

WELCOME

Welcome to our 21st Newsletter. We have come of age.

As we write, the club is seemingly safe from the drop for which we are all grateful, yet frustratingly looking like falling a little short of a shot at the play-offs (oh that ten point deduction). However, we are eternally thankful that a) we still have a club to support and b) there is now real hope for a bright future with Justin Rees and the Consortium.



Ron continues to linger, but the chances of him being totally gone by the time of our next Newsletter seem high (ok, we were hoping for that in our last scribe), and the enthusiasm shown by our new owner is just a joy to behold. Let's just quote one example. Beaten up by years of no real interest from Ron we simply forgot to invite Justin to our first brand new Former Players Club meeting (see next page). But Justin got in touch and asked if he could come along – of course he could was our immediate reply, and for the whole time he was there he engaged with everyone and genuinely enjoyed himself. It's a simple thing, but making an effort goes a long way.

Anyway, loads continues to happen SUEPA-wise. In this Newsletter we cover:

- Our brand-new Former Players Club;
- Membership update, focusing on who has joined us since our last Newsletter in December (including some top stories from our new recruits);
- Karl Lansley's pilgrimage your chance to get involved;
- Benefit match for Havens fancy a game?
- Spud's evening bringing back the memories;
- James and his family return to Roots;
- Rawly comes home;
- Helping Jakub;
- News bits Dave's first book, more Keith Bird, All My Own Words, visiting the museum, a surprise for Dennis;
- Remembering Ian McKechnie;
- RIP Paul Denny and Billy Kellock;
- How to keep up to date with SUEPA news, contacting your old team-mates, and SUEPA;
- The full current SUEPA membership list.

So, locate that Easter egg you've hidden from others, pour yourself a glass of something tasty, hide yourself away on a comfy seat, put on some earmuffs so you can't hear anyone wanting you to do something you'd rather not, settle down, and read on

Andy Leeder SUEPA Organiser

OUR NEW FORMER PLAYERS CLUB IS LAUNCHED

We are proud of this.

Having seen other clubs on social media, notably Rotherham and Sheffield United, hold regular meeting groups for former players to attend, we thought we'd have a go at holding our own. We sought a bit of advice from John Breckin who runs the Rotherham group, and also spoke to Penny Watson (wife of former England international Dave Watson), and then got to work.

The club kindly agreed to let us use their newly refurbished D2 lounge in the East Stand, and Michelle Gargate, landlady of the Blue Boar next to the ground, agreed to sponsor some light refreshments. We set the date, 13th March, fixed the time (2.00 pm to 4.00 pm), advertised the new group on social media, sent out email invites to SUEPA members, and rang around a few local former players who we thought might be interested. We may not have reached everyone, but if you missed out then read on as we will be doing it again very soon.



The aim of the group is simple – to afford former Southend United players the opportunity to meet up, maybe catch up with a few old friends, make new friends, and just do a bit of good old-fashioned reminiscing. It's all very relaxed, there is no agenda, and as well as us leaving a bit of memorabilia around to maybe help trigger a few memories, many also brought along their own pictures from days gone by which was lovely to see.

We had around 17 former players attend our first gathering, some brought partners, some had other family members with them, and the age of those gathering ranged from a couple of weeks to 80-something. Frankie Banks, of course, will usually win the prize for being a Roots Hall star the longest, having first joined the club as a junior in 1958, and the nice thing was that everyone who did come along had played football at Roots Hall with at least one other in the room.

So, we have the next meeting date now set – WEDNESDAY 8 MAY 2024, 2.00 PM to 4.00 PM – again in the D2 lounge at Roots Hall (there is lift access). Would you like to come along? It is open to anyone who has played for Southend United at any level and any era. You can bring a spouse or family member with you if you wish, or just come along on your own, you can be sure of a great welcome. As we have to judge catering needs all attendees must book in advance – TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE JUST EMAIL US AT <u>suepassoc@gmail.com</u>

MEMBERSHIP

Since our last Newsletter we've added 16 new members to the SUEPA family and now have 491 current members. We are getting ever closer to that magical 500 figure.

As ever all our new joiners get a hearty welcome and a mention in this section, so, with a few stories along the way, here goes

Between the sticks



Three keepers have recently joined our ranks to bring us up to an amazing 50 in the SUEPA squad. First up is **Luke Daniels**, who was with us on loan 2011/12 playing 10 games when we went on a fantastic run under Luggy. The former England U19 international is now at Forest Green Rovers.

Blondy Nna Noukeu was with us on loan last season making 17 appearances, and he is now back at Stoke fighting for a first team place. Thanks goes in part to our former kitman Luke for helping us to get Blondy on board!

Martyn Margetson became our landmark 50th current SUEPA squad keeper. The current England and Swansea coach was with us in the 1998/99 season making 32 appearances after signing from Man City. Martyn, a Welsh international, has been part of the England coaching set up for seven years. With Chrissy Powell until recently also being part of the England set up, it has been great of late to go 'Shrimper-spotting' on TV when our national team are playing.

At the back

Five more defensive signings since our last Newsletter to bring our back line up number up to an impressive 138 (though we are probably still short of the number of defenders currently on Man City's books).

Former defender and coach **Kevin Lock** joined us back in January. He had a fantastic playing career with West Ham (winning the FA Cup) and Fulham before his old pal Bobby Moore brought him to Roots in 1985 where he made 11 appearances before staying on as coach until 1993. He then coached at Chelsea and Brentford, and now works part-time as a court usher (a role he has done now for 17 years and greatly enjoys).

ROI U21 international **Joe Shaughnessy** was tracked down thanks to one of our SUEPA Facebook page followers Nigel Rickard – Joe's mum is Nigel's post lady where he lives in Ireland (our members come to us from many varied sources). The centre back was with us for the 2019/20 season making 21 appearances. Pre and post being a Shrimper he has spent his footballing career in Scotland, and now captains Dundee in the SPL.



