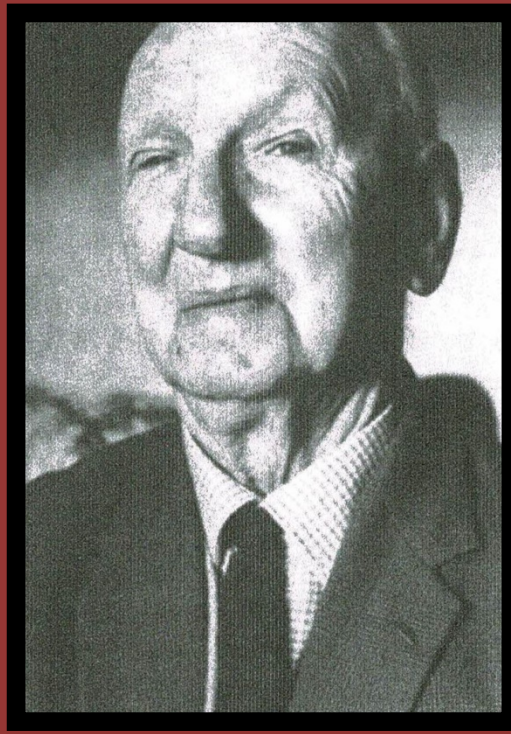


## **JOHN 'SAILOR' HUNTER**

**(MANAGER 1911-1946/SECRETARY 1946-1959)**

**MOTHERWELL FC 1911 – 1959**



**Without doubt the most important figure in the history of Motherwell FC.**

**John Bryson Hunter was born in Johnstone, Renfrewshire on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1878. His playing career started as an 18 year old in 1896 with Abercorn who were playing in the Scottish Second Division having been relegated the previous season.**

**He made 20 appearances before joining Liverpool in 1899. Whilst at Anfield he won the First Division League Championship in 1900-01 playing 37 times in the famous red kit and scoring 10 goals.**

He moved back to Scotland in 1902 signing for Hearts for a fee of £300 and was a member of the Hearts side that lost 2-0 in the 1903 Scottish Cup Final at Celtic Park after a second replay v Rangers.

In May 1904 he moved south again and joined Woolwich Arsenal for a transfer fee of £165, he played 22 times during season 1904-05 scoring 4 goals.

In 1905 he moved to Southern League side Portsmouth making 37 appearances and scoring 11 goals.

In 1907 he made his final move as a player, transferring to Dundee where he started scoring goals for fun, in the 3 years at Dens Park he scored an impressive 46 goals in only 61 appearances. During this period he won his only Scotland cap in a 3-2 defeat by Wales in Wrexham on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1909.

He played for Dundee in the 1910 Scottish Cup Final at Ibrox against Clyde. With 6 minutes remaining and Clyde up 2-0 John pulled one back before a late equaliser to force a replay which ended 0-0. In the second replay at Ibrox Clyde scored after 3 minutes with Dundee equalising in the 15<sup>th</sup> minute before John scored the winner in the 56<sup>th</sup> minute .

In September 1910 he moved to Clyde but due to injury he was forced to retire from playing the game without making an appearance for the Bully Wee.

John arrived at Fir Park in April 1911 initially taking up the post of manager and then in February 1913 he also took over the Secretary's duties due to the then incumbent Mr Barrie moving abroad.

When he arrived Motherwell the team had just finished second bottom of the First Division above relegated Queens Park. In his first full season 1911-12 the team finished in 14<sup>th</sup> place. However there was one sign of what the future might hold, he managed the reserve side to the Reserve League Championship in 1911-12.

In 1916 he signed a player who would become one of the clubs most prolific goal scorers, Hughie Ferguson. His 284 league goals in 288 appearances is a club record.

In May 1923 John signed a player who would later succeed him as 'Well manager, George Stevenson from Ayrshire Junior side, Kilbirnie Ladeside.

When the new offside law was introduced in 1925 which now only needed two players instead of three being between the goal and the player playing the ball he saw this as an opportunity to play a more attacking style of football and score goals. This style helped Ferguson and Willie MacFadyen rattle in the goals in great numbers.

