



PAST & PRESENT PLAYERS' & OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

PAST & PRESENT PLAYERS' & OFFICIALS' MEMBER NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023 EDITION

FROM THE PRESIDENT



- ROD GRINTER

Happy New Year – and happy new season - to everyone.

I'm looking forward to another very exciting year for our mighty Demons, and to being able to stay connected with members and enjoy watching our team perform at the MCG.

We have requested four MFC P&PP&OA Family and Friends Match Day functions for 2023:

- Rd 3 vs Swans, Sunday 2 April, 3.20 pm
- Rd 7 vs North, Saturday 29 April, 7.25 pm
- Rd 12 vs Blues, Friday 2 June, 7.50 pm
- Rd 19 vs Crows, TBC
- **Round 3** is the classic capital city clash, and marks our now traditional get together with

our Swans' counterparts, not an ideal starting time; however, the tradition is set to continue.

- **Round 7** comes just after the Anzac Eve classic against Richmond, and gives us a chance to see where we're at after one third of the season.
- **Round 12** looks to be a real winner, when the highlight in the room will undoubtedly be a 1980s team line-up across the alphabet from Healy to the likes of Lovett, Wilson, Yeats and Zantuck. This will be a reunion special, honouring 40 years since the 1983 U19s flag, and 30 years since the 1993 Seconds flag.
- **Round 19** shows just where we're sitting on the ladder, and means we can share the excitement heading into September.

Details regarding each of these functions will be made available as soon as possible. We look forward to having as many members, family and friends as we can join us throughout the season.

We will also continue being the Gold Sponsor of AFLW player Georgia

Campbell in 2023. As mentioned in earlier editions of the newsletter, Georgia is the daughter of past player Adrian. She is Melbourne's first ever father-daughter selection, and a former state representative in high jump.

Again, we would like to thank all those who have contributed financially to the MFC P&PP&OA over the last five years and beyond. We felt it important to share with everyone the amount that we have distributed over the last five years supporting our members in need; this is a significant contribution of \$79,671.00.

All those we have supported financially have been overwhelmingly grateful for our Association's care. This ranges from the individual member to the member's family connection, all of whom have thanked us sincerely.

To be able to continue to support our members in need, we continue to reach out and ask, where possible, for donations to our cause.

Go Dees!

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



BENEVOLENT FUND

Our Association relies on your support to facilitate our activities, and we welcome donations year round to our Benevolent Fund. This Fund helps to support members in need, as well as enabling the Association to



subsidise events, thereby playing an important role in fostering both camaraderie and care.

To make a contribution at any time of the year, our Association's banking details are:

**Account name:
MFC Past & Present Players &
Officials Association**

BSB: 063 204

A/C: 1008 8589

Please use your name as the reference.



2023 – A SEASON OF MILESTONES

There are a number of milestones that are being noted, celebrated and commemorated this year, and the Association is proud to be a part of all of them. Two that take us back to the 1940s are:

1943: the death of Keith 'Bluey' Truscott

In 1993, a commemorative service was held on the MCG to mark half a century since the death of Keith 'Bluey' Truscott. Now, another thirty years on, and with his name as intertwined with both the Melbourne Football Club and wider Australian history as it ever has been, he will once again be honoured. On Anzac Eve, as part of Melbourne's game against Richmond, tribute will be paid to Truscott, as we honour all those who have fallen in time of conflict.

Truscott was killed in a training accident over Exmouth Gulf in 1943. He had fought in the Battle of

Britain, was a Squadron Leader, and held the Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar in recognition of his feats. Before this, of course, he had played for Melbourne, wearing No. 5. His last game on the MCG was the Grand Final win over Collingwood on 28 September 1940, in front of a crowd of 70,330.



By the time he ran out for his fiftieth – and last – game, the world had changed beyond all recognition. The MCG had been turned over to military accommodation, and

Melbourne had been taken under Richmond's wing, playing home games at Punt Road.

Round Two of 1942 was played between the two Punt Road teams on 16 May 1942, and Truscott was on leave before heading back west. He had time to be part of just one more game. Wearing No. 1 instead of his customary No. 5, his very presence delighted the crowd of around 20,000, as he kicked one goal in Melbourne's 79 point loss to Richmond.

His death less than a year later was unimaginable to so many, and led to lasting commemoration by the Melbourne Football Club, particularly in the shape of the Best and Fairest award, named in his honour as of 1943. This is recognised in tangible form by the trophy presented to the winner of the award each season, and by the perpetual Shield, engraved every year since 1943 with the winner's name.

Now, eighty years on, we take the chance to remember Keith 'Bluey' Truscott and his story once again.

