

## **A Brief History of Springfield – Motor Racing’s Club for Young People**

With the assistance of Lord Essendon, the club was founded in September of 1961 in Hackney, a much-deprived area of London. Originally situated in the old Missionary building, the club has always been connected with Motor Racing and with the financial assistance of the motor racing community in 1964 the old club building was demolished and totally rebuilt.

Whilst the building work was in progress the club temporarily moved to an old Warehouse, just across the road. After some 18 months the club reopened in the building, which is still in existence today.

In the club’s first year of occupancy in the new building, the main activities for club members were helping to wire the building, plumbing, laying tiles, painting, painting and more painting.

Springfield’s first President Graham Hill was incredibly active and provided great support to the club and the boys until his tragic and untimely passing wherein the baton was passed to Sir Jackie Stewart. Over the past 40 years Sir Jackie has been an outstanding, unwavering, dedicated friend, ambassador and benefactor to the Club.

In the annals of the Club’s history there are many individuals that deserve a mention, Rita Berry, John Brumwell, Mickey Keogh, Peter Jopp, Stephen Herbert, Vibert Murdoch and HRH Prince Michael of Kent to name but a few. However, Sir Jackie summed it up best when writing a tribute to the Club’s co-founder and former Chairman on his passing,

***“I have no fear of contradiction in saying had Anthony Marsh not given of himself so freely to the Springfield Boys Club it would certainly not be in existence today.”***

Anthony Marsh was a well known and well respected F1 track side commentator. He was also a Justice of the Peace. It was in his role as a JP that Anthony saw first hand the results on the youth of the day that a lack of hope, a lack of direction and a lack of opportunities produced. Anthony wanted to make a difference and for almost 40 years he did just that.

Prior to becoming involved with Springfield, he had been a club leader in Camberwell for several years and was invited by what is now London Youth to take charge of the reopening of Springfield.

Following Anthony’s passing, Sir Jackie’s son Paul Stewart gratefully accepted the invitation to join the club as Chairman and assume the mantle. In his time as Chairman Paul has proven he is every bit as passionate and dedicated to the club as Anthony was and so the business of providing opportunities and options to those who are marginalized or excluded goes on and is in good hands.

Over the years the Club has faced many changes and challenges. The club is in Hackney which, like many other inner city areas, is multi-cultural and has high levels of single parent and low income families and has been blighted by drugs, guns and crime, yet despite all this the club manages to remain a safe, friendly, positive and aspiring haven, a much needed centre of activity and learning.



Anthony Marsh (on the left) hard at work interviewing another race winner

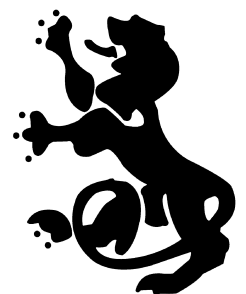
The club is now open for all young people aged between 10 and 16. Currently open 4 evenings a week – with extra activities at weekends and summer camp the club is thriving.

Many of the young people who join the club at 10, go on to being junior and then senior leaders within the club, giving their time freely on a totally voluntary basis. Many of the boys and girls that come through the doors of Springfield, pay tribute to the club and the tremendous influence it has had on their lives and careers.

The annual Club presentation night or 'Bun Fight' is the highlight of our calendar. It is our main prize-giving event and many world motoring and Olympic champions have come along as our guest of honour in the past, to the great delight of our young members.

Apart from ALL the British F1 World Champions, other notable guests of honour have included George Harrison, Simon le Bon, Zara Phillips, Lord Coe, Gary Lineker, Tessa Sanderson, Daley Thomson and many more.

There is always a good turn out by the parents/carers of the club members and the local community. Additionally we are also pleased to welcome friends of the club, some of the club's financial supporters and members of the motor-racing and sporting world to the club.



**Springfield**