



## ***CHARLESTOWN PIRATES HOOPS-HYSTERIA, TREASURE CHEST...***

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by Charles E. Ledbetter, Sr.

-**Amos 'Amoose' Brashear** – “My hands were too small, my arms were too short and I was not tall enough!” Amos Brashear, on one of the reasons he was told he couldn't make the basketball team in his freshman year.

But, 6' 2" Brashear knows what it means to persevere. He tried out his first two years, sixth and seventh grades, for the school basketball team, but was cut. Then, in his eighth grade year, he learned what persistence was all about, because it paid off for him. He finally made the squad, but as a 3rd-stringer.

So, when Amos got to high school, he pretty much made up his mind, he wasn't going out for basketball.

“Head Coach Dale McNeely talked to me and asked me to try out,” Brashear remembers. “So I did. And, to my surprise, I made the team!” Then he quickly adds, “I actually, played that year because the good players were all playing JV, and I played my sophomore year because all the good players were playing varsity!” he exclaimed. “When I did get to play a varsity game late in the season of my sophomore year,” Amos continued, “it was against Crothersville and to my dismay the player I guarded dominated me!”

In 1964, something real wonderful occurred to Brashear in his junior year. Coach Scotty Daugherty, new head mentor, took an interest in him. Daugherty worked with Amos before, during and after practice. He spoke positively about his potential. “He encouraged me in spite of my lack of talent,” Brashear said, “and [he] never gave up on me. He made me believe in myself and I became a decent player, averaging about 9 points a game.”

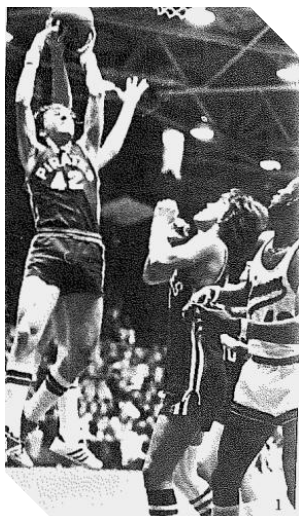
By the time the 6'2" Brashear entered into his final year at Charlestown, he was physically bigger and stronger. “So much so, that my teammates started calling me 'Amoose!'” he said, “and with five of us playing as a team and supporting each other, basketball finally came together for me.”

That it did! Amos Brashear had a fantastic season for the Pirates and Coach Scotty Daugherty. He helped lead the Buccaneers to an 18-6 record and clipped at a pace of 18.6 points per game. He had two real exceptional outputs of 30-plus scoring and finished the year scoring 335 points!

Brashear said his finest hour was in the Madison Shawe game at Madison. Starting at the forward post for the first time, he scored 35 points on 14 field goals and 7 free throws. The Pirate-Shawe match was an aggressive, see-saw affair with the Hilltoppers ending up defeating the Pirates by 9 points.

Amos said, “I had always played center, but that night, Coach Daugherty had me play forward for the first time. I scored 35 points!” In 1965, he was selected to the Silver Creek Holiday Tournament Team and the Mid-Southern Conference Team. He also won the Most Valuable Player and Sportsmanship trophies at the Charlestown High School and Charlestown Lions Club All Sports Banquet concluding an excellent season on the hardwood.

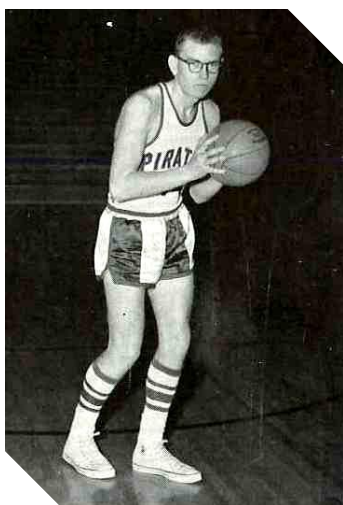
After graduation, he entered Morehead State University at Morehead, Kentucky, where he received his Bachelors degree. He received his masters at Indiana University Southeast. He is married to his lovely wife of 43 years, Jean. Amos Brashear is now teaching and coaching at Christian Academy of Indiana.



