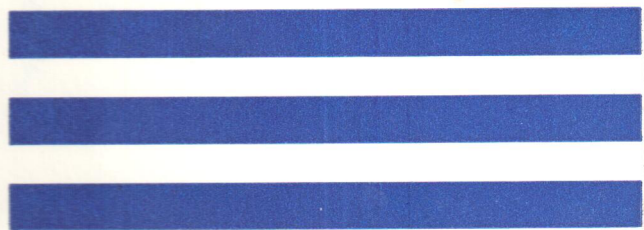


TONBRIDGE

ATHLETIC CLUB



1947 - 1972

FOREWORD

This booklet has been produced to commemorate twenty five years of the Tonbridge Athletic Club and has no pretence of being a precise history but more in the nature of the compiler's thanks for many happy memories of events and friends in the club.

Annual Reports, Minute Books and Press Cuttings have been scrutinized at great length and it has taken over twelve months to prepare, but due to lack of complete records and details it may contain errors and omissions for which apologies are offered.

Thanks are due to Ted Ardley, Ray Curtis, Pete Kitching, Tom Jones and Dick Stapley for records which they have kept, many of which have enabled the "Best Performance" tables to be compiled and also to our friends of the local press who have helped in many ways.

Photographs are by courtesy of Kent Sussex Courier (*)
Club Members x.

C.J.C.

August 1972

1972

PRESIDENT

Dudley G. Le May M.C. D.L.

LIFE VICE PRESIDENTS

N. W. F. Fowler O. B. E.

T. R. Jones

VICE PRESIDENTS

C. J. Casse

Sir Henry J. d'Avigdor-Goldsmid Bart. M.C. M.A. M.P.

Col. H. M. Gray O.B.E.

P. W. Hoath

Major General F. A. M. Jenkins D.S.O. O.B.E. M.C.

Cr. K. May M.A.

M. J. Rowbottom

R. S. T. Twort

Col. J. K. Warner T.D.

LIFE MEMBER

Miss Lorna Lee

CLUB OFFICIALS 1947 - 1972

President

1947 - D.G. Le May

Chairman

1947 Cmdr. A.G.M. Small
 1948 - 59 T.R. Jones
 1960 R.S.T. Twort
 1961 - 62 A. Pitson
 1963 - 65 M. Rowbottom
 1966 - 67 J. Turner
 1968 - 69 A. Prowse
 1970 B.A. Fagg
 1970 A.E. Hart
 1971 - M. Rowbottom

Hon. Secretary

1947 H. Allingham
 1948 - 49 R. Goodman
 1950 - 51 J. Carter
 1952 - 53 R.H. Outteridge
 1954 - 55 L. Manser
 1955 - 56 P. Delgoffe
 1957 - 59 L. Manser
 1960 - 61 D. Nutley
 1962 Miss J. Hanson
 1963 - 66 R. Schooling
 1967 Mrs. P. Hoath
 1968 - Mrs. V. Searle

Hon. Treasurer

1947 - 48 Mrs. J.J. May
 1949 - 50 Mrs. J. Carter
 1951 - 62 C.J. Casse
 1963 - 66 R. Schooling
 1967 Mrs. P. Hoath
 1968 C. Blundell
 1969 - C.J. Casse

Women's Hon. Secretary

1949 Miss J. Godliman
 1950 - 51 Miss J. Casse
 1952 - 53 Miss D. McLelland
 1957 - 59 Miss J. Ledger
 1960 - 61 Miss A. Usher
 1962 - 63 Miss J. Hanson
 1965 - 66 Miss C. Green
 1968 - Mrs. V. Searle

Fixture Secretary - Winter

1949 R. Goodman
 1950 - 54 P. Hoath
 1955 D. Nutley
 1958 - 60 M. Rayner
 1961 D. Johnson
 1962 T. Kinchen
 1963 M. Rowbottom
 1964 - 65 J. Turner
 1966 - 70 M. Redhead
 1971 - R. Curtis

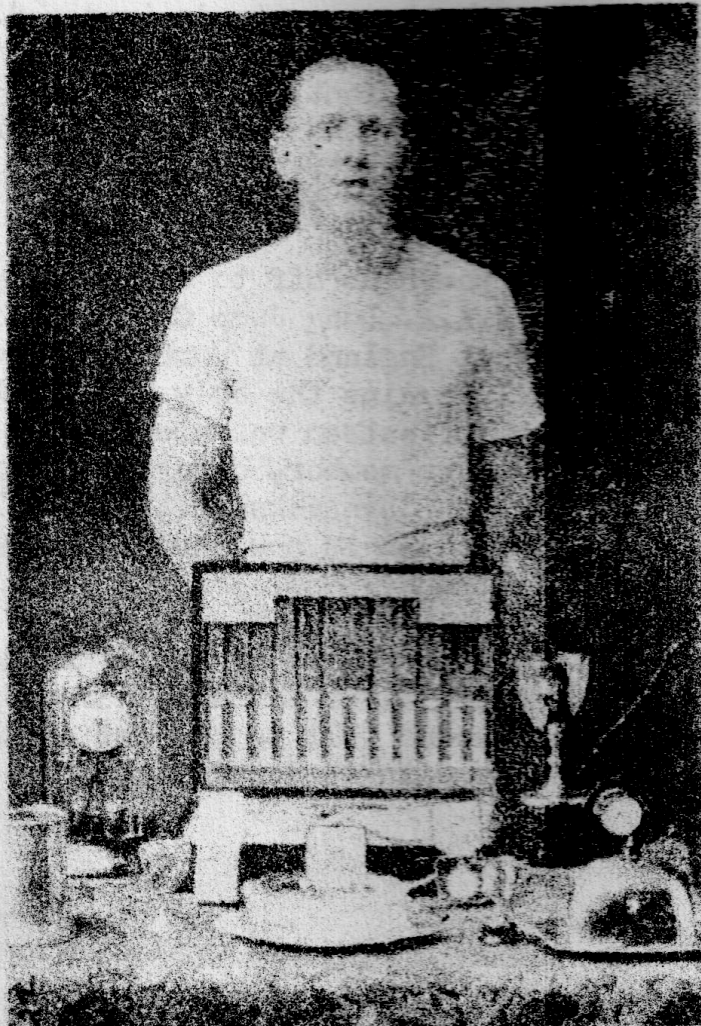
Fixture Secretary - Summer

1949 I. Aplin
 1950 - 51 C.J. Casse
 1952 - 53 A. Pitson
 1954 - 55 D. Treen
 1956 J. Carter
 1957 - 59 A. Pitson
 1960 - 61 C. Mills
 1962 - 64 M.V. Pitson
 1965 J. Turner
 1966 - 70 M. Redhead
 1971 - R. Curtis

All Set For The Start.

