



Essendon Football Club Past Players & Officials Association

Newsletter – December 2023

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President's message- David Collins

Welcome to the last EFCPP&OA Newsletter for 2023. The Association has had a busy year – holding a number of events, being involved in many different programs and proactively supporting and advocating for our members.

All our major events this year (DRC Golf Day, EFCPP&OA Life members function, DRC Luncheon -How to win a Premiership, DRC Cocktail function and, of course our Annual Dinner for Past Players and Officials) were very success thanks to the hard work of the EFCPP&OA and DRC Committees. Thank you to all involved and well done.

Our Association remains in a strong financial situation due to our fundraising efforts and generous donations to our Association. We sincerely thank everyone who has made financial donations/contributions and also to those that donated prizes for our raffles and our online auction.

With regard to our annual membership subscriptions, I would ask that any outstanding payments are paid as soon as possible, as the follow up on unpaid memberships subscriptions has been very time consuming.

An important innovation introduced this year was conducting our Annual Raffle online instead of the usual printed and distributed ticket booklet process. This new process significantly reduced the workload for raffle organisers whilst returning a similar financial result as previous years. We intend to continue to use this online process for all future raffles and I encourage members to fully engage in this process.

Very importantly, I want to congratulate long term EFCPP&OA Committee member Barry Besanko, for his excellent work in highlighting the need for much greater funding from the AFL to support past players with Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) and other brain injuries. Barry has had personal meetings with the new AFL CEO (Andrew Dillon), the AFLPA CEO (Paul Marsh) and AFLPA's Head of Alumni (Tim Harrington) and is playing a leading role with the subcommittee of the Combined Past Player Association (CPPA) representatives, to ensure much greater assistance is provided to past players suffering from long term brain injuries. Well done Barry and the CPPA. Fantastic work.



I am very happy to advise that work has commenced on the total renovation and refurbishment of the Barry Capuano Room (formerly the Legends Room) at Windy Hill. It is anticipated that the room will be formally opened early in 2024. The room will be available to both the EFCPP&OA and the Essendonians to book and hold meetings, small functions, including to watch EFC interstate matches and for social catch ups. A program of events for the room will be circulated in 2024.

As you will be aware, the primary role of our Association is to assist members who may be in need of support. This is done on a strictly confidential basis and if you become aware of any member who may need support, please contact me on via phone (0419 342 559) or email (president@efcppoa.com.au).

Thanks to Jane Lee (Admin Assistant) who does a mighty job in putting together and editing this Newsletter and also to everyone who has made contributions to it.

Thank you again for your support of our Association in 2023 and I wish you all the best for Christmas and for a safe and happy 2024.

David Collins
President

2023 DRC Cocktail Function

This year's DRC Cocktail function was conducted on Wednesday 30 August in the Premiers Room at Windy Hill Venue. Over 120 people attended the event, which featured debut jumper presentations to a number of past EFC players. MC (Kevin Dale) was at his brilliant best with his interviews and making sure all present enjoyed the evening.

Kevin opened proceedings with an interesting interview with EFC President Dave Barham which provided an explanation of where the EFC is at the moment and where it is going. Dave was very open and honest in his answers.

Kevin then interviewed EFC List Manager Adrian Dodoro. This provided some fascinating insights into Adrian's current role and his involvement with the EFC over many years. Like Dave Barham, Adrian also answered some very interesting questions from the audience which provided those present with an improved understanding of the challenges and also the difficulties of his role.



Presentations of Debut jumpers were also made to the following EFC past players:

Player	Presenter
Shaun McKernan	Charlie Italia
Jackson Merrett	Adrian Dodoro
Courtenay Dempsey	Mark Bolton
Kyle Reimers	Jason Johnson



All presenters highlighted informative descriptions and highlights of each player's career details. All past players presented with their debut jumpers expressed their delight in receiving these very individual mementos of their EFC careers and also acknowledged their great experiences at the Club.



Shaun McKernan & Charlie Italia



Kyle Reimers & Jason Johnson



Mark Bolton & Courtenay Dempsey

Special thanks to the DRC Committee for their great work in organising the function - Kevin Dale, Barb Cullen OAM, Jane Lee, Charlie Italia, Ken Gilbertson and Glenn Shepherd.