**-John Denney** had indisputable talent and was incredible with his left-handed shooting capabilities for the Pirates. He could make the nets “sing a tune” as one noted sports announcer used to say with delight whenever he experienced a breathtaking shot during a basketball game. Leaving Denney uncontested from the outside was a deadly thing to do, but just what the doctor ordered for the Pirates!

Coach John Wood, who had Denney in his second time around at Charlestown, gave these reflections on his former ace star. “He was a competitor. He liked to shoot the ball and we kind of altered his style of play. We didn’t have him free shoot as much as he was used to coming out of a set offense.” That change in Denney’s offensive style produced great benefits for the outstanding player on the basketball court.

He had several stunning moments on the hardwood making the nets *sing* with points, but his best night was up against John Heaton’s Silver Creek Dragons in 1973. Connecting on 12 of 23 shots and hauling down 13 rebounds, which was both highs for the Pirates, Denney maneuvered himself into skillful offensive positions with his hot shooting hand and scored 27 points. Coach Bill Dunn was later quoted in the Jeffersonville Evening News, “If John hadn’t been hitting we could have very easily lost this game.” *-Evening News, Dec. 2, 1973*



**-Wayne Albright** This 6’1” center for the Pirates had a terrific game in his sophomore year when he scored 21 points in a thrilling basketball encounter with first-time ever Seymour.

An estimated 500 persons travelled from Charlestown to Jackson County, Indiana, to boost their Pirates. It took five bus loads of Charlestown students to make the trip, and the easygoing Albright made it all worthwhile!

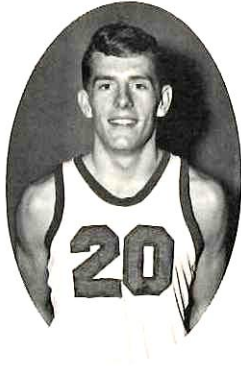
It was his night to shine on the hardwood. Albright, who was brought up from the JV’s in his freshman year, wasted no time in scoring. Playing in the middle, he scorched the nets throughout the clash against the more experienced Owls of Coach Barney Scott. He had 9 field goals and hit 3 free throws to lead the Pirates to their fifth win in a row that basketball season.

The game went all the way down to the final seconds before the Pirates walked away with the 62-61 win, but it was the tremendous hardwood performance of Albright that made the trip extra special for the Charlestown fans. The upset victory over the Owls was one of the notable highlights of 1958 for Albright and the Pirates of Coach John Wood.

The easygoing Albright put in another dynamic performance in the next outing against the Tigers of Coach Howard Key. He led all scorers with 21 points and the Pirates rolled to their sixth straight win in a row that year. The Pirates ended the season with 15 wins and 7 losses.

Albright ended his basketball career scoring 732 points for the Pirates. In his junior year, he amassed 335 points in 21 games for a sixteen points per game average.

A great Pirate from our past!



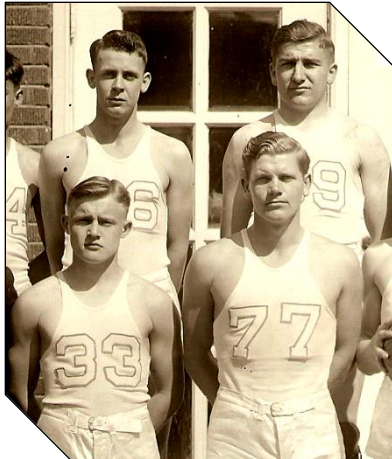
**-Norman Kalkhoff** - What a treat to watch this star athlete in action. Kalkhoff was one of the bright spots for Coach Tom Hamilton in his first season at Charlestown.

Right out the gate, Kalkhoff poured in 28 points against the Crothersville Tigers in a solid performance for the Pirates. He had 14 field goals and the basket that put the Pirates in the lead to stay in the breathtaking clash that was completely controlled by the Tigers at the start.

After graduation, he entered Martin Methodist College in Pulaski, Tennessee where he led the Redhawks in assists on the hardwood. In 1970-71, he helped the team to 22 wins and 5 losses, and winning the Dixie Conference Championship.