Earlier this season **Brooklyn Kabongolo** was in our first team as a commanding presence in our back line, so it was somewhat of a surprise to find him leaving Roots Hall and then shortly afterwards lining up against us for Oxford City. He had a great game for The Hoops back in February as we battled out a 0-0 draw. Still, Brooklyn we are pleased to say, now maintains a Shrimper link by being part of SUEPA.

Louis Lomas too is another recent leaver who put in some fantastic performances for us last season, but had been out of action all this season due to some terrible bad luck with injuries. We wish Louie the very best of luck on his way back to full fitness, and no doubt he will be another former player who ends up playing a blinder against us at a future date.

Finally at the back we are pleased to welcome **John Pye** to our ranks. John joined us as a 14-year-old way back in 1959 and played reserve team football for us until leaving in 1965. We are looking forward to catching up with John at our next Former Players Club meeting on 8 May (and getting a picture of him!).

Middle of the park



We now have 163 midfielders – it's getting congested.

Firstly, it was great to make contact with **Terry Kent**, and in doing so we achieved another season (1958/59) where all former players still alive are part of SUEPA. We'd spotted that there was an article about Terry on the website for the Addiscombe Cricket Club, so we got in touch with them and, after a few email exchanges with the very helpful folk there, we obtained Terry's number and he was thrilled (and very surprised) to hear from us.

Terry was born in Battersea just after the outbreak of WWII. His footballing youth was spent on the books with Fulham where he played with a certain Mr George Cohen (there's a hattrick of sorts here - read on). On the coaching staff for the Cottagers at that time was Eddie Perry, a goal-scoring Welsh international from the 1930's who had finished his playing career at Fulham and spent

two summers after the war helping to re-start the game in Norway after the German occupation. He was then retained as coach for the Fulham junior sides where, as well as discovering the supremely gifted Johnny Haynes, he helped to nurture the footballing talents of one Terry Kent. Then, when Eddie was appointed as SUFC manager in 1956, he brought Terry with him, giving him a job on the ground staff alongside dear old Sid Broomfield and promising him a professional contract when he turned 18 on 21 October 1957, which he duly got. Terry was, therefore, part of 'Perry's Puppies', the youth team Eddie started up for us when he arrived at the club.

Terry was a left-sided player, primarily on the left wing but also being happy as an inside-left, left half or left back. But in what proved to be a relatively successful team (finishes of 7th, 8th and 12th in Division Three from 1957-60), and before substitutes, first team opportunities were limited.

Terry eventually got his chance on 29 April 1959, our last match of the season, when we beat Notts County 5-2 in front of 5,734 at Roots Hall. However, that proved to be it as far as his Shrimpers first team matches were concerned, and although he stayed the following season, appearing in the 1959/60 team pic when The Blues went 'lily-white', he decided to move to Millwall in the Summer of 1960 and then quickly afterwards had a couple of seasons with Dartford FC. Cricket was his other passion and, as was more common back then, for a while he undertook the dual role of being both a professional footballer and professional cricketer, making 10 first class appearances for Essex CCC 1960-62 alongside the likes of Trevor Bailey and Doug Insole. And this brings us to Terry's hattrick - as well as playing football with 1966 World Cup winner George Cohen he played cricket with '66 heroes Bobby Moore and Geoff Hurst. Not bad eh?

Terry stayed in sport after hanging up his football boots, becoming a sales rep for Bukta, and maintained his cricketing interests by playing for Addiscombe for many years.

Terry still watches football; indeed, our call interrupted his watching of a Match of the Day re-run, and we ended our chat by talking about fixing up a reunion (we just love those). Terry said that when he signed for Southend he was still living in London and used to get lifts to Roots Hall from Alan Dicks, and we delighted in telling him that we were in touch with 89-year-old Alan. It is 63 years since the pair last got in touch, so wouldn't it be great to stop that becoming 64.

Allan Shires was someone who we'd spent a long time trying to track down but eventually the diligent tracing efforts by one of our SUEPA Agents led us to find an address for someone who we thought might be our target - so we took a punt and pinged off a letter, and thankfully we found our man.

Allan was an apprentice with us in the early/mid 60's. He made just one appearance in our first team (as one of our first ever subs), but we'll let Allan take up his story with his reply to our letter:

"Thank you for your letter and the list of all names you have included from the same period of time I spent as an apprentice for Southend United at Roots Hall. The two years I was there was a wonderful experience. As you say I only had one substitute appearance in the first team. I remember it well, coming on late in the game against Peterborough United when the team were losing 3-0. This game was television recorded which was shown the following day on a Sunday. When I came on, I remember having a shot at the goal that hit the crossbar. Shame it did not go in especially as it was on television.

I was very fortunate to have a scrap book that my father made from all newspaper reports of games I played in at that time which is very nostalgic when I look at these reports and see some of the phots that I was lucky to be in. Although I only played in that one game for the first team of the Blues, we did have a very successful youth team playing in the newly formed Mercia League against youth teams of Ipswich Town, Colchester United, Cambridge United and a number of other good youth sides from the Mercia area. We did very well and finished second in the league to Ipswich Town who had a very strong side with many of their players making it to their first team in the next couple of seasons. Players like Mick Mills who captained them and made the England team. The Mercia League picked a side from teams who had taken part that season (1965-66) to play an end of season match against the winners, Ipswich Towns Youth Team, at Portman Road before they were presented with the winning trophy. The Southend United Youth team had four players picked to play. I was picked along with Ray White and John Baber (on your list) and Frank Matthews. It was a very good game with Ipswich Town winning 3-1. This game was watch by a crowd of over 2,000. A lot for a youth game.

