

## Parramatta District Cricket Club - William 'Billy' Lothian

### 'A Bowler of Skill.'

[By T. Wood – Club Historian]



The Parramatta District Club's former champion opening bowler Billy Lothian, passed away at age 72, in April 2018 whilst residing in Mossman North Queensland.

Billy joined Parramatta (Central Cumberland) District Cricket Club in **1963/64** as an 18-year-old, after playing 'A' Grade for Baulkham Hills in the P.D.C.A. competition and starring for the Parramatta in the premiership winning 1962/63 Telegraph Shield team.

In my first season of grade cricket I was fortunate enough to be a team mate of Bill in Cumberland's 1964/65 Premiership winning 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade team – it was in this team that he 'served notice' that he was a new ball bowler of 'genuine quality' by capturing **37 wickets @ 10.40**, and blowing St. George away in the Final at Hurstville oval with the devastating double of **7/30** and **6/39**.

He was a popular, high quality person and clubman who had great attributes as a bowler, a thinking cricketer who fitted into the medium-fast category of paceman rather than an out and out speedster – a 'big-hearted' never say die competitor who would 'soldier on' regardless of conditions or temperatures – he had a tremendous work ethic at training, accuracy was the epitome of his bowling, and his repertoire included the out-swinger, sharp off-cutter and he was an early exponent of a well disguised 'slower ball', a common practice amongst modern pacemen. Usually coming at around No. 9 Bill proved to be a most capable lower-order batsman, able to apply himself to the circumstances of the game situation – he was at his best when the team was in trouble and throughout his long career he launched many rescue missions, scoring his runs with a mixture of sound defence and robust hitting. A versatile sportsman, in the winter months he was a 1<sup>st</sup> grade baseball pitcher with the Canterbury club.

Bill's outstanding career with Parramatta (Cumberland) extended from **1963/64** to **1979/80** after which he retired and relocated to the Central Coast. On his 1<sup>st</sup> grade debut in 1965/66 he claimed **6/71** against Petersham and continued to play at that level until 1979/80, along the way establishing himself to be one of the club's best ever fast bowlers, being the first paceman to capture '**400+ Wickets**' in 1<sup>st</sup> grade for Parramatta – Daniel Jackson has since joined him (Spinners Les Pye and Bobby Aitken were the only other Parra bowlers to reach this landmark). Highly regarded by players and officials of the club he captained the Poidevin-Gray Shield team in 1965/66 & 1966/67 (Best bowled **7/36** v. Sutherland), and **1<sup>st</sup> Grade** in 1976/77 and part of 1977/78 until injured. In another age Bill may well have tasted full First-class cricket after representing NSW at Colts and 2<sup>nd</sup> Eleven levels.

Statistical highlights abound as a testament to Bill Lothian's personal achievements in **1<sup>st</sup> grade** for Parramatta:

**450 wickets @ 20.14:** captured '5 wickets in an innings' – 28 times, 8 wickets in an innings – twice, 7 wickets in an innings – 5 times, hat-tricks – 1, 40+ wickets in a season – 5 times; best season **56 wickets** when he and Bobby Aitken spearheaded Cumberland to the Minor Premiership in 1969/70. Best bowling **8/29** v. Western Suburbs in 1969/70. **2,086 runs @ 15.92** (H.S. – 66).

Playing cricket in an era of uncovered wickets, at his peak Lothian had few equals amongst Sydney grade bowlers in utilizing damp wickets and he turned in some stunning performances on such surfaces. One example was a game against Western Suburbs in 1969/70 at Cumberland oval, the magpies fielded a side full of representative players led by Test great Bobby Simpson, after having Simmo dropped first ball and conceding 12 runs off his opening over Bill demolished Wests by taking **8/29** dismissing them for a meagre 63 runs and piloting Cumberland to victory. Bill Lothian's full record in **all grades** for the Parramatta District Cricket Club is laid out in the attached Table:

Grade	Runs	Average	Highest Score	Wickets	Average
Poidevin-Gray	262	32.75	53	25	25.00
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11	5.50	7	0	0
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	96	13.71	22	28	10.61
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	253	18.07	66	47	12.66
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	388	15.52	70	72	17.74
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	<b>2,086</b>	<b>15.92</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>20.14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,096</b>	<b>16.56</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>19.06</b>

