

	<b><i>Manager / Record</i></b>	<b><i>Biography</i></b>
	<p><b>MICHAEL CLEGG</b> Current manager</p> <p>First game 07/12/2019</p>	<p>A former Bolton trainee, Michael Clegg started in management in his home town; it was when he switched from Atherton LR to Atherton Collieries in 2014 that he led his new charges on an unprecedented run of success, lifting them from the North West Counties League into a first ever spell in the Premier Division of the NPL with three promotions in five seasons. Having faced Ashton on the opening day of the season, Clegg was brought in to replace Jody Banim in December 2019.</p>
	<p><b>JOSH WILSON</b> Caretaker player-manager</p> <p>First game 30/11/2019</p> <p><b>P 1 W 0 D 0 L 1 F 0 A 3</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>Josh Wilson was one of the club's senior players at the time of Jody Banim's departure, Wilson led the team for one game with the assistance of two members of the existing backroom staff - coach Damien Crossley and goalkeeper coach Kieran Bentley - before handing over to the incoming Michael Clegg.</p>



**JODY BANIM**  
Player-manager

First game 12/08/2017  
Last game 23/11/2019

**P 122 W 43 D 26 L 53 F 173 A 215**

Cumulative total (46 games with Will Haining)  
**P 168 W 62 D 34 L 72 F 252 A 300**

See Player Section for career details

Jody Banim took sole control of the club's playing affairs from the end of the 2016-17 season, appointing experienced defender Simon Woodford as his assistant. The combination worked incredibly successfully in their first season, as Banim led Ashton to runners-up spot in the Northern Premier League and promotion to National League North via the play-offs. It was no real surprise when the club struggled in the higher division and were relegated back after one season, but the board stood by their manager and funded him to rebuild the squad. With the summer's investments failing to pay dividends, he was relieved of his duties after exiting all cups and with only four wins from 14 league games leaving the club on the fringes of the relegation zone.



**JODY BANIM & WILL HAINING** (pictured)  
Joint player-managers

First game - caretakers 10/09/2016  
First game - permanent 20/09/2016  
Last game 20/04/2017

**P 46 W 19 D 8 L 19 F 80 A 85**

See Player Section for career details

The club's two most senior players at the time of Phillips / Halford's departure were elevated to the position of caretaker-managers and, after the interview process was concluded, were asked to continue in their role - having led the club to a win and a draw (both away from home) in the interim period. After losing a significant number of players, mainly to Stalybridge Celtic, the joint-managers steadied the ship and ended the season strongly in a comfortable mid-table position before Haining decided to step away from football and retired from the game.



**STEVE HALFORD & PAUL PHILLIPS**  
Joint player-managers

First game 17/08/2013  
Last game 03/09/2016

**P 176 W 89 D 36 L 51 F 306 A 227**

See Player Section for career details

Paul Phillips had applied for the manager's job when Danny Johnson left and been appointed assistant manager under Craig Robinson, making him an obvious replacement as Robinson quickly departed. Phillips immediately turned to former Droylsden team-mate Halford, then player-manager at Mossley, to form the club's first ever permanent managerial double act. The club had virtually rebuilt the squad over the summer - with many players choosing to follow Danny Johnson to Nantwich - however, after a slow start, Ashton made the play-offs in the pair's first season as managers and only lost the final on penalties; a best ever third-place finish in the NPL the following season was an improvement on 2014 but again the play-off dream ended on penalties. A third successive play-off finish was achieved in 2016, with Ashton losing out



to big spending Salford City - keeping the run going that each of the teams that beat Ashton in the play-offs ended up winning promotion. With Ashton unbeaten in the league at the start of September 2016, the managers accepted the Stalybridge Celtic job and finally got their move up a division.



**CRAIG ROBINSON**  
Player-manager

Appointed 13/05/2013  
Left post; 10/07/2013

**P O W O D O L O F O A O**

See Player Section for career details

Club captain Craig Robinson was a popular choice amongst the supporters to succeed Danny Johnson - competitive and forthright on the field, he was following in his father's footsteps as a non-league manager whilst brother Karl had gone one better and become the youngest manager in the Football League when taking over at MK Dons in 2010. Robinson quickly realised that he did not wish to fully commit to player / manager role at 30, with several years potential playing career ahead of him, and - typical of a man who had never tackled any challenge at Ashton half-heartedly - tendered his resignation rather than be prepared to try and muddle through. Some of the players he had recruited in pre-season went on to help take Ashton into the play-offs in the season to come and Robbo's own decision seemed justified when he scored Warrington Town's only goal in a 1-0 win over Exeter City in the 1st round FA Cup tie in 2014; not surprisingly a return to management did eventually come his way, taking over at City of Liverpool in 2018 – albeit still playing.



**DANNY JOHNSON**

Manager

Appointed; 16/04/2007

Last game 04/05/2013

**P 300 W 113 D 60 L 127 F 468 A 504**

Born 08/09/1975 (Salford)

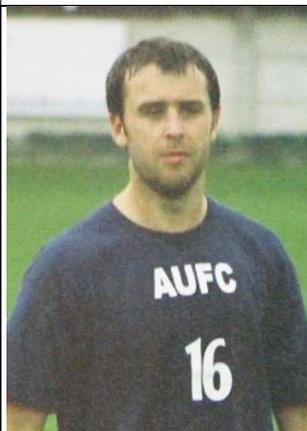
*Playing career*

Manchester United  
Preston North End,  
Salford City,  
Atherton Collieries  
Atherton LR  
Monton Amateurs

*Manager*

Manchester FA U-18's  
Leigh RMI Reserves  
Trafford (03-07)  
Ashton United (07-13)  
Nantwich Town (13-15)  
Radcliffe Borough (15-16)

Danny Johnson turned to coaching after his own promising career was cut short through injury; he developed a very useful side at Trafford before accepting the Ashton job and becoming the club's longest serving manager to date, plotting their then highest ever finish in the Northern Premier League and winning the NPL Challenge Cup along the way. As a manager Johnson engendered tremendous loyalty from the players he trusted, with several making over 100 club appearances under him - three of whom went on to pass 200 games in red and white.



**CHRIS ROYLE**

Caretaker player-manager

First game 10/03/2007

Last game 14/04/2007

**P 7 W 1 D 1 L 5 F 8 A 15**

See Player Section for career details

Chris Royle held the fort as the club's senior player in the period between Scott Green's departure and the appointment of Danny Johnson.



**SCOTT GREEN**

Player-manager

First game 17/12/2005

Last game 03/03/2007

**P 62 W 21 D 12 L 29 F 89 A 96**

See Player Section for career details;

Scott Green proved a steadying hand on the tiller after the club had had three managers in the year prior to his appointment - his undoubted ability on the pitch being a considerable factor in the club's attempt to regain stability. All that came to an end as Green resigned immediately prior to boarding the coach to an away match, claiming a press release from the club had undermined his position - a point that was strenuously denied by the board.