The team finished in seventh place in the final Junior College Conference poll in the nation. He led the National Junior College Athletic Association by shooting 57 of 62 from the free throw line for a 91.9 percentage.

Norman was a great tennis player at Charlestown and continued his greatness at Martin Methodist College and Belmont University. He was 14-2 playing singles and 13-0 playing doubles. He was runner-up in singles and conference champions in doubles. He was inducted into the Belmont University Hall of Fame and the Martin Methodist College Sports Hall of Fame for basketball and tennis in 1992 and 2002, respectively. Coach Don R. Burton, his mentor at Martin College, said this of the unassuming athlete. "Norman is one of the finest boys he has ever coached."



**1938 Pirates "Most Valuable Players"** – left to right, top: William "Bill" Hartman, Sr., Charles Reich, Alvin Hill, and Floyd Bohart [Photograph: courtesy of Sharon Werner Herndon]

**-Floyd Bohart, William "Bill" Hartman, Sr., Alvin Hill, Charles Reich,** were selected MVP in 1938 by the Charlestown Lions Club. Back in the 1937-38 seasons for Coach C. O. "poodle" Manaugh, these standout Pirate athletes were noted for their fantastic teamwork on the basketball court. They engineered a Pirate squad that almost gave Coach Manaugh an undefeated season.

Their sixth and seventh men, **Clark Werner** and **Glen Ross**, were two exceptional players as well when they hit the hardwood at Jonathan Jennings Gym on the public square. They were the sparkling twosome who Coach Manaugh sent into the ballgame to lift up the Buccaneers when needed.

**Floyd Bohart**, the team's leading free-throw shooter, spelled out what took place in that thrilling match between the Bearcats that cost them an undefeated season:

"They had this guy I can't remember his name right off. He was taller than we were and when he crossed the ten-second line, he would power hit the nets with this most unusual shot. He would shoot the ball in his right hand with his arm extended in an upward motion jumping off the floor at the same time and make it! We never saw anyone do that before!" he exclaimed.

Bohart hit over 70 percent of his free throws that season to merit the coveted "Free Throw Award" from the local Lions Club. Today, Floyd is the lone survivor of the 1938 Pirates and lives in Kentucky with his lovely wife, Magdalene. Floyd Bohart is 93.

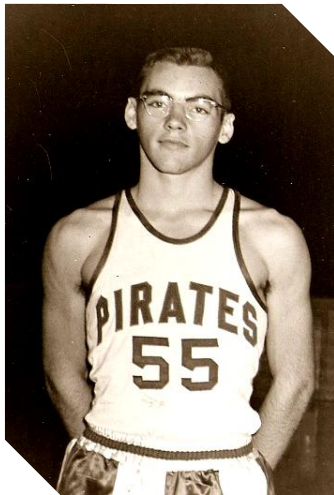
**Charles Reich** and **Alvin Hill** were mainstays around the bucket, with Reich having a swanking hook shot that he fancied frequently during a game and Hill typically could hit his two handed push shot from the side of the floor. **William “Bill” Hartman, Sr.** was an uncanny shooter, mostly using his one handed push shot at the other side of the wooden floor, but could work his way around the basket to hand off an easy shot for Reich, who would lay it up in the net or display his over the head hook shot.

Coach Manaugh’s Pirate team won 19 regular season games and lost only one that season. They were beaten by Georgetown on the Bearcats home floor by two points in the last game of the regular season, 33-to-31. In the sectional tourney that year at Jeffersonville, they beat Laconia, 43-24; Mauckport, 50-33; and lost to the Red Devils, 58-19 in the semifinals.

In 1937, they had the biggest win ever for a Pirate basketball team. They trounced Elizabeth, 42-to-1, in their first round of tournament action at the New Albany Sectional.

In 1937 and 1938, the Pirates won two consecutive Clark County Annual Holiday Tourneys, beating out the Silver Creek Dragons on both occasions 25-21 and 35-19 respectively, for the championships. The Pirates on three different occasions that year defeated the Dragons to end their spectacular basketball season with 21 wins and 2 losses, making them one of the winningest Pirate teams in Charlestown High School history.

