



PAST & PRESENT PLAYERS' & OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

PAST & PRESENT PLAYERS' & OFFICIALS'

MEMBER NEWSLETTER

JUNE-JULY 2021 EDITION

FROM THE PRESIDENT



- ROD GRINTER

Welcome to our fourth newsletter for 2021. As mentioned in my last welcome,

at the time of writing this our team is still sitting on top of the ladder with 12 wins and two losses - how good is this? Let's all continue to dream as the excitement of what's happening on the field eases the tough times off it due to this COVID-19 pandemic. This has made it very difficult to allow us to live one of our values, togetherness/connection; however, I can say that at this point and time, Round 18 will be our third and final Family and Friends Match Day function

when we take on the Hawks, so keep your eyes and ears open for this.

I am pleased to let you all know that we now have James Harmes as a member of our committee, a big welcome to James and we look forward to you connecting the present day players with what their Association is doing. I can also advise that the MFCW players are automatic members of our Association, and we look forward to announcing either a past or present women's player coming onto our committee. Watch this space.

Financially, we are responsible for keeping a healthy bank account to enable us to support MFC past men and women players of our great club. Without events to assist in raising funds, the next best thing is to simply ask whoever is in a position to do so, to donate to the MFC P&PP&OA.

We are making this as easy as possible by creating our own QR Code thanks to



Jackie Emmerton, so grab your mobile and donate whatever you can. See on page 5 to scan and donate.

Enjoy the read, as I thank those who have contributed financially, and those who have assisted in pulling this newsletter together.

As always, stay safe and healthy.

Continue to go strong Dees!

Regards

**Rod Grinter
President
MFC P&PP&OA**



NEALE DANIHER AND THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY

One of the greatest occasions of any AFL season is the Queen's Birthday match. All the ingredients come together – a wonderful contest, the walk to the MCG with red and blue flags – and, of recent years, the man at the heart of it all: Neale Daniher. Here is some of the story.

With his coaching tenure at Melbourne running for 211 games between Round One, 1998, and Round 13, 2007, Neale Daniher has been a constant part of Queen's Birthday since the late 1990s.

In 1999, Melbourne played Collingwood in a game on the Queen's Birthday; this was not officially counted as a 'Queen's Birthday game'. Melbourne won by eleven points.

The next season, the fixture was mixed up due to planning for the Sydney Olympics – while Melbourne and Collingwood didn't meet on the Queen's



Birthday, on the Saturday closest to this occasion, Melbourne defeated Collingwood by 65 points.

The Queen's Birthday game between Melbourne and Collingwood became a settled fixture as of 2001, meaning that Neale Daniher officially coached seven

of these games during his tenure as senior coach. The first three were losses to the Magpies – by 77, 51 and 56 points respectively – and the remaining four were victories.

In 2004, it was a narrow win, by nine points.

In 2005, the margin improved, with victory by 45 points.

In 2006, things improved even further, with Melbourne achieving victory by 47 points.

In 2007, it was back to a closer game, with victory by 13 points. This was Neale Daniher's third last game as Melbourne's senior coach, and a fitting result for a treasured contest.

The return of the Daniher name to the Queen's Birthday game took place from 2015, with the institution of the 'Big Freeze At The 'G', raising funds to research MND. As part of the occasion,

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MEMBER NEWSLETTER

the Neale Daniher Trophy is presented to the best on ground. For Melbourne, Max Gawn (2016) and Christian Petracca (2017) have been recipients of this trophy.

In 2020, the game could not take place due to coronavirus lockdowns. However, the AFL community continued to take part in the 'Big Freeze', with ice challenges undertaken by players from all teams.

In 2021, the game again suffered

dislocation courtesy of coronavirus lockdowns, but the commitment of many saw the ice slide continue at the MCG, while the game between Melbourne and Collingwood took place at the SCG. While it was a win for Nathan Buckley's last game as Collingwood coach, the MCG ice slide action was a win for everyone, particularly Fight MND. As part of the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2021, Neale Daniher was elevated to AO (Officer of the



Order of Australia), recognising his service and commitment to the Fight MND cause since 2015. [Visit **fightmnd.org.au**](http://fightmnd.org.au)

Over his time as Melbourne's coach, Neale Daniher coached 91 players throughout 211 games. Here is a visual reminder of some of those who made their way through the club during this time:



ANNUAL REUNION

While we all 'Zoomed' in 2020 for a memorable reunion, our plans are to head back to the Jim Stynes Grill in 2021, on the evening of the Thursday before Grand Final Day. This will be the first chance we've had in two years to come together as a large group, so look out for the invitation and final details in coming weeks.



