

# THE PRIMARY CLUB

*The cricketers' charity for the blind and partially sighted*



## Robert Fleming 1933-2021

**R**obert Fleming, who died in February aged 87, was a much-loved and hugely influential Honorary Secretary and then Chairman of the Primary Club.

Robert grew up in Australia and yet, fittingly for a future Primary Club stalwart, had strong Beckenham connections. His paternal grandfather had been the minister at Beckenham Baptist Church and when Robert settled in the UK in 1959, his Beckenham family welcomed him warmly, as did a local cricket team, the Jolly Rogers. Robert the cricketer was described in the 1997 edition of this Newsletter as "a purveyor of vicious in-swing bowling off the wrong foot. The result was an occasional wicket and a replacement left hip".

One of Robert's team-mates in the Jolly Rogers was Mike Thomas, then the Hon Sec of the Primary Club. Over

the years Robert and Mike discussed the possibility of Robert maybe taking over when Mike, and his wife Toni, wanted to step down. The timing was fortuitous. Robert's retirement from the world of television production in 1996 (he produced a number of acclaimed documentaries for ITV) coincided with Mike retiring due to ill health. Adrian Thomas, Mike and Toni's son and a current Trustee, describes Robert as

**He was passionate about the ability of sport to change lives. Through his leadership and commitment the range and quality of sporting opportunities for the vision-impaired have dramatically expanded and improved"**



Spreading the word: (above left) at the Club's Jubilee Dinner at Lord's in 2005; (above right) fund-raising with Marion; (below, l to r) with Hon Sec Chris Larlham, founder member Keith Patterson, and Patron Derek Underwood



"one of those rare people who had the priceless gift of making you feel special".

From 2004 to 2008, Robert was our chairman. With his wife Marion, he brought energy, wisdom and innovation to The Primary Club, including the introduction of a range of merchandise. Fellow Trustee, Mike Brace CBE, says of Robert: "He was passionate about the ability of sport to change lives. Through his leadership and commitment to The Primary Club the range and quality of sporting opportunities for the vision-impaired have dramatically expanded and improved. He was a key instigator and organiser of the legendary Primary Club dinners, which were graced by an incredible range of speakers such as Mike Brearley, Richie Benaud, Christopher Martin-Jenkins and Sir John Major. His sense of fun, friendship and support will be greatly missed."



**From the editor**  
**John Stern**

Welcome to the 2021 Primary Club Newsletter, which has a slightly bitter-sweet tone to it. You will notice the Newsletter is a bit shorter than normal, which is a function of the crushing effect that the pandemic had on the activities that your generous donations help to fund. As in every other aspect of our lives, we hope normal service is resumed very shortly. And sadly, earlier this year, The Primary Club lost one of its greatest champions, Robert Fleming. You will see our tribute to him on the front page.

You can contact me by email: [editor@primaryclub.org](mailto:editor@primaryclub.org); please follow us on Twitter [@ThePrimaryClub](https://twitter.com/ThePrimaryClub); and visit the website [www.primaryclub.org](http://www.primaryclub.org)



## The curse of Rule 5 (c)

The curse of Rule 5 (c) has struck again! The rule, under which members are asked to **add** £2 to their annual donation for each primary achieved by an England player in a home Test, is invoked by (and confirmed officially to the Primary Club by *Test Match Special* scorer Andrew Samson):

- **Z Crawley** c Holder b Chase, 1st Innings v West Indies, Old Trafford, 16 July, 2020
- **CR Woakes** c Hope b Roach, 1st Innings v West Indies, Old Trafford, 17 July, 2020



Run 'em up: Si Ledwith and the in-form Matt Dean of Metro cross for a single

# Where competition meets friendship

**Dave Gavrilovic reports on the resumption of blind cricket, which didn't take a place at all in 2020**

**A**fter a 20-month enforced break, blind cricket finally restarted in late May with plenty of excitement and relief in evidence.

In the BCEW National League Division One, defending champions Northants Steelbacks continued where they had left off in 2019 with a convincing 87-run win away to Lancashire Lions.

The other Division One clash saw Somerset VICC hold out for a draw away to London Metro. Metro declared at the halfway stage on 227 for 3 as England's Matt Dean thrashed 159 not out.

