



SOUTHEND UNITED EX-PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

Supported by Southend United F.C. and The Shrimpers Trust

NEWSLETTER – Issue 02 – April 2018

WELCOME

Welcome to our second Newsletter, issued exclusively to you, our SUEPA members. It's much longer than the first – we have plenty to report!

We are pleased to say that, from the promising start we mentioned in our February Newsletter, SUEPA is growing from strength to strength. Not only have we reached and surpassed a landmark membership figure, but interest in what we are doing has been exceptional. Our Twitter page now has 917 followers and on Facebook, with 484 page likes, our posts are regularly reaching 2,000 people a week.

In this Newsletter we cover:

- Membership update, so you can see who has joined
- A mini SUEPA event that we held last month re-uniting two players from the 1960's
- Remembering Gordon Linton
- If you have not seen it already, a link is provided to a short video that we have produced
- News of a SUEPA event coming up later this month
- Future event ideas
- A new regular feature, a quick Q&A, this time with Derrick Parker and John Walker
- A reminder of how to keep up to date with SUEPA news and how to contact us
- The full current SUEPA membership list

Please read on, we hope you enjoy this edition and, as always, your ideas and comments will be gratefully received.

100 AND RISING!

On 13 March, just 61 days after we started, Dan Bentley became our 100th member. The total membership now stands at 119, with Steve Hatter being the latest to join the SUEPA family.



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New members are reaching us from various sources. Some of you have put us in touch with ex Shrimpers you remain in contact with (a special thanks to Steve Parmenter who has become a top SUEPA agent!), a few of you have heard about us on the grapevine and got in touch yourselves via Twitter/Facebook, and we also have a number of fans who have either tracked people down themselves or provided us with leads to follow up which have led us to all corners of the globe. Inquisitive and persistent detective skills for SUEPA-hunters are essential.

One approach used for building the membership has been to consider a specific team or era, see how many have joined already and then try and seek out the remainder. It's a bit like having a real-life sticker album! Two examples of this we have been looking at are:

- **The team that faced Liverpool in the snow at Roots Hall in 1979: 10 of the 12 are now in SUEPA, so we would now love to get in touch with Steve Yates and Mickey Stead to get a full house.**
- **The 1980/81 Division 4 championship winning squad: building on from above, 13 of you in that squad are SUEPA members, but as well as Steve and Mickey the additions of Dave Cusack, Jeff Hull and Andy Polycarpou would then complete the 18 that played a first team game that season.**



We will be looking to focus on all era's in the months ahead. Another approach is to consider a playing partnership such as a defensive line-up, and if you have any ideas of what or who we could look to target then please let us know. For instance, in the late 1960's/early 1970's the striking partnership of Billy Best, Gary Moore and Bill Garner was a lethal one and we are pleased to have both Billy and Gary as members, but can we find Bill Garner? Not anywhere at present, particularly frustrating as it is believed he is relatively local to the Southend area and many of us saw him at the cup tie at Stamford Bridge in 2009. If you are in contact with Bill please let us know!

Overall, we now have 15 goalkeepers, 30 defenders, 47 midfielders, 24 strikers and three former coaching/backroom staff in the SUEPA squad. You will find a full current member list at the end of this Newsletter.

BACK TO THE 60's

David Allaway had contacted SUEPA wondering whether he was eligible to join as he had only played two reserve games for the Blues in 1967. The reply immediately came back that of course he could join, SUEPA is pleased to welcome any player who has pulled on the Southend shirt. David today, with his family, is a loyal season ticket holder supporter in the East Stand.



From team sheets that David had provided from the two games that he had played it was noted that Frank Mathews had also played in those matches. Frank, who still lives locally and visits Roots Hall when he can, joined the club as an apprentice in 1966 and played 29 first team games until he left for Torquay in 1968. Frank had also joined SUEPA.

So, 51 years after they last met, SUEPA arranged for both players to be re-united for the first time since they both played together all those years ago at the match against Walsall on 3 March.

It was great to hear tales from days gone by from both and has given us food for thought for future re-union ideas.

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REMEMBERING GORDON LINTON

Via our Facebook page we received a message from Jane Webb last month saying that, on going through some old papers recently, she had come across some details of her first husband's time as a goalkeeper at Southend.

