

# Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust

Be the 12th Man!



## A NEW SEASON!

This issue is kindly supported by



### MEET JONNY FAIRBAIRN



### JUNIORS GO DUTCH



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# Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust

Newsletter No. 24  
Summer/Autumn 2014



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## FROM THE CHAIRMAN



### Hello...

At the time of our last issue, we were preparing for the Trust-sponsored match against Peterhead on December 28th last year. All the effort put into promoting that game paid off as it attracted the highest home crowd of the season. Of course, some of us are old enough to remember when an attendance of 778 would have been regarded as on the low side for a festive period encounter but in the present day, it was a good figure for SPFL 2.

Admission was free but spectators donated almost £1,800 to the collection. We gave the football club the go ahead to use this sum to pay for a new block of yellow seats in the Main Stand to replace a block of red ones, some of which were in a bad state. Also during the close season, Trust members helped spruce up the club shop at Shielfield.

At our AGM in January, our guest speakers were the then manager Ian Little and Berwick Rangers goalscoring legend Ken Bowron. Ken, who first signed for Rangers in 1963 when he was a teacher in the town, related details of his career. Not many would have known he started out as a goalkeeper. It was unfortunate that the game he and his wife watched afterwards saw Berwick humbled 4-1 by Annan and within hours, Ian Little lost his job as team boss.

Also at the AGM, we welcomed Stuart Lee on to the Trust Board and, a few weeks later, Brendan Thorburn who has been busy designing a new Trust recruiting poster. It was felt it was time for a change from 'Uncle Sam'. Brendan's research also revealed that the message, 'Your Trust Needs You!', is commonly used by football trusts, another reason to go for something different.

In recent months, we have made donations to two good causes. We helped Berwick Rangers Juniors' visit to the Netherlands which is reported elsewhere in this newsletter. We also contributed to the Stuart Markland Appeal Fund set up to buy an electric wheelchair for this former player from the 1960s. Trust member Gemma Law handed over our cheque at a specially convened event in the Guildhall in Berwick on Friday, July 4th.

Berwick Rangers have been training at Haddington Athletic F.C. The set up there, with an artificial pitch, is good. We have agreed in principle to pay half the costs of renting this facility over the course of the season believing if we are to achieve success on the field, managers and players need to prepare in surroundings commensurate with a club of our status.

I hope you all enjoy following Berwick Rangers again this season and that we have something to celebrate at the end of it.

*Michael*

Michael Smyth,  
Chairman

## Be the 12th Man!

- Formed in 2003, the Trust has donated tens of thousands of pounds to the football club towards pitch and stadium improvements, youth and reserve teams, publicity, advertising and match sponsorship.
- We are a major shareholder in the football club with representation on the club board
- Around 240 members at home and abroad
- Members enjoy priority customer status for big match tickets
- Twice-yearly free, quality newsletter distributed to all members

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#### FOOT NOTE:

If you have an questions or issues, or any contributions for our newsletter, email: [trust@berwickrangers.org](mailto:trust@berwickrangers.org)



The morning after he had presented the awards at Berwick Rangers Juniors Presentation Evening, Berwick Rangers' Jonny Fairbairn met up with Trust chairman Michael Smyth for a long chat about his football career to date and his hopes for the new season.

Born in Ashington in 1990, Jonny was brought up on the family farm at Milfield, about 12 miles south of Berwick. His earliest memories of playing football were at Ford First School. He then started playing for 'Castle Blinds' in regular five-a-side competitions held at Prior Park School, Tweedmouth.

At the age of eleven, Jonny joined Tweedmouth Juniors who played in the Edinburgh League and whose home ground was just over the border at Foulden. When he was thirteen, crack Edinburgh club Hutchison Vale came down to Foulden for a pre-season game. Their team that day included current Berwick Rangers goalie Michael Andrews and recent signing from East Stirlingshire, Scott Maxwell. Accompanying the team was Hutchie Vale chairman Tam Smith who recognised Jonny's talents. He didn't start playing for the Edinburgh club until 2004-5 but whilst still turning out for Tweedmouth, also trained once a week with Smith's boys. He is indebted to his parents, John and Julie, for all the hours they put in driving him to and from the Scottish capital.



■ Jonny scores his first senior goal for Berwick

Jonny's Vale career kicked off with their under 15 team. Smith, whom Jonny describes as 'a great football role model', switched him from midfield to centre back. He even represented Scotland in an under 15 international against the Republic of Ireland at Penicuik, the criterion for selection apparently national affiliation of club rather than player's nationality.

Jonny trained with a number of senior clubs-- Hearts, Dunfermline, Gretna and St.Johnstone-- and signed for the latter in July, 2007 after being offered a football apprenticeship under the YTS scheme. "It was low pay but accommodation and meals were provided." He played in both SFL Youth and Reserve League games. Owen Coyle, with whom he got on very well, was in charge at the start but in January, 2008, left for Burnley and was replaced by Derek McInnes. Saints revamped their youth system and Jonny was released at the end of his one year contract. "I wasn't too disappointed."

