



NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2016

ANNUAL DINNER

Many of those who attended this year's Annual Dinner at the Windy Hill Social Club on Wednesday 27 September were of the opinion that this was among the best ever held. Over 180 members and guests attended this year's event which was presided over by President Barry Capuano and MC'd by Simon Madden who did a great job in achieving some sense of order given the enthusiasm, chatter and laughter of those present. He also managed to keep things on track getting through a full agenda on time and with his own brand of humour adding to the festive spirit. One example of this was when he asked all present to raise their hand if they had fathered gold medallist at this year's Olympics in Rio. Max Crow's hand went up to great applause and acclaim. Simon then asked those present to raise their hands if they had watched Kim Brennan's win and celebrations immediately afterwards. Almost every hand went up amidst much laughter as those present remembered Kim's fantastic victory and Max's own celebrations which followed.

EFC Chairman Lindsay Tanner, CEO Xavier Campbell and GM Brenton Humphries were in attendance at this year's dinner along with Board Members Paul Cousins, Catherine Lio and Simon Madden. A large number



of representatives from other AFL Past Player Associations also attended.

The main theme of this year's Annual Dinner was to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the 1946 premiership. Only 2 members of this team are still alive, they being Jack Jones and

Harold Lambert. Jack Jones was an apology for this year's Dinner as he is holidaying in Queensland with his family. Harold was in attendance and his interview with Barry Capuano was a real highlight. Harold clearly showed he is still very much on the ball at the great age of 94 and provided some wonderful insights into his life and achievements. Barry presented Harold with a certificate in recognition of the 70th anniversary the Premiership win.

Another highlight in proceedings was the presentation of two Debut Guernsey presentations. Sean Wellman presented Scott Lucas with his Debut Guernsey and Mark McVeigh presented Andrew Welsh with his. All presenters and recipients made outstanding speeches and their absolute love for the EFC shone through brightly as did their real appreciation of the opportunities that their involvement with the Club had provided them and the lifelong friendships they made.

Once again this year, it was good to see an excellent representation of players from the 2000 era at this year's function. Attendees included Jason Johnston, Joel Reynolds, Joe Misiti, Scott Lucas, Adam Ramanaukus, Sean Wellman, Mark McVeigh (down from Sydney), Mark Bolton, Andrew Welsh, Matthew Lloyd, Mark McVeigh and Dean Solomon.



Andrew Welsh, Mark McVeigh, Dean Solomon & Joel Reynolds

Others who travelled from interstate for the function included Stuart Barclay, Gary O'Donnell and Fred Gallagher all down from Queensland.

Another group recognised during the night were 3 of our longest serving trainers. Rob Destradi, Ken Box and Charlie Italia have all provided over 25 fantastic years of service to the EFC. They received a great round of applause by all present many of whom they would have massaged and assisted over the years.

Our comedian this year was Darren Carr who did an outstanding job keeping everyone highly entertained for over 30 minutes. His repartee with Simon Madden had everyone in fits of laughter as did the "debut" stage performance of Joe Misiti as the ventriloquist's dummy (see picture). Joe played his part brilliantly and received great acclaim from the audience despite most people having to reach for the handkerchiefs to dry their eyes from the tears of laughter. Well done Joe.



This event continues to grow year by year and is a real highlight. It's readily apparent to all present just how strong the bonds are that have been built up over the years and clearly demonstrates the strength of this part of the EFC. The Association now has over 380 members across Australia.

Winners of our Annual Special Effort drawn at the dinner were:

1 st Prize	Russell Blew
2 nd Prize	Nick Neophitou
3 rd Prize	Bill Duckworth
4 th Prize	Gary Fenton
5 th Prize	Joel Taualii
6 th Prize	Greg Bell
7 th Prize	Maurice Boyse
8 th Prize	Megan Gross
9 th Prize	Neil Evans
10 th Prize	Mal Pascoe

The Silent Auction was a great success and a return in excess of \$2,300 was achieved.

We greatly appreciate the commitment of all of the donors to our Annual Special Effort and Silent Auction prizes.

WHAT SOME PLAYERS OF THE 1960'S HAD TO FACE



I freaked out about the army

EXCUSE **LINDSAY MCGIE** for not watching when his former club Essendon plays the Western Bulldogs today in a game commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, where 18 Australians were killed on August 18, 1966.

McGie, 71, struggles to watch today's football, wondering how the code could be "cannibalised" into the "shambles" it has become over the past decade.

"I didn't think it was possible to cannibalise a game to that degree — nothing like the game I grew up with," McGie said.

"I grew up watching the great **JOHN COLEMAN** and **BILL HUTCHISON** when I was a kid, the magnificent **BOBBY SKILTON** in the 1960s or **BARRIE ROBRAN**, **RUSSELL EBERT** and **MALCOLM BLIGHT** when I moved to Adelaide."