Unfortunately, I was released by Southend at the end of the season when my apprenticeship finished. I was approached by Ipswich Town and Colchester United to have a trial. Due to a mishap by Ipswich Town my trial was to be with Colchester United. After a pre-season friendly against Ipswich Town which went very well for myself, I was offered a contract of two years with them. I was very happy to get this offer and managed to start the season in their first team. The first game was away to Shrewsbury Town which we just lost 2-1. The following week was the first round of the League Cup and we had been booked to play Queens Park Rangers at Loftus Road. I was on the bench for this game. Due to our midfield player Bobby Blackwood getting seriously injured with a broken jaw in the first 15 minutes I came on as substitute. Unfortunately, QPR had a strong side with a number of well-known players, Rodney Marsh, Mark Lazarus, Leslie Allen, Peter Springet, Roger Morgan, etc. Although I came on, we lost to them 5-0. They then went on to win the League Cup that year beating Swindon Town in the final.

What I did not know until 25 years later, when it was reported in the local Evening Echo around about the same date, 23rd August, in 1991, was that when I came on as substitute after only 15 minutes into this match was that I became the first substitute to be used in a League Cup match as this was the first season subs were being used. Fame!!

After two seasons with Colchester United I then left to play for one season with Chelmsford City. After that I continued playing for local teams. Had a couple of seasons with Basildon United in the Essex Senior League where we finished behind Billericay Town twice, who eventually went on the win the Vase Cup at Wembley. I continued playing for top local teams up into my forties with teams like Leigh Ramblers and Echo on Saturdays and vets' football on Sundays with teams like Hamlet Court, Stambridge and Courtlands. Saturdays with Echo included players like Frankie Banks, Micky Wright, Ray Scott, Frankie Mathews, Mel Slater, Bobby Kellard etc. As you can see a lot of guys from 1964 to 1966.

I didn't stop playing 5-aside football until 2005 when I had my first hip replacement. Since then, I 've playing tennis, either singles or doubles at David Lloyds in Southend. Golf as well. I now have had both hips replaced and only recently had a knee replacement. No tennis or golf for three months, but now back to playing those. People ask me about playing walking football but that's a definite no as speed was my main advantage when I was playing not walking. I Just want to keep playing tennis and golf and then life's good.

We have three grown up children who have given us six grandchildren all above 20. All keen on football, golf and keeping fit. Have a lovely wife, Tina, who I have been with since Southend United days 1965. Been married 54 years in June this year. I am now 75 1/2 years old.

I hope the above gives you an idea into what I've done with all my footballing years. If you ever want to have a look at my Scrap book sometime you are most welcome to do so. Thanks again for your letter."

We were delighted to welcome Allan, with his grandson Billy, and his scrapbook, to our first Former Players Club meeting in March, where Allan caught up with four of his former teammates.

Mauro Vilhete was another of our current season releases who we were delighted to readily restore a Shrimper link with by signing him up for SUEPA. And since leaving Mauro has been regularly banging in the goals for Isthmian League Premier Division outfit Hornchurch FC.

It was great to get a message from former apprentice **Arvid Gundersen** enquiring about all-things SUEPA, and we are pleased to say that he is now a member.

Arvid joined us as an apprentice in 1971 and stayed for two years before moving to play for Romford. We have a few members who did not quite make our first team, but he played up to reserve team level and so Arvid fully qualifies to be part of our group.

He recalls playing a few games in the old Midweek League, mainly as sub and once coming on for Gary Moore and scoring at home to Colchester when we won 3-0, with fellow SUEPA member Bobby Bennett providing the assist. In the 1972/73 season he played mainly in the SE Counties League, scoring 10 goals. He has fond memories of his time at Roots Hall and being amongst such great names as Billy Best, Alan Moody, Peter Taylor and being coached by Lawrie Leslie.

At Romford he played on a semi pro basis in the Southern League, and then later in the Eastern Counties League and Essex Senior Trophy, plus playing cricket for Walden.

Outside of football Arvid worked for BP for a number of years, and he is now enjoying co-running a special residential school for autistic young boys in Suffolk.

Our final middle of the park joiner is **Peter Robinson**. He was signed from Cambridge United in March 1969 and made four appearances for us before leaving for Margate in February 1970.

Peter made his Southend United debut coming on as sub for Eddie Clayton up at Wrexham in a 3-3 draw on 28 March 1969, and then made one more sub appearance before making his full debut at home to Newport in a 1-0 win on 28 April 1968. His final appearance, also up at Wrexham, was at the start of the following season, but with first team opportunities limited he moved to Margate scoring six times in 27 apps before going on to play for Kings Lynn and Romford.

However, perhaps Peter's career highlight came on Monday 5 August 1974 for Dunstable when they took on a Manchester United team in a pre-season friendly. A certain Mr George Best had been frustrating the Man U hierarchy by declining to play for them, but Barry Fry, cutting his managerial teeth for the Creasy Park mob, was good pals with the Northern Irish wizard which dated back to them having been teammates at Man U's youth academy back in 1961. Tasked with looking after George when he first arrived at Old Trafford, things didn't start too smoothy as George hot-footed it back home after a couple of days suffering from homesickness, but Busby persuaded him to come back and we all know of course that his career then took off in a stratospheric way.

Barry, always loving a bit of wheeler-dealing, used to buy George's two complimentary tickets he which he got for each match as an Old Trafford staff member, George then sending the cash home whilst Barry no doubt used the funds to further his entrepreneurial skills. The two young lads' careers soon took their very different paths, but in 1974 George had one final argument with Tommy Docherty and quit, retreating to his nightclub 'Slack Alice' which is where Barry put a playing proposal to the wing-wizard.

Crowds at Creasy Park were not great – for Barry's first match in charge the attendance was 34 – that increased to 43 for the next match as Barry invited his family along, but needing to do something a bit more ambitious to generate some cash for the club, Barry seized on an opportunity out of Best's woes and got him to agree to play two pre-season friendlies. The only trouble was that Man U still held George's registration, but, with the help of an alleged 'sweetener' from Dunstable owner Keith Cheeseman, George was allowed to play and Man U even agreed to send down a team for the first match (the second match George played in was v Tommy Baldwin's Cork City).

