

# **Hearts have big plans for their 150th season**

**Hearts' Chair, Ann Budge and the Chair of the Foundation of Hearts, Gerry Mallon, unveiled the first sign of the Club's impending sesquicentennial season.**

The new gate at Gerards Yard features for the first time a specially designed emblem marking 150 Years since Hearts started playing football. Manufactured locally by the club's partner, Hepburn Fabrications, the gate is formed of solid steel with the new emblem forged in aluminium.







Celebrations of this important anniversary will begin towards the start of next season and will feature a range of events and initiatives that will involve the broadest possible cross section of supporters, families and the wider community.

Events will include:

- preseason friendlies
- a festival of family fun and football at Tynecastle
- a series of 'Evening With' events featuring club legends across the years and
- special gala dinners.

Hogmanay 2023 will be celebrated in style with dinners in both the Skyline and the Gorgie Suite and there will be special celebrations as the club welcomes in 2024 when the official anniversary date falls. The first home game in January will be an occasion to hoist the Sesquicentennial Flag above the

stadium for the first time.

Throughout the year, Hearts will celebrate not just well-known stories, but also some unexplored moments in history. The club's recent "Transcribathon" that involved a mini army of volunteers transforming handwritten extracts from Club Minutes' Books from 1874 onwards into digital and searchable documents, has unearthed some fascinating insights into key moments across the decades. These will be shared with supporters and the club will engage with local schools to bring the rich heritage to life.

And Two Halves Productions will stage A War of Two Halves for its final run in November 2024 as well as producing two exciting new historic shows for Fringe 2023 and Fringe 2024. This show was staged previously to great acclaim.



Hearts Memorial Haymarket November 2019. Photo: Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)

In anticipation of the anniversary, the Club and the

Foundation of Hearts have been working on plans to improve the Memorial at Haymarket in time for this year's Remembrance service. And representatives are in advanced discussions on the creation of a Maroon Mile which will run from the monument and Tynecastle Park. Further details of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary programme and dates will be released during pre-season.

Ann Budge said: "We all know that some 10 years ago, there was a real danger that Hearts would not have reached this magnificent milestone. The incredible backing of supporters and the Foundation of Hearts changed history and now, as the largest fan-owned club in the UK, we will celebrate 150 years as a Scottish football icon, safe in the knowledge that the future of the club has been secured for future generations to come. "

Gerry Mallon, Chair of the Foundation of Hearts said: "Without Ann Budge and the amazing fans of Heart of Midlothian, it's very doubtful if our club would have had the privilege of celebrating its 140<sup>th</sup>, let alone its 150<sup>th</sup>, anniversary. What a story this has been and what a moment we have reached together. A milestone like this must be properly celebrated and the programme which the club has so expertly drawn up will give all of us the opportunity both to reflect on our rich history and to enjoy our present – made all the more special by the enormous challenges we have faced and overcome. Everyone involved with the Foundation can stand tall today and rightly be proud that the legacy of those 150 years has been upheld and can be passed on to new generations. It's very fitting that the first celebration focuses on these gates, a great metaphor for throwing open the story of our club and ushering in a bright, positive future."







Tynecastle Park. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam

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