2023 Annual Dinner

Around 145 full members and guests attended this year's Annual Dinner held in the Premiers Room at the Windy Hill Venue on Wednesday 27 September. John Barnes was the host and did a great job officiating the night.

Several EFC Board members (David Wills, Andrew Muir and Andrew Welsh) and EFC Executive (CEO Craig Vozzo and his Executive Assistant Samantha McKelvie) were in attendance as well as representatives from EFCPP&OA sponsors, EFC Coterie Groups, and other AFL Past Player Associations.



President David Collins welcomed all present and thanked everyone for their continuing support of the Association. David especially thanked both the EFC Board and Executive for their excellent support and assistance and for valuing the EFCPP&OA and noted that the relationship between all parties is working very well and is appreciated.



He also recognised players from the 1993 EFC Premiership Team and the 1983 EFC Reserves Premiership team who this year celebrate and remember the 30th anniversary of the 1993 win and 40th anniversary of the 1983 win.

David passed on his sincere thanks to Barb Cullen OAM, Kevin Dale, Glenn Shepherd, Susie Norton and John Dellar for their great work for the EFCPP&OA, and in particular, for the work on organising the 2023 Dick Reynolds Club functions (DRC Golf Day, DRC Lunch at the RACV Club - How to win a Premiership and the recent DRC Cocktail function).

He also thanked the EFCPP&OA Committee for their contributions in the last 12 months. David noted that Charlie Italia (Secretary), Ken Gilbertson (Treasurer) and Jane Lee (Administrative Assistant) had worked tirelessly and effectively for the EFCPP&OA and their contributions were much appreciated.

On a sad note, David also advised that the following EFCPP&OA members had passed away since the 2022 Annual Dinner:

Past Players: Barry Colliver, Terry Rodgers, John Towner, George Spero

Past Officials: John Kilby, Alan Gordon, Alby Wilson, Graham Mendola

Special guest, Victor Jeramiah, and his daughter Annie, both of whom had come up from Hastings, were recognised. Victor was a young boy in Hastings when the great John Coleman was playing there very early in his career. Victor and John great friends and Victor has spent many years collecting John Coleman memorabilia and now has a massive collection. Many EFC Past players have visited Victor at his home in Hastings and have been amazed at the material that is on display. David thanked Victor for his great work over many decades.

A panel representing the 1993 Premiership were then interviewed including Gavin Wanganeen and Mark Harvey. Their answers and memories of the 1993 premiership and their Essendon careers were very amusing and insightful.



John Barnes, Gavin Wanganeen & Mark Harvey



Charlie Italia, Tony Buhagiar, Matthew Banks and Mark Harvey

In another segment, Charlie Italia interviewed and presented plaques to Tony Buhagiar, Matthew Banks and Mark Harvey in recognition of their great work and fundraising for the EFCPP&OA through the EFC Past Players group in WA. Both Tony and Matthew travelled from WA for the event and provided some interesting insights in the WA Group which consists of over 20 ex EFC players.

Later in the night, a panel representing the 1983 EFC Reserves Premiership team, including Ron Andrews, Alan Stoneham and Graeme Schultz were interviewed and recalled many great stories about their win.

After the formal part of the evening finished, all present mingled and caught up with each other. The great Michael Long also made an appearance much to the delight of guests.



Alan Stoneham, Ron Andrews and Graeme Schultz

EFC Past Player Profiles

Sincere thanks to Carolyn Larson and Barry Capuano for their tireless work in completing and updating all EFC past player profiles. Former EFC past player and EFCPP&OA Committee representative, Gavin Keane through his IT Company, Cloud Made Simple, is setting up these profiles on the EFCPP&OA Website. Photos (where available) have been included for each player profile as well as other information including statistics from AFL Tables, etc.

It is expected these profiles will be online shortly and will also be linked to the EFC website. We will keep members updated when these player profiles are online.

AFLW update

In only their second AFLW season, Essendon qualified for the finals and had a very successful season despite going down to Geelong in an Elimination Final.

The team lead by Coach, Natalie Wood and Co-Captains Bonnie Toogood and Steph Cain, displayed a strong will to win, energy and excitement throughout the entire season.