The Creasy Park attendance improved a tad – an alleged 10,000 turned up with some 5,000 locked outside, and our Peter Robinson was part of it all. What an experience! The increased profile helped attract new players to the club including FA Cup winner Jeff Astle who went on to score 35 of Town's 105 goals in the promotion season that then followed. The story though ended up somewhat murky, Cheesman ended up in jail for embezzlement and Dunstable had to suffer liquidation.

Peter went on to play for St Ives, the town of his birth, and also managing them, for a number of years. To earn a living outside football he became a management accountant, but after a period of ill health took early retirement.

Up front



With three more additions we now have 124 strikers to choose from.

After a great deal of detective work by SUEPA Agent WD40 we finally caught up with **Alex Lumsden**. He joined us in January 1966 and made just two first team appearances before leaving towards the end of the following season, but as is always the case with any former Shrimper there is often a fascinating tale to tell.

Alex was born in Fife in May 1946 and played for several local teams as a youngster, catching the eye of both Liverpool and Celtic who he went to have trials with. But it was on a cold day in January 1966 when Jimmy was playing for Camelon Juniors that his young footballing life took a different turn. Shrimpers Assistant Manager Ernie Shepherd was watching young Alex play, liked what he saw and after the game

went and knocked on the door of his parent's house which was close to the ground. He was offered a trial but told to make a quick decision so, with the guidance of his dad, decided to come to Roots Hall.

Due to poor weather it took a couple of weeks before he could have his trial match, but he clearly made an impression as he was offered terms by manager Alvin Williams and duly signed up for the Shrimpers. The young inside forward made a number of appearances in the Football Combination League and impressed enough to be given his debut in the final game of the season at home to Reading, a match we won 2-1, though that was not enough to save us from relegation to Division Four.

Alex recalled many characters from his time with us, including that Eddie Firmani gave him an offer he 'couldn't' refuse of £20 for Alex's allocation of two tickets for the Everton v Sheffield Wednesday FA Cup Final (Alex was not expected to decline the offer). Alex stayed in many different digs during his time with us and it must have been a challenging time for a young man far from home as he remembers one or two of his landlords imposing stringent conditions re use of TV, curfews, etc. He did though get to watch the World Cup final on TV with his fellow teammate Frank Matthews (who he often played tennis with), and from one place got lifts to the ground from neighbour Tony Bentley. He also recalled going to the Cliffs Pavilion with teammate Tony Beanland to see a Scottish group who knew he was in the audience and who got Tony and Alex to stand up to receive applause from a packed auditorium for being SUFC players. He also recalled being friendly with Ray Smith, and now fellow-current SUEPA member Derek Ewing.

Alex's only other first team appearance came in a 1-0 win v Halifax at Roots Hall on 14 January 1967 (a game in which he came close to scoring himself by hitting the post) but towards the end of the season Alvin Williams let him go. Ernie got Alex a trial at Notts County but that didn't work out, so he returned home to Camelon, and he remains in the town to this day. For a period Alex played football for a few local teams including one managed by Jim Scott (who had scored one of the goals for Newcastle United in the 1969 Fairs Cup - as did fellow SUEPA member Alan Foggon) who invited him to play for Hamilton Academicals, but by that time Alex had become a bit disillusioned with the game (his footballing inspiration father also sadly passed away at that time) and decided to focus on earning a living elsewhere, becoming a tree surgeon and then working as a foreman for a double-glazing company.

A few years ago, Alex got talking to a guy about football in a local supermarket and found they had something in common in that they had both played for Southend. The other guy was our own Alex Duchart who sadly passed away just over a year ago.

Around ten years ago Alex took a trip down memory lane with his wife and came back to Southend. He attempted to visit Andy Smillie in his seafront café but frustratingly Andy had just left, but then had his morale boosted by a worker at the Premier Inn they were staying at who, on learning of his old playing days, asked for his autograph. They then took a trip to Roots Hall – the team were playing away that day but as he got to the East Stand reception to see if he could view inside the ground. He was greeted by someone calling out his old nickname - 'Touslehead'. It was none other than Mr Southend United himself Frankie Banks, who had been at the club when Alex first arrived in 1966. Alex enjoyed a ground tour, and we are delighted to say that Alex and his wife will be travelling back down south again soon to be our guests for the last match of the season v Rochdale.

"We've got Kanu " as the terrace chant goes, and now we have. Our loanee striker **Daniel Kanu** from earlier this season is now part of our ever-growing group and his four-goal salvo v Solihull will live long in the memory. We were of course all sorry to see him recalled by Charlton but wish him all the best for what we are sure will be a top football career ahead.

We've found them in Australia, California, Canada and Malaysia, often fairly easily, yet it's taken us hours of effort to track down **Bobby Howlett**, and when we managed to locate him he was in Basildon!

Ultimately it took some detailed ancestry.com and electoral roll research by SUEPA Agent Colin (again building on work before by our lubricated Agent WD40) which led us to find the names and addresses of Bob's children. So, we wrote to his son – our address proved to be out of date but thankfully the letter was forwarded, his son handed it to Bob who then showed it to his son-in-law who then rang us up.

Bobby started off his footballing journey as part of the youth set up at Stamford Bridge in the early 1960's, but with opportunities for progression limited at Chelsea in a squad full of household names, he was signed by Ernie Shepherd at the age of 18 at the start of the 1967/68 season.

Bobby made his first team debut in the number 9 shirt on 11 November 1967 in a 2-1 home win v Lincoln City alongside current fellow SUEPA members Bentley, Birks, Ashworth, Baber and Beesley. He went on to make five further first team appearances that season, but with Best and Moore ruling the roost the following campaign he only managed one sub appearance in 68/69.

So, in July 1969 Bobby moved to North Essex and signed for Col U, making his debut in August and going on to make 16 appearances before in April 1970 coming on as sub away at Brentford and cruelly suffering a broken leg which proved to be a career-ending injury aged just 21 and getting just circa £2,000 in compensation.

