

Essendon Football Club Past Players & Officials Association

Newsletter – April 2022



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President's message - David Collins

Welcome to the April edition of the EFCPP&OA newsletter for 2022. This is the first newsletter for many years, that has not been edited by our Immediate Past President, Barry Capuano. As our in-house scribe, Barry did an outstanding job, setting a high standard to keep us informed of the news in our community. I trust you enjoy reading this edition, edited and prepared by Jo-Anne Albert and Jane Lee.

Anzac Day is significant for many, and an important day in the EFC calendar. We pay tribute in this edition to our past players who served their country. From the senior's playing list, the late Noel Allanson was the last of our WWII veterans. Reserves player and centenarian Allan 'Bunny' Woods saw WWII service with the Australian Army. Six of our past players served in Vietnam. To all, we remember them and extend our thanks and gratitude for their service.

It was great to see the 2022 EFC players presented with their guernseys by members of our 1962 Premiership Team. Coach Ben Rutten hosted the evening @ The Hangar. The two generations came together, enjoying the special camaraderie of those who have played at the elite level share. The men from 1962 are our elder statesmen of premiership players, many making life-long contributions across all aspects of our club. The '62 team presented the '22 team with a signed copy of the 1962 WEG Premiership poster. A great reminder of our proud history and a nod to what is possible for our current team. Having past players present jumpers to the team is a great innovation, one highly valued by the EFC players.

In this 60th anniversary year of the 1962 premiership, several functions are scheduled, and invitations will be extended to all players from the 1962 list. We will recognize the 20th Anniversary of the 2000 Premiership at our Annual Dinner in September. Delayed in 2020, we are determined to ensure this significant milestone in our history is celebrated.

The 2022 Dick Reynolds Club Golf Day was held in February. Always a highlight on the calendar, it was again a great day out. Our particular thanks to Kevin Dale and Barb Cullen for their work to deliver an outstanding event.

March saw the successful launch of the Past Players & Officials Room at the Windy Hill Venue. Planning is well advanced for past players to come together at our spiritual home, regularly. The room will be refurbished with items of historical significance and memorabilia from our collection – a great touchstone for conversation and to build and bind our community.

The Dick Reynolds Club '*Bombers in the Media*' lunch was held in late March, after two failed attempts to stage it in 2021. Our thanks to our DRC members for their strong support and patience during the numerous lockdowns that thwarted our best efforts. We hope to schedule additional Dick Reynolds Club events later in the year.

The EFCPP&OA's 68th AGM was held on 27th March at the Windy Hill Venue. Our Treasurer, Ken Gilbertson has done an impressive job, initiating new systems. Members will see evidence of Ken's work when they receive their 2022 membership renewal invoice, with the ability to pay subscriptions online. The Association made a surplus in 2021 of approximately \$30,000. This reflects the work and generosity of many of our members, sponsors, and donors enabling the Association to continue its support of the EFC Players Foundation Trust.

Traditionally the setting for our Grand Final week Annual Dinners, the large first-floor function room at the Windy Hill Venue, has been renovated and it looks fantastic.

Sadly, we lost several members this past year. Our sincere condolences to the families of Noel Allanson, Harold Lambert, Ian Marsh, Geoff Rackham, Trevor Heath, John Robinson. RIP.

The Essendon Football Club 150th Anniversary celebrations have begun, and we will keep you updated with what's happening.

I would like to thank the EFCPP&OA Committee members for their service. A great deal of planning has been undertaken for 2022. Thanks, in particular to Jane Lee (EFCPP&OA Administration) and Barbara Cullen, OAM (Dick Reynolds Club) for their outstanding support.

It's great to look forward to what promises to be a successful year on and off the field, as we celebrate the Essendon Football Club's 150th Anniversary.

TELL US YOUR NEWS ... We welcome news, articles and photographs from all our members. Footy, reunions, family, career, business, milestone celebrations - email us: efcppoa@hotmail.com

Past players in WA Reunite @ 'Budgies' pub

The past players in WA have formed a close-knit group. Brilliantly led by Gary "The Prez" O'Donnell, they meet regularly at the **Camfield Pub, Burswood** owned by Tony Buhagiar.

The photo shows Russell Ellen, Patrick Ambrose, Matt Banks, Kyle Hardingham, Gary O'Donnell, Tony Buhagiar, Simon Eastaugh, and Michael Richardson at a recent catch-up. It's great to see newly retired player Patrick Ambrose joining the gatherings.

