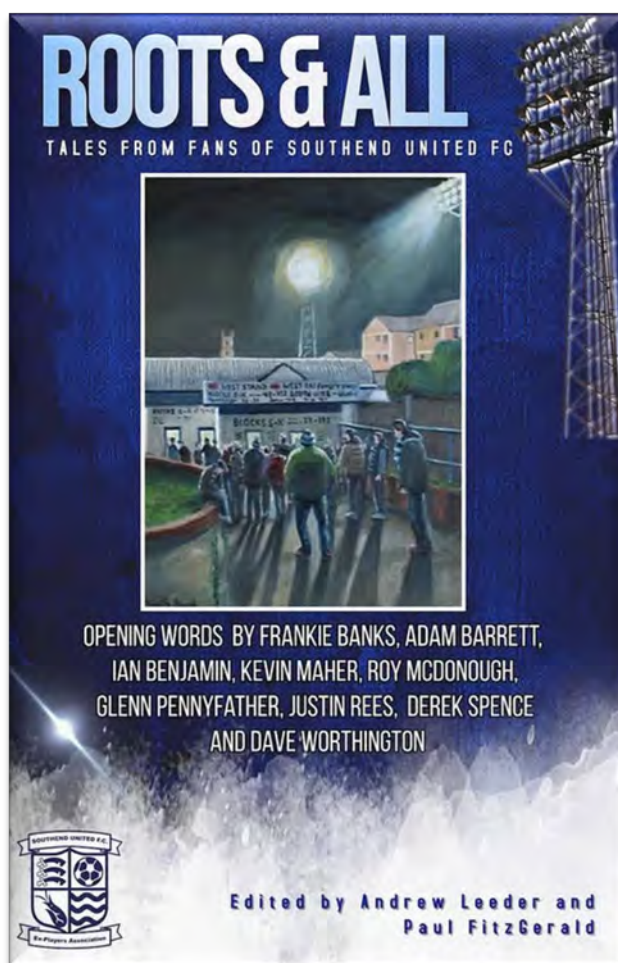


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WELCOME

Welcome to our 24th Newsletter - issued to all SUEPA and Shrimpers Trust members.

Well, it's been a while - our last Newsletter was sent out whilst you were all putting tinsel on your Christmas trees. Easter came, then went, but, well, there's been a bit going on. Yes, there was that Wembley thing (a great day until ... that's the end of our report on that), but critically too some key SUEPA-led project work took priority, especially this:



More on that in a moment, in this Newsletter you'll find:

- **Roots & All - a book for the fans by the fans**
- **Our Bench for Barks campaign**
- **Visiting Jimmy Thomson in Scotland**
- **Roots Hall returns for Nick Thurston, James Walker, Ryan Cresswell and Sean Clohessy**
- **Getting together - more meetings, stories and reunions**
- **Membership update - on an even keel**
- **Memories of Les Stubbs**
- **Treading in Grandfathers Footsteps**
- **News bits - Man U print, brightening up a Roots Hall corner, and Dave x two**

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- The oldest living footballers
- Our first ever big cup win
- A sad farewell to Tony Bentley, Chris Barnard and Gerry Fell
- How to keep up to date with SUEPA news, contacting your old team-mates, and SUEPA.
- The full current SUEPA membership list.

Time to take that beer you've been saving out of the chiller, sit back, relax ... and read on.

Andy Leeder, SUEPA Organiser

ROOTS & ALL – A BOOK BY THE FANS FOR THE FANS

A few months ago we came across an article by a football writer on LinkedIn - it was his chapter for a book of stories written by Chelsea fans about their experiences of watching their team. It read well, so we bought the book - 36 excellent tales later and we thought we could do that ... and so we have.

An appeal went out on social media for writers went rather well, and after a three month process, we've ended up with something we are rather proud of - 'Roots & All'. In total, 65 fan stories - some funny, some soul-searching, many emotional, some even quite 'Churchillian' ... and all heartfelt.

This being a SUEPA-led project it naturally has a former player twist - eight of our Shrimper greats have contributed some initial words about the importance of fan support, and club Chairman Justin Rees has chipped in with a few words too. We sent Justin one of the stories as a taster. His reaction: "Wow, just read it - so good! Loved it and can't wait to read the other fan accounts."

Well, it will be ready very shortly, and we think you will enjoy it. Indeed, a fan of any club might. It can be purchased online at: <https://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/roots-all-2/>

We will start posting out orders in the week commencing 21 July.

It is something worth celebrating, so we are having a launch party at The Shrimpers Bar, Roots Hall, on Friday 18 July from 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm, and you are more than welcome to attend. Circa 25 of the book writers will be there, all willing to sign your copy if you would like – some have been practising their signatures. Some 200 copies were quickly snapped up pre-publication, and we have put in an extensive order for more.

And this is a book with a purpose. Yes, we want it to entertain - and we are sure it will - but it will also be an important fundraiser as profits will be paid in to our new SUEPA Fund which has as its principal aim helping to fund a potential future club museum. So, every copy sold will help us achieve something we whole-heartedly believe in, namely protecting (and making accessible to all) our club's history and heritage.

