

Pembroke History: Part 2

1940-1960

Another World War

At 11.15 am on September 3rd, 1939 the entire nation was gathered around radio sets to hear the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, announce that a state of war existed between Britain and Germany:

'This morning the British Ambassador in Berlin handed the German Government a final Note that unless we heard from them by 11 o'clock that they were prepared to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you that no such undertaking has been received and that consequently this country is at war with Germany.'

The memories of the First World War were still fresh in peoples' minds and there was nobody under the illusion this time that it would 'all be over by Christmas'. We were in for the long haul.

A heavy blow for Pembrokians

We have seen that after a very modest start as an athletic club in 1890 associated with a Men's Bible Class in a Method chapel the club had evolved into a formidable force 30 years later having successfully weathered the First World War. For two decades the club had dominated the city scene with no fewer than 16 Liverpool and District Cross Country titles, the then benchmark of success.

An older generation was gradually replaced in the 30's by outstanding runners like Norman Jones, the club's first cross-country international and later the emergence of Harold Marsh as a Junior international. But the success lay in the depth and quality of the rest of the team as epitomised by the club's third spot in the 1938 Manchester-Blackpool Relay which attracted the best in the country. The club was poised for major national success when the Chamberlain announcement effectively scuppered that ambition as Pembrokians responded to the national call and were scattered all over the world. One at least to our knowledge, Fred Stevenson, gave his life falling at the battle of El Alamein in 1943. Fred had been described as '...a most promising young athlete and a club member of the very best type...and that his untimely death on the threshold of what promised to be a successful athletic career is a severe loss'.

Holding the fort

It fell to the lot of club officers like Secretary, Bob Roberts, to keep the flag flying in the absence of so many members. Competition elements were sustained and a newsletter appeared towards the end of the war labelled initially as 'Still?' and later as the 'Pembroke Link'. We learn from the June 1944 edition that at the 'Stalin Mile' meeting in Manchester the club placed 3,4,5,6 to comfortably win the two mile team race and that the team was, Evans, Auburn, Cattrall, O'Kell, Cooke and Woods. Clearly the 1930's domination of this event was not over. At Bolton a little later the team won again and at that same meet it was noticed that the medley relay team was fourth and that '...we ran an absolutely new lad in C Kelly who ran the half and he did exceptionally well'. We will hear more about Charlie Kelly later.

Two impressions of Pembroke are recorded in this issue that give a feel for the times.

When I joined Pembroke

Over 10 years has elapsed since I joined the Club and I shall always remember the first day. I was thoroughly at home twenty minutes after being introduced to the various members and many have in the meantime become real pals. I joined as an absolute novice but unlike many of the football players who do not come up to expectations was not told by the Secretary and officials that I could be of no use to them. They persevered with me like they have with so many others and under the guidance of 'Our Bob'(Bobby Cooke), Bobby Bridge and others of the old brigade the day came when the first time since becoming a member the relay team won third prize at Seaforth. I was one of the team and what a thrill it gave me to feel that I had at last helped the club gain an award. Since that day the club has run in countless relays and won or lost. However, to me the wonderful club and team spirit that existed is the star that shines the brightest. The war has for a time separated many of us and I look forward to a grand re-union. I hope that for those for whom running is over will not just fade away but come and share the club's activities and with their advice and assistance make it greater still. RD (Ron Dutton)

Impression of a new member

Once you have climbed the 15 or so steps to the dressing room you can see that Pembroke is over-brimming with a team spirit that has to be seen to be believed. This, in my opinion, is developed by Senior members who are only too keen to help you. Not only this, but they give up places to lads of promise whole-heartedly and without embitterment. In my case I was immediately placed into the team in an important match against the Services. They fitted me in the Relay and two other events. Little did I know that on the day there were enough Pembroke men to cover events but the only words spoken were of encouragement. The following week I turned at Broad Green (Court Hey) and got a shock when I saw the track! But on getting up the steps I found out what really makes us a team. Other tracks may be the finest for training athletes but Pembroke's make good sportsmen. DC (Dennis Cattrall).

The 'track' at Court Hey was simply a field and frequently muddy. Hardly the best facilities for track and field athletes but it did produce internationals as we shall see.

Court Hey

The club was based at Court Hey House in Court Hey Park, Broadgreen for some 20 years from the mid-30s to the mid-50s and it is arguably the most significant part of the club's history. During that time the club went from local fame to something more significant at regional and national level. But a little about the building first.

Originally a farmer's field the land was acquired by Robertson Gladstone(1805-75) who was the elder brother to the four times British Prime Minister, William Ewart Gladstone. He had married a Mary Ellen Heywood-Jones and the grand Mansion House that was to be built there would be their home. Robertson Gladstone was a very successful business man in his own right and even became Mayor of Liverpool in 1842-3. The couple had six sons and two daughters all born at Court Hey. Mary Ellen had been frequently ill and died at the young age of 51. This left Robertson Gladstone distraught and he never recovered from the bereavement eventually dying himself at 69. Significantly none of his sons ever married although both his daughters did. The family connection was largely broken and Walter, a son, was the last surviving family member to live at Court Hey. The mansion was eventually left to a nephew, Arthur, who had moved down south and he sold the house and entire estate in 1919 to J Bibby and Sons Ltd for the princely sum of £19,907. Bibby's were a major cattle food manufacturer and established at Court Hey an experimental poultry and cattle foods farm. A printing and recreational facility was incorporated.

Bobby Cooke, an ardent Pembroke runner, masseur and coach was an employee of Bibby's and he negotiated a concession for the club to initially base its headquarters in old stables at the back of the house. There were changing rooms and showers, a great luxury in those days, plus immediate access to Bowring Park and open countryside for cross country courses. It was the best facility of any club on Merseyside. There was also a track that was marked out around a cricket field. The club began to flourish.

I joined Pembroke in November 1949. I was 16 and working as a Lab Assistant at Liverpool University. During a lunch break I mentioned an interest in running not realising that a George Kirkham was listening. George who was later to die tragically in a motor cycle accident asked me if I wanted to join a club and did I know where Court Hey was situated. As the answer to both questions was Yes I was to find myself a week later climbing the steps (it probably was 15!) mentioned earlier. It was one of the most significant decisions in my life. It is hard to adequately capture the maelstrom of noise, banter and good humour I walked into. It was an amazing atmosphere of joy and friendship. George, I discovered, was a prominent member of the successful Senior cross country squad. I was well and truly hooked and athletics has been part of my life ever since. (Charles Gains)

Court Hey remains to this day a delightful park and is home to the National Wildflower Centre. It is well worth a visit.

Foot note: When the Mansion House was about to be pulled in the mid-50s in spite of being the world's worst photographer I took some final snaps of the building on an old Box Brownie camera, which are featured. It turned out that nobody else thought to do the same. The Friends of Court Hey Park are grateful for this!

Charlie Kelly: The club's first track international

The Pembrokians that gathered together after the Second World War were largely older members veterans of the glorious thirties. A 1947-48 group photograph still shows Norman Jones, Harold Marsh, Jimmy Auburn, Kenny Cookson and also Bobby Cooke and Charlie Bourne who were to figure strongly later as coaches and officials. Younger members were appearing though and were to have a major impact. One of these was Charlie Kelly.

Charlie first made contact with the sport after winning the Waterloo Schoolboys 220 yards championship in 1937 but his real interest lay elsewhere. He had developed into an accomplished ballroom dancer but was gradually prised away by his brother who was a physical training instructor. A chance meeting with Pembrokian Bill Finigan and he was quickly drawn into athletics. The year was 1944. Jim Rimmer and Albert Hogg were the club star sprinters and quickly left Charlie adrift but he began to show up well in club handicaps. At his first open meeting at Leverhulme Park he ran the half mile in the medley relay where he impressed. Later in the season he returned to Bolton and won his first open event, the one mile handicap in 4.12 off 165 yards.

Charlie was duly lured into the cross country scene and astonished everybody at the opening Monstre Meet Mile break at Prenton with a decisive win. He quickly established himself as a harrier winning a succession of inter-club events, even gaining representative vests for West Lancashire and the Northern Counties. Clearly he was going to have a fabulous track season and he obliged by victories in various mile handicaps and as a member of the successful two mile team which continued its pre-war reputation. His first track representative honour came when he donned Northern colours in a match against the AAA and Midland Counties. He was second with a time of 4.28, the first club member ever to go under 4.30.