**PAUL FUTCHER**

Manager

First game 14/02/2005

Last game Left post; 10/12/2005

**P 37 W 8 D 7 L 22 F 50 A 72**

Born 25/09/1956 (Chester)

Died 23/22/2016

*Playing career*

Chester City (72-74; 20-0)

Luton Town (74-78; 131-1)

Manchester City (78-80; 37-0)

Oldham Athletic (80-83; 98-1)

Derby County (82-84; 35-0)

Barnsley (83-90; 230-0)

Halifax Town (90; 15-0)

Grimsby Town (90-95; 132-0)

Droylsden (95; 9-0).

*Player-manager*

Darlington (95)

Gresley Rovers (95-97;72-0)

Southport (97-99; 52-0)

*Coach*

Leeds United Academy.

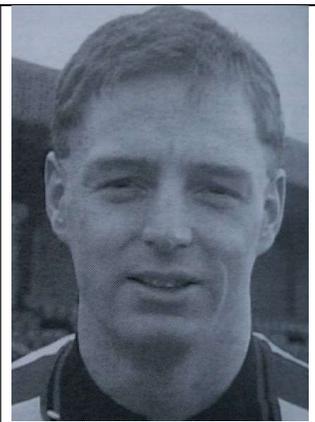
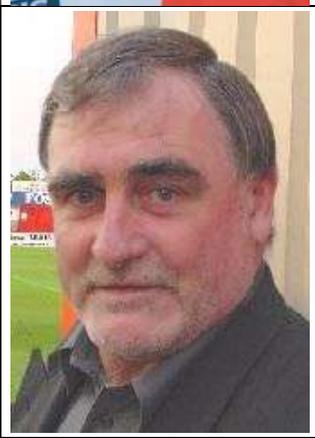
*Manager*

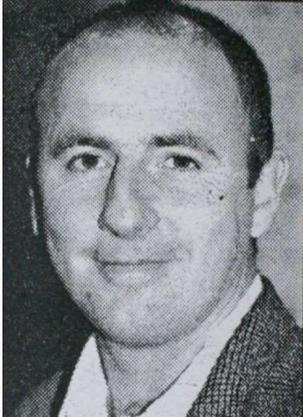
Stalybridge Celtic (01-02)

Ashton United (05).

Paul Futcher was, at one time, England's most expensive defender and he enjoyed a long career as a player - which he managed to extend well into his forties through consummate professionalism; dropping into non-league, he led Gresley to the Championship of the Southern League in 1997 then took Southport to Wembley in the FA Trophy final of 1998 - by featuring in the game at the age of 41, he became the oldest outfield player to feature in a final under the twin towers. After retiring from playing he returned to football as manager at Stalybridge Celtic (then of the Conference) but left with the side facing relegation, and three years later took over at Hurst Cross; despite his best efforts and a steady turn-around of personnel, Ashton made little progress and he resigned after eight months in charge. He died of cancer in November 2016, aged just sixty.

	<p><i>Coach</i> Huddersfield New College <i>Also</i> England u21 (76-78; 11-0)</p>	
	<p><b>ANDY JOHNSON</b> Manager</p> <p>First game - caretaker 18/12/2004 First game - permanent 15/01/2005 Last game 12/02/2006</p> <p><b>P 9 W 2 D 1 L 6 F 10 A 21</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>An experienced coach (by the time of his appointment he was already involved in coaching with England Ladies), Andy Johnston progressed from assistant manager under Gerry Quinn, to caretaker then permanent team manager. His appointment proved a popular choice amongst fans, but he struggled to bring in new faces (making just one signing) and was subsequently unable to improve results as a consequence.</p>
	<p><b>GERRY QUINN</b> Manager</p> <p>First game 13/11/1999 Last game 11/12/2004</p> <p><b>P 290 W 127 D 70 L 93 F 544 A 456</b></p> <p>Born 09/03/1956 (Huddersfield)</p> <p><i>Playing career</i> Emley Hyde United (82-83) Emley (83-87) <i>Player-manager</i> Emley (87-92) <i>Manager</i> Altrincham (92-93) Ossett Albion (98-99) Ashton United (99-04) Liversedge (06-07) Mossley (07-08)</p>	<p>A PE teacher from Huddersfield, Gerry Quinn turned out to be Ashton's most successful manager in two decades - he achieved promotion from the NPL 1st Division (via the play-offs) in 2002 with a team that played attractive, attacking football and led the club to three successive Manchester Premier Cup triumphs. He suffered distractions away from the game due to family illness in 2004 and, as a result, failed to sufficiently strengthen his side for the club's first season in the reorganised league structure as they competed in Conference North, leading to his departure before the end of the year.</p>

	<p><b>STEWART ANDERSON &amp; PAUL FRANCE</b> Joint caretaker player-managers</p> <p>First game 19/10/1999 Last game 06/11/1999</p> <p><b>P 6 W 1 D 3 L 2 F 9 A 9</b></p> <p>Stewart Anderson cumulative total (3 games with Jimmy Bell) <b>P 9 W 2 D 4 L 3 F 13 A 14</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>As two of the club's most senior players, Anderson (for a second time) and France took control of team affairs in the period between John King's departure and the appointment of Gerry Quinn.</p>
		
	<p><b>JOHN KING</b> Manager</p> <p>First game 14/08/1999 Last game 16/10/1999</p> <p>Playing record; <b>P 10 W 4 D 1 L 5 F 19 A 21</b></p> <p>Born 1950</p> <p><i>Playing career</i> Everton Shrewsbury Town Kirby Town Wigan Athletic</p>	<p>On the face of it, the appointment of John King – a seasoned manager and a playing legend at Moss Lane – looked an excellent coup for Ashton. There is no doubt that he brought good players to the club amongst his summer recruitment drive (the bulk of the previous season's squad having followed previous manager Coleman to Accrington) but his team and personality did not gel at Hurst Cross, meaning he left a few disappointing weeks after succeeding John Coleman.</p>

	<p>Northwich Victoria  Altrincham (77-82; 215-26)  <i>Manager</i>  South Liverpool (82-84),  Altrincham (84-86)  Runcorn (86-88)  Altrincham (88-91)  Barrow (91-92)  <i>Assistant manager</i>  Bury (92-94)  <i>Manager</i>  Altrincham (94-98)  Ashton United (99)</p>	
	<p><b>JOHN COLEMAN</b>  Player-manager</p> <p>First game 21/11/1996  Last game 01/05/1999</p> <p><b>P 163 W 89 D 41 L 33 F 318 A 183</b></p> <p>See Players Section for career details</p>	<p>Scorer of over 500 career goals at non-league level, John Coleman was appointed into his first managerial role at Hurst Cross as successor to Phil Staley; he continued to ply his trade as a striker and set his teams up to score goals too – in doing so, Coleman achieved two third place finishes, two NPL 1st Division Cup wins and reached the quarter finals of the FA Trophy - a club best; in 1999 he was surprisingly released after closely missing promotion for a second season running, with the board believing he had taken the club as far as he could at that time. He retired from playing to become Accrington Stanley's manager and eventually took them back into the Football League as he developed in to one of England's finest managers playing his trade outside the top tiers of the game.</p>
	<p><b>STEWART ANDERSON &amp; JIMMY BELL</b>  Joint caretaker player-managers</p> <p>First game 11/11/1996  Last game 18/11/1996</p> <p><b>P 3 W 1 D 1 L 1 F 4 A 5</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>Stewart Anderson and Jimmy Bell, as two of the club's more senior players, were asked to take control for the three game period between Phil Staley's departure and the appointment of John Coleman; Bell was appointed assistant manager when Coleman took office and followed him as his Number Two through more than twenty years of football management.</p>



