

Boundary View

Autumn 2017 - No. 16

The Newsletter of Stourbridge & District Cricket Society

Founded 1972

Seen at Stourbridge CC's 175th anniversary.
Who are they? Answers on page 2.



Terry Church has come up with another mouth-watering programme for our winter evenings. We will be entertained by four former Test players, an umpire to apply the Laws, an author to write it all up and a former head of security to keep our members in order.

The Society is proud to announce that Lord Cobham has consented to become our Patron - details inside!

Since the Society's last meeting, I have acquired a number of articles written by various members. I have in mind to introduce a separate yearly journal to accommodate members' contributions. Why not include them in the newsletter, you may ask, to which I respond:

Boundary View is essentially a vehicle for reporting news - the journal will feature views and reviews.

I wish to float the idea that the Society takes on board a specific task. One that immediately comes to mind concerns the dearth of local club histories. Many of our members have ties with local clubs and may well have information to contribute.

I have sounded out various members and am pleased that many not only support the idea, but want to be involved with the project.

We are very keen to obtain copies of team photos, anecdotes and snippets of information related to local clubs.

If you wish to participate (not necessarily write), please contact Anthony Collis:

**01384 442244 or email
adcollis@blueyonder.co.uk**

SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE!

For the umpteenth successive year subs are unchanged!

Members also are again offered the chance to renew in advance of the new season at a reduced rate.

INDIVIDUAL membership fee:

£12 if received by 18 October.

£15 if paid after that date.

JOINT fee: £15 (2 adults at same address)

Cheques, payable to Stourbridge Cricket Society, to be sent to: Ken Workman, 15, Ridge Road, Kingswinford, DY6 9RB
Membership cards will be available for collection at the October meeting.

If you wish to make a voluntary donation to the Society, please add your chosen amount to your cheque.

[Persons who have not paid by 31 December 2017 will be removed from the membership list]

WEBSITE HIATUS

We apologise for any inconvenience caused by the Society's website being unable to be updated for several weeks past.

There is insufficient space here to present the full details of the problem, seemingly caused by a change of ownership of Cricket Archive. Historically, CA hosted the Council of Cricket Societies website plus ours and various other societies that are also affected.

As this issue goes to print, we have yet to receive confirmation from the CCS that normal service has been resumed.

CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

It is mid-August and just one week ago I witnessed two rare sights. Driving past a local park there were five young boys playing cricket. A little further on, you wouldn't believe it, a Bobbie on the beat! Now maybe it's my suspicious mind and concern for our sports future, I couldn't help but think "I do hope these lads aren't breaking the law by not playing football!" The policeman was heading their way. There is a happy ending, however, one hour later their game was still in progress.

Welcome back to our fabulous cricket society! It has always been my intention to encourage more ladies and young members to join us and appeal on behalf of our Committee for you all to bear in mind that our membership numbers need to be maintained and for our guests to be welcomed by a full house.

Thank you to all our members who have supported Stourbridge CC events during its 175th year celebrations.

It was wonderful to see Jean Kenyon and her two daughters at the opening of the Don Kenyon Suite on Level Two of The View at New Road during the tea interval of the Sussex Championship game. Norman Gifford, who will be our guest here next March, spoke extremely well of his former Championship-winning skipper who was born, as we all know, just down the road in Wordsley. Also present was a great admirer of Don, Jim Parks looking very fit and well, and was accompanied by his wife. Jim was our Society's guest in 2011.

England Ladies have done fantastically well, winning the World Cup at a packed Lord's this summer.

Moeen Ali performed at a very high level during the South Africa Test Series winning the 'player of the series' award and cannot wait to play his first Ashes Series Down Under.

Moeen is a genuine guy who values every minute of his time at Worcester and all the help and support he has been given. Together with his brother and cousins, they were encouraged to play cricket throughout the year in the back garden and on the park. Well done to them all for their level of achievement and the way they represent cricket in such a dignified way.

