

CRICKET

Focus on - Warley

The seventh in a Saturday series on Calderdale cricket clubs by Dr Peter Davies of the Cricket Heritage Project at Huddersfield University



Paradise Lane: Warley's home

Mowers? No, grazing sheep

In the early years of the twentieth century, 'Warley Young Men' represented the village in cricketing competition.

This club was linked to Warley Congregational Church Sunday School. It appears that this club gradually became known as 'Warley C.C.'

The early Halifax Parish Cup records reveal that 'Warley' made their first appearance in the competition in 1906, though it is not totally clear whether this was the Sunday School side or another.

In the 1920s, when the club was temporarily defunct, cricket was still played at the Paradise Lane ground.

One old photograph from the decade shows local cricketers mixing with umpires, players of knur and spell (an early form of golf especially popular in the Halifax area), and women of the village.

After a series of meetings in late 1932 and early 1933, Warley CC was resurrected.

At a meeting held on January 12, 1933, W. Moore moved, and J.G. Fawcett seconded, a proposal that 'G.H.

Summersgill should meet with Mr Wilson about the field and draw up an agreement.'

Many of the members worked tirelessly for the new club during this early period.

At the AGM held on February 10, 1939 it was recorded that: 'On behalf of the members of both teams Mr W. Lately presented Mr E. Copley with an electric reading lamp, in appreciation of his work on their behalf.'

Paradise Lane has seen its fair share of improvements. The original pavilion had a new floor and new roof put in, and the current construction was built by club member Howard Smith in the 1960s.

Ian Buckley is another club stalwart. As a boy during the war he acted as club scorer and played for Warley for several decades.

He has vivid memories: "In the early days we had a problem with the grass. It was too long," he said.

"Sometimes you could run five for a gentle push! In the end we had to move some sheep in to graze during the week - just so it would be short enough for the weekend!"

In recent years Warley have scooped silverware aplenty and the superbly named Paradise Lane stands as one of the most intimate and atmospheric of Calderdale cricket grounds.



Warley's Parish Cup winning side of 1962

FACT FILE

Founded: c.1900
 Ground: Paradise Lane
 Local Landmark: Maypole Public House
 Former Grounds: None
 Former Leagues: Halifax District League, Halifax Amateur League, Halifax Association
 Greatest Moment: Re-formation in 1933