Hopefully given he remains local we can get Bobby along to one of our new Former Player Club meetings and catch up with him properly.

KARL'S PILGRIMAGE



On 11 May, Southend United season card holder Karl Lansley will embark on a 1,000-mile "pilgrimage" around the South-East of England. The aim of the walk, which will be completed over 60 days in a 75 day period, is to raise awareness/donations for a Southend-based charity – Carli Lansley Foundation - that Karl established in memory of his wife, Carli, who passed away from Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome (SADS) on 1st June 2017. Carli, who was also a season card holder at Roots Hall, was just 36 years of age at the time of passing.

They have two children, Jess and Ethan, who were just 10 and six when their mum passed. Karl, Jess and Ethan continue to be season card holders and, in the seven years since Carli passed, the links between the club and the charity have just grown and grown. SUEPA President, Adam Barrett, and current club defender Jason Demetriou, are both patrons of the charity.

There are big plans to involve the staff and players on the walk, particularly on the first day (11 May) when the journey starts from Eastwood in Southend and then the last day (24 July) when the walk finishes at Roots Hall at 3pm.

If there are any members of SUEPA or the Shrimpers Trust who would like to join the walk at any stage (and for any period of time), the charity would be delighted to hear from you. Please email info@carlilansleyfoundation.org.uk for more information. SUEPA Organiser Andy Leeder and his wife are joining Karl for the Portsmouth leg of his journey in June.

Futher details can be found at:

https://www.carlilansleyfoundation.org.uk/a-poignant-pilgrimage-may-july-2024



FANCY A GAME

As you will see from the picture flyer, this is a match between Barclays staff and local professional firms raising funds for Havens Hospices. It is their 10th year of doing this and during that time they have raised nearly £300,000.

The match will be played at Roots Hall. The money is raised by the players paying to play, by donations on the door for entry (anyone can come along), an auction and a raffle. With this being the tenth anniversary of this great fundraiser, we would love to help them make it a great year.

Adam Barrett and Steve Tilson have kindly in the past been a player/manager for the teams. Sadly, they are unable to make it this year but if there are any SUEPA members who fancy walking out on the hallowed turf once again or help to organise the teams in a managerial capacity, they would be very welcome.

If anyone interested in taking part, please call Shrimpers Trust life member Dave Oram on 07787161157 or email him at <u>davesoram@aol.com</u>

SPUD WE LIKE



We mentioned in our last Newsletter that we would be holding 'An Evening with Peter Taylor on 10 February. Well, oh what a night it was.

On the pitch with a few of our guests in the afternoon for the York match, a heart felt intro by Kev, the wonderful stories by Spud, Glenn Pennyfather running the show with sublime wit and ease, former players in the audience making it all that extra bit special (Frankie stole it), Chairman-in-waiting Justin and Consortium member Ian being the last ones out and loving it, our hosts The Essex Bowls Club once more being fantastic (and what great beer prices!), a sell-out audience playing their part but if you weren't one of the lucky ones there our good friend Pip (D1versity as he likes to be known) has put together a superb highlights video for you to enjoy:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLwbbbiB0hA

Let's do it all again soon and we may well just do that, we are already in discussions to line up two more fantastic 'Evening With' events for next season so keep a look out.



JAMES RETURNS

It was lovely back on 16 December to have James Walker and his family as our guests when we played Bromley. You will recall that back in May last year we ran a campaign culminating in a benefit match for James which raised over £21,000. That money continues to be put to good use to secure muchneeded additional therapy sessions for James as he continues on his long road to recovery after his cardiac arrest in 2019.

A real bonus was meeting up with James's long-time pal Myles Weston who had just signed for Bromley. We couldn't quite persuade James to venture too far on to the pitch before kick-off but he got a great reception from the Roots Hall faithful and he and his family all had a top day.

One of the many issues faced by James since 2019 has been that all food has had to be taken in via a stent in his stomach. However, thanks to the extra therapy sessions we are thrilled to report that he is now taking some food via his mouth which is a huge step forward. We remain in regular contact with the Walkers and will continue to keep you all posted of how James is getting on.

RAWLEY COMES HOME

On 3 February when we played Gateshead it was great to welcome back our 2002/03 leading scorer Mark Rawle.

It proved not to be so great on the pitch as the visitors won 1-0 in a scrappy affair, but it was a top day off it as Mark caught up with his old teammate Kev and many more. Mark participated in a Q&A session on the pitch at half-time and then after the final whistle in the Far Post Bar, and if that wasn't enough chatting, he then took part in a podcast with our friends at Shrimperscast. He certainly loved his afternoon with us and posted up a great highlights video afterwards that his girlfriend took to capture his return.

These days Mark is doing great work helping young offenders rehabilitate.





HELPING JAKUB

Jakub Sokolik got in touch with us shortly before Christmas asking for our help in an appeal to help fund treatment for his young two-year-old son (Jakub Junior) who has acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (a fast developing blood cancer).

Jakub was with us on loan from Liverpool back in 2014 and loved Roots Hall so much that he came back twice more, the last time in 2016 on loan from Yeovil. He subsequently played for Plymouth and Torquay.

Jakub is now back home in his native Czech with his girlfriend Nicola, Jakub Junior, and his newborn baby daughter. It was last Summer that young Jakub was diagnosed, and he has been undergoing a targeted therapy which uses drugs to attack specific cells. It has been working, but required another course of treatment and that treatment costs which Jakub was seeking to do by re-training as a barber and also having another job.

However, he was still unable to meet the costs involved and so he launched an appeal on GoFundMe - at the time he got in touch with us just over £3,000 had been raised. We helped him publicise his appeal and with the help of many Shrimper fans, plus those from his other former clubs Yeovil and Plymouth, his appeal now stands at almost £11,000, close to his revised target (which he had to increase due to insurance not paying out as much as expected) of £12,500.