His cross country reputation continued into 1945-46 with another Monstre Meet mile win and a succession of victories in inter-club events. He declined further involvement in cross country to prepare for the following track season and must have felt justified as he became the club's first track international. This came in the

form of an invitation to represent Ireland in the Triangular International against England and Scotland having sealed selection with victory in the Northern Ireland mile championship in 4.34. He finished third in 4.28 just half a yard off a sensational victory. There were also numerous other mile handicap successes to follow and also victory in the Lancashire half mile championship.

The following season he retained his Northern Ireland title with ease and was only pipped for the all-Ireland title by the legendary Joe Barry. Although winning so-called Olympic Trials he was ignored by the selectors but a second international honour came his way in the usual triangular match with England and Scotland but was unplaced. However, at the AAA championships he ran another club record of 4.24 in his heat.

During the winter he was working in Manchester and came into contact with coach Walter Perrott of Manchester AC. This was to prove an inspirational partnership. In the Lancashire half-mile championship he was third to Frank Evans (MAC) and Ernie Gallagher (Liverpool Harriers) but he had captured another club record with 1.57.5 which he later cut to 1.57 at an invitation race at Chesterfield. A trip to Dublin for an all-star meeting and he was a fine second in 1.58. A following race saw him team up with Harry Ashcroft, Ken Bruns and Ken Thompson to bring the Northern Counties Medley Relay Championship to Pembroke for the first time in a record time of 3.39.

But the star performance of that season was a magnificent 1.56.4 half mile in Dublin as he took the All Ireland title. It was Pembroke's first ever national track title. Amazingly there was more to come as a Jimmy Milburn, Charlie Kelly, Ken Bruns and Harry Ashcroft 4 x 440yards line-up gained second place to the great Polytechnic team at the AAA Championships in Port Sunlight. A further Irish International vest came in another triangular, fifth this time but with another club record of 1.56. Subsequent seasons saw him lower the club record to 1.55.4 and controversially he even took this to 1.54.9 again in Belfast but a lack of qualified timekeepers officially ruled this out.

Charlie later turned to coaching and when his career took him to Coventry he joined the Godiva club and became a highly respected coach there. Following earlier cross country internationals Norman Jones and Harold Marsh the club was beginning to acquire a reputation on the track as well.

Trevor Holt: Self-made Steeplechaser

The Trevor Holt story is best told in his own words:

It was midway through 1948 that I thought I'd try the 2 miles steeplechase. I'd run many two mile team races for Pembroke and this was merely the same thing with a few hurdles along the way...or so I thought! I entered the Cheshire steeplechase and although I won I was hanging on for dear life over the last three laps.

I felt that for an event which was so demanding on physical effort there must be some way to minimise such a high expenditure of energy. So I set about learning to hurdle and worked out a series of stretching exercises designed to increase flexibility of the hip joints. These I performed on the living room carpet throughout the winter.

During the winter I ran 4th in the Cheshire Championship, 41st in the Inter-counties, 2nd in the Liverpool and District, 5th in the West Lancs and then went down with flu and missed the Northern and National. With Spring 1949 came the need to practice over hurdles. I nailed together four hurdles out of scrap wood: rather rough affairs but light enough to carry, two over each shoulder and went to the cricket field about half a mile away. I usually had to wait until the light became too poor for cricket before I could start my training.

For a water jump I need a more sturdy structure which I made from solid timber then wheeled it on to the cricket field in sections propped on the handle-bars of my bicycle. When nailed together I positioned it on the boundary. The groundsman used to grumble at having to move the contraption in order to mow the outfield.

In those days the chance of gaining a British vest was provided by the annual match against France on August Bank holiday. Selection was virtually assured by finishing as one of the first two Britons at the AAA Championships. On Whit Monday the News of the World organised a 6-nation international match at White City which included an invitation steeplechase. As I hadn't been invited I wrote asking for my name to be added. On the day I stayed with the leaders till, with half a lap left I found something in reserve and sprinted the rest of the way winning by some 20 yards. When two weeks later I missed winning the Inter-counties title by two tenths of a second I felt things were going according to plan.

The AAA championships took place to the accompaniment of intermittent showers, some very heavy. As we walked to the start the sky turned black and after a couple of laps the heavens opened. All I can remember of the race was being in front with two laps to go and feeling so good that I knew I was going to win. After receiving the trophy from Lord Burghley I was collared by Jack Crump who asked if I was available to run against France and it suddenly hit me that I'd realised my ambition.

However, to put things in some sort of perspective here's a quotation from Melvin Watman's 'History of British Athletics' published in 1968. In the chapter on the Steeplechase after tracing the development of the event from 1850 up to 1935 he states:

For the next 15 years steeplechasing languished as one of Britain's 'cinderella' events attracting only mediocre flat runners who saw a possible short cut to championship honours and international representation and treated by spectators as something of a music hall turn. The rot stopped in 1950 thanks to Welshman John Disley and the foresight of AAA National Coach Geoff Dyson...

Only just in time, wasn't it? That 'mediocre' hurt though. 'Moderate' I might agree to.

Then what have I got to apologise for? In the 59 championships up to 1949 my winning time (10.29) had been bettered on only seven occasions. Even Nurmi in 1922 took 42 seconds longer and he wasn't 'mediocre'. I rest my case'.

Ken Anderson: The Flying Policeman

Ken Anderson goes down in the club history as its first member to gain Olympic selection. An outstanding sprinter as the club records in 1956 show. He ran a 9.9 100 yards and 22.0 220 yards in both 1947 and 1951. The earlier performances gained him selection for the 4 x 100m relay squad in the 1948 London Olympics. He competed in the heats but was somewhat controversially omitted from the Final squad that took bronze.

He was a prolific racer winning numerous titles at county, Northern and Inter-county level as well as sweeping victories in a whole raft of local meetings. A Liverpool policeman he dominated their national sprint scene for several years. He particularly loved relays and together with some other formidable sprinters that were emerging took county and Northern championship titles.

Cross country falters

The immediate post-War seasons did not quite match the dominance enjoyed pre-War. We have noted Norman Jones' success in the national and there was still plenty of talent around to figure prominently over the country but Wirral AC had emerged as a strong club. Pembroke were to win the Liverpool and District title

in 1947-48 but were reduced to silver by the green hoops and even third on one occasion. It is noted that Norman Jones and Jimmy Auburn were still the leading lights but the club was fading and awaiting an influx of new talent. Shortly though Ken Gates was to appear and a lead a mid-50s recovery.

Diamond Jubilee

Denied a silver celebration in 1940 by Hitler's intervention Pembroke was not to be denied a Diamond Jubilee celebration in 1949 and duly gathered at Reeces Restaurant for a well-attended Dinner. Given the post-War constraints the no-option meal of soup, chicken casserole, fruit salad and ice cream was rather grand.

Harry Kelly, Bob Roberts and Dick Dunphy enlivened the proceedings with well received speeches and there was much indeed to celebrate. The journey from Baptist Chapel to comfortable Court Hey and multiple individual and team success stories *en route* was a cause of great joy. Little was it anticipated that subsequent years could get even better.

Summary of the decade

Pembroke had clearly been on the fringe of some exciting prospects when the Chamberlain announcement scattered its members all over the world in defence of their country. Amazingly, though, the spirit remained very much alive as the Pembrokian Link endeavoured to keep everybody in touch and ready for demob. The thirties heroes were mostly around and were to still figure prominently in the club's re-emergence. The major difference now was that track stars were now appearing in the shape, primarily, of Charlie Kelly, Trevor Holt and Olympian Ken Anderson. Lurking away there were younger members who would transform things further.

The Fabulous Fifties

We have seen that Pembroke not only successfully survived a World war but picked up remarkably well and credit for this goes to a large extent to tireless efforts by officers of the club such as Bob Roberts, Eddie McCartney, Bobby Cooke, Charlie Bourne and others. The decade to follow was remarkable in many ways. In spite of several austerity years job opportunities were good and a generation was emerging that was better educated and more ambitious. Overwhelmingly club members had previously been working class emanating from mid-terrace and council house origins but increasingly there were the 'scholarship' boys and girls edging into grammar schools. For example, in my years at the Liverpool Collegiate School (1945-49) my form throughout had subsequently not just myself but Jack Tustin and Ron Mudge. There were others that headed for the Liverpool Institute, the Alsop, the Holt etc and grammar schools on the periphery of the city. The girls had Blackburne House, Notre Dame, Childwall Valley and so on to choose from. Additionally there were 'intermediate schools' such as St Margaret, Anfield, and Highfields. For others there was a range of skills and apprenticeships to be had with day release to further education establishments of quality particular the prestigious Byrom Street Tech in the city centre. A far more affluent life style than any previous generation beckoned with many heading towards owning their own homes, driving cars and exotic holidays. Things could only get better.

