

# GREENSBOROUGH FOOTBALL CLUB



FOOTBALL CLUB

— 1893 —

## 90 SEASONS OF SUSTAINED SUCCESS

*a personal account*

*by*

**Bruce McDowell**

## CONTENTS

- Chapter 1.           The Early Days (1893 – 1921)
- Chapter 2.           Diamond Valley Football & The First Golden Era (1922 – 1941)
- Chapter 3.           Post War & Back to Business (1946 – 1951)
- Chapter 4.           The Second Golden Era (1952 – 1967)
- Chapter 5.           Back to the Field (1968 – 1982)
- Chapter 6.           The Third Golden Era (1983 – 1991)
- Chapter 7.           Back to the Field Again (1992 – 1995)
- Chapter 8.           Difficult & Desperate Times (1996 – 2003)
- Chapter 9.           Relegation & Division 2 Football (2004 – 2006)
- Chapter 10.          The Hard Road Back (2007 – 2014)
- Chapter 11.          Another Golden Era ? (2015 & Beyond)
- Acknowledgements

— 1893 —  
Actis Non Verbis

CHAPTER ONE

**EARLY DAYS**  
**(1893 to 1921)**

*Seasons 1893 -1904*

In 1893, seven years before Federation - and in the depths of a severe depression – the Greensborough Football Club was born. Times were tough; banks had gone broke, and many people had lost their jobs, their land and their life savings.

In an obscure section of the Evelyn Observer Newspaper, on Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> June 1893, the following report appeared:

**DIAMOND CREEK v GREENSBOROUGH**

The first match played by the Greensborough Football Club, which has only lately been formed, took place on Saturday last (24<sup>th</sup> June) and resulted in a draw. The match was between teams representing Diamond Creek and Greensborough. Play commenced a few minutes after 3pm and was pretty fast throughout, with the Blue and Whites (Greensborough) doing their best to keep the ball going towards their opponent's goal. During the first quarter the play was decidedly in favour of the Borough lads, one goal and two behinds being kicked by them. In the second quarter, the Blue and Reds obtained one goal and two behinds. In the third quarter they obtained a behind. In the fourth quarter, the ball was kept dangerously near the Creek posts by the determined play of the Blue and Whites. Considering this was their first match, the Greensborough team played well, and would have won under more favourable circumstances. The results at any rate, to some, being 1 goal 2 behinds to 1 goal 2 behinds, being a great difference to '10 to nothing'.

The same paper reported that they played a re-match later that season at Greensborough on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> August 1893. It appears Greensborough won the rematch, and that Diamond Creek were not very happy being beaten by the 'upstarts' from down the road. The correspondent this time writing:

**It is a great pity, and I am very sorry, that the two villages cannot meet in a friendly game. If Diamond Creek cannot beat Greensborough, why don't they take it fairly; if not - they should not meet at all.**

Over a century later, one might argue that '*sporting relations*' between the two villages never really recovered.

Detailed information about the formalities of the competition, if there even was one, is now lost to history. Apart from Greensborough and Diamond Creek, we know it also included Heidelberg.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1893, The Mercury & Weekly Courier reported:

**Next Saturday (5<sup>th</sup> August 1893) the Heidelberg team will play Greensborough.**

Although Diamond Creek was the first ever documented opponent, and a strong rivalry with them soon developed, this Heidelberg game on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1893 was significant. Over the next hundred years, the Greensborough and Heidelberg rivalry would grow to the point where all others pale into insignificance.

It appears the clubs played out the 1890's, and into the early 1900's, in a Bourke Evelyn Football League, but not much more information is available until about 1904.

On 1<sup>st</sup> July 1904, Greensborough is reported again losing to Diamond Creek, this time 1-8-14 to 1-2-8 at Greensborough. The goal kickers were Wadeson for Diamond Creek and Ely for Greensborough.

### *Seasons 1905 - 1915*

Some evidence indicates that, from about 1905 until 1909, Greensborough Football Club went into recess, because a 1909 article reported:

**At a meeting of the Greensborough Sporting Club, Mr David Medhurst proposed the formation of a Football Club for Greensborough, with Mr W. Santon being elected captain.**

It seems the re-formed Club played teams from many areas and was not part of a formal association again until 1911. In 1911 the following 4 clubs got together to form an official new competition called the Heidelberg District Football Association:

- Greensborough
- Alphington
- Templestowe
- Heidelberg

Doncaster, Ivanhoe and Fairfield were invited to join, but declined. Heidelberg was Premiers in 1911.

Ivanhoe and Fairfield then joined in 1912, and Diamond Creek in 1913 - but as the 1914 season played out, ominous events were taking place on the other side of the world. On the playing field, however, it was an unremarkable season for Greensborough.

In the final Round of the 1914 home and away season, Greensborough played Fairfield Juniors at Greensborough. It was Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August 1914 - a monumental day in history. On this day Germany declared war on Russia. Three days later England declared war on Germany, and the Great War commenced.