**PHIL STALEY**  
Manager

First game 01/05/1995  
Last game 09/11/1996

**P 76 W 31 D 17 L 28 F 126 A 114**

Cumulative total  
**P 166 W 75 D 39 L 52 F 294 A 224**

See Player Section for career details

A non-league legend, Phil Staley became the first, and to date, only modern-day manager to have more than one attempt at managing Ashton United on a permanent basis. Staley made numerous signings in an attempt to bring improvements to his squad over the course of the 1995-96 season - but this came at the cost of continuity and duly affected progress on the field. A slow start to the 1996-97 season ensued and he was relieved of his duties after around one third of the campaign had elapsed. Staley published a book in 2002 about his life in non-league football called "Get those sheep off the pitch" (featuring a picture of sheep on the pitch of his first managerial assignment, Bethesda Athletic, on the cover) and didn't retire until 2012 when a health scare stopped him from taking his place in the Nantwich dug-out as Assistant Manager. Three years out of the game proved enough for this great survivor, and he returned to scouting in 2015.



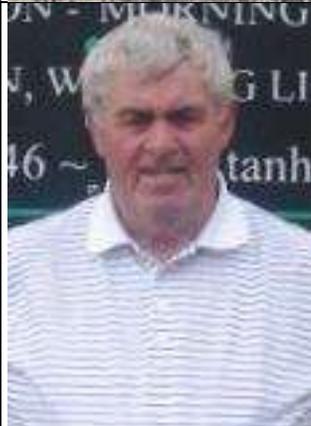
**MARK HILTON**  
Caretaker manager

First game 22/04/1995  
Last game 29/04/1995

**P 2 W 0 D 2 L 0 F 2 A 2**

See Player Section for career details

Mark Hilton was originally appointed as assistant to caretaker-manager Tony Ryan when Kevan Keelan was sacked; he took over team affairs for the final two matches before Phil Staley was appointed, following on from brother Mike – Ashton's manager in the late 1980s.



**TONY RYAN**  
Caretaker manager

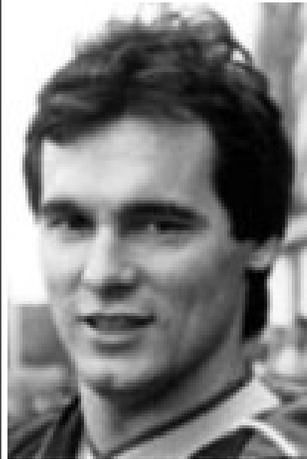
First game 30/03/1995  
Last game 18/04/1995

**P 8 W 2 D 1 L 5 F 10 A 20**

Cumulative total (three games with Mickey Boyle)  
**P 13 W 4 D 2 L 7 F 23 A 29**

See Player Section for career details

Tony Ryan was appointed as caretaker-manager for the third time in five years when asked to take the team until the end of the 1994-95 season after Kevan Keelan was sacked, but he asked the board to step up their search for a replacement after eight games in charge and stood down, accelerating the eventual appointment of Phil Staley.



**KEVAN KEELAN**  
Manager

First game 21/08/1993  
Last game 25/03/1995

**P 70 W 40 D 12 L 18 F 154 A 86**

Born 22/07/1953

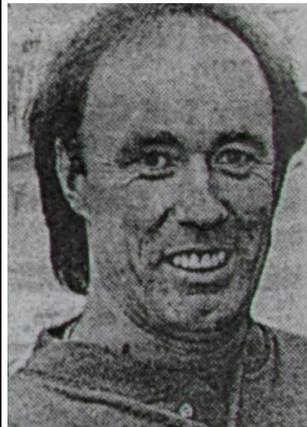
*Playing career*

Radcliffe Borough  
Northwich Victoria  
Buxton  
Stalybridge Celtic  
Newcastle (Aus)  
Mossley (79-81; 86-27)  
Macclesfield Town (81-84; 115-29)  
Hyde United  
Mossley (90; 7-2)

*Manager*

Rossendale United  
Stalybridge Celtic  
Ashton United (93-95)  
Mossley (95-97)  
*Assistant manager*  
Leigh RMI.

A highly respected player in Tameside football circles, Kevan Keelan also managed a number of the Borough's sides. Given a reasonably large budget (by Hurst Cross standards), he got Ashton to the brink of promotion with a virtually all-new side in 1993-94 - only missing out to Spennymoor United in the final game of the season; he was sacked toward the end of the following campaign - despite a healthy league position - as it appeared Ashton were again destined to miss out on promotion. Away from football, Keelan had a long and varied career in construction, including a number of senior management roles.



**SAMMY McILROY**  
Manager

First game 13/02/1993  
Last game 27/04/1993

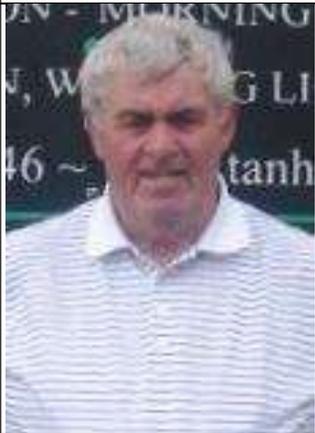
**P 21 W 12 D 3 L 6 F 47 A 35**

Born 02/08/1954 (Belfast)

*Playing career*

Manchester United (71-81; 342-57)  
Stoke City (81-84; 133-14)  
Manchester City (85-86; 13-1)  
Orgryte (Sweden) (86; 7-0)  
Bury (86-89; 57-2)  
VFB Admira Wacker (Austria, loan, 6-1)  
Preston North End (89-91; 20-0)

Matt Busby's last ever signing for the Manchester United youth programme was still cutting his teeth as a manager when he joined Ashton, going on finish third in his first non-playing managerial role. Pipped for promotion in the final week of the season by Knowsley, Sammy McIlroy then resigned and subsequently went on to re-write the history of Macclesfield Town - winning the Conference (twice), FA Trophy and, eventually taking them to the heights of the old 3rd Division. McIlroy later became the first manager to take a second team into the Football League with Morecambe, that success coming after a spell in charge of his native Northern Ireland.