In spite of a post-war drabness these were exciting times to be young and the club grew in strength and quality. Always a family club the members not only competed vigorously and successfully but socialised extensively. For example it was a regular occurrence for up to 20 of the unattached males to gather in the city centre on Saturday nights prior heading for the strict tempo destinations of the Rialto, Locarno, Grafton and Reeces ballrooms, even venturing further afield to the Tower Ballroom, New Brighton. Alternatively there was a plethora of 'hops' adjacent to the lengthy circuit of Queens Drive. The girls had a more scaled down version

of the same thing. A major highlight though, was the club's own dances which were well supported and often led to 'pairing offs' and subsequent engagements and marriages. Overwhelmingly it was the beginning of life-time association and friendships.

We will try and tell the story of Pembroke from the social side as much as from that of competitive success.

The Ace of Clubs

The 'Ace of Clubs' was a monthly magazine that came into being in October 1950. It had followed the 'Pembrokian Link' which was started during the Second World War by President, Bob Roberts, mainly to keep in touch with members serving in the forces. It continued as a substantial regular feature monthly or bi-monthly until the mid-1950s. By the latter half of the decade it was reduced to a quarterly issue and eventually stumbled to its demise in 1959 after a remarkable 70 issues. There were occasional attempts to renew it thereafter but it never quite caught on.

It was the inspiration of Dick Dunphy a useful athlete himself and a tireless worker for the club. For years under his guidance it was a sophisticated production for its time consisting of 20 pages or more closely typed even with photographs. It was printed via contacts of Charlie Bourne and stapled together with a cover that showed the Liver Bird badge and other shields.

Naturally the content was about results but also contained comment by the Secretary, Eddie McCartney, reports of club AGMs, profiles of athletes, social calendars, even gossipy items. It encouraged comments from the readers, letters, cartoons, poems and reminiscences. Fortunately, all copies are extant and would appeal to a social historian researching that time.

This was, of course the heavy decade of National Service and members were scattered across the globe. The Ace of Clubs was very important in keeping them informed and enthusiastic.

Cross Country revival

We have seen how Pembroke dominated the local cross country scene between the wars. Recovery for all clubs was problematic and it was Wirral AC that was the leading club for several years. In the 15 years post-1945 the local benchmark, the Liverpool and District Championships, fell to Wirral seven times, Pembroke six and the Harriers twice. After a single title in 1948 Pembroke put together a remarkable run of victories in the Fifties 1956-57-58-59-60 plus two in the early sixties, 1961 and 1962. Ken Gates scored four individual wins in 1953, 1954, 1956 and 1957 and Ron Williams won in 1958. The club's success was down to depth of quality runners.

In the West Lancashire Championships Ken Gates won in 1954 at Woolton and Eddie Williams in 1956 at Southport. There was parallel success to the L & D with team titles in 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1961. The Juniors were also enjoying prominence with an Arthur Price hat-trick in 1951, 1952 and 1953. The team title was secured four years in succession 1954, 1956, 1957 and 1958. The Youths team won in 1958.

In the hugely competitive Northern championships Ken Gates raced to victory in 1955 at Sedgefield. The depth in strength again told as the club enjoyed third in 1956, second in 1957 and third in successive years 1958, 1959 and 1960. The Juniors were second in 1954, took the title in 1955 and were second again in 1956.

Parliament Hill Fields was the scene of the club's best ever performance in the National Championships. An off-form Ken Gates was 41st but there was excellent support from John Robinson(76), Eddie Williams(81), Barry Juxon(81), Arthur Prescott(131) and Les Hollingsworth(140) to finish an agonising fourth. However, with Vince Bateman(154), Harry Sholicar(175) and Jack Highton(180) the club won the prestigious Charles Otway trophy for the club with the first complete team of nine to finish.

Clearly the outstanding runner of this period was the diminutive **Ken Gates**. To top his Northern title (1955) he finished third in the National. He picked up several international vests and famously beat the legendary Gordon Pirie in an Inter-county event. But there were other top class runners in the shape of **Arthur Price** as an outstanding Junior and **Ron Williams** whose story we tell later. Above all else there was a formidable back up squad that ensured a decade of quality performances.

During this period the energetic Charlie Bourne formed a strong Marathon section which won the team race in the Liverpool Marathon of 1951. Endurance running fizzed during the fifties.

Athletic Review

Athletic Review, for the princely price of one shilling, was a regular monthly magazine from the late 1940s onwards. Clubs were invited to send in reports of their activities. The following gives some idea of club activities of that time.

February 1950 Vol 3 No 10

December 31st we entertained East Liverpool Wheelers in a Harriers v Cyclists race over 8 miles and the cyclists won rather easily having the first four men home. East Liverpool 26pts, Pembroke 53pts.

January 14th we renewed acquaintance with Sutton AC and Wirral AC and once again the senior team, being much below strength, was heavily defeated by both Sutton 27pts, Wirral 60pts, Pembroke 93pts. George Radcliffe in ninth position was our first counter.

Our youths, however, are doing rather well. Arthur Price again ran excellently and is going to prove a worthy challenger for individual honours and with Green, Mullineux, McIver and Woodbridge backing up will go close for team honours Sutton 25pts, Pembroke 44pts, Wirral 55pts. First individual, A Price. Time 20.35.

January 21st. There was another triangular fixture with Liverpool University and Wallasey as visitors. In the Senior race we placed the first three men home, Dick Dunphy and Ron Perry again being 'guilty' of a dead heat with Trevor Holt just behind third. Pembroke 25pts, Varsity 38pts, Wallasey 75pts.

Our Youth team also scored over Wallasey by the close margin of 4pts. Sam McIver was first individual and he was well supported by Green, Mullineux and Woodbridge. Pembroke 17pts, Wallasey 21pts.

Our Ladies Section has not been much in the news of late but we are glad to note...the Ladies Captain has been an exception. We must congratulate Miss Muriel Dangerfield on an exceedingly good show in the Women's National Junior CC race at Birmingham on January 14th. This was actually her first attempt in a cross country race and to finish fifth is a most encouraging performance.

Our first film show proved a great success...in the programme for February we hope to feature the Olympics of 1948 and the one for March the Olympics of 1936.

August 1950 Vol 4 No 4

This has been a grand month for our members and many notable successes have been gained in championship, team and open events. Congratulations to CJ Kelly on winning the 880 yards All Ireland Championship and also the team that won the NCAA one-mile relay championship.

Our members have been well to the fore and have attended many recognised sports meetings including Liverpool Police, Dunlop, British Legion, Liverpool Corporation and Rochdale Police Sports. At these meetings

first prizes have been won by J Hockenhull, Ken Bruns, Len Fieldsend, Irene Leach, Len Barton, Ken Thomson, Jimmy Milburn, Arthur Price and PW Swift. There were seven second placings and six third prizes.

We finished both first and second team in the mile medley at Liverpool Police and also the Vernon Sangster Cup at British Legion and the WM Rice Cup at Liverpool Corporation. The ladies not to be outdone managed to secure second place at the 660 yards at Liverpool.

Other notable placings were in the NCAA Championships were Charlie Kelly finished third in the 880 yards and Trevor Holt third in the two-mile Steeplechase.

Ken Cookson put up a grand show in the Kendal 20-mile road race finishing fourth in 2.21.53. We are expecting a good show from Ken and our other long distance men in the Liverpool Marathon on August 12th.

The Jimmy Auburn Story

It is hard to believe as Jimmy Auburn started his running career in 1926, the 'Chariots of Fire' era. His first efforts were at the Stanley Athletic Grounds, later occupied by the Stanley Abattoir. In those days the track season opened on Good Friday and athletes were expected to turn up the night before to tidy up the place and possibly get in some last minute training! Eventually he found himself attracted into the ranks of Liverpool Pembroke Athletic Club which was enjoying a post-First World War boom and were to dominate local distance running for two decades.

The track season consisted of meetings scattered all over the North West and still a Youth in 1927 he enjoyed his first success with a second place in the Liverpool Police Meeting He had similar joy elsewhere in middle distance events in Earlestown and St Helens. The winter approached and in his first cross country season he was second in the 1928 Northern Counties Championships Youth Cross Country Championships. He was now well and truly bitten by the running bug and the 1930's saw him become a regular member of the powerful Pembroke squad both in cross country and road running. In between he posted numerous track successes, particularly in the mile handicap races he relished.

