



John Fraser Thompson

At the 2015 AGM John is retiring from an active role with the club's administration. Since 1958, when he moved from Wellington to Christchurch, John has played a major part in the club's development. As a player he had many successful years with the second grade team where he was a medium pace bowler and a very aggressive lower order left-hand batsman.

Later, for over twenty years, he was a regular member of the Presidents team and where, in spite of the good natured camaraderie of the grade, he never lost his competitive instincts. Rather than a vocal comment at a beaten batsman he developed a very good stare and pose which clearly indicated to the batsman that he had very little time left at the crease.

John had a three-year period on the committee in the mid 1960s and in August 1967 he was a member of a five-person group that requested a SGM to rescind a previous motion that would have closed the club to only University students or graduates. The motion was passed by 61 votes to 5 and the club maintained its home on Hagley Oval.

Family and business commitments now took over much more of his time but in 1978 he again became heavily involved with the administration of the newly merged club. John has been on the committee for 37 years and was President from 1983 until 1985 and again from 2008 until the present time. He was chairman of the organising committee when the club celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1980.

As groundsman he has not only spent countless hours each week on pitch preparation for all Saturday games on Burnside Park, but also on preparing pitches for Friday night and Saturday morning junior cricket.

As a result of his dedication, Burnside Oval has had top quality pitches for many years. He was a member of the group that ensured an all-weather pitch came to the club via sponsorship from the Post Office Savings Bank.

The pavilion has been altered and improved on at least four occasions and John has been at the forefront of those changes. With a bar manager's licence, John was for many years in charge of hiring out the pavilion and the necessary care and maintenance required after such functions. He has also taken a major and active part in securing sponsorship and much needed funds through applications to gaming trusts. He was made a Life Member in 1992.

Not content with all this in-club involvement, John was in 1985 appointed as the club's delegate to the Canterbury Cricket Association. Later he was an elected member on the Board of Control until August 1996. He was an underage selector for Canterbury teams from 1983/84 until the 1995/96 season and attended many tournaments as the manager.

With his dedicated and no-nonsense approach he was an automatic choice to manage the Canterbury Shell Cup and Trophy team for five years beginning with the 1996/97 season. He was made a life member of the Association in August 2001.

Those who have worked with John on his numerous projects have come to admire his enthusiasm, his passion to get things right, his practical skills and his dedication to make the Burnside Cricket Club and the grounds one of the best in New Zealand.