REV'S ROAMINGS

As Paul 'The Rev' Burnham keeps in touch with the Association community, he comes across some interesting and amusing stories. Here are just a couple from what he likes to call 'Rev's Roamings':

Recently I received a FaceTime pocket call from no other than 98 year-old Des Bell! He apologised for the inconvenience, saying he hit the wrong button. 35 minutes later after a great chat on FaceTime, Des and I now know what we look like when we chat every fortnight.

Readers may recall Des Bell, who featured on the Today Show last year during Melbourne's extended lockdown. He is a great supporter of the Association, even purchasing a t-shirt, and has a special place in the club's history. Having turned 98 on 23 May, Des is – most likely – Melbourne's oldest living player. (We say 'most likely' as many players during and immediately after World War Two made their way through the club, and they form a group that is a bit challenging to track).

Des played for Melbourne – seven games and four goals – between 1946 and 1948. These were tumultuous seasons, ranging from getting back to the MCG and making the Grand Final in 1946 to playing two Grand Finals and winning the premiership in 1948.

Appropriately for Des – born on 23 May 1923 – he made his senior debut aged 23 years and 23 days, against St Kilda at Punt Road on 15 June 1946. Melbourne won by 39 points, in front of 11,000

spectators. The multiple goal scorers for the Demons on the day were an illustrious bunch; Norm Smith with five, Fred Fanning with four, and Jack Mueller with three.

We all send greetings to Des, and hope that he is enjoying seeing the Demons in fine form through 2021.

Now to continue with 'Rev's Roamings':

The other story is from John Lord, who told me that recently he was walking his dog down at the local park, where quite a few young boys were playing kick to kick. A ball landed near John, and a young lad wearing a Melbourne jumper came over to retrieve it. John asked the boy what number he had on his back, and he turned around and displayed No. 29. To which John said, 'Oh, Hassa Mann?' The boy replied, 'Huh?' John found out that the lad's hero was Jayden Hunt. Time does get away from you, doesn't it?!



Jayden Hunt

With his distinctive red and blue headband, Jayden – who made his senior debut in 2016 – is following in some impressive No. 29 footsteps. Heading towards the 100-game milestone, he is also up in the rankings for the amount of games played by someone wearing No. 29. Of course, Hassa Mann leads the way with 178 games between 1959 and 1968 (premierships in 1959, 1960 and 1964). Then comes Lance Arnold, with 149 games between 1946 and 1954 (premiership in 1948), followed by Jimmy Davidson, with 137 games between 1924 and 1932 (premiership in 1926). It's an amazing group, and Jayden is adding to the story in 2021.

*While Andrew Obst wore No. 29, and played 149 games for Melbourne between 1990 and 1997, he spent the last 61 games of his career in No. 4.



Hassa Mann

POSITIVE PASTORAL CARE



In the month up to our June committee meeting, The Rev contacted over 50 people, with the following notes: Barrie

Vagg continues to make good progress after his serious bike accident. Dan Rogers also continues to recover from his stroke last year. Dean Terlich is working for the South Australian Health Department, as well as playing with and coaching a team

in the Adelaide Hills. Noel McMahan is doing OK and would dearly love the boys to win the flag this year.

Congratulations also go from The Rev to 'Neale Daniher and his achievements with MND and being awarded a gong in the Queen's Birthday Awards. Well done Neale.'



WELCOME, JAMES!

James Harmes joins us as the newest Committee member, giving a voice and representation to the Present Players. We are delighted to have James on board, and look forward to his ongoing contribution to the Association and its activities.



We also look forward to introducing a new AFLW Committee member to you in coming issues. This means that all demographics of the MFC population will be represented, and able to deal effectively with members' changing needs and demands in coming years.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

As the 2021 season continues on its mostly winning way, we're all delighted to see Melbourne people reaching milestones; always a good indicator of a team and a club growing in experience and achievement. At the time of writing, Melbourne had 12 wins from 14 games, which represents its best start

to a season since 1964.

