

### Essendon Football Club Past Players & Officials Association

Newsletter - April 2025

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### President's message- David Collins

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2025. The year has already kicked off with a busy start, featuring the DRC Golf Day in February, our monthly coffee club (EPPOCH) catch ups in February and March, and our Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Below is a summary of outcomes of our recent 72nd AGM held on 30 March 2025 at Windy Hill:

The AGM commenced with one minute's silence in recognition of the passing of the following members since the last AGM: Reg Burgess, Barry Davis, Hugh Mitchell, Des Freeman, Brian Gilmore, Malcolm Middleton, Kevin Harwood and Peter Bevilacqua. RIP

The Minutes of the previous AGM were accepted without amendment. The reports by the President, Secretary and Treasurer were also accepted.

The mains topics reported on and discussed were:

- Sound financial position of the EFCPP&OA.
- Decision to continue free annual membership subscriptions for full members was endorsed for 2025.
- Very successful functions since last AGM:
  - DRC Lunch "Celebrate 1984 Premiership 40th Anniversary"
  - DRC Cocktail Party
  - Annual Dinner
  - 2025 DRC Golf Day
  - EFCPPOA Life Members function
  - EPPOCH monthly coffee catch ups at Windy Hill
- The great work of our Admin Assistant (Jane Lee) in producing such high-quality newsletters and her other excellent administrative and EFCPP&OA social media work.
- EFC Past Player profiles including photographs are now up to date on EFCPP&OA
  Website. Past Player interviews conducted by Dan Eddy will be added to the individual's
  profile soon.
- EFCPP&OA memorabilia Display Cabinet to be installed in EFC Hall of Fame as part of the full refurbishment of the EFC Glory and Fame Museum at the "The Hangar".

- Excellent working relationship with the EFC Board and Administration.
- Update provided by Barry Besanko on his work with the AFL, AFPA and CPPOA regarding CTE/Concussions injuries.
- Binks & Associates are the EFCPP&OA new Major Sponsor.

#### The 2025 EFCPPOA Committee is as follows:

President:David CollinsVice President:Barry BesankoSecretary:Charlie ItaliaTreasurer:Ken Gilbertson

Committee Members: Graham Leydin, Gary Grainger, Ryan O'Connor, Jason Johnson,

Sue Anderson, Iain Findlay, Melissa Verner Green and Simon

Madden.

Special thanks to Darryl Gerlach who has stood down from the Committee after 19 years of service as Vice President. Well done Darryl and thank you for your extensive contributions to the Association.

Thank you to all members of the Committee for the loyalty and their contributions to the work of the Association during 2024. As well as the great work of the Dick Reynolds Club Committee members - Kevin Dale, Barbara Cullen OAM, Glenn Shepherd, John Della and Susie Norton.

Welcome to Melissa Verner Green and Simon Madden who have joined the Committee this year and congratulations to Barry Besanko on his appointment as Vice President.

A special congratulations to Barry Capuano who was awarded AFL Life Membership recently.

Several functions were held in The Barry Capuano Room at Windy Hill during the past twelve months, many of which were held in conjunction with The Essendonians. These events will continue in 2025, and members will be emailed details of any future events.

There were no recommendations by the Committee for EFCPP&OA Life Membership at this AGM.

Thank you to all members who had made the effort to attend this AGM.

Hope you are enjoying the start of the 2025 AFL season and looking forward to a fantastic year!

David Collins President

### **Dick Reynolds Club Golf Day**

The 2025 DRC Golf Day was held on Wednesday 5 February at the Sandhurst Golf course. The weather was ideal for golf and nineteen teams participated. Teams were made up of current EFC AFL players, EFC Board members, EFC Executive or EFC Past Players:



**EFC -** Dave Barham (President), Andrew Welsh (Vice President), David Wills (Treasurer), Brad Scott (Coach), Adrian Crawford (Executive), Alex Kater (Executive), Neil McKissock (Past President), Ken Lay (Past EFC Director), Kyle Langford, Jye Menzies and Xavier Duursma.

**EFC PAST PLAYERS -** Terry Daniher, Joel Reynolds, Simon Madden, Barry Young, Joe Misiti, Barry Besanko, Marc Bullen, Kelvin Steel, David Flood, Greg Brown OAM and Ben Haynes.