Large crowds attended the team's home matches at Windy Hill which highlighted the Club's spiritual homes strong value to the community.

Congratulations to Bonnie Toogood and Maddie Prespakis who were rewarded for their outstanding seasons with nominations in the All-Australian awards. Steph Wales and Amber Clarke received nominations for the Rising Star award and Sophie Van De Heuvel was voted into the 2023 AFLPA's 22under22 team.

Well done to all those involved in Essendon's AFLW program. We look forward to what the Essendon AFLW team can achieve in 2024.



Maddie Prespakis with fans at Windy Hill after Essendon's win against St. Kilda.

John Murray Peck

Contributed by Carolynn Larsen (EFC Historian)



This is not a name that will be familiar to Essendon supporters, but it should be, as John Murray Peck was a key player in the Club's formation. A foundation member and later vice-president, his ties with the Club were further cemented when his daughter married iconic Club figure, Alex McCracken.

Peck St in Strathmore is named for him and Mascoma and Lebanon Streets, also in Strathmore, are named after his properties.

But he left an even more important legacy - the iconic Cobb & Co. coach.

He and fellow American, Freeman Cobb, established Cobb & Co. in 1853 and ran their coaches from the city along Mount Alexander Rd to the goldfields. The service later expanded into NSW and Queensland and became part of Australian bush folklore.



Peck later became a stock and station agent, establishing himself as Victoria's leading auctioneer of fat cattle. He was a tall, powerful man and his voice could apparently be heard for half a mile.

When he died in 1903 at his home, "Lebanon" (still standing and classified by the National Trust), in what is now Strathmore, he left an estate of more than £36,000 (about \$6,000,000 today).

TELL US YOUR NEWS ... We welcome news, articles and photographs from all our members. If you have experiences, insights and/or photos that you think may be of interest to other EFCPPOA members, please feel free to send them to admin@efcppoa.com.au so if appropriate, we can include them in future newsletters editions.

Where Are They Now?

Mark Bolton

Years played: 1998-2007

Games: 124

Goals: 50

Number/s worn: 23



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

I played with the University Blacks in the VAFA for 4 years.

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

I started a non-profit named Ladder which, with the support of the AFL and AFL Players Association aims to tackle youth homelessness across Australia. From there I moved in to the technology sector and worked at SEEK for 4 years, and then moved to London for a few years with an organization called Go1. I'm now back at Essendon Football Club in the role of Chief Strategy and Growth Officer.

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

I've been pretty lucky post football and had no operations.

Do you have any ongoing medical problems?

Unfortunately, one of my knees is not great which makes running difficult.

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

I really enjoy the modern game – the speed of ball movement is great to watch.

Do you have any special anecdotes from your playing time to pass onto other past players?

Just enjoy the opportunity to learn the game from, and play with, some of the great players of the modern era.

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

We had a really tight group in the early 2000's – the beauty of WhatsApp means we can stay in touch easily.

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

For Essendon: Michael Long was an incredible player and a great leader in our community.

Other teams: I look back on my career and am grateful to have had the opportunity to play on players like Jonothan Brown, Nathan Buckley, Adam Goodes and Anthony Koutoufides

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

I just want to thank the EFCPP&OA – being on the other side of the fence now, means I see how much work goes in behind the scenes. We are lucky to have such a strong group looking out for both past players and the club.



Mark's daughters, Maggie & Grace, in front of the #23 locker at the Hangar.

Where Are They Now?

Name: Nick Neophitou
Former EFC Boxing Coach



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

I was involved in the VRL/AFL as a boxing coach from 1980 to 2007, (Essendon and Brisbane Lions 1996-2000).

During my time in Queensland, I was involved with The Queensland Academy of Sports, and assisted rowing teams, softball, netball teams, means and women's Hockey, all with boxing). Then I moved back to Melbourne and back to Essendon Football Club, again as Boxing Coach.

What job/jobs did you pursue outside coaching boxing?

I was a motor mechanic with my own business in Melville Road, Brunswick, then Account Manager with Parnell LPG Conversations, then in 1996 I move to Queensland through my association with Roger Merrett and then worked at MC Labor in 2004 once I moved back to Melbourne.

Are you still working?

No, I am retired. Now aged 75 and doing lots of travel with my wife Jacqui in our caravan.