Other members on that award-winning Pirate squad were: **Howard Haley, Charles Hester, William Hill, and Ralph Smith.** Their student manager was **Bob Bagby.**



**Gale Combs** was one of the great ‘sixth-man’ for the Pirates. Coach John Wood speaks highly of this muscular athlete he had in 1958 and 1959.

“He was one of our leading scorers,” he said, “and I started him about 4 or 5 times in mid-season. He didn’t play as nearly as well when he started, as he did coming off the bench. So, he asked me not to start him anymore, because he hadn’t played as well,” the coach declared, “That tells you something about his attitude toward his team and himself.”

Gale was that kind of player on the court when he could spark the Pirates on to victories on several occasions. In 1958, in a hotly contested affair with the Providence Pioneers, Combs was sent into the ballgame in the third quarter. He scored 10 quick points and sparked the Pirates to lead at the end of the quarter. In the final stanza he was instrumental in breaking the game wide open and the Pirates ended up dominating the Pioneers, 63-

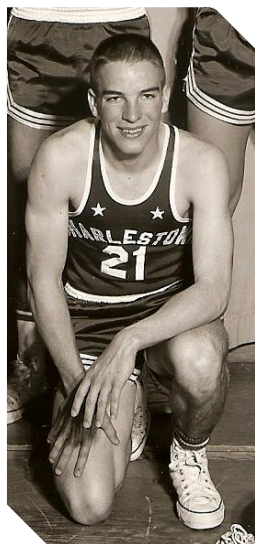
38. Combs hit for 13 points on 5 field goals and 3 free throws.

Combs recalled how his former coach would go about having his team ready for game night. “Coach Wood always had every practice session organized to prepare each player the necessary skills to beat our next opponent. Our offense and defense was set to take advantage of the weaknesses of the opponent played. He would select certain players [Platoon Squad] to perform extra defensive pressure on their guards and try to upset their offensive routine play.” He continued, “These were usually substitute players with speed who could relieve the starting guards and continue to rotate throughout the entire game using this type of strategy,” Combs said, “helped our team to win several close games due to the turnovers caused by our platoon teams.”

In 1959 on his home court, he had another excellent game against the Seymour Owls. Even though it was a loss, Combs and the Pirates worked hard battling the Owls. However, a hot shooting streak by the

Seymour five kept the Buccaneers from victory. Gale ended up canning 7 field goals and 1 free throw for 15 points in one of his finest moments on the basketball floor.

In the Jeffersonville Holiday Tournament, he was credited for sparking the win over Silver Creek in the championship game. He only scored 3 field goals, but his quickness in hitting key baskets at crucial moments ignited the Pirates to victory. The Pirates beat the Dragons, 46-43.



**Kenny Blick** – In 1962, Kenny Blick was one of the all-time impressive backcourt Pirate guards that enabled Coach Dale McNeely to win the Jeffersonville Sectional Tournament; the first-ever in the history of Charlestown High School.

In 1961, Kenny unleashed one of his spectacular moments on the basketball floor. The senior guard was in top form against the unbeaten Providence Pioneers, with his ball hawking talents.

“I made two free throws, then stole the ball twice in a row under our basket, and scored when Pioneer Tim Shea threw the ball in and did not see me hiding behind one of their bigger players,” Kenny said. “It was a big game for us to win on their court, and those 6 points put the game away!” Those six points, by the way, were just seconds apart and quick in succession due to his prolific play.

In that game, he stole the ball away from his opponents eight times. He pumped in 20 points, hitting 8 field goals and 4 charity tosses to bring the victory home for the Pirates and Coach Dale McNeely. That week, the Courier-Journal gave him the Four Star Award for his tremendous output.