Around the turn of the century Tonbridge could boast of two athletic clubs, Tonbridge Invicta Harriers with C.R. Catchpool as President and Tonbridge Athletic Club with A.G. Earl as President. Tonbridge Athletic Club had for their motto "Forward" and met on Monday and Thursday evenings at Portmanhall in Hadlow Road.

Records are sparse but mention is made of a win by fifteen points in a gymnastic match with Maidstone and of a celebration supper being held on 25th, February 1894, on 14th, May the Annual Sports were held on the recreation ground and many smoking concerts were held on various dates. On the 18th, January 1905 Invicta Harriers held a five mile cross country race and from then on very little can be traced until around 1946 two policemen sitting in a car decided to go ahead with the idea of forming an athletic club. Supt. N.W.F. Fowler, later to become Assistant Chief Constable of Kent, had been one of the foremost sprinters in the County and had represented the Kent Police in the British Police Championships, but early in his career devoted himself to athletics administration. Sergt. T.R. Jones, representing his first club, Surrey A.C., had gained many area sprint championships both in the army and the police and was a member of their relay team, all internationals, which only lost one relay in several years. Provisionally selected for the Olympic Games of 1932 but a road accident followed by a long spell in hospital lost him a place. He competed in the pre-war British Games, finishing second in the 100 yards and third in the 220 yards.



With no club nearer than Maidstone or Rochester they had thoughts of the possible rehabilitation of the Angel Ground, derelict since the war, or the excellent facilities of the Sports Ground, to become the home of Tonbridge Athletics.

At the end of 1946 the Sports Association was approached and with their co-operation it was decided to hold an open public meeting and in January 1947 this was held at the Social Centre, with Mr. Leslie Le May in the chair. With much enthusiasm the meeting voted in favour of forming an athletics and gymnastics club, to embrace boxing, weight lifting etc. The following month a second public meeting was held, with Commdr. A.G.M. Small, representing the Urban District Council, in the chair, Mr. J. Harvey of the Sports Association and Mrs. C. Firmin of the Women's A.A.A. were also present. After Mr. Fowler and Mr. Jones had outlined the scope of activities, it was decided to form a committee to administer the Tonbridge Athletic Club as it was to be called, with Harry Allingham as Hon. Secretary with Mr. Fowler as his assistant. Both of these offices became vacant very quickly, Harry emigrated to Canada and Mr. Fowler, due to promotion, left the district. One early decision of the committee, noted in the minute book, was "to purchase a postage record book" and also "to apply to the Board of Trade for coupons to purchase gym. shoes and vests" this following the rationing of clothes etc. due to the war. Shortly afterwards permission was obtained from the U. D. C., to use the Town Crest on the club badges and the club's first Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. J.J. May undertook the task of embroidering these until such times as funds improved. An amateur boxing tournament was held at Dowgate Hall, when over 650 attended including the Chief Constable of Kent, this was very succesful and the club donated half the proceeds to the War Memorial Fund. Later in 1947 it was decided that the club concentrate on athletics, although winter gymnastics was to continue for many years.

1948 Olympic Year saw the club off to a promising start, Lorna Lee came third in the Women's A.A.A. Long Jump Championship with 18ft. 3 ins. and was selected to represent England at Wembley but did not find her form on the day. She still remains the only club member to be selected for the Games and as a mark of esteem was elected the first Life Member of the club. It befell another member, Bernard Bullen, to carry the torch through the night in the Sevenoaks area on the long journey from Greece to London. The same torch is now competed for annually as the cross country championship trophy.

As a result of determined efforts by the Tonbridge U.D.C. the Angel Ground, so long derelict after the war, was happily restored. The honour of opening the ground fell to the lot of the club, in glorious weather 1500 people witnessed our first home match.

This year saw our first Kent Championship, Ian Aplin winning the long jump at 21ft. 6ins. and Gerry Mickelwright also winning three Kent and Eastern Command Cadet sprint Championships.

Training facilities were being provided at both Tonbridge and Judd Schools by courtesy of the Headmasters, both Vice Presidents of the club. Matches continued to be held at the Angel Ground and on 3rd, June 1950 the club staged the Kent County A.A.A. Championships, it was a very successful day, six County records being broken and one further record being made - it was the first occasion these Championships had shown a profit!! The club gained one senior and two junior titles. About this time the club were able to help the national effort by organizing a torch relay during National Savings Week, a lighted torch being carried and messages exchanged between the civic heads of Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, both men and women members taking part in the relay which was held during a very bad thunderstorm with suitable refreshments being provided afterwards. The cross country section, helped by the untiring efforts of Peter Hoath, was making strides with many fixtures and the club were indebted to the Tonbridge Cricket Club for the use of Bath Field Pavilion where Mrs. Bird and Mrs. Twort headed a large rota of helpers in the "catering department".



Many members figured in County Championships about this period, Barbara Gardner gaining her first County Badge with Jeanne Casse gaining two. Jimmy Edwards taking many Sussex County titles and also finishing 11th, in the Southern Counties Cross Country Championship with 431 runners. On the track Ken Lancaster won the Sussex mile title, Norman Gregor the Kent High Jump and Pole Vault (record), John Strutt and Bryan Phipps were making their mark with the discus and javelin and Gerry Mickelwright winning the Kent Junior 100 yards and also the long jump (record).

In conjunction with the Tonbridge Footballers Club, after many months of effort, on Whit Monday 29th, May 1950 a Childrens Sports & Fete was held on the Angel Ground, with about 5000 people attending a most succesful day in every respect. The Fete was held again the following year but bad weather marred the day, with a third try in 1952 and once again being beaten by the weather, for financial reasons it was reluctantly decided not to hold the Fete the following year.