## NEXT STOP, THE U.S.A.

At a 'SFA Careers Day' at Hampden, Jonny met an agent who recruited players for American universities. He had the right academic qualifications and in August, 2008, arrived in Hattiesburg, Mississippi to study and play soccer for William Carey University who were in the Southern States Athletic Conference of the U.S. collegiate set-up. "There was still a lot of travelling to do by bus - Florida, Alabama, Louisiana,

Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas. There were quite a few Americans in William Carey's 36 man squad but teams were dominated by European and Latin American imports."

In his fourth and final year, Jonny captained his team as it reached the last four of the national collegiate tournament and in his final summer in the States, signed for Mississippi Storm of the National Premier Soccer League. Away games took him to places with memorable names like Chattanooga, Tennessee and Rocket City, Alabama ( a nickname for Huntsville ).

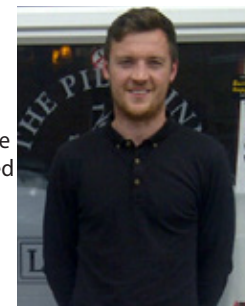
Two other important events occurred in Hattiesburg, graduation from William Carey with a major in Social Science and a minor in Physical Education and it is also where he met his future wife, Melanie, who is originally from New Orleans. They now have a son, Aldous, born in May, 2013.

## BERWICK RANGERS

Fresh from his stint with the Storm, Jonny arrived back in the U.K. in September, 2012 and was advised to contact Berwick Rangers Reserves' coach Mark Lamb. He is grateful to Mark for giving him a chance and in 2012-13 was a regular in Berwick's East of Scotland side until injury in the King Cup semi-final at Prestonpans late on. "Mark was passionate about the game and a good motivator."

Jonny's first team debut came in Rangers' opening pre-season game at Ashington in July, 2013. He also appeared as a sub in friendlies against Oxford Utd. and Forfar Athletic. His competitive senior debut was at home to Queen's Park in August and he kept his place for the visit to Montrose the following week. Berwick drew 1-1. "I felt I had a good game at Montrose and was very disappointed not to play in the next one, against Rangers at Ibrox. 'Yano' pulled me in before the match and said he wanted to go for experience."

At Montrose on January 2nd this year, 'Fairbairn' was a surprise inclusion in the starting line-up. This came about because Dean Hoskins was injured in the warm-up and couldn't play. The match finished goalless with Jonny hitting the post and having a header cleared off the line. The travelling fans were delighted with his performance. There was no way he could be left out next up at home to Annan but Berwick hit rock bottom, lost 4-1 and manager Ian Little was sacked. "Colin Cameron came in and showed some confidence in me and I think I've kicked on from there." Even so, Jonny had to wait patiently to secure a first team spot once more. The Reserves' last SPFL Reserve League game was away to Raith Reserves in early February. Stephen Tulloch, returning from injury, made mistakes. "I also had a bad game." Ironic then that, by the end of last season, these two were forming a regular partnership at the heart of the first team defence. "I played in all the last nine games and was never subbed. I was helped by playing alongside the more experienced Tulloch. We did well to come back after the poor show at Starks Park."



## LOOKING AHEAD

Jonny's daytime job is on the farm but in spare time during the off season kept fit. "I've been in the gym most days and I've been running. There should be a good feeling in the camp because most of last season's players have been retained. Colin Cameron commands a lot of respect. He holds the players' attention in the dressing room but is easy to talk to on a one to one basis. I'm determined to stay in the team but would like to become more of a leader on the pitch." Our thanks to Jonny for his time on a busy weekend and we wish him all the best for the new season.

Dale Jones, former chairman of Berwick Rangers Junior Supporters Trust, looks back at the club's recent history and considers the present state of health of Berwick Rangers.

Being a director of a sports club must be a predominantly thankless task. It is however probably fair to say that while the job is undoubtedly a tough one, Berwick Rangers have suffered their fair share of mismanagement at that level.

In 2008, the club found themselves once again relegated to the bottom tier of Scottish football, amidst a complete collapse of our heroic 2006/07 championship winning side, the resignation of manager John Coughlin and increasingly controversial boardroom management.

Stemming from the relegation and problems that had plagued the club for years would be politics that appeared to begin to encourage a split amongst fans. In-fighting bred from fans having to 'pick sides' on all sorts of matters became a regular feature. Even worse, a culture of negativity began to arise due to uninspiring on-field performance.

Thankfully however, the 2009 fan-led takeover resulted in several board members leaving the club, and since then, we've seen several more introduced, including the likes of Trust representative John Bell, who has very deservedly gone on to become vice-chairman.

Since the takeover, improvements have been both vast and undeniable. As with any club, frustration still rears its head, perhaps due to on-field results leaving us in League Two. Nevertheless, as a club we've not only improved, but have become a model example of how to run a club at our level.



The club have improved their facilities and obtained a UEFA club licence. Out of the darkness of the previous regime came Chair Brian Porteous, who is surely one of the best in Scottish football. A genuinely nice guy who always has time to speak to fans, Brian is also a very astute businessman – anyone looking for proof should consider the rarity that we're a profitable football club.

As frustrating as being in League Two is, everybody involved deserves credit for playing a crucial part in rebuilding Berwick Rangers. The likes of Jimmy Crease, Ian Little and Robbie Horn were vital in progressing to where we are today and shouldn't go underappreciated.