We hope you enjoy the book - do let us know what you think.

A BENCH FOR BARKS



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The passing of our former club captain Chris Barker at the start of 2020 was tragic, and in the aftermath some excellent work was spear-headed by Echo Sports Editor Chris Phillips in raising funds in Chris's name for mental health awareness charities.

Then, towards the end of last year we noticed some social media attention being given to a new charity set up by former Spurs, Chelsea and Swindon player Micky Hazard. It is called 'Legend on the Bench' and has the aim of siting as many benches across the UK as possible. These are high-quality pieces, complete with solar lighting, which have on them inscriptions about the need to talk and who to contact if someone is feeling vulnerable. Each bench is the result of its own fundraising campaign, often in the name of someone who has taken their own life.

So, at the start of the year we got in touch with Micky (who we had met back in October when he attended our benefit match for Micky Stead) and the result was a campaign which we ran during March called 'A Bench for Barks'. That campaign was so successful that, amazingly, we raised enough for four benches, two of which are now sited at Roots Hall after an opening ceremony attended by Micky of the day of our last home match of the season v Wealdstone.

The benches are sited at the east and west sides of Roots Hall, accessible 24 hours a day. We are currently in discussions with Southend Council about siting the other two benches in a park in the city.

A SCOTTISH TRIP

Before that emotional play-off match up at Rochdale, earlier that afternoon we had popped in to see a true Shrimper legend at his home in Dunblane in Scotland. Like the match that followed, it was also emotional.

Jimmy Thomson is 94 years old - our second oldest living Shrimper, and in the top 40 of the oldest living footballers in the UK. He was on good form - yes, some eyesight issues mean he needs some special glasses to see the TV, and he certainly is not as mobile as he once was, but for a man well in to his tenth decade he is sprightly, lives at home with one of his sons, and gave us such a warm welcome when we arrived at his door. His granddaughter Dana had flown over from her home in Germany to also be there.

On the way there we had dropped in to the local high street for an amble and were attracted by a wonderful display of pies in a local butcher (easily led). The owner saw our obligatory Shrimper wear and enquired about our visit. We mentioned Jimmy, he instantly knew who he was, said what a lovely man he is, and it turned out that he had made him a 90th birthday cake a few years before.

Our chat with Jimmy naturally covered his time in football and as a Shrimper. Football was in the genes - his dad was a player for Hamilton Academicals back in the 1920's. Early footballing times for Jim were spent playing part-time with Raith Rovers, where he was part of a team that made it all the way to the semi-final of the 1956 Scottish Cup before losing out to Hearts in a replay - catch some of the action of the first match in this wonderful clip (Jimmy is wearing the number 10 shirt - Raith have the hooped socks):

<https://www.britishpathe.com/asset/60571/>

Jim learned a trade as a joiner - something he was to return to later. His cup exploits attracted the interests of Sunderland, then a giant in the game and known as a 'bank of England club'. He fared well in trials but was not one of the lucky three taken on by the Black Cats out of the 100-plus who were on view that day.

However, something must have stirred an interest 'down south', as our then manager Harry Warren visited him in Scotland and brought him back to a still shiny Roots Hall with the tempting offer of a tenner a week and a £2 win bonus. Jimmy recalled living in digs in Southend, his wife and young child following him down, and also becoming great pals with Sammy McCrory who with a bunch of other teammates he went to see Sammy win his only Northern Ireland cap when he scored in a 3-2 win v England at Wembley.

Jim's undoubted 'moment in the sunshine' as a Shrimper came in that 1957 FA Cup tie at Roots Hall v a Liverpool side containing their great goal-scoring winger Billy Liddell. The pitch was a mud bath and the going was tough,



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and Jim recalled tiring towards the end, but somehow with eight minutes to go found the energy to connect with a through ball to score our winner. What a moment that was - over 18,000 in the Hall went mad.

Sadly, towards the end of a great first season, Jimmy got a ligament injury and, after surgery, spent two weeks in hospital (today it might well be sorted as a day patient). He recalled never quite having the same pace after that, and although in his second season he made a handful of appearances and scored a few more goals, he never felt able to meet his previous high standards. He was told that Headington United (now Oxford United) wanted to sign him in their bid to win promotion to the Football League. The temptation of an extra £1 a week, plus 10% of the £1,000 transfer fee, was too much to turn down, and so off he went to the Manor Ground to play alongside the likes of Ron Atkinson. His injury though restricted his first team football, and so it was not long after that when Jim moved his family back up north where he rekindled his career as a joiner until retirement, raising a family which now, with his daughter Deborah and granddaughter Dana, extends in to Europe.

Jim's delight in us finding him just over a year ago, and then coming along to see him at his home, was plain to see. He was full of enthusiasm for the chance to 'talk football', and his son Peter keeps an eye out on eBay for anything that might be relevant to his dad's time in the game. Jim has a younger brother who lives in Southend and who we are now looking to get in touch with as apparently he also has a few tales to tell. During Jim's two seasons in Southend people often mistook his brother for Jim, and a few tales of 'Jim' apparently dancing the night away at the Kursaal reached manager Harry Warren who questioned what he'd been up to!