Gordon Linton was a member of our youth team in the 1970's and signed on professional terms during the Arthur Rowley years before moving to the semi-professional game with the likes of Southall and Dagenham. Sadly, Gordon passed away at the all too young age of 38 back in 1994.

We did a little bit of research and came across some pictures of Gordon which we duly sent on to Jane who shared them with her daughters which brought back some wonderful memories. One of the pictures is below where Gordon can just be seen in the middle at the back in a great shot of the team in jubilant mood after winning the Essex Professional Cup in 1973. A couple of you might recognise yourselves in this picture! Jane getting in touch also led to his good friend Sean Rafter joining SUEPA. RIP Gordon.



WELCOME HOME

OK, this may be a little corny, and perhaps crudely made, but we thought that getting to the 100-membership mark was worthy of making a little fuss of, so a short picture video to the tune of an appropriate 1970's hit has been produced!

If you would like to see it and add to the 294 viewings to date, the YouTube link to use is:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VfqMAhNdPZ0>

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FORTHCOMING SUEPA EVENTS

Following the appointment of Chris Powell as the Southend supremo (and most importantly now a SUEPA member) we thought it would be a good idea to mark this by holding an event with some of the players that played with him at Roots Hall.

So, on **Saturday 21st April** when MK Dons are at Roots Hall there promises to be a great occasion with a number of SUEPA members set to be in attendance – details are in the process of being finalised and we will report on this in our next Newsletter.



For the other remaining home fixture, v Bristol Rovers on **Saturday 5th May**, Tony Bentley will be in attendance. Tony, who is fourth in the all-time Shrimpers appearances list with 47 games under his belt, will be re-united at the game with his long-term friend Ray Sorrell who first saw Southend play at The Kursaal in 1933!

FUTURE EVENT IDEAS

In our last Newsletter we mentioned some broad ideas for events.

Teams that played in key games such as that Liverpool match, or a little more recently against Manchester United, are two possibilities we are mulling over, though certainly for the latter we need first to build up our SUEPA membership of the team involved that day the Shrimpers made Alex Ferguson chew his gum just that little bit harder.

Squads that you were involved in that you felt gelled particularly well, either in times of adversity or during periods of success, are other themes to think about. Do let us know your ideas.

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A squad or team event can take quite a bit of organising – our aim though is to certainly hold one of these in the first part of next season. On a smaller scale, however, there is more flexibility to do things more frequently and at shorter notice – if you have an ex-Shrimper team mate or two that you would like to visit Roots Hall with then do please get in touch. They do not have to be on the SUEPA list, we can always sign them up! We will aim to make your day a special one, introduce you to the crowd before kick-off (just ask Keith Mercer about the reception he and Derek got last year), maybe sign an autograph request or two, and ensure you get a proper Roots Hall welcome.

QUICKFIRE 5!

We plan to issue out requests from time to time asking you if you could respond to a set five questions which we will then include in a future Newsletter. Don't feel too relieved if you have not had an email from us yet, we will get to you at some stage

First up are Derrick Parker (Feb '77 to Feb '80, striker, 149 apps, 51 goals) and John Walker (Dec '76 to June '83, defender, 59 apps, one goal). Thank-you for your input gentlemen.

DERRICK PARKER

1. Who had the biggest influence on your playing career at Roots Hall and why?

I have to say that Dave Smith had the biggest influence. He kept faith in me throughout the three years I spent at Roots Hall. We had our disagreements along the way, but he always encouraged me to keep getting in the box and not to worry if I missed chances. He used to say I wasn't the best finisher so I needed to get on the end of as many balls as possible!

2. Who was the biggest character you played with and why did they stand out?

Ronnie Pountney was a great lad to have around. Funny in the dressing room and totally committed on the pitch. He and Tony Hadley were always winding each other up and kept us amused on many occasions.

3. Who would you say was the best player you saw in a Southend shirt during your time at the club and what made them so special?

Alan Moody was a very solid and reliable defender and a top professional. Colin Morris, who I had played with at Burnley, was the attacking inspiration and made so many chances for me (and others). He had excellent control and perfected the art of "dummying" the full back before putting a cross in.

4. Can you tell us any funny stories from your playing days either whilst at Southend or elsewhere?

I can remember losing a home match on a Friday night (to Reading I think) and Dave Smith and John Lattimer tore into us afterwards. We had another home game on the Monday night and we were told in no uncertain terms to improve.



