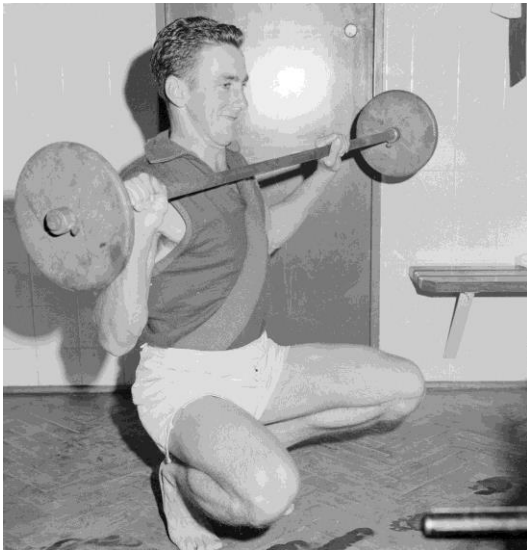


HEARTBEAT



A newsletter for past players and officials
of the West Perth Football Club

Welcome to Heartbeat



Welcome to the second edition of *HeartBeat*, the newsletter for past players and officials of the West Perth Football Club.

In this issue, we've got a new segment "Heading West", in which we catch up with one of the many players who joined our club from the east and made a significant contribution.

We launch the series with

defender Shane Fitzsimmons, who joined from Melbourne in 1979 and was recently inducted into the Kyabram Football & Netball Club Hall of Fame.

Thanks, too, to everyone who provided feedback on the first edition of *Heartbeat*.

We look forward to bringing you more news from the club, while also looking back at our proud history.

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Does your heart beat true?

Heading West: Shane Fitzsimmons 1979-1983

Can you tell us a little about your career with Melbourne?

I began my career at Melbourne in 1973, playing my first senior game at 17 years and 3 months under coach Ian Ridley. I played ten senior games that year and the remainder in the reserves. I then spent the next three years under coach Bob Skilton, then consecutively under Denis Jones and Carl Ditterich for a year each, all up playing 63 senior games and 52 reserve games for the Demons.

I was young and light framed then with a little bit of speed, so I played mainly as a half-forward, wingman and half-back in the seniors. I had a few games ruck-rolling, one as rover and a few at full-forward, but was not big enough to hold down a pivotal position, which is why I probably ended up as a utility at West Perth.

You started the 1979 season with Melbourne but on 16th June of that year, you played your first game for West Perth. What was behind your decision to join the Cardinals?

I began my career at West Perth at the ripe old age of 23. I was dumb-founded when I was told I was going to be put up for clearance to another club, as I felt my best football was ahead of me. I wanted to pay Melbourne back for nurturing me and I wanted to be a one-club player. My decision to join the Cardinals reflected my opinion that WA football was the next highest standard of football outside

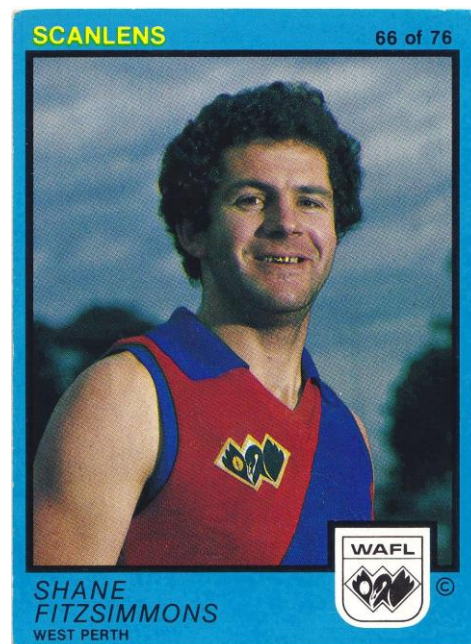
Victoria. The contract to play for West Perth was the best offer. Also at that time, Melbourne were recruiting interstate players, and paying big money to get them, so I thought why not prove myself interstate and put myself in a position to be recruited back. As it turned out, I could have done this after the 1980 season with Melbourne offering me a contract to return to play under Ron Barassi, but I refused because I could not go back on a promise I made to stay with West Perth on the night I was presented with my Breckler Medal. If Melbourne asked me before presentation evening, I think I would have returned because that's where I wanted to get back to.

When you arrived, how different was the game in WA by comparison with Victoria?

The biggest difference was the average size of guys across the ground in both height and weight. In terms of ability, I thought at the time that the best six-to-eight players in each team could play in the VFL. I could see, though, that this was going to change quickly, as there were a lot of young talented players emerging all the time. Subiaco's Gary Buckenara was just one example.

Can you share with us some of your favourite memories of your time at Leederville?

My favourite memories include playing finals for West Perth against talented opposition in my final three years at Leederville. I also enjoyed the great after match



entertainment at Leederville on match days. I remember the beautiful weather and beaches not far away from where I lived in Hamersley.