We were delighted to present Jimmy with a specially made match print (top work as ever by Dave Shields of Football Stadium Photography) to cap off a lovely visit.

Jim, it was a thrill and an honour to meet you, and to do what SUEPA does best - create new memories.

ROOTS HALL RETURNS



It seems like ages ago now, but back on 14 December for our match v Hartlepool, we hosted a rather special get-together for SUEPA member Nick Thurston and his friends, many of who also used to play for the club. A few beers in the Blue Boar was then followed by an introduction of the whole group (which included former FA Cup winner Kevin Lock) to the crowd shortly before kick-off. Lets just say it was emotional - but there again many of the things we do are. A top day.

It's over two years since our 'Match for James'. We maintain regular contact with James Walker and his mum Dawn - James continues to make the steady progress that was all kick-started by your wonderful generosity for our campaign. And on 30 March we had both of them along as guests, James's first venture into the stands since

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his life-changing cardiac arrest over six years ago. Since we first got in touch with Dawn we've been to Roots Hall with her four times - each time we've won!

On 18 April for our Good Friday match v Braintree it was good to see Ryan Creswell back at Roots. The man-mountain central defender scored a very creditable eight in 54 appearances for us in 2013/14 – he said he never wanted to leave us and was gutted when a return move fell through a few months later.

Our 2024/25 season of SUEPA match day visits was rounded off when Sean Clohessy and his family joined us for the last home game of the season v Wealdstone on 26 April. What a fabulous welcome you gave him just before kick-off, and it was poignant that Sean, a former teammate of Chris Barker, was there to also take part in our Bench for Barks unveiling ceremonies.

GETTING TOGETHER



Our SUEPA Former Player Club meetings continue to go well, with three being held since our last Newsletter.

On 13 December we had a good contingent of our 1980/81 squad in and enjoyed some special memories of Ernie Shepherd with his daughter Beverly, and also had Mark and Steve Watson (sons of our 1960's star Peter Watson) gave a chat about their dad's time at Roots Hall.

Then, on 17 February, we were regaled by Ian Holmes who delivered some fascinating stories about his father Keith who was our Club Secretary from 1967 to 1984. We learned about how much Keith did for the club - he was truly a dedicated servant.

Our last meeting to date was back on 28 April when Southend United historian Dave Goody led us through an entertaining presentation of snippets from the diaries of our former manager Dave Smith. A good few of those mentioned in the diaries were in the audience to learn what Dave thought of them – which did vary!

At the time of writing, our next meeting is likely to be in September - we will give notice of the date as soon as possible on SUEPA social media.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



One consequence of our reunion event for Nick Thurston just before Christmas was that we signed up the six former Shrimpers amongst them who were not already part of SUEPA. All got to reserve level for the club but didn't quite break in to the first team. So, it's a warm welcome to our ever-growing SUEPA family to John Heffer (right back), Adrian West (flying winger ... so he said), Robert Savage (centre back), Paul Taylor (keeper), Micky Newell (striker) and Neil Gray (keeper).

For the rest of the time membership recruitment has been fairly quiet, as our focus has been on the many events that we have been organising that you are reading about elsewhere in this Newsletter. Just before the end of 2024 one of our favourite ever loan players, John Egan, joined up. He made 15 classy appearances for us in the 2013/14 season and is currently at Burnley after six great years at Sheff Utd. And yes, there was THAT goal v Scunny: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxrkJZIO4k>

Thanks to help from our Charlton Ex-Players Association friends, we managed to catch up with defender Anthony Barness, who was with us on loan from Chelsea during February 1996 (oh those Championship days, we were fourth at the time!). Having been brought to Roots Hall by Theo Foley, he made five appearances as a Shrimper (his debut being a win v Millwall) before going on to notch a ton of appearances at both Charlton and Bolton, and also playing for Plymouth. Now working in quality assurance for a building company on the south coast, Anthony still keeps fit playing a bit of vets football ... which we have duly noted for whenever we have our next benefit match!

Finally, we welcomed on board striker Jack Wood who recently left the club having joined us from Kings Langley in January 2022. We wish Jack all the very best for his next football move.

Membership now stands at 515 - still we believe the largest former players group in the world, though AFC Wimbledon have been growing rapidly of late and have just reached the 500 landmark (a total that does include circa 70 former female players from their well-established ladies team).

A LOCAL HERO



We had noticed recently on Twitter that the grandson (Steve Lovell) of our former player Les Stubbs had wished his grandad a happy 96th heavenly birthday (Les passed away in 2011), so we got in touch with Steve to see if he had a few memories of him that we could share.

