

## WOPA - LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD



After many years of excellent stewardship by founder Mick Pugh, and with the approval of his family following his sad passing, the baton of WOPA (Wimbledon Old Players Association) Head has been handed on to Ray Armfield - Plough Lane stadium tour guide and museum host.

Ray tells us about his plans to continue the legacy of Mick's work and ensure it develops even further: "Big shoes to fill of course, but with the help of WISH (Wimbledon in Sporting History) colleagues and club staff alike, I'm determined to see WOPA flourish by remembering, recruiting, celebrating and reuniting former Wimbledon FC (up to 28 May 2002) and AFC Wimbledon players and personnel, helping provide special guests from within WOPA for stadium tours, matchday hospitality, fundraising dinners and other club events.

"I see the role also encompassing responding to requests from Dons Trust, WISH members and supporters, being



Ray (right) is pictured here with Dons playing legend Alan Cork, and Mick Pugh who was the founder of WOPA

a resource for the Club, external journalists, media companies and other parties who require access to former players, from confidentially-held details maintained on a secure database set up by Stuart Deacons.

"On a wider scale, I'd like to raise awareness of our past, the history, and heritage – the heroes and the villains – for new staff, players and other interested parties who may not be fully conversant with our unique story. Then, to help bring it all together going forward.

"So far, I've arranged Sammy Moore's first visit to Plough Lane (with his family), which, with assistance from Chris Slavin, Andrew Stead and others, saw him enjoy meeting many guests in matchday hospitality and be introduced to an appreciative crowd before the 2-0 win over Barrow."

"I was treated like a King" said Sammy afterwards. "It's been so good to see so many

familiar faces still here too – everyone looks a bit older, but no one's really changed! To have been part of this journey is amazing. It was the best day for me and my family and thank you to everyone who organised it."

Further special guests are in the pipeline for the remaining home games and stadium tours when required this season and to help facilitate this, a dedicated Twitter/X account [@WOPADons](#) has been activated with a WOPA Facebook page set to follow.

So if you are an ex-Don reading this – or even if you know of one – please get in touch as WOPA and WISH would love to hear from you.

# THE GREATEST STORY IN FOOTBALL

## *BUT WHY?*

- THE ONLY TEAM TO HAVE WON THE AMATEUR & PROFESSIONAL FA CUPS IN 1963 & 1988, RESPECTIVELY
- THE MOST NOMADIC CLUB - 22 DIFFERENT HOME LOCATIONS
- THE REAL INVINCIBLES - A RECORD 78 GAMES UNBEATEN
- FACED THE MOST DIFFERENT OPPONENTS, 781 AND COUNTING
  - THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF POINTS WITHOUT GAINING PROMOTION, CCL 2002/03
  - IT ONLY TOOK 9 YEARS - FROM REFORMATION TO FOOTBALL LEAGUE RETURN
  - THE FASTEST RISE IN FOOTBALL FROM LEVEL 4 TO LEVEL 1 1982/83-1986/87
  - THE FASTEST RISE FROM THE ASHES: FRANCHISED BY THE FA IN MAY 2002, LEVEL 2 FIRST MATCH AS AFC WIMBLEDON JULY 2002, LEVEL 9
- THE MOST AWARDED CLUB - 85 DIFFERENT TROPHIES
- THE ONLY CLUB IN THE WORLD WITH THREE CHARITIES: AFC WIMBLEDON FOUNDATION, DLAG, WISH