Who do you still keep in touch with from your WPFC playing days?

Unfortunately I have not kept in touch with many of the boys from my playing days. We go and live our own lives and Victoria is such a long way away. In the not too distant future I hope to rekindle some fond memories and get back over there to see West Perth play.

You retired after the 1983 season having played 92 games for West Perth in addition to your 63 with Melbourne. What have you been doing since the end of your playing days?

Since finishing football I ran a Home Improvement business with my father for 16 years as he was a

my father for 16 years as he was a renowned builder, he was the brains and I was the lackie! Then I went working for myself and am still doing so now.

Did you have any injuries playing football? Do you have any injuries now?

During my playing career I was fortunate to not suffer too many injuries or miss many games, other than when my head got in the way one day at Leederville and led me to being hospitalised. At home in Kyabram some years later I tried

to smother a kick however my opponent kicked the ball straight into my eye resulting in a dislocated retina, effectively leaving me blind. I had to go to Melbourne where a surgeon lasered the retina back on, a less than pleasant experience. My eye eventually healed but I was classed as having lost 100% of vision in that eye, leaving me with only peripheral vision. I adjusted and played with one eye for four years through to my retirement from football. Is that a love of the game or me being crazy?

I ended up playing 103 games with Kyabram and 42 games with Merrigum before winning a premiership in my second last season with Merrigum.

Thanks for giving me the chance to contribute to your HeartBeat newsletter and I wish all my old former teammates and friends at the club, all the best in the future. Take care and go the Cardies!

Does your heart beat true?



Shane Fitzsimmons and family with WFFC director Russell Ellen at the Kyabram induction night.

We made it! West Perth sneaks into 2017 finals

A courageous last-quarter effort against Claremont on Saturday saw the Falcons earn a top-five position and a place in the elimination final against Swan Districts at Bassendean Oval on Sunday, September 3.

The come-from-behind victory was also a terrific way to celebrate Aaron Black's 150th game – an achievement which earns him life membership. A home final is expected to see the black-and-whites' supporters out in force.

But our team has won both encounters with Swans this season, the last of those back in June when we got home by eight points in a fascinating encounter at Bassendean.

The winner of this weekend's game will earn themselves a spot in the first semi-final, and your support would be invaluable as the boys look to keep the dream alive in 2017. Be there if you can!

Looking for old footage?

Are you tired of trying to convince your wife or kids you were a champion when you wore the red and the blue? Well, we may be able to help. A small army of volunteers is collating a library of West Perth games broadcast on TV. Dating back as far as the 1969 grand final, we hope to make games available in return for a modest donation to the club. More details to come.

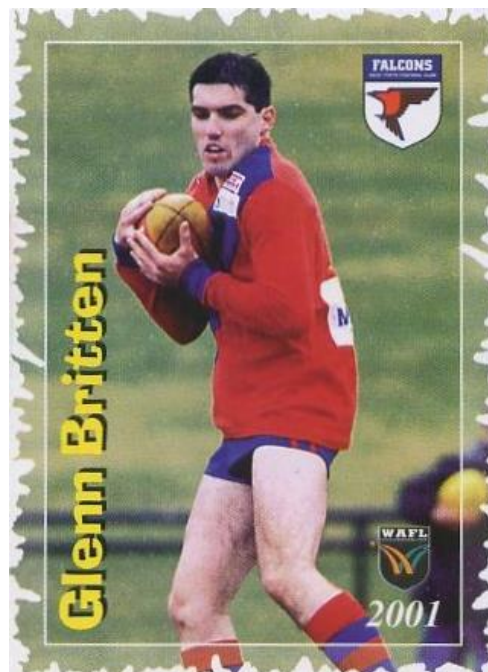
My first game – Glenn Britten remembers 1999

My first league game was the season opener on April 4, 1999, against the old enemy East Perth, and it was significant in that it was played on a Sunday evening under lights that had recently been installed at Joondalup, and were being used for the first time. It was also the inaugural year of the host club arrangement between Claremont and the West Coast Eagles, and South Fremantle and the Fremantle Dockers.

The influence (John Dimmer) had on me was that it was JD himself who was responsible for giving me my opportunity to play league football for West Perth. He didn't give me any specific advice, but my pre-season training was good and I performed well during the scratch matches leading up to the start of the season.

It was a combination of being a bit scary and excited at the same time. It was also Ryan Lasscock's first game so it was good to have him there alongside me. I only ever wanted to play for West Perth, even if it was just for one game. My dad was a statistician with the club for 23 years and I went with him to the West Perth games as a youngster and I used to run down and hand the stats to the coach.

JD thought I was better suited to a wing position, although I didn't get onto the ground until after half-time. I played the whole last half, and from memory I played on Shaun Colbung, but with players coming off the interchange it's likely I also had another opponent but I don't recall who it was.



