

## Cricket Section



As President of the Southampton Master Mariners Club 's Cricket Section I have been asked by its members to give a short history of the section and appeal for help to re-establish this once thriving branch of the main club.

From the information I have gleaned the section was formed in 1955. The first Secretary/Treasurer was a very enthusiastic Capt. Guy Farmiloe, aided and abetted by Capt. "Store" Hodson, Edney Curtis, Phillip Filer and others.

Between 1955 and 1977 a number of well-known local cricketers joined the main club and formed the nucleus of a strong team. Included were David Rule, Colin White, Alan Pierce, Frank Grayer, David Curtis, Archie Ferguson, Benny Ansell, John Smart and Nick Lockyer to be joined at a later date by Cdr. Reggie Bond, Capt. John Treasure-Jones, Paul Raworth, Ian Bagshaw, Mike Weston, Arthur Marshall, Graham Donald, George Gifford and Colin Lampard. Occasional guest players included Roy Marshall (West Indies & Hampshire), Jimmy Gray (Hampshire), Gerry Way (HCC), Harley Parish, and Jack Drake.

Phillip Filer was our baggage master for a number of years and in his will he left a bequest of £1000 to the cricket section for the purchase of cricket equipment.

Our home base was the University's Montefiore Ground at Swaythling, one of the best cricket wickets in Hampshire, lovingly looked after by Bob Barrett, the University Sports Grounds Superintendent. Sadly, blocks of flats have been built on it to accommodate University students.

We now play our 'Home' fixtures at the Southampton Solent University's Hardmoor Ground, which lies just off Stoneham Lane opposite Trojans Sports Ground.

Previously, our main opponents were the Wardrooms of HMS Vernon, Nelson, Collingwood, Dryad, Mercury, Excellent, Daedalus, and R.S. Yacht Club, Warsash College staff, and Winchester College Staff. Regrettably, with the demise of the Royal Naval Establishments, very rarely is one to be found on our fixture list. Such clubs as Shirley Police, Portsdown, SSU Staff, Overseas Mapping, Swanmore C.C., Eccentrics, Shirley C.C., etc., are now included.

The "apres match" was either a sumptuous dinner or a buffet. Indeed, once a year Marjorie was always surprised to see me leave for work with cricket gear in one hand and my DJ in the other.<sup>5</sup> We played HMS Vernon on the County Ground at Burnaby Road, Portsmouth, followed by our being entertained in the Wardroom as their principal guests at their Guest Nights. A member of our team was always expected to reply to the toast "Our Guests". At our home fixtures we would reciprocate either at the main club or in the clubroom at Montefiore.

With the increasing costs our refreshments, once ably provided by members' partners, were gradually reduced to a finger buffet, then to beer and sandwiches, and, latterly, to very little.

In the early days the Golf and Bowls sections were very active and, during the winter months, the three sections held triangular matches at skittles in various local bowling alleys. Unfortunately, the two were forced to disband due to lack of support.

Although quite sound financially, the cricket section still struggles to survive with the help from students at Warsash and a player or two from ABP. Capt. Ken Warren is the current captain of Cricket, Ian Bagshaw is Treasurer and, until two weeks ago, Mike Weston was Secretary. He has immigrated to Tasmania to join John Lloyd at the college there.

This has left us with a terrible void in our ranks and we are looking for someone to act as Secretary in his place. If there is anyone in our main club membership of about 440 members who would like to help us, please ring me on 023 8061 3351. You will be received with open arms!! Similarly, if there is a member who would like to enjoy a little social cricket, please ring me on the same number. We would be very sad if this section was also forced to close through lack of support.

At the time of writing the club has played seven matches and won six. A very good effort in spite of all the difficulties!

J.R.K.Smart.