



# THE PRIMARY CLUB

The cricketers' charity for the blind and partially sighted



Members' Newsletter Golden Jubilee Edition April 2005



# GOLDEN JUBILEE DINNER

Photo: Patrick Esagar



Richie Benaud  
PCA Patron and 12th man

The Nursery Pavilion  
Lord's Ground  
St John's Wood  
London NW8 8QN

Monday, 18 July 2005  
7pm for 7.30pm

### Speakers:

**DEREK UNDERWOOD MBE**

**(Kent and England), Primary Club Patron**

**MIKE BRACE OBE**

**Chairman, British Paralympic Association, Primary Club Trustee**

**RICHIE BENAUD OBE**

**(New South Wales and Australia), 12th Man and Patron, Primary Club of Australia**

**Tickets: £55** Husbands, wives, partners and friends all welcome.

**Dress: Lounge suits**

**To apply for tickets, complete the enclosed application form *as soon as possible*.  
First come, first served!**

The MCC have kindly agreed to open the NatWest Media Centre to the first 100 Primary Club members and their guests attending the dinner. If you would like to see the most recent, award-winning addition to the home of cricket, please fill in the box on the application form.

## MAIN EVENT OF THE JUBILEE YEAR!

### ENGLAND V AUSTRALIA

Forget the contest this summer between two teams led by Messrs Vaughan and Ponting.

The match that really matters is:

The Primary Club  
(Capt: Derek Underwood)

v

The Primary Club of Australia  
Wednesday 20 July 2005



Derek Underwood  
Primary Club Patron

Beckenham Cricket Club  
Foxgrove Road  
Beckenham, Kent

**COME & SUPPORT YOUR CLUB!**

Admission by £10 donation  
(includes entry into draw for 2  
tickets to Lord's Test)

**Evening Barbecue**

# Represent the Club

The Primary Club is looking for volunteers to represent the Club in every region of the UK. The job will involve:

- making contact with cricketers at every level from village to the county team: raising funds and awareness of the Club; recruiting members
- making contact with local press and broadcasting organisations
- representing the Club when receiving large donations or handing over grant cheques to schools or Clubs.

If you would like to find out more about this new and exciting development in The Primary Club, please contact:

**Roger Johnson**

**10 Beresford Hall, St James Park, Long Ditton  
Surrey KT6 5RS**

**Tel: 020 8786 6279 Mobile: 07801 699107**

**Email: [recruitment@primaryclub.org](mailto:recruitment@primaryclub.org)**

## YOUR DONATION COUNTS!

*When you are making your annual donation, remember this is the Golden Jubilee of The Primary Club. Please be as generous as possible and help to make this a record year. So many blind sports men, women and children around the country REALLY NEED our help.*

## 50 years on...

On 31 July 1955, four young members of Beckenham Cricket Club, in Kent, spent the evening in the bar consoling themselves after wretched performances with the bat earlier in the day.

What does an Englishman do in a crisis? Form a club and devise a tie. That was the easy part.

There was a poster on the wall of the bar 'Support F R Brown's Fund for Blind Cricketers'.

After another pint, the four decided that The Primary Club should make contributions to the charity of the recent England captain.

Whether the profits were drunk away or spent on the dogs we shall never know, but by 1963 the Club had only raised £46 for the F R Brown Fund.

### CHANGE

Change came with the arrival of the first Hon Sec, Charles Langford, in 1963. He transformed what was almost a joke into a serious charity. He enlisted the support of some great broadcasters: Rex Alston, Peter West and, in particular, Brian Johnston, who

talked about the Club on BBC radio. The Club started to grow, fast.

Later Hon Secs, Leslie Harris (1971-85), Mike Thomas (1985-96), Robert Fleming (1996-2004), and the present incumbent, Chris Larlham, have developed the Club so that, in 2004, grants to clubs and schools for the blind were £180,000.

**Over the 50 years of its existence, Primary Club grants to clubs and schools for the blind have totalled £1,778,673.**

The Club is now changing from a small to medium-sized charity and more people are becoming involved. The Club has been fortunate in finding some very able volunteers



to take charge of fund-raising, recruitment and the website. Recently, a group of young and startlingly bright members have formed a media group. The Primary Club owes a lot to the great British tradition of volunteering. This idiosyncratic charity has, for 50 years, survived

on the generosity of its members, who have raised money by every possible means, from climbing mountains to bungee-jumping and selling anything from second-hand books to horse manure.