AFLW – EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Coterie was founded on the objectives of aiming to 'provide player assistance and employment, and to raise money for the Melbourne Football Club', and now we are looking to help our semi-professional AFLW players.

We have several of our AFLW listed players seeking part-time and flexible employment opportunities to enable them to continue the on-field success we have seen over

the last six years. As the AFLW program continues to evolve, working in an understanding environment is critical to that success and the hopes of lifting the Premiership Cup again in 2023.

Many of you would know how difficult it is to balance a part time footy career and trying to earn a living, so we are extending



the invitation to those in the Past Players group who may be able to help; if anyone can assist in any way, please reach out to us at mfccoterie@gmail.com for more information.

1948

When the new season dawns, it will also be the anniversary of a long ago triumph from the late 1940s. For 2023 marks 75 years since Melbourne achieved a very special victory. It was 1948, and the Demons' opponents were Essendon. That season, Essendon had held sway in all three encounters between the two teams. But, as Don Corder met Dick Reynolds in



the muddy middle of the ground for that most important fourth game of the season, Reynolds suggested that it could be a draw.

Surely not? Don Corder would, many years later, shake his head in disbelief. For a draw it was, courtesy mainly of Essendon's grossly inaccurate kicking. The scoreboard read Melbourne 10.9.69 to Essendon 7.27.69. It was the first time that there had been a draw in a VFL Grand Final.

The next week, however, there was no doubt. With no goals in the first quarter, Essendon made a valiant effort thereafter, scoring five goals in the second term. But it was all to no avail, as Melbourne continued to build on a six goal first quarter. When the final siren sounded, it was Melbourne 13.11.89 to Essendon's 7.8.50, in front of an MCG crowd of 52,226.

This was Melbourne's sixth VFL premiership, joining those already achieved in 1900, 1926, 1939, 1940 and 1941. Three-quarters of a century later, it remains a memorable achievement, and one to continue celebrating.

REV'S ROAMINGS

As the football season starts to take shape, there's someone who's been busy right through the festive season and the holidays, and well beyond. Of course, that is Paul 'The Rev' Burnham, ever dedicated to keeping in touch with the Melbourne multitudes. With nearly 90 contacts in December and January, he's spoken to or shared messages with people from every corner of the country.

From Ray Carr and Carl Ditterich still dealing with the aftermath of floods, to Neale Daniher sending back a thumbs up, Chris Fagan getting ready for another season in Brisbane, Jared Rivers still working in coaching and Peter Tossol welcoming a new grandchild in Wangaratta, The Rev encompasses every generation and level of red and blue involvement.

It's a wonderful achievement, but what is even more wonderful is that The Rev has crunched the numbers,



and calculates that he has made over 2000 contacts since 2009. He has been – and continues to be – a valued part of the Association's life, and of all those who make up the community. With this, he shares his message for the season ahead: 'We need to make sure we take care of ourselves and are kind to ourselves and one another.'

With that, we look forward to more reports from The Rev in 2023, and thank him for his invaluable contribution to the Association.

SEARCHING FOR STEVE

Michael Roberts – History & Archives Manager for the Collingwood Football Club – is searching for past player **Steve Arnott**. Steve played one senior game for Melbourne in 1969, wearing No. 29. This followed a stint in Collingwood's Reserves in 1967 and 1968, during which he played 25 games. If anyone knows of Steve's whereabouts, or can provide contact details for him, please contact Michael on 0408 948 156, or slinks@ozemail.com.au

MELBOURNE FOOTBALL CLUB





NEITA ON SHOW

When he dropped in at the MCG to complete the loan of his MFC Hall of Fame induction trophy, David Neitz became one of the final contributors to a huge project that has been more than six months in the making. For, as the 2023 season dawns, so will a very welcome and permanent display. The MFC Zone is opening in the MCC Museum, with two showcases providing much Melbourne magnificence. From the club's infancy to recent achievements, from supporters to support staff, it's going to help make sure that all red and blue hearts are beating true.



Of course, the former captain and holder of multiple MFC honours is delighted to be part of the effort and says, 'it's always very humbling to be part of something like this. It's a great honour, and it's magnificent that we're going to have our own place.' As he is excited about the upcoming season, and looking forward to being back at the MCG, so is he looking forward to taking his young daughters to enjoy the display. 'They're already excited!', he laughs.

Stay tuned for further details and stories in upcoming editions.

COTERIE 2023

We have an exciting and busy start of the year here at Coterie, with some big events and functions in the coming months.

Firstly, we would like to thank those who attended the recent Coterie Golf Day at Moonah Links. It was a great day, and continues the tradition of MFC player and Coterie member camaraderie that now dates back over 60 years.

