

Interesting discovery of cricket fixture card... FROM 1901!

A chance discovery by Miss Joan Bird of Freshwater East in Pembrokeshire of a piece of cricket memorabilia, the 1901 fixture card for the E H Ebsworth XI, has solved a mystery that has existed since those who were around at the time passed away.

Joan passed the fixture card onto the Cowbridge Cricket Club and immediately it shone a light on a decade for which existed little evidence.

Indeed the information contained on this small card provided the missing piece of information that would have been extremely helpful to the authors of '1840 and all that', the story of the Cowbridge club that was published to mark the 175th anniversary of the first recorded fixture in 1840.

When the book was written it was not clear what cricket had been played by the Cowbridge town club once Harry Ebsworth had opened his new ground and established his sporting and socially high end private XI in 1896.

Once the Rev Owen Jones established the Cowbridge Wanderers Cricket Club in 1906 there are good records but there was a mystery of a missing decade.

What the card tells us is that playing on Mr Ebsworth's fine ground was an Ebsworth second XI which had regular fixtures against local teams. This second XI had not been known of but it would appear to have been those same townfolk who had previously played under the name of Cowbridge.

During the period of the gap in our knowledge they played as the

Ebsworth second XI.

The 1901 second XI fixtures were a real mix. The School, referred to as 'The College' was played on May 23 and the School won. There were matches against such teams as Cardiff Electrics, Cardiff Teachers and the Cardiff Commercial Travellers XI.

Local teams played included Llanharan, Bonviltstone, Llandough and Southerndown, all now sadly defunct.

The 1901 fixture card augments the bits and pieces held by the Cowbridge Cricket Club. Chance discoveries of the sort made by Joan are the lifeblood of creating a picture of the past.

Joan has a strong association with the Cowbridge Cricket Club. It was her father, Bruce who played with his brother Ralph and the Dunns amongst others before the First World War.

Having survived Gallipoli he returned to help revive the club post war. Bruce was always regarded by the late president Colin Adams as the finest wicket keeper Cowbridge ever had but off the field and he was equally effective off the field running a highly successful prize draw for the purchase of sightscreens to enable county cricket to be played at Cowbridge in 1931.

Joan's career took her to Morocco on behalf of the Save the Children fund and for that she was awarded an OBE for her work. On returning to this country Joan spent many years as headteacher of Pembroke Primary School.

If anyone would like to have a look at the cricket club's small but very interesting collection of memorabilia contact Jeffrey Bird on 07976793629.