

# ABINGER CRICKET CLUB



*Abinger CC vs Surrey CCC August 1980*

## THE HISTORY OF THE CLUB 1870 – 2013

# ABINGER CRICKET CLUB

Founded 1870

## *INTRODUCTION*

In the summer of 2012 Effingham Cricket Club produced a 1920 team photograph of a match vs Abinger in the hope that we might have club records which would enable identification of some, if not all, of the players in the picture. Unfortunately we had no trace or records of the match and doubts were raised as to the whereabouts or even existence of any comprehensive records of the Club's progress before the 1970's. It was felt that a serious attempt should be made to seek out all available information with a view to producing a History of the Club whilst the memories of older members were still reasonably sharp. We agreed to undertake this interesting task and the result is now before you; it is by no means perfect but hopefully we have made the best use of the sometimes limited material available.

Help has been received from a variety of sources and we are particularly grateful to Emma Corke for her guidance concerning the Farrer family and the Abinger Hall Estate. Photographer and Sports Club member, Peter Ruck has also been most helpful in producing the photography needed by our printer.

Probably our most useful work has been to bring together all available correspondence files, old photographs, Minutes of Meetings, etc, and placing them in a permanent archive within the Clubhouse. We are fortunate in having Jan Philpin, our Chairman's wife, who is a trained archivist, to put everything into it's proper order. The Archive can then be kept up-to-date for future years.

Mike Woods & Geoff Dunn  
June 2013

# ABINGER CRICKET CLUB

## . . . . the history

### *PREAMBLE*

The 19th Century saw a dramatic increase in the popularity of cricket as the game extended it's reach to country villages. In those early days it is unlikely that recognised matches took place, games would have been informal and played on any suitable piece of available land. Availability was the key consideration and many of the playing areas used would now be looked upon as unsuitable for any sport let alone cricket. Enthusiasm and the desire to play against other teams led to the need for better playing fields but in most villages, and especially Abinger, there was no flat public grassland available. However the popularity of Cricket extended to local landowners and many Clubs owed their existence to generous grants and leases of land from the local "Squire" or the Parish Council. This generosity was of great importance in those early years and remains equally important in modern times.

The Abinger story follows this pattern; local enthusiasm, pitch needed, landowner supplies field, Club formed and matches begin.

### *ABINGER'S EARLIEST YEARS*

Cricket was first played in the 1860's on an open area of grassland in the Abinger Roughts woodland behind Abinger Hall. This area, which is little more than a central crossing point for several footpaths, was known as The Plain.

In 1869 Abinger Hall was purchased by Thomas Henry (later Lord) Farrer. He had a schoolboy son and it seems likely his son's interest may have prompted Lord Farrer to give permission for Cricket to be played on the attractive parkland immediately below The Hall. Thus...

### *IN 1870 ABINGER CRICKET CLUB WAS FORMED*

The Cricket Field (as it is still called within the Farrer family) contained

the unusual feature of a lime tree within the outfield; a shot which hit the tree was awarded two runs. (Is Canterbury the only other outfield containing a tree?). The wicket was at the foot of a slope leading up to the Hall gardens. Although there are no surviving records of those earliest days it is recorded that Abinger cricketers played a small part in assisting after the tragic death of Dr Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester, who, on July 19th 1873, fell from his horse whilst traversing the Abinger Roughs. A groom went to the Hall for help whereupon (it is said) “the body was carried down to the Hall on a door by four men, all called George, who were playing cricket nearby”. Other accounts of the story may vary but we like this version!.

It is not known if and when a Pavilion was built and the only surviving record of cricket prior to the 1930's is a series of photographs of a Women's Institute match between the Ladies of Abinger W.I. vs The National Federation of W.I.'s played in 1924. One doubts that the men of Abinger would have been involved.