Les was a Great Woking man through and through - he was born there, lived there, played for the local team, and quite simply loved his local club which he ended up becoming Chairman and then Vice President of. Like David Copeland (see our next story), Les played a key role in the history of Chelsea FC, in Les's instance by being part of their first ever Division One championship winning team in 1955. But Les was also a Shrimper, and a few of you reading this may recall his latter spell with us.

Les was born on 18 February 1929 and started playing football as an inside forward for Great Woking Rovers as WWII ended. He did his national service with the army in Wales and still managed to help GWR win the Southend & District Division Two title. The former Arsenal and England defender Wilf Copping, working as a trainer at Southend United, spotted Les's talent and eventually signed him up for us in May 1948 when he then helped us to win the Essex Professional Cup.

Eventually making his debut on 1 April 1950 away to Torquay, Les hit the ground running scoring a brace in a 4-2 win at Plainmoor. For his home debut the next match there were 17,000 present at the old Grainger Road ground as we drew 2-2, Les netting again. Three more wins followed and promotion to Division Two looked to be a possibility, but just two draws from the last four matches saw us finish third and Notts County were promoted instead - but it was our highest ever league finish (a feat which was not bettered until the 1990/91 campaign).

The 1950/51 season saw Les establish himself in our first team, and in another period of relative success when we finished seventh, Les ended up being our top scorer with 19 goals from 31 appearances despite often playing on the left wing. The following season he finished with 18 goals from 36 appearances (missing out on the top scorer position to Albert Wakefield) which included five goals in an FA Cup run which saw us reach the fifth round for the first time ever when we eventually lost out narrowly to Sheffield United. Known to fans as 'the head', Les's good form attracted scouts from a number of clubs and also earned him an England B call up when he scored in a 3-0 win. Like many footballers of that era, Les played the game hard, played on some terrible surfaces, and once was found at half-time by the physio playing with some glass stuck in his leg which he didn't come off the pitch for. He never got booked.

Somewhat inevitably a top tier club came calling, and in November 1953 Ted Drake's Chelsea paid £10,000 for his services and upped his wages to £23 per week. He made his debut on 15 November 1952, still only age 22, in a 2-1 home win v Newcastle United. He went on to make 121 appearances for the Pensioners scoring 35 times, played his part in landing their first ever Division One title in the 1954/55 season often in front of huge crowds which regularly topped 50,000 at Stamford Bridge. He played alongside some greats of the game including the likes of Roy Bentley, Ron Greenwood, Jimmy Greaves, and also a young Alan Dicks.

It was with Alan (today one of our oldest SUEPA members) that Les decided to take a pay cut (to £20 a week) and return to Roots Hall in 1958. As is often the case it seems, things weren't quite so good second time round, and after just 23 appearances and two goals he left in 1960 to spend one season at Bedford Town. Then in 1961 he 'went home' to Great Woking, helping them to achieve great success, and finally finished playing aged 53 in the early 1980's.

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When Chelsea won the Premiership title in 2005, Les and his surviving teammates from the 1954/55 title winning side, plus his wife Jean, went along to the trophy presentation and were invited to lift the cup, which was not something they were afforded the opportunity of doing some 50 years previously.

Steve says that as a youngster they'd often be himself and six others chasing Les around the pitch, but they could never get the ball off him and he was in his 70's by then!

One of a kind and from a different era, Les was a Shrimper who achieved many notable things in the game at all levels.

TREADING IN GRANDFATHERS FOOTSTEPS



Following our December Former Players Club meeting we received a note of thanks from one of the attendees, who mentioned in passing that his fellow 'class of 1964' Shrimper teammate Paul Valentine's Great Grandfather played in the 1901 FA Cup final. That sounded like something worth following up on, and in the course of doing so we've uncovered a real gem that no one previously knew anything about.

First, a bit of background. Back in May 2024 when we reunited eight of the former SUFC youth team players who went on a 1964 tour to Holland, Paul Valentine was unable to be there and make it nine as he lived in Tasmania. Bit of a light-weight excuse really, but anyway, we did catch up with him when he visited the UK in September when he joined us at a match at Roots Hall. In those 1960s playing days Paul never actually made the first team as, just after the tour having had the news that he'd just been selected for an England youth team trial, he was hit whilst on his scooter by a motorist in West Street, Prittlewell. Though after a period in hospital he went on to captain the youth team, that piece of bad luck largely put paid to his future football dreams.

Paul though, as we found out, has a football pedigree. His Great Grandfather was David Copeland (2 April 1875 to 16 November 1931) - Paul knows little about him as he says his Grandfather was a bit of a dour Scotsman who talked very little about his family, and he has not had any contact with descendants of the Copeland family outside of those immediate to him. It was known though that David had played in the 1901 FA Cup final for Spurs and had played for Chelsea, but there are no family scrapbooks from that time to look back on, and the whereabouts of his Great Grandfather's FA Cup final medal is a complete mystery.