We are in a very healthy position. For the first time since relegation we've set the target of winning the league, and the acquisition of Colin Cameron is an incredible statement of intent. Our board deserve plaudits for getting us here and doing the impossible by pleasing almost everybody. That is why I hope that our thanks to them is the culture at Shielfield in 2014/2015, both a winning and positive one. We owe it to them, and we owe it to ourselves.

Trust member Martin Inglis, 21, has studied sports journalism at Sunderland University. Here, he looks back at the second half of last season and the influence of Colin Cameron (pictured far right with Robbie Horn and a young supporter) since his arrival as player-manager.



Languishing down in eighth place after a 4-1 home defeat against Annan on January 11, there was an overwhelming feeling around Shielfield Park that once again, the Gers had failed to live up to pre-season expectations and that the campaign was as good as over with 16 matches still to play.

But the departure of Ian Little the following day resulted in the swift appointment of former Scotland international Colin Cameron as player/manager – a move which was received positively by the vast majority of supporters and seen as a significant step in the right direction, with the club also boosted by the news that Robbie Horn had agreed to stay on as assistant manager.

With only one training session to have a look at the players at his disposal, Cameron left team selection for his first game against Stirling Albion down to Horn. The 41-year-old did start in midfield though and was handed the perfect start as Darren Lavery put Berwick 1-0 up after just 14 seconds in a match which finished in a convincing 4-0 win.

A faultless 3-0 win at Albion followed and it should've been three wins out of three up at Clyde a week later as a superb first half performance saw the Gers lead 3-1 at half time, only for the Bully Wee to hit back with two goals in the last 10 minutes after Steven Notman had been sent off.

The team then made hard work of beating basement side Queen's Park as Lavery notched the only goal with 14 minutes remaining before Cameron suffered his first defeat as manager 3-2

against Elgin at Shielfield Park.

Andy Russell – a Cameron signing from former club Cowdenbeath – made his debut as a substitute in the 1-1 draw at East Stirlingshire and at Annan in front of arguably the biggest away league support of the season, the Gers slumped to a 4-0 defeat which saw them move back down to eighth.

The response was magnificent though as Montrose were thumped 5-0 and Berwick won five of their remaining eight games, with two defeats against champions Peterhead and that infamous and costly loss up at Forthbank, where Paul Currie was shown his marching orders for gesturing towards the away fans after Lavery had opened the scoring. The Binns then went on to score two very late goals.

In the end, it came down to the last game of the season to decide the final play-off spot but the Gers lost at home to Peterhead and finished on 52 points, which is the highest total the team has amassed since the title-winning season of 2006/07.

As for Cameron, a record of W9 D2 L5 reflects positively on a hugely promising half-season in charge and despite missing out on his target when appointed of making the play-offs, if he strengthens in key areas over the summer, then supporters of the Black & Gold Army will have every reason to look ahead to the 2014/15 season with great optimism.



None of us who sat listening to Ian Little at the Trust AGM on Saturday 11th January had any inkling of what was to occur during the course of the following 72 hours or so.

Rangers took on Annan that afternoon hoping for a win that would trigger a push towards the end of season play offs. As we all know, Rangers lost 1-4 and the following day Little's 10 year association with the club, firstly as a player and then as manager, was brought to an end. I don't think that too many supporters were surprised that the football club board decided that a change was needed. Despite a promising start to the season, Rangers had fallen into the bottom half of the League and were struggling to put together a consistent run of results. Annan had strolled to a comfortable 4-1 win without getting out of second gear and the result left Rangers languishing in 8th place in the League. The board doubtless felt that there was still time for a new manager to turn things round and rescue the season from



oblivion. As it was, the board acted quickly and within 48 hours former Scotland internationalist Colin Cameron was appointed as the club's new manager with Robbie Horn as his assistant. Cameron's tenure as Berwick manager got off to a flying start with Rangers scoring after only 14 seconds on the way to a 4-0 win over Stirling Albion. Something about Carlsberg doing managerial debuts sprang to mind.

Cameron's appointment was met with universal approval in certain footballing forums with the big question for most Rangers fans being would he play? The answer to that was a resounding yes and despite being just the wrong side of 40 his fitness, class and experience were evident and brought a new dimension to Rangers play and his drive and influence were missed from the games he had to sit out through injury.

Despite Cameron's appointment and an upturn in performances there was still an element of inconsistency in Rangers results. A 0-4 defeat at Annan was followed by a 5-0 home win over Montrose followed by a 0-3 defeat at Peterhead and a 3-0 home win over Clyde. It all culminated in Rangers falling short of the play off places, finishing in 5th place, 5 points behind 4th placed Clyde. In my opinion there were two reasons for that. First, there was the 7 game winless run during the early part of the season which saw only 3 points obtained from a possible 21. Secondly, there was Rangers failure to convert winning positions into 3 points. The most blatant examples of that were the 2-0 lead at home to Elgin which became a 2-3 defeat and the 3-1 lead at Clyde with 12 minutes to go which ended up in a 3-3 draw.