Due to lack of public support at the home matches and the expense involved the lease of the Angel Ground was terminated about the end of 1950. This was the first year that entertainment at the Annual Dinner was provided by the L.A.M.P.S. who put on a wonderful show, this was to continue for about five years.

In 1951 the club were hit badly by the calls of National Service, but small teams were in many cases winning over larger and stronger ones, this year ground troubles loomed large once again. Martin's Field was being used and later the School Ground in Shipbourne Road became available, both by courtesy of our Vice President, the Rev. L.H. Waddy, who also allowed the club to hold athletic films in Big School. Jimmy Edwards repeated his successes by winning both the Sussex and the Southern Counties three mile track championships. H.J. Moesgaard-Kjeldsen also won the Kent Javelin Championship with Bryan Phipps second, Moes repeated his javelin win again in 1952.



The club staged the Kent County Women's Cross Country Championship from Tonbridge School and provided the winner in Jeanne Casse, who gained her Kent badge for the third time and later was in the winning team, running for Orpington A.C. in the Junior National Cross Country Championship, she also gained her Southern Counties badge in the match with the three areas. This year, 1952, saw the introduction of a new event, the ten mile road race, with a cup presented by Mrs. Betty Hoath, fittingly won by her husband Peter, over a snow covered course in the time of 60 mins. 30 secs. This fixture has now become to be known as the "Tonbridge Ten" and is attracting more entries from far and wide each year and special thanks are due to Mick Redhead who devoted so much time and effort in the organization that it now operates so smoothly, it is now in the capable hands of his mother, Mrs. Ivy Redhead. The club championship is held in conjunction with the Angell Cup as the Challenge Trophy.

On the 16th, June 1951 the first win of the Festival of Britain Trophy was celebrated by beating the Kent County Police and the Nore Comkand in a match on the Angel Ground. Over the country a new course was arranged, due to the assistance of Mr. Goodwin who granted the right to run over his farmland. Mr. Harden providing the changing accomodation at the Croxteth Club with once again the ladies headed by Mrs. Pitson and Joyce Murray providing the refreshments. The whist drives organized by Bob Hales were proving very successful both socially and financially and the winter season was wound up with a most enjoyable Christmas Party.

1952 track season with eleven inter club matches was most successful, Orpington A.C. who were without a ground competing frequently with Croydon Harriers, Surrey Beagles, Pearl Assurance A.C. and Brighton Students A.C. all being welcome newcomers to the hard core of Kent clubs - Rochester, Dartford, Kent & Hythe who have always supported the club so well.

(*)



JANETTE UPTON, winner of three senior women's events at Tonbridge Athletic Club's championship meeting on Saturday. She set two records for the meeting



1953 saw the marriages of three members, Jeanne Casse (now Mrs. Heasman) and Bob Hales to Daphne McLelland both having done so much for the club on the track, and social organization, had the best wishes of all members.

Brigadier Latham and his band of judges were present at every match, despite the weather, throughout the track season, Mrs. Hales (Bob's mother) acting as recorder, the winter season recording being undertaken by John Carter. The Annual Dinner this year was held at The Carlton Cafe and it was heartening that the Asst. Chief Constable of Kent, Mr. N.W.F. Fowler O.B.E. was once again able to make the long journey from Canterbury in order to be present.

"Ken Lancaster"

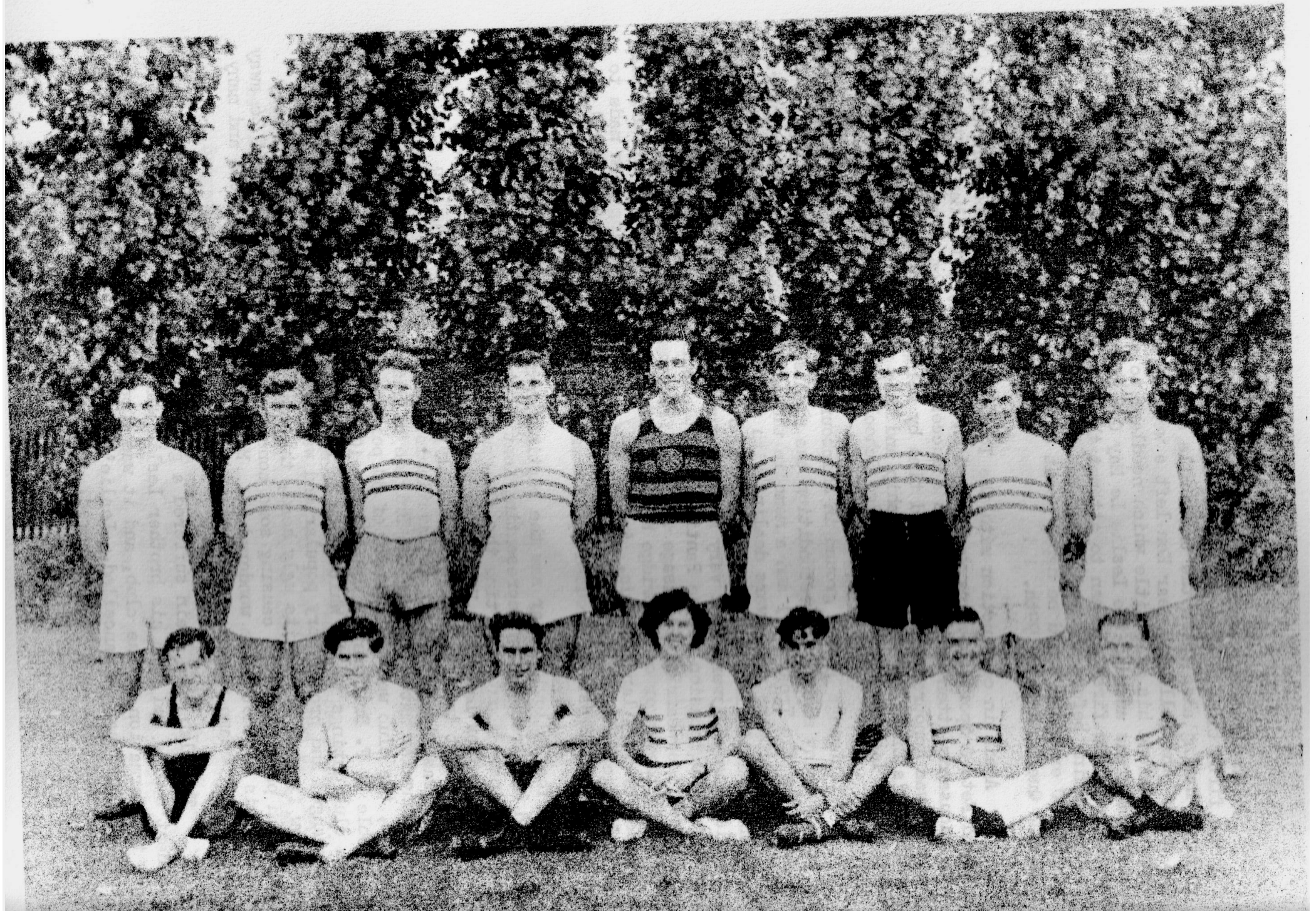
On the 15th, January 1955 won the club cross country championship for the fifth time, a club record for sure, this followed some tremendous running, having also taken the track mile and the three miles and the road ten mile. The following year Ken left a wedding reception in London in order to defend his mile title which needless to say he retained. Peter Hoath was awarded the Leslie Le May Cup (for outstanding performance) having been the first clubman to attempt the Windsor to London Marathon. On the morning before the race Peter was told by Tom Jones that if he came inside 100 everyone would be happy - out of a very large field, started by H.M. The Queen, he came 99th. ! !