It was great that EFCPP&OA's new Major Sponsor, Justin and Ben Commerford from Binks & Associates, were able to attend and participate on the day.

After lunch, Kevin Dale (MC and DRC Golf Day organiser) interviewed EFC President Dave Barham, Coach, Brad Scott, and current players Xavier Duursma and Jye Menzie.

The raffle was then drawn, and Barry Young conducted a very successful auction. This event is a major fundraiser for the EFCPP&OA and assists in providing support to our members who may need assistance.

Special thanks also to event organisers Kevin Dale and Barbara Cullen along with Charlie Italia, Ken Gilbertson, Darryl Gerlach, Gary Grainger, Iain Findlay, Barry Young, John Della, Susie Norton, and Ray Sneddon who assisted on the day.



Warren Erfurth, Andrew Welsh, Sam Good & Marian Barnett

#### Winning teams/individuals:

- 1st Place: BMW Essendon Michael Baker. Craig Freshney and Travis Sharpe
- 2nd Place: ELGAS Dale Haggar, Shane Keating, Darren Pickett and Barry Young
- 3rd Place: Jay Smith Jay Smith, Gareth Hall, Ash Taig and Xavier Duursma
- Best individual score Craig Freshney



Dave Barham, Justin Commerford, Kyle Langford & Ken Lay

#### A big THANK YOU to all 2025 DRC Golf Day sponsors and raffle donors:





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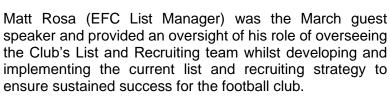
### EPPOCH – Essendon Past Players Officials Coffee Hour



The Essendon Past Players Officials Coffee Hour (EPPOCH) 2025 catch ups began in February with Dustin Fletcher as the guest speaker.



Dustin was highly entertaining and provided highlights from his EFC experiences during and post his 400-game career.





Each EPPOCH meeting is held on the first Monday of each month. The next EPPOCH's catch up will be held on Monday 7th April at Windy Hill Venue, 10:30am- 12:00pm with EFC guest speaker Daniel McPherson (General Manager – AFL).

Hope to see you at a Coffee Club catch up in 2025!

### **Binks & Associates**

Binks & Associates are EFCPP&OA's new Major Sponsor.

On behalf of our Association, we thank Justin and Ben Commerford for their support, and we are excited about this partnership.



BINKS & ASSOCIATES

Binks & Associates specialises in Owners Corporation management and manages the common property of strata title developments in all types of properties including residential, commercial, and industrial, and provide expert assistance to developers and project managers of new buildings.

They have offices in Surry Hills and Geelong and for more information visit <a href="https://www.binksandassociates.com.au">https://www.binksandassociates.com.au</a> or contact them by phone (03) 9536 5700 or email <a href="mailto:enquiries@binksandassociates.com.au">mailto:enquiries@binksandassociates.com.au</a>

### **Barry Capuano**

### Inducted as a Life Member of the Australian Football League



AFL Chairman Richard Goyder and Barry Capuano

Barry Capuano was inducted as a Life Member of the AFL at the 2025 Season Launch, held in Sydney on 4 March.

Announcing this significant accolade earlier this year, AFL Chief Executive Andrew Dillon said: "Life membership of the AFL is a high honour and recognises both quality of service across many years and an incredible love for the game and support for its growth and future success."

The award recognises Barry's extraordinary service to all levels of the code. Spanning over 60 years, Barry's contributions as a player, coach, official, and volunteer have left an indelible mark on footy.



The Capuano Family - Leah, Anna, Barry and Julia

# **Neale Daniher - Australian of the Year 2025**

Congratulations to Neale Daniher on being named Australian of the Year 2025. Since being diagnosed with motor neurone diseas (MND), Neale AO co-founded FightMND and has helped raise more than \$100m to find a cure for the disease.

A great Essendon past player and a fantastic human. Congratuations Neale – well deserved!

Past player and 81 gamer, Michael Prior presented the debut jumper to his son Jaxon Prior before his first game at the MCG



Neale & Jan Daniher



Gary Foulds & Isaac Kako

in Round one of the 2025 AFL Season.