In addition there was the 1-2 defeat at Stirling in early April when Rangers conceded two goals in injury time to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. That result effectively ended Rangers hopes of a play off place as it enabled Stirling



to open up a 5 point gap with only 4 games to play. In mitigation however, Rangers played the second half with 10 men after Paul Currie was bizarrely sent off by referee Nick Walsh for having the temerity to celebrate Darren Lavery's goal in front of the Berwick fans. As well as Currie's dismissal, Rangers also suffered the loss of manager Cameron who was injured in playing the pass through to set up Lavery for his goal. It was a double blow for Rangers because up to that point they had been slightly the dominant side in an admittedly nervy encounter and had both Cameron and Currie still been on the pitch in the second half then who knows what the outcome might have been. That said 10 man Rangers acquitted themselves well in the second half and were rarely troubled whilst looking threatening themselves on the break. Just as it looked as if Rangers had held out for a deserved 3 points, Stirling managed to carry out a daylight robbery by not only managing to equalise but then score a winner in the dying seconds of injury time. At least Dick Turpin had the decency to wear a mask.

As I write this the new season is just over a month away with the both the Challenge and League Cups up first although at the time of writing the draws for both competitions have not yet been made. What we do know is that Rangers will kick off their league campaign against the 2 relegated sides, firstly at home to Arbroath on 9th August followed by an away trip to East Fife on 16th August. The league this season has some extra spice with the advent of the new pyramid system which will see the 10th placed club play off against the winner of the Highland League/Lowland League play off to remain in the league. Needless to say Rangers fans will be hoping that Rangers will be involved at the other end of the table and that a sustained challenge for the league title will be made. However, every club in the league will start off aiming for the title and it is interesting that of the 10 clubs involved, only Jim Chapman at Annan was in post at the beginning of last season. There are also 3 clubs with former Scotland internationalists as managers, namely Colin Cameron of course, Gary Naysmith at East

Fife and the newly appointed Barry Ferguson at Clyde. I don't know if Ferguson intends to play but if he does, then Ferguson against Cameron in direct opposition to one another in midfield could be an interesting contest. When you add the nature of some of the signings being made by the various clubs then it looks like being a really competitive season.

From Rangers point of view they have retained the bulk of last season's squad. At the time of writing there is no definite news with regard to last season's captain and top scorer Lee Currie. Rumour has it that he is training with a full time championship club but until he puts pen to paper somewhere there is still hope that he may re-sign. If he does move on to pastures new then his threat from set pieces will be particularly missed. A number of his goals last season came from free kicks and it is doubtful if there was a better dead ball exponent in Scotland last season. On the plus side the possible departure of Rangers other main goal threat, Darren Lavery, did not materialise. Despite rumours that he had signed a pre-contract agreement with another club, Darren has signed on for another year. Although, I personally feel that he still has one or two rough

edges, there is no doubt that he has the ability to score all types of goals and I will be surprised if he is not featuring again this season at the top end of the goalscoring charts.

The only new addition to the squad to date is Scott Maxwell who is a left sided midfielder and who has joined from East Stirlingshire. Scott caught the eye against Rangers last season and hopefully he can solve what has been a problem position in recent seasons. Maxwell on the left and Ross Gray on the right has the potential to be an exciting combination. Possibly, by the time you read this further additions will have been made and Cameron has already been quoted in the local press as stating that some possibilities will be training with the club and may feature in some of the pre-season friendlies. Another 3 or 4 additions wouldn't go amiss and certainly another striker, a midfielder to replace Lee Currie in the event that he does put pen to paper somewhere else and another left back and a centre half must be top of the list. If Cameron can find the right players to fill these positions then I have no doubt that we will be up there challenging and that an exciting season lies ahead.



## "WHAT IF SCOTLAND BECOMES INDEPENDENT?"

That was one of the first questions directed at Colin Cameron at a very well attended 'Talk in' organised by the Supporters Club in early March.

The new manager said he hadn't really thought about it. A diplomatic sidestep? Or perhaps he hadn't but obviously the questioner had and probably quite a few other Berwick Rangers fans, too. When we look at a couple of other examples of clubs playing 'out of country', it is clear their situations are different from that of our club.

Association Sportive de Monaco play in the French League. Their tiny principality is a mere pinprick on the backside of France and in reality, AS Monaco have nowhere else to go. Derry City are located in Northern Ireland but now play in the Republic's League of Ireland. However, in Ireland, in sport, the international border is often overlooked. The Ireland rugby union team represents all four historical provinces of the island including those six of Ulster's nine counties which still lie within the U.K. Like most northern participants in Gaelic football and hurling ( controlled by the nationalist leaning Gaelic Athletic Association ), many supporters of Derry City would not consider playing in the Republic as playing in a foreign country at all.

But if Scotland leaves the U.K., then that is what in effect it would become in relation to England and vice versa. Of course, Berwick Rangers have a long history of football affiliation to Scotland. We are full members of the SFA and SPFL whose rules, apparently, make special mention of Berwick Rangers as an exception to the requirement that all member clubs must be based in Scotland. So legally, it appears we would have strong grounds to continue playing in Scotland even if there were a 'yes' vote in September's referendum. However, particularly if a strongly nationalist minded government was in power in Edinburgh, it might be only a matter of time before questions were asked about the



continued presence of a foreign, English-based club in the higher echelons of Scottish football and part of the argument against could be that, unlike AS Monaco, Berwick Rangers actually do have somewhere else to go. Such a view would take no cognizance of those fans living on the Scottish side of the border who support Berwick Rangers as their local team.