For 8 seasons commencing with season 1926-27 until 1933-34 Motherwell never finished lower than 3<sup>rd</sup> in Division 1. During those years John managed the club to its first ever Championship by 5 points over Rangers in 1931-32. Playing a skilful but effective style of football that was a delight for fans of all clubs to watch, they scored 119 goals with MacFadyen hitting the net 52 times.

John pioneered the idea of playing teams from other nations and was responsible for taking the club on the tours of France & Spain in May/June 1927, South America in May/June 1928, South Africa in May/June 1931, Belgium & France in May 1932 and again to South Africa in May/June/July 1934.

He was Motherwell manager from April 1911 to the end of 1945-1946 season when he was replaced by George Stevenson, then appointed secretary at the start of 1946-47 season, eventually retiring from duty at Fir Park aged 80 in 1959.

His managerial record is impressive; 1166 games, won 568, drew 245, lost 354, scoring 2338 goals.

Honours; Scottish First Division Champions 1932. Runners-up 1929-30, 1932-33. Scottish Cup Runners-up 1930-31, 1932-33, 1938-39.

The East stand at Fir Park was renamed The John Hunter Stand in his honour in November 2016.

He died on 12<sup>th</sup> January 1966 age 86.

Hopefully after reading this and recognising his achievements you agree that he was the most important person ever to walk through the doors of Fir Park.



**A young John Hunter with his first Motherwell team (the keeper Colin Hampton won the Military Medal in WW1)**





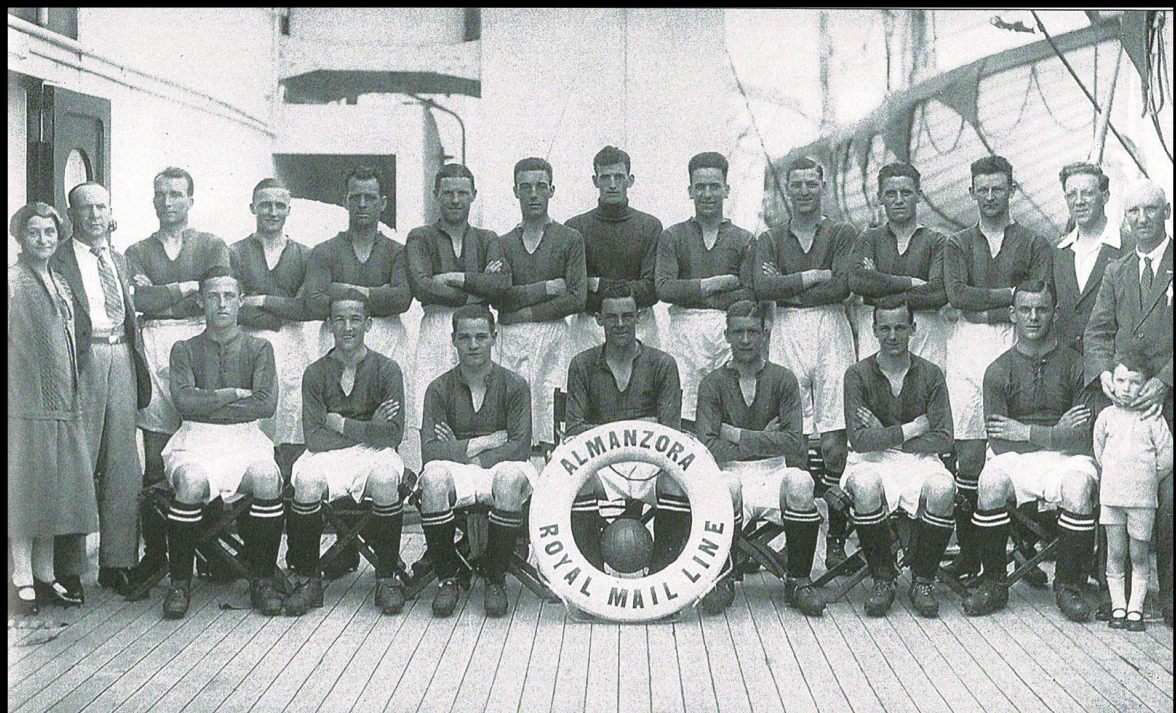
The trophy is the Scottish Police Cup won by Lanarkshire Constabulary in 1927-28, John may be representing MFC or presenting the trophy







**LANARKSHIRE CUP, 1927 KING OF SPAIN CUP & 1927 BARCELONA CUP**



**SOUTH AMERICA TOURING PARTY 1928**





**MOTHERWELL FOOTBALL TEAM,  
*Touring South Africa, 1931. (Scottish Cup Finalists, 1930-31).***

BACK ROW—J. Hunter, (Manager), J. Finlayson, A. Craig, A. McClory, W. Dowall, J. Johnman, W. Duffy, (Director.)