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However, when we arrived for a short training session at Roots Hall on Monday morning we found the match was called off due to the icy conditions. Smithy, still angry from Friday's performance, told "Latty" to run us and make us sweat. This was heaven to Latty who used to love slagging us off and took Smithy's orders with great delight. He was determined to make us suffer and he was having no messing about! He set us off to do a couple of laps of the pitch and then said we all had to line up facing the low wall behind the goal and we would do step-ups on the wall. BUT he wanted proper good step-ups and he would now show us how a good step-up should be done!

He then approached the wall and placed his left foot on top of the wall and started to lift his right foot off the ground. But remember, it was icy! Latty's left foot slipped off the wall as he was lifting his right foot from the ground. He then disappeared head first, arms flailing, behind the wall into the bottom of the terraces - pure slapstick! We tried, for a couple of seconds, to contain ourselves, but it was impossible to do so as he clambered back over the wall. Ronnie Pountney just ran on to the pitch, pulled his tracksuit top over his head and lay on the penalty spot laughing, shoulders rocking for a good five minutes. Forget any of the goals I scored in my career, that is one moment I wish had been video-taped!

5. What did you do after hanging up your playing boots and do you ever get back to Roots Hall to see a game?

I finished pro football in my early 30's after a short spell playing in Finland. I then played in the Conference League for Northwich Victoria and began working for Carlton Brick, a brick manufacturer in Barnsley. I became National Sales Manager and I am still there today, although Carlton Brick has now been acquired by a southern based manufacturer.

I also do some co-commentating for BBC Radio on Barnsley matches and several years ago I returned to Roots Hall for a Southend v Barnsley league match. It was my first visit back in more than 20 years. I was delighted to see that Ronnie Pountney and Dave Cusack were there as special guests for the day and I also saw Frankie Banks who was still involved on the coaching side. I really enjoyed the reminiscing..... apart from Nigel Fuller reminding me of those missed chances at Liverpool in the FA Cup! Well, Smithy did say I wasn't the most reliable finisher!

JOHN WALKER

1. Who had the biggest influence on your playing career at Roots Hall and why?

Whilst at school my older brother, Brian, was a big influence on my career. Encouraging me as a young boy to play football every moment and anywhere and later watching my every game. At Roots Hall I admired Frankie Banks. He was at the end of a long and distinguished career at Southend and Hull City and was then coaching. He remained inspirational in his enthusiasm for the game and commitment to sharing his experience with the younger players.



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2. Who was the biggest character you played with and why did they stand out?

One of the biggest characters I played with was Dave Cusack. He was a colossus of a defender, strong in the air with a superb left foot. He was as hard as nails and a true leader on the pitch. He had so much rabbit and could out talk everyone. I played alongside him for half the season when we won promotion the Division Four Championship in 1980/81 following Alan Moody breaking his leg. Dave was just as much a character off the pitch as he was on it. But of all the players I knew Dave would be the first one I would have picked to be on my side.

3. Who would you say was the best player you saw in a Southend shirt during your time at the club and what made them so special?

This is a very difficult question to answer. Automatically I think of some of the great strikers at the club during my time such as the speedy and tricky winger, Colin Morris, and the true gentleman off the pitch but green-eyed monster on it, Derek Spence. Then there was the lionhearted Ron Pountney, who never gave less than 100 per cent. I played as a youth with two great defenders, Phil Dudley and Paul Clark, but the best player I saw was our goalkeeper Mervyn Cawston. In the Division Four Championship winning season he was immense and held the club record for consecutive clean sheets that undoubtedly was a key factor in us winning the title. Even in training Mervyn was a phenomenal shot stopper and in shooting practice was rarely beaten. As well as being an outstanding keeper he was a great guy.