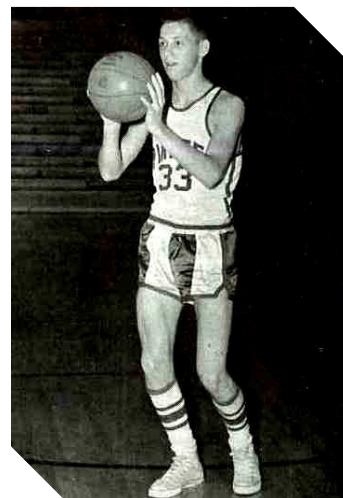
In his senior year, Kenny scored 339 points for the Pirates and averaged 14 points per game. He had four games where he scored a high of 20 points or more. Those were against the Providence Pioneers, Henryville Hornets, and the Scottsburg Warriors. He had 22 against the New Washington Mustangs.

Kenny stated, “Tim (Shea) and I later became good friends. We both had a lot of respect for each other.” Kenny Blick was an excellent backcourt athlete on the hardwood for the Pirates and Coach Dale McNeely. He was one of the paramount reasons the Pirates won the 1962 Jeffersonville Sectional.

**Frank Howard** – This all around Pirate athlete was a very strong cager both offensively and defensively in the middle 1950's. In 1957, as a sophomore Frank was unquestionably, the best rebounder in a thrilling game with the Henryville Hornets. He created a lot of high voltage with the fans on the basketball floor.

He swiped away 11 balls from the glass giving the advantage of the Pirates an inspiring win over the Hornets of Coach Jim Huter. Even though he scored only 3 points, it was his sterling performance underneath that made the sweet victory, 59 to 44, one of his remarkable moments on the court for the Pirates. He simply was a demon on the backboards.

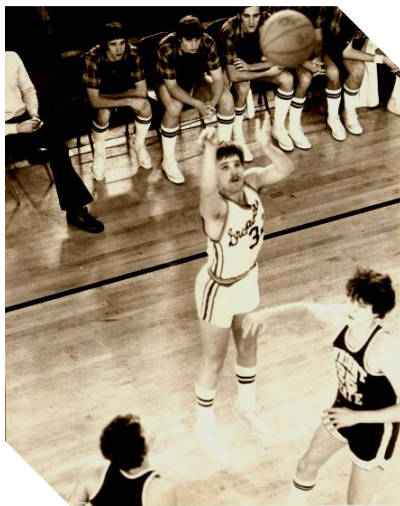
The gregarious Howard, standing in at 6' 1," could play guard, forward, and center for the Pirates. His teammates had tremendous respect for his round ball talents. In 1959, he scored a season high 14 points against the Orleans Bulldogs.



This was quite a thrilling clash between the Pirates and the Orange County quintet. It took an overtime to slip by the Bulldogs and Frank was the gun that saved the day. He scored three baskets in the close encounter which ended knotted 43 to 43.

In the overtime, he hit the net from the outside to put the Pirates out in front by two to take the lead. The Bulldogs responded with a hit to tie the game. Howard wasn't through yet. He connected again putting the Buc's out in front, but Orleans countered with another basket by their leading scorer to knot the game at 47 to 47. Frank hustled back on offense and in steady form took another long jumper from the outside hitting the bottom of the net for the Pirates. Teammate Larry Belcher, outside Pirate ace guard broke for a clean layup to make it 51 to 47 to give the lead back to the Pirates. As time ran out on the clock, Orleans hit for two, but the Pirates had the win 51 to 49.

Howard's superb performance in the overtime was another great reason he was such an outstanding Pirate player on offense and defense for the Pirates. Frank was a super-player for Charlestown in the 50's



**Joe Ledbetter** - The fascinating story about Ledbetter was in his high school playing days at Charlestown, he did not see very much action on the floor in his junior year. Physically, he was a late bloomer standing in at 5'9" when he played for head Coaches Tom Hamilton and William "Bill" Dunn. But, for Ledbetter, his future 'altitude' was only a few inches away!

It was in a reserve role that Joe got the opportunity to sparkle on the floor. Coach Dunn, in his first season for the Pirates, put him in an important Mid-Southern Conference game against one of Scottsburg's talented Warriors teams' that season.

As a result, he impressed his new head mentor so much he gave him another shot by having him come off the bench to ignite the Pirates in their next outing with the Clarksville Generals.

