

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

WELCOME

Welcome to our 16th Newsletter, issued to you after a hectic four months since Issue 15 which has seen our membership figures explode! Much more on this shortly.

SUEPA Newsletters are issued to all Shrimpers Trust members as well as the 418 former player/coaching staff members who are currently part of SUEPA.

Despite our buoyancy we are tinged with sadness as, on the day Queen Elizabeth died, we sadly also lost one of our own true greats, our former manager Dave Smith. We pay our own tribute in this Newsletter.

With groundwork on the new stadium underway (well, at least the training pitches), some exciting new signings for the current squad starting to bed in nicely, and with home crowds holding up well, despite results being up and down there seems to be a steady build-up of a positive vibe around Roots Hall of late. This feeds in to our SUEPA match day events where our guests this season to date have all received a terrific reception and thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon with us. More SUEPA match days are scheduled up to the end of the year and we will be working on our guest list for the New Year shortly, so if you would like to join in then please get in touch. Creating new memories is what we are all about.



Oh, and if anyone reading this Newsletter knows of a potential sponsor for SUEPA that we might be able to work with then do please get in touch. With the increasing status and activity of SUEPA we feel that now could be the right time for us to work with a partner to help support the things that we do, and which could also be mutually beneficial to any company etc looking to get involved. After all, what could be better than being associated with a football organisation that is 100% positive and is not results-dependent?!

So, leaving that thought with you, it's time to turn off the news telling you about your gas bill, get a cup of cocoa to keep you warm, and settle down for another good read

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

In this Newsletter we cover:

- **Membership update focusing on who has joined us since end of May. Short answer = loads!**
- **Dave Smith – a tribute**
- **A chat with Tony Currie**
- **Catching up with Alex Duchart – our new oldest SUEPA member;**
- **And we've also some more 1950's memories with Bill Punton;**
- **Back at the Hall with Richard Cadette, Adrian Clarke and Barry Silkman;**
- **Roots Hall is a work of art;**
- **News bits – PFA, balloons, Micky Wright;**
- **How to keep up to date with SUEPA news, contacting your old team-mates and SUEPA;**
- **The full current SUEPA membership list.**

Andy Leeder
SUEPA Organiser

MEMBERSHIP

Over the period since our last Newsletter, we've had an overall membership increase of 53, that's an amazing increase for a group which is now approaching its fifth birthday. One theory is that the bigger and so more credible we get the more our former Shrimpers become aware of what we are about – another theory though is that we've just sat down with a long list and spent hours and hours networking and investigating!

Anyway, whatever the reason, it is great to have so many more coming on board – from all eras. All our new joiners get a mention in this section, so here goes

Net protectors

Five new shot-stoppers have joined the fold to bring our keeper squad up to 42.

Tony Henriksen was our first goalkeeper signing since the last newsletter. Tony was with us 1996-98 as cover and he was needed on 6 December 1997 when Roycie was sent off in the FA Cup at Fulham. He also briefly played for Rushden before returning to Denmark where he is now a sales rep for a building materials firm.

Here's to you, Ryan Robinson, who became the 39th keeper in the SUEPA squad via a Twitter catch up. With us during the 2003-04 season making two appearances, the former Blackburn man then went on to have a good playing career in non-league circles.



Malcolm Webster (pictured) became our landmark 400th member in the SUEPA squad. With us 1973-76, many of his performances between the sticks for us were truly top-drawer, and those of us that were there we will surely never forget his heroics between the sticks in the mud at the Baseball Ground in FA Cup 5th round. That was just one of over 100 appearances for us, and the former Arsenal and Fulham keeper went on to also have a memorable time at Cambridge United too who recently inducted him in their 'hall

of fame'.

In chatting to Malcolm, it was clear that he has been 'through the mill' of late having been diagnosed with prostate cancer earlier this year for which he is currently receiving treatment for. Some of you may be aware that a fund-raising campaign was launched by Malcolm's family back in July, and if you would like to help give that appeal a 'Shrimper top-up' then that would be wonderful. We hope to get Malcolm back to Roots Hall for a very special return later this season. You will find the appeal link on the following Ipswich Town page:

<https://www.itfc.co.uk/news/2022/july/malcom-webster-thanks-footballing-world/>

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

Our latest keeper signings are Harry Seadon and Andy Petterson. Harry, with us as a youngster and leaving Roots Hall earlier this year after six first team starts, recently tweeted about a great result for his current club Billericay Town, and so we caught the good mood by connecting with him and signing him up. Andy, an Aussie U20 international, played for us on a non-contract basis as cover for Carl Emberson in the 2003-04 season and notched up 20 different clubs in a 22-year playing career before taking up coaching. He is now working in India for East Bengal FC, not the only exotic location of our latest SUEPA recruits as you will see by reading on

The backline

The backline has been strengthened with 11 new recruits to bring us up to 119 in this department. Kacper Lapota was our first defensive summer signing and guess what? He's now of course back at Roots Hall, something all Shrimper fans welcome without exception. However, once in SUEPA we don't let go – Kacper joins four other SUEPA members currently at the club (Kevin Maher, Mark Bentley, Stan Collymore and John Gowens) who have come back to their Roots.

At the start of June we finally located Mads Ibenfeldt. Phil Brown signed the Dane at the start of the 2014-15 season, but after impressing early on he had bad luck with injuries and only made three appearances. Mads played for Nykøbing FC in the 16/17 season before retiring from playing.

In July we opted for a month's free trial with the LinkedIn 'Premium Service' which enabled us to use that social media route in greater depth. Our first success from it was catching up with Mick Bodley. Including 62 appearances (two goals) for us 1993-96, Mick had a long career in the game and now, after a time as a postman, he has set up own building business. By the way, although our LinkedIn trial proved to be very successful, we are on a budget at SUEPA (i.e. no funds whatsoever!) so we opted out before they started charging us!

But it was back to a Facebook connection to finally catch up with Dorian Dervite. The French U21 international defender played 18 games for us on loan from Spurs in 2009 and then turned out for Charlton and Bolton before returning to France. He now works for Agence 442 in France as a football agent.