A separate Scotland might well become a member of the EU but there could be a hiatus between a declaration of independence and joining as a member in its own right. Though it may seem fanciful, that would raise the serious prospect of some form of checks and controls at what would now be an international frontier. A lot of people in the former Yugoslavia never expected such a thing but their region is now studded with frontier posts where none existed before. Furthermore, passing through them is not always a formality and can take time. The same could happen here. Fans travelling to and from Berwick for matches no longer able to cross the border in the blink of an eyelid. Then there is the currency issue. It is not certain what money an independent Scotland would use. Travelling fans might have to ensure they obtained enough of the required currency to get into matches either side of the border.

And if Berwick Rangers were eventually forced to return to English football? We could not expect any preferential treatment and be parachuted into say, the Northern League. Be prepared for the Northern Alliance and the likes of Wideopen and District F.C., Blyth Isabella and Wooler.



Berwick Rangers Reserves enjoyed a six match winning league run at the end of their East of Scotland season. In four of these games, they kept a clean sheet.

The final table showed Berwick in third place on 33 points, eight ahead of fourth-placed Peebles Rovers. Favourites Hibs Reserves duly won the First Division title but were chased all the way by Easthouses Lily. A factor in the Lily's failure to land the crown was their 2-0 defeat at Shielfield in mid-March, their first league loss of the campaign. For Berwick, missing out on a promotion spot was, in the end, academic for long before they rounded off the season with a 7-2 home win over Eyemouth United, the club tendered its resignation from the EoS League for 2014-15 to concentrate on the SPFL Reserve League. Berwick Reserves' first East game in 2014 was a Qualifying League match in Edinburgh against Spartans' EoS side. Rangers' defensive generosity helped Spartans to a 7-3 win but Berwick still qualified for the League Cup by finishing second in their group after winning 3-0 at Coldstream in early March.

In all respects, the Qualifying League was a convoluted affair. Teams in each of the four groups of five played each other home and away. There were rumblings from a number of team managers about the wisdom of staggering it across the season which led to an irregular pattern of fixtures. Furthermore, instead of the expected qualification of the top two from each group into the quarter finals, this reward was only automatically bestowed on the sides finishing top. Second and third placed teams participated in a Preliminary Round to determine the remaining four quarter finalists. However, in the case of Berwick's group, arguably, this system produced justice as Spartans, Berwick and Coldstream all finished with the same number of points ( 16 ) with only goal difference separating them. Berwick

qualified for a home Preliminary tie as the runners up in Section 'D' due to a superior goal difference to the 'Streamers'. That tie was a midweek one against Hawick Royal Albert in which the Reserves racked up their biggest score of the season, winning 9-1. It meant four days later a visit to Hibs Reserves at the Edinburgh club's Training Centre outside Ormiston. Berwick gave a good account of themselves in going down 3-1 but it was a third defeat of the season against the eventual League Cup winners. There would also be no repeat of the previous year's run to the King Cup Final after a 1-0 second round loss to Lowland League Edinburgh City at Meadowbank.

## SPFL RESERVE LEAGUE

Berwick played a total of thirteen games in this league. An outstanding fixture versus Annan Athletic was never rearranged leaving Berwick twelfth in a fifteen team competition with a total of 11 points from two draws and three wins. The last of these came in December, 5-1 over East Stirlingshire in a match hosted by Stirling University. In their final game at Starks Park in February, Berwick were on the wrong end of an identical scoreline against Raith Rovers' second team.

Belated plans to take part in the SPFL Reserve League Cup during the second half of the season had to be abandoned. Shielfield would not have been able to stage the extra fixtures and unlike the one-off affair at Stirling Uni, the club was unable to find an alternative venue for 'home' games.

Queen's Park won both the SPFL Reserve League and League Cup, a great achievement for a team representing an amateur club playing in the SPFL's lowest division. The Spiders received the League trophy, and the players their medals, following Berwick Rangers' 3-1 SPFL 2 victory over Queen's at Airdrie on April 26th.

## THE PLAYERS

Dean Carse finished as top scorer for the Reserves with 25 in competitive games whether EoS or Reserve League. Josh Morris scored seventeen, two of them penalties. Josh also had the distinction of netting all five goals, including one from the spot, when a Berwick X1 beat a Dumbarton X1 5-2 in a closed doors game in Glasgow soon after Colin Cameron took over as manager.

Carse, who appeared for the first team at times last season, has been retained for the coming one. But the real success story of a player coming through must be Jonny Fairbairn. He had a couple of setbacks--in and out of the senior squad--but by the end of the SPFL campaign was forming a regular centre back partnership with Stephen Tulloch. With Cameron injured, Ben Miller was given the chance to shine in front of the first team back four in the latter stages of the season, the manager clearly seeing ability and potential in the youngster that perhaps had not been noticed by others. Ben was initially a product of the now disbanded Under 19s but, in an end of season interview, acknowledged that playing for the Reserves in the SPFL Reserve League had benefited his game.