Again in conjunction with the Tonbridge Football Supporters Club a Grand Fete & Sports meeting was staged on Whit Monday 30th, May 1955 with some thousands attending the day was a success but did not show a profit. The club was honoured for the second time by being invited to promote the Kent Women's Cross Country Championship and this was held by kind permission of the Rev. L.H. Waddy, from Tonbridge School.

Tonbridge School ground in Shipbourne Road was the scene of combined efforts by many members to recondition the club's first home (a building presented by the Treasurer) and a memo in the Annual Report mentions members with their clippers and mowers dealing with the grass track this after the sheep had made their contribution ! later Stan Twort made tremendous efforts with his gang of mowers, and very much improved conditions. An outstanding event was the occasion of the Pantilles 250th. Anniversary, when the mens and womens sections carried a message by relay from the Chairman of the Tonbridge Council to the Mayor of Tunbridge Wells and then returned with an answer, all witnessed by very large crowds. Around 1957 application having been made to the Tonbridge U. D. C. regarding the possibility of a track on the Angel Ground, much interest was aroused but the matter died.

The following year saw the baptism in bigger competition with Avril Usher and Margaret Jordon representing Kent in the All England School Championships. About this time the club suffered the loss of a very old friend, Brigadier Latham, a Vice President for many years, and his help on committee and at track meetings was sorely missed, whatever the job "The Brig" was always willing and available. An outstanding event on the track was a triangular match between the Brigade of Guards and Surrey Beagles at Caterham, the club won by a margin of 30 points, a feature of the match was the treble by F. Brittain in winning the 100, 220, and 440 yards. The first of the club outings to the White City on the occasion of International matches was arranged and proved very popular and was to continue for some years. About now finance reared its ugly head, the cost of hiring coaches for away matches in particular was causing some concern, with a fixture list of 26 away matches this was not to be wondered at. Many schemes were suggested and many tried but it became necessary to curtail the away matches.

The club once again suffered a great loss in the deaths of our President's wife and also his brother Leslie who had been Vice President since the formation of the club, and it was thought fitting that the Annual Dinner for the year be cancelled. Leslie's asides and comments at the Annual Dinners will long be remembered.



On the 13th, June 1959 during the Tonbridge Civic Week, with the help of the Sports Association, the club staged the Childrens Sports on the Castle Lawn with 250 children competing. The financial position, always a problem, was this year helped by aid from the Lions Club, who made a donation for the second year. In 1959 the club competed for the first time in the newly formed Kent Cross Country League with a fair showing.

At the Annual General Meeting on 30th, March 1960, following his decision made known at a Committee meeting held in the previous October Mr. T.R. Jones resigned his position as Chairman, which he had held since the formation of the club in 1947. He stated that the club was now fully established and with some considerable tradition and it was time for control to pass to other hands. His resignation was of course accepted with considerable regret, and it was unanimously resolved that he be elected a Life Vice President of the club. He was then presented with the "Tom Jones" cup, anonymously subscribed by "several active members of the club as a token of your services to Tonbridge Athletic Club", later he was handed an illuminated address by the President, Mr. Dudley Le May. The "Tom Jones" cup is now competed for annually in the 880 yards championship. As members know, our Tom continues to give very active support, in particular at track meetings, the club are very glad of his help.

Avril Usher and Margaret Jordon were showing great form in schools competition, winning the 100 and 150 yards in their respective age groups in the Kent County and S.W. Schools Championships reaching the final but were unplaced. By presenting toilet facilities at the Shipbourne Road track the Tonbridge Rotary Club fulfilled a very great need and members were duly grateful. Finances had been helped considerably by the share of the proceeds of the A.A.A. Draws, but these having been declared illegal funds suffered accordingly, Jumble Sales and other more legal fund raising schemes had to be reverted to.

1962 figured as one of the best seasons to date for the cross country section, twentyeight fixtures when a full scoring team was fielded against many well known clubs such as Blackheath Harriers, Aylsford Paper Mills, Erith, Maidstone, Dartford, Canterbury, Isle of Thanet and the Kent Constabulary, with a fine performance finishing third to Rochester and Maidstone in a Kent League match on the 15th, December, With 13 teams competing this was the highest position that the club had ever attained in these fixtures which are on a parallel with the County Championships. It is well worth recording the team which gained such success - Mike Rowbottom, Ray Fermor (Capt.), Roger Schooling, Ray Curtis, John Holt and Terry Kitchen. Mike was running consistently well, coming third in the Kent County Cross Country Championship and chosen for the Inter-Counties race was the first man to finish for Kent. He followed this by winning the County 880 yards track championship.