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

In my opinion, there are too many changes to the game. Football has progressed into a lot quicker game, yet I don't think it is very entertaining as I liked the rough stuff! It's become more professional, with sports science and the game is a lot quicker and more skilful.

Do you have any special anecdotes from your time to pass onto other past players?

Always be prepared to work at your sport. Push yourself to the limits. That's what boxing teaches.

From a boxing coach - Never give up, don't take a backward step, keep pushing yourself to the limit, focusing

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

Nobby Clarke (Deceased), Bomber Thompsen, Terry Daniher, Roger Merrett, Billy Duckworth (all tough guys and some got me in trouble at night!)

I still keep in contact with Terry Daniher, Dean Rioli, and I take an active part in the Long Walk.

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

I admired the lot of them, but particularly "Bomber" Thompson and Neil Clarke, due to their work ethic, all the Daniher's for their constant hard work, Roger Merrett, Bill Duckworth and Timmy Watson.

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

I had a great time and loved the people. The Club treated me very well. Sheedy was a great coach and let me do my job, with no interference.

When I was interviewed for the Essendon Boxing Coach job, Sheedy said: " You teach them boxing and I'll teach them football. You don't interfere in football, and I won't interfere in Boxing."

EPPOCC – Essendon Past Players Officials Coffee Club

Contributed by Graham Leydin

All members will be delighted to hear that the first season of EPPOCC (Essendon Past Players Officials Coffee Club) was an outstanding success. EPPOCC grew out of an initiative suggested by past players Ken Fraser, John Birt and Ian Graham early in the season with the purpose to strengthen player/official/community relationships and increase communication.



This idea was considered by the EFCPP&OA as another opportunity to further engage with EFC and promote community engagement whilst also providing members to regularly meet in an informal casual setting.

The monthly catch ups are coordinated by committee member Graham Leydin, with the generous support of Alan Burton and the Windy Hill Venue. Catch ups were held in the Windy Hill Venue lounge area with free coffee and nibbles on the first Monday of each month.

EPPOCC started slowly with initial invitations sent to members within a close proximity of Windy Hill Venue. However as interest grew and news spread, invitations were sent to the wider EFCPP&OA community. Monthly catch ups grew strongly as the year progressed and now are strongly attended with plenty of interaction and input from members.

Various EFC identities chaired the monthly catch ups, including Barry Capuano, Ken Fraser, EFC CEO Craig Vozzo, David Collins, Barry Besanko and Charlie Italia. This format will continue in 2024 with meetings to eventually be held in the Barry Capuano Room once it has opened.

It was fantastic to see so many well-known EFC people gather monthly and have some surprise visits from Geoff Pryor, John Williams, Robert Shaw and Mark Eustice, all who provided interesting and entertaining insights.

The catch ups have generated lots of discussion about club direction, change of logo, staff roles, concussion protocols, player movements, the Hangar facility and a variety of other issues. Overall, the Catch ups have been a worthwhile initiative.

Hope to see you at a Coffee Club catch up in 2024!

FUNDRAISING ASSISTANCE - As you are aware, the EFCPPOA and Dick Reynolds Club run a number of funding raising efforts each year and also an Online Auction and Special Effort raffle. If you are able to donate potential prizes for any of these efforts in 2024, please email us admin@efcppo.com.au

Milestones and achievements

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

- Ross Higgins (70 – 29th October).
- Kevin Egan (80 -10th September).
- Barry Davis (80 -15th September).
- Glenda Wade (80 – 22nd November).
- Michael Maplestone (80 – 9th November).
- Noel Raitt (80 - 26th December).



Glenda Wade (President of Bomber Squad) presented with an 80 jumper by Ben Hobbs, Archie Perkins and Nick Bryan.



Make sure you stock up on Essendon Football Club Past Players & Officials Association Official Merchandise for Christmas!



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



EFCPP&OA Adults Cap – Grey
\$20.00



Beanie
\$20.00



Golf Towel
\$20.00

CPPA Bowls Day: EFCPP&OA participate again

Essendon Bowling Club was again the venue for the second Combined Past Players Association's 2023 bowls competition event. All AFL clubs are open to participate yet unfortunately a few clubs were unable to participate this time.

