LEICESTER CITY LANDLORDS

Throughout the history of the professional game, players have faced the problem of what to do when they hang up their boots. Many Leicester Fosse and Leicester City players took over pubs, several of which have now disappeared. This season we will be rediscovering and revisiting these 'Players' Pubs' and uncovering the stories about them and about the landlords who ran them.

The Player: Billy Frame

In the 1950s, The Griffin Inn was a well known city-centre pub run by Billy Frame, who played at right-back for Leicester City from 1934-1950. He was signed from the Glaswegian club, Shawcross Juniors, the team that also discovered Frank McLintock many years later. Only five players made more competitive appearances for Leicester City than Billy. He played 459 games for the Club. 220 of these were war time appearances, a club record, seven ahead of Sep Smith.

Billy was a virtual ever-present in the side that won the 2nd Division title in 1937. He was also an ever-present in the Leicester teams that won the Wartime Midland Cup in May 1941 and the Wartime Football League Championship South in December 1941. Both of these cups are in the club's trophy cabinet**.**

After 14 years as first choice right-back Billy was injured in Dec 1948 and didn't play in the FA Cup Final in 1949.He did however play in the vital match at Cardiff which saved Leicester from relegation to Division 3, a week after the FA Cup final He retired in July 1950 and became player-coach at Rugby town until 1953.

Billy (5th from right) at a training session at Filbert Street in 1935/36.

Billy, with manager Frank Womack and captain Sep Smith on the cover of 'Sports Budget', 1937.

The Pub. The Griffin Inn, Belgrave Gate

In 1954, Billy and his wife Agnes took over The Griffin Inn in the centre of Leicester. Built in 1929, this was a double-fronted city -centre pub in Belgrave Gate near to the junction with Charles Street. When Billy ran the pub, it was opposite a long-gone car park at the top of Abbey Street. The area was not a residential one, but the pub was in close proximity to several engineering works, boot and shoe factories, a printing works, a bus garage and a bus depot. It was also handily placed for the Savoy Cinema, the slightly dubious Floral Hall Cinema and the Palace Theatre. A Salvation Army Citadel and a Horse Repository were also close by, as was the Employment Exchange. Billy and Agnes ran the pub until 1958. They then moved to Nottingham and ran pubs there. These were the Cocked Hat and the Rose Grower, both now demolished. Billy died in 1992.

In 2009, the Club was in contact with Agnes who was then 97, providing for her, at her family's request, a collection of photos of Billy's time at Leicester to make an album for her Christmas present.

Griffin today?