

THE TRULY HORRIFIC HISTORY OF DUNFERMLINE ATHLETIC FOOTBALL CLUB

PART 4: HOW DUNFERMLINE ATHLETIC SURVIVED THE GREAT DEPRESSION OF THE 1920s AND 1930s

Between the two World Wars, Dunfermline Athletic had a series of financial troubles.

This was perhaps not surprising as the West Fife area was badly hit by the strikes in the coal mining industry as the miners fought to avoid wage cuts, the lack of demand for linen, and the closure of Rosyth Dockyard between 1925 and 1938.



Right colours, wrong sport...

In 1925, the Chairman called a special meeting at the St Margaret Hall to ask supporters to buy £1 shares in the club to keep it in business.

By 1929, a cut in players' wages was put in place and they were even being given shares instead of cash. In 1936, bankruptcy was only staved off by the sale of the rights to greyhound racing for £2,500. There was a greyhound track round the pitch at that time.

Football results were largely poor and the club seemed to have gone to the dogs (sorry!)

In 1938, the Dunfermline Press newspaper noted that St Mirren would not agree to cheap admission for the unemployed, a scheme which Dunfermline had used to help both attendances and the long term out-of-work.

The 1930s are remembered for mass unemployment. However there was already mass unemployment in the 1920s in Britain.

For most of the decade it was between 10% and 12%. Then, in the early 1930s, the economy was struck by real depression. By the start of 1933 unemployment in Britain was 22.8%.

However unemployment fell a lot in 1933, 1934 and 1935. By January 1936 it stood at 13.9%. This fall continued, and by 1938 the level of unemployment was down to 10%.



A march protesting against high unemployment

However although a bit of a recovery took place in Britain in the mid and late 1930s there was still an economic depression in the areas in the North of England, Scotland (including Fife) and South Wales.

On the other hand new industries such as car and aircraft making and electronics grew in the Midlands and the South of England where unemployment was quite low.

The problems of depression and high unemployment were only really solved though, by the arrival of the Second World War, which boosted demand and started industry booming again.

Want to know more? <http://bit.ly/historypars4>