*Cricket in play at Abinger Hall, 1949*

The pictures shown here of a game in 1949 and of the Cricket Field today (2013) amply illustrate the setting. (Photographer Peter Ruck stood on the foundations of the 1950 Pavillion to take this photograph across the Old

Ground in the direction of Abinger Hall. The house, which Lord Farrer had rebuilt in 1872, fell into disrepair in the 1950's and was eventually demolished in 1959.)



*Abinger Hall Cricket Field today, 2013*

Although there is an enormous gap in our knowledge it is known that Cricket was played continuously from 1870 until the 1st World war. After the war play started again and, despite the lack of any Club Records until 1938, we are able to give a glimpse of life in the years prior to the 2nd World war.

### *1930 to 1960 . . . THE HISTORY IN LIVING MEMORY*

From earliest days in 1870 it was the Farrer family's intention (and the Club's understanding) that the Cricket Field should continue to be used as long as needed. There was no lease and no rent was paid. Thus regular Cricket continued to be played throughout the 1930's, probably just one game per weekend. Club President for many years prior to his death in 1940 was T.C. (Lord) Farrer . . . that same boy whose love of cricket had prompted his father to provide the land on which the Club started some 70 years earlier.

Communication with players would not have been easy as few houses had telephones. Notification of selection would be by post-card and the Team

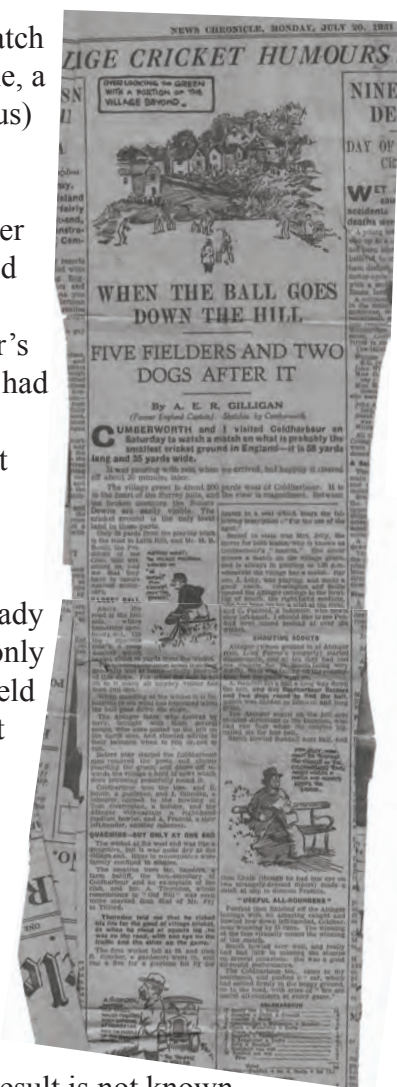


was displayed in the Post Office window so that local players could find out if they had been selected (this situation still applied in the 1950's).

Club Captain and Secretary for several years prior to the War was Bert Randall and we are indebted to his son, also Bert, for some pre-war memories . . . including his first match for Abinger at the age of eight. (Alas this child prodigy later joined Holmbury St. Mary C.C. where he remains a Life Member having served for 25 years as Chairman and 6 as President).

In July, 1931, Bert (Senior) played in a match which was reported in The News Chronicle, a national daily of that time. A long (hilarious) match report gives details of Abinger's game away to Coldharbour wherein it is interesting to read that Abinger arrived by lorry in poor weather and played on an equally poor wicket. Coldharbour scored 44 which comfortably beat Abinger's 23. The reporter was A.E.R. Gilligan who had played for Sussex and Captained England. Typical of his style is the following extract from the report. "Hereabouts the village postman, Arthur West, stopped for a few moments to watch play. On my enquiring whether he played, J. Chalk, a groom to Lady Piggot-Brown at Broomhall, replied 'No only the banjo' !" A full copy of this report is held in the Club's archive; we have improved it by adding more information about all the members of the Abinger team.

Another story from the 1920's/30's concerns a match vs Westcott. The team walked to the match with their equipment carried on a Scout Trek Cart. On arrival they had to clear a herd of cows from the outfield then post two fielders to prevent further bovine encroachment. The match result is not known.



