



**Arundel Castle Cricket Foundation  
2012 Review**

## The Arundel Castle Cricket Foundation 2012

2012 was a most extraordinary year for Great Britain which, by way of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic and Paralympic Games, was briefly the centre of world attention and one in which happy memories, even if slightly damp ones at times, abounded. There was much for us to rejoice in these spectacular summer events which helped unite the nation.

Yet it was far from an easy ride either for athletes or organisers. The joy of 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2005, when news of our successful bid emerged from Singapore, was eclipsed the very next day by the shock and horror of terrorist atrocities on the London Transport system. Bear in mind, too, that in August 2011, only twelve months before the Opening Ceremony, rioting and looting had engulfed parts of the country and especially those areas adjacent to the Olympic Stadium.

Many of the children who visit Arundel each year come from these boroughs: Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Greenwich and Lewisham. Indeed some of them lined the banks of the Thames in pelting rain to salute and cheer the Royal Barge on its way, and who will ever forget the glorious girl singers on top of an adjacent vessel, singing their hearts out, with hair straggling across their faces? The Royal Pageant was inspirational and evoked an atmosphere and spirit which, for years, we have been generating at Arundel.

For me, the Olympic spirit promotes endeavour and struggle but not necessarily conquest. Years of painful training will for many be rewarded by nothing save the knowledge that all effort has been exerted and failure is the norm. We only hear about those few who succeed. So raise a glass to all those who didn't win, for it is the support act that makes competition possible. We salute and admire the likes of **Mo Farah, Jessica Ennis, Bradley Wiggins, Ellie Simmonds** and a host of others but remember that their success would not be possible without thousands of other participants of lesser ability.

That's what we are really all about at Arundel – the champion of the underdog – those many youngsters for whom a normal life is not easy. Speech and understanding is often difficult; sight or hearing imperfect; co-ordination and movement awkward. Last year we set aside 45 days of activity at Arundel for over 600 young, seriously impaired people, handicapped in one way or another. Perhaps it is a natural instinct for us to turn our eyes towards the pretty and well-formed and avert them from the distorted and unsightly. Yet, as the Paralympics progressed, we fast realised we were seeing each one as athletes in their own right, with disability left far behind in the distance. This is our aim at Arundel: to create an environment where impairment goes unnoticed and can share a stage with the lucky ones.



Despite the weather, nothing deterred our **Special Needs Programme**. The children were all entranced by trees, grass upon which they ran about and fell over, the Castle and its gardens, ducks and pheasants. Many of these youngsters come from dysfunctional homes – parents in prison, alcohol, drugs, prostitution – for whom their school life is a merciful release. Lawnmowers, tractors, roller, the cricket pitch itself and the score box are all major features of my guided tour. A highlight for one group was driving through flood water in Bognor and splashing in giant puddles. *‘It’s all fantastic and you’re all fantastic’*, Katie from East London told the staff. *‘Fonominal’*, was a new word which summed up a visit by one school.



The seaside at Littlehampton is another great attraction: fish and shells but no paddling allowed this year! I felt moved to write to *The Times* last May and had my letter published, the text of which follows:

#### *HEALTH & SAFETY GONE MAD*

*Picture the scene yesterday. Littlehampton beach in Sussex. Calm and sparkling sea, 25 degrees, sunny and warm. Eleven children from a special needs school in East London on a visit to the countryside for a 3-day break. Cricket of a sort is played on a sandy beach. I remove my socks and shoes, roll up my trousers and suggest a paddle on the water’s edge to cool off. To my astonishment, I am told by regretful teachers that, owing to health and safety regulations, the children are not allowed to do what children have done for centuries: to dip their toes in the sea, maybe up to their ankles, and experience as an island race this joyous pleasure. What on earth is the world coming to?*

This theme was picked up by **Richard Littlejohn** of *The Daily Mail* and a number of readers made donations to the Foundation as a result.



Several adult groups with disabilities spent time with us too, participating in a variety of activities designed to improve fitness (obesity is something of a problem). 'Table Cricket' and a form of bowls called 'Boccia' have become very popular games. Our objective is to give the strongest possible support to those whose employment and social opportunities are limited and for whom a life on benefits is the norm.