A highlight of these meetings were the Two Mile Team races, four to run and three to count and where tactics were as important as speed. Pembroke were the local king-pins and their ranks contained internationals like Norman Jones. They collected a staggering total of 27 wins before the outbreak of World War Two and Jimmy was a regular member of the quartet. He was also part of the club team that finished third in the News of the World Manchester to Blackpool Road Relay classic. He excelled also over the country and there is barely a local team result, especially the Liverpool and District and West Lancashire Championships, that over ten years did not contain his name.

The war brought almost a complete stoppage to athletics but in 1946, now in his mid-thirties, Jimmy took once more to the track, country and road. In the first post-war Northern Championships at Radcliffe he finished 9th and later in the National Championships at Reading he was 51st. No mean achievements in what was a golden period for distance running. Meanwhile he resumed his track career taking a third place in the Northern 6 mile event at Fallowfield behind Pembroke's new star, Trevor Holt, and Manchester's Norman Ashcroft. He also rejoined the clubs' successful two mile teamers.

Amazingly in the 1950's and well into veteran status he could pull performances out of the bag and startle team mates half his age. Gradually anno domini took its toll but his love affair with running continued and he remained around for many more years. Eventually he was down to spectating and his diminutive figure would prowl the local scene offering gentle encouragement to the next generation. Occasionally he would spot me when I was then the secretary of Pembroke and, without a word slip, an envelope in my hand. It always contained the entire interest that had accrued in his savings account as a donation to the club he loved. A modest, almost shy, individual he summed up the characteristics of a long forgotten age, loyalty, team spirit and sportsmanship. A wonderful person to know.

The Ken Beisty Story

The following are excerpts from Reflections of a Runner by Ken Beisty. This is offered as an example of the type of member the club recruited in those years. The overwhelming majority were from working class backgrounds but some were scholarship winners like Ken and unknowingly upwardly mobile.

`As children we often ran for miles. We ran after lorries loaded with raw nuts for Bibby's, brown sugar filled hessian bags for Tate and Lyle or oranges for the markets of Liverpool... If the urge took us we would run the few miles along `the Docky' till we reached the Liverpool Pier Head there to gaze at the huge Liver Birds atop the Royal Liver Building.

...But running was natural rather than habitual and usually non-competitive. For some strange children's fad we once set out to see how many times we could run around the neighbourhood block. We stopped only to eat the jam buttes or drink the water our bemused mothers insisted upon, running almost the whole evening till one by one the mothers dragged their protesting offspring away to bed.

...I became a racer when I was sixteen, first sipping the intoxicant victory, near or complete, that distinguishes racing from mere running. I have sought that cup constantly since....Five years earlier I had won the `Eleven Plus' scholarship to St Mary's College in Crosby...in educative and social terms it was light years removed from all my previous experiences. Some of the Christian Brothers who ran it had difficulty understanding the mores of the `Bootle Bucks' as their paid fee students soon named us.

...I wore the tie but hated the cap and so wore it infrequently. Yet I grew to respect, if not love the college, for the insight into new worlds of art and music allied to the world of literature...But how stark was the contrast, rushing home from rugby seven-a-side on wonderful playing fields to join my mates in soccer in the street or dashing home in the hated `whites' to join the boys in a tense battle waged on our bomb site wicket.

...In the last two months I had two aims. The first was to pass my examinations for it was plain that I could not stay on in the sixth form and study for university. The second was to win the school annual cross country race at the senior level...Two years earlier I had trotted around the course...the previous year I had tried a little harder and been rewarded with 12th place.

...My father had been a competent runner and boxer in the army...so I had no hesitation in asking the advice of such an expert. The advice was brief and to the point, `Get to the front and don't let anyone pass you'. My father's strategy proved fine until the mid-point of the race where I still led...The tragedy struck as I ran off course...a fifty metre lead was now a fifty metre deficit...how hard I chased but to no avail. At the finish I was still ten metres behind the winner yet I learned so much. How lonely is second place.

...I doubt that Kevin Gilligan knew that I wore his scalp on my belt with pride. I never beat him again, not even by the short stride that sufficed that summer day but then neither did too many others. Five years or so later we ran for the same club, he an international and me a relative scrubber. As a student at Oxford he ran for Great Britain and also became a dual winner in the World University Games of 1958 and 1959.

Between leaving college in 1950 and my discovery of Emil Zatopek in 1952 running was far from my thoughts. In those early post World War Two years it did not seem too hard for a youngster to find a job, even in Bootle. I had high hopes and only moderate ambition. Knowing heads nodded as I failed interviews...in desperation I took a temporary job as a laboratory assistant in Bootle Grammar School. What a come-down for a college toff, washing beakers for £1.7s a week and no future.

...I intended a fast move out to greener pastures but in fact stayed there for nearly three years. This was almost entirely due to the fatherly interest of my boss, Ted Rowlands. As I sat at the rear of his classes he taught the mysteries of science to his pupils, gaining an experience of the subjects that had eluded me at college. Avogadro, Boyle and Lavoisier became familiar and a lot easier to understand. Ted was encouraging in my efforts in night school classes which were to last five years as I sought some higher form of qualification.

...I had great mates and for years we were brothers. Together we drank and chased girls, broke hearts and had them broken, playing all the roles of a Bootle lad. Soccer was our first love, watching the Pool or Everton, and playing at the slightest urge. Since Tudno Street was too small to own a team, I played with Campbell Street, the home of my mates.

...Ted managed to get my wage increased to £2.10s and I thought I had it made. I could visit the Jewish tailors on London Road and to Bold Street to buy some wares on the weekly. As Frank Sinatra sang, 'When I was seventeen it was a very good year'. Eighteen, not so good. Mateship was terminated by the call to arms, National Service. My study got me deferment for a few years but then I failed a medical test with a hearing defect. Just as well as I was convinced of the idiocy of all things military, a view not likely to be popular with the Forces. At 18 my main concern was the loss of my mates and I moped for months.

...Zatopek changed all that. Emil Zatopek was the first real runner I ever saw, bestriding the years 1945-55. I first saw him on cinema newsreel in late summer 1952 winning the 5K, 10K and Marathon in the Helsinki Olympics. From the newspapers I sought more information about my idol. His training volume was considered super-human at the time. In Emil and his achievements I saw the way I was seeking.

...Cinder tracks seemed the obvious way to meet runners and to practise the Zatopekian form of training. The track(Bootle) was circled endlessly. Then one evening I met Ossie Hey, obviously a real runner with his splendid red and white hooped vest distinguished by the Liver Bird. He invited me to watch his club championship three mile race to be held a few days later. I found the grass track in Fazakerley where it was to be run and Ossie introduced me to Eddie McCartney, the club secretary and Bobbie Cooke, an older athlete cum coach. They gently dissuaded me of my intention to race. I still remember Bob`s smiling eyes.

...So instead I watched in growing awe as Ken Gates led them home in a manner fitting his country and international status. Behind him Jack Highton, Eddie Williams, Arthur Price and a stream of others followed. All seemed of Zatopek proportions to me. In local terms they were Pembroke AC and just about to enter a period of excellence in distance running where their teams dominated local road and cross country racing for years`.

Pembroke Ladies

There is little information about Pembroke ladies between the wars although there must have been some competing but immediate post-war saw a gradual increase in numbers and quality performers emerged. Here we highlight a selection of them.

Shirley Craig

After experiencing some school success Shirley Craig was to meet up, as so many others did, with the indefatigable Bobby Cooke and she joined the embryonic Ladies Section of the club with Ruby Williams, Freda Buchanan and Muriel Dangerfield. On entering the perennial Open Handicap meetings she experienced immediate success over 100 yards and this was to continue for several years. In 1949 she gained her first

championship medal when she placed third in the Northern Counties Women`s Athletics Association (NCWAA) and a similar bronze in the 220 yards. Interestingly Pembroke were now building a reputation as relay runners and Shirley was part of the 4 x 110yards relay squad that just failed to beat Birchfield Harriers in the Womens Amateur Athletic Association (WAAA) Intermediate 440 yards relay. The following year, 1950, Shirley won the 220 yards NCWAA title, the first Pembrokian to do so. She just lost out too on the 100 yards championship, both times setting new club records. She continued to be massively successful at open meetings and finished that season holding every women`s club record with the exception of the High Jump. Her main aim though was to be part of a winning NCWAA relay title. This was to follow.