Playing conditions were far inferior to those of modern times. Grass mowing was somewhat haphazard, outfielders were long and heavy, wickets were so poor that an artificial strip of coconut matting was sometimes used; the roller was a light-weight affair with shafts designed to be pulled by a pony. Average incomes were at subsistence levels, the Club had no bar or other sources of income beyond subscriptions, the odd Dance in the Village hall, Jumble sales and Donations so there was little money to expend on playing facilities.

At the Annual General Meeting in March, 1938, the Treasurer reported an end year balance of £12.9s.1/2d from which the Club hoped to get a much needed motor mower.

At a subsequent Committee Meeting E.J. Harrison reported hearing of a second-hand motor mower at Angel Sons & Gray, Guildford, and four members of the Committee together with Mr. Covey, chief engineer, had made the journey to see it. The figure asked was £8.10s.0d and to overhaul and give a guarantee would cost another £2. The Treasurer was instructed to make the purchase.

Annual subscriptions at this time were three shillings for men and one shilling for boys.

With the outbreak of the 2nd World War play continued for a short while but ceased in 1940.

## *THE POST-WAR YEARS*

In 1947 meetings were held in an attempt to re-start the Club but at an open meeting only three potential players turned up. However further attempts were made and cricket was eventually played again in 1949. The mix of players was good; young players were encouraged and those with ability mixed well with the more mature men. Club benefactor and President Dr. W. Rees-Thomas (Mrs. Rees-Thomas was grand-daughter of both T.H. Farrer and Charles Darwin) and Club Secretary/Umpire George Caygill were ever-present driving forces. Strict food rationing made the provision of cricket teas impossible until a Catering Licence was obtained (after two applications) from The Food Office so that the necessary supplies could be purchased.

The team was well supported and efforts were made to have a full list of

fixtures; it seemed difficult to arrange many local games and lack of transport meant that travel to some away games was by hired coach. Saturday and Sunday Captains were elected each year and a team of ladies volunteered to provide teas.



*The New Pavilion in 1952. Abinger members prepare for a practice match.*

The small Pavilion at Abinger Hall had deteriorated during the War and a new one was built in 1952 by the members led by a relatively new member of the Club, H.O. Mockford, whose name was destined to figure prominently in Club affairs for many years to come.

At the 1952 Annual General Meeting subscriptions were set at ten shillings for adults and five shillings for boys. Match fees were one shilling. In 1954 the Groundsman's duties included cutting the outfield; maintaining the square and preparing wickets for which he received £1 per week; at Committee Meetings appeals were constantly made for more members to help on the Ground. With the outfield and square put back into reasonable order and fixtures arranged it seemed that smooth progress was now assured but changes were afoot which would have serious long-term consequences.

In 1950 the Cricket Field, which is part of Hackhurst farm, had passed into the ownership of the National Trust. Agreeable arrangements were made between the Club, the Trust and the tenant farmer for cricket to continue and the playing area was fenced off. Later the building of a new pavilion





*The Abinger Team circa 1953*

Back: Hon. D. Stewart, B. Darrington, P. Overington, M. Woods, J. Mills, H. Cribb  
 Middle: G. Caygill, B. Booth, H. Evans, G. Davies, P. Baker, T. Ockenden, B. Gravitt, J. Upton  
 Front: Mrs. Upton, P. Pullen, T. Overington, N. Stephens, J. Darrington, B. Champ, Miss Harding

was agreed and permission was given for cars to be parked in the field on match days but from 1951 onwards relations between farmer and club became increasingly strained. The farmer wanted cricket to cease so that he might make use of the land and the Club wanted him to honour the undertakings of previous tenants (going back to 1870) to allow cricket to be played. Over the next few years there were periods of uneasy truce interrupted by provocative acts such as opening the gate and allowing cattle to roam over the wicket. The national Trust intervened as much as possible to help the Club, meetings were held, ex-gratia payments made but no agreement could be reached. An offer to rent the ground from the Trust failed when the farmer refused to give up his tenancy.