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David was a Scot who moved south from Ayr (where he played for Ayr Parkhouse) and settled first in the Birmingham area (in Walsall). He played for Walsall Town Swifts for five years before going further south to Bedminster, where he played for the local team. He then joined Spurs in 1899 when they were in the Southern League, and this is where we uncovered the first of a couple of amazing facts as David played in (and scored a hat-trick) in the first ever game at White Hart Lane, a 4-1 win over Notts County (a pic of that match is shown here). So, already he has a special place in the hearts of all Spurs fans.

However, more was to come, as in 1901, beating some big teams on the way, Spurs made it to the FA Cup final as a non-league team, a feat that has not been repeated since nor is it ever likely to be (well, we suppose there is always next season for us Shrimpers). Oddly, David missed all of the league games in the 1900/01 campaign but played in every FA Cup game, and scored enroute to the final which was played in front of over 114,000 at Crystal Palace v Sheffield United. It ended 2-2, so off they all trotted to Burnden Park, then the home of Bolton Wanderers, where a much smaller crowd (thanks to the railway companies refusing to lay on sufficient subsidised travel again) saw Spurs run out 3-1 winners. David played but didn't score - his teammate Sandy Brown was though amongst the scorers and became the first ever person to achieve the feat of scoring in every round netting a total of 15 times.

There is some top footage of the game online, which Paul had not seen before, and perhaps the best link to a YouTube clip is the following as it contains the dulcet tones of the great John Arlott in a voice-over:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=jn71W134aoE...>

Legacy number stats from Spurs show that David was the 66th person to pull on a Tottenham Hotspur shirt (they are now at nearly 900 in the current first team squad - Southend are approaching 1,300!) but after 131 appearances and 36 goals he moved on to Chelsea to become a member of their first ever team, the initial match at Stamford Bridge being a 4-0 friendly match win against Liverpool. Keeper Bill Foulkes, renowned for filling the goal with his presence and who David had faced in that 1901 FA Cup Final, was one of his new teammates.

David scored nine times for Chelsea in 26 matches and was club captain, but then sadly he suffered a badly broken leg in a match v Leicester Fosse and thereafter first team opportunities were limited. However, the best bit of all this research is that one of his games he played to seek to get back to full fitness was on 30 January 1907 at ... Roots Hall!

So, in playing at Roots Hall some 58 years later in 1964, Paul trod in his Great Grandfather's footsteps, something he was completely unaware of until we started digging.

Now, of course that 1907 match was at the first Roots Hall before our club moved out to the Kursaal and then the Southend Stadium at Grainger Road - before Sid started digging and we returned in 1955. Nevertheless, it is quite something to consider - and Paul now has a brand-new story or two to tell on the beach in Tasmania. David moved to Derby in 1907, and in a bid to resurrect his playing career turned out a couple of times for Glossop North End, back then a league club playing in the Second Division (they still exist - if you are ever in the area their somewhat ramshackle Surrey Street ground is an interesting view). However, that did not last long, and he then earned a living working in pubs in the Birmingham area. He was too old to serve in the First World War and sadly dropped dead from a heart attack whilst chopping wood in 1956 (he had sometimes before journeyed out to join lumber camps in Canada to earn extra money).

David's son (Paul's Grandfather) Sam Copeland tried to enlist during WWI as a 16-year-old but got caught and was sent home before he could do any damage! He too apparently was a good footballer and was asked to sign for Walsall, but he thought there was too little security in the game and so he became a printer.

Now, in unearthing some of this information we sought the help of some kind folk who run historical groups for Spurs and Chelsea, both were thrilled to learn about Paul and his links to a player who is so important to the history of their clubs, and they are eager to meet him. So, when Paul and his family are next in the UK, it has been agreed that a visit will be arranged to view what historical documents each of those clubs have from those times at the start of the 1900's and make a bit of a day out of it all. And maybe we might just finish the day with a walk over the turf at Roots Hall ...

NEWS BITS



MAN U PRINT

Our ever-popular collaboration with Southend United fan artist Keith Bird continues, his latest brushworks of a Roots Hall scene being from that famous night in 2006 when we made Fergy chew his gum a little bit harder. If you would like a great reminder that we still have a 100% record v Manchester United then visit <https://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk/product-category/keith-bird-prints/> for our scoreboards' finest hour.

The original artwork now hangs proudly in our East Stand reception.

ICONIC MATCH PRINTS

We've been asked to brighten a corner of Roots Hall, so, working with our long-standing SUEPA friend Dave Shields of Stadium Photography, we are nearing completion of a series of iconic match day prints of Roots Hall matches.

We conducted a poll to determine which matches were deemed to be the most 'iconic', and yes it was perhaps no surprise to find that Man U game being top of the pops. In the end though we selected all of the matches shown in the poll picture here - each print (thanks to some generous fan donations) will contain the original match programme plus a series of match pictures. The first two batches of the prints have been delivered to the club with the final one due in the next few weeks for hanging up in the East Stand 'Box Corridor' ... so if you happen to be in that part of the stadium this season take a careful look, and enjoy.

The cost of this project has been met by the SUEPA Fund, with Dave, the top man that he is, kindly donating his time for free.