Mike Tomkins

The opinions expressed in Boundary View are not necessarily those of Stourbridge & District Cricket Society

Patron: **Viscount Cobham**

President: **Dave Nicklin**

Officers: **Mike Tomkins** (Chairman); **Terry Church** (Programme Secretary); **Anthony Collis** (Secretary / Editor); **Ken Workman** (Treasurer).

DENNIS BREAKWELL (Northamptonshire & Somerset)

Dennis Breakwell knows when, but not precisely where he was born. He entered the world at Brierley Hill on 2nd July 1948, but is unsure whether the birth was at home or in a maternity ward. "Dad couldn't remember because he was batting at the time!" he quipped.

Later, the family moved to Himley, where "we seldom saw more than three cars a day". Denis mentioned that Jack Flavell was his godfather, but he rarely saw him.

"Dad used to run the Bert Williams Indoor Cricket School at Bilston and I practised there after school from 6pm until 10pm on three nights a week." His boyhood heroes were Garry Sobers, Derek Underwood, Norman Gifford, Dougie Slade and Jim Pressdee. "I played for Staffordshire Schools Under 11s and Under 12s and was selected to play for a Midlands XI away in Norfolk. I also played a few games for Dudley,"

Dennis recalled of his early days. He was invited for trials at Edgbaston, New Road and Northampton, but plumped for the last named because "They were more welcoming. I was taken on at £7. 10s per week of which I paid £3 for my board, lodging and washing! I had £4. 10s in my pocket – I felt loaded!

Dennis recalled some of his colleagues at Northampton, when he joined in 1969. The skipper was Brian Prideaux, who once ruled himself out of a Test match after he was bowled twice in the nets by George Sharp; Brian Crump and his nephew David Steele (the first cricketer to be named BBC Sports Personality of the Year); Hylton Ackerman (a big hitting South African), Laurie Johnson (best wicket-keeper never to play Test cricket), Mushtaq Mohammad (an outstanding leg spinner), David Larter (a gentle giant) and of course, Colin Milburn. "I was sitting next to him when he crashed the car. I was unhurt apart from cuts and bruises

after being showered with glass, but Ollie lost his eye and ultimately his livelihood."

In those days, helmets were unknown and fast bowlers observed the code of no bouncers to nine, ten, Jack. "We played Derbyshire and Harold Rhodes let me have three in one over. His skipper, Derek Morgan, reminded him of the code and took him off on the spot."



In 1972 Dennis lost his place in the side to Bishen Bedi, who he described as the finest slow left-arm bowler ever.

One day Brian Close suggested Dennis moved west, which he did and played for Somerset from 1973 until 1984 and thereafter has stayed as head groundsman and coach at King's School, Taunton.

In his early years, he shared rooms variously with Botham, Garner and Richards. By playing with men of Test class made Dennis a far better cricketer and imbued him with greater confidence. "I would have had all their discarded bats had I known!"

He said that he often drove Beefy's Saab and referred to one incident on the motorway. "I was doing precisely 70, but got flagged down by a police car. They just wanted his autograph!"

"Botham was still single and extremely popular. He won a bet that he couldn't down three pints inside a min-

ute. He did it with time to spare! He was a much maligned character.

"Viv (he shared his surname with the other greatest batsman I'd ever seen) was imperious – he strutted rather than walked – and was a sensational hitter, but of the three." Breakwell rated Joel Garner as the key player in one-day cricket for Somerset.

Every county had great cricketers! Dennis regarded Mike Procter as his Nemesis. After one match I ended with figures of 5.4 overs, two wickets for 54. I bowled him four length balls and all were hit straight back over my head for six, and the first two balls of my next over went the same way. Dennis recalled proudly that he once hit Middlesex's Jeff Thompson to the boundary with a shot that went 'like a tracer bullet'. Colin Croft (Lancashire) hit the top of Brian Rose's bat handle and the ball went for six. At Somerset, we had a Dutchman named van Troost, who was hostile enough to trouble seasoned players.

In the Second Innings, Dennis gave the capacity audience an impromptu coaching lesson on varying methods of flight, delivery action and the importance of being the best fielder to one's own bowling. He thought that Muralitharan would never have played a Test had he been English. He regarded Moeen Ali as a fine player, but was not a Test-class spin bowler.