In 1958 Vice-President Sir Edward Beddington-Behrens assisted by negotiating an agreement between Farmer, Trust and Club to further fence off playing and parking areas (at the Club's expense) but finally the farmer felt unable to agree and his solicitors issued notice to quit. Appeals were made to every possible source (including HRH The Duke of Edinburgh) but no-one felt able to intervene and the battle was lost. In 1959 cricket ceased and the Club seemed doomed.

## *1960 . . . A CLUB REBORN*

Reports show that in 1959 the Club had 43 members who, whilst accepting the loss of the Cricket Field, had a strong desire to see cricket continue at Abinger. There was also much sympathy in the locality for the Club's predicament. As the need for a new ground was considered, eyes fell upon the small area of village green (about 1 acre) in the centre of the village on the southern bank of the River Tillingbourne. The land was originally marginal marshland but had been given to the Village as a recreational area by the Farrer family and the Wotton Estate (Evelyn family) in memory of those who had given their lives in the 1st World War. Responsibility for maintenance lay with the Parish Council and drainage and levelling work had been completed shortly after the 2nd World war by the Surrey War Agricultural Executive.

The adjoining field rose in an ever-steepening slope to the South . . . an area known as The Hangers. Any possible Cricket Ground would have to encompass the small village green plus an acre or more of the field; trees and hedges would need removal, substantial earth moving and levelling work undertaken, drainage installed, a wicket base laid down and the whole surface area prepared for seeding. In addition a pavilion would be needed with toilets, water supply etc. All-in-all a daunting prospect but in September, 1961, all plans were complete and the decision to proceed was taken.

Security of Tenure had to be assured before the project could finally go ahead. In March, 1960, a public meeting held in the Village Schoolroom had voted unanimously in favour of cricket being played on the Green. Leases were then negotiated with The parish Council for cricket to be played on public land. A further 99 year lease for the "top" half of the Ground was negotiated with Mr. Bob Newman of Paddington Farm at a fee of ten shillings (50p) per annum. The leases stipulated that the public should have free access when cricket was not in play. Both leases were concluded in June 1962.

Much credit must go to the Members at that time but nothing would have been achieved without the excellent co-operation of the Farrer Family, Bob Newman, the Wotton Estate and the Parish Council.

Whilst the prospect of a new Ground was exciting the Members still needed to play some cricket. Some use was made of nearby Goose Green, the

Gomshall Sportsfield, but most games were played away; not the easiest of propositions because the main momentum of all Clubs comes from their Home games.

Whilst limited play continued, contractors were employed and work went ahead in 1961-2 at a budgeted cost for ground works, seeding and turfing of £1,731. Local fund raising and donations were supported by a Grant from the National Playing Fields Association of £400 and a loan of £200. A bank loan was guaranteed by members, many of whom also made private loans to the Club.

As the contractor's work neared completion Member's working parties were needed to take down the Pavilion built in 1952 at Abinger Hall and move it to it's new site on the South-Western corner of the new ground. Working in dreadful winter conditions a water supply was installed together with a concrete base (the concrete moved by wheel-barrow across the Tillingbourne and along planks to the building site; the water supply was piped to the site from a point behind the bus shelter, (in later years it was extended to the cricket square). Once the Pavilion had been moved from the Hall and re-built, rudimentary toilets and an equipment shed were completed. This was a major effort by Members and much credit goes to H.O. Mockford for his skills and the drive he put into the work. Considerable administrative and legal work was needed and the Club were fortunate indeed to have David Ing, a Qualified Solicitor, as a leading Member who gave his services free of charge.



*A match in play on the New Ground, circa 1964*

By June, 1962, the outfield had been seeded and the turf on the square had started to grow. The pavilion was erected but much work was needed to complete the interior and landscape the surrounds. Finally the Club's ambitions were fulfilled and the Ground opened for its first full Season 1964.



