

The Association lost its former supervisor and Honorary President Archie Webster on Saturday 5th July 2008 aged 81 years.

I and many members and former members of the Association along with the wider refereeing family attended the Celebration of Archie's life earlier today and this tribute to him contains substantial extracts of the Eulogy delivered by Drew Fleming from the SFA Referee Committee.

Archie was a member of the Stirlingshire Association for the duration of his refereeing career and was President of Stirlingshire twice. On his retirement from refereeing at the end of Season 1974-75 he became the Fife Association Supervisor, a post he held for 23 seasons. During his time on the committee he was a member of its Executive for 22 years and for over a decade was Vice Chairman to the late Tom Wharton.

Archie's playing career as a goalkeeper took him to Junior level where he played for several clubs including Kilsyth Rangers.

Archie joined the Stirlingshire Association in 1954 and was promoted to the SFA Senior List in 1957-58 as a Class 3A official. His energy and enthusiasm saw him rise quickly through the grades. He was promoted to Class 2 in 1959-60 and to Class 1 in 1962-63 where he remained until he retired at the end of season 1974-75

His talent was soon recognised and he received appointments to many key matches, including the Old Firm, Hearts v Hibs, Dundee v Aberdeen and, being ideally based in Falkirk, games between the Edinburgh clubs and their Old Firm rivals. His domestic assignments included two Scottish Cup Semi-Finals – Motherwell v Celtic (1965) and Hibernian v Rangers (1972).

He was on the FIFA list of Referees for three of his thirteen years as a Grade 1. He refereed four Under-23 matches, three involving Wales and England, and the other Norway v France. At full International level, he refereed Wales v England in the British Championships, Denmark v USSR in a World Cup qualifier but the highlight of his International career came in 1966 when along with Tom Wharton and Willie Syme he went to a tournament in Brazil arranged by the host country when they played selected European countries to give them experience against European opposition with European officials.

Archie's entire refereeing career was spent as a member of the Stirlingshire Association where he was a regular office bearer and was President twice 1960-61 and 1966-67.

Archie did much to promote refereeing in Fife and to ensure that Fife referees were given every opportunity to progress. On a personal level I will never forget my conversation with Archie in what was his last season as Fife Supervisor when he told me after the October Members Monthly Meeting in 1998 that the SFA would be promoting some referees to the Senior List in the middle of the season. Two months later my letter arrived telling me that I had been promoted to Category 1 Assistant Referee.

In these days Supervisor reports were handed out at training and Archie would always append his comment to the SFA Compliments Slip – I still have all 3 reports which I received in the course of that season with Archie's comments. He had clearly decided I had settled in well as the comment on report 3 was "For Info."

Archie was more than just a refereeing colleague to me, he was a friend, neighbour, and bowling team mate. His youngest son Garry, who was also a member of the Association, and I went to school together.

Archie guided many of us in Fife in our refereeing and this was shown by the large attendance of members past and present at the celebration of his life.

The thoughts of the Association go out to Archie's wife Jesmay and his children David, Eleanor, Ruth and Garry and his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

**Colin R. Brown
President
SFA Referees (Fife)
14th July 2008**