McGie played 31 games for Essendon between 1964-69 as a centre half-back before around a seven-month stint in 1967 with the 6th battalion, five months after a group of just over 100 from the same outfit took on and helped defeated a Viet Cong force estimated at well over 1000.

He won Essendon's best first-year player in 1964 and remains proud of the achievement.

"The only problem I was actually the only first-year player at the club, the only time in VFL history a side has had only one first-year player," McGie laughed.

Friendly and on the outside not obviously scarred by Vietnam, McGie credits football for keeping his life in order when he returned from the war, one he considers "a 10-year waste of human life, time and money".



Football kept him busy and gave him some regimentation, unlike some others who drifted. And it gave him the chance to play on legends such as **DARREL BALDOCK** and **ROYCE HART**, plus a Fitzroy centre half-forward named **RALPH ROGERSON**, who McGie thought was a superstar.

"I was so freaked out about being drafted that in 1965 I walked away from football for a while. I had a job with the ANZ Bank in Essendon, I played footy and cricket on weekends, had a good family and good mates. What did I want to go in the army for?"

"But back then I did think we were doing the right thing and that the protesters were ratbags. Now I think it was a pointless waste of life, time and money and that Iraq was the same."

Article courtesy Herald Sun August 21st 2016

Lindsay's spirit highlights the traumas that a number of VFL players faced due to the Vietnam War, with Essendon having the most players called up, namely: Greg Perry, Ian Anderson, Bill Thompson, Keith Gent, Ian Payne and Lindsay McGie. Obviously all of these players' football and personal careers were affected by their war service and in the case of Keith Gent quite significantly, as he was wounded in action. We applaud all of these players who with great courage represented our country in this ridiculous war.

OBITUARIES

We are saddened to report the passing of three long standing members of our Association since our last Newsletter.

Past Player Bob Suter

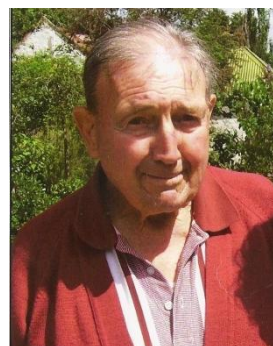
Bob played 22 games with the club between 1956 and 1958. Bob was recruited from Broadford.

Past Official Jim Matthews

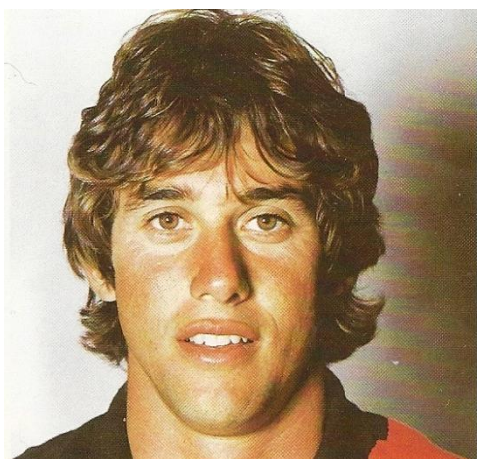
Jim was a Vice-President of the club from 1971 to 1975 and did a lot of recruiting for the club over many years.

Past Official Jack Feain

Jack commenced working for the club in 1954 as the First Aid Officer for the U19 team and later did many years of strapping for the senior team. He was our oldest member at the time of his passing, reaching the magnificent age of 98.



WHO IS THIS PAST PLAYER?



Neil Clarke

No. 8

Neil (Nobby) Clarke Neil was recruited from Ringwood and played from 1977 till 1987 playing 135 games. He was a very reliable defender/utility player who gave the Bombers great service during his time at the club and was a valuable member of the 1984 and 1985 Premiership teams.

He was rewarded with the Best Clubman Award in 1984. During the off seasons he took on pro-running to improve his fitness level, which indicated his great commitment to the club.

He unfortunately passed away in tragic circumstances in 2003

ASSISTANCE & WELFARE PROGRAM FOR MEMBERS

As mentioned in previous Newsletters, we have developed an assistance and welfare program that all members are able to tap into and receive support from Essendon people covering a wide variety of services, ensuring that you receive not only the best available service or advice but also at the best available price. This enables us to develop a wide networking opportunity that all participants and suppliers can benefit from.

The following covers the areas that we are able to offer to members, however we would point out that we would like to expand the whole program to cover as many areas as possible, and we therefore encourage any members who feel that they can contribute to the program to contact us as soon as possible.

In most of the areas covered below, we have a number of experts in each field, and upon enquiry from members, we will supply you with the names of each of the experts in your selected field to enable you to talk with each so that you can determine who you feel comfortable with before committing yourself.

