

**SEASON 1999**  
**20 YEARS AGO –**  
**WEATHERING THE STORM**  
**THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERS**  
**&**  
**A TRIBUTE TO BETTY PLUNKETT**  
**( Ref 2019/2)**

In 1999, following a VCFL restructure, Dromana FC was affiliated with the **Third Division** of MPNFL. The other clubs in that league that season were: Berwick, Bonbeach, Carrum Downs, Crib Point, Dingley, Keysborough, Red Hill, Somerville and Sorrento.

As history shows, it was a challenging season for Dromana FC and there were times when the obstacles, facing the club, appeared to be overwhelming. However, due to the resilience of the playing group, the determination of officials and the allegiance of local families the club survived and ‘inched’ forward. At times, improvement was barely discernable but, somehow, the club endured from week to week.

As mentioned elsewhere on this website, 1997 was the darkest season in the club’s long history. 1998 and 1999 also tested the commitment of players, officials and volunteers. There is no doubt that the club’s existence was imperiled in those difficult years; but by mid-1999 there was some spirit of optimism and the hope of better things for the Grasshoppers.

In 1998 the Dromana Football Club reverted to its origins and became the Tigers.

The **DFC Board of Directors** that season was: Steve Kyriifidis ( Chairman), Anthony Matthews ( Administrative Director ) and Kevin Schwab ( Finance

Director). Anthony Currie and Eddy Nedelko were also listed board members.

The other duties undertaken by Anthony Matthews were Player Insurance Officer and MPNFL Delegate. Anthony also played for the club in that period but was able to combine training and playing with his various secretarial duties with great efficacy.



**Colin Matthews**



**Anthony Matthews**

Anthony gave much time and energy to the club as an administrator and, along with his father, Colin, worked conscientiously to strengthen the club in those grim years of rebuilding. Anthony was granted **Life Membership** of DFNC in 2003 for his efforts in club administration and MPNFL liaison.

In 1999, the Football Manager was **Colin Matthews**; and the senior coaching panel for that season was **Steve Scagliarini** and **Dale Jolly**.

Former club President, **Les Rowler** was the **DFC Representative** on the **Dromana Sports Association** that season; and, with his wife, **Pam**, worked long hours supporting the club in various capacities. The bar staff /volunteers that season were **Kevin Schwab**, **Betty Plunkett** and **Pam Rowler**.



**Les Rowler**



**Pam Rowler**



**Christine Hunter**



**Rhonda Ferguson**

**Christine Fowler** was the **Canteen Manager** in 1999; and the Board of Management commended Christine for her outstanding contribution to the club. The canteen duties at DFNC commence at about 8.00 am on match days and finish well after the final siren. Christine was diligent in organizing volunteers, ordering stock and providing the spectators take-away food with refreshments.

The **support/volunteer staff** included: **John Joyce, Christine Hunter, John Kelly, Wendy Aarons, Ray Robertson, Rhonda Ferguson, John McCormick, Ron Hunter (Senior), Ron Hunter (Junior)**; and the club's **official timekeepers** that season were: **Eric Oakes, Betty Plunkett** and **Kevin Schwab**.



**Eric Oakes**



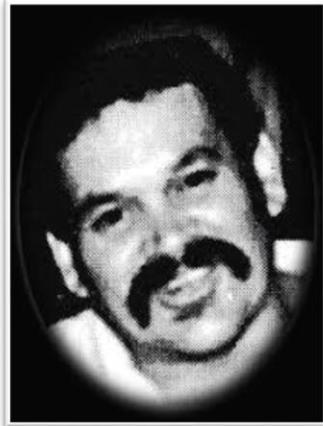
**Ron Hunter Senior**



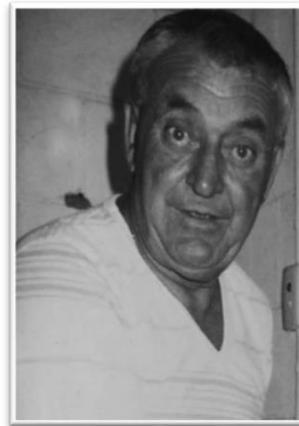
**Ron Hunter Junior**

**The Senior Medical Officer** in 1999 was **Gary Ferguson** and the **training staff** included **Alex McPhail** and **Mark Rogers**. As can be imagined, Gary, Alex and Mark had a massive workload each Saturday. Their match day

responsibilities commenced at 9.30 am and finished at about 5.30pm; and, in those eight hours, they attended to the 'on and off-field' medical requirements of the 60 Dromana players involved in the three games.