MIDDLE ROW—W. Telfer, T. Douglas, R. Ferrier, (Capt.) J. Murdoch, B. Ellis,

FRONT ROW—W. Walker, (Trainer), J. McMenemy, G. Stevenson, W. McFadyen, H. Wales, A. Hunter.

*On board R.M.S. "Winchester Castle."*

**SOUTH AFRICA TOURING PARTY 1931**



**1950-51 LEAGUE CUP WINNERS**

MOTHERWELL F.C.  
GROUND FIR PARK MOTHERWELL

Dick Hamilton.	Al Paton.
Jimmy Forrest	A. Shaw
Jimmy Watson	A. Hamman
John Hunter	Archie Kelly.
Donald Macleod.	J. Aitkenhead
Willie Redpath.	
Willie Watt	

1950'S AUTOGRAPHS including JOHN HUNTER





**1951-52 SCOTTISH CUP WINNERS**





**1951-52 Scottish Cup celebrations with John Hunter, Willie Kilmarnock &  
George Stevenson**

***1957-58 Season:***

*Back : McSeveney, Holton, McFadyen, Gardiner, Brown, Cowie, Martis, Forrest, Aitken.*

*Middle : B Ancell, A Weir, McCann, Campbell, Shaw, H Weir, Stenhouse, McCallum, McPhee, St John, J Hunter*

*Front : Ellis, Quinn, Hunter, Reid, Baker, Rea, Newman, Kerr. Kneeling : Reid.*





**Buenos Aires Select XI 1 v Motherwell 0, River Plate Stadium, May 13th 1928,**  
**The Motherwell team acknowledges the huge South American crowd.**





**1928 Argentina Tour match kick-off presentation incl Bobby Ferrier & John Hunter**



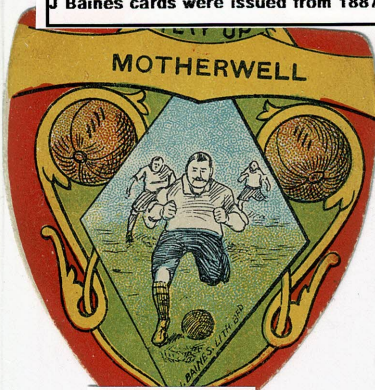
**Back Row; Donaldson (ass trainer), Hutcheson, MacFadyen, Johnman, McClory, Thackeray, Craig, Little, Walker (trainer).**

**Front Row; Tennant, Keenan, McMurtie, Hunter, Ferrier, Stevenson, Byers, last man id unknown**

**CITY BAKERIES & J BAINES CARDS ISSUED 1897-1940**



J Baines cards were issued from 1887 until just after WW1 and sold in packets of 6 for 1 halfpenny



J. Baines c.1897



J. Baines c.1900



J. Baines c.1905



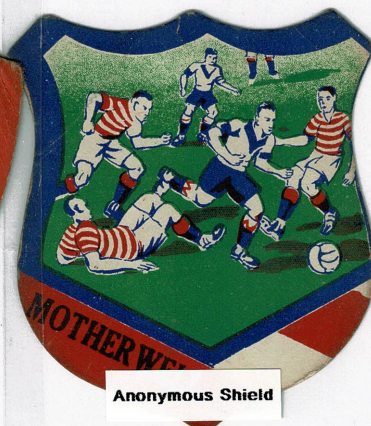
J. Baines c.1922



J. Baines



City Bakeries c.1940



Anonymous Shield





**Manse Road and the Fir Park Ice Café on the left c.1932**



**Junction of Knowetop Avenue with Fir Park Street (the corner where the gate entrance to the Davie Cooper stand is today)**