Muriel Dangerfield

Muriel Dangerfield was arguably the most significant of the post-war females not only for her performances but for leadership as captain. She came into athletics via successful sprinting at Cowley Girls School. In 1945 in a local sports meeting she finished second to a Ruby Williams who immediately recruited her into the Pembroke family. It is quoted that... `doubled the membership`. There was little competition for women and so Muriel had to wait some three years to experience a championship success which came in 1948 in the shape of third in the NCWAA 440 yards. Together with Shirley Craig throughout 1949 she was also collecting individual prizes in open sports meetings as well as relay success. That winter she turned her attention to cross country running and trained ferociously. At the 1950 National Women`s Junior Cross Country Championships at Birmingham she was a brilliant fifth among some very experienced girls. She later finished 10th in the Northern Women`s Championship. With a parallel interest in netball she helped form a successful Pembroke Ladies Netball team and was leading scorer. In 1951 she was back to her old sprinting power picking up prizes on the local circuit. Although possessing a fine turn of speed her forte was definitely at 440 yards and had there been opportunities at 880 yards might well have been among the country`s best. Interestingly she was also blessed with a fine academic brain and was a highly qualified research chemist when there were few females in that line of work.

Doreen Ashun

Doreen Ashun will go down in history as the first Pembroke female to pick up an international vest. For several years she was an accomplished sprinter and part of a very formidable relay squad that captured numerous local prizes. Her real talent began to emerge in 1951 when she linked up with Muriel Dangerfield, Shirley Craig and Val Wallace to collect the Northern 4 x 100yards title in 50.5. This led to both Doreen and Shirley gaining selection to run for the North in a 4 x 220 yards relay at a floodlit White City where they were third.

In 1952 she could hardly put a foot wrong. The Pembroke girls dominated local relays and Doreen took both the 100 yards and 220 yards in the Lancashire Championships. The familiar quartet failed to defend their previous years sprint title but they combined to lift the 660 yards alternative. Her final triumph was to win the Northern 220 yards. This brought her to national attention and international selection was to follow. She competed against Italy in Naples in October of that year. For some mysterious reason she then disappears from the scene, simply being recorded as `gone` the following year. Her times as noted in 1956 were still club records.

Pat Green

Pat Green was a niece of coach Bobby Cooke so she was, unsurprisingly, inducted into the Pembroke club at an early age. The post war years was a boom time for the whole club and the Ladies Section similarly grew apace. Pat came on to the scene at the same time as Ruby Williams, Shirley Craig, Muriel Dangerfield, Doreen Ashun and Irene Leach making it somewhat tough to make relay teams! Pat had become something of a star at Highfields School winning the 100 yards three years in succession but pure sprinting was clearly not going to be her forte. She shifted first to 400 yards gaining a third place in the Northern Women`s Championships and went one place better the following year. But it was in cross country and road running that she really began to shine finishing fifth in the Northern and gaining representative honours in an Inter-Area match.

This promising career was cruelly cut short by a serious illness that lasted three years. She returned but things were never quite the same again. Undeterred she turned her attention to coaching and administration. She was to go on to reach the highest levels of the sport, hold numerous distinguished positions and team manage GB teams. She became a household name in the sport.

National Service: The Ronnie Williams Story

Like all lads of my generation over the age of 18 I had to do National Service. Apprentices were deferred until 21. I received my call-up papers along with my birthday cards on 21st November 1956. I was to report to the Royal Signals at Catterick Camp, Yorkshire by 4pm on 3rd December together with a railway ticket to Darlington Station where transport awaited for the camp. The train was full of lads from all walks of life and we were loaded on to trucks for the 15 mile journey to the camp. I took with me a letter from the Amateur Athletic Association requesting the Commanding officer to allow me time and facilities to train as I was considered a very promising athlete.

The first week was spent getting kitted out etc and basic training started but no running which didn't go down too well! On the following Wednesday I was told to report to Corporal Albert Quicksall (of Manchester United fame) in the gym. I was told, 'You are running in the Northern Command League 7 mile cross country race today. The team consisted of 5 Physical Training Instructors, 2 Drill Instructors and me. Transport was by Land Rover to the Scots Guards tank testing area (a proper cross country course not a run around the park). The team members didn't say much to me. I was told later that I was replacing one of their own.

I was surprised to see a big turn-out of about 180 runners but as there were about 35,000 troops in 12 regiments at Catterick I shouldn't have been surprised. I finished second to a guy named Prince from the Midlands. I was happy with that after not running for a week. Quicksall was the best of the instructors finishing 25th. I was allowed to train after that as there was a race at Ripon the following week. We travelled in the back of a 3 ton truck, not the best transport before a race. I managed to turn the tables on Prince for a win. The instructors had a little more to say on the way back! To the envy of my fellow barrack room-mates I was allowed leave for Christmas and the New Year as Eddie McCartney (the Pembroke Secretary) had written for me to be allowed to run in the Lancashire County Championships in which I finished 7th making the team for the Inter-Counties.

The Signals only did 4 weeks basic training as it was a technical outfit. I moved from 7 Training Regiment to 2 Training Regiment to train as a Radar Mechanic. I had spoken to the officer in charge of cross country at the 1st league race. He told me Ken Norris had left their regiment 12 months earlier and they wanted me to replace him. I would be given time for training. My first race for 2TR was the Northern Command Championship in which I finished third behind Basil Heatley and John Anderson. 2TR team failed to qualify for the Army Championships but I got through as an individual.

I was allowed home for all of Pembroke's championships plus the Inter-Counties in which I finished 20th, fourth counter. March brought the Army Cross Country Championship at Landsdowne Race Course. Heatley was the winner and I finished 7th just making the Army team of eight. With a squad of 10 there were two full internationals, two Junior internationals and six county representatives. I soon realised I would not get far in this type of company on 50 miles a week so I increased my training to twice a day and 3 gym sessions a week. For making the Army team I was promoted to NCO in charge of the Post Room and also excused all duties. This was the nearest thing to a full time athlete in those days.

The 1957 track season showed the extra training was paying dividends with constantly better times. I got home for all Pembroke races throughout the season. The Army Championship 3 miles was won by Basil Heatley with Roy Fowler second and me on third in 14.12. I finished the season in September at the Glasgow Police Sports Invitation 3 miles in 14.00 dead. After 19 races I had 7 firsts, 4 seconds and 4 thirds.

After a month's rest I ran the Lancs Relay (about 3.25 miles) in 15.25, the fourth fastest of the day. Not bad on no training! It was time to set my targets for 1958. They would be the Army Cross Country Championships at the end of February and the track 3 mile at the end of June.

I only ran in the championship race over the country starting with the Lancs in January, finishing 5th...a bit rusty. Inter-Counties I was 9th, Liverpool and District 1st and Northern Command 1st to qualify for the Army Championship. This was held at Farnham over a heavy 6 mile course with a field of over 400. I led most of the way until I fell heavily in a ditch at 4.5 miles. Anderson and Flockton passed me gaining some 70 yards. I can remember vividly thinking I have not trained twice a

day for four months. I ran like a man possessed and caught them in the finishing field with 500 yards to go. I was thinking do I take a breather or do I go straight past. I passed and won, target one achieved. I finished the season in March with a run in the Army v UAU match finishing second to Martin Hyman. Not a bad season.

After a weeks rest I changed the training to more speed work for the track. In May I ran the 7th Stage in the Manchester to Blackpool Road Relay for Pembroke. This was the 6 mile leg where clubs fielded their best runners. I started off a minute in front of Basil Heatley and we finished exactly a minute apart, both on 28.36, fastest times of the day. This told me the training was on course for a good track season.

I started the track season with a 3 miles run in the Signals v Durham University winning in 14.17. Fitting in races for Pembroke, Army and Invitation was going to be heavy work. In the Lancs Championship I was second in 14.07 and I was third in a six miler at Tooting Beck, London in 29.09. In the Army Championship I ran 14.04 to win and break Ken Norris's record by six seconds. It was not so much the winning that pleased me but seeing such names as Chris Chataway, Frank Sando, Ken Norris and Basil Heatley on the trophy. To follow these made me feel so proud. Target 2 had been achieved.

The season continued to go well with a 4.10 mile against Sandhurst and 6th in the AAA Championships with 14.04. eventually I broke the 14 minute barrier at the Inter-Services Match with 13.52, finishing second to Clarke. This I followed by a second to Bruce Tulloh in the Combined Services v AAA v UAU in 13.49. My season Finished at Port sunlight in a two mile race with 9.05. I had run 32 races, 19 firsts, 7 seconds and 3 thirds. I had run more races than the previous year due to invitations.

