The Dreadnought



The Dreadnought is the official newsletter of 'Trinity Heritage' all things Wakefield Trinity history

Year 3, Volume 2 (Summer Edition) ... August 2015

Welcome to the Summer edition of the 'Dreadnought'. The idea of the newsletter is to remember and celebrate Trinity's history and heritage in the form of articles, photos, stories and memorabilia.

This edition looks at a very popular era in the history of the club, the 1970s.

Trinity 1970-71

Back Row: Tony Handforth, Jack Marston, John Godfrey, Ken Endersby, Mick Morgan, David Jeanes, Gary Cooper, Ian Brooke Front Row: John Hegarty, Bernard Ward, Rob Valentine, Tom Hill, David Topliss, Eddie McDonagh, David Barends

The above is one of the first team pictures we have of Trinity in the 1970s, taken before an away game at Blackpool Borough in February 1971. At the time, despite missing Neil Fox, Keith Slater, Geoff Wraith and Joe Bonnar, Trinity were second in the league table, behind Wigan but struggled to a 12-5 win at Borough Park with Topliss and Ward scoring the tries in front of only 527 spectators. Trinity would finish the season in fifth position and reached the RL Championship semi final, before bowing out to league leaders, Wigan, 15-49 at Central Park.

On the above photo are two of Trinity's Hall of Fame members. 2014 inductee, David Topliss was in his third season at the club and had scored 19 tries already before the Blackpool game. Fellow-2014 inductee, Ian Brooke's career was winding down and he would retire within a couple of months of the Blackpool game.

'Toppo' was not the season's top scorer though with winger Keith Slater having just scored seven tries the week before, against RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE
BLACKPOOL BOROUGH
WAKEFIELD
SATURDAY, 13th FEBRUARY, 1971 Kick-off 3-0 juin.

Hunslet, giving him 25 tries for the season so far. By February 1971, Neil Fox was top goal kicker with 104 but he would miss the next few months with a broken thumb

Committee & Officials ... 45 Years Ago



The Trinity programmes of the 1960s and 1970s were one of the most informative in the league and a dream for historians when researching matches, players, appearances, tries etc.

In each publication of 26 pages, the first page was a list of honours with the second page a list of staff.

Compare the list of staff in 1970 to the list of staff we have today ... aswell as a President, a Chairman, a vice-president, a secretary-manager and eight committeemen we had sub-committees for finance, ground, development fund, Junior football, the Trinity Juniors team and a programme committee. We had auditors, solicitors, doctors, architects and advisories. Add to these the on-field staff of coach, trainer, Ateam coach, physiotherapist and players ... those were the days.

It is interesting to note that the club also published secretary's Mr Thomas's, home telephone number.

That would go down well these days.