Areas covered:

Accounting	Leasing
Business Advice	Legal
Building Design & Development	Luggage
Building Materials	Mortgage Assistance
Career Advice	Motor Vehicles
Cleaning-Office & Commercial	Property Construction
Commercial Equipment & Finance Broking	Real Estate
Counselling	Retail Electrical & Whitegoods
Education	Retirement Village Advice
Energy Management	Statistics
Employment Opportunities	Stock & Station Agent
Estate Planning	Superannuation
Financial Advice	Taxation
Government Issues	Travel
Health	Wealth Management
Insurance	Wine

As can be seen from the above, there is a vast opportunity to expand the assistance available to our members and we will add any other areas of assistance as they become available from various sources.

At this stage we have not set up a central contact point for any enquiries, so any initial enquiries should be directed to Barry Capuano.

BOMBERS BAREFOOT BOWLS

Our second annual Barefoot Bowls Day is planned for Friday February 17th 2017 at the Essendon Bowling Club. You are invited to enter a team of three players in the challenge for cash prizes and other awards. A \$15.00 team entry fee will apply.

Your Association seeks your support to make this another great social and fun occasion for members which is sponsored by our Major Sponsor, Sovereign Financial.

You don't need to have played bowls to join in the event and bowls will be available for those who do not have their own bowls.


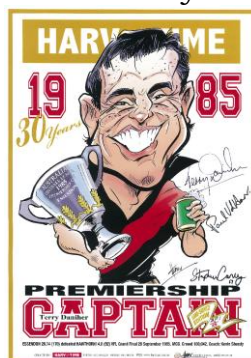
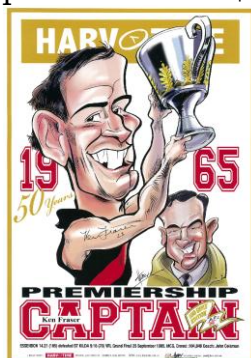
All entries and enquiries should be directed to Graham Leydin on mobile 0409161772 or email graham.leydin@bigpond.com Payment can be made on the day.

Team entry details will be emailed to members in mid-January.

Registration of teams will close on Monday February 6th. Register early as team numbers are limited.

SPECIAL MEMORABILIA AVAILABLE


We had produced in 2015 special commemorative caricature posters of the 50th Anniversary of the 1965 Premiership win, signed by the Captain Ken Fraser, and the 30th Anniversary of the 1985 Premiership win, signed by the Captain Terry Daniher. These posters would make great Christmas presents for family members or friends and are available for \$50 each. Limited copies are still available. Premiership Club WEG posters of Premiership teams are also available at \$15 each, a whole set of the 16 team posters can be purchased for \$250. Please contact Barry Capuano if you would like copies.



Invitation

BOMBERS BAREFOOT BOWLS

Date	Friday February 17th
Time	5.30pm - 10.30pm
Venue	Essendon Bowls Club
Format	Two Bowl Triples Teams of Three Limit of 14 Teams
Event	Six by Six Each team six games of six ends Modified rules for quick play Team scoring and bonus points Player coaching and support



- Sausage Sizzle
- Finger Food
- Refreshments
- Cash Prizes and awards

Further information
via website, newsletter, email

MILESTONES & ACHIEVEMENTS

The following members have achieved or will achieve significant age milestones between the 1st September and 31st December 2016.

60 years of age

Gerard Dillon

Brad Teal

70 years of age +

Gary Crouch (70)

Graeme Jenkin (71)

Geoff Pryor (71)

Robert Wilson (71)

Kevin Coleman (72)

Charlie Payne (72)

Ian Stevenson (72)

Barry Davis (73)

Kevin Egan (73)

Noel Raitt (73)

Glenda Wade (73)

Garry Fenton (74)

Robert Horgan (74)

Russell Blew (75)

Alf King (75)

George Spero (75)

Barry Capuano (76)

Barry Matthews (76)

Max Byers (77)

Paul Doran (77)

George Moloney (77)

Don Nicolson (77)

Ron Clarke (78)

Noel Freeman (78)

David Shaw (78)

Trevor Elliott (79)

Les Pridham (79)

Col Hebbard (80)

Robert Dunlop (81)

John Kilby (81)

Hugh Mitchell (82)

John Towner (83)

Robert Fox (85)

Max Nixon (85)

Ken Reed (85)

Brian Gilmore (87)

Merna Slattery (88)

90 years of age +

Noel Allanson (91)

Jack Jones (92)

Gordon Yea (92)

We hope you all have many more years of health and happiness.

CONGRATULATIONS

Sue Brennan

Sue Brennan, the daughter of Max and Sue Crow, made the country proud with her magnificent win in the single sculls race at the Rio Olympic Games in August. We are sure that all members anxiously watched the final of the event, as Sue had struggled a little in her heat in trying conditions, however she showed great courage and strength to lead the final early and held her position to the end. It was a fantastic performance, well done Sue.



