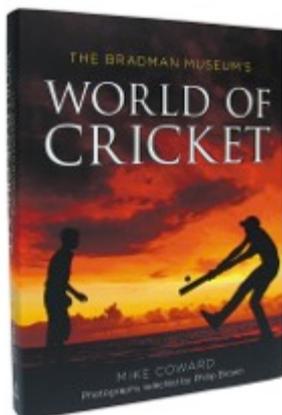


The Bradman Museum's World of Cricket Author's Note by MIKE COWARD



The joy of a book chockfull of images is that we are constantly transported to another place and another time.

Each photograph evokes a memory, kindles a wish or an ambition and elicits a response in one way or another. Often the gamut of emotions is in play.

Of course, cricket buffs often live vicariously through the deeds of the champions and the pictures in *The Bradman Museum's World of Cricket* take the reader time-travelling through eight centuries.

Sir Donald Bradman who had a passion for the history of the game and its evolution began his special 35mm slide collection with a depiction of “club ball” that in a 1344 manuscript is mentioned as being played “where the score is made by hitting and running as at cricket.”

Juxtapose this with a picture of Sachin Tendulkar holding aloft the World Cup outside the imposing Gateway of India in his home city of Mumbai in 2011 and one appreciates the scope of this eye-catching publication.

I was delighted to write the text to accompany this rarefied journey across the ages and, like the Museum's curator, David Wells, was excited by the richness of the material on hand to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Museum and to mark the staging of the 11th World Cup in Australia and New Zealand in 2015.

Among the greatest pleasures was to learn more about Sir Donald Bradman through his typewritten notes and handwritten annotations that accompany the slides that are being published for the first time. His renowned directness and attention to detail is apparent as is the strength of his convictions.

More surprising, perhaps, is his wry humour. Of his greatest nemesis Douglas Jardine, England's Bodyline captain, he observed: “You can tell by looking at the picture there wasn't much compromise about him.”

And of Warwick “The Ship” Armstrong, one of his predecessors as Australian captain, he noted: “He was not as fat as the artist suggested but at 21 stone he wasn't far short of it.”

It is exhilarating to hold pages that once belonged to The Don and meant so much to him and to read of his admiration for Stan McCabe, Bill O'Reilly and Arthur Mailey among many others. Like the rest of us, he had his favourites.

And, significantly given the nature of the publication he talks of the beauty of cricket photography and nominates certain images to illustrate his point. There is the iconic image of Victor Trumper with high backlit stepping out to drive; Wally Hammond cover driving; Bill O'Reilly at the point of delivery (“power and control simple come out of that picture”);

England paceman Frank Tyson (“the finest picture of a fast bowler I’ve ever seen”) in full flow.

The Bradman slides are complemented by the exceptional images of three distinguished photographers Bruce Postle, the late Viv Jenkins and Philip Brown whose work is archived at the Museum.

It was a formidable task to choose the most luminous images and every reader has a favourite to which they will return time and time again. If I am pressed for two choices I opt for Postle’s iconic Bungaree image of a family playing in the unique Australian landscape and Brown’s arresting image of a Bangladeshi boy bowling in a street in Chittagong in 2011.

Then again there is . . .



Bush Cricket Near Bungaree, Victoria, 1985
Bruce Postle



Chittagong, Bangladesh Street Bowling, 2011
Philip Brown