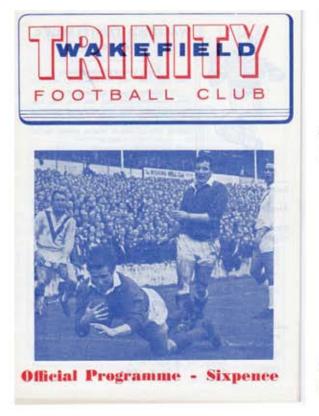
Stats & Stuff ... the 70s

| | Coach | Captain | Top Try | Top Goal | Top Points | Biggest Win |
|---------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | | Scorer | Kicker | Scorer | |
| 1969-70 | Ken Traill | Ian Brooke, | Keith Slater | Stuart Carlton | Stuart Carlton | 59-3 |
| | | Bob Haigh | 24 | 50 | 109 | v Hunslet |
| 1970-71 | Neil Fox | Neil Fox | Keith Slater | Neil Fox | Neil Fox | 72-8 |
| | | | 31 | 110 | 256 | v Hunslet |
| 1971-72 | Neil Fox | Neil Fox | David Topliss | Neil Fox | Neil Fox | 59-9 |
| | | | 23 | 84 | 186 | v Batley |
| 1972-73 | Neil Fox | David Jeanes, | David Topliss | Neil Fox | Neil Fox | 57-5 |
| | | Neil Fox | 29 | 138 | 300 | v Doncaster |
| 1973-74 | Neil Fox | Neil Fox | David Smith | Terry Crook | Terry Crook | 47-13 |
| | | | 38 | 68 | 175 | v Blackpool (Cup) |
| 1974-75 | Peter Fox | David Topliss | David Smith | Terry Crook | Terry Crook | 50-13 |
| | | | 24 | 73 | 165 | v Bramley |
| 1975-76 | Peter Fox | David Topliss | David Smith | Henry Oulton | Henry Oulton | 47-4 |
| | | | 24 | 73 | 158 | v Warrington |
| 1976-77 | Geoff Gunney, | Mick Morgan | David Topliss | Terry Crook | Terry Crook | 41-3 |
| | Brian Lockwood, | | 23 | 45 | 120 | v Leigh |
| 1977-78 | Brian Lockwood, | David Topliss | Mike Lampkowski | Keith Smith | Keith Smith | 36-23 |
| | Ian Brooke | | 13 | 52 | 114 | v St.Helens |
| 1978-79 | Ian Brooke, | David Topliss | Brian Juliff | Keith Smith | Keith Smith | 27-2 |
| | Bill Kirkbride | | 17 | 60 | 167 | v Batley (Cup) |

The First...

Trinity's first home game of the new decade was on Sunday 11th January 1970 when second-placed, Salford, came to Belle Vue. This was also a 'date in history' as it was the very first Sunday match at Belle Vue; Trinity having ignored the growing call to experiment with Sunday games in the late 1960s. In the early 1970s, Salford had an array of stars with David Watkins, Maurice Richards and Mike Coulman joining from the rugby union world along with present and future internationals in Paul Charlton, Chris Hesketh and Colin Dixon





This Trinity team had just won four in a row and had star players amongst their ranks, themselves, with World Cup stars, Ian Brooke and Bob Haigh.

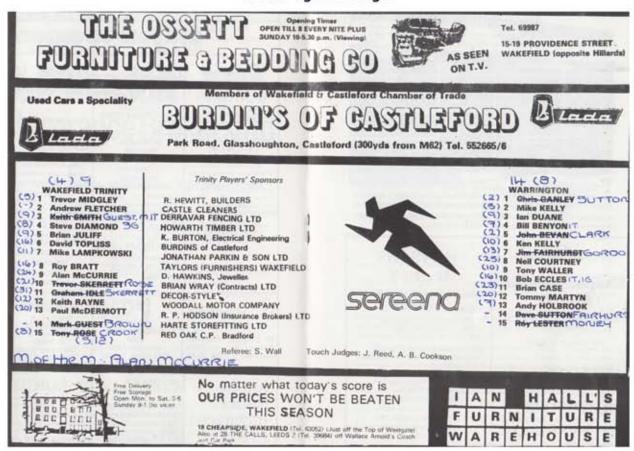
In a classic, Trinity shocked the highflying 'Reds' with a 7-5 win, prop David Jeanes scoring the winning try with Stuart Carlton kicking two goals.

The experiment with Sunday rugby was a minor success with a 5,025 crowd. The club tried again two months later when Leeds came to Belle Vue and 8,450 attended

The programmes of the early 1970s were also of local interest with many local businesses well advertised. On the 1970 team sheet, committeeman, John Ridge, hosted the 'Fox & Grapes Inn' on Stanley Road; Harry Hayley's 'sports outfitters' in The Springs was known by ever sporting schoolboy and girl and Burdin Motors was a well established motor car garage, situated on the site of the now departed 'Charlie Browns' on Northgate.