He scored only 5 points in that Scottsburg contest, but it was his shining performance on the hardwood, that proved he was a tremendous asset for the Pirates. In the game with the Generals, he got 7 points as he put together another brilliant playing game and Coach Dunn realized he had found "a valuable reserve in Joe Ledbetter."

Dunn started him the next game out and he made good in his first starting role, hitting double figures for the first time as a varsity cager against an awesome Corydon Panthers quintet. He pumped in 11 points as his team eked out a breathtaking win over the Panthers in overtime, 61-59.

Now, about that 'altitude' I was referring to. Ledbetter says about his maturing days in high school, "I grew 5 inches during my junior year and was still only 6'1" while playing as a senior" he declared. After graduation, he entered the campus of Indiana University Southeast at New Albany when Ron Fifer became the Grenadiers first basketball coach. That summer before heading to IUS, his "altitude" grew tremendously. "I grew another 2 inches the summer after graduation," Joe said, "and entered college at 6'3" and 190 lbs. Coach Ron Fifer was shocked and thrilled."

Ledbetter had a brilliant basketball career at Indiana University Southeast, amassing 1,212 points during his playing days with the Grenadiers and left as the all-time leading scorer at the time. He shot over 80 percent at the charity stripe where in one season he had a streak of netting 33 free throws consecutively in games. It ended when he missed a charity toss at Indiana State-Evansville, now Southern Indiana

University. In 1973, his sophomore year, he was named the most valuable player for the Grenadiers and averaged over 17 points a game.

In 2000, he became head basketball coach at Silver Creek and guided the Dragons team to a winning Class 2A Southwestern (Hanover) Sectional knocking off Southwestern, Eastern Pekin, and defeating Brownstown Central, 57 to 43 for the championship title. They played host to the 2000 Class 2A Silver Creek Regional, beating Batesville, 45 to 43, before bowing out in the 2000 Class 2A Semi-State at Southridge, by 1-point to the eventual State Runner-up, Winchester, 55 to 54, in hardwood tournament action! His Creekers had a winning record of 16 wins and 9 losses that year.

His Silver Creek Dragons were only the second team in 31 years to reach the coveted Semi-State in its school history. Joe said of that historic post season tournament run, "Pretty impressive. We were that close. Man..." *[In 1969, it was Coach Ray Green who took the first Silver Creek Dragons team to the Semi-State at Indianapolis, losing to Indianapolis Washington, 85-64. - Resource: The Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. IHSAA]*

**Bobby Thompson** - In 1952, there was one Pirate cager in his junior year, who played the middle that had several great games for Coach Billy Abel. But on one occasion, November 21, 1952, he had a commanding night on the basketball court. His name was Bobby Thompson.

Bruce Bottorff, one of Charlestown's notable athletes, pointed out Thompson's exceptional abilities for the Pirates. "He could do a lot of things with a basketball that other people couldn't...I really loved watching him play."

Thompson played for both Coaches Billy Abel and Letcher B. Norton. In 1952, his junior year, he had a brilliant offensive night against the New Washington Mustangs of new head coach Charles C. Rauth. He bombarded the nets for 34 points to lead all scorers as the Pirates trounced the Warriors, 70 to 37. Top scorers for the Mustangs were Joe Webb and Charles Pollard with 9 and 7 points respectively.

In other games, the hot-shot firing center for the Pirates had 24 in a clash with the Medora Hornets; 22 against the French Lick Plutos; 19 points in a thrilling victory over the Henryville Hornets; and 15 against the Austin Eagles. Bobby played with teammates, Harley Gaines, Steve Hamilton, Don Lewis, Russell Lewis, J. C. Teeple, and Lester Webb.