On the first weekend in June, three of the four quarter finals of the BBS Primary Club Heindrich Swanepoel Memorial Cup took place. Another Matt Dean century helped London Metro to victory over Somerset (for whom Rob Crisp also scored 114) in a repeat of the 2019 final. Northants, Sussex Sharks and Lancashire Lions also progressed.

At the time of writing, only eight teams had started their competitive matches again but a dozen more will be involved throughout the summer and almost all

have now started training again, as have the England Men's and UK Women's teams.

While the competitive nature of the cricket remains as strong as ever, observing how pleased everyone is to be back playing, seeing friends from their own team and their opponents, is as pleasing as anything this season.



Good hands: Lancashire's Tahseen Sabir

**THE PRIMARY CLUB FORECAST RESULT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

|                                     | 2020/21<br>£ (forecast) | 019/20<br>£ (actual) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Joining subscriptions and donations | 102,700                 | 108,756              |
| Profit on sale of merchandise       | 720                     | 433                  |
| Tax claim under Gift Aid            | 21,900                  | 21,310               |
| Interest receivable                 | 74                      | 180                  |
| <b>Total income</b>                 | <b>125,394</b>          | <b>130,679</b>       |
| Publicity and administration costs  | (10,312)                | (10,514)             |
| Surplus for the year                | 115,082                 | 120,165              |
| Surplus from earlier years          | 20,874                  | 35,318               |
|                                     | <b>135,956</b>          | <b>155,483</b>       |
| Grants (details right)              | 39,050                  | 134,609              |
| Surplus to carry forward            | <b>96,906</b>           | <b>20,874</b>        |

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

**2021 GRANTS TO CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS FOR THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED**

|                                 |                                    |       |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| Berkshire Stags VICC            | 2021 season expenses               | 1,500 |
| Birmingham Goalball Club        | Goalball                           | 3,000 |
| Bradford & District VICC        | 2021 season expenses               | 1,000 |
| Braille Chess Association       | Chess sets and clocks              | 3,000 |
| British Blind Sport             | Archery                            | 2,400 |
| Cambridge Dons                  | Goalball expenses                  | 2,000 |
| Croydon Vision                  | "Fit & Fun" programme              | 1,300 |
| Devon Bowling Club              | 2021 season expenses               | 1,500 |
| Durham VICC                     | 2020 season expenses               | 2,000 |
| Lancashire Lions VICC           | 2021 season expenses               | 1,000 |
| London Sports Club              | Swimming                           | 500   |
| Merton Sports Club              | Hall hire                          | 1,000 |
| Northants Steelbacks VICC       | 2021 season expenses               | 175   |
| Open Country                    | Club residentials                  | 2,000 |
| Recreational Club for the Blind | Transport costs, rambling weekends | 1,500 |
| SAVI Northwest Merseyside       | Venue hire and equipment           | 2,500 |
| Seashell Trust                  | Trampoline                         | 5,000 |
| Somerset VICC                   | 2021 season expenses               | 150   |
| Surrey VICC                     | 2021 season expenses               | 325   |
| Tandeming Together              | Tandem maintenance & transport     | 3,600 |
| Wavertree CC                    | 2021 season expenses               | 1,600 |
| West Glamorgan Bowls Club       | 2020 season expenses               | 1,500 |
| Yorkshire VICC                  | 2021 season expenses               | 500   |

**£39,050**

## From the Hon Sec...



Dear Member,

Last year's financial results were even better than forecast and income was within £300 of the previous year, which is yet another tribute to those of you who are our regular donors. This newsletter will be received by 5,000 members, of whom only 2,165 donated in the year just ended, 1,231 by standing orders which raised £44,000 – over 40% of our donation income. We have recruited just under 1,500 new members in the last ten years – of whom a high percentage haven't made a single donation since joining. We rely heavily on voluntary donations from our members to support the visually-impaired sports and recreational clubs who need our money so much. We ask members to make at least one donation every three years if they wish to remain on our mailing list, but only 2,750 (55%) have done so in the last three years. If you don't already have a standing order, email me (secretary@primaryclub.org) for a form – or, if you use internet banking, the details you need are 30-91-35, account number 01432381.