Jakub and his family would like to thank you all from the bottom of his heart – Jakub Junior, though still weak, has been responding well to treatment and the family hope to bring him home soon.

If you would like to donate to help Jakub get to his much-needed target then please visit his GoFundMe page which can be found at:

https://www.gofundme.com/f/5kj8h-help-for-my-2-year-old-son?utm_campaign=p_cp%20sharesheet&utm_medium=copy_link_all&utm_source=customer&fbclid=IwAR0IAggs5FdgMazDTqu6Ry6 Ge-ntC1ycBN78-8Y-Uw2HiC65RgtCE-2Accs



Roots book

Southend fan, photographer and great SUEPA friend Dave Shields has now published his first book all about the place he loves – Roots Hall. Accompanying some really top pictures are various quotes from players and fans and it all comes together as a great record of our home.

We put together a little video for Dave to help promote his book which we thought you might want to take a look at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3VZkaSFKRo

The first two print runs quickly sold out but more copies are now available and if you would like to get one visit the following: <u>https://ourstadiumourhome.co.uk</u>

Dave's book has won many admirers and we are pleased to say that he has just been commissioned by a current Championship club to do the same for them.

Roots art

We've mentioned before the atmospheric paintings by Shrimper fan Keith Bird who is a full-time artist. Two of his latest oil paintings depict the match v Liverpool in the '79 snow and entering the ground from Shakespeare Drive and are well worth a look. As with his others we have print copies available to buy from the Shrimpers Trust website, the link you need being:

https://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/product-category/keith-bird-prints

All My Own Words

Looking for a top read by a top sportswriter who just happens to be a Southend United fan (and former Echo journalist) too?

Your SUEPA Newsletter Editor has just finished reading Neil Harman's 's 'All My Own Words and couldn't put it down, so a suggestion for your next book buy can be found on Amazon by searching for <u>All My Own Words</u>.

Off to the museum

Key to our future is preserving the club's past and bringing it to life. With this in mind the Shrimpers Trust have set up a History Project Group, of which SUEPA is a key part, and back on 16 March we visited Exeter City's wonderful museum to learn about the great work they are doing.

A huge thanks must go to our Exeter friends for their hospitality, they went out of their way to help us learn and understand the long journey they've been on to get where they are today. Our, we hope, similar journey, is just beginning. The project group will be gathering input from lots of sources over the months to come and will be looking to work closely with our club and the fans to identify and help implement a way forward in a bright new future for our beloved Roots Hall.

A surprise for Dennis

Back on 2 March Edna Reynolds received a card from the King to mark her 100th birthday. But she also received another very important card from a former Shrimper. Let's scroll back in time a few decades

Born at Stanley Common in Derbyshire, a small agricultural village North-East of Derby that provided a 20th century workforce for local collieries, a young Dennis Booth was scouted by Charlton Athletic as a teenager and signed professional terms for the Addicks around the time of his seventeenth birthday in 1966. It was a daunting move and he needed somewhere to stay where he could feel welcome outside of the training and playing regime of being an apprentice at The Valley. Step up Mrs Victoria May Jones, a South-Londoner having moved from Woolwich to Welling and, to help make a living, taking in borders.



Dennis was housed by the club with Mrs Jones and flourished in a caring environment far from home which he today credits with helping him find his feet as a pro footballer. Edna was Mrs Jones's daughter and, living locally, was a frequent visitor to the house with her young son Chris and they spent many evenings all together watching TV – Chris recalls Dennis being a great enthusiast of 'It's A Knockout!'

That close bond continued for a while and Mrs Jones attended Dennis's wedding to Stephanie, but as is often the case they lost touch as they each went their own ways in life, Dennis first moving briefly to Blackpool in 1971 before Arthur Rowley brought him to Roots Hall in March 1972 to bolster our team during the run-in to our first-ever promotion. Dennis was a hard-working midfielder, always known for having a great sense of humour, and a real crowd favourite. He went on to become our club captain and make 84 appearances for us, scoring once in a home match versus Watford. Dennis moved on to Lincoln in February 1974 where he amassed over 100 appearances before going on to achieve the same at both Watford and Hull and then in 1985 moving in to a football coaching and scouting career.

Now, fast-forward to just a few weeks ago and Chris, making preparations for his mum approaching her landmark birthday and knowing that SUEPA, with its ever-growing family of former Shrimpers, might be in touch with Dennis, asked us to forward on a message to him. We were of course very happy to oblige, and to say that Dennis and Stephanie were thrilled to hear from him after the passing of over half a century, is a total understatement. They called Chris, exchanged many stories from those times back in the late 60's/early 70's, and a card was soon winging its way down from the Booth's in Humberside to Weymouth where Chris now lives with his wife and close to his mum. Edna, sporting an Arsenal shirt in homage to her Woolwich roots back in 1924, was just overjoyed to receive the card, and it all helped to make her day as four generations gathered for the celebrations.

So, many happy returns Edna, and many thanks to Dennis and Stephanie for helping to make it a happy time.

Now, the other picture seen here is of Dennis with Mrs Jones at his lodgings with, at the time, fellow Charlton teammate Jimmy Mullen. Jimmy went on to serve Rotherham with distinction from 1969 to 1974 at a time when Millers legend John Breckin was at the club. We are in touch with John who does a great job for Rotherham organising their own former players group meetings, so a copy of that picture is now on its way up to John to see if we might engineer a few more recollections from time gone by

IAN MCKECHNIE AND THOSE ORANGES



One of our SUEPA Agents spotted some pics of our former keeper Ian McKechnie (1964-66 – 72 apps) on Flickr so we thought we'd share a few on here. We also got in touch with Ian's brother Jim who had posted the pics. Jim told us:

"Ian certainly enjoyed his time at Southend, and I was lucky to visit him the two summers he was there, 1965 and 1966. I remember going on the park at Roots Hall and Ian taking shots at me in goal, I'd only be about 12 at the time, and Ian kicked one ball out of the Stadium and into the Bus Garage, I think, behind the goal. I recall meeting a lot of the players, Frank Banks, John McKinven, Bobby King, still got my autograph book somewhere.

