

## 6. ICI Ownership of Marbury Hall and Park

ICI purchased Marbury Hall and Park in 1948. The Hall was used as a hostel for employees and the huts were converted into two-bedroomed temporary dwellings. Although the accommodation was meant to house only their employees, eventually it became available for families waiting for council housing. The Hall became a Social Club yet again in 1949, with dancing and bingo. ICI maintained the swimming pool for use by employees.

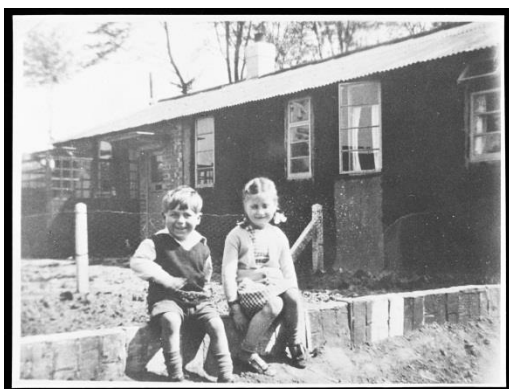
Many more hutments had been built on the site since 1945. This plan shows the scale of the 'hutments' during the period of ICI ownership.



There are many fond memories of this period.

Jeff Green recalls:

*'As a child, I lived at the old Marbury Hall (Cheshire) POW camp. My family went to live there about 1951. The camp huts had been converted into chalet type/prefabricated buildings. The site was owned by ICI and used the place to house workers who moved there from Liverpool/Manchester. The Hall was still in use housing single men and was still an imposing building as I recall. There were still a lot of Poles living there, many working in the hall as chefs etc.....As I recall during my childhood at Marbury, it was great place for kids to grow up, surrounded by woods and fields and the magnificent lake for fishing.'*



Keith Wilson recalls:

*'In the 1950's ICI had what was even then a slightly old fashioned ethos – they cared for their employees beyond the workbench. In those days, the workers participated in a share scheme which meant that workers benefitted financially from the company's successes. But more than that each Christmas this once great company organised a Christmas party at Marbury hall for workers and their families – and all the kids received Christmas presents – in some cases the only Christmas presents they got. I can remember the excitement of the day and of going home feeling that I had enjoyed myself tremendously!'*



*A Christmas at Marbury Hall*



*Marbury Sports Day – East Park, 1953*

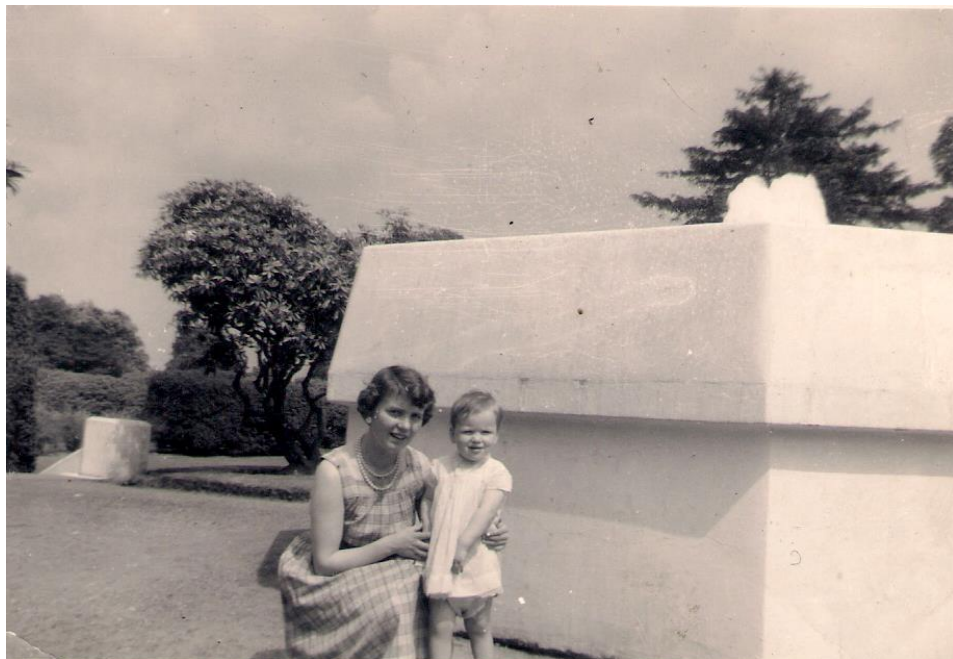
Another child at the time, Patricia Campbell recalls:

*'I was born in Marbury in 1952, My father worked for ICI. I have wonderful memories of Marbury, especially the old hall. My maiden name was Campbell and I had 3 sisters, Pauline, Christine and Caroline, also a brother, Andrew.*

Patricia's sister Caroline Campbell recently gave the Friends of Anderton and Marbury some photographs of the time the family spent at Marbury.



*The Campbell family by the steps to the swimming pool, about 1960*



*Mrs Campbell by the swimming pool fountain*



*View from the Campbell's garden – 100 East Park (early to mid 1960's)  
(the entrance to the present Rangers' compound is opposite the lamp post)*



*Another view from the Campbell's garden*



*Many people had their photograph taken by this statue!*

### ICI Sale of Marbury Hall

ICI put Marbury Hall and the land immediately surrounding it on the market in 1961. The Sale particulars, dated 4 January 1961, state:

*'It was purchased by ICI in 1948, one of the principal objects being to provide immediate hostel and housing accommodation in order to achieve the urgent post war expansion of the Company's Mid-Cheshire Works. The hutted camp was converted into a temporary housing estate and continues to be used as such. Marbury Hall and the adjoining Stable Block were adapted at very substantial cost as a well equipped hostel capable of providing full residential accommodation for 225 single persons with liberal indoor recreation and leisure facilities. The property is being placed on the market as the need for hostel accommodation on the original scale no longer exists.'*

The Hall was described as:

*'Especially suitable as a hostel, residential club, convalescent home, school and for similar institutional purposes or could readily be adapted as offices.'*

ICI sold the Hall, and the land immediately surrounding it, in 1961 to a Manchester property developer, Leslie Fink and Company. ICI retained ownership of the swimming pool and the East Park. The last of the families who lived in the Park moved out in 1966.

The Hall was demolished by Lesley Fink and Company in January 1969.

Once the last of the families had moved out of the hutments still owned by ICI, the remainder of the site became derelict. The following pictures are a reminder of the scale of the 'hutments' development on the site.



*East Park, looking along the road at the side of the Lime Avenue  
(The present dog exercise area by the car park is on the right)*



*Looking from Big Wood towards East Park*



*Looking towards West Park from the Hall*



*Far end of West Park looking back towards the Hall*



*Another view from West Park looking in the direction of the hall*

The hutments were eventually demolished:



Another phase in the life of Marbury had drawn to a close.