One of our SUEPA Agents (they lurk everywhere) connected with the good folk at the 'To Hull and Back – Hull City Podcast' so we could speak to Michael Turner (pictured). He made 65 appearances for us 2017-19 and ended a great career in that game-to-remember versus Sunderland. He told us that he felt he had a decent two seasons at Roots Hall and was hoping for a third though ultimately viewed it as fitting to have his last match v the Black Cats (who he played for in the Premiership after a £4 million transfer from Hull in 2009) to end a 500-plus game career. Mike is now doing some player agent and property management work, and we hope to have him as one of our guests in the New Year.

Martyn Booty was with us 1999-2001 making 80-plus appearances and it was a joint effort thanks to our friends at the former player groups for both Reading and Coventry (we like to hedge our bets) that led to us getting in touch with him. After a long career in the game Martyn had assistant manager roles at Huddersfield, Curzon Ashton and Hyde United, and now works for a small building firm in Yorkshire (a rival to Mick Bodley?!). We hope to catch up with Martyn at Roots next April when his son is due to be visiting as part of the Maidstone United team.

We hooked Barry Hunter, George Parris, Danny Lunan and Garry Cross during our LinkedIn trial. Now chief scout at Liverpool, Barry was with us on loan from Reading during the 1998-99 season and made five appearances including scoring a brace in a 3-0 win v Brighton at Roots Hall. George was with us at the start of the 1997-98 season at a time towards the end of his career which was dominated by a hugely successful 11-year stint with WHU, and he is one of several footballers who has written an autobiography. Danny was with us as a youth and made the first team at the end of the 2001-02 season before going on to have a non-league career with a number of Essex clubs. He is now Director at 14 Flooring Ltd. Garry was with us as a youth and made 16 league starts at the turn of the millennium before having a mostly local non-league playing career. Now Director for Chelmsford-based electronic manufacturers Energise Systems Limited, we are pleased to learn that Garry is one of a growing number of former Shrimpers that follows SUEPA on social media.

Our backline signings in this latest period were completed by us catching up with USA international Mike Lapper via Facebook. With us 1995-97 making 52 apps (one goal), the experienced (43 caps) centre back chose little old Southend for his only UK club before going back to the US, where he is now a coach.

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

The engine room

Our engine room is getting a little busy – 26 new recruits have been added so we now have 138 competing for the midfield berths.

We snapped up Lewis Gard quickly after he left the club in the summer – Lewis joined the club at the age of eight, so he was with the club for 16 years – wow! Other end-of-season leavers now part of SUEPA are our 2021-22 loanee Harrison Neal (now at Barrow) and our former youth product winger Terrell Egbri (now at Bishops Stortford).

At the emotional 'Game for Barks' brilliantly organised by Echo Sports Editor Chris Phillips at the end of May we were pleased to catch up with two former Shrimpers - Marlon Agyakwa and Lyle Della Verde. Like Terrell, both were wingers who came through our junior ranks, Marlon was recently at Aveyley and Lyle at Enfield. Another 'Game for Barks' attendee was Anthony Straker – we didn't manage to speak to him on the day, but a quick bit of networking afterwards did the trick. The Grenada international winger scored six in 82 apps for us 2012-14 and played for eight other clubs in a 15-year career, most recently at Havant.

We manage to connect with Mark Dziadulewicz via Facebook. Mark with us as a youth, and though never making the first team he made many appearances for us in the reserves (the old Mid-Week League) until he left to join Chelmsford City at the end of the 1977-78 season. He also played for Wimbledon and a number of Finnish clubs and he also now follows us on Facebook!

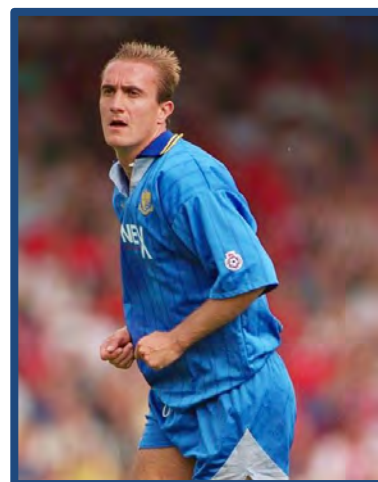
It was thanks to our friends at the Lincoln City Former Players Association that we connected with Graham Bressington. With us in those 'oh soooooo good' '90's Championship years', he made around 50 apps in a Shrimpers shirt. What a team we had back then, tier two footie, trips to Italy, spending half a million on a player, Ronnie Whelan quality, Ricky Otto causing havoc ahhhhh.

Our very next signing was then Graham's Shrimper teammate Derek Payne. Derek made 35 appearances for us in the 1993-94 season and is now keeping very busy coaching young kids in Wembley, doing Watford match commentaries on BBC Three Counties Radio, and watching his son Charlie play for Hertford Town.

And like buses, mid 1990's Shrimper midfielders come in threes as a day later we had a good chat with Andy Sussex (pictured). The ex-O's and Crewe midfielder scored 15 (including a great goal v Luton) in 90 appearances for us from 1991-97. Andy is now earning a living as a ceramic tiler.

As a result of a bit of networking with the good folk of the Reading FC Former Players Association we then signed up to SUEPA Mick Gooding. He made 28 appearances for us 1998-99 at the end of his playing career and then had two spells as our caretaker manager. Mick has since run an estate agency for many years and combines that with being a commentator at BBC Berks for Reading matches.

Miguel DeSouza came to us via a LinkedIn connection. He was at Roots Hall on loan from Posh at the start of the 1998-99 season. Also playing for Wycombe, Brum and others in a 16-year playing career, Miguel is now Head of Recruitment at Fulham.



Our next midfield joiner was tracked down in Tanzania (via the internet, sadly not in person). Winger Andy Turner, with us at the end of the 1995-96 season on loan from Spurs making six appearances in a Shrimpers shirt, had a 16-year playing career with 23(!) clubs before taking up coaching. We hope it's all going well out there on the African continent Andy – keep a look out for fellow former Shrimpers, you never know when one might turn up (we do know that our Peter Butler was once out that way – but we accept it's a big place!).