As 1915 progressed, military recruitment gained momentum. Despite the growing number of enlistments having an impact on playing numbers, the 1915 season managed to get underway. By April 1915, Australia was about to go into battle for the first time as a unified nation. It would be at an obscure, but strategic place on the Dardanelles in Turkey, now famously known simply as **GALLIPOLI**.

On 15<sup>th</sup> June 1915, The Heidelberg News and Diamond Creek Chronicle reported on the Heidelberg v Greensborough match at Warringal Park the previous weekend. Prior to the match, Heidelberg's captain, a Mr. W. Walle, in a pre-match address to the crowd, paid tribute to a former Heidelberg player who had been badly wounded at Gallipoli. In front of a large crowd, and in an entertaining match, Heidelberg defeated Greensborough by 4 points, ie. 4-5-29 to 3-7-25.

The players mentioned for Heidelberg that day were:

- Walle (Captain)
- Millburn
- Cooper
- Tyrell
- Dawson
- Twomey (*possibly William Snr – father of Bill Jnr, Pat & Mick*)
- Northill

For Greensborough, those mentioned were: ———

- Splatt (*a number of Splatts served Greensborough with distinction*)
- Parsons
- Hodgson (*presumably Harold – later the founder of Montmorency Football Club*)
- McDowell (*presumably Reg – brother of Scotty & Bill – father of Teddy & uncle of Don*)
- Chanter (*presumably Fred – father of Vic Chanter - Fitzroy VFL champion*)

Interesting to note, and surprising in light of what has transpired since, it was reported as follows:

**This game will long be remembered by all who saw it, as being extremely fair football. No unnecessary rough play took place, but at the same time, it was rather willing.**

The 1915 season was eventually cut-short and the finals were brought forward to 24th July. Greensborough were knocked out in the First Semi-Final by Fairfield, who went on to be Premiers. In 1916, the Association was finally forced into recess for the duration, not to resume until 1919.

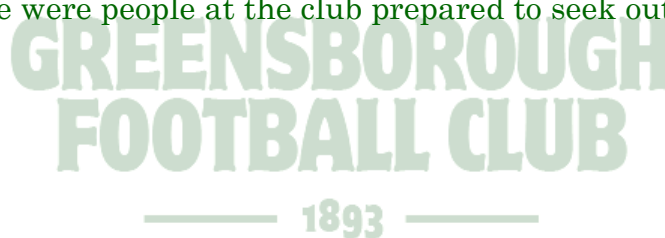
### *Seasons 1919 - 1921*

In 1919, after the recess, six clubs were able to immediately resume:

- Alphington
- Fairfield
- Heidelberg
- Diamond Creek
- Templestowe
- Greensborough

It was an unsettled competition, with teams often forfeiting, and even folding. Hurstbridge and Eltham soon joined the competition. While Greensborough Football Club appears to have successfully re-established itself after the War, it was not settled and a new approach was needed.

Fortunately, there were people at the club prepared to seek out change for the better.



CHAPTER TWO

**DIAMOND VALLEY FOOTBALL & THE FIRST GOLDEN ERA  
(1922 – 1941)**

At the end of 1921, after only three post-war seasons, Greensborough decided to join the Diamond Valley Football Association. This was a brand new and more localised competition.

The 1922 DVFA foundation members were:

- Greensborough
- Diamond Creek
- Eltham
- Templestowe
- Kangaroo Ground
- Warrandyte

Heidelberg and Hurstbridge joined in 1923. The new association quickly settled down, then grew and prospered. Greensborough, in this new Diamond Valley competition, was a much tougher 'nut to crack' than before. Over the course of the next 20 years, it went from being an '*also ran*' to a powerhouse in the competition.

After winning the inaugural premiership in 1922, it dominated for the rest of that decade, and continued as a power right up until 1941. From 1922 to 1941, during the first 20 years of the Diamond Valley competition, Greensborough played in 11 of the 20 contested Grand Finals, and won 5 premierships, ie.

- 1922 - Premiers – Captain Harold Hodgson  
(28 point win over Diamond Creek)
- 1924 – Runner-Up – Captain Gus Lines  
(15 point loss to Diamond Creek)
- 1925 – Premiers – Captain Gus Lines  
(4 point win over Heidelberg)
- 1926 – Runner-Up – Captain Gus Lines  
(13 point loss to Diamond Creek)
- 1927 – Premiers – Captain Tony Crees  
(10 point win over Templestowe)
- 1929 – Runner-Up – Captain Stuart Clough  
(Unknown margin loss to Heidelberg Juniors)



- 1931 – Premiers – Captain Bill McDowell  
(38 point win over Heidelberg)
- 1934 – Premiers – Captain Vin Broderick  
(28 point win over Eltham)
- 1939 - Runner-Up Captain Alf Montfort  
(29 point loss to Epping)
- 1940 - Runner-Up – Captain Alf Montfort  
(33 point loss to Epping)
- 1941 – Runner-Up – Uncertain who was Captain  
(16 point loss to Heidelberg West)

This excellent record was not easily achieved, and the rivalry and competition between neighboring clubs had gone to a new level. By now, Greensborough had developed quite fierce rivalries with near neighbors Eltham, Diamond Creek and (*of course*) Heidelberg. Towns that could always beat Greensborough in the old days did not like the fact that we were now as good, or better than them.