Dennis recalled his one first-class century – 100 against the New Zealanders including Hadlee and company, but admitted that it was Dale not Richard Hadlee! He had previously come close with scores of 94 (against Derbyshire) and 96 (v Surrey).

He was ashamed of the tactics used by Somerset when Brian Rose declared after one over against Worcestershire to preserve their prospects of advancement in the B&H competition. It was within the rules but not within the spirit of the game, our guest speaker admitted.

**21 March 2017
Attendance 90**

The final meeting of last season began with a period of silence in respect to our member Steve Wilkinson, whose family was devastated by the horrific events that occurred on 30th March.

www.sdcscouncilcricket Societies.com

The Society's website is in urgent need of a new look. If any member knows of a suitable person keen to acquire experience for their CV, please contact the Secretary for information.

Phone: 01384 442244

Email: adcollis@blueyonder.co.uk

MORE BLACK COUNTRY SPORTSMEN

A second helping of local sportsmen has been compiled by Terry Church!

The new book contains a second selection of pen portraits of 57 Black Country sporting mortals.

Terry's first volume, published in 2015, was sold out soon after publication!

The book, priced at £8.95 will be on sale at the October meeting.

WHO ARE THEY?

Gordon Smith is flanked by former Worcestershire players Ravindra Senghara and Derek Pearson.

Ravi played 23 games for the Pears (1974-76); Stourbridge-born Derek played 74 matches (1954-61) before being no-balled out of cricket.

Gordon never played first-class cricket, although many thought he could have more than held his own. He played a record 50 years in the Birmingham League for Dudley and later Stourbridge.

INTRODUCING OUR PATRON

VISCOUNT COBHAM

Our President, Dave Nicklin, is pleased to announce that Viscount Cobham has kindly accepted our invitation to become Patron of Stourbridge & District Cricket Society.

The position renews not only the connection between the Society and the Lyttelton family, but also re-establishes the link, albeit indirectly, with Worcestershire County Cricket Club.

The Hon. Charles Lyttelton played 93 matches in the 1930s for the County (prior to becoming the 10th Viscount Cobham in 1949), was the inaugural Patron when our Society was founded in 1972 and held that position until his death six years later. His elder son, John (1943-2006) became the 11th Viscount Cobham and the Society's second Patron. As he died childless, his younger brother, Christopher Lyttelton (b.1947) succeeded to the title as the 12th Viscount Cobham (pictured).

Consequently, the role of Patron of our Society has now been restored after

an interval of eleven years, and ensures the position stays 'in the family'!

The present Lord Cobham's cousin, the late 6th Duke of Westminster was President of Worcestershire CCC in 1984-86. His great-grandfather, the 4th Baron Lyttelton (1817-1876) chaired the inaugural meeting that led to the formation of Worcestershire CCC in 1865.



The Lyttelton family has enjoyed an association of more than 150 years with New Zealand. Christchurch's nearby seaport carries the name of Lyttelton in respect of the 4th Baron's work to establish a settlers' community in the region. The 10th Viscount Cobham served as Governor-General in 1956-58. In 2014, New Zealand played Sri Lanka at the newly created Hagley Oval, which became the 108th Test venue in the world.

Our new Patron has embarked upon a series of exciting initiatives to restore the sights, views, follies and fountains of his ancestral home to their former glory. He has recently completed the purchase of Hagley Golf Club at Wassell Grove. He enjoys cricket and golf, but admits that his greatest passion is gliding.

He kindly and willingly wrote the foreword to the Society's book commemorating the 175th anniversary of Stourbridge Cricket Club.

We look forward very much to welcoming our new Patron to our meetings in the coming winter season.

MARK HANNAM (Fieldings of Stourbridge)

Mark opened with a resumé of his career and a brief insight into the workings of the auction world.

A Dorset lad (he is a keen supporter of AFC Bournemouth), Mark cut his teeth in a saleroom in Sherborne before joining the Philips' consortium, which subsequently merged with Bonham's, one of London's top salerooms. In 2010, Mark was invited to join a then small outfit in Stourbridge headed up by Nick Davies and Will Farmer, who now make frequent appearances on *Flog It* and *Antiques Roadshow* respectively.