Two significant individual milestones were reached in Round 15 against Essendon, when Clayton Oliver played his 100th consecutive game, while Simon Goodwin hit a winning note in his 100th game as Melbourne coach. With club captain Max Gawn on the threshold of playing his 150th game (147 at time of writing), it's congratulations all round.



L-R: Clayton Oliver, Max Gawn and Simon Goodwin

AFLPA



As one of those leading the way in the Association's work with the AFLPA, John Ahern encourages all eligible members who may be in need of advice and extra help to access the AFLPA website, pointing in particular to the wellbeing services, which are 'completely confidential, and offer great support':

WELLBEING SERVICES

Reminder that the AFLPA's Mental Health Navigation Service is a service specifically designed to support the unique wellbeing needs of all AFLPA members, including past VFL/AFL players.

How players benefit from this service:

- The AFLPA wellbeing network has more than 300 psychologists and psychologists with a variety of specialisations and approaches (e.g., sport, mental health, relationships, communication, personal development)

- Players who utilise this service spend time talking with our team to ensure that they are connected with someone who is a great 'fit' for them
- AFLPA wellbeing network practitioners are independent from club and AFL
- Session can be accessed face to face, via phone or online (i.e., Zoom, Skype Facetime) to suit your availability and preferences
- AFLPA wellbeing support is free for members, meaning that they do not experience out of pocket expenses
- There are no limits or caps on sessions, so you can continue to access support as long as you require

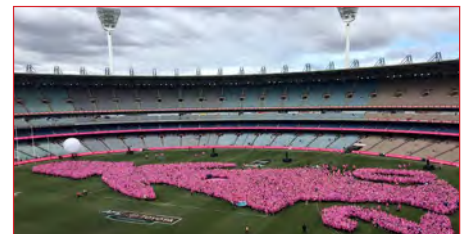
How do I connect with one of the AFLPA's in-house psychologists?

Our friendly Wellbeing staff are available weekdays during standard office hours (AEDT) to discuss your needs and help you arrange individualised and confidential support.

Telephone: 1800 448 903

Email: wellbeing@afplayers.com.au

MATCH DAY FUNCTION



Our next match day function will take place in Round 18, when Melbourne plays Hawthorn. This coincides with the Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA)'s Pink Lady Match, which has been conducted in partnership with the Melbourne Football Club since 2005.

Visit bcna.org.au

Due to COVID restrictions, numbers will be limited so if you are thinking of coming, please contact Spike Harris - spike.w.harris@gmail.com or 0411 235 073 - to secure your spots. Once we have confirmation regarding the date and time of the match, as well as access arrangements, details will be communicated to all MFC P&PP&OA members, with bookings to be made via TryBooking.

BENEVOLENT FUND

In her role as the Association's fundraising expert, Jackie Emmerton launched our extremely successful Benevolent Fund in 2020, and is now focused on achieving similar results in 2021. Below, she reviews some of the ongoing efforts being undertaken by the Association:



In early 2020, as part of our strategic plan, the MFP&PP&OA launched our Benevolent Fund as a platform to raise funds to support our member welfare program and subsidise the cost of member social activities and events. It also aligns with our purpose of delivering "togetherness and benevolence" outcomes. Coincidentally, the world faced a global pandemic at the same time, which required us to think and work differently – aka remotely - to ensure we remained connected and engaged with our members.

Here are some of the highlights from the past 18 months:

- Rev Paul Burnham (our superstar) calling our members as part of the "Positive Pastoral Care" program, checking in and having a chat and making sure they are ok. Rev has amassed an amazing total of over 750 phone conversations with members since early 2020. We are so grateful to have Rev on our team!
- Paul Hopgood and John Ahern leading the management of our AFLPA Alumni relationship, ensuring members are aware of the services and support provided to our past players. Over the past 18 months, numerous past players have received assistance through this program. Past players are reminded to become a member of the

AFLPA Alumni, if not already signed up. There is a small fee payable, with a range of support and services available to all members. Click here to sign up: [Alumni | AFL Players' Association](#)

