



RICHARD WALSH



PETER ANDERSON



2020-21



PETER ANDERSON

Peter Anderson is the longest serving club official in the history of Somerset CCC having held the role of Chief Executive for 17 years, from 1988 until retiring in 2005.

Peter literally brought Somerset into the 21st century in all senses and he achieved so much during his time in charge, the playing high spots of which were Somerset winning the 2001 Cheltenham and Gloucester Trophy and the 2005 T20 Cup. However, during his time in charge he achieved so much more, the legacy of which the Club is still benefitting from.

With this sort of pedigree it seemed perfectly fitting that Peter Winston Anderson, who was born on 19th May 1942, should complete the Somerset CCC 150 Interviews for 2025.

Peter was born in Wokingham Berkshire, and because his father, who was a keen cricketer himself, was in the forces, at the age of 11 he was sent to the Duke of York's Royal Military School in Dover where he stayed until he was 18.

"They had sports facilities galore and I did everything that was available, which is probably why academically I wasn't as successful as I might have been!

"We had massive sports grounds and swimming pools and parade grounds- the RSM was an ex- guards officer who used to run us ragged! That was the sort of environment I grew up in, which I didn't find easy because at heart I'm a rebel. However, I can tell you that after a short time there I didn't do much rebelling- I learned the hard way."

Peter did well at all sports but particularly, football, rugby and cricket. In the Duke of York annals it records that in 1958 Peter played a prominent part in the school's 'most successful rugby season ever', whilst in cricket he excelled with both bat and ball. He played for the Kent and South of England Under 15 XI and was also good enough to have a trial with Kent CCC.

When he left school, Peter joined the

police force.

"I joined the police force when I was 19 - I joined Devon because by that time I was already courting Sybil who became my wife and she came from Beer, which is where we still live now.

"When I was about to complete my training I was asked where I might like to be posted and I said anywhere in East Devon - so they put me at Ilfracombe which couldn't have been much further away!"

From Ilfracombe he moved to Plympton where, through his sporting achievements, he was encouraged to join Plymouth City police force.

"I served there for about two years in Plymouth City centre, which was a revelation and then I went into the CID. I passed my promotion exams high which meant that I got interviewed for a place at Police College, which I got and spent a year there. When I came back I was an inspector after seven years service".

"By that time the force had been amalgamated so I could go anywhere in Devon or Cornwall so I got posted to Torquay which at that time was pretty lawless.

"The Chief Superintendent was a great sports fan and was delighted I'd joined his division. He said he wanted me to form a task force to restore public order.

"I got together 12 officers and we went to Torquay and started to sort things out. It was a hilarious time really. We got a few thumps and gave a few as well and that was it. I served in Torquay for quite some time and then the guy who put me there moved to Plymouth.

"One day he rang me up and said where do you want to go in my area, we need you in the football team, he suggested Tavistock, which sounded good to me and that's where I went.

"Tavistock was like being in the wild west and I ruled there for three or four years which was really good. Wherever I went I played for the local cricket club so I played for Tavistock, and they also asked me to play football but by that time I was 30 and had lost some speed."

During the time he was playing for Tavistock CC the wicket suffered from invading ponies galloping across from the moor. Peter was informed that tiger poo from the local zoo would solve the problem. It did the trick but also burnt the grass on the square which took a while to recover!

"By then I was playing cricket for Devon

in the Minor Counties but didn't play that much. I only scored one 50 for them and that was against Berkshire at Reading which was my home county, which I was pleased about."

At about that time, Peter went to the West Indies with the Mendip Acorns touring team and whilst he was there played against a young Viv Richards and bowled him out.

"I've never let him forget it either.

Several years later he came on tour to England with a club side and I played against him at Bath. As soon as I came in to bat he came on to bowl and got me out in the second over and just stood there laughing!

"The thing about Viv was that he had such a range of attacking shots and he knew when to play them. He was really good."

Peter went off to Hong Kong in 1978 and stayed there until 1988 and during his time there captained Hong Kong in the ICC Trophy twice.

"I didn't even know that they played cricket there, but I hadn't been in the hotel room after we arrived for more than an hour when the phone rang. It was a bloke from the Royal Navy who asked me if I'd played for the Royal Navy in England to which I said yes.