And what other charity depends on failure to succeed?

## Mike Sheeres

It is with great regret that we report the death of Mike Sheeres, a trustee and founder member of The Primary Club.

He was one of the four young men who, 50 years ago, decided to form the Club after a poor performance with the bat. Typically Mike, who was primarily a bowler with few batting pretensions, realised something useful could come from his misfortune.

When Mike retired 10 years ago, after a lifetime in the wine trade, he devoted himself to a variety of activities, all for the good of other people.

But The Primary Club was closest to his heart. He was involved in everything, from

major issues of policy to the most routine tasks.

Recently he worked with the Royal London Society for the Blind on planning their new canal boat (see page 8). During busy times, he was just as happy opening envelopes or wrapping mugs.

Above all, he was the most wonderful friend and companion. Charm is often skin

deep, but with Mike Sheeres what you saw was the man – gentle, thoughtful, always courteous and very funny. The best kind of Englishman.

The Primary Club will miss him greatly. Our thoughts are with his wife Tessa and their family.



**Goalball**

A grant from The Primary Club paid for coaching fees and new equipment at the **RNIB Vocational College** in Loughborough (see picture right).

Goalball is the only game designed solely for the visually impaired.

Players, defending a goal 9 metres wide, hurl themselves towards a ball, guided by the sound of a bell inside the ball.

The RNIB team, who have only been playing for a few months, have recently risen to sixth in the national league of 20 goalball teams around the UK. Peter Saunders, the coach on the right of the picture, is a tennis player at nearby Loughborough University.

# HOW YOUR MONEY



The football school was part of a week of summer activities attended by 28 boys and girls from the London area, aged between 7 and 18.

When Ryan first came to Arsenal he was being bullied at school, had little confidence and was not wanted in the school team. His limited sight meant he had real problems controlling the ball.

Two summer sessions with Arsenal coaches have turned Ryan's life around.

He now represents Arsenal in the British Blind Sport Junior Five-a-side Competition – and the bullying has stopped.

**Football coaching**

The young man with the ball in the centre of the picture (below) is 11 year old Ryan Jones.

He suffers from nystagmus, an eye condition which means he cannot focus clearly for any length of time. He calls it 'wobbly eye'.

Last summer he attended football coaching at Arsenal, organised by the **London Sports Forum** and paid for by a grant from The Primary Club.



**Blind riders group**

A grant to **British Blind Sport** is the first the Club has made to support blind riders.

Bridge '04 was a four-day residential course at Pittern Stables in Kinton, Warwickshire. Twelve visually impaired riders were given instruction in dressage to prepare them to compete on equal terms with sighted riders.

Shouted instructions tell blind riders which of eight letters, spread around the ring, they are passing. This is vital in dressage so that riders know when to walk or trot and when to turn.

The picture below shows Anne Bennett riding 14 year old Billy who, at first, was more relaxed than she was. Anne is totally blind and it was the first time she had been on a horse in 20 years. Before long, all her old confidence returned.



and Robert has very little sight.

They are all aged nine and because of severe and complex disabilities in addition to their visual impairment, they have real problems communicating.

Regular music sessions with the conga drums play an important part in the boys' lives.

Although they do not speak to each other, they communicate through the drums. One boy will play something and another will respond.

It is a short and simple form of communication – almost like a conversation through the drums.



**Swimming pool**

The swimming pool at **St Vincent's School for Blind and Partially Sighted Children** was over 30 years old and badly in need of refurbishment.

A grant from The Primary Club has given the pool a new lease of life. Swimming is very important to visually impaired children.

Being able to thrash around in the water gives them a sense of freedom and an ability to compete on an equal footing with sighted children.

Pictured are Hannah Astbury (l) and Ashley

**Conga drums**

A grant from the Club paid for a set of conga drums for the **Joseph Clarke School**.

In the picture in the next column are (l-r) Harry, Robert and Andy. Harry and Andy are totally blind



## No booze is good booze

The policy of Warwickshire County Cricket Club not to allow alcoholic drinks into Edgbaston for Test Matches has proved to be a bonus for The Primary Club.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Test against the West Indies at Edgbaston last summer, over 1,400 cans of beer and lager, 250 bottles of beer and 100 bottles of wine were confiscated.

The office of Warwickshire Chief Executive, Dennis Amiss contacted the Hon Sec and said if he could arrange to have it

collected, the illicit booze was ours.