- Daniel Ward has been working hard connecting members with business networking and employment opportunities. Remember to reach out to Daniel if you need assistance in this space. Daniel can be contacted on 0403 986 011.
- A team effort with the whole committee involved in delivery of our Zoom Annual Reunion in October last year. The reunion was "attended" by almost 100 members, hosted by Russell Robertson, technical support from Mark Jenkins and a host of guest speakers and entertainment. The event continued into the late hours, with lots of reminiscing and stories shared.
- Round One, 2021 match day function – and wasn't it great to be back at the footy! Our second match day function – for Round Eight against the Swans, was a sell-out for the first time ever. We were able to deliver a cost-effective event thanks to the generosity of our Benevolent Fund donors.
- Support for families and loved ones of members who have passed away. We pride ourselves on looking after our fellow members and their families during these sad and difficult times.
- Lynda Carroll continues her tireless work and commitment as our historian. Lynda is also responsible for our wonderful newsletters, website and Instagram account - sharing stories and important information with members.
- Introduction of new member only Facebook page. If you haven't joined the group yet, look us up and request to join [MFC Past & Present Players & Officials Association | Facebook](#)

Our 2020 Benevolent Fund attracted just over \$3000 in donations, for which we are extremely grateful. A big thank you to all those who donated. We are now looking to raise \$5000 in 2021. If you can spare a few dollars, please support us – any amount is appreciated.

We would like to thank and recognise our generous donors of 2020:

Melbourne Football Club, Melbourne Football Club Coterie, The Demon Army, Western Demons, Ron Barassi AM, Don Baron, Clint Bizzell, Barry Bourke, Graeme Brassington, Paul Burnham, Lynda Carroll, Dave Cawsey, Andrew Chrapot, John Collett, Liz Coningsby, Chris Connolly, Penny Connolly, Ray 'Smokey' Dawson, Eric Dick, Colleen Dooley, Simon Eishold, Jackie Emmerton, John Gallus, Ian George, Simon Godfrey, Bernadette Grinter, Rod Grinter, Spike Harris, Karen Hayes AM, Chris Heffernan, Ben Holland, Paul Hopgood, Mark Jenkins, Graeme Jones, Darren Kowal, Clyde Laidlaw, Ralph Laurie, Harold Lubansky, Phil Madick, Gary Marchant, David Martin, Peter McKenna, Mike McShane, Diane Mountney, Jeremy Nichols, Stephen Powell, Guy Rigoni, Russell Robertson, Cameron Schwab, Troy Simmonds, Steven Smith, Brian Stynes, Janette Sutherland, Tricia Thorne, Daniel Ward, Ken Whitfort, Anonymous x 3

Our 2021 Donors to date are:

Melbourne Football Club, Melbourne Football Club Coterie, The Demon Army, VFL Foundation, Chris Connolly, Jackie Emmerton, Paul Galwey, Rod Grinter, Kaye Hargreaves, Spike Harris, Torsten Kasper, Deluxe Print, John Trotter

Click here to add your name to the 2021 Donor list!

You can also scan this QR code to connect to our GoFundMe donation page:

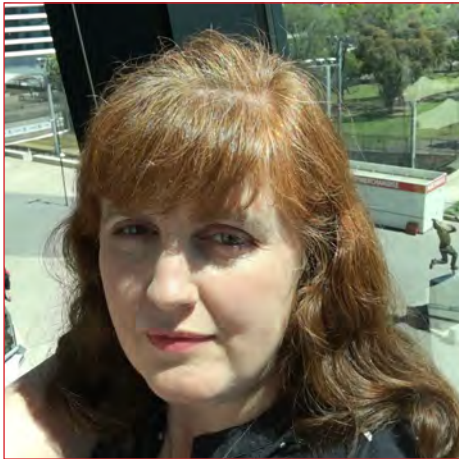


OR – go to gofundme.com and search **MFC P&PP&OA** (<https://gofund.me/d69a8084>)



IN OTHER WORDS – MARK JENKINS

In this occasional series, we hear from assorted Committee members as they take the opportunity to profile those involved in the Association.



LYNDA CARROLL

A familiar face and constant presence around the Melbourne Football Club since 1994, Dr Lynda Carroll (we shall explain the title later) went from being a supporter of the MFC to volunteering in various capacities, to eventually becoming an employee in 2005.

She has been there to witness the highs and lows of our great club over that time. Lynda recalls nervously meeting the then MFC CEO Hassa Mann after

sending him a letter to express her interest in interviewing him for her university research. Hassa agreed, after which Lynda was given access to historic documents for further study, before eventually working on both The Demon magazine and the MFC Yearbook – two initiatives of which she is still immensely proud.