Jae Martin, Danny Maye, Gareth Risbridger and Gavin Strachan were four more LinkedIn connections. Jae was in our youth ranks and became a first team squad member in 1993 making eight appearances before leaving for Brum in 1995 where, via playing for 18 other clubs, he is now on the coaching staff. Danny was with us for the 2002-03 season, he made three appearances before dipping in to non-league and is now doing great stuff at the Southampton FC Academy. Gareth was signed by Dave Webb from his old club Yeovil for the 2001-02 season, making one appearance as a Shrimper before having a non-league playing career, then managing Aylesbury, and he is now a Director at R&R Estates Management. Gavin made seven appearances at the end of the 2002-03 campaign and made over 200 appearances for 12 clubs before the Scottish U21 international became a coach and he is currently first team coach at Celtic.

For Tony Scully we took a gamble that his was the right Facebook profile – we have made a couple of wrong guesses in the past (and flattered unsuspecting folk with the news that they were once a Shrimper) but this time

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

we got it right. The winger was with us on loan from Cambridge United in the 2002-03 season and made eight appearances out of a career total of nearly 300 with 15 clubs. Once the subject of a £155k fee from Man City to QPR, Tony was assistant manager at Histon, and is now enjoying life as a postman.

Back to surfing the waves of LinkedIn which saw us finally get in touch with Jean-Francois Christophe who was with us 2008-10 scoring five in 69 apps including a special overhead v Posh. The French midfielder now plays for US Vimy which he combines with working for Audi in Avion. And, from just before JFC's time, we then signed up JCR. Jamal Campbell-Ryce was with us 2005-07 scoring two in 69 apps, the 18-cap Jamaican international winger retired in 2020 from a 19-year playing career with 15 clubs and is now the U18 coach at Posh (maybe teaching them JFC overheads?).

We then caught up with current Maidenhead man Kane Ferdinand (with us as a youth until 2012 – 61 appearances/10 goals) when his team visited Roots Hall. Also from the Luggy era, Antonio German, with us on loan in 2010-11 (four appearances, two goals) and latterly with Leatherhead, has now joined us.

More on the signing of Tony Currie, Alex Duchart and Bill Punton later in this newsletter.

Finally in the middle of the park, after a bit of research we got an approximate idea where Terry Bradbury was living and so put an appeal out on the Facebook community page for his local town, a tactic that has worked for us before, and very shortly afterwards we were having a chat with him! The ex-Chelsea wing half made 176 appearances (19 goals) for us 1962-66 before joining Orient then Wrexham and then Chester. After finishing playing Terry became a publican and is now enjoying retirement.

Strikeforce

Twelve additions here to tip us over the ton mark now with 105 strikers to choose from.

Facebook was our source for finding Ken Price. Signed from Dudley in 1976, he made his debut for us versus Aldershot that November but sadly that was then it - off he went to Gills where he had a great career scoring 78 in 255 appearances. We now just need to catch up with fellow striker Paul Denny to give us the whole 1976-77 squad in SUEPA – he is proving elusive, but we now think we've tracked him down to somewhere in California!

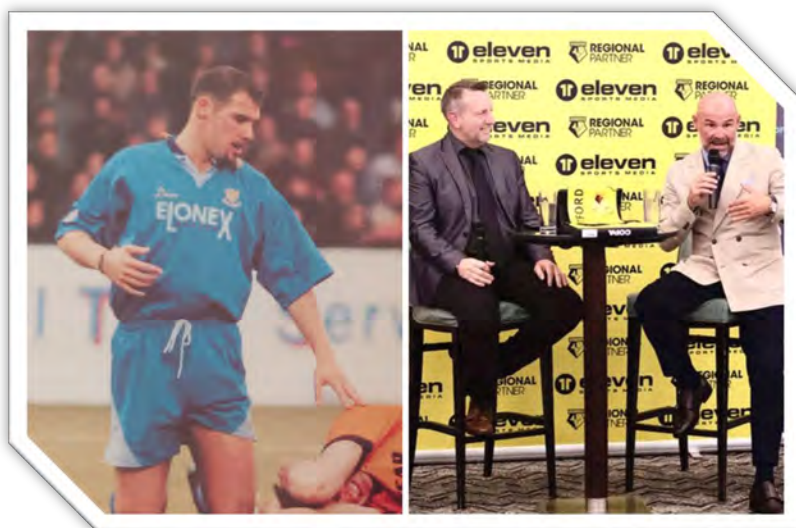
"So here's to you Theo Robinson (we like that song)". With us first in 2009 on loan and then 2017-20, the Jamaican international back in 2018 became our first hattrick hero for six years in a 4-0 win v MK, last season was at Bradford City, and was recently acting as co-commentator (a role many of our members have taken up and really enjoy) for BBC Stoke on Port Vale matches.

If you're gonna sign off your Shrimper career why not make it v Man U? That's what happened to SUEPA signing no. 385 James Lawson in 2006! James is now an electrician - Ron, that new stadium need a few bulbs?

Current Chesterfield Assistant Manager Danny Webb was finally hooked via LinkedIn (Danny – we made so many attempts via other routes to find you in the past!). He was with us 2000-02 scoring three in 31 apps, and played for 16 clubs before moving in to management and the Webb's now become our second father and son member duo after the Sturrock's.

We caught up with Steve G Jones via Facebook. The former WHU, Charlton and Bristol City striker was with us on loan in 2000 scoring twice (including on his debut) in nine appearances and has recently started up a café business not far from Roots Hall in Battlesbridge which we are sure a few Shrimpers will now be dropping in to.

Rock on! Tommy Mooney (pictured, then and now!) was with us in the turbulent 1993-94 season (though what season isn't turbulent?), scoring five in 14 for us. Now a Watford FC match commentator, we caught up with Tom thanks to a bit of networking with TV and radio presenter Lee Partridge on LinkedIn who we spotted had recently hosted an event with our former Shrimper. With Tommy notching around 200 goals in a 650-plus match 20-year career, we are sure meant they had plenty to talk about.



NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

Current Salford City striker Matt Lund responded to our LinkedIn connection request. With us on loan from Stoke in the 2012-13 season he made 13 appearances (one goal), and the Northern Ireland international is now with his 10th club who have at the time of writing got off to a solid start in their League Two campaign.

Graeme Jones became our 100th striker in the SUEPA squad. The current Newcastle United coach was with us for the 2002-03 season scoring three in 26 games. He played for the likes of Wigan Athletic and Doncaster Rovers and is now enjoying a top coaching career which you might recall included a role with England during Euro 2020.

We were delighted to receive an enquiry from David Heaver asking whether he was eligible to be part of SUEPA. David joined us as a youth player at the end of the 1980's and then went on to make some reserve team appearances (without ever making the first team), so of course the answer came back 'yes'. He would be delighted to hear from anyone with any pictures from his time at Roots Hall as all of his own were lost long ago in a house move. David is now a Director of the Southend Private Hospital and is a club sponsor.

For the umpteenth time since our last newsletter LinkedIn came up trumps as we 'connected' with Ken Charlery. With us on loan during the 1995-96 season, Ken started his playing career at Basildon United and went on to make circa 600 appearances, notably for Posh, Barnet and Watford. More recently he was manager of London Colney.

Some networking with the Cambridge United fans group '100 years of Coconuts' (great name) led to us signing 82-year-old striker Norman Bleanch. With us at the start of the 1961-62 season making three apps playing alongside fellow SUEPA members Alan Dicks and Tony Bentley, the ex WHU man then moved on to Cambridge United (and City) and settled in the Cambridge area. After finishing playing in his late 20's he worked for Worcester Engineering, and then moved up to Yorkshire to sell bathroom suites to major builders for Ideal Standard. He retired at age 60 and enjoys spending time in his garden and with his family (three sons and six grandchildren).

And, last but not least, and after some two years of trying, we finally caught up with the legend that is Eddie Firmani. A youth player with Clyde FC in his native South Africa in 1949, hot shot Eddie came to England in 1950 to join Charlton scoring 50 in 100 appearances before the start of his Italian odyssey, first with Sampdoria who he joined for a then British record fee of £35,000 in 1955. Stints at Inter Milan and Genoa plus three Italian caps (his grandfather was Italian) followed, with 'The Golden Turkey' as he was known by the locals notching a total of 115 goals in 210 appearances whilst in Italy.

It was back to The Valley in 1963, 32 more goals in 55 appearances (keep up – phew!) before he was attracted by the glistening arena of Roots Hall in 1965. Eddie played in a good team back then, but despite plundering 20 goals from 42 games including a hatrick v Gillingham, we contrived to get relegated for the first time ever at the end of the 1965-66 season. Eddie's performances though certainly earned adulation from the fans (see picture).



His second season with us was more successful as we finished sixth in Division Four, but appearances were restricted to just 20 (eight goals) and his last game for us per the record books came on 4 February 1967 in a 1-0-win v Newport.

Eddie ended his playing career back at Charlton where he scored six from 10 appearances in the 1967-68 season before journeying out to the States to briefly play for Tampa. But that was the start of his US love-affair as Eddie went on to manage a whole host of North American clubs including New York Cosmos where he coached a certain Edson Arantes do Nascimento ('Pele' to his mates).

A brief stint as manager of Sur FC in Oman came at the start of the 1990's – as did a spell being held captive in the First Gulf War. Another little-known fact is (we understand) that Eddie gets a name-check in the film 'Buster' – you learn something every day.

Eddie now lives in splendid retirement in Florida, and well in to his 80's was still to be found helping to coach kids.

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

Backing us up

Well, no new joiners in this category so our backroom team of managers, assistants and physios is now down to 14 following the sad passing of our legendary manager Dave Smith.

And all that means

We have yet another season where every player still alive is part of SUEPA, as Malcom Webster joining us completed the 1973-74 season squad (see picture). The other six seasons that this also applies to are 1977-78, 1978-79, 1980-81, 1981-82, 1982-83 and 1989-90.



DAVE SMITH – A TRIBUTE

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of our former manager Dave Smith on 8 September 2022.



NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

Dave took over the managerial reins from Arthur Rowley in 1976 and during the following seven seasons built some great but compact squads that achieved notable success with two promotions from Division Four. He was approachable to the fans, and always had time for others that shared his passion, namely achieving success for his team.

That record-breaking 1980-81 season lives long in the memory, but perhaps the promotion as runners-up to Watford in 1977-78 was his finest achievement as that was almost a complete re-build of a squad, bringing in players he often new from his managerial time before and knitting them together with a couple of established Shrimpers. His passion for his work was captured in the opening credits for Match of the Day for a good while as they showed him waving his arms on the bench at that 'crunch game' at Vicarage Road in 1978 which ended honours even.

Relegation in 1979-80 was a surprise – the team that held Liverpool to a draw in the snow that term was just too good to go down, but the campaign afterwards a slimmed down squad with no new additions went on to smash all kinds of club records.

We believe it is testament to the team spirit that Dave built that so many of his former players are pleased to be part of SUEPA. Indeed, from his six seasons we are only missing two players from our ever-growing group and that is simply because we can't find them yet!

Dave had the same approach wherever he went, and is equally revered at Newcastle, Mansfield, Plymouth and Torquay. He was a true gent, and will be missed by many.

A CHAT WITH TONY CURRIE

It was thanks to our current Assistant Manager Darren Currie that we got in touch with 'Uncle Tony', and it was great to receive a call from the 1970's football genius to chat to him about his brief time as a Shrimper.

All of us who were there at the start of the 1983-84 season, and in those sparsely populated days that wasn't many, were somewhat surprised to see the former Watford, Sheffield United, Leeds and QPR man come out for the pre-match warm up wearing our colours. "Peter Morris was manager but it was my friend and Southend Chief Exec Bobby Moore who brought me in for a three-month trial" Tony told us. " But almost as soon as I got on the pitch I felt a bad twinge in my calf muscle and came off to tell Morris I couldn't play. There wasn't much time until kick-off and he seemed to be more concerned with the club having the potential of a £1,000 fine for having to change the team sheet than anything else!"