### 2025 EFC jumper presentations

Past player and 300 gamer, Gary Foulds, presented the number 10 jumper to new debutant and first gamer Isaac Kako in round one of the 2025 season

Isaac happened to kick his first AFL goal with his first kick. Famous number 10's includes Gary O'Donnell, Mark McVeigh, Alan Noonan, and the great John Coleman.



Michael & Jaxon Prior

### **Legends of the EFC- Harry Hunter**

Contributed by Barry Capuano (EFC Legend)

Harry Hunter was one of Essendon's top full-backs and came to the Seconds in 1920 from Footscray (VFA) where he played in 1919. Prior to that he played with Newmarket Juniors.

He had a waddling run but had pace and he was a good mark and beautiful kick. He was a vigorous but fair player.

Hunter was a late withdrawal from the 1923 premiership side with a strained leg but was a key player of the 1924 premiership team.

He was also selected in the state side in 1922, 1923, 1925 and 1927 and was also Essendon's vice-captain in 1927.

He was transferred to Albury in his employment in 1928 and spent a year as Albury's captain-coach, winning the premiership in that year.

After returning to Essendon for a season in 1929, he became captain-coach of Yarraville in 1930 and 1931, and he later coached Preston in 1932.

Hunter became co-coach of Essendon with Dick Reynolds in 1939 when Jack Baggott resigned midway through the season. He served on the Club committee from 1937 to 1943 and was also chairman of the selection committee. He was Club treasurer from 1961 to 1971 and foundation president of the Past Players Association in 1953. He was inducted as a Legend of the EFC in 2015.

He died on 23rd April 1971.

**Harry's Statistics\*:** 

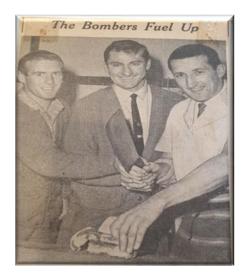
Games played: 109 Debut order: 325
Goals scored: 9 Nos. worn: 7, 14 & 1

**Height:** 184cm **Weight:** 85kg \*Details provided from the EFCPP&OA Website under <u>Player Profiles</u>

**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 EFCPP&OA members, please feel free to send them to <a href="mailto:admin@efcppoa.com.au">admin@efcppoa.com.au</a> so if appropriate, we can include them in future newsletters editions.

### **Alec Epis Poem**

Written & contributed by: Ken Fraser, Teammate and 1965 Premiership Captain







Alec Epis and Hugh Mitchell



Alec Epis, Ken Fraser, David Shaw

### **ODE TO ALEC #28**

HERE'S TO ALEC, THE BOY FROM THE WEST AS A HALF BACK FLANKER, HE'S ONE OF OUR BEST, 180 GAMES, 2 PREMIERSHIPS, VIC. REP. AND MORE, THEN A GOOD MANY YEARS, IN CLUB SERVICE, WE SAW.

NICKNAMED "KOOKABURRA" FOR HIS VERBAL CAPACITY UPSETTING OPPONENTS WITH LANGUAGE TENACITY, NOT SHORT OF A WORD IN THE TOUGHEST OF CONTESTS, OPPONENTS BEWILDERED AND SOON IN DISTRESS

A CROWD FAVOURITE DUE TO HIS DASHING STRONG PLAY, OPPONENTS SORE AND SORRY AT THE END OF THE DAY, HIS MARKING WAS STRONG AND BLIND TURNS QUITE UNIQUE, EXCEPT AT SOUTH MELBOURNE GROUND, OF WHICH WE DON'T SPEAK!!

A BUTCHER BY TRADE, HE WAS UP BEFORE DAWN, SOMETIMES A DAY'S WORK, BEFORE JUMPER WORN, WHILE TEAMMATES WERE STILL ASLEEP IN THEIR COTS, "KOOKA" WAS BUSY AT WORK IN THE LOCAL MEAT SHOP

BUT COME MATCH TIME, MID SATURDAY AFTERNOON, ALEC DONNED RED AND BLACK, MIND AND BODY IN TUNE, SOON DRIVING THE BALL TO HALF-FORWARDS WITH EASE, SAVING MANY OF THEM BEING KNOCKED TO THEIR KNEES.

AND OFF FIELD ALEC, THE DASHING DEBONAIRE WON THE HEARTS OF YOUNG LADIES WITH HIS PERSONAL FLAIR, HIS TEAMMATES WERE THANKFUL FOR A DRAW CARD LIKE THIS, AND OF COURSE, HIS GENTLEMANLY BEHAVIOUR, WAS IN NO WAY REMISS!!