One of our members, Charles Wollaston, who lives near the ground, came to the rescue. It took Charles and his brother Stephen three trips each, in big estate vehicles, to transport it.

Charles is now busy giving the booze away in return for suitable donations to the Club. So far these total over £1,000.

Thank you, Warwickshire.



## ...But our booze is best

The Hon Sec (pictured above, left) forced himself to endure a morning of tasting delicious wines, all for the benefit of members.

With him are MD Keith Calman (pictured above centre) and retail manager Christopher Elliott Lockhart, of Berkmann Wine Cellars, who supply the Club's wines.

They chose wines for the Club's offer to members to celebrate the Golden

Jubilee year – the results are spectacular.

*For details of this very special offer, see the enclosed leaflet.*



## The Media Group



The august figure of the Hon Sec, surrounded by members of the Club's Media Group, newly formed to handle press and public relations.

The Media Group is one of several current initiatives to involve members in the running of the Club.

The Group are (l-r) Allan Guild, Luke Living, Paul Doyle and press officer Helen Cleaves, The Primary Club's answer to Max Clifford.

## Famous Primaries

**Patrick McGahan writes:** "July 27<sup>th</sup> was a glorious day and I was really looking forward to captaining the Brook House and Highbrook v Jeremy Blanchard XI, always one of our most enjoyable fixtures. Both my sons were playing and my daughter Jessica had been bribed into preparing the match teas.

"It all started to go wrong when, as I was about



Max, Harry and Patrick McGahan

to leave home for the game, Jessica casually announced that she had 'battered the malt loaf with mayonnaise'.

"I won the toss, decided to bat, and was a little concerned when Max, my 17 year old son, was bowled by an in-swinging yorker which removed his middle stump first ball.

### SECOND DISASTER

"Next in at No. 3, I decided that our run rate could do with being upped slightly, to give us a fighting total. My selfless first ball was an attempted 'Flintoff' but took the finest of edges to the wicket keeper.

"My 14 year old Harry was next in and, as we crossed at mid wicket, I

distinctly remember telling him to play himself in and to try and avoid the hat trick.

### CATASTROPHE

"Harry drove his first ball straight at silly mid off who, despite taking evasive action, managed to catch the ball in the folds of his jumper and only some seconds later in his grateful hands.

"So there we have it. The McGahan family contribution at teatime was 0 for 3 in 3 balls and two large plates of mayonnaise-covered malt loaf!

"Curiously, not one person noticed that it wasn't really butter."

*The McGahan family's joint application for membership was duly accepted by the trustees.*

**Email addresses...**  
**Please fill in your email address on the donation and order form. It will be a great help to the Club. The address will NOT be given to anyone else.**

# From the Hon Sec....

Dear Member

My first full year as your new Hon Sec has ended on a very sad note with the death of Mike Sheeres, one of our trustees and one of the three surviving founder members. A full tribute appears elsewhere. As the "new boy" I didn't get to know Mike all that well, but he was one of the most delightful men I have ever met.

The year's results have been disappointing, with a 22% drop in the amount of money available for grants. The fall of some £24,000 in donations is wholly attributable to the absence, this year, of a number of substantial "one off" donations (such as legacies) made in the second half of last year and totalling £25,000, compared with £1,000 this year. The dinner produced a net £14,626 in 2003-04. Rather more disturbing is a significant drop in the recruitment of new members – down from about 500 to 333 as I write. Please make good use of the membership application form enclosed. The apparently significant increase in administration costs is accounted for by the fact that the Club now pays for the printing and posting of this newsletter, an expense hitherto borne by the Royal London Society for the Blind.

On a happier note, this year the Club celebrates its Golden Jubilee. We have a dinner at Lord's on 18<sup>th</sup> July, to which I hope you will give your full support – I am looking forward to hearing Richie Benaud "in the flesh". Full details appear in a separate insert. The Club will also be playing a match against the Australian Primary Club at Beckenham on 20<sup>th</sup> July; the side will be captained by our Patron, Derek Underwood.