"Physio Buster Footman's idea of treatment in the weeks that followed was to get me to stand in the sea for half an hour!" Anyway, after that I tried to return to fitness, turning out in a couple of reserve matches (Editor note: which is what qualifies Tony to be part of SUEPA) and I thought I was doing ok. The manager called me in, and I thought he was going to tell me that I was part of the team on Saturday, but he just told me to pack my bags, and that was it."

Later that season Tony turned out for Dave Webb's Torquay, playing 14 league games to then bring to an end a 17-year playing career that had seen him amass well over 500 league appearances.

"After that I played a few non-league games for the likes of Dunstable and Goole, but I had knee problems and I just had to pack it in."

Since 1988 Tony has worked for his beloved other SUFC in Sheffield in the community department and more recently as club ambassador. He still comes down to Essex from time to time to see family and hopes to get to a match at Roots Hall soon. We told him the old place hadn't changed much. "I remember Frankie Banks, and also Brian Dear behind the bar" Tony said. "They're still here, told you the place hasn't changed much" was our reply. We think that cemented the deal for his return soon - maybe just not for a pre-match warm up this time though.



The picture shown here sees Tony helping out with the youths during his time here.

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

And at the following link you will find an interesting little interview with Tony from last year in The Telegraph: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/.../tony-currie-interview.../>

CATCHING UP WITH ALEX DUCHART – OUR OLDEST SUEPA MEMBER

On 2nd September on a sunny afternoon in Falkirk, as a result of a bit of SUEPA investigating, two old friends met up to talk about times at Roots Hall in the 1950's. One did so with a happy tear in his eye.



Let's back track a little first. We've recently been revisiting our player database and are starting to go through it season by season revisiting cases which had for whatever reason drawn a blank as far as player tracing was concerned. Our records go back to the 1955-56 season, a time when sadly the previously only two surviving players who we had tracked and joined up to SUEPA have since passed away. The 1956-57 campaign was not looking much better - of the 22 Shrimpers that played that season we knew that 18 had passed away and some further exploring sadly added another two to that total. That left just Alex Duchart and Jimmy Thomson.

Some internet trawling led us to a relatively recent article by a Falkirk FC historian, Michael White, which seemed to imply that Alex was still alive. An email to Mike (to whom we are indebted for his wonderful efforts) revealed indeed that Alex was, that he was in good spirits, and also that Mike was friends with him. Mike added that Alex was always talking about his happy memories from his time as a Shrimper, and promptly called up Alex who was totally bowled over by our contact. Mike arranged to meet him at his house where he was to be found with old pictures of his Southend days strewn across the table. We called up whilst they were both there.

Alex started his playing career at Hibs, back then in the early 1950's a real powerhouse in Scottish football challenging head-on the dominance of the Glasgow big two. During his time there he made just six appearances for the first team, but it was a great time punctuated by two years National Service with the RAF ("which was like a holiday camp!") and running in conjunction with it a five-year apprenticeship earning a trade as a painter and decorator. He had a spell on loan with the now defunct Third Lanark playing at the iconic Cathkin Park, and the 'Thirds' wanted to sign him. But Southend manager Harry Warren got a tip off about the left-sided winger and, at a time when there was a bit of a Scottish influx to Southend, brought Alex back with him to a shiny new Roots Hall for the start of the 1956-57 season.

A pre-season tour in Germany and France kicked things off nicely for Alex in a team that contained the likes of Harry Threadgold ("what a character"), the record-breaking Arthur Williamson (most consecutive games over a six-season spell) and our record goal-machine Roy Hollis. "Sammy McCrory was our best player, but my best mate was Crichton Lockhart and that season I was his best man as he got married at Prittlewell Church on a

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

match day Saturday – after the wedding we went to Roots Hall to play the game and then had the reception in the evening!” Alex recalls.

Alex made his debut on 15 September 1956 away at Exeter. It was not a great start (we lost 6-1) but he kept his place for the home game four days later v Reading and we promptly won 4-0. Three days after that we were at home again and in front of a crowd of 14,000 Alex scored in our 1-1 draw v Crystal Palace. His chances in the first team though under new manager Eddie Perry proved to be infrequent, the in-form John McGuigan mostly made the No. 11 jersey his own and Alex’s season with us was limited to eight games and two goals. “I played a lot for the reserves though at some wonderful grounds, including Highbury, and also Upton Park where I was awarded some golden cufflinks for my performance against a team containing John Bond and many other big names.”

“We used to train at Priory Park, a short walk from my digs in Westcliff, and after training I often went for ‘cribbage sessions’ with my good friend Len Pond and some teammates. I also took up golf, with lessons being exchanged for match tickets. My wage at the time was £12 a week, just below the then maximum of £15 but still quite decent compared to average industry wages.”

“At the end of the season I received an offer from East Fife and, wanting regular first team football I took it. I travelled back to Southend to pick up my things and Eddie made me an offer to stay. It was so frustrating, I didn’t want to leave but I had made a promise to East Fife and I couldn’t go back on that, so off I went.”

Alex went on to be leading scorer for East Fife, a feat he also achieved with his subsequent clubs Dumbarton and Falkirk. It was at the latter that he suffered a bad injury but came back to score four goals at the end of the season. He then made the move briefly south again to play for a team near Hayes before going back up to Scotland to end his career with Inverness Caledonian Thistle where an injury sustained in a car crash at the age of 32 put an end to his playing days. After football Alex took up his painting and decorating trade, “I was never short of work, trading on my name as a footballer.”

A few years ago, his old Southend teammate Jimmy Thomson called him saying he was in Falkirk, and they met up for a good reminiscing session but have not stayed in touch. It is our SUEPA task now to do what we can to see what happened to Jimmy, a couple of years older than Alex, but for now at least Alex, at age 89, is newly installed as our oldest member (just pipping recent joiner Eddie Firmani). He is also now as far as we know the former Shrimper who played for the club the longest time ago.

... AND MORE 1950's MEMORIES, THIS TIME WITH BILL PUNTON

An email to Norwich City led to us finally catching up with Bill Punton.