Unfortunately, Harold Hodgson, captain of the inaugural 1922 Premiership Team, left Greensborough at the end of 1923 and became founder of the new Montmorency Football Club. Montmorency was officially admitted to the Diamond Valley Football Association in 1925, and due to its close proximity to Greensborough, another rivalry was born. This rivalry did not really 'come of age' until our epic finals battles in the 1950's. In the case of Montmorency, though, we really have no-one to blame but ourselves - we should never have let Hodgson go!

During this era, the club played at three different venues. In the inaugural 1922 season, the home ground may have been a reserve, now long gone, at the top of town between the Church of England and the State School. This was not much more than a paddock, and known locally as 'Medhurst Hill Park'.

It would have been on a very steep slope, behind the original Pub, on land now eaten up by Greensborough Plaza. Apart from, maybe, a season or two at another paddock between Henry and McDowell Streets, later to be known as War Memorial Park - home was 'Greensborough Park' on the Plenty River.

From 1922 until 1941 the jumper was effectively all green with no standard monogram. The official colours were supposed to incorporate some white, but photos prior to the 1940's show nothing other than plain green. There was no money to spend on pretty jumpers in those days.



From 1946 until the end of 1947, due to a continuation of war rationing and material shortages of almost everything, the jumper was Black with a White Vee. It seems the famous GFC monogram we know and associate with the Club today started to evolve around 1948.

Family associations are the very life blood of any local football club, and at Greensborough, this has been especially so. Even by 1941, many local families had already established long standing relationships, and given great service to the Club - both on and off the field:

- Bennett
- Barnett
- Brownhill
- Burkett
- Carse
- Clinton
- Collard
- Cordner
- Elliott
- Ely
- Franklin
- Godwill
- Iredale
- Judkins
- Lines
- Maurer
- McDowell
- Medhurst
- Montfort
- Mountford
- Partington
- Poulter
- Purcell
- Rolfs
- Santon
- Splatt



In this era at least five Greensborough players were recruited by VFL clubs:

- Fred Chanter – Fitzroy (1920)
- Clem Splatt – Collingwood & Hawthorn (1922 & 1925 to 1927)
- Joe Poulter – Collingwood & South Melbourne (1923 to 1929)
- Stan Judkins – Richmond (1928 to 1936)
- Bill McDowell – North Melbourne (1927 & 1928)

Stan Judkins went to Richmond via Northcote in the VFA, and won the 1930 Brownlow Medal. His Brownlow Medal qualifies him as the most highly decorated Greensborough player of all time. Although rarely acknowledged outside the town, Stan was definitely a 'Boro Boy'.

Joe Poulter and Bill McDowell were first cousins, and both were related to the Splatts and the Elys. The Poulters were Greensborough pioneers, as were the Partingtons, Splatts and Elys. Joe Poulter played in Collingwood's 1927 premiership team before transferring to South Melbourne in 1928. He returned to Greensborough as Coach in 1935 after a stint as Captain Coach of Brighton in the VFA.

After 1927 and 1928 at North Melbourne, and 1929 at Diamond Creek, Bill McDowell returned in 1930, captained the 1931 premiership team, and then played in the 1934 premiership under Vin Broderick.

While good players are fundamental to success at any level of football, dedicated off field servants are equally important. The late Ray Dickson, the great GFC player, worker and mentor of many future Greensborough players - once said:

*'... the easiest job in a football club is to just turn up and play.'*

Up to 1941, Greensborough Football Club had been truly and faithfully served by many dedicated men and women in these critical off field roles. The more noted ones in these early roles were:

- W. Santon Snr – Patron & Official
- A. H. Price - President
- M. Monaghan – President
- P. J. Holohan – President
- A. J. Fahle – President
- W. Franklin – President
- R. Franklin – Player, Vice President & Committee
- D. Purcell - Committee
- Dr. E. Cordner Snr – Vice President
- W. Butterworth – Vice President
- C. Jessop – Vice President
- N. Poulter –Player, Secretary & Committee
- W. Meakin – Secretary
- The Godwills – Players, Committeemen & Trainers

Way back then, as now, fund raising and social activities were critical. The old Greensborough certainly celebrated its successes, and conducted many great socials and fund raisers.