The day started in warm sunshine and 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.

Essendon contributed two teams to the fixture with four rounds of eight ends being played over the duration of the day – two in the morning session and two after the lunch break.

After the formalities, a wide collection of uniforms, hats, tracksuit tops and windbreakers took to the links, but Essendon looked smart in the special shirts.

The competitive instincts came to the fore with friendly banter, good natured "stirring" and high spirited energy prominent on all rinks. There was action aplenty as players aimed to provide consistent and steady bowling to make each bowl count.

Essendon 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. Active review and reflection of performances with the usual excuses and "unlucky" stories were the common theme!

Play continued keenly after lunch in warm sunshine and then concluded with some after match refreshments. There was general agreement that it was a fantastic day. Many thanks to those players who represented the Club.

Team 1 – Bombers (team of 3) - Brian Lanigan, Brian Howard and Kevin Harwood.

Team 2 – Same Olds - Rob Blachford, Peter Hiscock, Ken Swanson and Colin White.

The next bowls challenge will be held in March 2024.

Important Information for Past Players

The AFLPA Alumni.

The AFLPA have substantial programs to assist past players who are members of the AFLPA, including as listed below:

- Up to \$500 refund on excess payments when in hospital if you are in a Private Health Fund.
- Up to \$8,000 refund for out-of-pocket charges should you require surgery on body joints, including for damaged teeth, if you are in a Private Health Fund. Up to \$6,000 may be available should you not be in a Private Health Fund.
- An opportunity to seek funds from the Geoff Pryor Fund or an Injury and Hardship Fund, in the event of suffering financial hardship.

If you are not a Member of the AFLPA you can still join by contacting Rebecca Gross at the AFLPA on 86514351. There is a once up cost of \$50 or \$25 for pensioners or others assisted through Centrelink.

Tour of the Hangar

Any Past Players or Officials who are interested in a Tour of the Hangar, please contact our Secretary Charlie Italia via email; secretary@efcppo.com.au and Charlie can arrange a personal tour for you and your family.



1962 and 1965 Premiership Player, Charlie Payne and his family on a recent tour of the Hangar.

Obituary

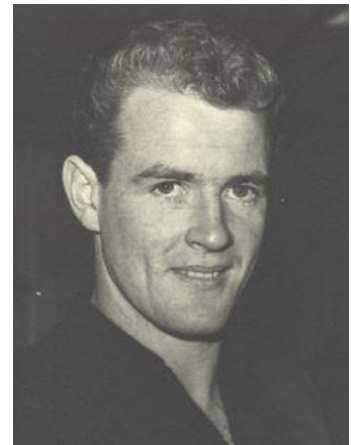
Vale Ken Timms

Ken played 134 games for Essendon between 1957- 1965 and was a member of the 1962 Premiership team. He was a versatile player who played as a ruck-rover before becoming full-back and then a ruckman and forward.

Ken also played for Victoria in 1962 and 1963.

Post Essendon, Ken became captain-coach of Colac in 1966 and he then joined South Warrnambool from 1967 to 1972.

Our condolences to the Timms Family. *Rest in Peace Ken*



Vale Steve Beaumont

A rover who came from Cooe in Tasmania, Steve had represented Tasmania before joining Essendon.

Steve played 37 games for Essendon between 1974-1976.

After leaving Essendon, Steve had a successful football career in Tasmania, playing for Cooe and Burnie and he was a member of three premierships teams. He was inducted into the of the Tasmanian AFL Hall of Fame in 2011.

Our condolences to the Beaumont Family. *Rest in Peace Steve*

Thank you to our 2023 Online Auction and Special Effort Raffle donors:



ATG and Ben Doolan



The Eastern Golf Club & Kelvin Steel



Kevin Sheedy AM , Jeanette Curwood and Windy Hill Venue



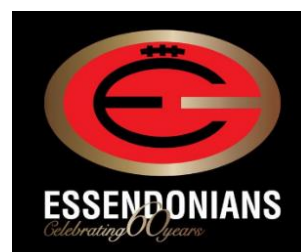
Barry Besanko



Alec Epis



Essendon Football Club



Essendonians



We wish all our members a very happy and safe festive season and look forward to a fantastic 2024!