

from the branches

newcastle



Hunter cricket legends (l to r) Graham Corling, Arthur Morris, Robert Holland, Gary Gilmour and Rick McCosker.

Arthur hit them for six at the legends' dinner

One of the last remaining Test Cricket Invincibles, 82-year-old Arthur Morris stole the show at the Newcastle Branch's Hunter Cricket Legends Dinner held at South Newcastle Leagues Club on October 30 last year.

Arthur joined Rick McCosker, Gary Gilmour, Graham Corling and Bob Holland on stage as the guests of honour at the dinner and had the audience both enthralled and in stitches as he answered the questions of Master of Ceremonies, NBN Sports Editor, Michael Rabbitt, with a little help from his "batting partner", wife Judith.

The timing of Arthur and Judith was so good, some members of the audience likened them to the late George Burns and Gracie Allen at the height of their careers.

High on Arthur's long list of wonderful cricket memories is his recollection of what happened when the great Sir Donald Bradman played his last test innings.

It was at The Oval on August 15, 1948, and Sir Don was bowled second ball for a duck by leg spinner W.E. "Eric" Hollies – four runs short of a test batting average of 100.

Arthur told his audience at the dinner how he had recounted the story of Bradman's duck many years later to a group of businessmen.

He told the businessmen how you could have heard a pin drop for several minutes when both the players and the crowd were stunned by the dismissal.

One of the businessmen had asked: "You were there, were you?"

Arthur replied in the affirmative and the man then asked where he was in the ground.

The former test opener replied: "Up the other end."

According to Arthur, the newspapers the day following Sir Don's last test batting appearance were filled with accounts of the history-making duck.

"I was run out for 196 and hardly rated a mention," he lamented.

Another fond memory was the occasion in July the same year at Headingley, when England set Australia 345 minutes to get 404 second innings runs to win on the last day of the fourth test match.

Arthur and Sir Don put on 301 runs in 217 minutes in a magnificent second wicket partnership.

When Arthur was out for 182, Australia needed only another 46 runs to win and they got them.

Neil Harvey hit the winning runs and Bradman remained 173 not out.

It remains the best performance ever on the last day of an Ashes test match, made even more meritorious by the badly worn state of the pitch.

Here are some of the other memories recounted on that very memorable night.

- Rick McCosker: The day he batted with a broken jaw in the Centenary Test in Melbourne in March, 1977, to help Rod Marsh to his century and to help Australia to repeat history and win by 45 runs. Rick told his audience he felt any Australian playing test cricket for his country would have done the same thing. Arthur Morris was quick to disagree and described Rick's innings as "an act of great courage." We all agreed.

- Gary Gilmour: The day Gary virtually won his first one-day match against England on his own on the 1976 tour of England. Gary also had some interesting comments about curfews imposed by Aussie captains. According to "Gus", Ian Chappell's test curfew was 10 am at the ground on match day.

- Graham Corling: His triumphant duels with Geoffrey Boycott during his tour of England in 1964.

- Bob Holland: The January day in 1985 when Bob took six wickets for 54 in the first innings of the fifth test against the West Indies at the SCG to pave the way for an historic victory by Australia – the Windies' first loss in 29 matches. Bob went on to take 10 wickets for the match, re-launching Australia's mastery of spin.

The Hunter's other two test cricket legends, Doug Walters and John Watkins, couldn't make it to the dinner but the Newcastle Branch hopes to get them along to a similar tribute night at some later stage.

Len takes Parkie down memory lane

Last year's edition of The Taverner made its way to a very distinguished dinner table in London not long after its publication.

Our very own Hunter vigneron legend, Len Evans, was tickled pink by our Page Four "Memory Lane" photograph showing him with other members of the "Ballroom Cricket Team" which featured in the very first Taverner in 1985.

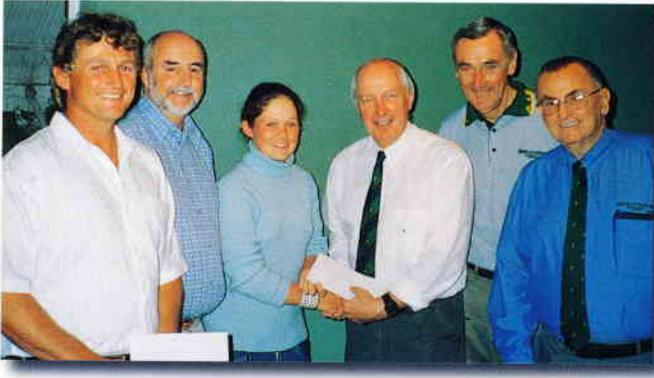
So much so that Len decided to take it to London to rekindle the memories of another person in that photograph, none other than Michael Parkinson.

Len dropped us the following line in June last year:

"Thank you so very much for The Taverner. I really enjoyed seeing the old shot and it brought back some memories. I shall take it with me to England next month since I'm having dinner with Parkie. Pity that Hogan bloke didn't come to much."

Other personalities in that photograph included Paul Hogan, Ron Barassi, Tony Greig (now Sydney Branch President), Frank Tyson (the first editor of The Taverner), John Meillon, Alan Davidson, Jimmy Hannan, Gamini Goonesena, Brian Taber, Barry Knight, Graham Corling and Bobby Simpson.





Junior Taverner Corinne Hall receives her award from Newcastle Chairman, Professor Saxon White at the Golf Day dinner. The other Junior Taverner Matthew Frith was unable to attend but his award was received on his behalf by his Belmont club captain Steve Clarkson and President Peter Barnett (pictured left). Looking on are Hunter Academy of Sport Executive Officer Ken Clifford and Chairman Warren Evans who are both on the Taverners committee.