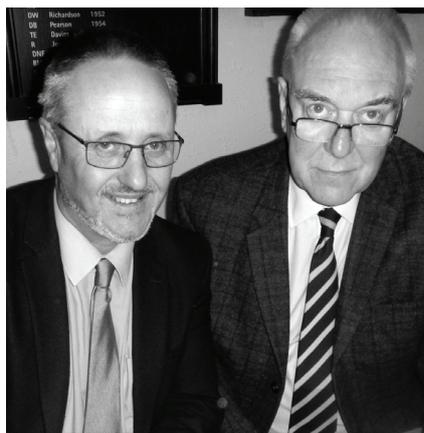
Fieldings hosts 16 specialist auctions annually. One of the fastest growing of their themed events is 'Mantiques'. The first sale in 2010 (then known as 'Boys Toys', mainly consisted of Lee Sharpe's collection of football shirts) realised a total of £32k. Last year's sale generated a staggering £176k.

Members of the public are invited to bring along items for free valuation every Tuesday. Fieldings make home visits to ensure nothing of importance is missed, but focus their attention on items with a potential minimum value of at least £50 or capable of being bundled into a story that might raise £150 or more. A typical local example was the tennis dress worn by a Pedmore knickerless teenager who gained worldwide recognition on an Athena poster. The dress, poster and tennis racket were bundled as one lot, with a

guide price of £1,000. The hammer price was £16,500!

Commission of 18% (inc. VAT) is payable by both buyer and seller on all transactions.

Members' items brought along in the second half included three cricket bats, various autograph collections, a Springbok blazer and a Stourbridge CC engraved salver dated 1878, which was



Mark Hannam & Mike Williams

found in a junkshop in mid-Wales, returned to the Club and subsequently retrieved after it was being used as a receptacle under a leaking fridge in the Club's kitchen – so much for heritage!

Prices of cricket items fluctuate, but generally older items hold their value, with pre-WWI items commanding a premium. Autograph values have fallen as dramatically as has the quality of signatures, many of which are little more than scribbles. Don Bradman signed so many

items that his autographs are measured in single pounds rather than the amount the Don's record might warrant.

The most valuable item of the evening was a blazer awarded to W.V. Ling who played six Tests for South Africa in the early 1920s. The bonus of a hatband in the green and gold, to be attached to a straw boater, was an interesting and rare item. The blazer should fetch £800, but the price of the hatband was impossible to predict.

Victorian bats in reasonable condition can reach £150 and go much. One bat signed by more than 50 Edwardian amateurs should reach £400 or more.

Modern-day bats rarely fetch more than £40 today - perhaps a future investment opportunity for the canny collector. However miniature bats with genuine signatures are sought after. Many bats are valueless if the owner mistakenly gave them a coat or two of varnish!

Postage stamps, in the form of souvenir or commemorative miniature sheets, issued by various Caribbean countries have little value above their original price.

Some members were apprehensive prior to the event, but most expressed enjoyment at the outcome of a very interesting evening. In addition to thanking Mark, a special vote of thanks was accorded to Mike Williams (Chairman of the Midlands Cricket Society) for his personal observations in support of Mark's assessments.

13 April 2017 Attendance: 42

MEETINGS' PROGRAMME FOR 2017/18

All meetings start at 7.30pm (unless stated otherwise) Programme subject to change
If in doubt, for example, due to severe weather, phone 01384 292170

