



Sedgley's
Diamond 60
*Sixty years, sixty people,
 sixty stories about village life
 since 1952.*

The Great Sedgley Expedition of 2005 (The Ashes)

by Tony Hart

On the evening of Saturday 6th August, Australia were 175 for 8 in the fourth innings of the 2nd Test Match. They needed 103 to avoid defeat so they were inevitably set to lose in the first few minutes of play the following day. It seemed pointless travelling over to Brum to watch 20 minutes of cricket at the most.

However our expedition set off from The Priory, Sedgley at 10 o'clock on the morning of the 7th. We parked ourselves in our seats in the Priory Stand with the anticipation of watching very little cricket. Warnie stepped back onto his wicket leaving a couple of tail-end no-hopers, Brett Lee and Kasparov, to what seemed an inevitable fate. Yet Lee and Kasparov fought like tigers. The wickets for us to win soon became runs to save for us to avoid losing. When the bar opened almost nobody got out of their seat to get a drink!

The climax was unbelievable – just two runs to go and Kasparov flicked a ball off his glove to Gareth Jones the Welsh wicketkeeper. The ground went totally silent – for a second. Then the umpire's finger went up. There was an explosion the like of which had not been heard since we blew up a mine under Messines ridge in 1916. We'd won, yeeess!!!!

The 5th and final Test Match took place in early September when Anne and I were in Sicily on holiday. When I heard we'd won the series I unfurled the Union Flag from our balcony for a celebratory photograph.



Freddie Flintoff takes a wicket in Australia's second innings.



Tony celebrates the Ashes series victory at his hotel while on holiday in Sicily.