Covid has had an even more drastic effect on the recipients of our grants than on sports clubs generally, with grants this year down by over 70% on the previous year – in almost all cases because beneficiaries still have all, or most, of their 2019-20 grant. This has at least built up our reserves, which had fallen heavily in the last five years, to a level which, with your continued generosity, will enable us to maintain a reasonable level of grant provision for a few years.

I am completing this a couple of days after the announcement that 'Freedom Day' has been postponed to 19 July. For those of you looking forward, as I am, to watching cricket in 2021 let's hope for great weather for the last two months of the season.

There is a tribute elsewhere in this issue to my predecessor, Robert Fleming, who died earlier this year. It was Robert who was almost entirely responsible for me being, at 17 years and counting, the longest-serving Hon Secretary of the Club. In spring 2003, I spotted an announcement in an MCC newsletter about the Club's search for a new Hon Secretary. At the time, I was a (not very good) member of the Club, having been recruited by another predecessor, Leslie Harris, after a golden duck playing

for my old boys in a regular fixture at Beckenham. I was (and still am) semi-retired and thought the job shouldn't take up too much time. I emailed my CV to Robert and we arranged, fittingly enough for two retired bowlers, to meet in the Bowlers Bar at Lord's. Before we met, I saw an article in *The Cricketer* that made clear that the Club had moved on since my membership in the late sixties, and that the job of Hon Secretary would be considerably more time-consuming than I had envisaged. His enthusiasm on meeting up was such that any thought of withdrawing my application soon vanished. Robert was too kind to have said so but I have always suspected my application was the only one he received.

Yours sincerely,

*Chris Larlham*

**Chris Larlham**





Inspiration: Stephen Daley (above, second left and above right, third from left in the front row) won 143 caps for England

# Lion of Lancashire

Preston's Stephen Daley has been recognised for his years of service to partially-sighted football

**S**tephen Daley, a leading light in partially-sighted football, received an MBE in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours for services to para football and futsal.

The Partially Sighted Football League (PSFL) is one of our regular beneficiaries and Daley has been a significant figure for many years, retiring recently after winning 143 England caps.

"Stephen started in the PSFL in the 90s and has since developed into such an inspirational player to so many people within the game," says George Ferguson, chairman of the PSFL. "He also has a very personable manner and a wonderful

sense of humour that makes him even more approachable and likeable. I am certain that the England partially-sighted squad will benefit immensely from having him as head coach."

Daley, who is based in Preston, helped England to back-to-back World Cup finals in 2017 and 2019 before retiring to focus on his coaching. He succeeds Ian Bateman with the European Championship on the horizon in December this year and a

World Cup on home soil in Birmingham due in 2023.

The Queen's Birthday Honours announcements were delayed from June until October last year because of the pandemic so Daley had a lengthy period of enforced silence.

"I first found out about it way back in June, and I've had to keep it quiet – the kids didn't even know!" he told the Football Association's website.

**I was just gobsmacked when I heard and I'm chuffed, because it's not something that you play the game to get really. It's as much for the squad and disability football, because we just want to raise the profile of what we're doing."**

## From lockdown hobby to London Marathon

Will Macpherson, the cricket and rugby union correspondent of the *London Evening Standard*, explains how he comes to be running 26 miles to raise money for The Primary Club

I was one of those people who found myself so bored in lockdown that I was suddenly aimlessly sprinting round south London just to fill some time. Until then, running had seemed a necessary evil to replace organised sport, which I had run out of time to be involved in many years earlier. But my lockdown hobby has turned into something I really enjoy, and I was honoured and delighted to be offered The Primary Club's role at the London Marathon this year.

The first weekend of October is moving into view, and I'm realising that I need to put in a bit more than my dashes of a few kilometres

each day. In January, I took part in a charity fitness challenge where I exercised each day and, on the 31st, ran 31km as I took the first step towards marathon distance. Since then, I've done another half-marathon, and am continuing to build up throughout the summer – perhaps including some running to and from cricket grounds as I chase the England team round the country.

Go to this link to sponsor Will and The Primary Club in the 2021 London Marathon, which takes place on Sunday 3 October <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/WillMacpherson2>