This year we suffered the loss of two of our lady Vice Presidents Lady Hollenden and the Viscountess de Lisle & Dudley, both were missed very much. Mention must be made of the one man team from Germany, Leo Lavitsch, a guest member for one year, Leo won everyones admiration for his willingness to run any distance, throw any missile and jump long and high, rarely a match passed without a new personal best from a very fine athlete, and a very fine clubman.

Around this time (1963) with very much regret we lost the use of the track at Tonbridge School, recollections of changing facilities, either in Stan Tworts tool shed or the cricket score box, will remain for a long time by those who "suffered".

The following year was most successful on the track, 34 members attending and winning a match at Canterbury and at inter club matches always finishing in the first three. Reg Mepham and John Turner drove to Scotland to take part in the Kinlochleven (Argyll) Highland Games, John finished sixth in the Mammore 15 mile road race, they repeated the trip the following year and Reg won a wife !

Congratulations to Norman Firth were due after winning the quarter mile in the District and County Schools under fifteen and representing Kent and gaining a place in the All England Finals. This year the youths retained their cross country County championship and later help was given in running the cub sports and the club were asked to assist again the following year. A club social was held instead of the usual Annual Dinner, and although this was a success it was felt that it was no substitute for the Dinner, which was resumed after two years at the Riverside Cafe. Later a Barn Hop was held at Reg Mepham's farm this again was very popular.

1966 saw the raising of subscriptions which had been held down for many years but with rising costs and the new project of Swanmead going ahead it was deemed necessary. The following year the club was in a flourishing condition, in the winter season A & B teams always being entered, but a tremendous loss was suffered by Roger Schooling, one of the stalwarts, who had held the post of Secretary and Treasurer for four years, moving to Ireland.

The Swanmead project after two years was bearing fruit, a lease was prepared by Tonbridge U.D.C. and grants and loan facilities were negotiated and it was hoped that building would commence in the near future. The Tonbridge Ten was again a great success with 132 starters and Peter Cawson taking the club ten mile title.

The club were now fortunate in obtaining the services of Mrs. Vera Searle (W.A.A.A. Women's Coach) as Women's Team Manager. Vera Palmer as she was then, came into athletics almost as a joke, in 1923 entered by her father, as a result of successes in the West London Schools Championships in a scratch 100 yards, came fourth running in a gym,

tunic and spikes borrowed from one of the Chelsea F.C. players. Later under the guidance of Mr. (Uncle) Ted Knowles had a measure of success in the Women's A.A.A. Championships and following an invitation to compete in Paris she ran in the 250 metres and won in world record time. During the following four years she held both the 220 and 440 yards National titles in three consecutive years, and reduced the world record time for the 440 at least three times and was a member of every international team which was raised. Turning to administration, Vera has been secretary of the W.A.A.A. and was the first secretary of the Women's Southern Counties Cross Country & Road Walking Association and has held office as secretary of Middlesex County W.A.A.A. for twenty-two years. In addition to being Vice Chairman of the Women's A.A.A. she is now (1972) President of the Southern Counties Women's C.C. & R.W.A. and a member of the British Amateur Athletic Board. It is the club's good fortune that Vera Searle despite her many interests places so much of her time and experience, gained over so many years, at the disposal of the club, she deserves a very big thank you.



Mrs. Searle together with Bob Owen who was undertaking the winter coaching instilled tremendous enthusiasm among members.

With a new career and the tie of matrimony John Turner was compelled to resign from the Chairmanship of the Committee after two years of terrific effort, not in the least of which were his money making and highly successful Barn Hop of 1966 and the Mini Market on August Bank Holiday 1967, with a profit of over £70, both aided by Reg. Mepham. Richard Sliney was finding form, both in the mile and two miles on the track and later in the winter together with Ian Skerrett, Andrew Hutton and Peter Cawson were becoming stronger in inter club competition. The Women's section was gaining strength with Janette Upton winning the intermediate S.W. Kent Schools, eighth in the County and ninth in the Schools County Championships. The seniors also won the A.G. Turner Trophy on 27th, January 1968.

Coaching was continued with Bryan Fagg and Bob Owen making trips to Camber Sands where many miles were covered over the dunes and beaches.

On the resignation of Mrs. Hoath as Secretary/Treasurer, Mrs. Searle and Mr. C. Blundell were elected to serve in the respective positions.

On the 27th, April 1968 the senior men won the Elliott 4 x 2½ mile road relay at Chatham, the team being Andrew Hutton, Ian Skerrett, Ray Curtis and Anthony Prowse. In early January 1969 Chris. Godsell won the Kent Boys Cross Country Championship, later the Club made history by finishing a full scoring six in the English Cross Country Championships held at Parliament Hill Fields, surely on the muddiest nine mile course in England ! ! The women's section followed up their track successes by winning the Kent Junior Cross Country Championship held at Tonbridge with Janet Owen, Gill Scrivens and Karen Silburn as the team. A small band of enthusiasts visited Gosford, Englands only indoor track, and had the invaluable experience of top class competition.

Swanmead was now nearing completion and the 1969 track season started with high hopes but losses were suffered on the administrative side with the chairman of the committee, Anthony Prowse, resigning as he was leaving the district for study reasons. Bryan Fagg taking up an appointment in Ireland, Dick Sliney gaining a scholarship to Tucson University and Bob Owen left suddenly, fortunately Bryan Fagg returned later in the year. The club competed in the Southern A.A.A. League and finished fourth. August 2nd, 1969 with the opening of the pavilion by Mrs. Clara Watts, Chairman of the Civic Amenities Committee, saw the final chapter of a story began on the 8th, June 1965 when the Swanmead Sports Association was inaugurated. Two football clubs, Invicta and Roselands, joining with the club with the general aim of creating better facilities for all the members and the particular aim of building and maintaining a pavilion at Swanmead. The original estimate of the cost of building the pavilion was about £3,750, with the aid of grants this seemed a reasonable figure. However it took four years to finalize the

details of the lease and grants and by the time building commenced the estimate had risen to £5565 - the pavilion being finally completed at a cost of £6350. The lease was granted by Tonbridge U.D.C. for twentyone years and the money required was raised from a number of sources, grants being received from the Ministry of Education & Science and Tonbridge U.D.C. and loans from the National Playing Fields Association, Kent Playing Fields Association and the Tonbridge U.D.C. The Association was fortunate in receiving a gift of £100 from the Lions Club and a further £968 was raised by the Swanmead Association itself. The loans are to be repaid over a period of ten years and many efforts have been and continue to be made to raise the necessary funds. Considerable savings in cost was effected by the voluntary help given by many individual members of all the associated clubs, digging trenches for water pipes etc., and interior decorating and fittings, Ray Curtis being very prominent in this department.