...The Last

The last game played by Trinity in the 1970s was for the visit of Warrington on 30th December 1979. The 'Wire' were in 7th place in Division One with Trinity three places below them in 10th, but with just one point separating the teams. Trinity were on a good run having defeated Hull KR at home (21-14) and Castleford away (26-13) over the Christmas period; Warrington arriving on the back of a 4-8 defeat against Leigh.





Trinity were seven months post-Wembley and they still had nine of their Wembley XV in their team with Alan McCurrie gaining man of the match honours, but they were no match for a keen Warrington side who triumphed 14-9 with four tries to one, scrum half, Parry Gordon scoring two. The 'markings' above show the tackle counts in brackets with Trevor Skerrett leading the Trinity tackle count with 31. Young centre, Mark Guest scored Trinity's only try on his fourth appearance for the club.

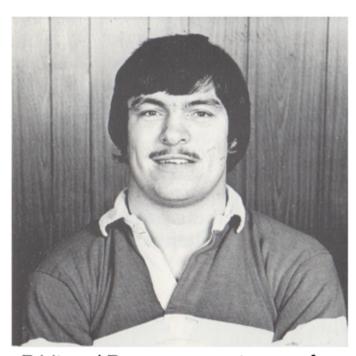
The committee had been reduced over the last ten years with only the popular Les Pounder still on the committee from the beginning of the decade, and Burdin's Motors' still advertised in the centre pages of the programme, although they seemed to have moved to Castleford.

Two players had remained throughout the 1970s; David Topliss had just played his 360th first team game and was just completing his testimonial year and Terry Crook had just played his 230th game after returning from Bramley at the beginning of the season.

1970s Hall of Famer

Trevor Skerrett was the 'cornerstone' of the Trinity pack in the late 1970s and went from the amateur scene in Hunslet to the test arena of Sydney Cricket Ground within six years. He was a fearless player who never knew he was beaten and in his six seasons at Trinity represented Wales and Great Britain with distinction.

Hailing from the Belle Isle area of Leeds, Trevor played for Bisons Sports ARL before signing for Trinity, as a 20 year old, in August 1974. He debuted within a few weeks, coming off the substitutes bench in a 12-12 home draw with Castleford. In only his seventh Trinity game, he was in the line up for the 1974 Yorkshire Cup Final, only to suffer defeat against second division, Hull Kingston Rovers, 13-16 at



Headingley. Six months later, after a great cup run, Trinity and Trevor were one step away from Wembley after a 7-13 loss to Widnes in the RL Challenge Cup semi final.

In 1977 he appeared for Great Britain under 24s against France, at Hull and a year later he represented Wales against Australia at Swansea, Trevor qualifying for the Welsh through grandparents. His displays for Trinity and two more appearances for Wales, in 1979, got him noticed and the likeable Skerrett deservedly earned a place on the 1979 Great Britain touring squad to Australia. Prior to the tour, he achieved an ambition of playing at Wembley but Trinity lost to Widnes in the RL Challenge Cup Final, earning great praise with a man of the match performance in the 9-7 semi final victory over St. Helens.

'Down Under', Trevor was one of the few players to impress and made his GB debut in the first test against Australia at Lang Park, Brisbane. He gained four caps on the tour, playing in the second test at the SCG in Sydney and the second and third tests against New Zealand and Christchurch and Auckland. He played another twelve games on the tour.

A fourth Welsh cap followed in January 1980, but within a few months he was transferred to Hull for a record £40,000 fee. He played 160 games for Hull (1980-86), playing in nine finals, winning four, aswell as the 1983 Championship and adding to his Welsh and GB caps. Two seasons at Leeds, followed by two seasons at Keighley saw him retire in 1990.