"KOOKA" WE THANK YOU FOR FRIENDSHIP AND CLUB SERVICE GIVEN, MANY YEARS OF FINE SERVICE AND FOR THE HIGH STANDARDS STRIVEN, WE CONGRATULATE YOU ON CREATING YOUR WINERY OF FAME AND DRINK TO YOUR HEALTH WITH A GLASS FROM "EPIS DOMAINE"!!!



### **Thank you Bruce Connor**

On 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024, the Club celebrated and made a presentation to well-respected medical staff/physiotherapist, Bruce Connor, who announced his retirement.

Bruce has been associated with the EFC for over 30 years and is also a long serving member of our Association.

Thank you Bruce for your contribution to the EFC.

L to R: Former physio Paul Lew, CEO Craig Vozzo, Bruce Connor and Dr Brendan DeMorton.



### Calendar of events

DATE	EVENT
Manday 7 April	EDDOCC Applie Coffee Club cotab up
Monday 7 April	EPPOCC – April Coffee Club catch up
	10:30am Windy Hill Venue
Monday 5 May	EPPOCC - May Coffee Club catch up
	10:30am Windy Hill Venue
Saturday 10 May	EFC Past Player function
	<ul> <li>Pre-game at Essendon's Round 9 game against Sydney at Marvel Stadium. The Club will send an invite with details to Past Players shortly.</li> </ul>
	, ,
Wednesday 25 June	Dick Reynolds Club Luncheon, RACV
	Club Melbourne.
	<ul> <li>Event information and booking details will be emailed to members in May.</li> </ul>

### **Just Browny**

### **The Greg Brown Story**

In February, Greg Brown OAM, surrounded by his proud family, and many footy and cricket mates gathered at Windy Hill to celebrate the launch of Dan Eddy's book – *Just Browny*.

Greg's the only player in Essendon's history to win a VFL premiership (1965) and a District cricket premiership (1963/1964).

The book on Greg's life was commissioned by his children with the assistance of Greg, Dan Eddy and Paul Daley.

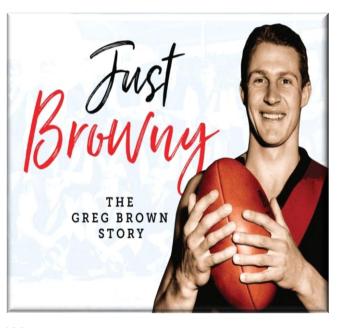
Well known cricket champion Paul Sheahan AM was the MC and interviewed three panels of people to give their insights on various aspects of Greg's life – these included Greg's children, Fraser, Travis and Kirilly as well as Kevin Carroll, Kevin Johnson, Ken Fraser, Fred Harrison, John Grant and Russell Roberts.

Topics discussed were Greg's experiences with Essendon Football Club, Essendon Cricket Club, AMP, Frankston Wranglers Charity Club and the Lords Taverners Cricket Charity.

To purchase a copy of *Just Browny*, visit <a href="https://www.daneddybooks.com/">https://www.daneddybooks.com/</a> or contact Greg on 0448 872 280.

Any profits coming from the sale of Greg's book will be donated to the Past Players Foundation Trust.

A great read. Congratulations, Greg!





Greg Brown OAM with Dan Eddy

**FUNDRAISING ASSISTANCE** - As you are aware, the EFCPPOA and Dick Reynolds Club run a number of funding raising efforts each year and the Special Effort raffle. If you are able to donate potential prizes for any of these efforts in 2025, please email us <a href="mailto:admin@efcppoa.com.au">admin@efcppoa.com.au</a>

### Celebrating Greg Sewell's remarkable career with Essendon

Contributed by Jo-Anne Albert (EFC Life Member & former Board Member)

In December 2024, family, and many friends from the Essendon Football Club community gathered to celebrate Greg's contribution to Essendon and Australian Rules football. Greg's long-time mate, Athol Hodgetts, spoke about Greg's career ... here are excerpts from Athol's speech ...

Greg attended Glenroy State School, Essendon Grammar, and University High, where two of his schoolmates were Allen Aylett (North Melbourne/VFL) and Dick Pratt (Carlton FC).

