

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME

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**The story of
HATHERN OLD C.C.**



*THE NEW PAVILION WILL BE OPENED BY
WILLIAM BENTLEY, Esq., M.B.E.
PRESIDENT LEICESTERSHIRE C.C.C.*

SUNDAY, 18th JUNE, 1967

● **FOR TODAY'S TEAMS SEE PAGE FOUR**

*Hathern Old C.C. in 1923:
Back row: Umpires A. Randon and J. Ratcliffe,
T. H. Marson, H. Brown, R. G. Crofts,
A. Dutton, E. Price (captain), M. Watts,
B. Fuller (vice-president). Seated: A. Spence,
W. A. H. Hunt, S. H. Pilkington, A. Thompson,
S. F. Simpkin, D. E. Thompson and C. Mee.*

HATHERN OLD C.C. — A NEW ERA IN A LONG HISTORY

In the little North Leicestershire village of Hathern—the cradle of county cricket throughout the last century—King Willow still reigns supreme.

Today, 18th June, the President of Leicestershire County C.C., Mr. William Bentley, M.B.E., will perform the official opening of the Hathern club's new pavilion on the recreation ground. The ceremony will take place at 5 p.m. during the tea interval of a gala match in which a Hathern Old eleven, including such well-known names as Nottinghamshire's Brian 'Bomber' Wells and John Springall and Leicestershire's Gerry Lester, will play a representative side fielded by the Loughborough Cricket Association.

The new £800 pavilion is one of which any club, whatever its status in the game, could be proud. But Hathern Old is no ordinary club and, thanks to the often outstanding abilities of past players, is known wherever cricket is played in this country.

The origins of the club and its curious name are by no means certain, but it is likely that its foundation dates back to the beginning of the 19th century, when a few villagers got together to play amongst themselves. Although the title 'Old' is appropriate inasmuch as the club can boast

a long history, the reason for its adoption could have been the emergence of another Hathern Club, since defunct, in competition with the original.

The earliest reference to the Hathern Club is quoted in E. L. Snow's excellent book *A History of Leicestershire Cricket*, in which he refers to a match between Shepshed and Hathern in 1814. Since then a number of Hathern players have written their names in the record books. Perhaps the name which occurs most frequently is that of the Randons, a remarkable family, most generations of which seem to have produced at least one player of real talent.

Reports of a fixture arranged for G. Bishop's Benefit and played at Tyler's Ground at Loughborough in 1868, list no less than five Randons in the Loughborough side, which beat an All-England team. Of that five, Charles Randon, described as "a useful bat, good fast-medium bowler and slip field," subsequently undertook several professional engagements, including a post at Rugby School. His younger brother, Frederick J. Randon, owned the singular distinction of having clean bowled the great Dr. W. G. Grace in two successive innings in a match played at Victoria Park, Leicester. In the first innings, the great man was out for a

Frederick John Randon, the man who clean bowled Dr. W. G. Grace in two successive innings.

The new Hathern Old—some of the 30 playing members: Back row: Umpire R. Webster, D. Swift, M. Walker, K. Farmer, W. Tollington, M. Liddell, I. Swift, A. Swift, Scorer R. Price, Umpire T. Middleton. Seated: R. White, V. Melbourne, D. Robinson, J. Brown, E. Edinborough and D. Brown.





The spacious new Pavilion on the Recreation Ground was built in 2½ months at a cost of £800. With the help of the Loughborough Cricket Association, the Club was able to arrange a direct grant of £200 and loan of £300, payable over five years, from the National Playing Fields Association. The structure comprises a steel frame and asbestos roof from a former prefabricated house, clad with Shiplap boarding and makes provision for two large dressing rooms, a kitchen/servery and tea room. A rear extension to house ground equipment will be added at the end of the season.

Club President William Dunsmore.

duck and, in the second, he only scored eight, none of them off Fred Randon.

Another well-known Hathern family with an unusual talent for the game are the Thompsons. David Thompson played regularly for Leicestershire and his son Jack, who had lost his left arm in an accident, nevertheless gave a good account of himself, winning single wicket matches against three opponents. Among other well-known personalities who have made their mark in the game is Mr. H. Brown, who played for Leicestershire C.C.C.

In those early days of the club's history, enthusiasm for the game knew no bounds. Hand-frame knitters would spend whole days practising and then catch up with their work at night. The team would walk as far as Barrow and Ashby to play away matches and then, having celebrated a win or drowned their sorrows, walk back again.

Beer and skittles there were, but on the field they played to win and weren't above a bit of gamesmanship to do so! An 'authentic record of the cricket match between Ilkeston and Hathern', taken from the *Ilkeston Cricketer of the Past* and published in 1881, states:

"The first match of the season was with Hathern and came off on the Rutland Ground, on Monday and Tuesday, June 5th and 6th, 1856. Some excellent cricket was displayed on both sides and towards the close of the game, great excitement prevailed. It was arranged that the stumps were to be drawn at six o'clock. When the Rutlanders went to their wickets for the second time, 113 runs were wanted to win. Four wickets having fallen, T. Attenborough and C. Ross found themselves together and all attempts of their opponents failed to separate them. The ball was being knocked about right merrily and many an anxious eye was turned towards the church clock. The hour of six was approaching, and nearly 40 runs were yet wanting. At this juncture an idea occurred to one or two that it would be advantageous if the Church clock could be stopped. The permission to do so was obtained and two well-known Ilkestonians were deputed to carry out the scheme. While one of the two kept watch through the glass in the centre of the dial facing the cricket ground, the other was instructed to hold the pendulum a few seconds at a time. Still the batsman were making runs and the fielders longed for the hour which would put a stop to the game. Suddenly it appeared to some of the players that the clock was moving very slowly, watches were compared and the question was decided by the Hathern umpire drawing the stumps when only 18 runs were required to win, with six wickets to fall. The game thus resulted in a draw. The conduct of the Hathern players, when they saw Ilkeston gaining upon them, was not at all gentlemanly. The batsman never lost time in taking position; but the bowlers, one particularly, between every ball made a most minute inspection of his person, even to the soles of his feet and very often indulged in a roll on the ground and in grimace at the spectators, whose disgust with such conduct sought expression in frequent

exclamations of contempt. The intention to prevent Ilkeston playing out the game by inexcusable delays at each over and in bowling, was too evident, and contrasted strongly with the conduct of the home team in the morning when their opponents were at the wicket."

Although this was obviously a 'needle' match, Hathern Old have always tended to prefer friendly matches to league games. A large slice of their history has been under the patronage of the Lords of the Manor—the De Lisle family—who have always taken a keen interest in the club, to the extent of playing themselves. The previous pavilion (one of the oldest in the county, having stood for 100 years) was sited on the Pasture Lane ground which, thanks to the De Lisle family, was theirs for all time. A dispute with a farmer prompted them to move to the Recreation Ground, however, which they rent from Loughborough Corporation.

The post-war history of the club, unbroken except for a two-year period during which the side was re-formed, has seen more competitive cricket. In 1958, they were granted membership of the North Leicestershire League and, after a series of ups and downs, the first team is now in the second division. On Saturdays, Hathern field two teams; in addition to a Sunday team and a Tuesday evening XI in the Castle Donington League, and having a hat-trick of wins in 1960, '61 and '62. They have played in the semi-final of the Hospital Cup three times in the last six years and, last year, reached the final of the Loughborough Association six-a-side competition. Of their annual fixtures, the September match against George Bates' XI is a popular fixture, the proceeds of which are donated to the Hathern Darby and Joan Club. The present playing members number 30, of which two—batsman/wicket-keeper Vin Melbourne and all-rounder Bill Parker—are founder-members of the post-war side. Village youngsters are showing a healthy interest in the club and the number of outsiders is limited to three per team.

Hathern Old has always prided itself on being a village club in every sense of the term: it recruits its players from the village and involves itself in the life of the community. The lack of housing development in the district is a current cause for concern, in that youngsters are leaving Hathern in search of accommodation elsewhere. It would be a pity if this state of affairs necessitated bringing more outsiders into the team.

Club President for the past two years has been William Dunsmore, who has contributed enormously to the building of the pavilion. The 26 Vice-Presidents include famous Notts. spin bowler 'Bomber' Wells. Their efforts have been supported by very energetic officers; namely, Secretary P. B. Clifton, Assistant Secretary F. E. Clark, Fixture Secretary D. A. Swift and Treasurer A. M. Swift. The Committee, under the Chairmanship of M. Hollis and Vice-Chairmanship of H. Taylor, the longest-serving members of the Committee, comprises D. Robinson, E. Edinborough, T. Insley, P. Clayton, I. Swift, B. Cooper and M. Liddell, most of whom have played for the Club, and some of whom still do.

After a five-year period of consolidation, the Committee decided that the money raised by a football pool, whist drives, dances and donations, could best be spent on building the Pavilion. This Gala Opening will mark a new era in the history of Hathern Old Cricket Club. Inspired by the achievements of the past and encouraged by this new-found prosperity in the tangible form of modern facilities, Hathern Old can look forward to this new era with confidence and, who knows, even surpass the greatness of their predecessors.

TODAY'S TEAMS

HATHERN OLD C.C.

LOUGHBOROUGH CRICKET ASSOCIATION

1 G. LESTER <i>Leicestershire C.C.C.</i>		1 L. CARRINGTON <i>Brush Sports C.C.</i>	
2 A. SWIFT		2 D. WALKER <i>Shepshed Messengers C.C.</i>	
3 V. MELBOURNE <i>Capt.</i>		3 D. SYLVESTER <i>Loughborough Town C.C.</i>	
4 I. SWIFT		4 R. BARRETT <i>Carillon Old Boys C.C.</i>	
5 J. SPRINGALL <i>Nottinghamshire C.C.C.</i>		5 M. DEACON <i>Quorn C.C.</i>	
6 M. WALKER		6 R. WOOTTON <i>Carillon Old Boys C.C.</i>	
7 P. ROSE		7 R. WILLIAMSON <i>Barrow Town C.C.</i>	
8 A. BEXLEY		8 J. SMITH (<i>Capt.</i>) <i>Loughborough Town C.C.</i>	
9 D. SWIFT		9 K. BAILEY <i>Brush Sports C.C.</i>	
10 B. D. WELLS <i>Nottinghamshire C.C.C.</i>		10 T. MURPHY <i>Shepshed Town C.C.</i>	
11 K. FARMER		11 J. SHACKEL <i>Quorn C.C.</i>	

EXTRAS:

UMPIRES: G. BATES & T. MIDDLETON

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The President, Chairman and Committee of Hathern Old Cricket Club would like to thank the many people whose help and support has enabled them to build this new Pavilion for the use of the club for many years to come.