HAPPY 80TH DAVE ELLIOTT

Dave Elliott was 80 back in February and our SUEPA Agent Nobbler did a top job gathering up birthday messages from so many fans who wanted to send their best wishes. Pictured here with his card, Dave said: "I've been overwhelmed by the love and good wishes I've received from so many of you at Southend. Thank you so much for taking the time to share your memories and get in touch. My time with your club was among the happiest of my entire career." Cheers Dave, it is great to see you looking on top form.

BIG DAVE CUSACK

It was good to see Dave Cusack, one of our early '80s defensive rocks, turn up at a recent Rotherham United group meeting. Dave lives in the area, and both played for and managed The Millers in the 1987/88 season, so

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from time to time gets along to their regular 'Memory Club' gatherings. He still looks intimidating, instantly recognisable in the middle of the back row of the pic shown here.

OLDEST LIVING FOOTBALLERS

OLDEST FOOTBALL PLAYERS UNDERSTOOD TO BE ALIVE			
UPDATED: 20.02.25			
No.	Name	Date of Birth	Clubs
1	Joe Lancaster	28.04.26	Accrington Stanley, Manchester United
2	Ray McKee	16.06.26	Northampton Town, Finchley
3	Trevor Hitchen	25.09.26	Southport, Wigan Athletic, Oldham Athletic, Notts County, Wellington, Halifax Town
4	Bobby Goodwin	03.02.28	Swindon Town, Old Headlandians
5	John Scott	18.07.28	Leeds United, Workington Town
6	Harry Jarvis	08.10.28	Notts County, Worksop
7	John Core	29.03.29	Halifax Town
8	Ernie Bond	04.05.29	Carlisle United, Manchester United
9	Don Gibson	12.05.29	Leyton Orient, Sheffield Wednesday, Manchester United
10	Roy Killin	18.07.29	Lincoln City, Manchester United
11	Terry Robinson	08.11.29	Brentford, Northampton, England Amateur
12	Johnny Langland	09.11.29	Hartlepool, Blyth Spartans, Chesterfield, Sunderland, Silkworth
13	Ron Harbertson	23.12.29	Lincoln, Darlington, Wrexham, Grimsby Town, Bradford City, Brighton, Newcastle
14	Eric Marsden	03.01.30	Crystal Palace, Southend United, Winchester, Shrewsbury Town
15	Reg Pearce	12.01.30	Peterborough
16	Albert Childs	12.09.30	Liverpool
17	Allan Senior	29.09.30	Halifax Town
18	Colin McDonald	15.10.30	Burnley, E
19	Eric Gill	03.11.30	Brighton, D
20	Peter Higham	08.11.30	Bolton, D
21	Robert Harrison	23.12.30	Carlisle U
22	Arthur Tyrer	25.02.31	Aldershot
23	Jimmy Thomson	17.03.31	Southend
24	Ralph Glanville	24.03.31	Clyde, No
25	Eric Jones	23.06.31	Accrington

A photograph showing two elderly men standing on a football pitch. The man on the left, wearing a blue jacket, is holding a framed football jersey with the number 20. The man on the right, wearing a dark jacket, is looking at the jersey. In the background, there is a brick building and a goalpost.

This is something we believe will be of interest to fans of all clubs and is the current position of a huge research undertaking.

In undertaking our own investigations last year to determine the oldest Southend United players currently alive, we received some kind assistance from independent researcher Richard Jenkins. We kept in touch, and back in February he gave us his authority to publish his data which looks at all players born before 1 January 1935 (so, aged at least 90). A snapshot of some of the data is shown here - we published more on our social media sites back in February.

There are five Southend United players currently above aged 90, namely:

- Eric Marsden: the 13th oldest player, age 95
- Jimmy Thomson, the 23rd oldest player, age 94
- Eddie Firmani, the 57th oldest player, age 91
- Bill Punton, the 69th oldest player, age 91 (and shown here seen recently at Gt Yarmouth FC)
- Alan Dicks, the 77th oldest player, age 90

We treasure them all, and Richard works hard at constantly updating the data. It is something we intend to revisit with him from time to time and to publish his updates.

OUR FIRST EVER BIG CUP WIN

This wonderful pic recently popped up on X, so we just had to do a bit of digging to see what we could find out.



At the time, our 4-1 win v Second Division Derby County in Round Four of the FA Cup represented our best ever performance against higher league opposition. Our opponents arrived at The Kursaal in unbeaten form and were expected to triumph, but the town was in cup fever mood and a record crowd of 14,225 arrived in more hope than expectation paying then record receipts of £1,226.

Derby had internationals in their line-up, but we inflicted their heaviest defeat all year, goals from Billy Hick (a brace), Jack Andrews and Fred Graver (substituting at the last minute for Jimmy Bissett whose brother had just died) earning us a home tie v Notts Forest when the attendance record would again be broken.

The Derby Daily Telegraph reported "The Rams went in to the contest with something approaching contempt for the opposition, persisted in playing the wrong type of game, and were taught a lesson that should do them good in the quest for other honours. Southend were supremely indifferent to the greatness of the opposition and fought with tremendous enthusiasm."