	<p><i>Player-manager</i> Northwich Victoria (91-92; 8-0). <i>Player</i> Mossley (92; 2-0). <i>Manager</i> Ashton United (92-93) Macclesfield Town (93-00) Northern Ireland (00-03) Stockport County (03-04) Morecambe (05-11). <i>Also</i> Northern Ireland (72-87; 88-5)</p>	
	<p><b>TONY RYAN</b> Caretaker manager  First game 06/02/1993 Last game 08/02/1993  <b>P 2 W 1 D 0 L 1 F 9 A 4</b>  Cumulative total (three games with Mickey Boyle) <b>P 5 W 2 D 1 L 2 F 13 A 9</b>  See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>A former Ashton player who remained involved with the club many years after he finished his playing days, Tony Ryan was appointed as caretaker-manager for the second time after Dave Denby left the club; he held the reigns until Sammy McIlroy's appointment – thrashing Rossendale 7-1 during his final game in charge.</p>
	<p><b>DAVE DENBY</b> Manager  First game 06/11/1990 Last game 30/01/1993  <b>P120 W 78 D 21 L 21 F 240 A 119</b> Born 06/11/1941 (Manchester) <i>Playing career</i> Blackpool Glossop Droylsden <i>Player-coach</i> Abbey Hey <i>Assistant manager</i> Curzon Ashton Macclesfield Town <i>Scout</i></p>	<p>Dave Denby's appointment - and the addition of a few shrewd signings to the core of a squad inherited from Trevor Ross - took an inconsistent lower mid-table side up to a third place finish in just over half a season; he then wrote one of the most significant chapters in Ashton United's history by winning the first ever North West Counties League 'double' (League title and the Raab Karcher sponsored Challenge Cup) over the 1991-92 season, adding the Manchester Premier Cup and the NWCL Challenge Trophy for good measure. Rumours of discontent between Denby and the Board at Ashton abounded, despite his phenomenal success on the pitch, and eventually this led to a parting of the ways; despite enjoying a long career in football, he never came close to replicating what he achieved at Hurst Cross during the 1991-92 campaign – but he'll always be fondly remembered by those at Hurst Cross that witnessed the season where the club landed four trophies.</p>

Manchester City  
*Manager*  
Ashton United (90-92)  
Mossley (93)  
*Assistant manager*  
Stalybridge Celtic  
*Manager*  
Curzon Ashton (96-97)  
*Scout*  
Droylsden



**MICKY BOYLE & TONY RYAN**

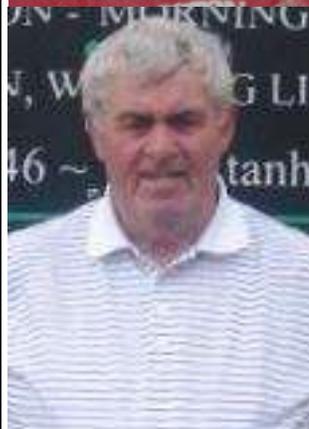
Joint caretaker managers

First game 27/10/1990

Last game 03/11/1990

**P 3 W 1 D 1 L 1 F 4 A 5**

See Player Section for career details



Former player Tony Ryan and senior player Mickey Boyle combined to act as joint caretaker-managers in the period between Trevor Ross leaving and Dave Denby being appointed. Match reports from the period are incomplete, but Boyle appears not to have selected himself during the time he was picking the team, hence he is not listed as a player / caretaker manager.



**TREVOR ROSS**

Manager

First game 19/08/1989

Last game 20/10/1990

**P 43 W 14 D 11 L 18 F 54 A 60**

Born 16/01/1957 (Ashton-under-Lyne)

*Playing career*

Arsenal (74-77; 58-5)

Everton (77-82; 126-15)

Portsmouth (loan, 82; 5-0)

Sheffield United (loan, 82; 4-0)

AEK Athens (Greece)

Sheffield United (84; 4-0)

Bury (84-87; 98-11)

Hyde United (87; 6-0)

Altrincham

Radcliffe Borough

*Assistant manager*

Radcliffe Borough

*Manager*

Ashton United (89-90)

*Coach*

AFC Oldham (Youth)

*Also*

England Schoolboys

Scotland Under 21's

The son of former Ashton player Bill, Trevor Ross inherited an Ashton side that only missed relegation due to Ellesmere Port folding at the end of 1988-89; his team struggled for consistency but made a late rally to finish the following season mid-table - he was sacked three months into 1990-91 without much further evidence of progress on the previous campaign, although his successor (Dave Denby) did inherit a solid nucleus of players, many of whom went on to play in the side that won the North West Counties League & Cup double in 1992. Every Ashton fan owes a debt of gratitude to Ross though for, whilst manager, he introduced businessman and future chairman Terry Liversidge to the club - and thereby helped secure the very future of Ashton United.



**MIKE HILTON**

Manager

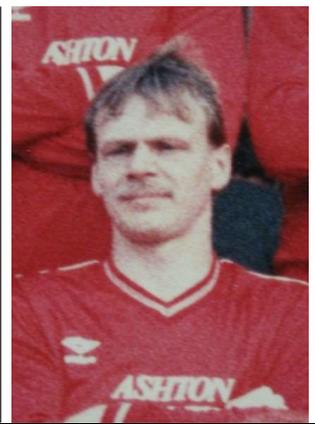
First game 21/01/1989

Last game 06/05/1989.

Playing record; **P 19 W 6 D 2 L 11 F 18 A 32**

See Player Section for career details;

Mike Hilton applied to be Ashton manager in 1988 when Dave Lees actually got the job, but he made a good enough impression at interview to be appointed into a General Manager's role at the club, later taking over first team duties (from Lees) as the third manager of a difficult season. He inherited a team in turmoil and finished near the bottom of NWCL – which was hardly surprising - despite a late run of improved form. Although the club were reprieved from relegation due to the resignation of Ellesmere Port & Neston, Hilton resigned as manager in the summer of 1989.