Trevor Skerrett earned a reputation of being one of the hardest forwards in the game in his day, aswell as one of the fairest and most well respected. He played 204 Trinity first team games in his six seasons, scoring twenty six tries, and remains one of only eight Trinity forwards to take on the might of the Australian pack in test matches and one of only two in the last forty seven years.

| Trevor Skerrett Trinity Playing Record | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------|-------|--------|--|
| Season | Played | Tries | Goals | Points | |
| 1974-75 | 31 | 2 | 0 | 6 | |
| 1975-76 | 31 | 5 | 0 | 15 | |
| 1976-77 | 34 | 7 | 0 | 21 | |
| 1977-78 | 40 | 4 | 0 | 12 | |
| 1978-79 | 32 | 4 | 0 | 12 | |
| 1979-80 | 36 | 4 | 0 | 12 | |
| TOTALS | 204 | 26 | 0 | 78 | |

Record Breaker

The 1970s did not see many records broken after the glory years of 1960s but one record that was equalled was the tries in a season record in 1973-74.

Fred Smith had broken the record in 1959-60 with 38 tries and despite the phenomenal try scoring exploits of the classy backs of the 60s, only Jan Prinsloo had reached 30 tries (1961-62).

David Smith was a winger, signed in August 1971, from Shaw Cross in Dewsbury. He debuted against

York in August 1971 and by the start of the 1973-74 season he had scored 24 tries in 37 appearances. He started his run with a try in the second game of the season, against Rochdale, followed by four against Doncaster and a hat trick at Keighley, both in the Yorkshire Cup, giving him seven tries in the first five games of the season. His feats continued and in his 42 appearances throughout the season he scored in 24 of them.

The sequence slowed down through the autumn and winter months but when the grounds dried out in the spring of 1974 his tries continued to come, scoring twelve tries in the last twelve games of the season. He scored his record equalling 38th try of the season in the last match of the season, a 7-12 defeat at Warrington in the Club Championship semi final.

This is a record that is unlikely to be beaten, or equalled, and in the next forty years, to the present day, the nearest anyone has come to it is Sid Domic's 25 in 2004.

Smith went onto play for Yorkshire and gained an England appearance in a friendly against Australia in the 1975 World Cup, although it was not classed as a full international, and eventually Leeds came with their chequebook in 1976. He finished with 115 tries in his 170 appearances, sitting in eighth in Trinity's all-time try scorers and one of only 13 men to score 100 or more tries for Trinity



| | Trinity's Try S | | |
|----|-----------------|----|---------|
| 1= | Fred Smith | 38 | 1959-60 |
| 1= | David Smith | 38 | 1973-74 |
| 3 | Fred Smith | 37 | 1958-59 |
| 4 | Alan Skene | 35 | 1959-60 |
| 5 | Billie Simpson | 34 | 1910-11 |
| 6= | Dennis Boocker | 32 | 1953-54 |
| 6= | Neil Fox | 32 | 1957-58 |
| 8 | Keith Slater | 31 | 1970-71 |
| 9= | Fred Smith | 30 | 1956-57 |
| 9= | Neil Fox | 30 | 1959-60 |
| 9= | Jan Prinsloo | 30 | 1961-62 |

Heritage Numbers 1970s

| 764. Norman Cooper (1970-76) |
|-----------------------------------|
| 765. Bob Oswald (1970-73) |
| 766. John Hegarty (1970-74) |
| 767. Brian West (1970-71) |
| 768. Rob Valentine (1970-74) |
| 769. Stuart Kelley (1970-71) |
| 770. David Barends (1970-73) |
| 771. Peter Harrison (1971-72) |
| 772. David Smith (1971-76) |
| 773. Steve Lyons (1971-74, 81-82) |
| 774. Mick Major (1971-73) |
| 775. Peter Bell (1971-72) |
| 776. Steve Davies (1972-74) |
| 777. Les Sheard (1972-80) |
| 778. lan Ellis (1972-77) |
| 779. AW 'Sam' Hughes (1972) |
| 780. Ray Layton (1972-75) |
| 781. Bryn Bennett (1972-74) |
| 782. David Knowles (1972-75) |