Alan Stevens

We also congratulate Alan Stevens, a long serving member of the club and our Association in receiving the Alec Gillon Award by AFL Victoria. The Alec Gillon Award is awarded to honorary club officials in recognition of outstanding service to a club or football in general. AFL Victoria considered nominations from every TAC and VFL Clubs in which all nominations were ratified by the Chair of AFL Victoria and its Board.

Alan was presented with his award at the VFL men's and Women's Best & Fairest evening at Crown Palladium on Monday 12th September.

Alan has given great service in many roles to the club for over 50 years, including as senior time keeper for many years, in a voluntary position, and followed on a family tradition as his father, Ron, also acted as time keeper for many years prior to Alan joining him as his assistant later on.

Clubs survive on volunteer workers and Alan epitomises this great work, well done Alan on receiving this prestigious award.

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Although the appeal against the 34 players suspended due to the supplements saga was not successful, it was great to see that of the twelve current Essendon players suspended, 10 have recommitted themselves to continue playing with the club.



All of these players have had to go through three years of drama and turmoil and have all handled their situation extremely well and no doubt their return will see the club improve greatly over the next few years. It is now time for all of us to embrace the future to ensure that the club quickly becomes a force again in the AFL.

A group of the suspended players train at St Bernards during the year.

Our Association has a close working relationship with the club and is continuing to develop programs that will benefit all past players in the future. In this respect, the program that we have been working on for some time in developing a wide spread networking program of assistance and welfare for past players and officials is now ready to launch, and the details are shown separately in the Newsletter. This program will see our Association leading the way in assistance for past players and officials and we encourage you all to embrace the program to ensure that we maximise the many benefits offered by those involved in assisting us all.

THE DRC GOLF DAY

The DRC Golf Day will be held at Sandhurst Golf Club on Thursday 8th December, commencing at 8.00am.

A number of current and past players will be playing in the event and any of our members who would like to attend are welcome. You can attend the lunch for \$50 by contacting Aysha Ward at the EFC on 8340 2163.

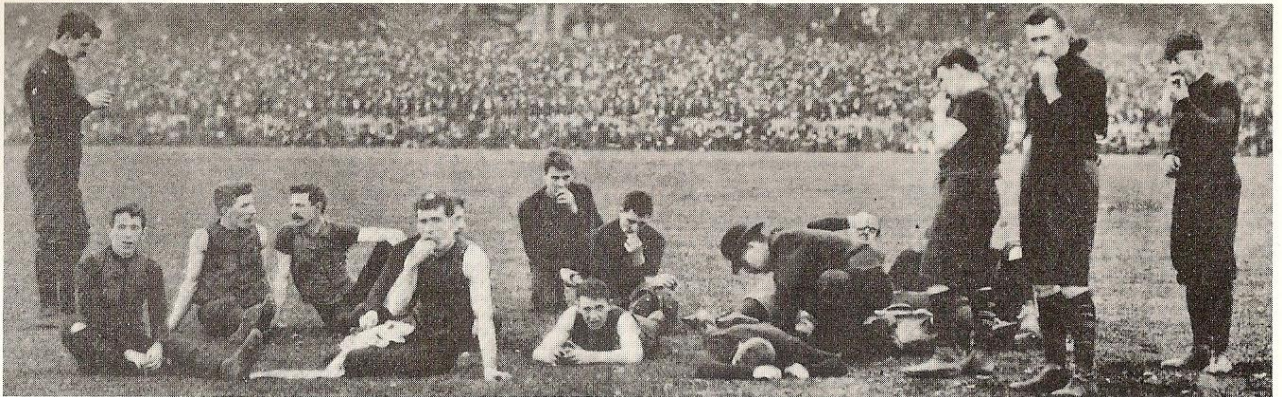
All proceeds of the golf day will be paid directly into the EFC Past Players Foundation Trust, so this is a very important event for our Association.

The DRC do a fantastic job in supporting our Association.

FACTS FIGURES & OTHER TRIVIA

On July 28th 1984 heavy rain fell and combined with strong winds some bizaare scoring occurred. The 12 sides playing on that day amassed a total of 73 goals 139 points between them, an average of 48 points per team. However in 1960 in a game at the Western Oval between Footscray and Essendon, both sides were goalless at half time, but Essendon won the game 4.11.35 to 4.2.26.

How times have changed!



Three quarter time lemons for Essendon in the 1901 grand final.

This game was played at the South Melbourne Football Ground in front of 30,031 spectators, Essendon defeating Collingwood, 6.7.43 to 2.4.16. During this game a place kick goal by Albert Thurgood against the wind, was measured after the game at an incredible 93 yards (85m).

