PRESS RELEASE

11 March 2020

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**MEMORY GROUP’S THIRD BIRTHDAY**

**NATIONAL FOOTBALL MUSEUM’S AGE-FRIENDLY SESSIONS SET TO EXPAND**

A group which shares experiences and memories though football is celebrating its third birthday.

The National Football Museum’s Sporting Memories programme was launched in spring 2017.

It was set up to enable older sports fans (50+) to meet and reflect on the beautiful game with like-minded visitors.

Sporting Memories has now clocked-up a century of sessions. Its Monday meeting has proved so popular that an extra session will launch on Wednesday mornings.

The group has themed discussions where everyone has the opportunity to listen to and share their memories about amazing players, great games or match-going-anecdotes.

The group has also welcomed guest speakers, with England manager Gareth Southgate making an appearance last year.

The new Wednesday group will launch on 18 March and welcome guest speaker Mike Summerbee. One of the most popular Manchester City players of all time, Summerbee spent a decade at the club during a golden era of success (1965-1975).

Louise Rutherford, National Football Museum Age Friendly Coordinator, said: “Football is a fantastic way to bring people together and get them talking.

“Members enjoy the social aspect and have more face-to-face contact with people of their own age. New friendships have been formed through a mutual love of football.

“We are delighted to reach our third birthday and are launching an extra session on Wednesdays. We’d love anyone who wants to make new friends and talk football to come along.”

Andy Tysoe from Sporting Memories Network CIC & The Sporting Memories Foundation said: “The Sporting Memories Foundation uses the power of sport to engage older adults living with, or at risk of, dementia, depression and loneliness - so basically that's all of us. And it's why our groups are open to all the over-50s.

"In Manchester, we are proud to be working in partnership with the National Football Museum, who host a fortnightly group that, due to its success, has prompted the museum to start up another group.

“The museum is the national guardian of football memories and preserves a wealth of history, stories and memorabilia. Who better for us then, as a charity that runs over 100 reminiscence groups nationally, to have the privilege and pleasure to work with?"

Group member Jo said: “I’ve been coming to Sporting Memories for about 18 months and I absolutely love it. It’s so nice to chat and share our experiences within football.

“A lot of the people come from different backgrounds, we support different teams and it’s so interesting to hear their insights into the game past or present.

“Football has been a constant in my life. I love talking about it, I love hearing about it. If anyone is thinking of coming along to the Wednesday group, I’d say ‘take the plunge’ you’ll have a great time.”

Sporting Memories runs fortnightly at the museum on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10.30am-12noon. Entrance is free with refreshments provided.

People wanting more information about joining the group can call 0161 871 8177 or email [louise.rutherford@nationalfootballmuseum.com](mailto:louise.rutherford@nationalfootballmuseum.com).

**ENDS**

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**Notes to Editors:**

**The National Football Museum:**

The National Football Museum is a registered charity. It was established and its collection acquired thanks to £9.3m investment by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Its vision is to become a leading national museum by 2022, exploring why football is the game of our lives. The museum’s social purpose is to provide equal opportunity for all to enjoy football culture.

In January 2019, the museum became a charging attraction. All visitors except for those living within the Manchester City Council boundary now pay an admission fee. School groups within the Manchester City Council boundary are also admitted free of charge.

Opening Times: Seven days a week 10am – 5pm Last admissions 4.30pm. Open every day excluding Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day. The venue is fully accessible for wheelchair access. Cathedral Gardens, Manchester M4 3BG

[www.nationalfootballmuseum.com](http://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com)