Greg excelled at sports. A friend notes he could have played Test Cricket, represented Australia at the Olympic Games, or been an Australian Champion Ball Room Dancer. He chose to play for Essendon.

At 14, Greg played in cricket and footy teams in higher age groups. He won batting/bowling averages. In 6 games at Essendon Grammar, he kicked 61 goals. 26 in one game! He also excelled at athletics.

In the same years, Greg played with school AND open-age teams! Playing for Monash Rovers, he was spotted by recruiters and invited to join the Essendon Football Club.

In 1952 Greg played in a Third 18 Premiership, and the Reserves Premiership, after playing 7 senior games in the same year. He made his senior debut as 19th man on July 19, 1952, against Footscray at Windy Hill. In his second senior game, starting on the ground, he went to shake hands with Albert Mantello, who promptly belted him and sat him on his bum! Welcome to league football, son.



1952 was the start of a 171-game career. Greg only kicked 34 goals. He explained that away, saying his major role was to deliver the ball lace out to John Coleman and to other full forwards who followed the great Coleman - times when he had to carry his centre-line teammates Burgess and Clarke!

The club didn't win a Premiership, but Greg played in 4 first semi-final teams, 2 losing Grand Final teams, and the Victorian Interstate Team. He was considered a very talented player who was fast, could mark, and break away from his opponents, delivering the ball to his forwards – 'lace out', of course!

In 1956, Greg met Glencye Hargreaves at a dance in Heidelberg. When Greg told Glencye he played footy for Essendon, Glencye asked if Essendon played in the VFL or VFA! History reports Greg won the day. He and Glencye were married on 26 September 1958. They've celebrated 66 years of marriage and been blessed with three beautiful children - Phillip, Tamara, and Mark.

Greg left Essendon in 1961, joining Kyneton Football Club as captain-coach from 1962-1964.

In 1965, Greg returned to Essendon to coach, replacing Bill Hutchison. He worked as Reserve Grade coach and Assistant to Senior Coach John Coleman. The senior side won the Premiership that year. Greg was one of the last people at Essendon to see John Coleman before his sudden death in 1973.

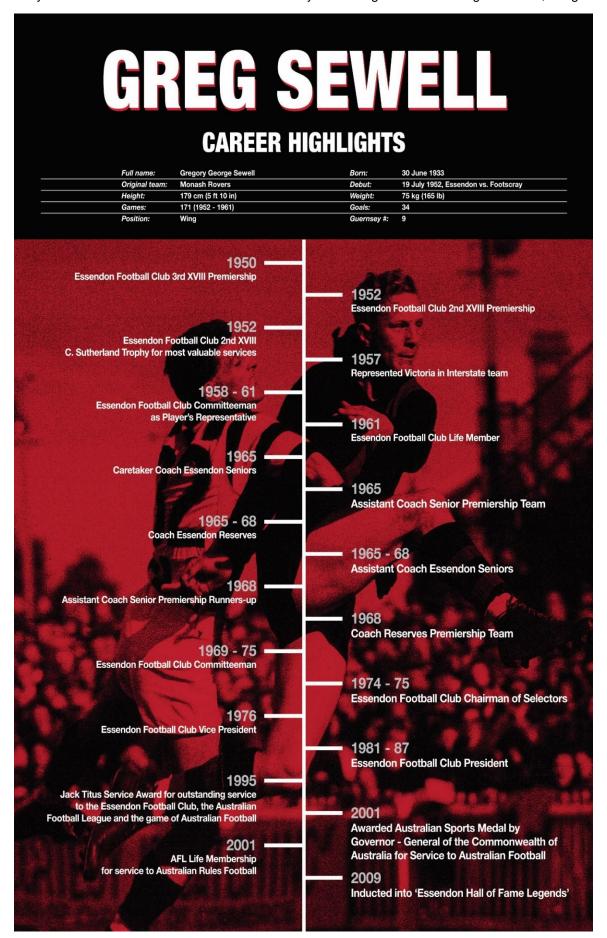
In 1968, Greg finished his coaching career in triumph. Essendon Reserves won! The first premiership success since 1952. Notable as Greg was a member of the team, playing on the half-forward flank.