She hails from a family of doers, with an ancestor named Thomas Power who was the editor of one of the first football magazines, as well as a founder of the Carlton Football Club (is that a good thing?) and cricketing great, Warwick Armstrong. On her father's side of the family, Lynda's great-grandfather was a renowned boxer, who also played for and worked at Port Melbourne Football Club as a trainer. Her father has three (3) doctorates - so academia runs in the family!! Lynda was awarded her doctorate for the thesis named 'For the Red and the Blue – a Social History of the Melbourne Football Club'.

In 2016, Lynda was approached by Rod Grinter and Spike Harris to be involved in the MFC P&PP&OA, an offer she could (not) refuse after having been part of it from 2005 to 2013. Lynda has always been a passionate proponent of the history and heritage of the MFC, particularly through writing and

interviews, and collection of memorabilia.

Those who attend the Association's social events will often see Lynda standing behind her camera, capturing the greats of old as they share memories (and a beer). On match day, at MFC home games, Lynda may also be found in the MCC Library, where she supports Members who may want to check on a football related fact or simply enjoy the relative peace, away from the roaring crowds.

Lynda's journey with the MFC has allowed her to meet many players, coaches and supporters – as a club employee, her last job was to interview the great Robbie Flower for the yearbook. One of her most treasured meetings was with Maurie Gibb, who played for the Demons in the 1930s and 1940s, closely followed by former player and renowned sports journalist Percy Beames.

At a time of incredible change, we are very blessed to have a person like Lynda committed to the club, our Association, and the history of both. She has been commissioned by the Association to update the MFC history publication by adding the years 2000 to 2020/21, which we look forward to reading upon completion early next year.

Just a tip, next time you see Lynda at one of our functions take some time to share your memories and experiences with her - these are all special, and need to be captured.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? - TROY SIMMONDS

By Lynda Carroll

Having lived the AFL life at three clubs between 1999 and 2010 – Melbourne, Fremantle and Richmond – Troy Simmonds still has a strong connection to and affection for his first club. Starting out in 1999, he played 40 games for the Demons to the end of 2001, before moving on to Fremantle, where he played 64 of a possible 67 games, including the Dockers' first final

in 2003; then rounding out his AFL career with 93 games at Richmond between 2005 and 2010. Each club has made a strong impression on his life, and left him with many lessons learned and memories kept.

As he explains it, 'As you grow older you become more emotional and at the same time more grateful.' The passing of time has meant that Troy – always a thinker – has had time to treasure his

seasons at Melbourne, and enjoy his connection to the club.

Indeed, Troy says it himself – 'I have a great affection for Melbourne, particularly as I didn't come through the normal front door. I was a late developer!' His ultimate entry to Melbourne was through the 1999 pre-season draft, taken at No. 9. Even getting that opportunity was a test of fortitude, and the likes of Craig Cameron and Neale Daniher noted his attitude as one of sixteen vying for one spot on the list. Troy had to drive from Lilydale to the Junction Oval – always a testing trek – but never missed a training session, and

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? *continued*

never complained. 'I thought it was a great opportunity!' Afterwards, he was told 'that's why you got that spot'.

Making it to Melbourne's senior list, Troy was set on his AFL adventure. Appreciating the necessity of deploying his 'discipline and inner drive' to play at the highest level, another factor helped him along the road; moving in with Guy Rigoni. 'Moving in with Guy meant learning the ropes, growing up, learning about professional sport.' This experience meant that the two forged a connection that is maintained to this day, Troy saying 'we don't catch up all that much, but it's special when we do.'

One of the memories that most Melbourne supporters have of Troy is the cruel thump that took him out of the 2000 Grand Final, removed from the MCG on a stretcher. Looking back, he recalls 'the great run we had in 2000', and the intrigue of seeing how much the game has changed since that time, along with the unfolding fate of his clubs. 'It's been good to see success at Richmond, and it's great to see a traditional club like Melbourne succeeding.' It is also clear that – while he loves his clubs – Troy doesn't regret having changed teams. 'There were some great opportunities, and I made the decisions I did in order to better myself.'

Now living by the sea, Troy has many fond memories of Melbourne experiences, places and connections. This is

encapsulated through events such as the annual reunion, with particular appreciation of last year's Zoom version. 'The past players do a really good job – it's great to have the ability to stay in touch. It's a wonderful community, and it's also great to see the guys getting together.' Even more special for Troy is that 'I still have a deep sense of belonging.'