The passing of the club's beloved Dr. Bruce Reid in 2020, was the catalyst for these past players to reunite. In tribute to Reidy, they met to '*Raise a Red for Reidy*' in the Doc's memory. Bruce would have loved and approved of the gesture! The get-togethers have now become a regular feature in the boys' calendars.

Over 40 of our past players are in Western Australia, many are Association members. The EFC provided tickets for the 2021 Dreamtime match at Optus Stadium. In recent times, the EFC has made a concerted effort to emphasize the importance of the culture, history, and traditions of the club. A significant focus of this strategy has been to strengthen connections with past players. The club has events in WA planned during 2022, as part of the 150th Anniversary celebrations.

We look forward to seeing more of your Instagram posts boys!



L-R FRONT: Kyle Hardingham, Gary O'Donnell, Tony Buhagiar, Simon Eastaugh, Michael Richardson

BACK: Russell Ellen, Patrick Ambrose, Matt Banks



25 April 2022 - Anzac Day

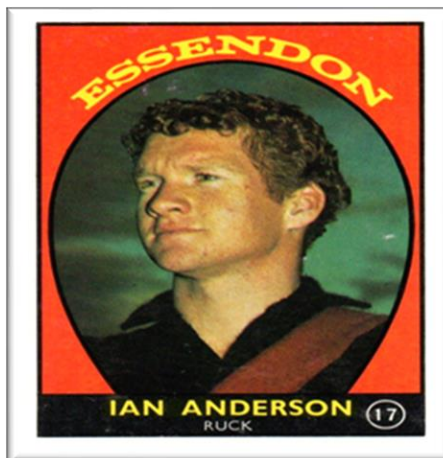
*On this day, and every day
we remember and thank all who served*

Lest We Forget

VIETNAM WAR – 1955 - 1975

The Vietnam War saw 20-year-olds subject to the lottery of conscription

Six Essendon players served in Vietnam



Ian Gregory 'Ginger' ANDERSON - 27 games; 49 goals

Serving as a Private in the Army attached to the 8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, Ian was sent to Vietnam in November 1969. He spent six weeks in the Long Hai mountains dodging land mines and bullets. Several of his fellow unit members were killed. Whilst on service with Platoon C, Anderson had 14 "contacts" with the Viet Cong.

Keith Edward GENT - 7 games

1967 - Based at Nui Dat, Keith served as a Private with the 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment. During his service, Keith was wounded by shrapnel, which cut through his sciatic nerve.



Lindsay William McGIE - 31 games; 2 goals

McGie served in the Australian Army as a Private in three regiments - Australian Reinforcement Unit, 6th and 2nd Battalions.

Ian Graham PAYNE

45 games; 11 goals

Australian Army Corporal Payne was attached to the Australian Force Vietnam Provost Unit and sent to Vietnam in 1968.



1971 Vung Tau, Vietnam:

Essendon's Greg Perry receives the award for Best Player in the Vietnam Football League

Gregory (Greg) Francis PERRY

63 games; 38 goals

Perry was posted to Vietnam in 1969, assigned to the 110 Signal Squadron. While on service, he was appointed the captain-coach of his squadron's football team

William (Bill) Robert THOMPSON

17 games; 2 goals

Deployed to Vietnam in 1970, Private Thompson was attached to the 2nd Advanced Ordinate Depot.



Bill coached his unit's football team to the Grand Final in 1971, paying against Essendon teammate Greg Perry.

World War II



Noel Laurence ALLANSON

57 games; 1 goal

The passing of Noel Allanson in February saw the end of an era. Noel was our last surviving WWII veteran. He served in the Royal Australian Navy. As an Able Seaman Allanson was aboard *HMAS Ipswich* in August 1945, anchored in Tokyo Bay close to *USS Missouri*, witnessing the signing of the Japanese surrender.

Acknowledgments: 'Harder than Football' League Players at War – Barbara Cullen. Photographs: Stan Middleton, Damien Green, and EFC

Jumper custodians from 1962 premiership team met at the NEC Hangar for the Bombers 2022 guernsey presentation

Drawing on the club's rich history, and in recognition of the **60th anniversary of the 1962 Premiership**, past players from the premiership team were invited to present the players with their guernseys and share words of advice on the eve of the season.