For example, the Hurstbridge Advertiser, reporting in September 1931 said:

**Mr Henry Ryan gave the winning team a sumptuous 'Pie Night' on Tuesday, and Mr Holohan (the popular 'mine host' of the local Hotel) has promised a dinner to the Greensborough team to mark the winning of the premiership.**

In July 1933 the same newspaper reported;

**The socials held fortnightly under the auspices of the Greensborough Football Club are always well attended. Last week the waltzing competition was won by Mr J. Richards and Miss Horne. At the next social keen interest will centre on the fox trot competition ...**

In 1934, Mr Holohan (the local publican) came to the party again after yet another flag. The 'Advertiser' reported as follows in October 1934:

**With the dining room decorated with the colours of the Greensborough Football Club (green and white), and the tables bountifully laden, the Greensborough Hotel was the scene of gaiety and life on Tuesday night, when the club president (Mr J. Holohan and Mrs Holohan) gave a dinner to players and supporters in honour of their premiership win ...**

But as far as socials go, the GFC Annual Ball of 1937 more than 'took the cake', as 'The Advertiser', reporting again about a function held in August 1937, wrote:

**The Committee of the Greensborough Football Club embarked on an ambitious project when they engaged the huge ballroom at the Heidelberg Town Hall, for a Grand Ball. They were, however, fully justified in their enterprise, because between 600 & 700 very happy dancers assembled to spend a thoroughly enjoyable time dancing to good music, on a splendid floor, and amid luxurious surroundings.**

Having some idea of the size of the town in 1937, I wonder if there was anybody left at home that night.

Although the 1920's and 1930's were an outstanding two decades for Greensborough, we did not quite have it all to ourselves;

- Epping – Premiers 1933, 1935, 1936, 1939 & 1940 (5)
- Heidelberg – Premiers 1923, 1937 & 1938 (3)
- Heidelberg Juniors – Premiers 1928 & 1929 (2)\*
- Eltham – Premiers 1930 & 1932 (2)
- Diamond Creek – Premiers 1924 & 1926 (2)
- Heidelberg West – Premiers 1941 (1)

*\* Heidelberg Juniors, although affiliated, was a separate team to the Heidelberg Football Club we know and 'love' today.*

Greensborough's overall finals record from 1922 to 1941 was indeed outstanding. From 1922 until 1941, we made the finals in 17 of the 20 seasons, only missing in 1935, 1936 & 1937.

As war clouds gathered ominously over Europe yet again, Greensborough finished this pre-war era losing the 1939, 1940 & 1941 Grand Finals in succession. The last premiership had been the '*Centenary of Victoria*' Premiership in 1934 under the great Vin Broderick.



CHAPTER THREE

POST WAR & BACK TO BUSINESS  
(1946 to 1951)

*Season 1946*

As life started to normalise, after a second global war in just twenty years, Diamond Valley football returned in 1946. On 13<sup>th</sup> April 1946, after a recess of some four & a half years, Greensborough Football Club finally took the field again at Montmorency, defeating the locals by 6 points. This new Greensborough team was a good one, and the following players were prominent in that 1946 season:

- Arthur Franklin (*Captain Coach*)
- Alf Montfort (*although still recovering from being a POW*)
- Jack McPherson
- Jack Lawrence
- Jack & Alan Partington
- Frank & Maurie Carse
- Horrie Richmond (*recruited from Montmorency*)
- Hugh Wasley
- Norm Maud
- Bob Negri
- Mick Mountford
- Jim Joules
- Allan Barrett
- Curly Tozer
- Fred Dawes
- Don Clinton
- Arthur Wiltshire

Under President Gus Lines, 1924 premiership Captain, strong off-field support came from people such as: ——— 1893 ———

- Alf Purcell (*a four time pre-war premiership player*)
- Syd Thompson (*also a local boxing trainer*)
- Harry & Gordon Rolfs
- Bob Mills
- Bill Lobb

Everything was certainly on track after 18 Rounds, at which point we had managed 17 wins for only 1 loss.

Heidelberg was the only team to beat us before the finals – by 3 points in Round 8 at Warringal Park. After a solid 29 point win against Epping in the Second Semi Final, we went straight into another Grand Final.

Whether it was over confidence, injuries or something else – we lost the 1946 Grand Final. It was *effectively* a 4<sup>th</sup> Grand Final loss in ‘succession’ – this time to Reservoir by 31 points.

### *Season 1947*

Again under Arthur Franklin, the eagerly awaited 1947 season was a huge let down. We lost 9 games out of 18 and failed to make finals for the first time since 1937. It was some consolation that, although Reservoir were premiers again, they beat Heidelberg by 44 points in the Grand Final. A number of new recruits had advanced since the disappointment of 1946, and better things had been hoped for.