## THE MANAGEMENT

Coach Mark Lamb, his assistant Jimmy Rae and goalkeeping coach Mark Beveridge have now all left Berwick Rangers. They were always appreciative of the help the Reserves received from Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust. Their decision to go was in part influenced by the club deciding to opt out of regular Saturday reserve football. Had they stayed on, their expected roles may have been different. For example, it was quite possible that Colin Cameron or his assistant Robbie Horn would

run the show at some of the SPFL Reserve League games as they always fall in midweek. Mark Lamb was totally committed and extremely hardworking during his two years at Shielfield. Jimmy Rae and Mark Beveridge occasionally found themselves on the teamsheet when there was less than a full complement of subs available. It is possible that in time, we may look back at Lamb's spell with Rangers as something of a 'golden era' as he recruited and developed players who progressed to the fringes of the first team or even better.

Mark Lamb has now joined Lowland League club Vale of Leithen. Kenny O'Brien and Josh Morris have followed him to Innerleithen as have a good few of last season's Berwick East of Scotland regulars including Ross Brady, Jordyn Gill, Ewan Saunderson, Greig Tulloch and James Elliot. There will certainly be less travelling involved for Mark who lives at nearby Peebles. We wish him all the best for the future.



Lee Currie, who has now re-signed for the club, was voted as Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust 'Player of the Year', 13-14.

The Trust award was one of eight (!) Lee received at the Players' Presentation in the Sponsors' Lounge at Shielfield following the final game of the season at home to SPFL 2 champions Peterhead on Saturday, May 3rd. Amongst the other trophies taken home by Lee were those for Directors' 'Player of the Year', Players' 'Player of the Year' and Berwick Rangers Supporters Club 'Player of the Year'. Lee was also rewarded for finishing as top scorer for the season with eighteen goals in all.

Around 30% of Trust members took part in the poll with Lee collecting over 60% of the votes cast. Last year's winner Darren Lavery was a long way behind in second place, just ahead of Ross Gray. Local player Jonny Fairbairn had his backers with several other fans indicating he would have been their choice had he played more first team games. The others to win votes



were Devon Jacobs, Billy Bald, Stevie Notman and Kenny O'Brien.

For the second year running, trophy supplier Shoecare of Hide Hill in Berwick lent their support by engraving the winner's shield free of charge. Lee was presented with this by Trust chairman Michael Smyth at the May 3rd event.



## BAYERN MONACO?

Outside a bar in Rome earlier this year, Trust vice chairman Gordon Dickson spotted a poster advertising television coverage of Real Madrid v. Bayern Monaco. The apparent mixing of the names of two famous clubs led him to conclude that whoever was responsible for the poster didn't know much about football. He later learned that in Italian, Munich is called 'Monaco di Baviera' (Munich of Bavaria). Confusing for English speakers but the poster was correct.

'Bayern Monaco' sounds more like one of those names conjured up by teams entering the annual Berwick Charities Cup summer competition played on The Stanks. Over the years, continental inspired names have included Racing Club de Pringles, F.C. Twente Something and the cleverly contrived Real Ale Madrid.

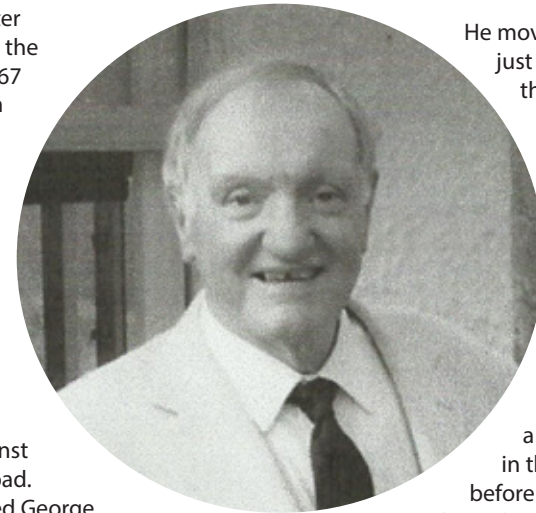
The A-Z of Borderers on Berwick Rangers official website is an extensive list of those who have played for the club since it joined the Scottish League. It gives brief details of the Berwick careers of each one.

Amongst them is Walter Gerrard who was with the club during the 1966-67 season, the one which saw the most famous result in its history, the 1-0 win over Glasgow Rangers in the Scottish Cup in January, 1967.

Gerrard didn't play in that first round game but was in the team for the second round tie against Hibernian at Easter Road. He replaced the injured George Christie at centre forward. Berwick lost 1-0.

The 'Berwick Advertiser' report of the match, written by 'Tweeddale', described how 'big Gerrard, full of courage and vigour could not ruffle Madsen'. In his analysis of the match in the same paper, 'Castlgate' commented, 'A great deal of criticism has been levelled at centre-forward Gerrard but for me he put more into the game than any of the other forwards. Hibs centre half Madsen did not move a yard from him all the game and I doubt whether any other centre-forward would have done much better on the day'. The Dane John Madsen was an imposing figure at the heart of the Hibs' defence. Even so, 'Tweeddale' also reported that Gerrard, 'chasing everything, headed a Riddell free kick only inches wide, then headed another Riddell cross past the post'.

Walter Gerrard was born in Glasgow in 1943. He came to Berwick from East Stirlingshire where he usually played centre half. During his time at Shielfield he actually made only four league appearances for the first team, scoring once, as well as the Cup appearance v. Hibs.