Born in Ormiston, Scotland, on 9 May 1934, at the age of 15 Bill was spotted playing locally by the manager of Portadown who was in Scotland on holiday and who ended up taking the young winger back to Northern Ireland. It didn’t start well. Pushed straight away in to the first team on a muddy pitch, it was 0-0 with time running out when Bill passed back to the keeper, the ball got stuck in the mire and the opposition centre forward nipped in to score. The crowd reacted badly, and afterwards young Bill wanted nothing else but to go back home.



The Portadown chairman and others however persuaded him otherwise, Bill spent a couple of matches in the reserves, scored a hattrick, and soon found himself back in the first team. This time it went much better, the opposition centre half had been dropped and went to the pub to drown his sorrows but had to be recalled back from the watering hole as a last-minute injury meant that the team were a man short. Bill ran rings round him (“he was clearly drunk!”) and had a great game. Confidence boosted, Bill went on to score 28 goals that season and soon his performances were attracting interest from several big clubs. “The Celtic manager wanted to sign me but then found out that I was a protestant so that put an end to that, Arsenal were interested and said that they would be up to sign me the next day, but Newcastle were already there with an offer plus a bag of cash as an inducement so off I went to St James’ Park”.

“When I signed for Newcastle they already had five other left-sided wingers, but I gradually eased my way into the team playing alongside the likes of Bob Stokoe, Jimmy Scoular and Jackie Milburn. In one match I recall beating Sunderland 6-2 which was just fantastic and playing in front of crowds of 70,000 was a sight to behold.”

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

Bill's appearances though for the Geordies were restricted to just 23 (one goal) in four years, so at the start of the 1957-58 season he found himself on the way to the delights of Southend as part of an exchange deal which saw John McGuigan going in the opposite direction. "I also had offers from Swansea and Cardiff, but another 'bonus' payment tipped the balance and it was off to Roots Hall." The 1957-58 season was a decent one for the Shrimpers with an eighth-place finish in the then newly created non-regionalised Third Division. Bill scored on his home debut and ended the season with six goals from 40 appearances, feeding the prolific Roy Hollis and Sam McCrory as we plundered 85 goals in the league (we won't dwell on the cup defeat to Yeovil).

Bill recalled with fondness the names of many of his former Southend teammates, most of whom have sadly since passed away though he was pleased to learn that we were in touch with Alan Dicks who he recollected had been signed from Chelsea together with Les Stubbs. "The training was a bit archaic, and it was a shock compared to what I had been used to at Newcastle both in terms of techniques and facilities. Wilf Dixon, an ex-army sergeant in the war, was the trainer and his favourite was 'progressive laps' where we ran one side of the pitch and walked the rest, then ran two sides, and so on. Another was 'bunny hops' over benches holding concrete blocks as we jumped, all pretty basic stuff."

Bill remembered one match when high-flying Doncaster Rovers were the visitors, a team which included Charlie Williams who went on to make his name as a comedian. "I had been out the night before with a couple of the lads and we didn't get home to our digs until 4.00 am, something which was somehow reported to manager Eddie Perry. Eddie's reaction was to place a £1 bet with us (a decent sum back then) that we wouldn't score against Doncaster – we duly won 5-0! Later in life when I was manager of Great Yarmouth, Charlie Williams used to come and sit with me on the bench on match days when he was appearing in shows at Great Yarmouth."

"During that season the Norwich City manager Archie Macaulay made an approach to sign Errol Crossan and myself after being impressed by us in our win at Roots Hall (Errol scored the only goal) – Eddie let Errol go but not me. However, when back home in Scotland at the end of the season Archie travelled up to see me and I decided to sign for Norwich where I then stayed for eight years." Bill made 214 league appearances for the Canaries scoring 24 goals and has been inducted into their Hall of Fame. He won a League Cup winners medal with them in 1962, scoring in the 4-0 aggregate win v Rochdale, and ended his full-time playing career with brief stints at Sheffield United and Scunthorpe.

"I was living in Norfolk whilst playing for Scunthorpe and they wanted me to move up, but I got an offer from Great Yarmouth Town which included a job locally as a highways inspector so I took that, a career that then stood me well for 30 years." Bill became the Great Yarmouth manager, a position he held for an incredible 20 years (former Shrimper and SUEPA member Graham Franklin was a player during Bill's time there), before moving to Diss Town for a further seven years which included a memorable win at Wembley in the FA Vase.

Bill, even at the age of 88, is still involved in the game today as alongside former Shrimper Peter Silvester he acts as match day guest at Carrow Road and a treat to sample a bit of Norwich City corporate hospitality to meet our latest SUEPA member is now firmly on the wish-list.

BACK AT THE HALL WITH OUR SUEPA GUESTS

First up for the season-opener v Boreham Wood was Richard 'Tricky' Cadette, still to this day 17th in our all-time scorers' charts with 56 goals plundered in just two campaigns. Oh, the memories of all those goals, that four strike 1985 debut v his old club, his appreciation of his team mates (especially Big Roy), the training ("Buster just dumped us in the sea" (Editor note: it seems to have been a specialist treatment of his)) and the way players stood up for the fight and not roll around (as evident with our opponents in the match we witnessed).

For the match v Torquay at the start of September Adrian Clarke was in town. As with all of our guests he loved the reception he received just before kick-off and was thrilled to meet so many familiar faces, including Doc Sinha who had once fixed his broken nose in the car park plus his old BBC Essex and Echo colleagues. Interesting to learn too about Ronnie Whelan's opening line on the phone when seeking to recruit him from Arsenal: "Do you like a drink?"!

Our most recent guest, for the match v Wrexham on 17th September, was midfielder Barry Silkman. A teammate of Tricky's during 1985-86, it was indeed Barry who was responsible for bringing him to the club, just one of many great tales told by Silky over a wonderful afternoon. It was just fantastic to see Barry greet Paul Clark after decades had passed since they had last met, and the look on Barry's face when we surprised him with a tap on his shoulder from his old pal Brian Dear was just priceless. And Silky's reward to Brian? Telling a tale in front of all about how Brian did not return from a training run with a search party then sent out only to find Brian asleep under a tree!