Alec Epis, Graeme Johnston, Russell Blew, Paul Doran, David Shaw, Barry Capuano, Don McKenzie, Ken Fraser.

Bomber Backline represented by:

David Shaw (#5) Paul Doran (#36) Don McKenzie (#24) Alec Epis (#28)

Centreline Crew represented by:

Barry Capuano (#12) Russell Blew (#14)

Forwards and Followers represented by: Ken Fraser (#23) John Birt (#11)

Graeme Johnston (#16) Charlie Payne (#7) Hugh Mitchell (#31)



31 Hugh Mitchell and Zach Reid



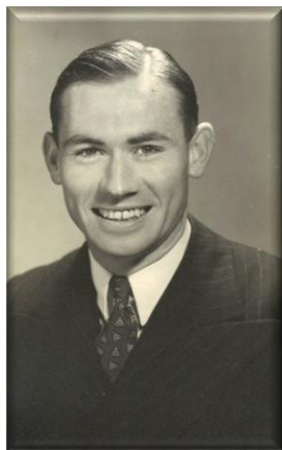
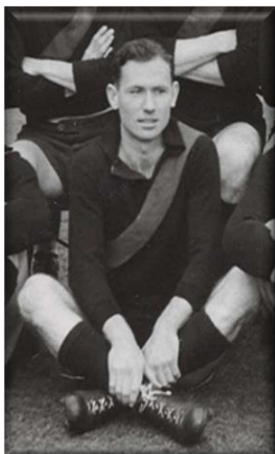
#11 Will Snelling and John Birt



#6 Jye Caldwell #15 Jayden Laverde #5 David Shaw and Devon Smith #22 Sam Durham



#38 Cody Brand #24 Nick Bryan and Don McKenzie (seated) #20 Peter Wright #1 Andrew McGrath



Vale - Noel Allanson

25 December 1925 – 7 February 2022

EFC - 45 years' service

Jumper number: 33
Member of the 1950 Premiership team
Vice President: 1976-1977
Treasurer: 1978 – 1990
Awarded EFC Life Membership: 1980
Inductee, EFC Hall of Fame: 2015

Excerpts from the eulogy delivered by Ken Fraser at Noel's funeral service

The family tribute published in the daily paper said it all: *"Noel had a genuinely intelligent and inquiring mind. Loved and respected by all."*

From Noel's family, we've heard of his considerable contributions to the Essendon Cricket Club, to the Northern Golf Club, his service in the Australian Navy during WWII, and his professional life as Secretary/CEO of the Country Roads Board. Noel was a man of remarkable talent and gave generous service to many organisations and their communities.

As a nine-year-old, growing up in Essendon, I got to know the name Noel Allanson well. As a footballer with the *Mighty Dons*, they were mighty in those years, playing in six grand finals in six years. Then, during the summer months, the name Allanson featured in the media, when he regularly scored centuries for the First XI at the Essendon Cricket Club.

But it was to be a decade or two on, when first as Assistant Coach at the footy club and later as a member of the EFC Board, I had the good fortune to come to know Noel Allanson, the man. Noel joined the EFC board in 1976 serving as Vice President and Treasurer. We became and have remained close friends.

Noel made a wonderful contribution to the EFC during his lifetime. His contribution is represented here today by the presence of the 1950 VFL Premiership Cup.

The cup symbolizes Noel's contribution to the EFC because as a player, office bearer, Life and Hall of Fame member, and importantly as a person - he was of premiership class. Noel was a valued member of the 1950 Premiership team. A diligent Treasurer for 13 years, including those memorable 1984/85 premiership wins against powerful Hawthorn sides.

Noel played as a very tight, close-checking half-back flanker. Giving nothing away to his opponents. He played with great concentration and determination and as an aside, also played his cricket with a very straight bat.

His on-field qualities quickly transferred to his role as Treasurer of the club. It was a time of considerable turmoil in the Victorian Football League as many clubs were in debt, their futures in doubt, and amalgamations threatened. Essendon was fortunate it did not have to undergo the gut-wrenching uncertainty of several clubs and their members! A great tribute to Noel's astute custodianship in those difficult years.

On a personal level, Noel was a wise, trusted confidante and adviser during his lengthy service as an office-bearer. Many sought his advice, not only on finance and job opportunities but personal issues as well. The happiness and morale of team members were enhanced by his influence.