The Junior team won both the Kent Women's Road Relay and the Cross Country Championship. On behalf of the Southern Counties Women's Cross Country Association the club staged two area Championships at Somerhill Park by kind permission of one of the club Vice Presidents, Sir Henry d'Avigdor-Goldsmid and M. Buggs Esq., the meeting was an outstanding success, made even more so for the club by Nina Silburn winning the Girls Championship. At Eastbourne on 12th, July the men won the Barker Trophy, the women were second to Brighton & Hove, a splendid club performance, later in August the women won the inter club meeting at Dartford for the second year.

Avril Bowring was selected to represent England at the Commonwealth Games held in Edinburgh and ran in the 400 metres but was not placed in the final, later in the year she won the 400 metres against Hungary and Rumania and was in the winning relay team. At the Commonwealth Games Mrs. Searle was selected as an umpire.

At the Trophy meeting at Dartford the men came second and the women third, followed by the Festival of Britain Trophy meeting at Erith which the club won by a margin of 72 points, with four clubs competing. At the promotion meeting of the Southern A.A.A. League held at Redhill in September the club finished fourth and so remained in the fourth division.

The junior women were in great form, Catherine Thompson was successful in winning the Kent Junior Pentathlon, and later over the country in the Southern Counties Women's Cross Country Championships Nina Silburn finished 10th. out of 200 starters, with Susan Powell 64th. Paulette Coldman 66th.. In the Southern Counties Women's Junior Road Relay the same team finished 12th. out of 67 clubs.

Early in January a new venture, a quiz programme "Athletics Any Questions", was organized by Brian Mitchell, held at Judd School it met with much approval.

The club were asked by the S.W. Kent Schools A.A.A. to organize the Boys Cross Country Championships, this was held at Somerhill Park with many club members helping to make the event most successful.

The sponsored walk was held again this year but did not have quite the response it had previously, but a welcome addition to the funds nevertheless.

The club track championships held in May were the most successful to date, due in no small degree to the organization and efforts of Bryan Fagg, who during the year qualified as a senior coach in both track and cross country, he was also elected as Hon. Sec. for coaching for the Kent County W.A.A.A.

Anthony Prowse, a former committee chairman and a great clubman, went through a bad spell in the spring and spent some months in hospital, it was good to learn that he made a complete recovery and was once again in harness. On the track the Kent Junior Pentathlon was won once again, this time by Susan Powell with Paulette Coldman winning the Kent Junior 800 metres while John Williams gained the County Boys 800 metres. On 10th, June the local police organized a road run at Tunbridge Wells, with ten teams competing the club won with Ian Wilson, Andy Sharp, Ray Curtis and Pete Kitching. Mick Redhead got a run with odd team called "B/? Division, a very odd team indeed ! !

At the Kent Schools Championships held at Broadstairs the club members competing had a very good day, John Rogers won the boys 100 metres John Williams the 800 metres, Sally Courtney-Hood taking the high jump with a County record and Susan Pettett winning the 100 metres. At Eastbourne in July, with nine teams competing, the club retained the Barker Trophy for the second year by a large margin of points and Dick Stapley won the individual Youth Discus Trophy.

Efforts having been made over some considerable time through the Sports Association, for improvements at Swanmead, in particular the long jump run up and the provision of concrete throwing circles, funds were allocated for this purpose. The grass track after some years of cutting and rolling was beginning to show some improvement.

All in all 1971 was a successful year in many respects, with some 47 new members joining, including some very welcome seniors, and the men finishing top of their division in the Southern League. Club colours have been seen at the indoor meetings at Gosford where Janette Upton and Dick Stapley have regularly made the long journey to compete.

1972 so far has been successful for male club members as individuals even if the section as a whole does not seem to have fared as well as in previous years. With a total of eight members being selected for their respective County teams, numerous club records being beaten and one member being short listed for the Olympic Games, this was probably the best season for members in recent times.

As a team the club once again being placed second in the Southern League but for the third successive year, due to depleted team at the promotion match, failed to get selection to division two. The Barker Trophy, which has been held for the past two years, was lost to numerically stronger teams at Eastbourne.

It was at home that most success was enjoyed, including the Open Championships, with over 100 entrants which were the best ever, thanks again to the smooth and efficient organization by Bryan Fagg.

A new venture, an Octathlon, supervised by the eventual winner Gerry Le Roy, was equally a great success, competed for on two training evenings several personal bests and a club record were achieved.

Congratulations are due to Richard Sliney in obtaining an Olympic qualifying standard in the 10,000 metres, unfortunately he was injured after his return from Tucson University in the U.S.A.

The club had two senior representatives in the Inter Counties match Gerry Le Roy in the 400 metres and Ted Ardley in the 3.000 metres walk. There were also a number of junior men representing the County, Peter Collins (hurdles) Paul Glenister (800 metres) Nigel Brookes (javelin) David Cross (high jump) and Dick Stapley (Shot & Discus). Earlier Collins and Cross had represented the Kent Schools and Dick Stapley gained a Kent Schools Championship.

The walking section continues to grow slowly but surely, the club colours being seen around the country both on the track and road, Ted Ardley winning the cup presented by Mr. W.T. Collins.

(*)



However 1972 is really the Junior women's year. During the last few years they have gone from strength to strength. Four years ago the most that could be produced for a team was four girls but now with fifteen or more to choose from good times have to be produced to get into the team.