However, amidst these happy occasions, many teachers and schools feel anxious and threatened by Health and Safety requirements and Child Protection issues which the Jimmy Savile revelations have brought into even sharper focus. These are very real concerns but we must not let them inhibit us in our determination to make life better for those who struggle. A day out at Arundel does the children the world of good and nothing is enjoyed more than throwing balls for my terrier, Robert, to chase. Children must not be brought up to be suspicious and fearful but, rather, confident and self-assured. The art, I believe, is to give youngsters the freedom and independence to develop their lives while remaining just close enough to catch them if they fall. We are indebted to **The Cricket Society Trust** for its unstinting support.

Last year, the **Joshua Hayday Helping Hand Trust** gave us wonderful support for those children and young adults whose lives are likely to be all too brief through severely life-limiting conditions. What we try to do, in a very relaxed way and with nurses and carers to help, is to maximise their opportunities and pleasure. Medical and pastoral care is provided by **Chailey Heritage School**, while we at Arundel give pupils a day out including a walk round the Castle gardens, lunch, wheel-chair activities and Boccia, accompanied by the smiles of the children. The staff play cricket of a sort; the children look on from their chairs somewhat bemused. One little boy plays with his musical book, oblivious to all going on around him. They love the Table Cricket games which, with a little help, capture their attention. Lunch is taken in the pavilion or on the terrace; only one child is fed normally, the others internally through tubes, but the atmosphere is a happy one. Photographs all round and a thank you card is signed. These have been special days for special people who, from birth, have been dealt the toughest hand imaginable.





It is now more than 26 years since our Foundation was formed at Arundel. It was inspired by the opportunity to share the beauty and special heritage of a world-famous cricket ground and historic castle with the young and especially those endowed with less advantages than most. Once we had completed our cricket school in 1989, a facility admired by all who use it, we had just about everything we needed to combine a first-class cricket ground with a project that has now benefited many thousands of children, teenagers and young adults. The idea has never been just to teach them how to play cricket but rather, through a variety of games and activities, to broaden outlooks, inspire confidence, teamwork, generosity, goodwill and sportsmanship. Health, education and social skills are right at the top of our agenda.

Throughout last year, children visited us from some of London's most deprived boroughs, many of them close to the Olympic Park. These youngsters had a wonderful time at Arundel, playing games indoors and out, staying away from home – often for the first time – and receiving expert attention in a lovely environment. In all, more than 900 young people came down from London and experienced something vastly different from their inner-city culture. I like to think it was memorable for all of them; no more so than when we took a group of 50 Inner London Borough youngsters to watch an evening T/20 match at Hove between Sussex and Gloucestershire.

Never before had this group seen top cricket teams in action and under floodlights. The ground was full, music was blaring; it was a fine, clear night. Disaster struck as Sussex collapsed initially but, well used to this sort of dilemma, in strode their large overseas player from New Zealand, **Scott Styris**. In just 37 balls, he struck the fastest 100 of the season. Ball after ball flew high into the crowd. The noise was deafening, our party cheered and was captured on television in green and pink wigs. Rarely, if ever, have I watched cricket played amidst such a happy and animated bunch. I even had time to take a group of them to visit the Sky commentary box where **Nasser Hussain** and **Nick Knight** gave them a friendly welcome. Sussex won and autographs were signed. The children loved it and, as they grow up, will probably never forget the experience. I loved it too!

Throughout last summer, the many other events, matches and tournaments were all played with the same robust spirit and the Arundel staff certainly went about their work with that intention. My great friend, **John Sullivan**, who co-ordinates all these activities from the London end, told me after the **Lord's Taverners Wicketz event for Youth Clubs**, *'Trips to Arundel are so well received by both youngsters and adult supervisors that many go on to participate in summer camps and join cricket clubs too.'* That's the sort of thing we like to hear.





Not only did **The Pipemakers' Challenge** open up an opportunity for Inner London teams to play their finals at Arundel, but we were also privileged to host a wonderful match for North and South London boys competing for the **Clem Gibson Memorial Trophy**. This game was a family affair, inspired by our local Arundel MP, **Nick Herbert**, and his sister, **Claire Kasket**, in memory of their grandfather who loved cricket. Both matches were played with great spirit and sportsmanship and gave young, talented players the chance to show their skills in surroundings far removed from London's hustle, bustle and sirens.

It was a joy, too, to welcome **Afghan cricketers** to Arundel for the first time. These young men, all refugees and driven from their homeland by the Taliban, are seeking asylum in Britain. Their vulnerability is acute for they exist on a shoestring. Thanks to the Croydon Social Services, they are cared for until their appeals are heard. But, whatever else, they love their cricket which provides a release and diversion from the reality of their lives. We were delighted to open up Arundel for them and play a small part in their recovery programme by boosting morale.