He served as the Players' Representative on the EFC Committee 1958-1961, a Committee Member 1969–1975, and Vice-President in 1976. Greg then took a break from football to concentrate on his business.

Returning to EFC in 1981, Greg served as President for seven years. Eight people ran the day-to-day operations of the Essendon Football Club in 1981, together with the Board led by Greg.

Greg quickly gained the respect of the Essendon footy community. He was tough but fair, driven to achieve success for the club. Back-to-back premierships in 1984 & 1985, two-night premierships, playing finals 6 years out of 7. The club returned a profit during all 7 years Greg was in charge.

Could Essendon have achieved the same success during those 7 years if Greg Sewell hadn't been President, I very much doubt it. After leaving the Presidency, Greg continued running the Sewell family foundry business which has been in the Sewell family for three generations. Congratulations, Greg!



# Past Player Recognition jumper presentation

All players who have played one or more senior match for the Club are post-career presented with an EFC Recognition jumper to identify their debut number, years played, games played and playing number/s.

Bryan Pirouet was presented this EFC Recognition jumper at the Club's Chairman's Function at Essendon's Round 2 match v Adelaide at MCG on Saturday 22 March.

Bryan played 14 games for EFC during 1970-1971.



**Bryan Pirouet** 

### 1965 Premiership reunion

Players from the 1965 premiership team gathered at Windy Hill in late March 2025 to reminisce about their premiership season.



Members of the 1965 team.

### **Obituary**

#### Vale Malcolm Middleton

Malcolm passed away on 17th November 2024 and was an Associate member.

Condolences to Middleton family.

RIP Malcolm

#### Vale Frank Driscoll 1934 - 2024

Frank passed away in December 2024.

A key forward from Mortlake, Frank played seven games for EFC in 1957 and 1958.

He was a prolific goalkicker in the country and represented the Laxton League from 1953 to 1968.

Post EFC, Frank returned to play for Navarre and was also captaincoach of Moonambel in 1966 and 1967 & coach from 1970 to 1973.

Condolences to the Driscoll family.

RIP Frank.



#### Vale Kevin Harwood 1937- 2025

Kevin played for the EFC seconds in the 1950's and was a well-known member of the Essendon Bowls Club. Kevin passed was on 30 January 2025.

Condolences to the Harwood family.

RIP Kevin.

### Vale Peter Bevilacqua 1933 -2025

Peter was born in Italy in 1933 and moved to Australia in 1938 with his family. He played 1 game for Carlton in 1953 and in 1961 he became Essendon fitness advisor under coach John Coleman. He was Essendon's runner in the 1965 Premiership year. Peter finished as EFC fitness advisor in 1971 when he transferred to a role as teacher at Marist Brothers in Burnie Tasmania.

He was highly regarded for his fitness expertise as well of his personal support of and friendship with many players. He was very highly regarded by all who knew him. Peter later moved to Hobart. Peter passed was on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025.

Condolences to the Bevilacqua family.

RIP Peter.

#### Milestones and achievements

The following members have or will achieve significant age milestones between the 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025:

- Kevin Parks (90- 9 July).
- Jack Hambridge (90 16 July).
- Keith Gent (80- 13 April).
- Noel Judkins (80 -18 April).
- Ken Betts (80 22 June).
- Andrew Radchenko (70- 3 May).
- Ron Andrews (70- 13 May).
- Wayne Foreman (70 -16 May).
- Steven Huggard (70 18 May).
- Tim O'Shannessy (70 25 May).
- Jim Demetriou (70 7 June).
- Kelvin Steel (70 7 June).
- Maurice Boyse (70 3 July).
- Robert Amos (70- 11 July).
- Adrian Dodoro (60 12 May).
- Gary O'Donnell (60 12 May).
- Mark Harvey (60- 11 June).
- Trevor Spencer (60- 28 June).
- Dustin Flecther (50- 7 May).



### **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; <a href="mailto:secretary@efcppoa.com.au">secretary@efcppoa.com.au</a> and Charlie can arrange a personal tour for you and your family.

Jason Winderlich & his family at their recent tour of the Hangar which was six months after his horrific neck breaking incident.



## Make sure you stock up on EFCPP&OA Official Merchandise!



Order online <a href="https://essendonfcpastplayers.com.au/shop/">https://essendonfcpastplayers.com.au/shop/</a>