	<p><b>DAVE LEES</b> Player-manager</p> <p>First game caretaker 15/10/1988 First game permanent 19/11/1988 Last game 14/01/1989</p> <p><b>P 18 W 4 D 4 L 10 F 17 A 38</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>Dave Lees strived manfully to manage a team already struggling and further weakened by players leaving the club in the wake of previous manager Albert Pike's departure. Assisted by Bobby Socha, Lees was unable to field the same side in consecutive games and was constantly trying to recruit new players in a bid to improve the playing standards, eventually resigning after a demoralising run of eleven games without a win from the time he was promoted to the manager's position on a permanent basis.</p>
	<p><b>ALBERT PIKE</b> Manager</p> <p>First game 17/12/1985 Last game 08/10/1988</p> <p><b>P 18 W 4 D 4 L 10 F 17 A 38</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>Albert Pike became Ashton third manager of the 1985-86 season as he took control of a team floundering in the lower reaches of the North West Counties League 2nd Division – with The Robins having started the season expecting to push for promotion. Pike built stable foundations in the coming months and managed a fourth-place finish in the table for the 1986-87 season, then won the 2nd Division title in 1988 with just four defeats and having scored over 100 goals along the way; he lost many of his better players to higher-ranked opponents over the summer and made a slow start to life back in the 1st Division as a result – however, given the previous year's success, it was a significant surprise when he was relieved of his duties after a 3-2 FA Vase win over Formby, with his record for the season in all competitions standing at what looked a fairly reasonable five wins, three draws and six defeats.</p>
	<p><b>GERRY CLOWES</b> Manager</p> <p>First game 19/10/1985 Last game 14/12/1985</p> <p><b>P 11 W 3 D 2 L 6 F 14 A 22</b></p> <p>Born 19/08/1936 (Manchester)</p> <p><i>Playing career</i> Stockport County Altrincham Nantlle Vale</p>	<p>After Jim Fletcher was dismissed, Billy Ash was appointed caretaker-manager - but he did not take a game as, within a week, a former assistant manager to Billy Chell was appointed as the new man in charge. Having been the number 2 over the 1984-85 season, Clowes left Hurst Cross when Chell retired at the end of that campaign, returning as manager in his own right in October 1985. He lasted just twelve games in charge (although the players were already picked for him in his final game as manager due to his late arrival at the ground), most of which were lost despite a bright start. Clowes later returned to Hurst Cross in a coaching capacity when Albert Pike was manager and then was at Hyde United in a similar role during their extremely successful period when Mike McKenzie, another former</p>

	<p><i>Manager</i>  Dukinfield Town (81-82).  <i>Coach</i>  New Mills (82-83)  <i>Manager</i>  Cheadle Town (83)  <i>Assistant-manager</i>  Ashton United (84-85)  <i>Manager</i>  Ashton United (85)  Cheadle Town  <i>Coach</i>  Salford City  Ashton United (86)  <i>Manager</i>  Dukinfield Town  <i>Coach</i>  Hyde United  Witton Albion  Trafford</p>	<p>Ashton player, was manager.</p>
	<p><b>JIM FLETCHER</b>  Manager    First game 10/08/1985  Last game 13/10/1985    <b>P 11 W 3 D 2 L 6 F 14 A 22</b>    See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>A trainee at Oldham Athletic, Jim Fletcher first landed at Hurst Cross as a player when former Latics boss Jack Rowley was Ashton's manager. When Billy Chell retired at the end of the 1984-85 season his team had finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the North West Counties League 2<sup>nd</sup> Division - unable to build on that platform (after just three league wins all season and losing every game played in September), former Bacup manager Fletcher was sacked following a 1-4 reverse at Colwyn Bay in mid-October.</p>

**BILLY CHELL**

Manager

First game 07/01/1984

Last game 11/05/1985

**P 63 W 24 D 14 L 25 F 87 A 108**

See Player Section for career details

Billy Chell had featured briefly at Hurst Cross as a player, making a handful of appearances in the early 1960s; he had a long association across town with Curzon before he managed Ashton. Chell took on a team with only a handful of league wins to its name and would have saved the club from relegation but for a points deduction incurred before he took over. He almost secured a return to the North West Counties 1<sup>st</sup> Division at the first attempt, finishing fourth in his one full season in charge before taking the decision to retire from football.

**GLYN WATSON**

Manager

First game 13/08/1983

Last game 31/12/1983

**P 28 W 6 D 7 L 15 F 35 A 53***Manager*

Clarence Athletic

Darwen

Lancashire FA u-18s

Rossendale United

Winsford United

Ashton United (83-84)

Rossendale United (84)

Glyn Watson started the 1983-84 campaign with just one player remaining from the Derek Partridge's squad of the previous season and endured a tough baptism as a result of having to build from scratch; after a half season of moderate results (with only four wins in the league) he quit Hurst Cross in the first week of 1984 for a return to Rossendale - taking much of the squad he had assembled with him

**DEREK PARTRIDGE**

Manager

First game 14/08/1982

Last game 05/08/1983

**P 54 W 21 D 15 L 18 F 85 A 85**

See Player Section for career details

Derek Partridge, from Haughton Green, inherited an Ashton side in transition, with established players having left and the club financially challenged - he endured a terrible run up until Christmas before stabilising the team but, despite winning the Manchester Premier Cup in his final game in charge, was still sacked at season's end as cup form failed to mask league results tailing off; Partridge turned out twice for the team when short on numbers late on in the season and his son Eddie also featured in a few matches. Partridge went on to become Chief Scout for Manchester City and worked on fundraising efforts with Manchester City Old Boys charity football team over many years (either side of his time at Ashton) - he was awarded the Medal of Distinction (an award rarely presented to civilians) by the Army, in recognition of having raised over £1M for various charities.

**EDDIE HOPKINSON**

Manager (Played one game)

First game 19/08/1978

Last game 04/05/1981

**P 54 W 21 D 15 L 18 F 85 A 85**

Cumulative total

**P 55 W 22 D 15 L 18 F 88 A 85**

See Player Section for career details

When appointed as the manager on a permanent basis, the former Oldham, Bolton, and England goalkeeper Eddie Hopkinson had control of a side that contained his son as first choice keeper. A moderate first season saw a high turnover of players and a 17<sup>th</sup> placed finish – the stability he brought the following season (26 players, roughly half of whom were retained from the previous campaign) saw the club rise to finish 4<sup>th</sup>. Hopkinson announced he was retiring toward the end of his final term, a decision probably exacerbated by him injuring his leg when falling through rotten timber at the dilapidated old ground that Hurst Cross was becoming. Ashton finished mid-table and Hopkinson bowed out with a cup final, albeit it in a losing cause. He played once during his tenure with the team bereft of players who had gone to the wrong ground, making him one of the club's oldest ever players.



**PHIL STALEY**  
Manager

First game 17/12/1977  
Last game 13/05/1978

**P 32 W 17 D 8 L 7 F 65 A 40**

Cumulative total  
**P 90 W 44 D 22 L 24 F 168 A 110**

See Player Section for career details

Re-instated after rescinding his resignation, Phil Staley had spent six days away from the Hurst Cross hot seat before resuming his duties – and he saw out the second half of the season in much the same way as he completed the first, winning roughly one game for every game drawn or lost. His side finished in mid-table – but with the club's best points tally for a season since the mid 60's - and completed the campaign with a trophy, beating Hyde United in the final of the Reporter Floodlit Cup final. Despite the progress made, the seeds of doubt were no doubt sown in December's goings-on and, with the board also unhappy about deviations from the agreed wage bill and the number of Ashton players also featuring in Sunday football, Phil Staley was dismissed ten days after season's end.



**EDDIE HOPKINSON**  
Manager

First game 10/12/1977

**P 1 W 1 D 0 L 0 F 3 A 0**

See Player Section for career details

Eddie Hopkinson had joined Ashton as club trainer the previous month when Phil Staley's shock resignation threw him into the manager's role at Hurst Cross; as it was, the home fixture with Burscough – won courtesy of goals from Colin Hope, Barney Daniels and Terry O' Connor - was to be his only game in charge of the team (for now) after his predecessor was soon reinstated.