Since **His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales**, visited Arundel in 1991 to open our cricket school, we have reminded ourselves of this event each year by playing the finals of **The Prince's Trust Trophy** at the Castle ground. For this match we have always concentrated on young adults, mainly on the verge of leaving school, from East London boroughs. Last year was no exception. In a hard-fought contest, **Waltham Forest** beat **Newham** by 14 runs. After the match, I talked to the players about the Olympic Games and asked them for words to describe the events. *'Determination, commitment, exciting, wow, intriguing, emotional and tearful'*. Good words, I thought, from promising but vulnerable youngsters for whom a recession can be pitiless in picking its victims. The sting of unemployment is

never more brutal than amongst the young. The Prince's Trust seeks as its main aim to rebuild hope and so provide encouragement for young people to set up their own businesses. From our early days at Arundel, and through the Prince's Trust's good-will and care, we have been proud to help a large number of young adults to improve their self-confidence and bolster their self-esteem. And it is good to discover now that there are many similar initiatives having an impact. It has come to my notice that the brilliant young violinist, **Nicola Benedetti**, has been helping deprived youngsters, from estates surrounding her home town of Stirling in Scotland, to come out of themselves and so build their self-worth by using string instruments and orchestral music to lift their spirits.

**The Arundel Castle Cricket Foundation** was set up to give the less advantaged something of a leg-up, a better opportunity. The more deprived people are, the less likely they are to fulfil themselves in any activity, let alone sport where so often there is still neither time, space nor resources to cater for their natural enthusiasm. Playing fields are still being sold off for development. Teachers, (nurses and social workers, too, for that matter), receive short shrift and are given scant recognition for their work when related to its importance and responsibility. **Sir Matthew Pinsent**, the Olympic oarsman, says, *'Sport is perennially dismissed as a side issue in Whitehall, a little add-on to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport'*. It is mighty hard to climb out of this rut. *Times* columnist and broadcaster, **Libby Purves**, comments, *'If you're born poor, you're likely to stay poor, get a poor job or none, live in poor housing, eat poor food and die early. If you're born into an educated, professional family, however dim you are, the outlook is rosier'*. At Arundel we are determined that everyone should sample something special, fun and joyous, take it to their hearts and so make a difference to their lives.

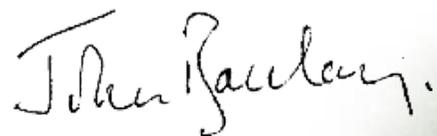




Let me bring this Review to a conclusion by returning to the Olympic spirit. Little known athletes have emerged as intelligent, charming and sporting role models; a far cry from the boorish and spiritless behaviour to which we have become accustomed from the world of football. It was said by someone, *'If we could bottle up the Olympic spirit and prescribe it at times of national adversity, the country would have little to worry about'*. Compared with the usual diet of soap stars, X-Factor contestants and flaky celebrities, the young now have some real-life heroes, who have achieved fame through merit and effort, to look up to. If just a few follow in the footsteps of these athletes and their example, the Games' legacy will have witnessed great fulfilment.

In the words of **Nelson Mandela**, *'Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. Sport can create hope where there was previously only despair'*.

Our achievements in this last year, and years gone by, would not have been possible without the dedicated generosity of so many people and institutions. We are very grateful to you all. We are greatly encouraged by your support and kindness, sure in the knowledge that you, in your giving, value what we do at Arundel. That means a lot to us. Thank you.



JOHN BARCLAY DL

Director of Cricket & Coaching



## FUNDRAISING IN 2012

The Foundation benefited from a number of fundraising events last year: a Charity Golf Day at Goodwood, an Evening with Andrew Strauss at Caldicott Preparatory School, a West Sussex Charity Walk, a sponsored swim at Chailey Heritage School and a charity collection at St Christopher's School in Hove. Together, they raised over £55,000. Huge thanks must go to all those who helped ensure that all these events were so successful and such fun.

The Foundation has also been supported by a number of generous private donors and many Companies, Charitable Trusts and Foundations:

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## Arundel Castle Cricket Foundation

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**John Barclay:** 01903 882602  
arundelcastlecricket@yahoo.co.uk

**Annie Atkinson:** 01903 744306 / 07775 815 668  
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Arundel Park, West Sussex BN18 9LH

Tel 01903 882602

Email [arundelcastlecricket@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:arundelcastlecricket@yahoo.co.uk)  
[www.arundelcastlecricketfoundation.co.uk](http://www.arundelcastlecricketfoundation.co.uk)

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