Oct 19	Mushtaq Mohammad	Northants & Pakistan Mushtaq made his Test debut aged 15 years 124 days, subject to confirmation tonight! He played 57 Tests and led his country 19 times. Also played for Old Hill.
Nov 16	Philip DeFreitas	Leics (2), Lancs, Derbys & England (also appeared for Stourbridge CC). A fine pace bowler, explosive batsman and superb fielder often spoke of as the new Botham. What's not to admire!
Dec 14	David Millns	Notts (2), Leics, Tasmania & Boland—now on the first-class umpires' list. One of the few bowlers to score a hundred and take ten wickets in the same match.
Jan 18 2pm start	Geoff Cope NB No food!	Yorkshire & England Geoff is the subject of Stephen Chalke's latest book: "In Sunshine and Shadow" which will be on sale at the meeting.
Feb 15	Dean Allen	Author of "Empire, War & Cricket" - a lavish biography of the 'Laird of Matjiesfontein', James Logan, who created his own legend and financed early South African tours.
Mar 15	Norman Gifford MBE	Worcs, Warwks & England; Worcs CCC President 15 Test caps; 2068 career wickets; captain of both counties; Test selector; later coach to both Sussex and Worcs.
Apr 12 7pm / 7.45	AGM & Tom Scott	The AGM will be held at 7pm followed by: Tom Scott , a lifelong Worcestershire supporter, who is now the Club's CEO; former owner of the Cotswold Group security company.

VISIT TO OVAL & LONDON STADIUM 9 March 2017

This was the 14th trip organised for Society members. Leaving Stourbridge shortly before 7am the early start was justified when we logged on to the back of the slow moving traffic soon after joining the M42. This was to be the pattern for the day and we must record our appreciation to our driver, Steve, of Greenline Coaches for the way in which he located alternative routes as we encountered so many gridlocks.

His expertise ensured that we arrived at the headquarters of Surrey CCC in time for 11 o'clock coffee although the organisation of the provision of our beverage was a little chaotic. However that was the only downside of our time there. Incidentally as the club declined to make a charge for the coffee it was agreed by our members to make a

donation of £75 to *Evalina* the local Hospice and the official designated charity of Surrey CCC.

The tour was relaxed, informative and thoroughly enjoyable as our two tour guides progressed unhurriedly through the pavilion without any rush and fully answered any questions. Practice was taking place in a marquee on the outfield with temperature and conditions induced to give the type of wickets which would be encountered on the field itself in the month of April. Oh, the wonders of technology. What a surprise and a pleasure to be allowed on the outfield that so many wonderful cricketers had trod before of us. We were like kids in a candy shop.

Sandwiches were devoured on the coach as our driver negotiated the virtual car park that is a feature of everyday London life. We found the London Stadium. but gaining access was another matter. We had an

audio visual tour, or "the experience" in marketing jargon. Informative and enjoyable but without, dare I say, the charm, atmosphere or history of our pre-lunch venue. Chaos continued as a phone call from the car park was needed to allow our coach to leave the stadium and it is a stadium rather than a football ground. Perhaps we should not have been surprised at the chaos as this is the stadium that earlier in the football season had to apologise to West Ham season ticket holders who were unable to sit in their allocated seats. You really couldn't make it up.

We arrived home just before 9pm after a fourteen hour day. As with other trips my overriding impression is that tours of cricket grounds are conducted by enthusiasts of the game whilst for those who host football ground tours it is just a job.

Terry Church

SOCIETY BOOKSHOP

During the past year, the Society has published the following two books:

Stourbridge CC Test Cricketers

This book commemorates the 175th anniversary of the Club's founding and features cricketers who have played at Amblecote and also at Test level. Worcestershire players begin with Ted Arnold and end with Glenn Turner. Other Test men such as Phil DeFreitas (one of our guests this season) and David Larter (does not do talks) played for other counties are included.

The book is priced at £7.50 to members.

Early Days Recalled

This 24-page booklet is a reprint of the 1957 edition compiled by the late Jack Haden. Due to his work for the County Express, he had free access to the archives from which he gleaned details of matches played by Stourbridge CC between 1857-81.

The result is a fascinating glimpse of cricket in a totally different age. Early Days Recalled is priced at £3 to all persons.

Copies of both publications will be on sale at the monthly meetings.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Deadline for receipt of copy is for each *Issue* is (Last Friday of Month)

Autumn (August) *Winter* (November) *Spring* (February)

Preferably all articles should be typed and emailed to adcollis@blueyonder.co.uk

The editor reserves the right to edit or refuse the publication of any material submitted without further reason.