**PHIL STALEY**

Manager

First game 30/10/1976

Last game 03/12/1977

**P 58 W 27 D 14 L 17 F 103 A 70**

See Player Section for career details

Almost a decade on from being given a trial game for the goalkeeper's shirt at Hurst Cross - and after four years out of the game running a pub - Phil Staley was not yet thirty when he was appointed Ashton manager; Staley had set Bethesda Athletic on their way to winning the Welsh League (North) in his previous job before being brought in to replace caretaker-manager Eddie Harrop - and to try and pep up the fortunes of an Ashton side that had spent seven successive seasons in the bottom half of the table since re-joining the Cheshire League. His first season in charge ended with a typical lower-mid-table finish for The Robins but with signs of progress at least - his second campaign, the 1977-78 season, was progressing reasonably well overall and good progress was being made in the FA Trophy (wins over Formby, Nantwich and then a 6-0 romp against Northern Premier League side South Liverpool) when Staley and the club fell out. An issue of dissent had been noted by the referee at Formby and the culprit was asked to pay the subsequent fine - refusing to do so, the manager resigned rather than cough up and left the club just four days after the magnificent result against South Liverpool.

**EDDIE HARROP**

Caretaker player-manager

First game 21/08/1976

Last game 23/10/1976

**P 16 W 2 D 3 L 11 F 19 A 43**

See Player Section for career details

Following on from a decade's service to Winsford United, experienced defender Eddie Harrop had been at Hurst Cross only a matter of days when the manager that had signed him - Les Sutton - resigned from his post, less than a month before the start of the season. Amongst the players recruited during Harrop's temporary tenure, Ashton gained the services of club favourites Ged Coyne and Tony Keyes and the returning Alan Sanderson. Featuring mainly as a left back, he made three further appearances after Phil Staley was recruited before moving on.

**LES SUTTON**

Manager (Played one game)

First game 05/05/1975

Last game 07/05/1976

**P 61 W 18 D 13 L 29 F 70 A 93**

See Player Section for career details

Les Sutton was appointed to the manager's post at Hurst Cross to take over a team that had just finished 19<sup>th</sup> out of 22 teams in the Cheshire League – he oversaw a season of steady transformation of the team by introducing the likes of Roy Baker, Jimmy Lomas and Mike Saile, all of whom served the club well over the 1975-76 campaign, but only managed a slight improvement in league position (+2 places) and points tally (+5 points). Despite this, the club were happy to let Sutton continue and he was in the midst of preparing for the coming season when the club were rocked by his resignation on July 25<sup>th</sup> – less than a month before the start of the season; it was a double change for The Robins as popular club President Sid Sykes was replaced by seafood entrepreneur Roy Donnelly the same week. Sutton then went on to a second spell as Hyde manager, leading the club through some successful seasons, winning the Cheshire League title and promotion to the Northern Premier League in 1982; he was also a decent cricketer away from the commitments of the football season, playing for Denton St. Lawrence CC.

**DAVE ATKINS**

Manager

First game caretaker 05/10/1974

First game permanent 08/02/1975

Last game 28/04/1975

**P 42 W 15 D 6 L 28 F 59 A 102**

Playing career under research

Ashton were in a pretty dire situation at the time Dick Oxtoby was sacked, with only league three points gathered in the first two months of the season; Dave Atkins was promoted from Oxtoby's coaching staff into a caretaker-manager position to fill the gap - and managed two draws and two wins from his first five league games in charge. He brought a degree of stability to the club during a long probationary period – he wasn't given the role permanently until he'd been in charge for four months, although results tailed off after his appointment was made permanent and this meant he was released from his post with one game of the season to play.

**RICHARD OXTOBY**

Player-manager

First game caretaker 19/01/1974  
First game permanent 17/08/1974  
Last game 12/10/1974

**P 35 W 5 D 8 L 19 F 32 A 79**

See Player Section for career details

Dick Oxtoby was the club's regular centre half when appointed caretaker-manager in January 1974, immediately bringing in John Kowalski as his coach; he continued to play as well as manage, but reduced his game time so that he started only around 50% of the matches in the second half of the season. Results were pretty much on a par with his predecessor and Ashton finished the season with 28 points from 42 games, fourth bottom of the Cheshire League. Despite this, the board were content to give Oxtoby the job on a permanent basis and allow him the summer to build his own squad, but few of the players brought in made a lasting impression at Hurst Cross and, having failed to win any of the opening dozen league matches, the former Bolton and Tranmere man tendered his resignation - the end arriving after Ashton were dumped out of the FA Trophy by students from Leeds Carnegie University. Like many footballers of his generation, Dick suffered with dementia later in life.

**ERIC WEBSTER**

Manager

First game 11/08/1973  
Last game 13/01/1974

**P 35 W 9 D 5 L 21 F 47 A 82**

See Player Section for career details

Having already managed at Stalybridge, Hyde and Runcorn, former Ashton player Eric Webster had a solid track record as a manager behind him when he took over the Ashton hot-seat, as the club attempted, once again, to rise above being perennial strugglers in the Cheshire League. Webster was in charge for the first half of the 1973-74 season, a period that saw Ashton benefit massively from goals scored by a Webster signing - Graham Smith - but defensive problems meant that two goals were rarely enough to win a match. The week after being forced to name himself as a substitute (at the age of 42) Ashton played an experimental first fixture on a Sunday - the 1-4 reverse to Prestwich Heys at Hurst Cross proved to be Webster's last game in charge. Eric Webster went on to become a legend at Stockport County, holding virtually every role possible in a club of their size - youth coach, assistant manager, manager, scout and even groundsman. He rightly sits in County's Hall of Fame at Edgeley Park.



**DENNIS SCHOFIELD**

Manager

First game 27/11/1971 (Match abandoned)

Last game 09/05/1973

**P 99 W 33 D 23 L 43 F 148 A 180**

Born c.1930

*Playing career*

Bolton Wanderers (trial)

British Army football

*Scout*

Burnley

*Manager*

Clifton Palace (later Deans)

Ashton United (71-73)

Deans Sports

*Scout*

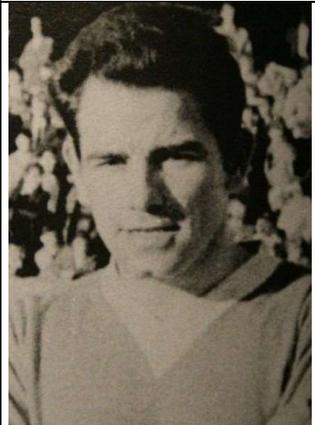
Manchester City

Blackburn Rovers

Manchester United

Manchester City

Milkman Dennis Schofield dedicated most of his life to football in one way or another – in 1964 he founded what is now known as Deans Youth & Ladies, a grassroots phenomenon in Salford, he has scouted for a number of top clubs in the region (including both United and City) and, in 1971, he took on the role of Ashton United manager recently vacated by Billy Wheeldon. Ashton had only two league wins to their name when Wheeldon departed on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 1971; the ship was steadied for a couple of months by senior players Lawson and Colquhoun before Schofield arrived at the end of November. A mid-table finish brokered hope for further improvement the following season but, although the foundations had been laid, the team did not make progress and ended the season just six points above bottom markers Radcliffe – gathering less points in a full season under Schofield that he had managed during just 34 games the previous campaign. After departing Hurst Cross, Schofield returned to his Salford routes and a decade after joining Ashton United he spotted yet another talented youth in Salford and persuaded a young man – then Ryan Wilson, now known as Giggs – to join his Deans side... Dennis Schofield was still coaching the Deans' youngsters when the Welshman was in his prime with Manchester United twenty years later.