The club has much to be thankful for in Noel's outstanding service. Noel deserved the club's recognition, received in the form of Life Membership and in 2015 elevation to Member of the prestigious EFC Hall of Fame.

I am very thankful for Noel's wonderful friendship over my life's journey. Rest in peace Noel, you have made the world a better place. You have made deep imprints of love in our hearts. May your spirit and memories live long in all of us. Amen. Ken Fraser.

<https://www.essendonfc.com.au/news/20504/hall-of-fame-noel-allanson>

An interview with Noel is featured in the EFC 150th Anniversary video



“FORE”!

Dick Reynold Club Golf Day 2022

Enjoying perfect golfing weather, twenty-three teams participated in the DRC EFC Past Players & Officials Golf Day held at Sandhurst Golf Club on 9th February.

The format was a Gentsomes event, that saw the honours go to Kevin Dale's team:

**The Winning Team: David Calthorpe, Dan Kneipp, Jim Cranage, Kevin Dale
(Kevin Dale team)**

Runners Up Joe Misiti, Ferzi Bekiri, Pasquale Di Virgilio, Sean McIlroy
(Melbourne Cleaning Supplies team)

Third Place Xavier Campbell, Russ Fynmore, Stephen Fynmore, Don Abell
(Russ Fynmore team)

The individual winner of the day was **Jason Smith**. Jason is a regular player in this event.

EFC was represented by a team of current-day players: Darcy Parish, Devon Smith, Jayden Laverde, and Dylan Clarke. Jake Stringer joined us for lunch. EFC Executive management was represented by Xavier Campbell, Brenton Humphries, Nick Ryan, Adrian Crawford, Alex Kater, and Cassidee Grubb.

Several past players participated: David Calthorpe, Steve Alessio, Marc Bullen, Paul Vander Haar, Graeme Shultz, Barry Young, Ben Haynes, Terry Daniher, David Flood, Kelvin Steel, Dustin Fletcher, and Joe Misiti.

Following the completion of the play, Kevin Dale hosted lunch, featuring interviews with Devon Smith and Darcy Parish. EFC CEO, Xavier Campbell provided us with an insight into the *Bombers* preparation for season 2022. 400 game veteran, Dustin Fletcher spoke about the success his sons Mason and Max, are having in the USA College NFL competitions. A fundraising auction and raffle draw was conducted by Barry Young, ably assisted by Premiership players, Terry Daniher and Paul Vander Haar.

All funds raised on the day, approximately \$10,000, are directed to the EFC Past Players Foundation Trust, to assist past players who are experiencing financial hardship, following their playing days.

We acknowledge and thank our generous event sponsors: PMD Financial Advisers, Essendon BMW, NEC, Little Real Estate, TMS: Mos Kassaby, InfraBuild and Drummond Golf. Thanks to our many generous donors for their contributions to the prize pool for the auction and raffle.

To our Event Convenor, Kevin Dale and Barb Cullen OAM our special thanks. Many months of work went in to delivering a memorable day and we are most appreciative of your efforts.

Our thanks to those who assisted on the day: Ken Gilbertson, Charlie Italia, Graham Leydin, Gary Grainger, Barry Besanko, Ray Sneddon, John Della, Susie Norton, Sue Anderson.

The Winning Team: David Calthorpe, Dan Kneipp, Jim Cranage, and Kevin Dale





Thank you to our generous sponsors and donors for their support of the 2022 Dick Reynolds Club events

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Paul Little AO



Michael Baker
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Kevin Dale



Susie Norton



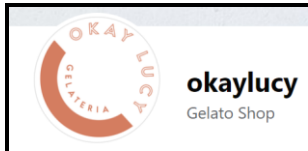
Tim Donohue



Barry Young
Jasper Herington



Somerton Road Garden
Supplies



Okay Lucy Mornington



Jo-Anne Albert



Goonawarra Golf Club
Sunbury and Mick Leahy



Lago Smallgoods



Barry Besanko



Michael Catlow
Flynn's Wines



Anthony Smith



Barb Cullen OAM



Jason Johnson



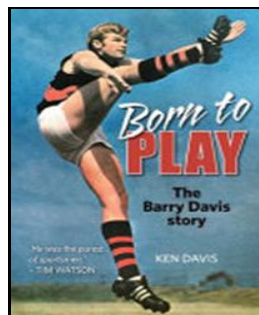
Iain Findlay



John Della



Marnong Estate Winery



Ken and Barry Davis

Heath Hocking to pull on the boots again ...