Junior taverners on the representative trail

Two 17 year old Lake Macquarie cricketers, who have already represented Northern NSW and NSW, are this year's Newcastle Branch Junior Taverners.

Matthew Frith, of Redhead, and Corinne Hall, of Gateshead, were awarded their scholarships at the Branch's highly successful annual golf day dinner on January 11.

Matthew, an outstanding opening bat, has played first grade for the strong Belmont Club for the past two seasons and this year was selected in the Northern NSW Country Colts Under 21 team to play in the final NSW Country Colts trial.

His selection in the Northern NSW team followed outstanding displays for the Newcastle Colts side.

Matt was a member of the Newcastle team that won the Bradman Cup in the NSW Under 16 competition last season.

He was away playing a representative match at the time of the dinner and his Belmont first grade captain, Steve Clarkson, and the President of the Belmont Club, Peter Barnett, accepted his award for him.

Corinne, a right hand bat and off spin bowler, was a member of the NSW Under 19 team which won the Australian Under 19 championships in Tasmania this season.

She travels to Sydney each weekend to play for Bankstown in the Sydney women's competition.

Both Matt and Corinne are members of the Hunter Academy of Sport Cricket squad.

The Branch's Golf day, held at the beautiful Newcastle Golf Club at Fern Bay, was another outstanding success.

The main trophy for the best net score went to a team led by the Branch President, former Wallaby, Professor Saxon White, and containing low markers Sue Wilson (4) and Kent Driver (5) and John Wilson.

Sue, a long serving executive for the Newcastle Women's Golf Association, also took out the women's longest drive trophy.

Other women's trophy winners were Taverners' stalwarts, Peta Moore and Mary Egerton.

A \$10,000 hole in one prize, donated by long time Taverners supporter Garry Dowling, was not won.



Golden Oldie cricket team members and their wives at the Golf Day.

Other trophies were donated by Fay and Brian McGuigan (McGuigan Wines), Bruce Tyrrell (Tyrrells Wines), Allan Northey (Tamburlaine Wines), Wendy and Peter Smith and Club Professional, Jason Laws.

Jason was awarded this year's President's Trophy for his continuous support of the Branch.

Secretary-Treasurer, Kevin McDonald, again did a great job helping organize the event.



The Chairman with lady winners at the Newcastle Golf Day. (From l to r) Sue Wilson, Peta Moore and Mary Egerton

Our taverners are older but more golden

Lord's Taverners in Australia will be represented at the World Golden Oldies Cricket Festival for the third time next September.

The Newcastle Branch will again field a team in the Festival – to be held between September 4 and 11 on Queensland's Sunshine Coast.

The same Branch fielded teams at Rotorua in 2000 and Vancouver in 2002.

This year's side will again be led by former test leg spin legend, Bob "Dutchy" Holland who was also in charge of the two previous teams.

Other members of this year's "touring party" will be Col and Irene Rogers, Vic and Meg Levi, their son Scott, Vic's brother Royce Levi, Ken and Alan Hoff, Alan and Pam Squire, Roger and Cathie Black, Professor John and Margaret Fryer, Doug and Sue Duncan, Jim Spencer senr, Jim Spencer junr and Vic Cook.

The 12 players' ages average around 60 and only Bob Holland, Vic Cook and Roger Black are still playing grade cricket.

The oldest member of the team is 70-year-old Royce Levi, a former NSW Country wicketkeeper and Petersham first grader. The youngest are Scott Levi, an ABC radio announcer on the Central Coast and Jim Spencer junr who has just returned to the mainland after selling his holiday units on Norfolk Island.

More than 70 teams from around the world including sides from England, the West Indies, Florida, New Zealand and even Hollywood are expected to take part in the 40-overs competition.

Our team will be based at the Festival headquarters, the Outrigger Resort at Mooloolaba.

Well, somebody has to do it!



Newcastle Branch Taverners on tour in Vancouver, Canada in 2002.

Cassie's wish made her a star

By Vic Levi

This is a story about the courage and dedication of a disabled 15 year old girl. Her fightback epitomizes the kind of spirit which Lord's Taverners around Australia support and encourage as we seek to give all young people a sporting chance.

Just over 18 months ago, 15 year old wheelchair-bound Cassie Brown made a wish that one day she would be able to swim with dolphins.

Cassie's wish was granted by the Starlight Foundation and that swim with the dolphins, at Coffs Harbour Porpoise World, gave her new hope and a new life.

Cassie, who lives in the Newcastle suburb of Black Hill, has cerebral palsy. But that dolphin swim inspired her to leave her wheelchair to learn the skills of swimming.

She started training and on November 16, 2002, won four events at the NSW Sports Council for the Disabled swimming meet.

Her times were good enough to get her into the NSW team to contest the national games for the junior disabled and in June last year, she won three gold medals and set two games records at the championships held in Adelaide.

Swimming in the S4 category, she won gold in the 50m freestyle and the 50m and 100m backstroke events.

Despite the strong competition, she broke the games records in both her backstroke events.

Now she is training four days a week in the hope that she can gain a spot in the Australian Paralympic team.

And with her will and determination, we are backing her to make it.

Cassie is one of the two Hunter Academy of Sport athletes awarded annual scholarships by the Newcastle Branch of the Lord's Taverners last year.

The other recipient is 15 year old Brett Peterson, a highly talented cricket allrounder from Doyalson, on the NSW Central Coast.

An offspinner-batsman, Brett has played representative cricket on the Central Coast from Under 11s to Under 15s and plays first grade with Doyalson.

He was a member of the NSW Emerging Blues Under 13 Squad and was recently picked in the Central Coast Under 16 representative team.



Cassie Brown with her dolphins.



Scholarship winners Brett Peterson and Cassie with Branch Chairman Vic Levi.