**JOHN COLQUHOUN & ALLAN LAWSON**

Joint caretaker player-managers

First game 02/09/1971

Last game 20/11/1971 (Match abandoned)

**P 9 W 2 D 2 L 5 F 12 A 18**

See Player Section for career details

John Colquhoun and Allan Lawson were two fine players in their own right; they had been brought to Hurst Cross by Jack Rowley, who had previously managed the pair at Oldham Athletic. During a caretaker period in charge, the two men oversaw ten games, the final match of which was abandoned after an hour due to a frozen pitch at Hurst Cross – the following week's fixture against Droylsden (Dennis Schofield's first in charge) was also abandoned due to failing light with no working floodlights at the ground.



**BILLY WHEELDON**  
Manager

First game 05/09/1970  
Last game 25/09/1971

**P 56 W 21 D 10 L 25 F 86 A 98**

See Player Section for career details



Billy Wheeldon played for the famous Manchester amateur side Goslings either side of a short spell on the wing at Hurst Cross in the 1940s. He had spent eleven years coaching at Droylsden - and a spell at Stalybridge in a similar role - prior to being given control of team affairs at Ashton when Jack Rowley stepped aside. The Robins had endured a tough time since re-joining the Cheshire League and, whilst the mid-table finish Wheeldon achieved in 1971 was only a qualified success, it was achieved with a points tally greater than had been obtained over the two previous seasons combined. The 1971-72 season started sufficiently poorly (two league wins in the first ten outings) that it cost Wheeldon his job, but Ashton fans have cause to be grateful for that section of his career, as he introduced club legend Barney Daniels to Hurst Cross for his debut. In 1973, whilst coaching with Hyde, Wheeldon suffered a heart attack, but that didn't stop him making a return to football and working in a coaching capacity three further times at Hurst Cross, the last being during the 1987-88 North West Counties 2<sup>nd</sup> Division title-winning season.

**JACK ROWLEY**

Manager

First game 07/03/1970

Last game 29/08/1970

**P 20 W 3 D 3 L 14 F 32 A 59**

Born 07/10/1920

(Wolverhampton)

Died 28/06/1988



Playing career

Dudley Old Boys

Wolverhampton Wanderers (35; 0)

Cradley Heath

Bournemouth (36-37; 23-12)

Manchester United (37-55; 317-163)

*Wartime - Wolverhampton Wanderers**Player-manager*

Plymouth Argyle (55-60; 56-14)

*(Retired from playing in 1957)**Manager*

Oldham Athletic (60-63)

Ajax Amsterdam (Holland, 63-64)

Wrexham (66-67)

Oldham Athletic (68-69)

Ashton United (70)

*Also*

England (48-52; 6-6)

England B

Football League XI

Named for his shooting prowess and service during the war as an anti-tank gunner, John 'Gunner' Rowley (commonly known as Jack) was one of the most effective English strikers of any era. The former Manchester United and England man denied in the press that he was after the manager's job at Ashton at the time his son was playing for the club; he was eventually inserted into the role after Bob Farriday resigned under the impression that the story in the papers did not reflect the club's – or possibly Rowley's – ambitions, but only after Cliff Pratt had been caretaker for a number of weeks. In the end, Rowley agreed to assist the club for free but only took charge for the tail end of the 1969-70 campaign and a few games into the following season. Settled in the Oldham area, he ran a post office in the Shaw area of the town away from football.

**CLIFF PRATT**

Caretaker-manager

First game 24/01/1970

Last game 28/02/1970

**P 5 W 2 D 0 L 3 F 13 A 15**

Playing career – under research



Cliff Pratt had been working as the club's fitness coach when promoted to the caretaker-manager's role after the short-lived reign of Bob Farriday – he was actually in charge for 46 days as caretaker, which was more than twice as long as Farriday (21 days) spent as permanent manager.

	<p><b>BOB FARRIDAY</b> Player-manager</p> <p>First game 10/01/1970 Last game 17/01/1970</p> <p><b>P 2 W 0 D 0 L 2 F 3 A 6</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>The club's first player-manager since Hugh Kelly in the early sixties lasted just two games, Bob Farriday's resignation coming on the back of rumours of an approach by the board to Jack Rowley (whose son John was playing for Ashton at the time) to take control of team affairs – although the former England man denied any intention to oust the newly-appointed manager. Farriday stayed on at Hurst Cross as a player under both caretaker Pratt and - when he was eventually appointed - Rowley as well but left before the end of the season.</p>
	<p><b>ALAN McINTOSH</b> Manager</p> <p>First game 24/08/1968 Last game 30/12/1969</p> <p><b>P xx2 W 0 D 0 L 2 F 3 A 6</b></p> <p><b>Playing career</b> Cardiff City Horwich RMI Droylsden <i>Manager</i> Droylsden (60-61) Ashton United (69-70)</p>	<p>Alan Macintosh had had nine seasons as manager of Droylsden when, aided by coach Alan Walker, he took control of Ashton United just after they completed a return to the Cheshire League – following an absence of over thirty years; it was a competition Ashton had been keen to re-join for most of the decade and had suddenly become accessible due to the extra places created by the founding of the Northern Premier League in 1968. Still paying the price of costs incurred by playing two seasons in the Midlands League (arising after the chase for Cheshire League membership had failed in 1964), McIntosh struggled manfully on for a season and a half before resigning - having finished bottom of the table in his first season in charge.</p>
	<p><b>ALEX CALVERT</b> Manager</p> <p>First game 04/1965 Last game 19/08/1968</p> <p><b>P xx W D L F A</b></p> <p><b>Playing career</b> <i>Wartime football – Aldershot, Watford</i> <i>Manager</i> Altrincham Reserves Glossop Stalybridge Celtic Reserves</p>	<p>By helping the club see out its commitments in the Midlands League and taking the first few games following the return to the Cheshire League, Alex Calvert is the only man to take control of The Robins in three different leagues. Originally promoted from reserve team manager when Stuart Dimond left the club, the bulk of Calvert's time in charge was spent in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the Lancashire Combination - with little to spend on players, his achievements of finishing third in 1966 and then fourth in 1968 were not without merit, but this was a lower grade of football than Ashton were used to competing in. After losing three of his first four matches at the start of the 1968-69 season, Calvert tended his resignation and took up the role of publican in New Mills.</p>