In season 2022, EFC past player Heath Hocking will return to the club where his footy journey began – the Mooroolbark Mustangs in Melbourne’s Eastern league.

Heath was a Mooroolbark junior player before forging a successful career with Essendon in the AFL.

We wish you and your family well Heath. Your leadership and skills will make a great contribution to the Mustangs.



Rev. Allan Dunn appointed Honorary Chaplain to the EFCPP&OA

Former Essendon Football Club Chaplain, Rev. Allan Dunn has generously agreed to be Honorary Chaplain of the EFC Past Players and Officials Association.

A 'local' boy, Allan was educated in Essendon and is a lifelong member of the Bombers. After studying architecture and teaching at university, he then spent time teaching in Ethiopia. Returning to Australia, Allan has been a minister in the Baptist Church for over fifty years. He became the Essendon Football Club Chaplain in 1991, during Kevin Sheedy's time as senior coach.

Allan was club chaplain for twenty-five years, selflessly giving time counselling players, assisting them through difficult times, and officiating at weddings, christenings, and funerals.

Inducted as an EFC Life Member in 2011, Allan was awarded EFCPP&OA Life Membership in 2019. He is also a Life Member of the Sports Chaplaincy Australia.

The Association is delighted Allan has accepted the invitation to act as our Honorary Chaplain. Allan can be contacted on 0488 748 811.



57 years on treasured 1965 Premiership guernseys return home

As was the tradition as the final siren sounded on Grand Final day in the 1960s, players swapped guernseys and shook hands with their opponents. And so it was on Saturday 25 September 1965 that Essendon's Darryl Gerlach and St Kilda's Ross Smith upheld the tradition.

Essendon had defeated St Kilda by thirty-five points. It was Essendon's famous premiership from fourth position on the home and away ladder. The 13th Premiership for the club, played in front of a crowd of 104,846 at the 'G'.

Since Grand Final day in 1965, the guernseys remained in the hands of the 'opposition'.

Author Michael Kearney has been conducting player interviews documenting memories of the 1965 Grand Final. Michael and his co-author Phillip Hoey were researching their forthcoming book, celebrating the Essendon Football Club premierships of 1962 and 1965. During these conversations, it emerged both Darryl and Ross were keen to return their swapped guernseys, to their rightful owners.

Recently, Michael Kearney and Phillip Hoey, sought permission from the MCC to access the ground, so the former players could again 'exchange' their jumpers. Darryl and Ross returned to the same spot on the 'G' where they had stood as the final siren sounded 57 years earlier. They shook hands, standing in the back pocket at the Punt Road end of the oval. Guernseys were 'returned' and are now back home where they belong after loving care by their 'minders'. A memorable occasion.

Postscript: Darryl who normally ran out in #17, wore #2 on that day. Why? The VFL was forced to make last-minute changes to some guernsey numbers worn by the Essendon team. Some members of the public had endeavoured to sabotage the official edition of the footy record by printing a 'rogue' version. Ross wore his traditional #3 jumper. Ah, the passion of footy fans!





Allan 'Bunny' Woods Essendon's oldest living player

On 13 January 2022 Allan 'Bunny' Woods celebrated his 100th birthday, making him Essendon's oldest living player. The milestone celebration saw Allan proudly sport his EFCPP&OA red 'n black cap, to welcome Kevin Sheedy to the party.

Allan donned the sash for EFC Reserves in the late 1930s, but like so many of his mates, he left footy, home, and loved ones to enlist in the Australian Army. Woods served as a Sapper with the 2/7 Field Company from 1943-1946.

Post-war, Allan worked for sports goods manufacturer Nutting & Young, hand-stitching footballs and, many cricket balls used by the Australian Test teams. So well regarded by Don Bradman for his skill in preparing the perfect cricket ball, Allan was *The Don's* go-to man when he ordered new cricket balls.

An Essendon boy born and bred, Allan and his family lived at 33 Buckley Street. He attended Essendon Primary and High schools. His best mate was Essendon great, the late Harold Lambert. Together the pair attended school, played footy, and enlisted in the armed services. Allan and Harold maintained their long friendship with a weekly telephone call ritual, right up until Harold's passing in 2021.