*The Abinger Team 1964*

Back: M. Woods, T. Moon, T. Woods, B. Ockenden, K. Waters, C. Holtom, H. Mockford  
Front: D. Thompson, C. Hall, R. Taylor, J. Lambert, G. Caygill (Umpire)

It would be nice at this stage if history showed the Club proceeding successfully into the future, but difficulties lay ahead. The lack of a Home ground for four years had led to a fall-off in local membership and although the team was quite strong it contained several who lived many miles away. There were also ongoing problems with the Ground which was inevitably taking time to settle; it lay very wet and the drainage was inadequate. No Home fixtures were possible until the land dried out at the end of May. Outfield mowing was undertaken by the County Council Education Department (children from the local school used the Green as a play area) but many matches were lost to “unplayable” conditions and the Club's reputation suffered. Despite these difficulties some good quality cricket was played and a strong team led to a demand for stronger fixtures but this led to the Club losing its fixture base amongst local villages. At one point the team travelled to a game against Bognor just a year after their star fast bowler, John Snow had left to play for Sussex and England. An enjoyable but unsuccessful day.

The decision to “up” the quality of fixtures was countered by some members who wished to remain loyal to our roots and play village cricket against our neighbours. This led to an internal dispute and a number of the strongest (and hardest working) players resigned. As a consequence membership fell and by 1967 fixtures had been reduced to just one per week-end and the situation became so desperate that a Committee resolution to disband the Club was only narrowly overturned. This was, indeed, a low point and the remaining Members needed much determination to enable survival over the next few years.

### *1970 THE CLUB'S CENTENARY*

By nature of it's location the Cricket Ground had become much more than a simple venue for Cricket. Abinger now had a handsome Village Green which, combined with the very well maintained River Tillingbourne, made an excellent leisure area for family picnics and children's play. The Parish Council installed a small play area with swings and slides and the Club built safe fencing against encroaching cricket balls.



*The Abinger Team 1970*

Back: V. Sowerby, M. McClaren, T. Woods, H. Foster, D. Ing, D. Edwards  
Front: C. Van De Lande, H. Mockford, J. Alexander, I. Macinnes, M. Hart

In 1970 Mr Bob Newman agreed to sell the Club 3/4 of an acre of the land between the Cricket Ground and Felday Road for £200. At the time this



was a minor transaction but its impact on future developments would be very important indeed. In 1973 ownership of the land led to a successful application for change of use from agriculture to a car park for the Cricket Club. This was not only very good for the cricketers but also helped ease the acute parking problems which had become such a nuisance in the village during the Summer months.

The early 1970's saw steady but un-spectacular progress on the Cricket field. Membership remained quite small but the pleasant surroundings encouraged strong family support with wives and children much in evidence on Match days. Final establishment of the car park in 1973-74 was a great improvement. At about this time nearby Peaslake Cricket Club closed and several of their remaining members joined Abinger where some have served ever since. However, the growing popularity of the Club began to expose the lack of decent facilities in the Pavilion. With just one cold tap and no electricity, catering was very difficult. the toilets could only be described as primitive and were entirely unsuitable for families with young children.

Complaints were made and possibilities for improvement were examined but the low-lying nature of the land and the proximity to the water table made proper sewage disposal and drainage almost impossible. It was at this point that ambitious ideas began to emerge for a new Pavilion on the Club's own land to the other side of the Ground.



*The Dorking Advertiser reports on Abinger's Toilets 1975*

## 1975 AND MEMBERSHIP GROWS

By 1975 the Ground had settled and was showing signs of improvement. Extra drainage was installed and more modern machinery for grass cutting had to be funded when the County Council ceased their outfield cutting service. Morale amongst players was greatly improved and this, in turn, led



to an upturn in Membership resulting in more and better cricket. The Fixture List, which had remained static for some ten years, was increased with particular emphasis on fixtures with all other local villages. The number of games increased from 24 to 55 within two years.