Results have been excellent they having won both the County Road Relay and the Cross Country Championship for the past three years and have supplied the individual champion over the country for four years, also the individual champion for the Schools Cross Country Championships for three years. Following the team's success in gaining fourth place in the All England 3 x 800 metres relay, at Dartford in June 1971, this year a N.U.T.S. standards were gained, 3 x 800 metres relay, a 400 metres, and a 100 metres.

In addition there have been many other outstanding performances hardly dreamt of a few years ago. All this has been achieved in the main by the tremendous efforts made by Mrs. J. Silburn who has instilled a great club spirit among the girls. If only could be found, as suggested by the club chairman Mike Rowbottom, at the last Annual General Meeting, a male counterpart to organize the boys teams as efficiently as does Mrs. Silburn, as the club has on the books one of the most powerful colts, boys and youths cross country sections in the County, but they are lacking competition.

Finally mention must be made of the club news sheet, so aptly named "The Puffer". Way back in the early years Bob Hales founded a news sheet which continued for some time but regrettably ceased to function, now once again the club are indebted to Mrs. Ivy Redhead who does a tremendous job of compiling and putting together all club news and other interesting data - long may the "Puffer" pant.



THE FIRST LAP

So much for the first twenty five years, so much attempted, so many failures, moments of achievement, moments of despair, with always someone ready and willing to carry on the aspirations of 1947.

Officials have come and gone, many changes have been seen and this booklet would not be complete without special reference to our only and long serving President - Mr. Dudley G. Le May M.C., D.L., to whom the club owes such a debt of gratitude. His help and guidance since the formation of the club has always been forthcoming and he still continues to give his very active support, long may it continue, the club are very grateful. Also to the Vice Presidents, most of whom have been with the club for many years, years in which their financial and active support have enabled the club to survive.

The club has never taken a narrow view and for many years pressed for a sports centre to cover all sporting activities in the Town and while taking athletics seriously has always endeavoured to help all members, in particular the juniors and have tried to show them a way of life, and here is a quote from a letter received (from a now non active member, a past holder of many club and County titles) in response for information regarding this booklet -

"looking through my little green book which lists all my races, I can say without any doubts at all, that the most enjoyable athletics that I was fortunate to participate in were the club meetings at Tonbridge"

This is surely some reward for someones efforts in the past and some encouragement for another twenty five years.

TONBRIDGE ATHLETIC CLUB

MEN'S BEST PERFORMANCES (1947 - 1972)

100 METRES

10.8	G. Le Roy	Hastings	17/7/71
11.0 y	P. Rowlands	Tonbridge	7/7/60
11.1 y	J. Carter	Tonbridge	-/8/50

y = 100 yards time plus 0.9 secs.

200 METRES

21.1 y	C. Yardley	Tonbridge	17/5/58
22.3	G. Le Roy	Hastings	17/7/71
23.1 y	M. Dobson	East Grinstead	4/6/59

y = 220 yards time less 0.1 secs.

400 METRES

49.6	G. Le Roy	Eastbourne	18/7/71
50.1 y	A. Pitson	Tonbridge	-/-/57
51.7 y	P. Sargission	Tonbridge	-/-/64

y = 440 yards time less 0.3 secs.

800 METRES

1.56.3 y	J. Holt	Eltham	6/6/64
1.56.3 y	J. Pickles		
1.57.2 y	M. Rowbottom	Erith	30/5/59

y = 880 yards time less 0.7 secs.

1500 METRES

3.54 y	R. Sliney	Flagstaff U.S.A.	-/-/72
4.07 y	M. Rowbottom	Tonbridge	-/8/61
4.08	P. Glenister	Crystal Palace	18/6/72

y = mile time less 18 secs.

3000 METRES

8.17 y	R. Sliney	Houston U.S.A.	-/-/72
8.52 y	C. Mills	Tonbridge	27/8/60
8.57 y	A. Hutton	Erith	2/8/68

y = two mile time less 39 secs.

5000 METRES

13.56	R. Sliney	San Diego U.S.A.	-/-/72
16.12	R. Curtis	Hastings	22/8/70
16.37	F.R. May	Redhill	19/9/70

10000 METRES

28.46	R. Sliney	San Diego U.S.A.	-/-/72
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3 MILES

13.28	R. Sliney	U.S.A.	-/-/72
15.12	J. Edwards	Tonbridge	7/7/56
15.12	C. Mills	Tonbridge	4/8/60

ONE HOUR

10 miles 561 yds.	R. Curtis	Erith	2/6/69
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3000 METRES STEEPLECHASE

9. 0.4	R. Sliney	Idaho U.S.A.	-/-/72
9.51.8	A. Prowse	Crystal Palace	31/5/69
10.16.4	A. Hutton	Redhill	19/9/70

SHOT

12.57m/41ft. 3in	H.J. Moesgaard-Kjeldsen	Tonbridge	25/4/52
12.48m/40ft. 11in	M. Chapple	Tonbridge	17/8/58
12.20m/40ft. 0in	C. Smart	Worthing	29/5/71

DISCUS

35.96m/118ft. 0in	C. Smart	Tonbridge	15/7/72
33.68m/110ft. 6in	B. Phipps	Tonbridge	-/8/48
32.06m/105ft. 2in	P. Collins	Eastbourne	1/7/72

JAVELIN

55.24m/181ft. 3in	H.J. Moesgaard-Kjeldsen	Tonbridge	24/6/50
48.16m/158ft. 0in	G. Blewdon	Tonbridge	11/7/59
46.74m/153ft. 4in	M. Lee	Eastbourne	18/7/71

POLE VAULT

3.81m/12ft. 6in	N. Gregor	Tonbridge	24/6/50
3.05m/10ft. 0in	H.J. Moesgaard-Kjeldsen	Tonbridge	-/-/50
2.28m/ 7ft. 6in	A. Howard	Redhill	4/7/70

HIGH JUMP

1.90m/ 6ft. 3in	N. Gregor	Tonbridge	16/6/51
1.78m/ 5ft. 10in	D. Cross	Crystal Palace	20/5/72
1.75m/ 5ft. 9in	B. Rogers	Tonbridge	7/5/60

