

Hibs' fans invited to attend ceremony to unveil a gravestone in honour of former manager Dan McMichael

✘ The St Patrick's branch of the Hibernian Supporters' Club have invited all Hibs' fans to attend a ceremony to unveil a gravestone in honour of former manager Dan McMichael, ahead of Saturday's game against Partick Thistle.

The ceremony will take place at 11.30am in the Eastern Cemetery behind the Famous Five Stand, and Hibs' legend Pat Stanton will do the honours.

New manager Terry Butcher has confirmed that he will be attending the event along with members of the board and the McMichael family.

Dan McMichael played a special role in the history of Hibernian Football Club, and many fans were saddened when it was discovered that he had been buried in an unmarked grave in the cemetery.

A spokesman for the St Pat's said: "We are pleased to be able to announce that we have taken delivery of a magnificent headstone for the legendary Dan McMichael, who held office as Manager, Secretary and Treasurer of our great club. Dan was the last Hibernian Manager to lift the Scottish Cup in 1902 and Scottish League title 1902/3 season and although buried in the Eastern Cemetery, a stone's throw away from The Holy Ground, it is a sad fact that Dan's resting place has until now been unmarked, with no gravestone or inscription to him or his unique service to the Club. St. Patrick's Branch of the Hibernian Supporters Association working hard with Hibernian supporters from near and far will now rectify this. It is only

through the generosity of Hibernian fans that this has been made possible.

“St Pat’s wish to invite all Hibernian Supporters to join us, along with members of the Hibernian F.C. Board, the Hibernian Supporters Association and the McMichael Family, to this event. St. Patrick’s Branch Patron and modern day legend Patrick Gordon Stanton will unveil this stone in honour of Dan. The ceremony will take place in the Eastern Cemetery, Easter Rd, on Saturday 7th December at 11.30 am, prior to the home game against Patrick Thistle. Please look out for more details on here, the Hibernian F.C and St. Pat’s websites and make this a real Hibernian family celebratory occasion.”

Born in Ireland in 1865, Dan was a ship’s carpenter to trade. He moved to Edinburgh in the mid-1890s where lived with his brother-in-law, James ‘Judge’ Murphy. Although he had never played professional football, Dan had been a renowned sprinter in his younger day.

Described as a ‘tall, serious-looking man with a bushy moustache who was never known to speak harshly or ungenerously to anyone, Dan joined Hibs a few years later and filled every role from secretary to treasurer, manager to physio, with the highlight being that 1-0 win over Celtic in the Scottish Cup Final which Dan sportingly agreed would be played at Parkhead following a disaster at Ibrox which claimed the lives of 18 supporters at a Scotland v England game a few weeks previously.

Dan’s Hibs then won the Glasgow Charity Cup beating Celtic 6-2 which meant that the Easter Road Trophy Room held four pieces of silverware, including the Rosebery Cup and the East of Scotland Cup. The following season Hibs won the League Title for the first time, finishing six points ahead of nearest rivals Dundee.

Dan became club secretary for a short spell, but returned to

lead the club for a further 15 years, after his replacement Phil Kelso left to join Arsenal.

As well as being manager, Dan turned his hand to anything and did odd jobs around the ground when his office commitments finished. One day an English journalist visited Easter Road in search of material for an article, and he spotted what he assumed to be the groundsman painting the goalposts. When he asked where he could find Dan McMichael, the reporter was astounded when the 'groundsman' replied that he was talking to him.

Whilst he kept the club in a prominent position, especially during the war, Celtic had overtaken Hibs as the preferred club of the Irish community in Scotland.

The two rivals met again in the 1914 Scottish Cup Final, but on this occasion it was Celtic who emerged triumphant, winning 4-1 after a replay, although accounts of the first game suggested that Hibs had been on top and deserved to win.

By the end of the war, Hibs finances were in a sorry state, and the Glasgow based media took great delight in making fun of the faded and worn Hibs jerseys which looked more yellow than green. Their performances were such that an Easter Road chip shop owner, Jock Ward, had taken to offering fans free fish suppers if the team won at home. His profits were safe as the campaign saw just three win in 19 matches.

Dan's story ended tragically in 1919 when he was one of 100 million victims worldwide of Spanish flu possibly having picked up the infection working in the docks at Leith. He collapsed on his way home from Brockville on February 1, 1919, after a 1-1 draw with Falkirk.

Taken home to be with his wife, Jane at their house at 187 Easter Road, he was confined to bed, where he died peacefully five days later. His funeral was well attended and Hibs directors paid for a wreath in the shape of a broken harp,

reflecting the Irish heritage of the manager and the club.

Dan's football philosophy would go down well at Easter Road today, as he was once quoted as saying "I don't need money to bring stars to Easter Road. Hibs bring out their own stars."

The Edinburgh Reporter will also be at the ceremony and an update on proceedings will appear next week.