Whether true or not, Ian could tell a good tale, but he said he scored a penalty, or two, for Southend Reserves. He later took part in the first penalty shoot-out in the Watney Cup Semi Final against Manchester United.

He started off as an outside player with Arsenal, and was converted to a goalkeeper by George Swindin (former Arsenal player and manager).

After football he had a variety jobs, working in a sports centre in Hull, becoming a Prison Officer at Hull Jail....during the riot, and he finally ended up with British Aerospace in Brough where he was in charge of coating a tiny component for a fighter jet wing the quality control was such that his team there would be lucky if they produced six on a shift.

He worked at Hull City on Matchdays, though, at their new Stadium.

After football and, I think, before the Sports Centre job, he took up the manager's job at Nuneaton Borough and then as manager of Sligo Rovers – he briefly moved over to Sligo but after a week this two came to an end. He did say he was asked to phone the ex-Rangers player Davie Wilson, Davie was manager at Dumbarton, when Ian asked where the phone was he was directed to a phone box down the street....such was Ireland, he was miffed too as somehow Air Lingus lost his golf clubs!

After he finished at Hull City he signed for the Boston Minutemen in the USA, this was 1974 as I was visiting my sister in Long Island and I stayed with him and his family in Boston for a few days.

Ian had a tremendous left foot kick and this had been noted by the Miami Dolphins, I think, who wanted to sign him as their goal kicker, seems he just had to run onto the park and kick the ball through the posts....however the American Football had come to halt with the first ever players strike and any idea of staying on went. Because the Minutemen were a good team, they ended up playing more knockout rounds and by the time this finished football in England had started, he did say Mansfield had expressed interest in signing, but they had signed a keeper for the start season, with him still in Boston. When he returned he played for Goole Town, and I believe Scarborough but not for long.

He ultimately settled in the picturesque village of Brantingham outside Beverley. I retired in 2014 and my wife and I visited him, by then he had developed Alzheimer's disease, but was still with it, though he was less interested in the old photographs I had brought down to show him.

On a nightly walk around the village in 2015 he collapsed with heart failure, he had some heart issues but nothing serious we thought.

We attended his funeral where a lot of former and current Hull City players were present, as they buried him in the grave yard several fans and his family moved forward and threw oranges on top of his coffin....this related to the time two fans at Hull met him in the street eating a Jaffa....the next home...the two fans threw two oranges onto him.....this developed until it became a ritual and one game was delayed because of the number of oranges thrown on."

Jim also told us that, many years later, the son of one of his cousins played for Southend, Gordon Connelly. Jim's Uncle Robert had played for Port Vale in the mid 1920's and Jim mentioned that Stanley Matthews in his autobiography told how as a lad he had hero-worshipped Bob Connelly. Gordon, who played for us 1999-2000, is not yet a SUEPA member so we have asked for Jim's help in getting in touch so we can invite him to be part of our ever-growing group.

The images shown here are just a selection of many that Jim has put up on his Flickr page, the link to that being: <u>https://www.flickr.com/photos/22365330@N08/</u>

PAUL AND BILLY

It was somewhat of a shock to learn that **Paul Denny** passed away back in Fenbruary. We never quite managed to track Paul down to invite him to be part of SUEPA, but our former striker/apprentice (two goals in nine appearances 1975-77) had moved to the USA a long time ago and we understand was working for BMW.

We were also saddened to learn that our former midfielder **Billy Kellock** has passed away aged 70 (after a long illness). Billy joined us from Wolves Sept '83 and made 62 apps (12 goals) before leaving for Port Vale Dec 1984.

RIP Paul and Billy, forever Shrimpers.



FOLLOWING AND CONTACTING SUEPA

As we hope most of you know by now, we are active on social media. It's not for everyone we know, but if you do a bit of web-surfing then make sure to check us out.

Twitter ('**X**' is such a duff brand name) still leads the way and now has 2,810 followers, up a decent 4.5% since December. Catch us at: **@SUEPAssoc**

Our **Facebook** page – where we can waffle on without text restriction – has 1,860 readers (up 7.6%). Catch us at: **www.facebook.com/SUEPAssoc**

On Instagram we are up by 13% to 438. Catch us at: https://www.instagram.com/suepassoc

And on **LinkedIn** we have achieved the highest growth rate once again, up by 17% to 841 connections. Catch us at: <u>https://www.linkedin.com/in/southend-united-ex-players-association-14a823183</u>

You can then use any of these social media outlets to send us a private message, or you can contact us via email at: 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**

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 many former Shrimpers already.