Our line-up that day was certainly experienced, ultimately amassing 1,230 Shrimper career appearances between them - the 'ton up' by Messrs Moore, French, Sayles, Jewhurst, Morris and Hick earning each of them a name-check on SUEPA's 'Pitch Invasion' prints that we advertised last year (check them out if you haven't yet seen them - they are top dollar!).

The man with the midas touch in front of goal was Billy Hick, whose 76 Shrimper goals in 113 appearances is some strike rate, and it still to this day places him sixth in our all-time scorers list. Billy was described at the time as having a 'rugged, robust and resolute' playing manner - back then when no one took any prisoners that is a notable accolade, and we suspect in today's game he might have to adapt his style somewhat.

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Billy Moore and Jack French would later go on to be part of the Southend team that played at Wembley in 1930 when Clapton Orient had to temporarily move out of their usual home. Hugh Morris played for Manchester City in the FA Cup final in 1924, at the time only the second FA Cup final to have been played at Wembley. William Smith, like Billy Hick, had a good strike rate for us notching 21 from 39 appearances but then in 1926 went on to have a cracking season for Gainsborough Trinity when he scored 70 times just in one season.

We went on to break the attendance record again v Forest in Round Five when 18,153 squeezed in to the Kursaal, but we went out narrowly 1-0. We would not make the Fifth Round again until the 1951-52 season, a feat we have only since matched (twice) but never beaten.

The Shrimpers in the picture shown here are Billy Moore, Jackie French, Tommy Sayles, Fred Jewhurst, Frank O'Rawe, Jack Andrews, Hugh Morris, Fred Graver, Billy Hick, William Shaw and Stephen Smith. Shrimpers forever.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO



Tony Bentley: club legend Tony passed away on 18 December 2024, just two days short of his 85th birthday.

He is without doubt one of the club greats. He made his football league debut for Stoke City in the 1958/59 season and played as a forward, scoring 15 in 44 matches before making the trip to Roots Hall in May 1961.

Manager Ted Fenton gave Tony his debut at the start of the 1961/62 season in a 2-1 home win v Bradford Park Avenue, and during the season Tony ended up in the more defensive role that he became known for during his time with us. He played in some great Shrimper teams during the '60s and was our Player of the Year in the 1965/66 season - he was ever-present that campaign, a feat he achieved three times.

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He went on to make 419 appearances for us over ten seasons scoring 17 times before moving on to Folkestone Town, and also played for Ashford Town before hanging up his boots.

Tony was such a lovely guy, respected by so many and well deserving of the two testimonials granted to him by our club, both v Stoke City.

We last saw him at Roots Hall in 2018 when he was one of our very first SUEPA match day guests - he often used to visit the UK and take in a match, and on his last visit received a rapturous round of applause as he was introduced to the crowd. A very early SUEPA memory is seeing the many folk come down the East Stand steps to shake his hand as he made his way to his seat.

Five years ago for his 80th birthday we sent to his home in Nova Scotia a club pennant to mark the occasion which he celebrated with his family in a local hostelry.

Chris Barnard: Chris came to our Former Players Club meeting back in May last year (indeed, he was at our December meeting just the month before he died) and his smile simply just lit up the room. He had been suffering from dementia for some time and was living in a care home, but back in May of last year when we had a reunion of the 1964 Southend United youth team, the pure joy on his face as, one by one, he was introduced to seven of his old teammates who he had last seen some 60 years ago, was just priceless. If ever we wonder why we do what we do at SUEPA, those moments just encapsulated every reason. For the rest of us looking on it was a moment to treasure.

Chris wasn't a star football name - he played youth football for us first in the early 1960's, signed on apprentice terms in 1965, and went on to make just 11 appearances in our first team (three goals) before moving on to Ipswich Town in 1966. He played for the Tractor Boys 21 times, went on to make 32 apps for Torquay 1970-72, played one game for Charlton, and finished his playing days at Chelmsford City. But of course, though maybe not a household name he did what most of us as kids would dream of doing in playing for our club.

We got to know Chris a couple of years ago shortly after he had been admitted to the care home where the wonderful folk of Down Hall looked after him royally. He loved his visit as our match day guest back in January 2023, and when our Former Player Club meetings started last year, Down Hall made every effort to get him along.

Though Chris's short-term memory was poor, we know he treasured his visits to see us and, following up on an idea his care home suggested, we sourced a Southend United tracksuit top for him to be dressed in for his funeral, and delivered the eulogy at his funeral service.

Gerry Fell: it was such sad news to learn about the passing of our former winger back in May - but poignant too.

We had spoken to Gerry on many occasions in recent times. His illness had prevented him from joining our Dave Smith players reunions, but he was always positive and even last year helped us with our 'Message to Ron' videos. And those goals v Newport in 1977 ... oh what a night that was. And on the same day we learned the news about Gerry we had the miraculous comeback win in the play-offs v Rochdale - some things are just written in the stars.

RIP Tony, Chris and Gerry, forever Shrimpers.

