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Meet Ariff Ahmad: The Boro mad fan who founded and runs Singapore Official Middlesbrough FC Supporters Club

Since Bryan Robson was appointed Boro manager in 1994, Ariff has followed the club's fortunes from afar

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By [Dominic Shaw](#) Boro Editor 12:04, 1 AUG 2014 | UPDATED 12:46, 1 AUG 2014

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He may well live in Singapore and has never visited the Riverside but in Ariff Ahmad, Boro have a loyal fan.

From the moment Bryan Robson swapped Manchester for Middlesbrough in 1994, Boro could boast of a new international supporter in As. and Ariff has followed the fortunes of his adopted heroes ever since.

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Ariff, who was born in Malaysia but now lives in Singapore, wanted to share his passion so went about setting up the Singapore Official Middlesbrough FC Supporters Club 10 years ago.

And avidly following the club from afar, the 39-year-old says he wants the people of Teesside to know that "Boro exist in the Far East".

When he's not organising group gatherings or meeting up with former players and club greats including Steve Gibson himself, Ariff is messaging his fellow members alerting them of the latest news from the Riverside.

In an occasional look at Boro fans around the world, Ariff, a IT system engineer by day, talks all things MFC from his home in Singapore.

Why Boro?

I was initially a supporter of Manchester United in the early 1980s from the age of nine.

I then started shifting support to [Middlesbrough](#) in 1994 when legend Bryan Robson joined Boro.

From that moment I have continued faithfully with Boro and established the Supporters Club in 2004 after moving to Singapore in 2000.



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** Bryan Robson**

Why Boro is the question that is often asked of me from fans and journalists.

I've never been to the Riverside but Boro is part of my blood.

I wish one day I can visit the Riverside with my family.

The cost to go there is expensive unless Mr Gibson want to sponsor me and family. Just kidding.

How many people are involved in the supporters club?

We have about 20 of us in the group including people from Singapore and people from Middlesbrough who now live here.

Our club members gather local supporters and also some from Middlesbrough who now live in Singapore.



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Our supporters club is not as big as other top teams but we want people to know that Boro exist in the Far East.

I'm now assisting some Boro fans in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia too.



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We are very proud of that in Singapore.

I have met with chairman Steve Gibson several times as well as a range of former Boro players in Singapore.

The last time I met Mr Gibson was in 2008 before Boro were relegated.

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I have also met Craig Hignett and Neil Maddison during a tournament in Singapore.



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I also work closely with our Supporters Club chairman Peter Schott (Shooter), he is from Middlesbrough.

Do you ever get the opportunity to watch Boro?

We all used to gather to watch the games live before we were relegated but the local cable TV never shows any Championship matches.

From that moment I just watch the news and listen to Boro games on the radio.



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Just recently the cable TV channel has brought back Championship matches but not as many as Premier League.

We can only watch it if there is a Boro game live, most of the games are based on what Sky Sports pick.



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I feel that we are one of the candidates to get promoted this season.

Pre-season has been successful with good results and I'm confident that we are on the right track.

Once again, Mr Gibson has given the club his best shot.

Who is your favourite all-time player?

[Juninho](#) because of his influence on the team.



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He played with his heart, not for money. The moment he cried on the pitch when we [won the Carling Cup](#) proved that.

Who is your favourite current player?

George Friend.

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He will throw his body into every game to make sure Boro win. He will be a Boro legend one day.

Do you follow Boro from the other side of the world? Are you part of a Boro supporters group from afar?

If so, get in touch on social media by following @GazetteBoro or email dominic.shaw@trinitymirror.com.

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