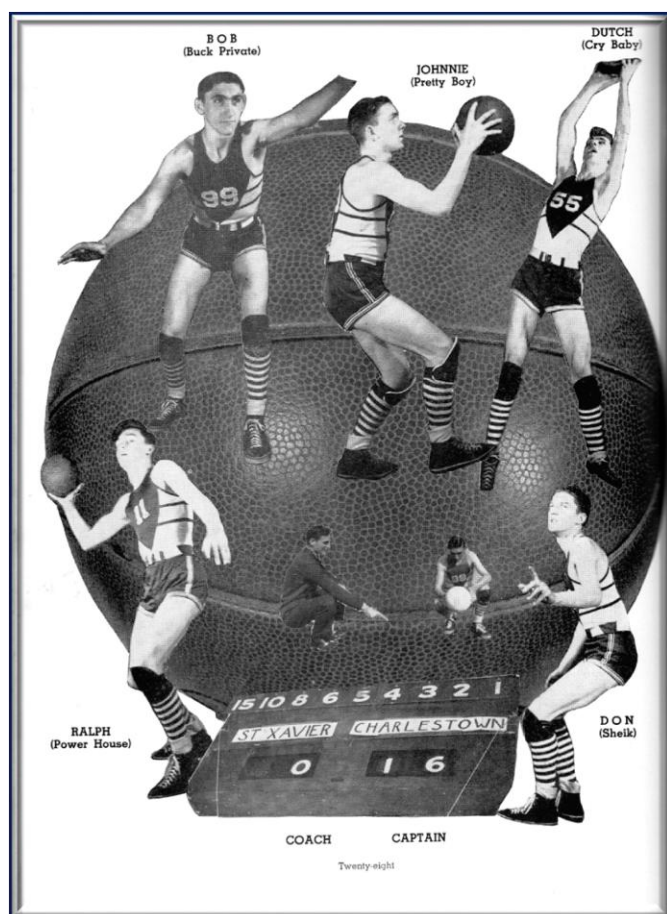
Scoring records for Thompson in other games are incomplete, but confirmed is he scored 270 career points while on the court for the Charlestown Varsity Pirates for three seasons. His points-per-game-average was 16 points a game.



**Dale Ferguson** was an extraordinary athlete for Coach Scotty Daugherty in three seasons, 1963, 1964, and 1965. In the 1963-64 basketball campaign, Dale, starting in his fourth game for Scotty, made a major impact on our home court with his offensive punch of 30 points against the Henryville Hornets.

The sophomore 6'2" guard wasted no time in the first half finding the range. It made no difference where he shot the ball on the floor Ferguson was flawless in the second stanza. He quickly had 22 of his 30 points before heading off to the dressing room with his Pirates' ahead by eleven. Dale connected on 10 field goals and 2 free throws during his dynamic performance. For the rest of his sixteen minutes of play, he added two more from the field and connected on 4 at the charity stripe to complete his high energy shooting skills on the hardwood.

He was third in scoring honors during the 1963 season totaling 156 points for his sophomore year having 7.4 points-per-game-average. In three seasons for the Pirates, his varsity basketball career finished with a total of 565 points and a 10 point game average.



**1940-41 Charlestown Pirates** piled up the biggest score made by any Pirate team during this period of time when they walloped the Borden Berries, 68-30.

That score may not sound very phenomenal to this generation of basketball enthusiasts, but then the game did not have the 3-point-shot, the fast moving offense, or the fully developed jumper from its athletes.

Most shots by the players, even in the '40s, were still shooting the one-handed push shot and the underhanded shot between and below the legs at the free throw lane. The rules of the game were getting better which had only occurred about three years prior to this season.

The high scoring contest with the Berries had four Pirate ace shooters that hit in double-figures to enable the shooting spree to reach over the 60-point range.

Johnny Breeden, Donald Cole, Ralph Hauselman, and Harold "Dutch" Reis, were the masterminds shooting guns. Breeden and Cole led the pack with 16 and 17 points respectively. Reis, playing guard, was next with 15.

Hauselman sank 14 from the outside.

The Coach Raymond Gladden band of Pirates shot from all angles on the floor and had almost 50 percent shooting--- dropping 31 of 63 field goals. At the charity stripe they did even better sinking 6 of 11 attempts. Cole and Reis each got 4 field goals in consecutive attempts, while Hauselman sank 4 in 5 shots from the field.

The game against the Borden Berries was played on February 7, 1941 - [Resource: *The Charlestown Courier*, February 13, 1941.]