John Coleman taking a mark in his first game for Essendon in 1949 against Hawthorn in which he kicked 12 goals and went on to be one of the greatest players to have played the game. Note the difference in the Hawthorn jumper to what it is today.



During the 1921 season a sensational incident occurred in the Richmond game. When Richmond scored a behind, the ball was thrown back from the crowd punctured, some larrikin having pierced it with a knife. Albert Day, the Essendon full back, saw the ball flat and kicked it gently from the boundary to Umpire Williamson to inspect it. To Day's surprise his Tiger opponent intercepted the ball and ran in to score a goal. To everyone's amazement the score was allowed. Unfortunately we lost the game.

The Captain, Jack Clarke, introduces Essendon players to Princess Alexandra prior to the Preliminary Final in 1959.



Essendon won 8.9.57 to Carlton 7.8.50 and went on to play Melbourne in the Grand Final, but were beaten 17.13.115 to 11.12.78.

This is the Goal Umpires score card for the Qualifying Final against the Kangaroos in 2000. A very substantial performance. The team went on to win the flag.

RESULT OF MATCH

Played at McG on 12 August 2000

	CLUB: <u>Essendon</u>			CLUB: <u>Kangaroos</u>		
	GOALS	BEHINDS	POINTS	GOALS	BEHINDS	POINTS
10	9	1	55	4	2	26
20	15	6	96	6	3	39
30	25	9	159	9	4	58
FINAL SCORES	31	12	198	11	7	73

[Signature] GOAL UMPIRE [Signature] GOAL UMPIRE

To be completed and handed to Field Umpire who shall forward to League Office with Match Report

AFLCPP&OA BOWLS DAY – SUNDAY NOVEMBER 15TH

“BOMBERS DO IT AGAIN”



Altona Bowling Club was again the venue for the second of this year's bowls competition available for all AFL clubs. Unfortunately a few clubs were unable to participate but this was offset by several clubs – Bulldogs, Geelong, Melbourne, and the mighty Bombers entering two teams. Fourteen teams in all were rostered for competition. - including a combined team “the Allies”.

Despite heavy overnight rain and a bleak grey morning all teams assembled optimistically for pre-game socialisation and briefing regarding the day's organisation. A convivial and warm atmosphere prevailed as old foes caught up with each other to chat about the season past, renew friendships, compare aches and pains and exchange footy gossip.

Play commenced in cool overcast conditions at 10.30am with all teams occupying seven links of the excellent Altona facility. Four rounds of eight ends were to be played over the duration of the day – two in the morning session and two after the lunch break. Teams were to be awarded ten points for a win, five points for a tie and one point for each end won.

With all the formalities out of the way a wide collection of uniforms, hats, tracksuit tops and windbreakers took to the links. Soon the competitive instincts came to the fore with friendly banter, good natured “stirring” and high spirited energy prominent on all rinks. Action aplenty as players aimed to provide consistent and steady bowling to make each bowl count.

After two rounds the Altona Bowling Club graciously provided a lovely two course lunch with a few quiet beers also available to quench the thirst and energise players for the afternoon session. Some active review and reflection of performance with usual excuses and “unlucky stories “. Teams with two wins at this stage were in a good position to challenge for the Ken McKaige Cup – scores indicated several clubs were in contention.

Play continued keenly after lunch however the forecasted weather conditions were closing in and it was not long after the third round was completed that the rain bucketed down and everyone made for cover. Soon the heavy rain had saturated the greens and they were awash with puddles. Shortly after play was abandoned for the day and all players adjourned to the bar for warmth, refreshments and to eagerly await the collation of results.

On the aggregate of matches and “ends” won over the three completed games Essendon (1) was the only undefeated team - a great effort. Richmond closely followed with Geelong (2) filling third place. Congratulations to our Essendon (1) Team members who won the coveted Ken McGaige Shield after 3 convincing game performances – To Ron Clarke, Geoff Barber, Alby Wilson, Graeme Johnston – well done boys.

TEAM RESULTS

(Essendon 1) Graeme Johnston (Skip), Ron Clarke, Geoff Barber, Alby Wilson

Rd 1 – Essendon	8	def	St Kilda	4
Rd 2 – Essendon)	12	def	Nth Melb	4
Rd 3 - Essendon	7	def	Footscray (2)	6

(Essendon 2) Brian Lanigan (Skip) Ian Graham , Graham Leydin , Kevin Harwood

Rd 1 – Essendon	8	drew with	Richmond	8
Rd 2– Essendon	6	lost to	Melb.(2)	11
Rd 3 -Essendon	5	drew with	Melb. (1)	5

Many thanks to our EFCPP&OA members above who participated. I hope those who represented the club with great pride enjoyed the experience and camaraderie – and will continue to be regulars.