The newer Members also combined with the old to produce an outstanding blend of business skills; by now the Club had it's own Solicitor; Architect, Builder, Banker, Accountant and several experienced businessmen together with an enthusiastic core of other players and their wives. With this experience, confidence and drive the Club was now ready to turn the earlier dreams of a New Pavilion into reality.

### *A NEW PAVILION . . . THE ABINGER SPORTS CLUB*

Late in the 1975 season our architect member, Graham Locke, took it upon himself to investigate the possibility of an ablution/toilet block at the rear of the pavilion. This would prove to be prohibitively expensive for only a marginal gain due to the problems mentioned earlier. This led him to investigate the possibility of building a separate ablution/toilet block on our car park land on the other side of the cricket field, which had access to the Felday Road. After consultation with Local Authority planners, and their encouragement, he decided that the best option would be to build a completely new pavilion with kitchen, bar, changing rooms with toilet and shower facilities. He also had a meeting with the Sports Council which offered to support us with a grant of about £8,000 if we built a proper Pavilion and formed ourselves into a multi-sport club. As it happened the flourishing Abinger and Peaslake table tennis Club was looking for a home venue and, early in 1976, negotiations were commenced to explore the possibility of linking the two clubs into an Abinger Sports Club.

Meanwhile cricket continued and village events were held on the Green. In 1977 a fair was held to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of the Queen's accession. This was a happy and successful occasion as were the many Teddy Bears picnics held to raise funds for the village school. It is also worth mentioning at this juncture that the Cricket Club has supported The Old Fair at Abinger Common with men and labour since the first of the modern day Fairs in 1957. The Old Fair raises significant funds for St. James' Church and other local charities each year.

Having decided to form the Sports Club, the Cricket and Table Tennis Clubs had very few assets. Various fund raising activities were arranged, sponsored walks, Christmas Raffles etc, with somewhat unspectacular results falling well short of the funds needed to commence building. However the final decision to go ahead was taken at a Cricket Club meeting in February, 1977, at which the project was enthusiastically promoted by Graham Locke and Freddie Triggs (Hon. Treasurer). The latter said he could raise the shortfall from local wellwishers and selected members and this he did!.

The building work was planned to take place during the winter of 1977-78 and was carried out by Harry Mockford, a builder who by now was also Club Chairman, at a very favourable hourly rate. (Readers will have noted that Mr. Mockford was also responsible for the 1962 Pavilion and he had earlier led members when this same Pavilion was originally built at Abinger Hall in 1952). Several other members contributed machinery, expertise and labour but atrocious weather put the project well behind schedule. In the end the plumbing was completed by two local plumbers free of charge and the official opening was by Vic Lewis in July, 1978, followed by a match against his Celebrity XI. Vic Lewis was a well known band leader and music promoter from the post war period. He was also an ardent cricket fan and ran his team for many years to the benefit of many



*The Programme for two  
Celebrity Matches 1980*

charities; actor Peter Davidson (“All creatures great and small” and “Dr Who”) and West Indian Cricket Captain Rohan Kanhai were among the many who enjoyed the well known Abinger catering provided by the Club’s highly skilled ladies.

## *THE CRICKET PROSPERS*

Celebrity cricket matches were a regular feature of summers during the following twenty or so years. A succession of matches were staged against the Vic Lewis XI, Surrey County Cricket Club and the Bunbury's Celebrity XI with the Surrey Beneficiary, the Surrey Association of Youth Clubs and PHAB (SAYC) and, of course, Abinger Sports Club development fund benefiting from the proceeds. The highlight of these matches took place in July, 1983, with a game against the full New Zealand Test squad captained by Geoff Howarth (Surrey Beneficiary for that year).

Some 3,000 spectators were ranged around the Ground. The Kiwis entered fully into the spirit of the day and contributed hugely to the entertainment, resulting in a substantial profit.



*Abinger vs New Zealand, 1983*

A feature of the Club's social side was the annual Cricket Club Dinner which, for several years, was held at The Wotton Hatch Hotel.