After being on the ground for only half a game I was pretty happy with my 14 possessions, and we went on to beat East Perth by 58 points so the day went well and I felt I had made a contribution to the win. It was just as much a thrill to be part of the team in my first game as it was to be part of those two premierships in 1999 and 2003.

Team photo flashback - 1965



Back row: L-R Peter Panegyres, Terry Robinson, David Dyson, Terry O'Dea, Brian Foley, Bob Ptolomey, Ray Boyanich, Glen Spivy, Trevor Clarey;

Middle row: L-R Ken Spencer, Ross Kelly, Richie Haddow, Colin Hebbard, Ray Marinko, Joe Fanchi, Bill Dempsey, Gary Ireland, Ray Margaria;

Front row: L-R Mel Whinnen, Neville Hebbard, Murray Leeder, Frank Margaria, Bob Spargo, John Vukman, Ron Evans, Bob Hebbard.

The 1965 league team was absolutely full of talent and managed to finish in third spot on the WAFL ladder – one position above eventual premiers East Fremantle.

And it was Old Easts who finished the Cardies' season in the first semi final, winning by 19 points in front of a crowd of almost 26,000.

Bob Spargo was captain-coach in 1965, taking over from Clive Lewington, who only lasted the one season in 1964.

Upcoming Events

24 September: WAFL grand final. Subiaco Oval. 2pm.

13 October: Breckler Medal evening. Joondalup Resort. 6.30pm til late.



14 December: Annual General Meeting. Premier Suie, HBF Arena, Joondalup. 6.30pm.

Membership initiatives

Your club is examining a wide range of membership initiatives for the 2018 season, designed to better cater to past players. More details to come in the next edition of *HeartBeat*.

Where are they now? – Roy “Lizard” Porter



Kenneth Roy Porter

Born: 17 November, 1935

Years played: 1954-1964

Games played : 179

Position: Wing

Roy Porter was given the nickname “Lizard” as a 10-year-old boy, when his teacher said he looked like a skinny lizard... and the name stuck.

What did you do after you left West Perth?

After my stint at West Perth, I went to Williams and played there for two years. It was a very young side. I was not ready for coaching, so I just stayed and played. Years later, I was on the board of selectors for West Perth.

Are you in touch with former team mates?

I keep in contact with Bill Dempsey and, until recently, with Polly Farmer. I enjoy the Cardie Coffee club. There is always someone to talk to at

the footy on a Saturday. I even keep in contact with a few of my opponents.

What do you think of the game now?

The game today is terrible. It is too much like rugby. There is no man-on-man. You used to know who you were playing on. I remember in the 1961 grand final, Keith Slater won the Simpson Medal because he contained Polly Farmer so well. These days, we seem to have lost the great contests.

What are your interests now?

The best things now are my grandies and great grandies – I just got a new one 12 weeks ago. I also enjoy going to Cardie Coffee Club and attending the footy on the weekends.

Do you have any injuries from your footy days?

Nah, I was too fast. At the age of 15/16, I played in the Sunday League against grown men, so I had to learn to get out of the way.

Have you had a favorite player since retiring?

Peter Menaglio. Best player ever, in my opinion. Nippy and a real team player.

Do you still attend West Perth games?

I attend as many games as I can. I’m always happy to chat to anyone.

Do you have any special memorabilia?

I have a lot of photos and a scrap book that I kept of my playing days. I also have many framed pictures. The lizard caricature pic is one of my favorites and decorates my room, as do photos of Mary (brother Don “Mary” Porter) and I.

Did you have a favorite Cardies player as a kid?

I never went to the footy as a child. I didn’t even know my brother Don played football. The First I

knew of it was when he told me, "I'm off to win the Simpson Medal". That was in 1951 and, from then on, Mary was my favorite.

Which player did you look up to?

Ray Schofield was a good drop kick. He always knew where the ball was and would deliver it well. He always had ball skills.

What was your greatest moment while playing?

In the last game in 1960 - I was playing at centre half forward - we were four goals down against East Perth. But we kicked the last four goals and it was a draw.

If you could play along any player past or present who would it be?

Mary Porter and Peter Menaglio.

- with Elizabeth Lourenz

Does your heart beat true?



Obituaries

We are saddened to report Brian Humphries recently passed away.

Brian Humphries 1933 - 2017

Originally from Narrogin, Brian "Massa" Humphries played 102 games for West Perth from 1951-1955.

He played in a premiership in his first season of league football (aged 18) and was a regular fixture in the league side during his years with the club. In 1954, aged 21, he was selected to represent WA against Victoria.

But he went travelling overseas after the 1955 season and never returned to the WAFL, becoming a country football stalwart in the Great Southern.



Contributions

If you have any suggestions, facts or photos for inclusion in future editions of HeartBeat, please contact the Heritage Committee at heritage@falconsfc.com.au