781. Bryn Bennett (1972-74)
782. David Knowles (1972-75)
783. Geoff Wrigglesworth (1972-76)
784. Steve Nicholson (1972)
785. Gordon Young (1972)
786. Gary Hetherington (1973-74)
787. Eric Ingham (1973-77)
788. Roy Bratt (1973-84)
789. Barry Lumb (1973-75)
790. Alan Tonks (1973-75)

795. Terry Langton (1973-77) 796. John Archer (1974-77) 797. Neil Goodwin (1974-78)

791. Max Fletcher (1973-74)

792. Barry Parker (1973)

793. Mick Summers (1973)

794. Tony Garforth (1973-74

798. Harry Whittaker (1974) 799. Barry Langton (1974-75) 800. Steve Gobey (1974) 801. Trevor Skerrett (1974-80) 802. Ray Handscombe (1974-78) 803. Henry Oulton (1974-77) 804. Les Tonks (1974-76) 805. Alan Butterfield (1974-79) 806. Doug Miles (1974) 807. Terry Hudson (1975-78) 808. Paul Evans (1975-76) 809. John Sutcliffe (1975-79) 810. Willie Oulton (1975-77) 811. David Chester (1975-76) 812. Graham Idle (1975-80) 813. Alan Smith (1975) 814. Keith Rayne (1975-80, 87-90)

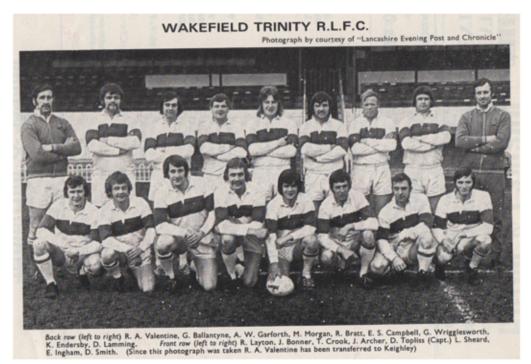
815. Owen Stephens (1975) 816. Kevin Rayne (1975-81) 817. Trevor Midgley (1975-81) 818. John Sanderson (1976-77) 819. Chris Stringer (1976-84) 820. Lou Lardi (1976) 821. Paul O'Brien (1976-77) 822. David Noble (1976) 823. David Watkinson (1976) 824. David Finch (1976) 825. Howard Firth (1976-77) 826. Michael Corkery (1976) 827. Graham Brown (1976-80) 828. Geoff Gerard (1976-77) 829. John Rangeley (1976) 830. Brian Lockwood (1976-78)

831. Bill Kirkbride (1976-80)

832. Nigel Murray (1976-81) 833. Keith Riggs (1977-78) 834. Keith Banks (1977) 835. Keith Pollard (1977) 836. Mike Lampkowski (1977-85) 837. Mark Endersby (1977-78) 838. Paul McDermott (77-80, 82 & 84) 839. Bob Gant (1977) 840. Andrew Fletcher (77-86, 87-90) 841. Adrian Rushton (1977) 842. John Crossley (1977) 843. Gary Hale (1977) 851. David Wandless (1978-85) 852. John Burke (1978-79) 853. Adrian Barwood (1978-81) 854. Steve Diamond (1978-81, 86-87) 855. Brian Juliff (1978-81) 856. Alan McCurrie (1978-81) 857. Wayne Dimmock (1978) 858. Brian Gregory (1978-79) 859. Terry Clawson (1978-79) 860. John Thompson (1978-97) 861. David Needham (1979-81) 862. Steve Tinker (1979-82) 863. Tony Rose (1979-81) 864. Adrian Plummer (1979-80) 865. Stephen Flynn (1979)

867. Craig Wright (1979-82) 868. Andrew Kelly (1979-82, 88-92) 869. David Briggs (1979-80) 870. Colin Spink (1979) 871. Mark Guest (1979-82)

866. Colin Morgan (1979)



Trinity 1974-75