Yours sincerely



Chris Larlham

## GOLDEN SPONSOR

**NCG Ltd, a London based broking firm specialising in insurance and risk solutions, have generously agreed to sponsor the Club's Golden Jubilee year. Their grant of £20,000 is the largest single grant the Club has received. Thank you, NCG.**



### THE PRIMARY CLUB FORECAST RESULT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005

	2004/5 (forecast) £	2003/4 (actual) £
Joining subscriptions and donations	117,000	141,318
Proceeds of sales of merchandise	18,000	27,286
Tax claim under Gift Aid	25,500	24,700
Dinner tickets and other receipts	-	28,553
Interest receivable	1,500	1,375
<b>Total income</b>	<b>162,000</b>	<b>223,232</b>
Cost of ties and brooches	(1,500)	(3,041)
Cost of merchandise sold	(11,500)	(17,155)
Dinner costs	-	(13,927)
Publicity and administration costs	(16,000)	(9,406)
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>133,000</b>	<b>179,703</b>
Surplus from earlier years	8,145	8,442
Adjustment thereto	2,819	
	143,964	188,145
<b>Donations (details below)</b>	<b>137,473</b>	<b>180,000</b>
Surplus to carry forward	6,491	8,145

Note: Copies of the Club's full accounts can be obtained from the Honorary Treasurer.

### 2005 DONATIONS TO SCHOOLS AND CLUBS FOR THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED

Birmingham Sports Club	2004 season expenses		2,000
Blatchington Court Trust Sussex	Residential camp		3,600
British Blind Sport	Archery	4,800	
	Athletics	6,788	
	Cricket KO Final at Lord's	5,050	16,638
Joseph Clarke School, Walthamstow	Music therapy	5,120	
	Skiing	2,000	7,120
Derbyshire Assoc for the Blind	Swimming pool hire		800
Eastern Vipers CC	2005 season expenses		2,000
English Blind Golf Assoc	Matchplay Championship		2,500
HSBP Henshaws, Harrogate	Swimming and hydrotherapy pools		5,000
The Island Trust, Devon	Sailing holidays 2005		6,000
Kent Assoc for the Blind	Transport costs		400
Kirklees Education Service, Yorks	Sport and Recreation aids		6,043
Leeds Sports and Social Club	Various sports tournaments		4,180
Linden Lodge School, London	Hoists and tracks for pool (2 of 3)		8,500
London Community Cricket Association	Cricket coaching and expenses		3,000
London Sports Club	2005 season expenses		2,000
London Sports Forum	Summer Camps	5,750	
	Goalball	1,400	7,150
Metro	Cricket	2,000	
	Lawn bowls	2,000	4,000
National Blind Children's Society	Activity holidays and family weekends	4,400	
The Outlook Trust, Yorks	Sailing weekends		2,500
Pennine Bowling Club	Winter bowling sessions 2004/05		2,400
RLSB (Dorton House)	Summer schools		20,250
Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind	Bowling etc	1,252	
	Allotment expenses	500	1,752
South Wales Dragons CC	2005 season expenses		2,000
Sussex Sharks VICC	2005 season expenses		2,000
Sutton VI Swimming Group, Surrey	Pool hire	1,440	
	Coaches	900	
	First Aid training	500	2,840
Visibility (Glasgow & West of Scotland)	Tenpin bowling		5,000
Warwickshire VICC	Start up costs and 2005 season expenses		3,000
West of England School Exeter	Upgrading playground		6,000
Worcester Royals VICC	Start up costs and 2005 season expenses		4,400
			<b>£137,473</b>

## Your newsletter

The editor welcomes stories from members of unusual primaries or other cricketing disasters for next year's newsletter.

## Thank you!

The Club is indebted to Nicci Westgarth and Sam Wells for designing this newsletter; also to Maureen and Derek Rowlands for packing the newsletter and enclosures.

# Introducing the Golden Duck



**Golden Duck, a 56-foot canal boat, has been handed over by the builders to the Royal London Society for the Blind. RLSB staff worked closely with the builders to incorporate many special features for visually impaired young passengers.**

The cost of £93,850 was covered by a grant from The Primary Club.

The *Duck* has 12 bunks for children, carers and crew on overnight trips.

There are special hoists in the cabin to help severely disabled children into bunks, a roll-in bathroom for wheelchairs and foldaway desks so that the boat can become a floating classroom.



*Golden Duck* has already been a great success and given a lot of pleasure to young people, aged 4-18, from all over the region.

Jude Thompson, head teacher of Dorton House School, says: "The lives of visually impaired children are often more boring than their sighted peers. For them, activities outside school are very limited.

"Part of our role here is to put some excitement and fun into their lives, which can be rather flat. The *Duck* certainly does that."



A hoist raises the foredeck from cabin level to meet a ramp for wheelchairs.