THE FULL SUEPA SQUAD TO-DATE

GOALKEEPERS

Terry Alderton, Steve Arnold, Cameron Belford, Daniel Bentley, Derek Bellotti, John Burridge, Mel Capleton, Mervyn Cawston, Steve Collis, Luke Daniels, Barrie Delf, Rhys Evans, Darryl Flahavan, Neil Freeman, Danny Gay, Bart Griemink, Patrik Gunnarsson, Tony Hafford, Tony Henriksen, Kelvin Jack, Glen Johnson, Ian Joyce, John Keeley, Brian Lloyd, Martyn Margetson, Don McKay, Alan Meyer, Steve Mildenhall, James Montgomerry, Glenn Morris, Paul Newell, Blondy Nna Noukeu, Jon O'Brien, Andy Petterson, Gerry Peyton, 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, Gary Banks, Frankie Banks, Dave Barnett, Adam Barrett, Mark Beard, Tony Bentley, Graham Birks, Andre Blackman, Darren Blewitt, Mick Bodley, Martyn Booty, Steve Broad, Kenny Brown, Paul Brush, Adrian Burrows, Guy Butters, Peter Cawley, Peter Clarke, Tom Clifford, Sean Clohessy, Ben Coker, Steve Collins, Simon Coleman, Mark Cooper, Leon Cort, Graham Coughlan, Ryan Creswell, Jaden Crowhurst, Garry Cross, Dave Cusack, Leon Davies, Timothee Dieng, Andy Dixon, Dorian Dervite, Phil Dudley, Bob Duncan, Steve Dyer, Andy Edwards, Derek Ewing, Kevin Fallon, Anton Ferdinand, Ricky Footman, Andy Ford, Peter Gilbert, Jamie Gray, Tony Hadley, Greg Halford, Steven Hammell, Mick Harmston, Andy Harris, Mike Harrison, Sam Hart, Steve Hatter, Frank Haydock, Johnny Herd, Shaun Hobson, Mark Hone, David Howell, Lewis Hunt, Barry Hunter, Chris Hutchings, Christian Hyslop, Mads Ibenfeldt, Richard Jobson, Duncan Jupp, Brooklyn Kabongolo, Jean-Paul Kalala, Bobby King, Harry Kyprianou, Kacper Lapota, Mike Lapper, Harry Lennon, Kevin Lock, Louis Lomas, 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, Brian Myton, Teddy Nesbitt, Rob Newman, Terry O'Donnell, Danny O'Shea, Gary Parkinson, George Parris, Chris Perkins, Mark Phillips, Chris Powell, Spencer Prior, Luke Prosser, John Pye, Chris Ramsey, Gary Richards, Ian Riley, Paul Roberts, Leo Roget, Osei Sankofa, Pat Scully, Damon Searle, Joe Shaugnessy, Owen Simpson, Alex Smith, Efe Sodje, Jakub Sokolik, Michael Spillane, Micky Stead, Kevin Steggles, 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.

MIDFIELDERS

Marlon Agyakwa, Andy Ansah, Scott Ashenden, Barry Ashworth, Will Atkinson, John Baber, Nicky Bailey, Chris Barnard, Sam Barratt, Tony Beanland, Mark Bentley, Jon Benton, Kevin Betsy, Dennis Booth, Gary Borthwick, Terry Bradbury, Graham Bressington, Zak Brunt, Harry Bunn, Peter Butler, Paul Byrne, Francis Cagigao, Jamal Campbell-Ryce, David Chambers, Jean Francois Christophe, Paul Clark, Steve Clark, Adrian Clarke, Eddie Clayton, Conor Clifford, Jason Cook, Nico Cotton, Jimmy Corbett, Regis Coulbault, Willie Coulson, Dave Cunningham, Tony Currie, Peter Daley, Gary Deegan, Lyle Della Verde, Miguel DeSouza, Alan Dicks, Scott Donnelly, James Dunne, Mark Dziadulewicz, Craig Easton, Terrell Egbri, Dave Elliott, Nathan Ferguson, 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, Arvid Gundersen, Luke Guttridge, John Gymer, Julian Hails, Derek Hall, Mark Hall, Ryan Hall, Lee Hodges, Ricky Holmes, Dean Holness, Tommy Horsfall, Scott Houghton, Rob Howard, Jeff Hull, Peter Hunt, Kevan Hurst, Michael Husbands, Carl Hutchings, Isaac Hutchinson, Neil Jenkins, Terry Kent, Kevin Johnson, Leon Johnson, Terry Johnson, Matt Jones, David Keefe, 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, Jacob Mellis, Jermaine McGlashan, Colin Morris, Franck Moussa, Harrison Neal, Garry Nelson, Terry Nicholl, John Nielsen, Kevin O'Callaghan, Iain O'Connell, Stuart O'Keefe, 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, Peter Robinson, Alan Rogers, Andy Rogers, Lee Sawyer, Damien Scannell, Tony Scully, Allan Shires, 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, Mauro Vilhete, Sanchez Watt, Myles Weston, Harry Willis, Peter Woods, Alex Woodyard, Anthony Wordsworth, David Worrall and Josh Wright.

STRIKERS

Ben Abbey, Peter Abbott, Charles Ademeno, Simeon Akinola, Brett Angell, David Allaway, Lee Barnard, Tyrone Barnett, 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, Leon Clark, Kenny Cocker, Stan Collymore, Leon Constantine, Jim Conway, Barry Corr, Aaron Cosgrave, Simon Cox, Harry Crawford, David Crown, Martin Curruthers, Marcus Dackers, Liam Dickinson, George Duck, Lawrie Dudfield, Freddie Eastwood, Mickey Engwell, Jackie Ferguson, 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, Bobby Howlett, Noel Hunt, Jake Hyde, Nathaniel Jarvis, Graeme Jones, Gary Jones, Ken Jones, Steve Jones, Daniel Kanu, Charlie Kelman, Francis Laurent, James Lawson, Jason Lee, Stuart Leslie, John Linford, Alex Lumsden, Matt Lund, Charlie MacDonald, Roy McDonough, Sammy McMillan, Keith Mercer, Jack Midson, David Mooney, Tommy Mooney, Paul Moran, Dean Morgan, Shamir Mullins, Rhys Murphy, Lee Nogan, Frank Nouble, Derrick Parker, Stuart Parker, Matt Paterson, Jack Payne, Billy Paynter, Steve Phillips, Joe Piggot, Andy Polycarpou, Ken Price, Andy Rammell, Mark Rawle, Ben Reeves, Dave Regis, Alex Revell, Neville Roach, Theo Robinson, Matt Rush, John Russell, Jack Sampson, Henry Sandat, Morrys Scott, Ian Selley, Peter Silvester, Derek Spence, Scott Spencer, Blair Sturrock, Andy Thomson, Neil Tolson, Micky Tuohy, James Walker, Mario Walsh, Danny Webb, Jason Williams, Chris Wreh and Micky Wright.

COACHING / BACKROOM

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