By now, a number of new players were progressing up the senior list:

- Ken Franklin
- Don Franklin
- Jack Glasgow
- Frank LeGassick
- Doug Hall
- Norm Brooks
- Bob Pringle

Alan Partington, a stalwart Premiership player from the 1930's, had even come out of retirement at 40 years of age. Noted people in off-field roles at this stage were:

- Gus Lines (still President)
- Lindsay Spears (Secretary)
- Syd Thompson (Assistant Secretary)
- Wally Butterworth (Vice President)
- Roy Franklin (Vice President)
- Alan & John Ely (Various Roles)
- Jack Richards (Trainer)



### *Season 1948*

With Arthur Franklin in charge for a third season, 1948 was a great improvement over 1947. We won 12 out of 18 games to qualify for the First Semi Final against Heidelberg. Regrettably though, we were just not good enough - and they beat us soundly by 40 points. The 6<sup>th</sup> Premiership was certainly proving elusive – and frustratingly so.

### *Season 1949*

In 1949, despite winning only 9 games, again under Arthur Franklin, we qualified for the finals. After thrashing Templestowe by 65 points in the First Semi Final, and then beating Epping by a mere 2 points in the Preliminary Final, we made it through to the Grand Final - our 13<sup>th</sup> since 1922.

Although we put up a fine effort, Eltham were too good on the day. Led by Gordon Hunter and Max Jarrold, they held us off to win by 8 points in a close game, and claim their 3<sup>rd</sup> Premiership.

### *Seasons 1950 - 1951*

At the end of 1949, the great Arthur Franklin stepped down after a magnificent contribution as Captain Coach since 1946. It is understood, but not certain, that ex-Eltham & South Melbourne player, Jack Twyford, replaced Arthur Franklin in 1950.

After the 1949 Grand Final loss, our playing list fell away, and with only 6 wins & 12 losses, we failed to make the finals in 1950. Heidelberg defeated Montmorency by 11 points that year for Premiership. It is understood, but not certain, that we started season 1951 under new coach Bill Ryan (*brother of Phil Ryan, the Montmorency Captain Coach*) but at an early stage he resigned, and was replaced by star pre-war player Maurie O'Connor.

Unfortunately, 1951 was even worse for us than 1950, and with only 2 wins for the season, we recorded our worst return since 1922. In 1951, Montmorency went one better that year to win its first Premiership in resounding style – defeating Epping by a record 96 points. Montmorency had a mighty team that year, with great players like Phil Ryan (Captain Coach), Ron Denmead & Charlie Barnett.

After losing 5 Grand Finals from 5 attempts since 1934, belief that we could ever do it again was beginning to fade. It was time for a more professional approach. We were getting left behind by clubs who were recruiting widely, and taking a more businesslike approach to building their support base and finances.

CHAPTER FOUR

**THE SECOND GOLDEN ERA  
(1952 to 1967)**

*Season 1952*

Towards the end of 1951, and in the lead up to 1952, our playing fortunes were in a bad way. However, some outstanding work was underway behind the scenes. The Club was desperate to lift itself back to the top of the ladder. Consequently, three pivotal leadership appointments were made for the 1952 season:

- Percy Adamson - a top Brighton VFA premiership player, accepted the position of Captain Coach.
- Dr Ted Cordner - a Melbourne VFL premiership player, and highly respected local medical practitioner, accepted the position of President.
- Dick Tooth - an immensely capable committeeman, became Treasurer.

There was also the added bonus that Ted Cordner agreed to pull on the boots. The appointment of keen young local, Bill Cecil, as Club Secretary, meant we had both a playing President and a playing Secretary. Finances were gradually moved to a more organised basis, an active Social Committee was re-formed, and recruiting was re-instituted with purpose.

The great leadership of Percy Adamson and Ted Cordner, plus magnificent examples from astute veterans Horrie Richmond and Alf Montfort, soon had a positive effect. Slowly, but surely, a professional approach started to permeate every aspect of the Club. By the end of the 1952 home and away season, we had achieved 15 wins, for only 2 losses and 1 draw.

This obviously created great excitement and expectation, and qualified us for a Second Semi Final berth against Eltham – our nemesis in 1949. Eltham had beaten us by 4 points in Round 8 and were highly fancied to repeat the dose.

But, in a hard fought and low scoring match, a confident and superbly led Greensborough reversed the Round 8 result. We prevailed by 2 points to qualify for a 14<sup>th</sup> Grand Final appearance since 1922. The Town was ecstatic, but very nervous - would this be the year? We had not won a Premiership since 1934, and had failed 5 times since.

The 13<sup>th</sup> September 1952, DVFL Grand Final Day, was a monumental day in the history of Greensborough Football Club.

It was a huge deal in the old town - everybody was just waiting and hoping. Eltham had beaten Heidelberg by 7 points in the Preliminary Final, to qualify for another crack at us in the Grand Final. Eltham were fancied by many, particularly themselves, but not by the Greensborough faithful.