He moved on to Clydebank just over two months after the Rangers tie before becoming one of the first European professionals to play in Hong Kong. By now, he was considered to be a centre forward and in his first season with Hong Kong Rangers scored 37 times. He played for a couple of other clubs in the then British colony before going into coaching.

The nickname given him by local fans translated as the 'Water Buffalo'.

Gerrard also developed a long and successful career in the drinks industry. He continued to live in Hong Kong where he died in March this year aged 70.

Another former Berwick player who passed away this year was goalkeeper Ronaldo Ugolini. His Shielfield career was even shorter than that of Gerrard. He made one SFL appearance in the 1962/63 season. Rangers had a goalkeeping crisis and brought in the veteran Ugolini as an emergency signing for a midweek game. He had played for a string of clubs, Dundee United his last before turning out for Berwick. Born in Italy in 1924 but raised in Armadale, West Lothian, he died in April, aged 89.



Colin Keenan runs Keenweld (Welding Supplies) Ltd which has advertised at Shielfield Park for twenty years. The firm was proud to sponsor Lee Currie's home kit and is a corporate member of Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust.

In April, 2013, I took a party of students from the former Border Judo Kwai, based in Berwick, to the home match against Queen's Park after learning from social media that director John Bell was encouraging local clubs to visit Shielfield and take in a match free of charge. I not only saw it as an opportunity for Berwick Rangers to possibly gain some more fans but for some good 'team building' as well as a treat for my students. Contact between the club and myself was first class and arrangements were duly made.

The visit proved a great success with the party being shown around the ground and meeting the team. In addition, Berwick won 4-1! I would definitely recommend other clubs and organisations take advantage of the chance should Rangers continue to offer free group visits in the future.

To further help Berwick Rangers and to promote my business I thought it was a good idea to look into match ball sponsorship at a home game. I contacted BRFC commercial manager Conrad Turner who was very helpful, enabling us to be ball sponsor the first game of the 2013/14 season, also against Queens Park.



On a sunny afternoon, my partner and I along with my son Michael and Karen's eldest, Brendan, were greeted by Robert Johnson. He handed us over to Conrad Turner who gave us all an interesting tour of the stadium. Unfortunately, there were not many directors available that day but we did get the chance to have a chat with manager Ian Little and met the team. With still a wee bit of time before the game, we headed to the sponsors' lounge and were made very welcome. Then, just before kick-off, we were escorted to the directors' box in anticipation of a good match. My son, Michael Keenan, was tickled that his namesake was playing for Queens Park!

Berwick were 2-0 up at half time when it was back to the sponsors' lounge for a quick bite to eat. My partner, Karen, was well pleased that Conrad had organised something special for her, as she is a vegetarian. She was also very happy that she was given the privilege of pressing the button for the number for the bond scheme. We were all on a high and looking forward to a thrilling second half. We weren't disappointed with Darren Lavery scoring two goals and the game finishing 4-0 to Berwick! All in all, we all had an amazing day and we very well looked after by the BRFC staff. On the plus side, since that day, it prompted my partner and me to take in more games and give extra support to our local club. We hardly missed a home game last season!



Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust made a donation towards the cost of Berwick Rangers Juniors trip to the Netherlands in late May.

Despite their name and black and gold strips, the Juniors have no official connection to the Shielfield Park club. However, they provide local boys, from under 8s to under 17s, with the opportunities for regular football, the youngest starting in the Wooler-based Glendale League. Most of the club's teams play in the Pinpoint Recruitment Junior Leagues which cover Northumberland and the Newcastle area. Berwick Juniors also have an annual exchange arrangement with the Dutch club VV Zeewolde. This year marked the 25th such exchange and it was Berwick's turn to cross the North Sea. Zeewolde (population approx. 20,000), is a new town on a polder (reclaimed land) in the province of Flevoland. Voetbalvereniging Zeewolde is a big club with around 1,200 members. It is the only club in town and caters for adults (male and female) as well as youngsters, running several teams within each age group.

On tour, Berwick, who this time took under 12s, under 14s and under 17s, played a couple

of matches on Zeewolde's new 4G pitch which cost 650,000 Euros. Funding came from the Dutch government. The other games were played on conventional grass pitches of which VV Zeewolde has five full size ones. The club also boasts two full size artificial pitches, an outdoor five-a-side astro pitch, over twenty changing rooms, a medical room and a spacious clubhouse amongst its facilities. Berwick's under 12s lost all three games played including a Cup match against Zeewolde's top under 12 team. The under 14s defeated Zeewolde's second team 4-1 and invitation club Swift's first team 3-2 but lost the Cup game against Zeewolde first team 4-2.

The under 17s won their Cup game against Zeewolde's first XI 4-3. They also beat the host's second team 4-2 but lost 3-1 to guest opponents BAZ. One other game saw Berwick select a purely under 16 eleven from amongst the touring party and they enjoyed a 6-2 success against another Zeewolde XI. The tour involved more than just playing football. Amongst other events organised were trips to Amsterdam, the stadium of AZ Alkmaar and activities such as swimming and orienteering. The Berwick boys stayed with local families during their week in Zeewolde.



## READER'S COMMENTS

Generally, we receive little in the way of comment from members about the contents and quality ( good or bad ) of the Trust newsletter. So it was pleasing that one Berwick-based member did have a few words to say about our previous issue, Winter, 2013. Even more so as the views expressed were quite favourable!