ROOTS HALL IS A WORK OF ART!



The Shrimpers Trust is delighted to have linked-up with Essex artist Keith Bird, a Shrimper fan, who has recently turned his brush towards capturing Roots Hall in all its glory in his oil paintings.

His atmospheric interpretation of 'going to the match' with the scene outside the Shakespeare Drive entrance to the West Stand received much admiration from Shrimpers when he posted it online. That led to us agreeing with Keith to make them available to all as a quality print thanks to the always helpful Dave Shields of Stadium Photography (another Shrimper fan).

The first print run sold out fast and another print run was promptly sourced – we sell them at the Shrimpers Trust stall (in the Shrimpers Bar) on match days, but they can also be purchased at the price of just £15 (plus P&P) at: http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/home.asp?page_id=910

At the time of writing a second print, this time capturing a view from inside the West Stand, is in the process of being made available, and it is possible that Keith will turn his hand to depicting other scenes of our beloved home in the coming months – we will let you know.

NEWS BITS

Working with the Professional Footballers Association (PFA)

We are delighted to report that, back in June, the PFA gave the go-ahead to our proposal (made jointly with our friends at the Blackpool Former Players Association) to create a national network of former player groups. We have agreed to be part of a Steering Group to get this proposal off the ground and currently await further direction from the PFA on this.

Balloons

Thank you to all that participated in the Shrimpers Trust virtual balloon race that was run at the start of September. It was a great success with around £2,000 being raised to help towards key Trust funding projects earmarked for this season, namely our social inclusion project which helps disadvantaged groups have a 'day to remember' at Roots Hall, contributions to the purchasing of gym equipment for the club and helping with the funding of 'Junior Blues' which the Trust has recently taken over the administration of.

A special thanks must go to SUEPA member Barry Fry for his participation in the race – one of the prizes given out was to the person that finished in front of 'Baz's Balloon' which all added to the fun of the event.

A letter from Micky Wright

It was lovely to recently receive a letter from SUEPA member Micky Wright, not least as it is so rare these days to see some real writing rather than type! Micky wanted to let us know that we have been recording him incorrectly as a defender when he was in fact a striker when with us 1962-66 -a apologies Micky and correction duly made!

Micky went on to recall that he was once in a colts side that scored an impressive 127 goals in one season and that he scored on his debut for the reserves at the tender age of just 16. In addition to his life-long friend and fellow SUEPA member Derek Ewing, Micky recalled playing alongside the one and only Frankie Banks, Harry Threadgold, Ray Brand, Norman Leggitt (who is someone we are currently trying to trace) and many more.

Great to hear from you Micky, and do let us know when you next plan to be at Roots Hall.

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

FOLLOWING AND CONTACTING SUEPA

We will continue to issue regular Newsletters - our usual aim is to issue them quarterly (even though we sometimes lapse by a few weeks) so expect another SUEPA Newsletter early in the New Year.

We do have a SUEPA Twitter page (currently 2,250 followers) and a SUEPA Facebook page (currently 1,403 followers) 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 then please do 'follow' us:

On Twitter: [@SUEPAssoc](https://twitter.com/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

We are also on LinkedIn, just type our name in to the search box to find us. And yes, we can now be found on Instagram, but we are still getting to grips re how best to use that ... every time we put up a picture we want to tell a story but it seems that is not quite the idea!

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

And, as a reminder, any SUEPA ex-player/coaching staff member can ask to get in touch with any of their former team-mates in SUEPA by just asking us to pass on a message. We cannot disclose contact details without permission, but are always happy to pass on a message to ask them to contact you, something we have done to help re-unite a number of former Shrimpers already.

THE FULL SUEPA SQUAD TO-DATE

GOALKEEPERS

Terry Alderton, Cameron Belford, Daniel Bentley, Derek Bellotti, John Burridge, Mel Capleton, Mervyn Cawston, Steve Collis, Barrie Delf, Rhys Evans, Darryl Flahavan, Neil Freeman, Danny Gay, Bart Griemink, Tony Hafford, Tony Henriksen, Kelvin Jack, Ian Joyce, John Keeley, Brian Lloyd, Don McKay, Alan Meyer, Steve Mildenhall, James Montgomery, Glenn Morris, Jon O'Brien, Andy Petterson, Sean Rafter, John Roberts, Ryan Robinson, Simon Royce, Paul Sansome, Harry Seadon. Paul Smith, Neville Southall, Jim Stannard, David Stockdale, Callum Taylor, Martin Thomas, Malcolm Webster, Ray White and Andy Woodman.

DEFENDERS

Ryan Auger, Dean Austin, Gavin Axcell, Pat Baldwin, Frankie Banks, Dave Barnett, Adam Barrett, Mark Beard, Tony Bentley, Graham Birks, Darren Blewitt, Mick Bodley, Martyn Booty, Kenny Brown, Paul Brush, Adrian Burrows, Guy Butters, Peter Cawley, Peter Clarke, Ben Coker, Steve Collins, Simon Coleman, Mark Cooper, Leon Cort, Graham Coughlan, Ryan Creswell, Garry Cross, Dave Cusack, Timothee Dieng, Andy Dixon, Dorian Dervite, Phil Dudley, Steve Dyer, Andy Edwards, Derek Ewing, Kevin Fallon, Anton Ferdinand, Ricky Footman, Andy Ford, Peter Gilbert, Jamie Gray, Tony Hadley, Greg Halford, Steven Hammell, Andy Harris, Mike Harrison, Sam Hart, Steve Hatter, Frank Haydock, Johnny Herd, Mark Hone, Lewis Hunt, Barry Hunter, Chris Hutchings, Christian Hyslop, Mads Ibenfeldt, Richard Jobson, Duncan Jupp, Jean-Paul Kalala, Bobby King, Harry Kyprianou, Kacper Lapota, Mike Lapper, Harry Lennon, Danny Lunan, Scott Malone, Daniel Matsuzaka, Warren May, John McMahon, David McSweeney, Robert Milsom, Tamika Mkandawire, Alan Moody, Taylor Moore, Luke Morrish, David Morley, Bilel Moshni, Teddy Nesbitt, Rob Newman, Terry O'Donnell, Danny O'Shea, Gary Parkinson, George Parris, Chris Perkins, Mark Phillips, Chris Powell, Spencer Prior, Luke Prosser, Chris Ramsey, Gary Richards, Ian Riley, Paul Roberts, Leo Roget, Osei Sankofa, Pat Scully, Damon Searle, Owen Simpson, Alex Smith, Efe Sodje, Michael Spillane, Micky Stead, Mark Stimson, Ray Ternent, Derek Tharme, Adam Thompson, Neil Townsend, Michael Turner, John Walker, Shane Wardley, Mark Warren, Martin Warwick, Shane Westley, John White, Charlie Williamson, Che Wilson, Bob Worthington, Dave Worthington, Mark Wright, Steve Yates and Dave Young.