In an outstanding performance at Warringal Park, Greensborough was able to comprehensively defeat Eltham by 52 points to win the 1952 Premiership. This was our 6<sup>th</sup> premiership from 14 attempts since 1922. The celebrations lasted all weekend and that day has never been forgotten by those who were there.

### *Season 1953*

In 1953, again under Percy Adamson, the season got off to a great start with an 86 point thrashing of Epping at home. By the end of the home and away Round in 1953 we had 13 wins and 5 losses - and had qualified for a Second Semi Final against Lakeside.

Unfortunately, the game was a big letdown as Lakeside beat us by 15 points, which meant we had to play Eltham in the Preliminary Final. In a disastrous result, Eltham thrashed us by 59 points in the Preliminary Final and our 1953 season was over.

### *Season 1954*

A new Captain Coach was required in 1954. Percy Adamson had stepped down, but fortunately was playing on. One story goes that the star recruit of 1954 was signed as the result of some very quick thinking by Dick Tooth - our dynamic Treasurer, later to serve as Secretary, Vice-President & President.

After three years with Fitzroy in the VFL, that star recruit was 23 year old Joe Murphy. Joe agreed to come to Greensborough as Captain Coach after 3 years at Fitzroy, where he had won their Reserve Grade Best & Fairest Award in both 1951 & 1952, and had been runner-up in the 1952 VFL Reserve Grade Best & Fairest Award –the Gardner Medal. 1893

With 14 wins and 4 losses in the home and away season, we earned a First Semi Final berth against Eltham.

Unfortunately, after just managing to beat Eltham by 1 point in a gripping First Semi Final, we were to lose to the powerful Montmorency in the Preliminary Final by only 4 points.

In a brilliant first season, Joe Murphy won the DVFL Best & Fairest Award – by then already known as the ‘Frank Smith Medal’.

The subsequent Grand Final of 1954 between Montmorency and Lakeside was a draw. In the replay, under Phil Ryan again, Mont defeated Lakeside by 1 solitary point to win its 2<sup>nd</sup> premiership.

### *Season 1955*

In 1955, Latrobe Football Club attracted Joe Murphy to Tasmania as Captain Coach, and he was not to return to Greensborough until season 1959. Despite this unlucky break, fortune still smiled on Greensborough in 1955.

The Club secured 23 year old, ex-Fitzroy Rover, Freddie Anderson, as Captain Coach for 1955. Also, Ted Cordner, still on the playing list, was in his 4<sup>th</sup> season as President, and retired champion, Horrie Richmond, had taken up a position as Vice President. Percy Adamson was still in fine form, and the young playing list of 1952 was largely intact – hungry for another Premiership.

Also, over the past two years, the ‘young guns’ from the 1952 premiership had really ‘come of age’, ie.

- Bob Towler
- Don McDowell
- George Coventry
- Geoff Geer
- Peter Abbott
- Doug Hall
- Norm Brooks
- Frank LeGassick
- Ray Ormsby
- Teddy McDowell
- David Wickes

To top things off, another crop of fine players had also progressed through the ranks or been recruited, ie.

- Frank Green
- Don Bell
- Don Rogers
- Geoff Geer
- John Stublely
- Trevor Partington
- Ray Skals

The 1955 home and away season consisted of 16 matches with 2 byes. After 12 wins and 4 losses we qualified for the Second Semi Final against Montmorency.

Montmorency was still very much the team to beat, and although we had beaten them by 9 points in Round 2, they had beaten us easily by 26 points in Round 11.

However, in a tough and exciting game, we held them out for a narrow 2 point victory, to go straight into the 1955 Grand Final. Although excited at the prospect of a 7<sup>th</sup> premiership, we were careful not to *'count our chickens'* too early.

Montmorency had to play Eltham in the Preliminary Final, and during the season, we had found Eltham nearly as hard to beat as Mont. Our record against Eltham was also 1 win and 1 loss in the home and away season. Both opponents would be very hard to beat, and victory could never be assured in any game – particularly a Grand Final. By this stage we had well and truly learned that painful lesson.

In an epic battle, Montmorency (*now led by Ron Hibbert*) beat Eltham by 3 points in the Preliminary Final. It was going to be Greensborough and Montmorency again – this time for the premiership.

In the Grand Final on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1955, and in another 'cracker' of a game, we prevailed over Montmorency by 6 points and claimed a 7<sup>th</sup> Premiership. It was a great victory over a formidable opponent. We celebrated hard, and then looked forward with confidence to 1956 – the Melbourne Olympic Year.

### *Season 1956*

With Freddie Anderson still at the helm, and ably backed up on the field by veterans Percy Adamson & Ted Cordner, we had a great home and away season in 1956. Winning 17 games and losing only 1, our average winning margin had been 52 points. There was only one problem - and this time it was not *Black & White* – it was *Yellow & Black!*

Our only loss for the year had been to Heidelberg in Round 2 by a solitary point, and in the return match in Round 10, we had beaten them by the same margin. Since that loss in Round 2, we had won 16 games straight leading up to the Finals. As had been the case a number of times over the past 35 years, only Heidelberg stood between us and the premiership.