	<p>Ashton United Reserves Ashton United (66-68)</p>	
	<p><b>STUART DIMOND</b> Manager</p> <p>First game 09/63 Last game 04/65</p> <p><b>P W D L F A</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>Few former players are held in the regard that Stuart Dimond earned at Hurst Cross – a prolific scorer over many seasons, he struck not only frequently but also when it mattered most, such as when the club earned a 1-1 draw with Halifax Town in the FA Cup.</p>
	<p><b>J. WHITLEY</b> Caretaker manager</p> <p>First game 08/63 Last game 09/63</p> <p><b>P W D L F A</b></p>	<p>Committee man Whitley was assigned caretaker-manager duties for the spell from Hugh Kelly's resignation until Stuart Dimond was appointed.</p>
	<p><b>HUGH KELLY</b> Player-manager</p> <p>First game 08/61 Last game 08/63</p> <p><b>P W D L F A</b></p> <p>See Player Section for career details</p>	<p>Blackpool skipper Hugh Kelly broke his ankle against Liverpool in the penultimate league game of the 1953-54 season, meaning he missed what came to be known as 'The Matthews' Final' a couple of weeks later. Having played for Blackpool throughout a professional career stretching to seventeen seasons and some 500 appearances (one Scotland cap), Kelly came to Hurst Cross in the summer of 1961 – Ashton had just been demoted to the second tier of the Lancashire Combination despite a mid-table finish (they resigned to contest membership of the Cheshire League and, after failing to get elected, found their 1<sup>st</sup> Division place had been re-allocated) His team, packed with professionals, swept the competition aside in winning the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division title – registering a 100% home record and picking up the League Challenge Cup for good measure. The following season saw the team finish third, albeit ten points behind champions Morecambe, but the club were not as well set financially – they'd invested heavily in new floodlights, been fined £100 for making inappropriate payments to amateurs and then suffered storm damage to</p>

		<p>the main stand. Kelly resigned, stating a lack of funds, in August 1963 and although was to go on the backroom staff at Bloomfield Road, he soon left football to concentrate on running an ice cream business, café and shop in the town.</p>
	<p><b>(JAMES) ALAN BALL</b>  Manager</p> <p>First game 08/59  Last game 05/61</p> <p><b>P 84 W 31 D 17 L 36 F 139 A 174</b></p> <p>Born 23/09/1924  (Farnworth)  Died 02/02/1982</p> <p><i>Playing career</i>  Bolton Boys  Southport (46-47; 2-0)  Birmingham City (47-48)  Southport (48-50; 41-9)  Oldham Athletic (50-51; 7-1)  Rochdale (51-52; 5-1)</p> <p><i>Player-manager</i>  Oswestry Town (52-55)</p> <p><i>Manager</i>  Borough United (58-59)  Ashton United (59-61)  Nantwich Town (62-66)</p> <p><i>Coach</i>  Stoke City  Manchester City  Cork Celtic (Ireland, 67)</p> <p><i>Manager</i>  Halifax Town (67-70)  Preston North End (70-73)  IF Saab (Sweden, 74)  Southport (74-75)  Sirius (Sweden, 75)  Halifax Town (76-77)  Djurgardens IF (Sweden, 79)</p> <p><i>Scout</i>  Blackpool (80-81)</p>	<p>Alan Ball senior spent most of his career as a lower league professional, unlike his more-illustrious footballer son of the same name – but he did enjoy a reasonable amount of success as a manager, most notably at Halifax, where he led them to promotion in his first spell at the Shay, and at Preston, leading them to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division title in 1971. His first non-playing management role had been at Borough United, a team from Llandudno, who he led to the Welsh League (North) title in 1959 before switching to Hurst Cross and appointing former Ashton and Manchester United goalkeeper Bill Fielding as coach / reserve team manager – during his tenure, he gave a debut to Alan junior, a future World Cup winner, whilst still a schoolboy.</p>



**FRANK HARGREAVES**  
Manager

First game 1958  
Last game 05/59

**P W D L F A**

Frank Hargreaves was a touch over 21 when given a trial game at Hurst Cross – he scored on that only outing before going on to a long professional career. He joined the coaching staff at Hurst Cross after finishing playing and was the first manager in the modern sense of the term (following on from the club's previous selection committees) between August and September 1958.



**TOM BURGESS**  
Trainer

1957-58



**ERIC THOMASSON**  
Trainer

1956-57



**FRANK HARGREAVES**  
Trainer

1955-56



**COLIN GLEAVE**  
Player-manager

1954-55



**LES HORTON**  
Player-manager

1952-54



**FRED HOWE**  
Trainer

Early 1950s



**COLIN GLEAVE**  
Player-manager

1948-49



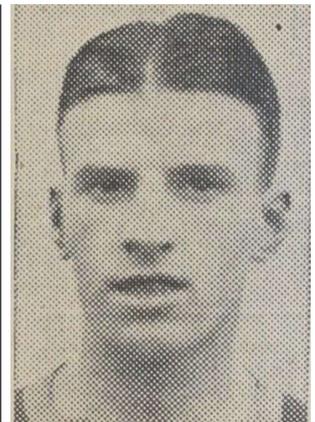
**FRED HOWE**  
Trainer

1947-48



**JIMMY CURRIER**  
Trainer

1947

	<p><b>JOE BARLOW</b>  Manager  1946-47</p>	
	<p><b>JOE TOWNSLEY</b>  Secretary  1941-42</p>	
	<p><b>J.T. HOWARTH</b>  Secretary  Wartime</p>	



**JOE TOWNSLEY**  
Secretary

1939



**BERT BURRIDGE**  
Secretary

1930s



**SAM BATTY**  
Secretary

Late 30s



**BERT BURRIDGE**  
Player-manager

1935-36



**K.R. VERNON**  
Manager

Mid 1930s



**J. WYATT, J. HALL & J. WOLFENDEN**  
Selection Committee

1933-34



**J.T. HOWARTH**  
Secretary

1930-34



**CHARLES HEWITT**  
Secretary

1929-30

	<p><b>T. HOWARD</b> Secretary</p> <p>1929</p>	
	<p><b>T. TRAVIS</b> Secretary</p> <p>Late 1920s</p>	
	<p><b>BILLY ROOKS</b> Player-manager</p> <p>1927-28</p>	
	<p><b>W. HEROD</b> Manager</p> <p>1927</p>	
	<p><b>ALBERT DALE</b> Secretary</p> <p>1926</p>	



**JIM FERRIS**

Secretary

1923-26



**F. MORLEY**

Trainer

Early 1920s



**JOE BROOKS**

Manager

1921



**JIM FERRIS**

Secretary

1909-1921



**BEN LEVER**

Club Founder

1878