Footnote: little did I know that 4 weeks later I would start a 3 month stay at Fort William Hospital after a serious motoring accident involving other Pembroke lads. At 22 years of age that was the end of competing at the highest level. The letter from the AAA had said '...a very promising athlete'. I would now add '...but was not allowed time to fulfil that promise'.

(The serious accident also took the life of Arthur Prescott another prominent Pembrokian)

Training with Bobbie Cooke

We have seen just how important Bobby Cooke was in the life of the club. He was instrumental in moving the club to Court Hey, was an enthusiastic recruiter but was also a talented coach. Here we re-produce his training schedule for Boys.

Schedules mid-1950s

Boys (14-16) training schedule 1.5 and 2 miles

Session 1

Warm-up and exercises.

3 miles good steady run.

Limber down.

Session 2

Warm up and exercises.

Repetitive running fast and slow. 440 yards at 70 secs per lap.

Limber down.

Session 3

Warm up and exercises

3 miles Fartlek (Playway)

Should include speed bursts (winders) at varying distances.

Limber down

Session 4

Warm up and exercises

3 miles at a good pace with at least two fast-ish 880 yards.

Limber down

Notes

1. Providing training is strictly supervised a Boy may train 4 times per week.
2. All racing should be carefully graded and racing outside own age group discouraged.
3. Where schools have a heavy racing programme training must be adjusted accordingly
4. Races should be looked at as a part of one`s training programme.
5. Training sessions should consist of 2 for stamina and 2 for speed.
6. Speed work over shorter distances and stamina work exceeding the competitive distance.
7. Each session should commence with a period of warming up and body and breathing exercise.
8. Limber down to cool off.
9. Where boys can run together it is advisable that each boy sets the pace in turn.

The above gives an intriguing insight into coaching approaches of the time. Already `new` ideas were influencing coaching methods. Here we have some elements of interval work, fartlek and tempo running...not so far distant from contemporary schedules. But all of this would be largely on the road or grass with the occasional Sunday session, perhaps, at the cinder surface of Bootle Stadium. It produced some excellent results nevertheless.

Club records at September 1st 1956

We are fortunate in having a list of the club records at 1956 and shows just how significant that decade was in terms of progress across track and field.

100 yards	Senior	9.9	K Anderson	1947 and 1951
	Junior	9.9	J Railton	1954 and 1956
	Ladies	11.1	D Ashun	1952 (twice)
	J Ladies	11.5	C Carter	1952 (twice)
100 metres	Senior	10.9	J Railton	1955
	Ladies	12.5	D Ashun	1952
220 yards	Senior	22.0	K Anderson	1947 and 1951
	Junior	22.4	J Railton	1954 (twice)

	Ladies	25.6	D Ashun	1952
440 yards	Senior	49.2	J Railton	1952
	Junior	49.2	J Railton	1952
	Ladies	63.5	S Craig	1949
880 yards	Senior	1.54.9	C Kelly	1951
	Junior	2.00.7	J Hanley	1947
1500m	Senior	3.57.4	K Gilligan	1956
1 Mile	Senior	4.17.8	K Gilligan	1956
	Junior	4.26.4	C Camden	1956
	Ladies	5.59.5	D Bayliss	1952
2 Miles	Senior	9.17.0	R Williams	1956
	Junior	9.23.6	R Williams	1954
3 Miles	Senior	14.19.6	K Gilligan	1956
	Junior	15.23.0	R Perry	1949
6 Miles	Senior	29.48.0	K Gates	1954
10.000m	Senior	30.52.2	K Gates	1954
2 Mile SC	Senior	10.24.0	T Holt	1949
1 Mile SC	Junior	5.01.0	A Caldwell	1956

Club records at September 1st 1956 FIELD

Long Jump	Senior	22ft ½ ins	J Railton	1956
	Junior	21ft 11ins	L Barton	1950
	Ladies	18ft 6.5 ins	D Ashun	1952
High Jump	Senior	6ft 0ins	C Shiers	1955
	Junior	5ft 6ins	C Shiers	1949
Hop/Step/Jump	Senior	44ft 3.5ins	C Shiers	1955
	Junior	43ft 0.5ins	L Barton	1947
Shot	Senior	31ft 4ins	J Milburn	1955

	Junior	43ft 6.5ins	A Dean	1954???
Discus	Senior	89ft	J Milburn	1951
	Junior	93ft	E Williams	1950
	Ladies	76ft 7ins	V Strain	1954
Javelin	Senior	143ft	J Denton	1951
	Junior	135ft	K Shaw	1951
HURDLES				
220 yds H	Senior	27.0	J Milburn	1955
440 yds H	Senior	58.0	J Milburn	1955
80m H	Lades	12.8	E Davies	1953
RELAYS				
4 x 110 yds	Senior	43.6	Thompson/Keith	1956
			Connor/Railton	
	Junior	44.0	Matthews/Brandwood	1954
			Railton/Hughes	
	Ladies	50.4	Craig/Dangerfied	1951
			Wallace/Ashun	
660 yds	Ladies	1.17.5	Craig/ Dangerfield	1951
(Medley)			Wallace/Ashun	
1 Mile	Senior	3.31.4	Connor/Keith	1956
(Medley)			Wilson/Railton	
1 Mile	Senior	3.19.6	Railton/Connor	1956
(4 x 440 yds)			Wilson/Keith	

With appropriate translations from imperial to metric these performances are extremely impressive given the constraints of the time. A team composed of the above would give a contemporary club squad a run for their money! We have heard about **Ken Anderson, Charlie Kelly, Muriel Dangerfield and Doreen Ashun** but there are other names that catch the eye.

Take **Cliff Shiers** a Northern and Civil Services champion. His 6 feet was accomplished with the Western Roll. If he was 'flopping' today that would be well in excess of 2m. His Hop, Step and Jump of 44feet 3.5 inches translates into today's Triple Jump as ? **Kenny Gates** was, of course, club champion at 6 miles but **Kevin Gilligan**, a universities champion, recorded an outstanding 3 mile time not to mention his sub-4minute 1500m. The relay team time of 43.6 for the sprint version is good but the longer race, four 'quarters' in 3.19.6, is especially good (**Jim Railton, Harry Connor, Ian Keith and Frank Wilson**).

Len Barton was an intriguing character reputedly indifferent to training but a student of technique. He built a reputation locally as a sprinter and jumper and in 1949 he travelled to Barrow for the Northern Junior Championships. His Triple Jump of 42 feet 8 inches not only took the title but broke the old record substantially. As in so many other cases National Service in the RAF but with a bit of 'leave wangling' he got free to compete in the 1950 Northern Championships at Butlins, Skegness! He retained his Triple title with, for him, a modest 40 feet 10 inches but added the Long Jump crown as well with 20 feet 11 inches. But his big moment was to come. The AAA Junior Championships made a long overdue appearance in the North at Port Sunlight. After yet another disappointing Triple when he only collected third medal he turned his attention to the Long Jump. His first two leaps were good but his third was perfect and he hit the sand at 21 feet 11 inches, the first British Junior title in the club's sixty-year history.

The **Ronnie Williams** story is told elsewhere.

The remarkable Jim Railton

Arguably the most outstanding track and field athlete in the club's history to date though is **JAN (Jim) Railton**. He was nothing short of sensational. He started his career at the Liverpool Collegiate School trouncing all and sundry in his age group and then went on to represent Liverpool Schools in the Lancashire Championships finishing third with an unremarkable 16 feet 7.5 inches. He was spotted, as so many others, by coach Bob Cooke and had soon filled in a Pembroke application form. In 1951 he progressed to very rapidly to 19 feet 2.5 inches. But his running was also taking shape. In the Merseyside Grammar Schools Championships he was second to Tom Farrell, another Collegiate pupil, in the 440 yards with 55.6. Farrell, a Liverpool Harrier, was to go on to represent Great Britain at 400m hurdles in the Melbourne Olympics in 1956. Before the 1951 season was out Railton had lowered his quarter best to 54.8.