The next “bowls challenge” will be in - **2017 on Sunday March 19th** - once again at Altona.

Hope you might like to join as we would like to enter three teams if possible. No cost involved. Our participation is generously sponsored by your EFCPP&OA. Graham Leydin.

CARING FOR OTHERS AT ITS VERY BEST.

Sylvia Kirwan, the wife of the late Ron Kirwan, has for many years regularly fed and entertained aged care groups at her magnificent home in Strathmore. Sylvia organises a group of volunteers who cook the food to serve to the groups and make them feel most welcome. All of those attending greatly enjoy the day and are overwhelmed by the generosity of Sylvia and her volunteers.

For all of those who knew Ron well, he had some very interesting and bizarre collections, one being his collection of hats that he purchased in various places around the world, many being purchased on end of season football trips.

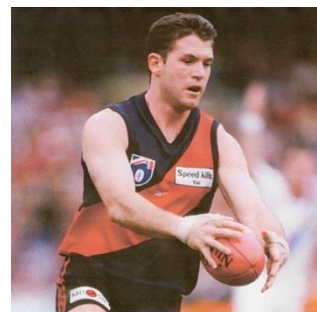
Sylvia has supplied some of these hats to the guests to wear at her last function in October and you can see the enjoyment on their faces in the photo.



Sylvia, you do a fantastic job in making older people's lives much more pleasurable. Congratulations on your great work.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Name: Barry Young
Years Played: 1994-1999
Games Played: 76
Number Worn: 35
Recruited From: Richmond



What did you do, football wise, following your playing days with Essendon?

I worked with Triple M Radio for 3 years following my retirement as well as a casual role on match days in the box with Sheeds for 3 years.

What job/jobs did you pursue following your playing days, including what you are doing currently?

I was fortunate enough to have bought a small business called Jaspa Herington P/L which manufactures pillows, quilts & underlays in March 1991 while still playing. I worked in the business while playing but it never really became a priority until I retired at the end of 2000. I have owned and run the business now for 25 and a half years

Are you still working? Yes

Have you suffered with any post football injuries and have any required surgery?

I have had continuous knee issues since I retired which has reduced my activity in certain sports that involve too much running.

Do you have any ongoing medical problems?

No

What are your thoughts on the modern game, and how would you change any of the areas that you don't like!

I like the speed of the game now with the continuous fast movement, it creates more scoring with the teams that get it right. I hate the flooding that some teams turn to during play. It creates a negative impact on the game and is very hard to watch.

Who were your mates in your playing days with Essendon, do you keep in touch?

Mark Mercuri, Mark McVeigh, Gavin Wanganeen, Mark Harvey, Bomber Thompson, Steve Allesio. Yes have kept in contact

Who were the players you most admired in your playing days at Essendon?

For Essendon: Gavin Wanganeen, Sean Denham

Other teams: Mark Riccuto,

Do you have any comments that you would like to pass on about your time at Essendon?

It was great to be a part of such a high quality club with great tradition & culture. It has been badly hurt over the last 4 years but I have no doubt we are starting to head in the right direction and are now on our way back to become the sporting power house we once were.

SPONSORS & DONORS

Our Association would struggle to survive without the generous support we receive from Sponsors and Donors and we greatly appreciate the support you give to us.

Our Major Sponsor, Sovereign Financial, continue to support us and supply a great service to our Association in many areas, and we encourage all of our members to utilise them for any of their needs, as outlined in our past player assistance and welfare program.



We also encourage members to support all of our other Sponsors and Donors, as listed below:

Bill Jacobs Pty Ltd
Alan McGillivray & Surfers International Apartments
The Kirwan family & Top Shelf Management
The DRC Committee. DRC Golf Day
Iain Findlay & Victoria Golf Club
Ben Doolan & Australian Transit Group
Joel Reynolds & Moonee Valley Racing Club
ELK Golf
Jan Morris & Condor Corporate Leisure
Bay 101 Café & Restaurant
Brad Teal & Brad Teal Real Estate
Howard Staehr & Mt Stapylton Wines
Barry Besanko-Various items
Dan Eddy-Dick Reynolds book.
Doug Ackerly-John Coleman book
Paul Connors & the AFL Premiership Players Club
Ray Sneddon-Signed past player photographs
EFC-Tickets to Crichton Medal
Don Gross-Dustin Fletcher signed book.

