



Newsletter, February 2023

Editorial

Well done to everyone who has been braving the cold (sometimes wet) weather on a Tuesday or Thursday (or both). Now February is here, we can expect to see the odd day that reminds you that Spring will soon be along. If you can't wait to feel really warm, how about joining Ken Eason's trip to Spain? There is still a chance to go with a small group to the Malaga area, in March. Speak to Ken, if interested (or go to his meeting at 12.15 after football on 9th February).

Best wishes

Terry Stubbings.

Birthdays:

Congratulations and happy returns to those with a February birthday:

Alan Winton on 3rd February

John Langton on 3rd February

Roy Smith on 7th February

Darren Shoesmith on 14th February

Mike Winton on 20th February

Carl Hodgkinson on 21st February

Antonio Forte on 22nd February

David Blackledge on 23rd February

Get well soon

We hope to welcome back these players back soon:

Mike Bridger, Ian Corfe, Roger Powell, John Barry, Chris Smith, Keith Andrew, John Nelson

A special mention to Dave Waller who has had a rough time following a hip replacement. We hope everything goes well from now on and look forward to seeing you at Priory Lane when you are fit.

Eastbourne over 50s Summer Tournament

Will be on Thursday 15th June 2023 10am - 4pm. This will be 6-a-side (squads of 9) and 16 teams are expected, which will be split into 4 groups, for round-robin games, with top 2 to qualify for knock out games (and bottom 2 to play in the *plate* competition).

Andy Dixon would like volunteers to help with the event. Members should speak to Andy if they are happy to help.

Awards Evening

Our annual awards evening was on January 20th. The Borough clubhouse was a good venue that encouraged people to mingle in the bar area, as a magician circulated, showing off some baffling card tricks. There was a lovely meal provided by Becky and her team, although some problems with the ovens meant that some people had to wait too long for their food.

We were pleased to have the Borough Chairperson, Dave Blackmore and Danny Bloor, the Borough Manager as special guests and at the end of the meal they each gave a speech, emphasising how our club is an important part of Eastbourne Borough Football Club, before going on to present the awards. Congratulations to Steve Over, our *Player of the Year* and to Roy Fouracres, *Clubperson of the Year* and congratulations to the raffle winners.

The evening finished with dancing, until late (well, late for us old folk!).

Special thanks to Michael Richardson for taking on the stress of organising the event.



Dave Blackmore and Danny Bloor



Steve Over gets his award from Danny Bloor

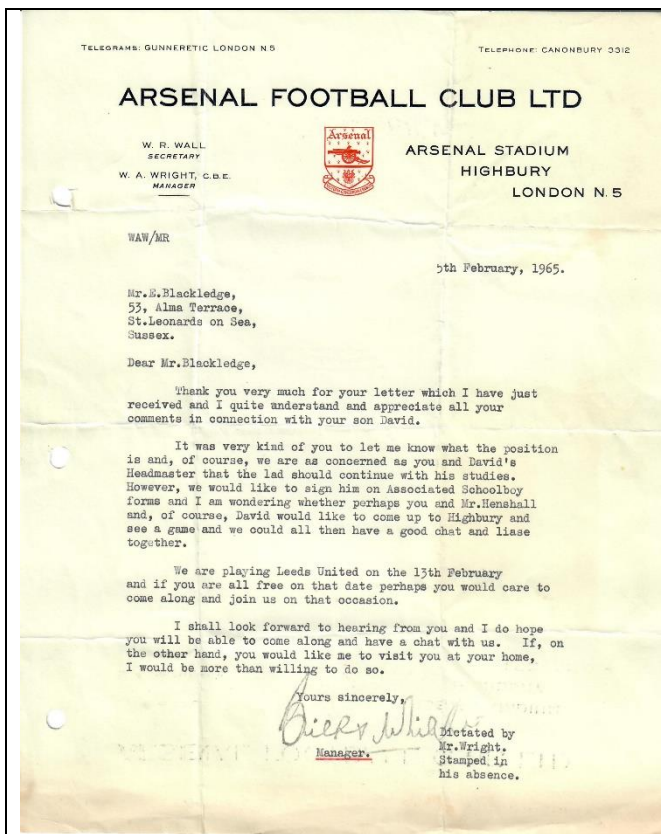
Stop for a cuppa

Every Thursday, there will be free tea or coffee provided in the club house, after the walking football session, as well as sandwiches etc, to buy. So, stay behind for a chat and a snack.

Player Profile: David Blackledge



David Blackledge was born in Hastings and grew up there. He went to Hastings Grammar School. From about the age of nine, Dave played IN goal and in his teenage years he played for both his school, for Hastings Boys (representing all the schools in Hastings) and for Sussex Schools. With Dave in goal, Hastings Boys reached the quarter final of the English Schools Championship. Dave's heroics between the sticks were being noticed and he went for a trial for the English Schoolboys representative team. The trial was set up as eleven hopefuls against another eleven and there were three goalkeepers, including Dave and Peter Shilton! Peter Shilton played the whole match, whereas Dave just got half a game, with virtually no action at his end of the pitch (so Shilton got the gig!). Arsenal wanted to sign Dave on schoolboy terms and he still has a nice letter from Billy Wright (who was managing Arsenal at the time) but Dave's Dad wouldn't agree to the signing, wanting Dave to put his studies first.



Dave's letter from Billy Wright



An early team photo from 1961 when Dave was 11 - the boy holding the cup is Silverdale team captain Kevin Barry, who is the dad of Gareth Barry, who played midfield for England, Aston Villa, Manchester City and a few other clubs

Dave is philosophical about missing out, knowing that, as he stopped growing at about 15 years old, he wouldn't have made a professional career.

As well as a footballer, Dave was a talented athlete, becoming Sussex Schools 100 yards champion and winning a gold medal in the English Schools Championship, as part of the Sussex relay squad.

Before he left school, Dave met Stephanie, who later became his wife, the mother to his son and daughter and Grandmother to seven grandkids.

On leaving school Dave was off to Warwick University to study Economics and to keep goal for the University team. A teammate of Dave's was Steve Heighway and one day there was a lot of excitement as Bill Shankly came to the University to sign him for Liverpool.

After being awarded a BA at Warwick, Dave moved on to Leeds University to study a masters degree in transport economics. Dave's working life was in transport planning, working for big transport engineering companies and for local government, before, in 1991, setting up his own consultancy business, which led him to work all over Europe.

The Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and soon after Dave was in Berlin to test the first satellite navigation system. Unlike your satnav today, there was no map and no voice giving directions but the

system just showed you a turn left arrow, a turn right arrow or a straight on arrow. Dave was a stranger to Berlin but he successfully crossed the city, with no problems.

After leaving University, Dave played football, at Sunday league level until the age of 32, when some sight issues led to his retirement but one day, visiting his mother he saw his mother's neighbour, Alan Walmsley, in football kit and so found his way to Priory Lane!

Since coming along for the first time, Dave has been selected for the South East region Walking Football over 70 squad and played for them, up and down the country and was part of the 2022 *WFA Super League* winning team. Dave has been a great committee member, doing a lot towards the successful running of the club.