This translates into where Troy is now, working with young people in a mentoring position. As he explains it, 'I have an interest in development, movement and physical attributes, all being connected holistically.' His role – while it encompasses teams, groups and individuals alike – essentially focuses on helping individuals to learn about themselves through vehicles such as sport. 'They're boundless with energy, and that's such a great resource. We turn it on its head, with lots of training and spending time with the likes of martial arts practitioners.'

Part of the challenge for many in modern life comes through channels such as social media. As Troy illustrates, 'That



Training Camp at Anglesea 2020

leads to living life in grabs. Practices such as martial arts need you to take time. That helped to shape me, then I developed on top of that, as mentors enabled me.' Now, he is passing on his knowledge and experiences to the next generation. 'It's all about getting young people to take ownership of their lives, to develop character, and to learn qualities such as thinking and patience.' Naturally, it also takes patience to shape this in Troy's mentoring role, and he readily acknowledges this. 'There's a lot of one-on-one type work. You really get to see the person, and get to know them. Of course, it's not all smooth sailing! But, by getting through suffering, there is joy and happiness on the other side.'

This leads to an excerpt from one of Troy's favourite poems, a classic that essentially sums up where he has been, what he is doing and – appropriately – where he is now:

If

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

...

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling (c. 1895)

To learn more about Troy and his business, visit troysimmonds.com.au, or [@troysimmonds_official](https://www.instagram.com/troysimmonds_official) on Instagram.



THE DOMINANT YEARS



A patch of Melbourne's history that deserves much attention is the stretch between 1926 and 1966, particularly against Collingwood, which is woven into the story of both clubs.

Ken Mitchell – former MFC director and VFL field umpire for thirteen years – has put together a publication dealing with this 40-year rivalry. Revisit some of the great stories in **The Dominant Years**.

Contact Ken directly for orders and enquiries via mitchellkv@gmail.com



LOOKING FOR

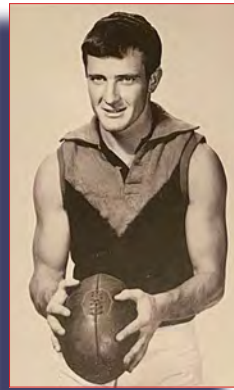
Once again, we are seeking assorted MFC people who may have lost contact with both the club and the Association. Please don't forget to check earlier issues of the newsletter for others who might be missing in action, and contact Spike Harris on 0411 235 073 or spike.w.harris@gmail.com to re-establish contact: **John Howat**

Damien Gaspar Addam Maric
Brad Hall Bernie Massey

NUMBER 16

Recently, a special piece of filming was shared with MFC P&PP&OA President, Rod Grinter, when John Ramsden – former baseballer and Melbourne supporter – passed on his project around the love of No. 16 and – particularly – memories of Melbourne legend, John Townsend.

So, click on the link below and enjoy the perfect mix of Melbourne past and present. Thank you to John for sharing! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXswGz2xgxM>



BARRY BOURKE

We had a great response to last month's unveiling of Barry Bourke as our new Association sponsor, and thought we would share 'Barry Bourke Facts' with you in each edition of the newsletter.

On his Mobil Footy Photo Card of 1965, Barry was profiled by Lou Richards as:

'This husky lad from Neerim South...didn't expect to be a footballer at all. At school he shone as a cricketer, and was rated a very mediocre hand with a football.'



This came months after Barry had played in the 1964 premiership side, following a stellar start in 1963, during which he led the club's goal kicking with 48, and was named as Best First Year Player.

Association members, don't forget to contact Barry for assistance with all your motoring needs.



BARRY BOURKE

MOTORS

0418 999 101

barrybourke.com.au

VALE - GREG SIZER

It was with great sadness that we heard of the recent passing of Greg Sizer, who played a senior game with Melbourne in 1986, wearing No. 57. Greg's single game was against Carlton, and he faced David Rhys-Jones, credited with a most competent performance against the much-feared Blue.

Greg Sizer was recruited part of the way through 1986 from Geelong West, and in 1987 made his way to Richmond, playing in the Reserves team. In 1989 and 1990, he played for Werribee.

We are all thinking of Greg's family and friends, and pass on our condolences.

At the time of going to design, we also heard of the passing of former MFC President, Wayne Reid OBE. We offer our condolences to Wayne's family and friends, as well as to the tennis community, where he played such an integral role. **Vale Wayne Reid OBE.**