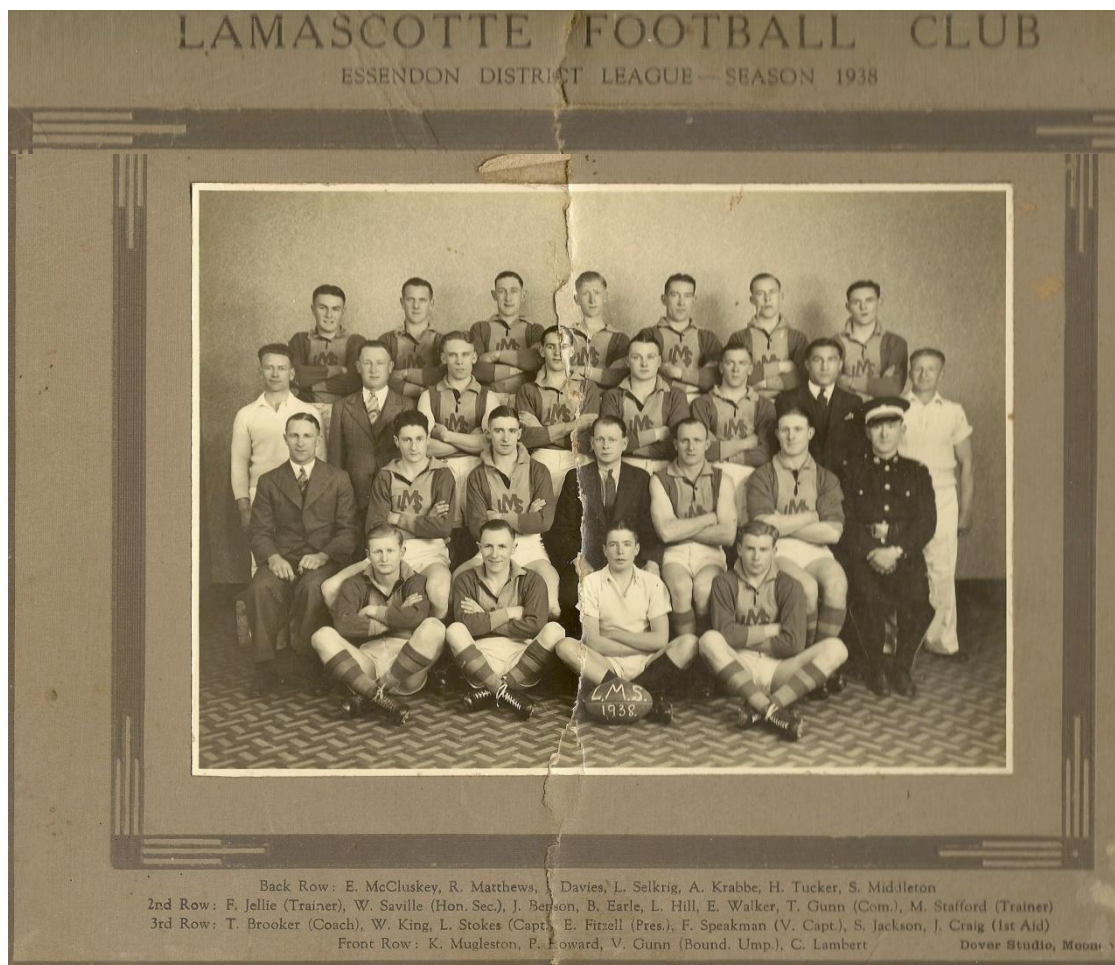
AN ANNUAL 2000 PREMIERSHIP CATCHUP

The EFC 2000 premiership team conducted their annual catch up on Saturday the 5th of November. This is an annual event that is held in November every year and is something that we all look forward to. This years event was organised by Matthew Lloyd at Platform 28 in the Docklands. As the event coincided with Emirates Stakes Day, Lloyd organised our own bookmaker who it is fair to say made a good profit on the day. Only 4 players from the premiership team were unable to attend and a special shout out to Dean Solomon who travelled from the Gold Coast to get to the event. Looking forward to next year already.



These are the type of functions that continue to build the history and culture of the club.

AN INTERESTING OLD PHOTOGRAPH



Tom Brooker, who coached the EFC Under 19 team from 1950 to 1957 is seated in the second front row on the left hand end, and Chris Lambert, who played with the EFC 1939-1942 and 1944-51, playing 137 games and a member of the 1946 Premiership Team, is seated on the right hand end of the front row.

A LITTLE BIT OF NOSTALGIA

Gordon Yea has been a long standing member of our Association, and although he never played senior football, he has been very supportive.



AN EXTRACT FROM THE 2016 GRAND FINAL RECORD ON OUR OLDEST PAST PLAYER



HAROLD LAMBERT Silent Assassin

The AFL/VFL's oldest living premiership player is known as a man of few words, but he opened up to **BEN COLLINS**.

Essendon's greatest era was dominated by three Australian Hall of Fame Legends – Dick Reynolds, Bill Hutchison and John Coleman – but Collingwood contemporary, later media megastar, Lou Richards often highlighted the importance of another unique Bomber.