One condition of our support for the Surrey Beneficiaries was that they should attend as guest speaker at the Club dinner thus maintaining our relationship with the County. Most seemed to enjoy having to "sing for their supper" which they performed with varying degrees of skill.

The completion of the Pavilion resulted in an increase in Cricket membership so that the club was able to form a regular 2nd XI and, with the excellent facilities, there was no trouble in getting fixtures for it.

The National Village K.O. competition and local evening leagues were entered and regular winter net practice was arranged to improve standards. In 1979 a President's Day was inaugurated and has taken place in one form or another every year since.

SCORE CARD									
Abinger Cricket Club					v. Surrey County Cricket Club				
<b>ABINGER</b>					<b>SURREY</b>				
	How out	Runs				How out	Runs		
* 1	S.J. Stennett	.....	.....	.....	FROM: * 1	R.D.V. Knight	.....	.....	.....
2	M.V.G. Copleston	.....	.....	.....	2	A.R. Butcher	.....	.....	.....
3	M.R. Dunn	.....	.....	.....	3	G.S. Clinton	.....	.....	.....
4	I. Marshall	.....	.....	.....	4	M.A. Lynch	.....	.....	.....
5	G. Dunn	.....	.....	.....	† 5	C.J. Richards	.....	.....	.....
6	G.M. Staves	.....	.....	.....	6	G.P. Howarth	.....	.....	.....
7	D.B. Colebrook	.....	.....	.....	7	M. Feltham	.....	.....	.....
8	C.S. Klimcke	.....	.....	.....	8	A.J. Stewart	.....	.....	.....
9	J.E.D. Cattermole	.....	.....	.....	9	D.J. Thomas	.....	.....	.....
† 10	P.J. Parsons	.....	.....	.....	10	G. Monkhouse	.....	.....	.....
11	D.G. Forbes	.....	.....	.....	11	S.T. Clarke	.....	.....	.....
12th MAN R.B. Norman					12	P.I. Pocock	.....	.....	.....
EXTRAS B, l-b, w, n-b,					13	I.J. Curtis	.....	.....	.....
TOTAL					14	A. Needham	.....	.....	.....
FALL OF WICKETS					15	D. Pauline	.....	.....	.....
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
UMPIRE: J. Stonehill					SCORER: Miss K. M. Stennett				
* CAPTAIN					† WICKET KEEPER				
FALL OF WICKETS					FALL OF WICKETS				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
UMPIRE: A.C. Shirreff					Commentator: M. G. Woods				
EXTRAS B, l-b, w, n-b,					TOTAL				


  

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*The Teams for Abinger vs The Full Surrey XI, 1984*



The long term security of the Club was enhanced in 1978 when Mr. Newman sold the top part of the Ground to the Club for a very modest £200. At about the same time a generous settlement of additional land from Mr Patrick Evelyn (Wotton Estate) gave space for the tennis courts and practice net.

The Club is a village cricket club and was reasonably successful at that level, but there was a slight hiccup in 1988 when the 1st XI captain, who had been elected against the wishes of the Committee, attempted to persuade the Club that it ought to play at a higher standard and introduced some players who did not live in the locality and had no connection with Abinger. This was to the detriment of existing members, reducing their opportunities to play and causing some resentment. At an acrimonious AGM the Captain was voted out, but the Committee recognised that there was a demand for among some members for league cricket at a suitable level.



*The Abinger 2nd XI in 2009*

Back Row: D. Ayling, D. Williams, S. Hollingshead, J. Wakeford  
Middle Row: D. Colebrook, M. Philip-Smith, B. Shaw, N. Van-Pelt, J. Stonehill (Umpire)  
Front Row: S. Stennett, N. Corker, R. Fiderfin

Accordingly officers met with representatives of the Surrey Villages League and, as a result, in 1988 Abinger was invited to join.

This early foray into League Cricket was not too successful but in 1996 Abinger were confirmed as full members of the league which the team has subsequently won twice.

Of equal importance is the Club's success in winning the League's Sportsman Trophy on a number of occasions. With success in the League and friendly matches for both 1st XI and 2nd XI , the Club continues to provide cricket of an appropriate standard for all from the local area who want to play.

