

5th May 1973

Salut! Sunderland thanks our contributors to our memories of the Cup Final win of 1973. After a brief introduction they tell their stories in their own words.

Jeanette Sutton (nee Coyle) was born and raised in what was then County Durham and is now Tyne and Wear. Her father Bill had been on Sunderland's books as a schoolboy and played for Darlington, West Auckland and other North East sides. The family were friends with Bernie Slaven and knew many of the first team players, especially those that had come up through the youth system. As a young girl, Jeanette also worked at Roker Park and it was this that led to her having a couple of days which many of us would love to have experienced.

The atmosphere was electric in the run up to the final and the town and surrounding districts were covered in red and white. People were desperate for tickets. Fortunately for us Dad had his season ticket allocation and as a staff member I was given a chance to buy a ticket for the price of £1. But even better, I was invited to travel to Wembley on the League Liner with other officials and members of staff.



Jeanette and her dad with the Cup

My two sisters Trish and Fiona had been planning to watch it on television along with my Mam and my Nana, when just days before the Final I was able to get hold of another two tickets so they could also make the trip. They travelled with Dad on the train and met me on Wembley Way as I proudly stepped off the League Liner. Just as it had at Hillsborough it poured with rain but we hardly noticed. The nation seemed to have taken us to their hearts and people were shouting and wishing us luck as we walked to the stadium. Although we were the underdogs we were on top of the world and really felt it would be our day. The omens were good after all. We had last won the cup in 1937 and this was 1973. The last time Bob Stokoe had met Don Revie at Wembley was in their playing days when Stokoe's Newcastle beat Revie's Man City 3-1. A team playing in stripes had never lost at Wembley. We couldn't lose with all of that history behind us and of course we all know what happened next as our dreams came true.

After the game the family were heading back to Sunderland but for me the night was just beginning.



Jeanette (far left) with Linda and Billy Hughes

I jumped into a taxi to celebrate the victory in London, having arranged to meet Linda and Billy Hughes, as I was to be their guest at the winners' banquet at the Park Lane Hotel.

Back in the 1970s there wasn't the same degree of celebrity culture and saturation coverage of football but the Sunderland team had done some radio interviews, and a few of them bumped into Rod Stewart, who being a football fan and

celebrity Scotland supporter took a great interest in them.

Once I'd met up with Billy and Linda we celebrated with a glass of something fizzy and rang Rod Stewart, who at that time was one of the biggest stars in rock music. Looking back now it's hard to believe but it really did happen. The evening passed in a daze and next morning the wives, girlfriends and I got on the coach back to the North East, while the team who still had a league match to play, were staying in London. The cup was put on the back window of the coach and as I was the only one with a scarf we hung it between the handles.

I still have that scarf and wear it to all the matches.

You can read the full account of Jeanette's memories of the entire cup run in these earlier and fuller accounts published on Salut! Sunderland a few years ago:

<http://salutsunderland.com/2013/05/sunderlandleedswembley-1973-part-1-meadow-lane-to-hillsborough/>

<http://salutsunderland.com/2013/05/sunderland-leeds-and-wembley-1973-part-2-how-i-spoke-to-rod-stewart-and-hung-my-scarf-on-the-fa-cup/>

Peter Lynn is a Bristolian who lives in the West Midlands but is Sunderland through and through. He too was at Wembley that day.

I was part of a love triangle, and a geographical triangle with points at Roker, Hartlepool and Bristol. Mum was from Roker, my Dad a Hartlepool lad and me born in Bristol, where my parents had moved to find work in the Great Depression.

I grew up supporting The Lads so when the once in a lifetime (so far) chance came up to get two tickets for an FA Cup Final featuring my team arose, I snatched it with both hands.

The day dawned and I drove my Dad to Harrow on the Hill where we abandoned the car, grabbed something to eat and caught the tube to Wembley Park, where we joined the hordes of our fans streaming down Wembley Way, heading towards the iconic twin towers.



A not so wrinkly Pete's in there somewhere!

Once inside we stood, patiently waiting for the teams to emerge but when they did I was totally unprepared for the volume of the roar from that welled up from the Sunderland fans. It shook me from head to toe.



Peter finally gets Monty's autograph

That roar of course was nothing to the one that erupted when Porterfield's strike hit the back of the net right in front of us. It was manic in the crowd and for a few moments I feared for the safety of my 64 year old Dad.