**Gary Ferguson**



**Alex McPhail**

As can be seen above, **Betty Plunkett**, was one of a dedicated group of volunteers who spared nothing in trying to save and fortify the club in that era; and the following tribute attempts to outline the key role that Betty played at Pier Street over many years.

## **A TRIBUTE TO BETTY PLUNKETT**



**Betty Plunket  
A True Believer  
&  
Benefactor of DFNC**

This extract, which was part of an article published in 'Tiger Talk' in May 2003, will give readers some insight into Betty Plunket's dedicated service to the Dromana Football Club....

*“ Betty Plunket is a Life Member of the club and has been a strong and resolute supporter of Dromana Football Club since 1980. In the past 23 years, Betty has been involved in the following areas of club activity:*

- *Treasurer for three years.*
- *Committee Member.*
- *Canteen and kitchen helper.*
- *Bar attendant.*
- *Organizer of the hotel raffle ( 10 years).*
- *Time keeper for home and away games.*

*This season, Betty is the timekeeper for all grades at home matches and she takes her responsibilities with the siren and stop watch very seriously. Betty has taken over where Eric Oakes left off; and Betty continues to represent the club with honesty and loyalty.*

*Betty played a major role in the building of our social rooms. Her confidence in the future of the club was typified when she loaned DFNC the money to complete the building in 1982.*

*“... We owe a debt of gratitude to Mrs Betty Plunket, who loaned us the outstanding \$ 10,000 ( ten thousand )...” Eric Oakes -1996.*

*Betty is very proud of her family. She has two daughters, three granddaughters , two grandsons and a great grandchild is due in September ( 2003). Betty’s husband, George , died in 1983 and at every presentation night, Betty presents a trophy in George’s honour to the Most Determined Player in the Senior XVIII. Last year ( 2002), Bryce Wilson was the winner.*

*Betty’s training as a stenographer and clerical assistant is obvious when her time cards are completed at the end of each match . She takes pride in her work and appreciates the importance of ‘time in life and sport. ‘*

*Her love of cricket and football are strong and she has witnessed the highs and lows of our great club...*

*Whether you are a new or old ‘Tiger’ take a moment of your life to say hello or introduce yourself to this remarkable stalwart of the Dromana Football Club.”*

At the time of posting this article on the DFNC Website (2019), Betty is one of twelve women who have been granted **Life Membership** of the DFNC in recognition of their voluntary service and unwavering support of the club.

**The other women Life Members of DFNC are:**

Eileen O’ Leary ( 1975), Alice Oakes ( 1984), Rhonda Ferguson ( 1989), Jacki Ross ( 1991), Denise Williams ( 1994), Pam Rowler ( 1996), Pam White ( 1998), Christine Hunter ( 2004), Vicki Holt ( 2012), Theresa Stelling ( 2014) and Valda Knight was presented with DFNC Life Membership in 2015.



**Theresa Stelling**



**Alice Oakes**



**Val Knight**



**Vicki Holt**

**'MY LIFE'  
BY  
BETTY PLUNKET**

**DELIVERED BY CELEBRANT KERRY HOLGATE**

**AT ROSEBUD ON THE OCCASION OF  
BETTY'S FUNERAL SERVICE  
ON FRIDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2018 @ 10.30AM**

The following article was written by **Betty Plunket** prior to her passing and was read by **Kerry Holgate** at Betty's funeral service in **May 2018**.

Betty's epistle serves as a lasting record of her early years, her generous spirit and her wholehearted involvement in community activities. Betty's love and belief in the Dromana cricket and football clubs are apparent in her words.

DFNC owes a great deal to Betty's kindness and she will never be forgotten for the part that she played in building and strengthening DFNC.

