

Ann Packer (Mrs. Robbie Brightwell)

In 1960 Ann Packer left school and began studying to be a teacher at Dartford College of Physical Education, where her prowess, especially in hockey and athletics, was outstanding.

After qualifying in 1963, Ann took up her first teaching post, and at the same time was also training to represent Great Britain in the 1964 Olympics held in Tokyo. This was the first Olympics to include a 400 metres race for women; Ann not only won a silver medal in the 400 metres, but followed this up by becoming the first British woman to win an individual gold medal for an Olympic track event, the 800 metres, and in a world record time of 2 minutes 1.1 seconds. It would be another 40 years before the Olympic 800 metres for women was won by a Briton.

In 1965, not only did gold medal winner, Ann, marry Robbie Brightwell, who had been captain of the British Olympic team, but she was also awarded an M.B.E.

Ann was inducted into the England Athletics Hall of Fame in 2009. In 2013 Ann became Patron of the Bergman Österberg Union, and in 2017 she was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Education (HonDEd) by the University of Greenwich.

Greenwich Portraits 2018, to inspire future generations, celebrated the achievements and pioneering work of alumni who have made their mark in the world; Ann's portrait was included in this 2018 gallery.