In a huge disappointment, Heidelberg (*under the great Kevin Hart*) beat us soundly by 35 points in the 1956 Second Semi Final. They came to play – and we did not.

After managing to account for the still dangerous Montmorency in the Preliminary Final by 15 points, we earned another crack at Heidelberg in the Grand Final.



Although the effort against Heidelberg was better in that grand Final, it was just not our day - and we fell short by 14 points. At this point our Grand Final record stood at 16 Grand Finals for 7 Premierships – and we had been Runner-Up 9 times.

### *Season 1957*

It was back to the drawing board in 1957 for another go. Confidence was still high, the team was still very good and recruiting had been strong.

Under new captain coach, Don Rogers, a 1955 Premiership player, the 1957 home and away season was again outstanding. After 18 Rounds, we again had 17 wins and only 1 loss. The one loss was unexpected, at home to Diamond Creek by 4 points in Round 16. Up until then we had won 15 games straight. Our average winning margin was even better than the previous year – a whopping 58 points!

Although we had beaten Heidelberg twice during the year, they were still the main worry. The first win against them was an easy one – 59 points at home in Round 1. Worryingly, the second was by only 5 points in Round 10 at Warringal Park - and that was where Grand Finals had to be won.

So, once again, in the second week of the finals, we made the pilgrimage to Warringal Park to do battle with Heidelberg in another Second Semi Final. After 100 minutes of arm wrestling, we fell short by 1 miserable point. They had gotten the better of us again in a tight finish – and again when it really counted.

The following week we faced a powerful Heidelberg West but were able to get over them by 8 points to earn the right to take on Heidelberg again in the Grand Final.

In the dying moments of that desperate 1957 Grand Final, our George Coventry took a mark, within range of goal, and had the chance to put us in front. Unfortunately George missed the shot, and as soon as the Heidelberg full back kicked the ball back in the siren sounded.

We had lost the Grand Final by 2 solitary points. It was a huge disappointment, and Heidelberg was delirious at its good fortune. What on earth could we do? There was only one thing we could do – we did what we always did: we sucked it up and vowed to give it another go next year.

One consolation for the 1957 season was that our classy full forward, Ray Skals, won the DVFL goal kicking award with 96 goals.



### *Season 1958*

After the near heartbreak of 1957, Don Rogers stood down as Captain Coach, but fortunately continued on as player. The 1958 playing list was still very keen, very talented and possessed a burning desire to make up for the past 2 Grand Finals losses. It had a great mixture of experience and youth, and included a number of premiership players from 1952 and 1955 who still had the hunger for more.

The Club had also made a very astute decision in its appointment of an impressive new Captain Coach in Frank Londrigan. Apart from being a fine player, Londrigan was a tough and imposing presence on the field. He would become famous in the Diamond Valley for his outstanding strength and leadership, particularly when things got a bit '*willing*'.

Season 1958 consisted of 22 Rounds and 2 Byes. Our early season form was magnificent, and by the middle of July, after Round 14, we had only lost 1 game – surprisingly by 60 points at Epping in Round 10. Included in the wins were 70 and 89 point victories over Montmorency in Rounds 2 and 13 respectively, and importantly, a 23 point win over Heidelberg at Greensborough in Round 4.

However, after our second bye in Round 14, we lost 3 of the next 5 matches to put a big dent in our confidence. Two of the losses gave us a particular cause for concern:

- Heidelberg – the old enemy - had turned the tables on us in Round 15, at Warringal Park by 3 points, and
- Heidelberg West then turned the tables on us in Round 19 by 1 point, at Memorial Park

Fortunately, Heidelberg did not make the finals in 1958. Heidelberg West did qualify, and played Lakeside in the First Semi Final. Greensborough had reached yet another Second Semi Final, but this time our opponent would be a resurgent Epping.

Although Epping had thrashed us by 60 points in Round 10 at Epping, we had thrashed them by 61 points in Round 21 at Greensborough. In the 1958 Second Semi Final, however, we cruised to a comfortable 22 point win, and progressed straight into an 18<sup>th</sup> Grand Final since 1922.

Under Frank Londrigan's magnificent leadership, the team prepared with quiet confidence to take on Heidelberg West in the Grand Final. West had ended Epping's season in the Preliminary Final by a comfortable 32 points.

With a win each against each other during the season, and with similar performances against Epping in the past fortnight, there was not much to go on to tip the winner of the Grand Final. However, after heartbreaking losses in the past two Grand Finals to Heidelberg, Greensborough were desperate to atone.