FOLLOWING AND CONTACTING SUEPA

Use of social media is key for getting our message across. It's not for everyone we know, but if you like a bit of web- surfing, then make sure to check us out.

Twitter (ok, 'X') still leads the way and now has 2,941 followers, only a small increase from December but still a useful upward move at a time when the platform is seemingly losing out to other social media outlets. Catch us at: @SUEPAAssoc

Our **Facebook** page – we've now broken the 2,000 barrier and currently sit at 2,100. Facebook is where we can waffle on without word restriction, we like that. Catch us at: www.facebook.com/SUEPAAssoc/

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On **Instagram**, a slight increase to move above the 500 barrier to 514. Still searching for that 'killer pic' to make our numbers really grow here. Catch us at: <https://www.instagram.com/suepassoc/>

And on **LinkedIn** we have another healthy increase and now stand at 1,554 followers. Catch us at: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/southend-united-ex-players-association-14a823183/>

You can then use any of these social media outlets to send us a private message, or you can contact us via email, now at our BRAND NEW email address of suepa@shrimperstrust.co.uk However, our old email address of suepassoc@gmail.com is still active and will continue to be monitored for some time yet.

Still not got to grips with Tik Tok, or Threads, or now BlueSky, maybe we need a full-time social media manager. All applications welcome – standard SUEPA rates of pay apply (i.e. zero). We've put this invite in the last two Newsletters - maybe no one reads this far!

And don't forget, we can always be reached by post at **SUEPA c/o The Shrimpers Trust, PO Box 5830, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 9FD.**

The Shrimpers Trust website address is www.shrimperstrust.co.uk

As a reminder, any SUEPA ex-player/coaching staff member can ask to get in touch with any of their former teammates 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 former Shrimpers countless times 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, Neil Gray, 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 Montgomery, Glenn Morris, Paul Newell, Blondy Nna Nhoukeu, Jon O'Brien, Mark Oxley, Andy Petterson, Gerry Peyton, Sean Rafter, John Roberts, Ryan Robinson, Simon Royce, Paul Sansome, Harry Seadon, Paul Smith, Ted Smith, Neville Southall, Jim Stannard, David Stockdale, Callum Taylor, Paul Taylor, Martin Thomas, Malcolm Webster, Ray White and Andy Woodman.

DEFENDERS

Ryan Auger, Dean Austin, Gavin Axcell, Pat Baldwin, Gary Banks, Frankie Banks, Anthony Barness, Dave Barnett, Adam Barrett, Mark Beard, 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, Craig Davidson, Leon Davies, Jason Demetriou, Timothee Dieng, Andy Dixon, Dorian Dervite, Phil Dudley, Bob Duncan, Steve Dyer, Andy Edwards, John Eagan, Derek Ewing, Kevin Fallon, Anton Ferdinand, Ricky Footman, Andy Ford, Peter Gilbert, Michael Gonzague, Jamie Gray, Tony Hadley, Greg Halford, Steven Hammell, Mick Harmston, Andy Harris, Mike Harrison, Sam Hart, Steve Hatter, Frank Haydock, John Heffer, 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, Jean-Yves Mvoto, 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, Robert Savage, 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, Deon Woodman, Bob Worthington, Dave Worthington, Mark Wright, Steve Yates and Dave Young.

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MIDFIELDERS

Marlon Agyakwa, Andy Ansah, Scott Ashenden, Barry Ashworth, Will Atkinson, John Baber, Nicky Bailey, 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, 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, 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, Ethan Hamilton, 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, Keith Jones, Matt Jones, David Keefe, Danny Kerrigan, Steve Lamb, Micky Laverick, David Lee, Ryan Leonard, Bernie Lewis, Martin Ling, Adam Locke, Alistair Love, Jimmy Lumsden, 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, Mark Patterson, 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, Nick Thurston, Steve Tilson, Michael Timlin, Mark Tinkler, Andy Turner, Lars Unger, Paul Vickery, Mauro Vilhete, Sanchez Watt, Adrian West, Myles Weston, Russell Williamson, Harry Willis, Peter Woods, Alex Woodyard, Anthony Wordsworth, David Worrall and Josh Wright.

STRIKERS

Ben Abbey, Peter Abbott, Charles Ademenio, 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, Roscoe Dsane, 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 Heaven, 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, David Lazell, Jason Lee, Stuart Leslie, John Linford, Alex Lumsden, Matt Lund, Charlie MacDonald, Eric Marsden, Roy McDonough, Sammy McMillan, Keith Mercer, Jack Midson, David Mooney, Tommy Mooney, Paul Moran, Dean Morgan, Shamir Mullins, Rhys Murphy, Micky Newell, 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, Morris Scott, Ian Selley, Peter Silvester, Derek Spence, Scott Spencer, Blair Sturrock, Andy Thomson, Jimmy Thomson, Neil Tolson, Micky Tuohy, James Walker, Mario Walsh, Danny Webb, Jason Williams, Jack Wood, 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.



'Creating New Memories'