Jim was active in the Air Training Corps at school and won many of their national titles. Meanwhile in 1952 at the Collegiate School Sports he took the Victor Ludorum award with victories in the 100 yards (10.2), 220 yards (23.2), 440 Yards (55.0) and Long Jump (20 feet 2 inches). That must have been some occasion! At Bradford he captured the all England Schools Long Jump in blustery conditions with 18 feet 11.5 inches. But in a crowded and highly successful season his most significant moment was yet to come. On June 15th he burst on to the international scene with an amazing performance that was to earn him a 'World Sports Certificate'. At the somewhat routine Lancashire and Cheshire Boys Club Championships at Blackpool's Stanley Park he stormed round the 400m grass track in 49.2. This was the best performance of any Pembrokian to date, Junior or Senior. The 16 and a half-year old had briefly caught the imagination of the sporting world.

1953 was a fairly quiet season but Jim took two Northern Junior titles, 100yards (10.2) and 220 yards (22.8). During the season he reduced his 100 yard best to 10 seconds dead. He even appeared at the British Games at the White City clocking 10.4 for the heat of the 100 yards and securing second in the Final with 10.6. 1954 was an excellent season. He retained his Lancashire Junior title, 100 yards (10.3) and 220 yards (23.0) and still at the Collegiate there was another breathtaking sweep of the 100 yards (10.0), 220 yards (22.60 and 440 yards (51.6). At the Northern Senior Champs he was second in the 220 yards (22.80 and a fortnight later easily won the Junior the 100 yards in a wonderful 9.9 and the 220 yards in 22.4. On the 10th July at the White City a Pembroke Junior sprint relay line up of Peter Matthews, Geoff Brandwood, Jim Railton and Fred Hughes took the National honours. On the 31st July the National Junior 100 yards title was in his ownership in a record 9.9.

In 1955 Jim was at Loughborough University and it was a quieter year but was thereabouts in 1956. Now a senior he was second in the Lancs Championships 100/220 yards and similarly in the Northern 100 yards (9.9) and 220 yards (22.3). On the 28th July at Port Sunlight for the AAA Junior and Senior Championships Jim was anchor to a fourth spot in the senior 4 x 110 yards relay but was to collect a silver in the 4 x 440 yards quartet of Harry Connor, Jim Railton, Ian Keith and Frank Wilson. In 1957 did the sprint double at the Lancs 100 yards (9.9) and 220 Yards (22.5) but thereafter slips out of our story as he went 'Southwards'. There is though one story somewhat hidden in this remarkable career. In February 1955 Jim ran a 60m indoors in Dortmund against Germany's best. The result is unclear but the time is not... 6.7 seconds! Maybe his best performance?

Jim went on to coach an Oxford boat team and to head up the sporting facilities at the legendary Iffley Road stadium.

Summary of the decade

As indicated this was a pretty astonishing decade and worthy of the reflection we have given. It marked a further step upwards in terms of ambition and achievement. Even if things were to dip, as inevitably they always do, the club would never lose sight of the desire to strive for quality, to be not only the best as a family club but also to provide the escalator for talent to commence the journey to national and international recognition . A significant number of athletes were to subsequently take that ride.

Picture Gallery

A selection of photos and other materials follow to illustrate the 1940-60 period. It is not definitive and we are still looking for good quality illustrations

- Two group pictures taken at **Court Hey** show senior men both in 1937-38 and then ten years later in 1947-48. In spite of the effect of the Second World War a number of faces are the same and demonstrate the strong bond of loyalty that had grown over the years.
- Court Hey was the home of the club for 15 significant years, providing a base that it had not really had in previous decades.
- **Jimmy Auburn** sums up the loyalty of members. His 30 years of quality running was unusual for that time.
- The **road relay** photo of 1952 shows the squad that was runners-up in the prestigious 8 Stage Lancashire Road Relay Championship. The club was to take the title the following year. It is also shows four of the clubs long serving **officials**. Bobby Bridge and Harry Kelly had even been around before World War 1!
- A selection of photographs shows 'stars of the road' for this period. We would hope to add to this in the course of time. Included is **Ken Gates** the club's outstanding distance runner of the decade.
- We should not forgot the growing role of women in the club. Here the club's most successful lady, **Doreen Ashun**, receives an award.
- **Bootle Stadium** was the track headquarters used mostly on a Sunday morning. The cinder surface was deemed high quality at the time! The old wooden changing rooms can be seen in the background. Another picture captures the enjoyment of that time.
- A programme from the **Police Sports** held annually at their ground in Fairfield Road shows the range of events at a typical open and largely handicap meeting.
- Three '**Pembroke Personalities**' are illustrated whose fame, directly or indirectly, spread way beyond their running ability. **Sammy McIver**, the master of the one-liner, **Jacky Highton** who inspired a song and **Alan Caldwell** (as Rory Storm) a significant figure in the pop world of the sixties. Pembroke had a reputation for 'characters'!

**We are looking for further quality pictures and illustrations from this period.
Please contact us if you have anything!**

charles.gains@btinternet.com

Liverpool Pembroke AC at Court Hey

1947-48

A number of these members appeared in the 1937-38 photo. The club was still dependent on them post-World War 2.



W Roberts N Jones J Auburn J Johnstone A Frost

B Nolan CA Bourne L Pendlebury TR Roberts J McGregor RB Cooke K Cookson

H Marsh J Pendlebury Mr Molyneux W Evans H McCartney

**Four Photos of Court Hey House in the mid-1950`s
before it was demolished**



The Eternal Jimmy Auburn

In a career spanning thirty years from 1926 Jimmy Auburn was the club's most consistent and loyal member. Here he is pre-war and part of a winning two mile team squad at Port Sunlight in 1938, competing in a 5 mile track race at Chester and post-war still making relay teams



Road Relay Team 1952

Photo shows team that finished second to a powerful Bolton squad in the
Lancashire County 8 stage relay

They were to win the title in 1953 with Jack Highton, Les Hollingsworth, Sid Black, Barry Juxon, Arthur Price,
Ron Perry, George Radcliffe and Ken Gates



Les Hollingsworth, Jimmy Auburn, George Radcliffe, Ron Perry, Jack Highton, Arthur Price
Sid Black, Eddie McCartney, Harry Kelly, Bob Roberts, Bobby Bridge, Norman Stobbart

Stars of the Road

A selection of Pembroke's 1950's road running team

George Radcliffe, Eddie Williams, Harry Sholicar, John Robinson



Stars of the Road(continued)

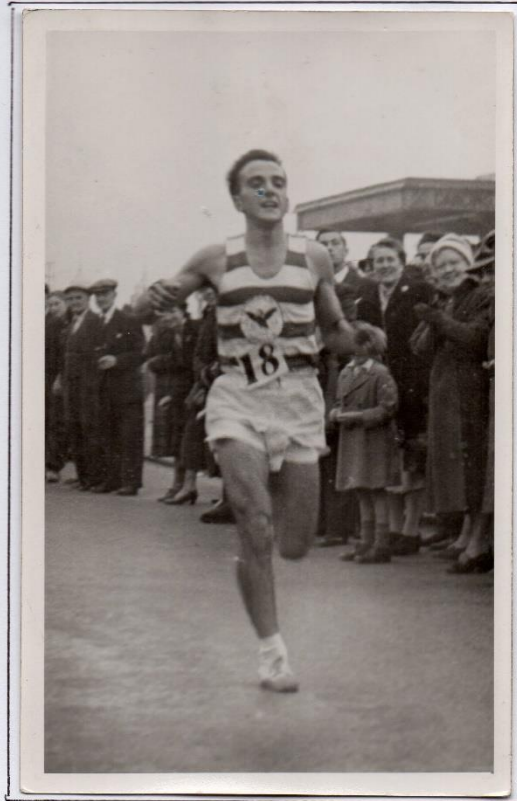
Barry Juxon to Arthur Price, Vin Bateman to Jacky Highton, Jacky Highton to

Les Hollingsworth, Sid Black



Ken Gates

Cross Country star of the 1950's



Liverpool and District Champion

West Lancashire Champion

Lancashire Champion

Northern Champion

Runner up in the Inter-counties Championship

Third in the National Championships

Cross Country International

Doreen Ashun, Pembroke's most successful female athlete in the 1950's receives an award



Liverpool Pembroke AC at Bootle Stadium

1952



Bootle Stadium 1950`s

On the picture is Ken Gates and Muriel Dangerfield

(Comedian Ossie Hey decides to join the Ladies kneeling down!)



The Summer season largely consisted of handicap meetings associated with in-house competition. Here is the programme for the Liverpool Police Sports of 1952. The meetings usually finished with an open two mile team race plus relays.

Winning two mile team at the 1951 Police Sports...Ken Bruns, Arthur Price, Ron Perry and Trevor Holt.
Successful Women's relay team at Upton 1951...Shirley Craig, Doreen Ashun, Val Wallace and Irene Leach

ORDER OF EVENTS.