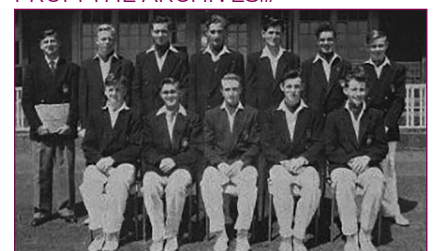
"He then said, 'we've got a cricket team here and we've got a game on Saturday and you're in the side.' I said I haven't got my kit. He said don't worry we've got all the kit. I went there and played and I was in.

"We had some good cricketers out there, including lots of Combined Services players and quite a few who'd had trials with First Class counties, plus a few from Australia, who were quite good.

"I came over to England twice with Hong Kong to play in the ICC Trophy but we didn't do as well as we should have done.

"After a few years there was a great deal of talk in Hong Kong about the handover to China which was about five years hence and I wondered where that left me so I thought I'd better start looking for a job in England."

FROM THE ARCHIVES...



Peter Anderson front left in Duke of York's School First XI 1958

Captain of Hong Kong in 1983- fifth from left front row



Little did he know but the next stage in P.W. Anderson's life was just about to begin.

"I put the word about back here in England that I was heading back and Somerset rang me up. They asked me to come to the County Ground for an interview, which wasn't much of one. I think that I was interviewing them more than the other way round and they offered me the job more or less there and then. I took the job and stayed there until 2005, 17 years."

How much of a change was it for Peter?

"It was and it wasn't because throughout my life I'd played for cricket clubs and when I'd played for them I always ended up being chairman or secretary, so I'd always been used to organising cricket. At that time I was also captain of the British Police team.

"I couldn't believe it when I got the job at Somerset. I gave it a great deal of thought because I was only an amateur cricketer coming to a professional club, so I didn't get involved in the cricket side for several seasons.

"Then gradually I think people realised that I knew a little bit about cricket so they would involve me in things. Typical policeman, I knew when to get involved and when not to!"

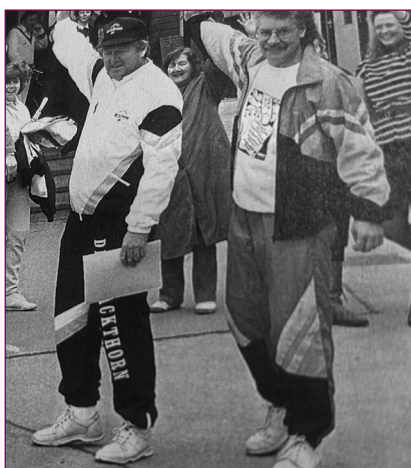
"Before I arrived, the Committee got involved in all sorts of spats. When I was appointed, Richard Parsons, who was then the Chairman, said that Somerset needed an authoritative figure who could deal with all these

matters. That's what I was told so that's what I did!

"I was the first Chief Executive at Somerset because prior to me it had been a secretary who was only ever in charge of the cricket, not running the Club."



Two Somerset stalwarts Peter Anderson presents Peter Robinson with a clock to mark the latter's retirement



Soon after he arrived Peter Anderson (left) walked the Somerset county boundary with local journalist Eric Coombs

One of Peter's first big signings happened soon after he arrived.

"A friend of mine rang me up shortly after I'd started and told me about this bloke who could bowl. I asked for a contact number, which he gave me, and I rang up Andy Caddick.

"I said: we haven't met but I'm from Somerset and I think it's time we had a chat and we should sign you up because everyone tells me you could be a very good professional bowler.

"I went to meet him and he signed for us. Within a short while he got injured and I had to drive him up to some specialist somewhere. Eventually he had an operation and took some time to recuperate during which time he came and painted my house! I got on very well with Caddy."

Another person who Peter brought on board early in his tenure was Andrew Moulding who was appointed as Cricket Development Officer when the Ondaatje Pavilion and Indoor School was built.

"I knew Andrew because he lived locally at Axminster. We'd spent such a lot of money building the Indoor School, which was financed by Sir Christopher and it was all the rage with counties setting up their own Academy and we had to start thinking about developing our own plays.