Imagine the good fortune we, along with so many of our fans enjoyed that day, when we witnessed Monty's amazing double save in the very same goal in the second half!

My Dad never forgot that day together and neither will I.

Meanwhile, **Bill Taylor** couldn't make the trip to Wembley and remained in the North east but has his own memory of the 5th May 1973 and the days afterwards. Let him tell his story.

I couldn't get to the 1973 FA Cup Final so I watched it on my parents' colour TV with my Mag supporting flatmate (we could only run to black-and-white ourselves and that had nothing to do with his dubious footballing allegiance). We went to the Top Hat in Spennymoor afterwards and put away 11 pints each, our first time into double figures. As the old saying goes you celebrate in haste, repent at leisure.



I was working for the Northern Echo at the time and a few nights later as the team triumphantly paraded through Sunderland with the Cup, I was on the press truck. We were ahead of the open-top bus with the Lads on board and I could see Ian Porterfield waving what I assumed was the boot with which he had scored that magical goal.

I discovered 36 years later, when Mike Amos retold my tale in the Echo, that it was actually an Adidas Scorpion Trainer owned by Paul "Sobs" Dobson. He'd painted it gold and tossed it up to Porterfield as the procession got underway.

That was my mistake and by then too late to ask the paper to publish a correction. But I had been able to correct a rather bemused Guardian reporter who was next to me on the truck and seemed somewhat shell-shocked by the barrage of noise.

"What does 'ha-way' mean and why is everyone shouting it?" he asked. "Is it an insult?"

There's a corollary, too, a part of the story that's never seen print.

A couple of weeks later, I met the woman to whom I'm still married. She was a young American journalism student, working at the Echo for the summer. I had a little metal Sunderland badge and also a cup-winner's badge which I gave to her as an early token of my affection.

I almost came to regret it as one weekend, we took a trip to Newcastle which, apart from Sid James Park and all that goes on there, isn't a TERRIBLE place.

Football was the last thing on my mind... until I realised she was wearing my two Sunderland pins. As the penny dropped in the middle of Grey Street, I seized her, shrieking, "Get them off!"

At first I think, she thought I was overcome with passion, until I explained that those who later came to call themselves the Toon Army weren't as civilized as we who became known as Mackems and that if anyone noticed them, she wouldn't be the one getting her face punched in.



To this day, she doesn't quite believe me, but the memory still brings me out in a cold sweat sometimes.

Finally we finish with **Paul "Sobs" Dobson's** account of how he gave our goalscoring hero the boot!

On May 6th, 1973, having sung all the way home from Wembley and only arriving in the wee small hours, after a few hors kip, I set about carrying out a task I'd agreed to in the euphoria of post-match celebrations.

We knew that the scorer of the winning goal was awarded a golden boot and that we'd be bringing the FA Cup home at some stage, but that Porterfield would be highly unlikely to carry his personal trophy on an open top bus for fear of mishap.

Because of this I'd agreed to make a replica golden boot and took one of my Adidas Scorpion trainers (the red and white ones, obviously) and sprayed it gold.

For the team, there was the small matter of a league game at Cardiff on the Monday night, meaning the shoe had plenty of time to dry ahead of the glorious return on Tuesday 8th.



I'm not sure where we hoped we'd end up, but with mam driving myself and some mates, we set off from Bishop Auckland for Roker. Carville is as far as we got, as it became apparent there that we had no chance of getting anywhere near Sunderland, never mind the Fulwell End, from where the replica Golden Boot was supposed to be passed to Porter.

So we took our place by the roadside and watched the bus approach, the top deck all sideburns, lapels, and baffled wives. "Go on" shouted my mates, and I duly lobbed the Golden Boot gently towards Porter.

Miracle of miracles, he caught it, looked at it, smiled, and was away with the rest of the Lads up the A690.

My job was done, but I always wonder what he did with that shoe – did he keep it as a memento, or just put it on the bin? Sadly, I never got the opportunity to ask, but I'd like to think that he kept it for at least a while, even as a doorstep.



Pictures of Sunderland's FA Cup celebrations are visible on www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/sport and www.ryehillfootball.co.uk

Jeanette Sutton's pictures are her own as are Peter Lynn's