Even bigger than that, Coterie is again proud to be presenting the 2023 Melbourne Football Club Season Launch on 1 March. This night will be the official MFC 2023 AFL Season Launch event, and will see the full 2023 playing squad in attendance, as well as providing a chance to hear from both the players and senior coach Simon Goodwin. This will be the night of nights to kick off the 2023 season, and we hope to see you there.

For our match day functions, we have the ever popular Titus O'Reilly locked in as guest speaker for the opening round and in Round Three against Sydney we will be hosting our Player Parents Day. The Player Parents Day is one of the few times each year that the parents of our players can get together to watch a game, and is a proud initiative of Coterie.

The first of the Coterie 'Pub Lunches' for the season will be held on Wednesday 5 April, when we will be



presenting the First Year Players, as we give them a warm welcome to the Coterie family.

We cherish the relationship that Coterie has with Past Players and Officials, and, as always, you are

welcome to be part of all Coterie events, so keep an eye out for an invitation. Remember that it's also never too late to join the Coterie on the tailored three game past players membership package; please contact John Crisara - john.crisara@melbournefc.com.au - for more information.



DES BELL – TO THIS DAY

As he heads towards his 100th birthday, it's fair to say that Des Bell's memories of the Melbourne Football Club go back a lot further than most.

In fact, Des offers an invaluable insight into life in general; things most of us can only read about. As he remembers the story of his father receiving treatment for World War One shrapnel wounds at Caulfield Military Hospital and meeting his future wife in the process; as he recalls himself 'finishing the war in Borneo'; as he laughs at his initial selection being in the newspaper before he even knew about it; Des Bell is a talisman of times past and still looking into the future.

Des, as many readers will know, played seven senior games for Melbourne. He played five games – all wins – in 1946, followed by one game in each of 1947 and 1948. What many may not immediately realise is that Des was then still in the Army, boarding in the city, when he first entered Melbourne's sporting landscape. The cricketer from Creswick – who combined school with work from the age of twelve, cleaning up and undertaking deliveries for a local drapery both before and after hours – found himself being recommended and in contact with the likes of MCC Secretary Vernon Ransford and his assistant, Maurie Gibb. Maurie – a dual premierships player for the Demons in 1940 and 1941 – was all things Melbourne, whether cricket, football or the MCC itself, and for Des, this expanded the sporting horizons remarkably. From showing his prowess at cricket, Des soon moved into football, and the red and blue colours.

Des' first real match day encounter – which came at Punt Road, home to



Heartfelt thanks to Des for passing on this beautiful 1946 autograph book, a signed 1940s Kia-Ora Sports Parade and Variety programme, and the Ron Barassi scrapbook publication. Autograph books are quite the in thing at the moment, so look out when we bring you another that's just a little bit special, coming up in the next edition or so.

Melbourne while the MCG was still under military control – was with the great Jack Mueller. Questioning the newcomer as to his identity, Mueller was soon satisfied that 'Dinger' was meant to be there, and had him standing on a trestle table for introduction to the rest of his teammates.

That first game was a win against St Kilda, and Des faced up to Keith Miller, the legendary cricketer then playing for St Kilda. But, fortuitously, Des got the ball to Fred Fanning, and a goal was the result; a welcome part of the 39-point victory, and one of Fanning's haul of four goals.

Fanning went on to become good friends with Des, as was Norm Smith, a 'great chap' according to Des. In a pointer to the times, Fanning and Des would often catch the tram to games together. 'Hardly anyone had a car back then!' Unfortunately for Des, both Fanning and Smith were supreme in their roles at Melbourne, which meant that Des often found

himself relegated to the Seconds. Not that that was any disgrace, albeit it meant a pay cut from around £3 to 30 shillings per game.

Still, Des had a strong competitive streak, and was a solid goal scorer in the Seconds. He and Fanning would take bets on who out of the two of them would be the most successful. On one occasion, Des felt confident that he had had a good game, had kicked a few goals, and may have triumphed over Fanning. Unfortunately, it was the last home and away game of 1947, and Fanning – as Des soon found out from the *Sporting Globe* – had kicked eighteen goals. It remains a V/AFL single game record to this day.

To this day; it's a phrase that holds as true for Des in 2023 as it did in the 1940s. He loves the club, and takes a strong interest in the team, considering that newcomer Brodie Grundy is 'a great asset', while delighting in being around to see Clayton Oliver win multiple Best and Fairest awards. With laughter born of many decades, Des also says that he is 'hoping that I can last long enough to see them win a premiership at the MCG!' With Angus Brayshaw having visited him with the 2021 premiership cup, there is no doubt that Des would enjoy a similar experience in the very near future.