4. Can you tell us any funny stories from your playing days either whilst at Southend or elsewhere?

I remember when I was an apprentice at Southend in those days we each were allocated specific tasks like sweeping the terraces after a match (in those days Roots Hall had a capacity of over 30,000 of which all but the main East Stand were terraced for standing only). Paul Clark and I were in charge of getting out the training kit for everyone before training. Each Friday afternoon we took all the dirty training kit to the nearest laundrette in Northview Avenue. On one day we loaded up all six washing machines to over-capacity and with a cup full of soap powder. We started them all together and went to the nearby shop for some food. Ten minutes later we returned and the laundrette was flooded with soap suds and every machine was leaking soapy water everywhere. The manager was called. We pleaded innocence never admitting that all six machines were ours and started at the same time, which caused the flooding. I think that was why shortly afterwards we were stopped from washing the kit.

5. What did you do after hanging up your playing boots and do you ever get back to Roots Hall to see a game?

On leaving the club in 1983 I took up the advice of a Southend Board member, a retired policeman Fred Bonfield, and joined Essex Police. After 30 years I retired but during that time I had the honour of attending many Southend United games in the police box as the Police Match Commander. In particular I was on duty for the FA Cup matches against Manchester United (Freddie Eastwood's brilliant winner in 2006) and Chelsea (the

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foggy 4-1 defeat in 2009). I remain a life-long Blues fan and still regularly go to Roots Hall in the Family Stand with my son and nine year-old grandson.

FOLLOWING AND CONTACTING SUEPA

We will continue to issue regular Newsletters and our next one is scheduled to be issued during late May/early June. These will normally be distributed via email.

As mentioned we do have a SUEPA Twitter account and a Facebook page on which we post up details of new joiners and any other news, so if you wish to see what is happening on a more frequent basis please do 'follow' us:

On Twitter: [@SUEPAssoc](#)

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/SUEPAssoc

You can then use either of these social media outlets to send us a private message, or you can contact us via email as follows:

Email address: suepassoc@gmail.com

Alternatively, we can be reached by post at SUEPA c/o The Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5830, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 9FD

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THE FULL SUEPA SQUAD TO-DATE

GOALKEEPERS

Terry Alderton, Cameron Belford, Daniel Bentley, Derek Bellotti, John Burrridge, Mervyn Cawston, Steve Collis, Darryl Flahavan, Neil Freeman, Ian Joyce, John Keeley, Steve Mildenhall, Sean Rafter, Paul Sansome and Jim Stannard.

DEFENDERS

Frankie Banks, Dave Barnett, Adam Barrett, Mark Beard, Tony Bentley, Guy Butters, Peter Clarke, Andy Dixon, Phil Dudley, Tony Hadley, Steven Hammell, Andy Harris, Steve Hatter, Johnny Herd, Mark Hone, Lewis Hunt, Frank Matthews, David McSweeney, Tamika Mkandawire, Alan Moody, Danny O'Shea, Mark Phillips, Chris Powell, Spencer Prior, Efe Sodje, Michael Spillane, Adam Thompson, John Walker, Shane Westley, and Che Wilson.

MIDFIELDERS

Andy Ansah, Will Atkinson, John Baber, Nicky Bailey, Mark Bentley, Peter Butler, Paul Byrne, Adrian Clarke, Jason Cook, Jimmy Corbett, Peter Daley, Craig Easton, Dave Elliott, Gerry Fell, Scott Forbes, Julian Hails, Derek Hall, Ryan Hall, Peter Hunt, Carl Hutchings, Leon Johnson, Terry Johnson, Bobby Kellard, Danny Kerrigan, Micky Laverick, David Lee, Ryan Leonard, Martin Ling, Kevin Maher, Mike Marsh, Dave Martin, Alan McCormack, Colin Morris, Garry Nelson, Terry Nicholl, Ricky Otto, Anton Outulakowski, Adrian Owers, Glenn Pennyfather, Declan Perkins, Ron Pountney, Ken Reynolds, Damien Scannell, Peter Taylor, Steve Tilson, Sanchez Watt and Alex Woodyard.

STRIKERS

David Allaway, Lee Barnard, Ian Benjamin, Gary Bennett, Billy Best, Drewe Broughton, Stan Collymore, Harry Crawford, David Crown, Liam Dickinson, Lawrie Dudfield, Terry Gray, Francis Laurent, John Linford, Roy McDonough, Keith Mercer, David Mooney, Gary Moore, Derrick Parker, Stuart Parker, Peter Silvester, Derek Spence, Blair Sturrock and Andy Thomson.

COACHING / BACKROOM

Buster Footman, Steve Parmenter and Steve Thompson.



'Creating New Memories'