NEWSLETTER – Issue 16 – September 2022

MIDFIELDERS

Marlon Agyakwa, Andy Ansah, Scott Ashenden, Will Atkinson, John Baber, Nicky Bailey, Tony Beanland, Mark Bentley, Dennis Booth, Gary Borthwick, Terry Bradbury, Graham Bressington, Zak Brunt, Peter Butler, Paul Byrne, Jamal Campbell-Ryce, David Chambers, Jean Francois Christophe, Paul Clark, Steve Clark, Adrian Clarke, Eddie Clayton, Conor Clifford, Jason Cook, Jimmy Corbett, Regis Coulbault, Willie Coulson, Dave Cunningham, Tony Currie, Peter Daley, Gary Deegan, Lyle Della Verde, Miguel DeSouza, Alan Dicks, Alex Duchart, Mark Dziadulewicz, Craig Easton, Terrell Egbri, Dave Elliott, Gerry Fell, Kane Ferdinand, Brian Ferguson, Ken Foggo, Scott Forbes, Lil Fuccillo, Lewis Gard, Antonio German, Anthony Grant, Phil Gridelet, Mick Gooding, Steve Goodwin, Mark Gower, Luke Guttridge, John Gymer, Julian Hails, Derek Hall, Mark Hall, Ryan Hall, Lee Hodges, Ricky Holmes, Dean Holness, Tommy Horsfall, Scott Houghton, Jeff Hull, Peter Hunt, Carl Hutchings, Isaac Hutchinson, Neil Jenkins, Kevin Johnson, Leon Johnson, Terry Johnson, Matt Jones, Danny Kerrigan, Steve Lamb, Micky Laverick, David Lee, Ryan Leonard, Bernie Lewis, Alan Little, Martin Ling, Adam Locke, Alistair Love, Kevin Maher, Mike Marsh, Dave Martin, Jae Martin, Danny Maye, Stephen McLaughlin, Alan McCormack, Jermaine McGlashan, Colin Morris, Franck Moussa, Harrison Neal, Garry Nelson, Terry Nicholl, John Nielsen, Iain O'Connell, Ricky Otto, Anton Outulakowski, Adrian Owers, Jack Paxman, Derek Payne, Carl Pettefer, Glenn Pennyfather, Declan Perkins, Adem Poric, Ron Pountney, Bill Punton, Ken Reynolds, Gareth Risbridger, Martin Robinson, Alan Rogers, Andy Rogers, Lee Sawyer, Damien Scannell, Tony Scully, Barry Silkman, Josh Simpson, Nicky Smith, Paul Smith, Jamie Southon, Gavin Strachan, Anthony Straker, Andy Sussex, Peter Taylor, Stuart Thurgood, Steve Tilson, Michael Timlin, Mark Tinkler, Andy Turner, Lars Unger, Paul Vickery, Sanchez Watt, Myles Weston, Alex Woodyard, Anthony Wordsworth and Josh Wright.

STRIKERS

Ben Abbey, Peter Abbott, Charles Ademenno, Brett Angell, David Allaway, Lee Barnard, Peter Beadle, Mike Beesley, Ian Benjamin, Bobby Bennett, Gary Bennett, Billy Best, Norman Bleanch, Stuart Brace, Lee Bradbury, Tes Bramble, Drewe Broughton, Steve Brown, Richard Cadette, Ken Charlery, Kenny Cocker, Stan Collymore, Leon Constantine, Jim Conway, Barry Corr, Simon Cox, Harry Crawford, David Crown, Martin Curruthers, Liam Dickinson, George Duck, Lawrie Dudfield, Freddie Eastwood, Mickey Engwell, Eddie Firmani, Anthony Flood, Alan Foggon, Jamie Forrester, Marc-Antoine Fortune, Graham Franklin, Paul Furlong, Bill Garner, Shaun Goater, Brandon Goodship, Roy Goulden, Terry Gray, Wayne Gray, Danny Greaves, Chris Guthrie, Neil Harris, Matt Harrold, David Heaver, Tom Hopper, Noel Hunt, Nathaniel Jarvis, Graeme Jones, Gary Jones, Ken Jones, Steve Jones, Charlie Kelman, Francis Laurent, James Lawson, Jason Lee, Stuart Leslie, John Linford, Matt Lund, Charlie MacDonald, Roy McDonough, Sammy McMillan, Keith Mercer, Jack Midson, David Mooney, Tommy Mooney, Dean Morgan, Shamir Mullins, Lee Nogan, Derrick Parker, Stuart Parker, Matt Paterson, Jack Payne, Billy Paynter, Steve Phillips, Joe Piggot, Andy Polycarpou, Ken Price, Andy Rammell, Mark Rawle, Dave Regis, Alex Revell, Neville Roach, Theo Robinson, Jack Sampson, Morrrys Scott, Ian Selley, Peter Silvester, Derek Spence, Scott Spencer, Blair Sturrock, Andy Thomson, Neil Tolson, James Walker, Mario Walsh, Danny Webb, Jason Williams and Micky Wright.

COACHING / BACKROOM

Phil Brown, Micky Buxton, Ben Clarkson, Barry Fry, John Gowens, Ron Hanley, Lee Harrison, Steve Parmenter, Amy Rogers, Paul Sturrock, Steve Thompson, John Threadgold, Gary Waddock and David Webb.