**MY LIFE**

**By Betty Plunket**



*I was born at home – at 7 Westgate Street, Pascoe Vale and was a whopping 10 pound (4.5 kilograms), a triceps birth and lucky to have survived. At 9 months, we moved to Falconer Street, North Fitzroy and then at 18 months to Rowe Street, North Fitzroy where I lived until age 21, then to Gold Street, Clifton Hill with my mother, where I raised my daughters Frances and Louise.*

*At 46, I moved to Heales Street, Dromana, my first home. From there to Safety Beach, when it became too hard for me to look after myself and finally, to Rosebrook Aged Care.*

*I attended Gold Street Primary school from 1939 to 1945, then off to Preston Girls High and Domestic Arts School Preston, from 1946 to the end of 1949.*

*I went to Methodist Sunday school and church from the age of 4 to 14, then taught and attended the Presbyterian Church, Michael Street, North Fitzroy from 14 - 17. I was finally christened along with my granddaughter, Cherie in 1985.*

*I attended ballroom dancing from 1948 - 1952 and passed all exams up to teachers, when I ceased. I played badminton on and off from 1958 – 1982, and during the later years, I was able to form a team with my daughters.*

*At a young 16, in 1950, I had my first serious boyfriend, Peter Davis. I had quite a few more before meeting Noel Callenberg whom I married in Collingwood, on the 10th April, 1954, at age 20, and had with him 2 daughters, Frances, in 1957 and Louise in 1960.*

*I divorced Noel in 1972 after separating in 1966. Noel passed away in 1976. I then married George Plunket on the 23rd March, in 1973, at the church I had formerly taught Sunday school at.*

*George and I started building our home in Dromana in March, 1980. George was by this time unwell and was staying at Dromana to finish the house. It was not quite finished (little odds and ends) when he passed away on the 15th March, 1983. Only 3 years together in our home for which we worked so hard to*

*achieve. I only ever had 2 jobs; 1 was for 7 years in an office prior to having my girls and the other was for 13 ½ years at Telecom (now Telstra) to support my girls. I loved both of my jobs. In my spare time I enjoyed knitting.*

*My best achievement was to instigate getting the memorial wall erected at Dromana Cemetery. The council honoured me by giving George the number 1 niche.*

*I was blessed by having 2 daughters, 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren, with the 6th currently cooking. I therefore lived long enough to achieve my wish of having great grandchildren. In later years I enjoyed the opportunity to travel to many parts of Australia.*

*My volunteer work for the Dromana Cricket and Football Club awarded me life membership, of both which I have cherished. My volunteer work with the clubs included hotel raffles (10 years), bar assist, Thursday night meals, committee, treasurer, Christmas parties, presentations, other functions and of course, my love, being scorer for the cricket and time keeper for the footy. George and I loaned \$10,000.00 towards the building of the club rooms.*

*I was not supposed to live at birth, but here I am leaving at 84 years of age. It hasn't been easy. My father died when I was 6, so my mother struggled to rear my 2 half sisters and myself during WW11. I suffered whooping cough at the age of 8, which left me with a dreadful cough. I had diabetes in my 60's, a heart attack at 63, and bowel cancer at 66.*

*Lots of ups and downs, but I'm not complaining - who could, after such a wonderful and fulfilling life - certainly not me. As it's said "Life wasn't meant to be easy!" Especially if you are vertically challenged and never grew taller than 4 foot 9 and ¾ inches.*

*What advancements have I seen in my lifetime:*

- *Cures, research and medical procedures*
- *Aeroplanes, jets and space ships*
- *Maxi shipping liners*
- *Car advancements*

- *Electronics*
  - *Man in space and on the moon*
  - *Decimal currency in 1966*
  - *Metric measurement in the 70's*
  - *Household washing machines, dryers, fridges, freezers, vacuums, microwaves and many others*
  - *Mobile phones (unsociable at times), computers, internet, coloured TV and big homes on small blocks.*
- The advancements which I feel have not been so good are:*
- *Small blocks of land*
  - *Drugs*
  - *Late and all night clubs*
  - *Non-discipline of children at home and schools*
  - *Very few letters written anymore*
  - *Manners lacking in some people."*

#### **REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION:**

Sources: DFNC Records –Tiger Talk- DFNC Handbook-Personal files- Letter from Betty Plunket- Photograph from Betty's family.

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