

COLIN BISHOP

Proposed by: Melanie Bishop

Seconded by: Jenny Louise Stocks

I have been a supporter of Reading Football Club since the late 1950's. I first visited Elm Park with my father and uncle in 1958 when I was eight years old, the match was against Norwich. I was instantly hooked, both my parents were Reading fans and attended most home games. I started following the team away from home regularly in the 1970's, after a couple of years travelling away I got actively involved with Reading Football Supporters Club, the official supporters organisation. In 1975 I was asked by Mick Foster if I would like to join Reading Football Supporters Club Committee. For the first few years I worked in the club shops at Elm Park and stewarded the away coaches. Along with other members of the supporter's club committee I helped to rebuild the Tilehurst End Club Shop after it was destroyed by a fire in 1983 which also coincided with the attempted merger of Reading & Oxford United by Robert Maxwell & Frank Waller. For thirteen years I was responsible for the Supporters Club Quiz team that went on to become National Champions for five consecutive years. For the last ten years of the Supporters Club I held the position of secretary. I have represented Reading Supporters at National level attending annual conferences and regular southern division meetings. I am also a member of the Reading Collectors and Historians Society, I am an avid collector of Reading memorabilia and own an extensive programme collection going back pre WW2. In 2002 STAR became the successor to Reading Football Supporters Club and I continued to be involved, I joined the board originally as a co-opted member for the first year, I then went on to serve on the board for a total of twelve years, when as per the rules I had to stand down for a year after which I sought re-election.

My active involvement with a supporter group is over fifty years, my enthusiasm is just as strong now as it was then, and I feel that I can still actively contribute.

I took over responsibility for the organisation and management of the away travel coaches from Denny Fullbrook in 1999-2000, this involves liaising with the Coach Company, police, motorway service centres, and officials of the team we are to visit. On match days I can be found in The STAR H. Q. where we sell away coach travel tickets and memorabilia, technology now means that we can offer online facilities for both membership and travel, however there is no replacement for interaction with fellow Reading fans reflecting on past glories and dreaming hopefully of those to come. Over the last fifty years I have gained a wealth of experience and I feel that I can use it to good effect not only to promote and support my club but also to develop better opportunities and conditions for my fellow supporters.