"Building the Indoor School was a good move and we needed someone to run it full time who could deal with the professionals and the amateurs, sort out programmes, timetabling plus the rest of it, all of which Andrew was very good at.

"He had something new to work with and he was able to appoint his own staff, work out the programmes and make it happen. He was also a club cricket captain and used to dealing with everyone."

Peter went on: "I quickly realised that Somerset didn't have any money so we couldn't try and go and buy players so we established our own Academy."

During Peter's time in charge, Marcus Trescothick and Mark Lathwell, two of the Club's most exciting young talents, both emerged.

"I didn't think that Marcus would last long but he seized his chance as a player and has done really well for himself. Mark Lathwell was an exciting young player and a real talent and what happened was a great disappointment. God, did I ever try to get him to stay."

Peter was also very involved with Dermot Reeve coming to Somerset

"The thing about Dermot was that he came as a bit of a shock to the players. As a coach he'd be saying to them in terms of one syllable what being a professional cricketer meant. I can remember on one occasion he had them all sat down in front of the pavilion and told them what for. I think a lot of the slackness at that time was that the players had got so used to doing things their own way.

"Dermot was something different and brought something special within him. He also brought the fitness regime with Darren Veness and Andy Hurry who is still at the Club. The thing about Andy was that having been a former Royal Marine with rank he knew how to deal with people. People like Dermot and Andy Hurry turned Somerset into a professional team."

During Peter's tenure at the Club, Somerset appeared in three Lord's one-day finals, one of which they won in 2001 in addition to which they won the Twenty20 Cup in 2005.

Peter was involved with helping to put those sides together when he signed Jamie Cox to captain the team in 1999, who duly led Somerset to a Lord's final that season.

"I got on very well with Jamie Cox and although I'd never met him before, as



Marcus Trescothick



Mark Lathwell

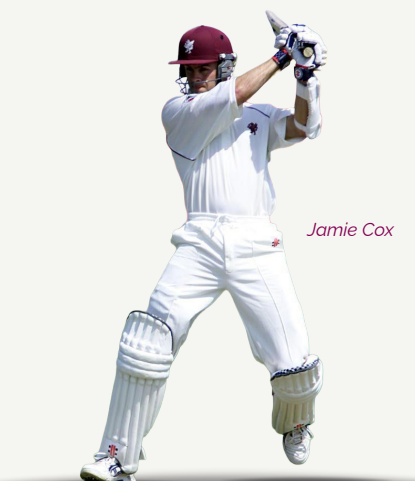


Dermot Reeve



Andy Hurry

Darren Veness



Jamie Cox

he was talking I thought 'this bloke could fit in at our place'.

"Jamie is a good bloke. He is sensible and talks to people, which is what people here like, someone to chat to. I have great respect for him and the way that he captained the side. Yes, he is someone who is a bit special."

Peter was also involved with the signing of Richard Johnson and Keith Dutch from Middlesex, Ian Blackwell from Derbyshire and Steffan Jones. He had a knack of gathering people together to work as a team, something he'd learned from his time in the police force.

"The 2001 cup win at Lord's was the highlight of my time here. We'd won something at last!

Peter also got the Big Three - Ian Botham, Joel Garner and Viv Richards back involved with Somerset. He oversaw the building of the Ian Botham Stand and the Club also staged the first music concert at the ground when Elton John appeared.

Another of the things that he was involved with was the appointment of Giles Clark as Chair of the Club.

"Giles was not everyone's cup of tea but he certainly got things done and if it hadn't been for him the Pegasus Court and Somerset Stand development wouldn't have happened."

One of the most recent times Peter was involved with Somerset was when he attended the 150th Anniversary match at Sidmouth on August 18th 2025 where among others he caught up with Jamie Cox and Andy Caddick.

What is it that makes Somerset the way that it is?

"Basically because we are honest country boys. We are honest cricketers. The biggest things that we have in our favour is the loyal fan base from right across the South West and that's why I used to walk around the ground a lot and talk with people."

Summing up his years in charge Peter said: "Somerset was right for me because the Committee had got fed up with making all the decisions. They wanted to appoint someone who was prepared to take charge and take the flak if there was any or also take the praise. That's why they appointed me and that's why it worked."