“The meanest player they had at Essendon, and certainly the most underrated player of all time, was Harold Lambert,” Richards wrote in his 1963 book *Boots And All*.

While Coleman, Reynolds and Hutchison formed an extraordinary offensive triumvirate, Lambert was the Bombers' best negator, and perhaps their most self-sacrificing team man.

As much as he kept superstar opponents quiet, Lambert was so quiet that Richards observed “he wouldn't speak on the ground”.

Ex-teammates would attest that Lambert was, in football terms, a kind of silent assassin; and that

he was similarly soft-spoken off the field – all of which actually spoke volumes of his humble nature.

Former Essendon coach Kevin Sheedy is one of many to have a soft spot for soldier-footballer Lambert, whom he hails as “the silent knight of Essendon”.

But in an interview with the *AFL Record*, the Dons great was happy to chat and reminisce.

Now 94, Lambert is the oldest living premiership player and oldest Bomber overall.

“G'day Ben, how-ya-goin' y' all-right?” came the Jack Dyer-esque greeting. We're seated in the living room at Lambert's Essendon home, about 2.5km from the Bombers' spiritual home at Windy Hill.

Lambert started building the house by hand in 1949 and moved into it at the start of 1950 – both premiership years.

He and his late wife Marie, who died a decade ago, had three daughters, who have produced

four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

“My youngest daughter (Anita) would've been a star in women's football now,” Lambert volunteered. “She could kick as far as me!”

And her father could kick a long ball.

Lambert was a September specialist. World War II service restricted him to 99 games, but 21 of them were finals.

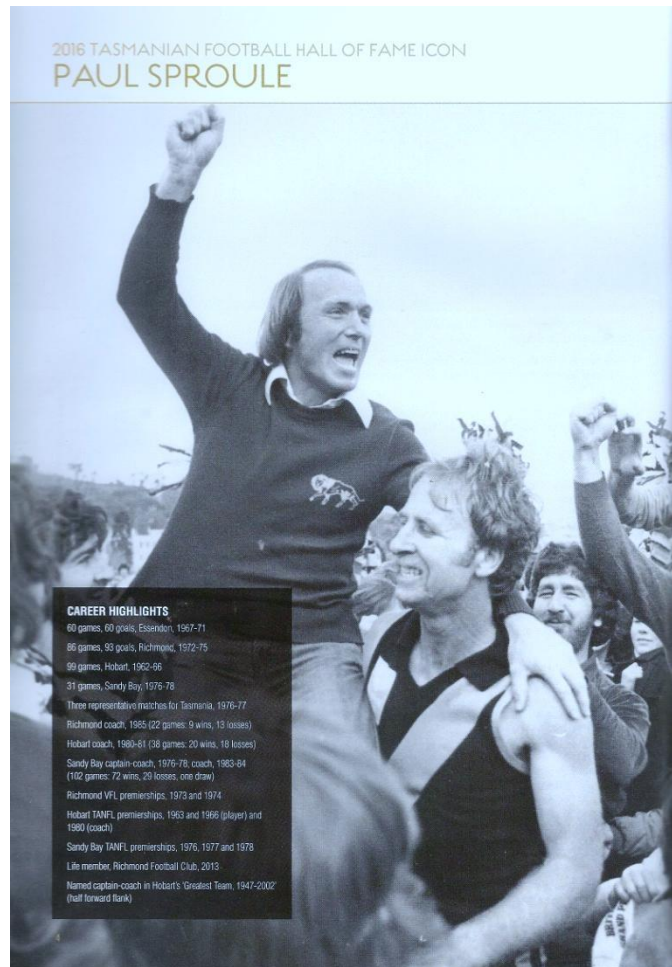
He was named in the Dons' best players in 13 of those finals, explaining he “just treated finals like any other game”, and that he “always seemed to play well at the Melbourne Cricket Ground”.

In his eight seasons (actually, seven-and-a-half), Lambert played in seven Grand Finals (an effort matched by only Melbourne's ‘Big Bob’ Johnson), missing an eighth only through injury.

And if Lambert hadn't gone to war between the ages of 19 and 24,

FORMER BOMBER PAUL SPROULE INDUCTED INTO THE TASMANIAN FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME

Congratulations Paul on being inducted into the Tasmanian Football Hall of Fame, your contribution to football has been fantastic and your award well deserved.



Former Essendon Reserves player, Bruce Greenhill, helps carry Paul off the field, following a Premiership win.

A HAPPY FESTIVE SEASON TO ALL

We wish all of our members and readers a very Merry Christmas and happy and prosperous New Year.

Let's hope that the club recovers quickly from all of the traumas that it has been through over the last four years and that the players will soon perform well and once again become a force in the AFL.