The ground has continued to improve year after year thanks to the enthusiasm and skill of members and investment in modern machinery. In recent years recognition has come from The Surrey Playing Fields Association (Best Cricket Ground) and a place in the top ten of Britain's Best Village Cricket Grounds competition by The Daily Telegraph. Two very worthy tributes.

### *THE CRICKET CLUB BENEFITS FROM THE SPORTS CLUB EXPANSION*

ABINGER SPORTS CLUB continued to develop over the next few years. A Badminton Club was set up in 1982, playing in the village hall but ceased when the leading light emigrated to New Zealand in the late eighties.

A Bridge Club flourished for a few years before closing down but the Big Band and Jazz Club still meets every month in the Pavilion.

By 1990 architect Graham Locke was able to move forward with his long term building improvements to the Clubhouse. A substantial extension was built for table tennis and social events; dressing rooms and ablution areas were enlarged.

Much needed additional storage areas for catering supplies and ground maintenance machinery were completed in the next few years and improved lighting and central heating were installed.



Yet another Club member, builder Michael Cuthbert, undertook responsibility for all this work and the final result is a fine Clubhouse which sits well in this beautiful village environment.



*The Presidents Match in Play, 2011*

A tennis court was built in 1984 and a second added in 1992 thanks to great help with ground levelling and earth moving arranged by cricket member Stewart Stennett. After a very promising start with leagues, ladders and knock-out tournaments the Tennis Club relapsed into a few regular “fours” playing at regular weekly times. Keep Fit sessions were held intermittently over many years and are still running today (2013).

The Club is in the centre of the Village, is part of the Village and is used by locals and friends as the Village Club at weekends.

In 1998 the Club lost one of it’s longest serving members when Harry Mockford passed away. His membership encompassed almost half a century. In this history we have recorded his contribution in leading the

building of Pavilions in 1952, 1962 and 1978 but he is also remembered as Club Captain, Chairman and, in later years, President. A fine example of loyalty to a Club he so loved.

In 2008 the Club lost another much valued friend when Freddie Triggs died at the great age of 100. He had joined the Club when moving to Abinger in the early 1970's and served variously as treasurer, 2nd XI Captain and President (8 years). He played his last match after his 80th birthday. Behind the scenes Freddie was a most generous benefactor, his final gift to the Sports Club was the excellent terrace to the front of the Clubhouse where his ashes rest beneath a commemorative flagstone.



*FREDDIE TRIGGS  
Patron of Abinger Sports Club  
On the occasion of his 100th Birthday  
25th May 2008*

## *CONCLUSION*

In compiling this history we have become aware of the very many individuals who, at various times, have made significant contributions to the welfare of Abinger Cricket Club but it has not been feasible to name them all. There have also been events not included here which readers may feel were worthy of mention. In all cases we have tried to give the best overall picture and where making suppositions as to dates and events we have made best use of the information available.

## *AT THE START OF THE 2013 SEASON*

The Cricket Club now has a very long memory indeed. From earliest days when rudimentary cricket was played on the Abinger Roughts, to the support of Lord Farrer and his ground at Abinger Hall; through inter-village rivalry which continues to this very day; play ceasing throughout two World Wars when, no doubt, some members were lost forever; the upheaval of developing a new ground; the ongoing support of Bob Newman and Abinger residents and the Farrer and Evelyn families in particular; the challenge of creating the Sports Club and building a new Pavilion and the excitement of a match against New Zealand. Throughout these many long years it has been the members' love of cricket, their enthusiasm and willingness to work for the Club that have prevailed.

With the firm base of the Sports Club and security of land ownership the future seems assured for the cricketers of Abinger.

Mike Woods and Geoff Dunn  
June, 2013

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# ABINGER CRICKET CLUB

## 2013



*The Saturday XI vs Kingston Methodists  
July 2013*



# THOMAS HENRY FARRER

Circa 1865



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