The member concerned particularly liked Ron Kirk's 'Mid-Season Report' and the feature article, 'The Day We Went to Culter' and felt that the publication was all the better for having a greater variety of contributors than many previous issues. If you have anything to say about this edition, we'd like to hear from you at [trust@berwickrangers.org](mailto:trust@berwickrangers.org)

## RUBBISH, RUBBISH, MORE RUBBISH...

One of the banes of operating an e-mail account like ours is the amount of rubbish that comes our way. The Trust is inundated with various sorts of junk. There is correspondence from businesses touting for custom, often based in China. At least these are usually written in English but every week, we will receive three or four deliveries in Cyrillic script. Sometimes, the accompanying pictures of 'pretty girls' tell us what these are all about.

However, by far the most common irritant is 'registration of new user of Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust site'. Typically, we are sent a highly unlikely name e.g. Erasmus Giteau or Daniella Doalittlebit with accompanying e-mail addresses which bear little resemblance to the names provided. For example, 'Mr. Giteau's' might be something like bigbird2yxx@yahoo.com. To give some idea of the scale of junk mail, one afternoon, a dozen of these 'registrations' were eliminated. By the following morning,

another two dozen had appeared! If all these people were genuine, we would have to conclude that there is phenomenal interest in Berwick Rangers. Instead, a lot of valuable time is spent deleting this crap.

The source of these unwelcome communications is a 'spambot', a computer programme designed to collect or harvest e-mail addresses from the Internet in order to build mailing lists for sending unsolicited e-mails, commonly known as 'spam'.

Luckily, we now seem to have found a way to prevent bombardment by 'new users' but the correspondence from Russia, Ukraine and the People's Republic continues to arrive.

## ALBION ROVERS

A few weeks after Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust sponsored the game between Berwick and Peterhead at the end of last year which saw spectators admitted free, our SPFL 2 rivals Albion Rovers did something similar for a home match against Montrose.

Whereas those attending Berwick's clash with the Aberdeenshire club were invited to make a donation, the Coatbridge club offered admission on a 'pay what you can' basis. The results were a 125% increase in attendance (718) and a 160% increase in payments compared to the club's previous home encounter against the same opponents.

Rovers then went a step further by launching a 'pay what you can' season ticket for 2014-15. Club chairman John Devlin was asked about this scheme in a radio interview in May. He reported a big increase in season ticket sales. Rovers had suggested a minimum purchasing price of £10 but he pointed out that many of those paying this sum lived in other parts of the U.K. or

abroad and were, in effect, making a donation to show their support for grassroots football.

Mr. Devlin conceded that by purchasing a Rovers' season ticket for £10, supporters of other SPFL 2 clubs could be getting a bargain for if they travelled to watch their team's two league games at Cliftonhill, their entry costs would work out at only £5 per match.

Normal full season ticket prices would be £140 and £70 for concessions. Asked for the average payment so far for the new style tickets, the chairman said, "Between £50-60".

On the premise that they have paid to be there, the SPFL insists that all season ticket holders are counted as being present when individual match attendance figures are calculated. So presumably, we can look forward to some inflated crowd numbers from Coatbridge this season with many of Albion Rovers' newly found far-flung supporters unlikely to attend on a regular basis.

## LOWLAND LEAGUE

In our Summer, 2013 edition, we previewed the launch of the new Lowland League. Spartans were inaugural champions of the 12 team league with Selkirk finishing bottom. On successive weekends in March, Berwick Rangers Reserves played Lowland League sides who, theoretically at least, compared to the East of Scotland First Division, were at two levels higher in Scottish football's pecking order. Clubs from the LL still in membership of the East of Scotland F.A. continued to take part in the King Cup and first up for the Reserves was a visit to Edinburgh City for a Second Round tie. City won 1-0.

The following week, the Reserves travelled to South Lanarkshire for a friendly against East Kilbride and drew 2-2.

The Lowland League management had intended to increase the number of teams to 16 for 2014-15 but in the end, accepted only two new members. Edinburgh University come in from the East of Scotland Premier Division. The other newcomers are Broomhill Sports Club from Glasgow who applied despite not yet running an adult team! However, LL officials were clearly impressed by what BSC Glasgow (as they will now be known) had to offer overall including a thriving youth section.

BSC had fixed up a three year deal to share Saracen Park in Glasgow with Junior club Ashfield, but now seem set to ground share with Maryhill JFC. The BSC situation has echoes of that with East Kilbride where the Lowland League's leap of faith in admitting them proved justified by their first season performances. Probably the LL also felt it important for its credibility to get a Glasgow side into the competition.

## FASTEST GOAL?

A former Berwick Ranger, Craig Stevenson, may have scored the fastest goal in Scottish football. Stevenson had a short spell at Shielfield at the start of the 2012-13 season before returning to East of Scotland League side Lothian Thistle Hutchison Vale. He scored for LTHV after only four seconds of a midweek match against Heriot Watt University in March this year. Certainly, his Edinburgh club believe it was some sort of record. LTHV went on to win the game 3-0.

## INTERNATIONAL AT SHIELFIELD

Shielfield staged an international match in April with a Sunday game between the Scotland Independent Schools and their England counterparts. England won 4-0 and the match was watched by a crowd of around 120.



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