Meanwhile, Des continues to be as involved as he can, and through that has forged another treasured connection, with Association committee member Daniel Ward picking him up and escorting him to assorted functions. 'Daniel's just marvellous', says Des. The friendships Des holds courtesy of his red and blue longevity are indeed something special, and we look forward to celebrating his century with him in 2023.



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BEHIND THE SCENES - PETER 'MAX' MAYNARD

While he may have come and gone a few times in both his working and playing life, it's fair to say that Peter 'Max' Maynard is a constant of the Melbourne Football Club, and has been since his time wearing the No. 36 guernsey to start the 1980s.

But that was not the last that the red and blue would see of Max. He returned to Melbourne from a 20 year career in radio, working in the club's most challenging area of the time - sponsorship. Even then, Casey was on his radar, as 'between 2010 and 2013, we were doing a lot with Casey council, building the partnership and developing the club's footprint in the South East'. These were the formative years of the connection between Melbourne and the Casey community, as well as Casey Fields, the sprawling conglomeration of ovals and facilities now overseen by Max and the team.

After he departed Melbourne towards the end of 2013, Max returned to his old stomping ground of radio, as the 'GM of Nova and 5AA in Adelaide.' With he and wife Donna agreeing that a home base needed to be retained in Victoria, particularly with son Brayden heading into his VCE at the time, it meant that Max was essentially commuting between states for two years. 'Between October 2013, and February 2015, I was travelling between Melbourne and Adelaide every week.'

The demand eventually came for Max to move to Adelaide full time but this wasn't an option so he ultimately 'finished up with radio', and – in the way of the football community – 'filled in with AFL South East for a short period of time', and landed at Casey Fields. He knew its background from his earlier stint at Melbourne when it was 'a challenge to get the club really

motivated by the opportunity the City of Casey, and the greater South East region presented.' While he was then based at the MCG, he also knew of the potential of Casey Fields – let alone Melbourne – and the excitement of the current era and its multiple achievements means as much to him as anyone.

From taking on the role of 'basically GM of Casey operations' from October 2017, Max has been delighted to see the facility expand and grow, working with everyone from 'the Melbourne Football Club to Council, local businesses and organisations. As Casey Fields grew, Melbourne's involvement grew, and it went from just the VFL program to now housing the VFL, VFLW, AFL training, AFLW home games, the Next Generation MFC Academy' – and other major events like Melbourne Storm pre-season games and Little Demons Day (South East Juniors opening round). There is a brand new indoor training and Strength and Conditioning facility, a long term licence agreement, a new aquatic recovery centre on its way, brand new change rooms and administration offices, and the enthusiasm of Max at the helm. What's more, there are multiple premierships – AFL, Casey Demons VFL and the AFLW – that have landed in the red and blue camp in just over eighteen months. Of the 2021 AFL premiership, Max says with a laugh, 'Kelly O'Donnell got the cup down here, and we had photos taken. I was far more emotional than I thought I would be!'

The mention of Kelly O'Donnell exemplifies that special connection between past players in the Melbourne fold, and Max is one of those who appreciates it greatly. As many would know, the wonderful facility at Casey was appropriated as a COVID vaccination and



testing hub; in the midst of the mayhem, Max appreciated the links, the communication and the friendships

inherent in being a past player and official. He even heard from Tim Harrington, formerly in Melbourne recruiting, now with the AFLPA, who 'reached out to see how I was going.' To emerge from the worst of times into the best of times with multiple premierships has been rewarding for many Melbourne people, and Max enjoys the chance presented by occasions such as P&PP&OA match day functions – 'a brilliant initiative' – to keep the connections strong.

It is quite possible, of course, that Max couldn't escape the football world even if he wanted to. His children make sure of that. With Brayden newly anointed as part of Collingwood's leadership group; oldest son Corey moving from playing into his new career as North Melbourne's Player and Welfare Manager, Corey's partner, Kate Hore, playing a major part in Melbourne's AFLW premiership win, and with daughter Karli working for the MRC at Caulfield racecourse, Max is merely one cog in the Maynard domination of the local sporting scene.

Of course, not everything can be perfect, and for Max, it's the idea of traffic. While he's obviously not trekking interstate all the time now, he is making the daily journey from bayside to Casey, and occasionally the hour-long drive can take its toll (literally as well as figuratively). Max doesn't really mind, although 'a company car would be nice!' His is a benevolent attitude, delighted to see the growth and club embracing Casey Fields, in the thick of the action, and determined to continue making a contribution for the future.



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