1.	100 Yards Flat—Members	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
2.	60 Yards Flat—Members' Sons	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
3.	60 Yards Flat—Members' Daughters	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
4.	80 Yards Flat—Police Orphanage (Boys)	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
5.	80 Yards Flat—Police Orphanage (Girls)	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
6.	80 Yards Flat—Members' Sons	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
7.	80 Yards Flat—Members' Daughters	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
8.	100 Yards Flat—Women Police	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
9.	880 Yards Open Handicap (3 Heats)	.....	.....	.....	.....	Heats
10.	100 Yards Junior Handicap (6 Heats)	.....	.....	.....	.....	Heats
11.	100 Yards Open Handicap (7 Heats)	.....	.....	.....	.....	Heats
12.	Tug-of-war—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	First Round
13.	High Jump—Members	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
14.	100 Yards—Ladies Handicap (Open)	.....	.....	.....	.....	Heats
15.	100 Yards—Juniors' Handicap (Open)	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
16.	100 Yards (Short Limit) Handicap	.....	.....	.....	.....	Heats
17.	220 Yards—Members' Handicap	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
18.	Putting the Shot—Members	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
19.	880 Yards Handicap—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
20.	100 Yards Handicap—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
21.	880 Yards Junior Handicap—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	Heats
22.	100 Yards Ladies' Handicap—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final

INTERVAL—

Full Dress Musical Ride by Liverpool Mounted Police.
Music by the Liverpool City Police Band.

23.	100 Yards Short Limit Handicap	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
24.	Tug-of-War	.....	.....	.....	.....	Semi-Final
25.	880 Yards—Members' Handicap	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
26.	100 Yards Veterans' Handicap	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
27.	220 Yards Handicap—Open (7 Heats)	.....	.....	.....	.....	Heats
28.	1 Mile Handicap—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
29.	Long Jump—Members	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
30.	Throwing the Javelin—Members	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
31.	Band Race—Members	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
32.	660 Yards—Ladies' Relay	.....	.....	.....	.....	Heats
33.	880 Yards Junior Handicap	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
34.	220 Yards Handicap—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
35.	Tug-of-War	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
36.	2 Mile Team Race—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
37.	660 Yards Ladies' Relay Race	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final
38.	1 Mile Medley Relay—Open	.....	.....	.....	.....	Final



Sammy McIver

One of the great Pembroke `characters' famous for his wit. His fame spread way beyond the club. His untimely death, aged 50, in 1982 inspired the great Mike Turner, a Liverpool Harrier no less, to these memorable lines.

Sam McIver

is dead. The wardrobe holds the suits he made
For me in Bold Street, by the bombed out Church.
Up fifty broken stairs to reach his room,
I climbed each winter to inspect the bunch,
Accept his judgement of the latest style,
Be pinned and chalked, and patted into shape.
No jew or gentile tailor took more pride
In collar, cuff, lapel, revers or waist.

Category 2A is far too young
To die. Pembroke were relying on him.
Already he has missed a month's training:
It'll take him some time to get back his form.
Slight overweight was always his problem
I shall remind him in the pit head baths
At Sherdley Park. The West Lancs race begins
In the change room an hour before the start.

I forget, there is no fitness for death.
No reason for those last few hundred miles:
No pissing in the hedge before the start:
No freezing balls suspended in wet jock.
But could he swap a thousand years of heaven
For one more run along the Blackpool road
Or sloshing through the mud at Arrowe Park:
He'd chuck the chance of paradise for good.

There are so many lines I had prepared
To counter the service of his verbals,
To level the score, or at least return
The ball into his court. His first remark ,
A stinging volley well below the belt,
Delivered to the changing room at large,
That left you helpless, dangling from a peg,
With your discoloured underpants and vest.

King of the one line gag, yet his friends
Were common men from Bootle, Oriol Road.
I enjoyed his respect for something that
Just happened to please his sense of humour
And because I lost an epic race
To Ron, his hero more than twenty years.
Sixty seconds silence is superflous,
Each changing room bears witness to his life.
Only, spare a thought for the Almighty
Forcing the pace with the great one-liner.

Jacky Highton knew Tony Murphy, the song writer who, probably bored with his stories of running with Pembroke, wrote this song about him. It was recorded by the Spinners. Hughey Jones, a surviving member of the group, wrote the words out for us.

CHORUS:- We're harriers, harriers
 We race along while people stand & stare
 We're harriers, harriers
 We don't know where where we're going & don't care

1 Now Jackie was a harrier and at running he's quite good.
 In all the winter weather he splashes through the mud
 In singlet, shorts & pumps he lopes he does it just for fun.
 But a man who runs half naked thus must have a touch of sun.

Chorus:-

Now harriers must be wealthy men they never spend a dime
 on shoes & clothes & bus fares cos they're running all the time
 One day our Jack fell over in the middle of the ~~street~~ TOWN
 It took four men to lift him up, his wallet weighed him down.

Chorus:-

One night the harriers held a dance Oh it was quite a do
 Jackie met a pretty broad whom he got chatting to
 He said I'd like to run you home, she said I think you're sweet.
 When she got home at 2 AM she bathed he blistered feet.

Chorus:-

One day while on my way to work Jack passed me at great speed
 I yelled to him 'There's road repairs', but he paid me no heed.
 He ran into a manhole, there came a crashing sound
 Unlucky Jack the harrier ran himself into the ground.

Chorus:-

And when the ambulance came along to drag him from the ^{HOLE} ~~ground~~
 He looked less than a harrier & he looked more like a mole
 But when they tried to carry him, proud Jack held his head up high
 If you don't let me run to hospital you can leave me here to die.

Hi Norman words copied from The City Sings Back by Khylic
 November 2014.

Alan Caldwell



LIVERPOOL PEMBROKE A. & C.C.

LIVERPOOL & DISTRICT CHAMPIONS 1922-3-4, 1926-7-8, 1931-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9, 1947-8.
 WEST LANCs. CHAMPIONS 1937-8-9, RUNNERS UP 1933-4-5-7, 1947.
 INTERNATIONAL HONOURS 1934, 1936, 1938, 1940, 1945, 1947.
 COUNTY HONOURS 1938-39, 1943, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948.
 OLYMPIC HONOURS 1948.

Founded 1890

President:
R. W. ROBERTS

Affiliated to:
A.A.A. N.C.A.A. E.C.C.U. W.L.C.C.A.
L.D.C.C.U. W.A.A.A.

Chairman:
R. BRIDGE, Ex A.A.A. Champion
British & World Record Holder

I Certify that I am an Amateur according to A.A.A. W.A.A.A. and N.C.U.

Laws and wish to become a 1st Claim Member of your Club.

I am ~~am~~ not a Member of another Club.

Names of other Clubs (if any)

Proposed by M. Beest Date of Birth 7-1-1938

Seconded by E. Garratt Date of entry to Club 2-5-1951

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Under 14 years	...	...	1/-
Over 14 and Under 16 years	...	...	2/6
Over 16 and Under 18 years	...	...	5/6
Over 18 years	...	...	10/6

Name Alan E Caldwell

Address 54 Broadgreen Rd,
Liverpool 13

LADIES SECTION:

Under 16 years	...	...	2/6
Over 16 years	<u>under 21</u>	...	5/6
	<u>over 21</u>	...	7/6

Hon. Gen. Secretary:
E. McCARTNEY,
3 East Orchard Lane,
Liverpool 9.

Hon. Ladies Secretary:
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
120 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Liverpool 20XX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Hon. Treasurer:
C. A. BOURNE,
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
10, Moss Lane,
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Maghull,
Phone: Maghull 1726. Liverpool.

Paul

Alan Caldwell's story is told elsewhere. As 'Rory Storm and the Hurricanes' he is a famous part of the Liverpool pop-scene of the 1950s/60s. After the Cavern numerous performers including the Beaties, Cilla Black, Freddy Starr etc would gather at 54 Broad Green Road where Alan's mother, Violet, would serve tea. Paul McCartney dated Alan's sister, Iris, and he wrote 'I saw her standing there' for her. He intended Rory Storm to record this classic but it never worked out that way. Numerous Pembroke runners would also visit Number 54. Ken Beisty remembers, 'He invited me and my girlfriend Sue, later my wife, to his place on a weekend evening. It was crowded with what we thought were 'way out people', ended up drinking tea from jam jars 'cause they ran out of cups'.