

# CATHY DUNN: TOFFEE LADY

Molly Bushell, the original 'Toffee Lady', set up a cottage industry making cough sweets in Everton in the mid-1700s, close to the lock-up tower which adorns our Club badge. Sometimes referred to as Mother Noblett, The Toffee Lady is, of course, now firmly ensconced in Goodison Park folklore. The depiction of Bushell has evolved over the decades. One of the most famous iterations was created by *Liverpool Echo* cartoonist George Green. His Toffee Lady caricature appeared in the matchday programme in the 1950s and on the front page of the *Football Echo*.

The Toffee Lady mascot as a regular matchday presence came in the early 1950s under the auspices of the Everton Supporters' Federation (later changed to Everton Supporters' Club). As a rule, it selected the daughters of the Federation members, typically they would serve a multi-season term before passing the honour on to a successor.

In the late summer of 1966, there was a knock on the door of James and Patricia Dunn's house on Claudia Street. The Supporters' Federation's secretary was calling to ask if their 13-year-old daughter, Cathy, would take over from Sheila Radcliffe, who was bowing out after six years in post. The answer was an emphatic 'yes'. Cathy had begun her Blues indoctrination in the Gwladys Street for FA Youth Cup games and even watched some matches from the renowned Boys' Pen. Having inherited the velvety dress, embroidered apron and blue basket, she debuted in her new role in a home match in October.



The matchday routine saw Cathy get changed at home, report to the players' entrance in the Main Stand, go up the tunnel and distribute sweets to the supporters on the terraces. Once the players ran out to *Z-Cars*, she would hot-foot it down Goodison Road to take her complimentary seat in the Gwladys Street stand (a perk of the role), still dressed in her uniform.



Cathy also attended matches as the Toffee Lady at Old Trafford, the Victoria Ground and Elland Road – including Manchester United's home for the 1968 FA Cup semi-final. She appeared on stage at several Supporters' Club functions – joining her hero Jimmy Gabriel on one occasion. She even enjoyed a brush with TV fame, appearing in the *How We Used To Live* educational TV series as the Toffee Lady (earning £5).

Cathy gave up the coveted role in 1974 when she was pregnant. Sisters Joanne and Gillian Francis subsequently donned the famous outfit into the 1980s. Mother-of-three and now Cathy Tierney, she works (whisper it) in the Anfield ticket office – this means she is free at weekends to watch her beloved Blues as a Park End stand Season Ticket Member. Her successors continue to distribute Everton mints to the Goodison faithful, donning the iconic blue and white dress she once proudly wore.