LONG JUMP

6.56m/21ft. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in	I. Aplin	Charlton	29/5/48
6.18m/20ft. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ in	G. Le Roy	Eastbourne	22/5/71
6.17m/20ft. 3 in	P. Johnson	Tonbridge	18/7/59

TRIPLE JUMP

12.31m/40ft. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in	D. Cross	Eastbourne	1/7/72
12.22m/40ft. 1 in	C. Myers	Tonbridge	28/6/60
12.04m/39ft. 6 in	B. Fagg	Redhill	4/7/70

110 METRES HURDLES

18.5	A. Rogers	Eastbourne	1/7/72
19.8	R. Stapley	Eastbourne	22/5/71
22.6	M. Redhead	Eastbourne	22/5/71

400 METRES HURDLES

60.9	A. Rogers	Erith	3/6/72
63.6	M. Redhead	Eastbourne	22/5/71
67.4	B. Fagg	Redhill	11/9/71

ROAD RANKINGS.

5 MILES

24m. 09secs.	R. Sliney	East Ham	5/4/69
25m. 11secs.	A. Hutton	East Ham	5/4/69
26m. 22secs.	A. Prowse	East Ham	5/4/69

6 MILES

28m. 27secs.	R. Sliney	Canterbury	19/4/69
30m. 06secs.	A. Hutton	Canterbury	19/4/69
31m. 21secs.	A. Prowse	Canterbury	19/4/69

10 MILES

49m. 24secs.	R. Sliney	Horsham	18/7/70
54m. 25secs.	P. Cawson	Tonbridge	13/3/67
54m. 45secs.	C. Mills	Tonbridge	25/3/61

20 MILES

2h. 5m. 16secs.	R. Curtis	Hayes	9/7/70
2h. 5m. 24secs.	K. Lancaster	Worthing	4/5/67
2h. 15m. 24secs.	P.W. Hoath	Chiselhurst	18/6/55

MARATHON

2h. 52m. 9secs.	R. Curtis	Harlow	13/6/70
3h. 13m. 49secs.	P.W. Hoath	Windsor	21/5/55
3h. 18m. 25secs.	K. Lancaster	Windsor	16/6/56

ROAD RELAYS

6 x 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ MILES

1h. 29m. 42secs.	D. Nutley	15m. 00secs.	Catorham	27/9/58
	M. Rayner	15m. 36secs.		
	D. Johnson	15m. 11secs.		
	R. Mackenzie	15m. 53secs.		
	R. Curtis	14m. 17secs.		
	C. Mills	13m. 45secs.		

6 x 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ MILES

1h. 23m. 39secs.	R. Curtis	14m. 11secs.	Brighton	30/3/68
	T. Gilroy	15m. 00secs.		
	I. Skerrett	13m. 59secs.		
	A. Hutton	13m. 46secs.		
	R. Sliney	13m. 02secs.		
	P. Cawson	13m. 41secs.		

6 x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ MILES

1h. 49m. 38secs.	A. Hutton	16m. 20secs.	Bexley	15/3/69
	A. Prowse	17m. 29secs.		
	R. Sliney	16m. 11secs.		
	M. Redhead	21m. 32secs.		
	P. Kitching	19m. 46secs.		
	R. Curtis	18m. 20secs.		

ROAD WALKING

10 MILES

1h. 21m. 31secs	A. Ardley	Crystal Palace	18/3/72
1h. 28m. 56secs	F. Baker	Bexley	26/2/72
1h. 34m. 52secs	J. Nye	Bexley	26/2/72

20 MILES

2h. 55m. 9secs	A. Ardley	Maidstone	24/4/71
3h. 10m. 0secs	J. Nye	Maidstone	22/4/72
3h. 22m. 2secs	F. Baker	Manchester	10/6/72

100 MILES

22h. 32m. 6secs	F. Baker	Leicester/Skegness	28/29/7/72
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S.E. LONDON TO BRIGHTON

9h. 22m. 17secs	A. Ardley	A23	20/5/72
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DISC

SHOT

JAVELIN

100 YD

100 YD

TONBRIDGE ATHLETIC CLUB

WOMEN'S BEST PERFORMANCES (1947 - 1972)

100 METRES

12.1	y	A. Usher(Bowring)	Maidstone	4/6/60
12.2		S. Pettett	Crystal Palace	20/5/72
12.2		S. Powell	Beauvais France	27/5/72

y = 100 yards time plus 0.9 secs.

200 METRES

25.3	y	A. Usher	Tonbridge	11/6/60
26.7		J. Upton	Dartford	8/8/70
27.6		K. Bailey	Tonbridge	17/7/72

y = 220 yards time less 0.1 secs.

400 METRES

54.3		A. Bowring	Bucharest	19/9/70
58.4		S. Pettett	Washington	9/7/72
60.7		J. Upton	Eastbourne	12/7/70

800 METRES

2. 24.3		N. Silburn	Crystal Palace	20/5/72
2. 26.0		K. Lyon	Crystal Palace	20/5/72
2. 27.0		B. Leach	Strood	22/7/72

1500 METRES

5. 24.6		B. Leach	Tonbridge	15/7/72
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DISCUS

28.40m/93ft.2in	D. Lawrence	Tonbridge	15/7/72
27.58m/90ft.6in	V. Leigh	Tonbridge	15/6/57

SHOT

8.43m/27ft.8in	A. Usher	Tonbridge	11/7/59
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JAVELIN

24.48m/80ft. 4in	L. Equenot	Erith	2/8/68
20.06m/65ft.10in	C. Priest	East Grinstead	4/6/59
17.84m/58ft. 6in	P. Brown	Tonbridge	16/6/56

HIGH JUMP

1.45m/4ft.9in	B. Gardner	Tonbridge	13/5/50
1.34m/4ft.5in	M. Brotherhood	Tonbridge	25/6/60
1.32m/4ft.4in	J. Casse	Tonbridge	14/8/48

LONG JUMP

5.55m/18ft.2½in	L. Lee	Chiswick	25/6/48
4.79m/15ft.8¾in	S. Powell	Crystal Palace	15/7/72
4.72m/15ft.6in	B. Leach	Crystal Palace	16/5/70