Congratulations, Allan – 100 wonderful years.



Remembering the Hon. Andrew Peacock, AC



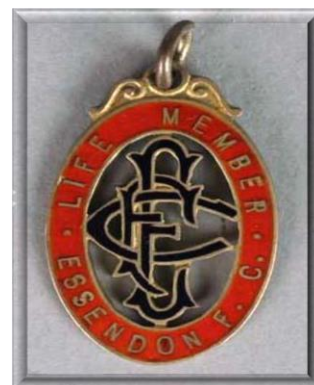
Former No. 1 EFC Ticket Holder, the Hon. Andrew Peacock, AC was honoured at a State Memorial held at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne recently. Peacock died in Texas, USA on 16 April 2021, aged 82. Andrew Peacock served in Parliament for 28 years and was a Minister in three Federal Liberal governments.

Andrew had a lifelong love of the Bombers, often attending games and club functions.

The Association was represented at the service. Our condolences to the Peacock family.

2021 Inductees - EFC Life Membership

The Association congratulates five new Essendon Football Club life members who were presented with their awards at the club's Annual General Meeting in December.



Adrian Dodoro - General manager of list and recruiting, Adrian was inducted as a life member in recognition for his contribution to the club over the past two decades. The long-serving administrator has been instrumental in identifying, recruiting, and nurturing the Bombers' young talent.

Brendan de Morton is the current club doctor and former president of the Sports Medicine Association of Australia. Brendan was also recognised for his medical expertise and contribution to the club.

Gerard Dillon - An Essendonian for over three decades, serving as secretary and treasurer for 26 of those years. He has also been responsible for numerous projects that generated significant returns for the club and has been a generous financial supporter of the club, past players, and associated programs.

Gerard was a driving force behind the facilitation of fundraising to secure the return of Dick Reynolds' Brownlow medals to the club for the enjoyment of all Bombers fans.

Michael Maplestone - Michael's contribution has been substantial across many years, and he continues to be involved through his role on the selection panel for Essendon's Hall of Fame. He was instrumental in the establishment of the original Hall of Fame Museum at Windy Hill and was the author of *Flying High* and *Flying Higher*, which both brought significant financial and historical benefits to the club.

Ricky Dyson – as a 114-game Bomber and favourite son, Ricky has been inducted as a life member for his time as a player and his contribution to the VFL program. The 1047th player to don the sash, played from 2004 to 2012 and was then involved in Essendon's VFL program for the 2018 and 2019 seasons, where he held a coaching and developmental role.

All inductees were recognised for their contributions to the club.

The Association congratulates Adrian, Brendan, Gerard, Michael, and Ricky on their well-deserved honour. We look forward to welcoming them to the Association's next function.



Oh, What a Night!

The Association congratulates our Past Players & Officials inducted as Legends into the Essendon Football Club Hall of Fame.

Past players; Neale Daniher, Dustin Fletcher, and Gavin Wanganeen together with past official the late Dr. Bruce Reid were honoured at a club Hall of Fame event in February.

Christmas @ The NEC Hangar

The club hosted EFCPP&OA members for Christmas drinks @ The NEC Hangar in December.

Mark Harvey put on a *3 Vote Best on Ground* performance as MC and resident comedian. Harvs asked several “politically incorrect” questions of some members, much to everyone’s amusement.



EFC Chairman Paul Brasher and CEO Xavier Campbell provided background on the planning and recent completion of stage 2 of the facility. The facility is a credit to all involved, an impressive headquarters.

The event was held in the *Essendonians Conference Room*. The function room overlooks the playing fields, it can seat 200 or 400 at a stand-up event.

Association members were provided with a tour of the new Hall of Fame now known as “Glory and Fame,” the Jack Jones Café – featuring some great caricatures of our beloved Jack, the Bomber Shop, overnight accommodation areas for up to 30 athletes, 2 sets of change rooms for VFL/VFLW teams, lecture rooms and facilities. Stage 2 has space for future expansion.

Our thanks to Paul Brasher, Xavier Campbell, Mark Harvey, and Lisa Raciti for hosting this event.

**Essendon Football Club Past Players & Officials Association
Official Merchandise**

Order online - <https://essendonfcpastplayers.com.au/shop/>



CAP (grey)
\$20 + ph

CAP (red 'n black)
\$20 + ph

BEANIE
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