Despite being without retired veterans Ted Cordner & Percy Adamson in this our 5<sup>th</sup> Grand Final since 1951, we recorded a wonderful 15 point victory to claim an 8<sup>th</sup> Premiership. It was with a degree of relief that a trio of Grand Final losses, similar to 1939, 1940 and 1941, had been avoided.

Don McDowell had another good season, and tied with John Elliot of Diamond Creek for the DVFL Best & Fairest Award. Despite protests from Greensborough, because Elliot had been found guilty and reprimanded by the Tribunal during the season, the league awarded the medal to Elliot because he had the greater number of 3 vote games.

In 2002, the DVFL retrospectively rectified this decision, and reinstated Don McDowell as joint winner for 1958 as it did for Doug King, who had originally tied with Joe Murphy in 1954.

### *Season 1959*

With Frank Londrigan again at the helm, hopes were high for historic 'Back to Back' premierships in 1959. Following the 1958 premiership the playing list was weakened by the loss to retirement of 4 outstanding players, ie.

- George Coventry
- Ray Skals
- Brian Coombs
- Don Rogers (*due to injury*)

Also, star wingman, Bruce McMaster-Smith, had been lured to the VFL by Fitzroy, and his particular talent for dominating against Heidelberg would be sorely missed. Despite these losses, fortune compensated us well with the return of Joe Murphy from Tasmania. Also, we picked-up five other recruits, ie

- Tom Crosher (*Wangaratta*)
- John Nolan (*East Suburban League*)
- Ken McGough (*Euroa*)
- Gordon Hughes (*Beeac*)
- Stephen Crawford (*returning from Ararat*)

At the end of the 18 Round home and away season we had 12 wins, 3 losses and 1 draw. There had been 2 byes.

However, for only the 2<sup>nd</sup> time since 1951, we failed to earn a double chance, and had to deal with Epping in a sudden death First Semi Final. In a tight game, we prevailed by 12 points and moved into the Preliminary Final, where we were to come up against Lakeside.

The 1959 Preliminary Final was a close game, but we got over the line by 9 points to qualify for our 19<sup>th</sup> Grand Final, and again, against the arch enemy – Heidelberg.

The 1959 Grand Final was a disaster for Greensborough Football Club. In trying conditions, Heidelberg (*under Captain Coach Peter Gurry*) ran all over us, and delivered a 53 point thrashing. The result could have been even worse, given the score line of 10 goals 20 behinds to our lousy 3 goals 9 behinds. We had barely given a whimper in defense of the 1958 title, and Heidelberg thoroughly enjoyed kicking us back up Rosanna Road - with our tails between our legs.

In his first season back, Joe Murphy was runner-up in the DVFL Best & Fairest Award, falling just 1 vote short of Diamond Creek's John Elliot, despite missing 3 games during the season.

### *Season 1960*

Following the disappointment of 1959, Frank Londrigan stood aside as Captain Coach, but fortunately continued to play. Joe Murphy stepped into the breach. Murphy had developed into an elite player, and like Londrigan, was a powerful physical presence on the field.

Joe was also by now highly credentialed and experienced, having captain coached Latrobe in the Tasmanian NWFU since leaving Greensborough in 1955, and being selected to represent the State of Tasmania in both the 1956 and 1958 ANFC Carnivals. While at Latrobe, he had also won the 1956 Wander Medal, as the Best & Fairest player in the North West Football Union.

Supported by Frank Londrigan and Freddie Anderson, who were both still playing, Murphy set out to improve all aspects of the team's performance. He particularly concentrated on improving our fitness and tactics. Today – I think tactics are called '*the game plan*'.

Off field, at the end of 1959, two significant changes also took place, ie.

- Dr Ted Cordner stepped down after 8 years of outstanding service as President & player.
- The tireless Dick Tooth stepped down as Treasury & Secretary, also after 8 years outstanding service.

Although difficult to replace, two worthy replacements stepped forward, ie.

- Percy Adamson – our revered 1952 Premiership Coach, 1955 Premiership player & Vice-President – as President
- George Coventry – ably assisted by Dougie Hall – both members of the 1952, 1955 and 1958 premiership teams – as Secretary and Assistant Secretary.

At the end of the very wet 1960 home and away season, Greensborough had 15 wins and 1 loss with 2 byes. Our average winning margin was just on 50 points, with the only loss being to Epping at their ground in Round 4 by 28 points. Again, we qualified for a double chance, this time against Epping in the Second Semi Final.

The confident Greensborough defeated Epping by 21 points and progressed into its 20<sup>th</sup> Grand Final. In the Preliminary Final, Heidelberg knocked Epping over easily by 31 points – so it was to be us and them again in the Grand Final. It seemed we just could not avoid Heidelberg in the finals. We were determined to prevail in 1960, after the humiliation of 1959. We had beaten them by 24 points in Round 11 at home, on the only occasion we had met so far that year.

On a rainy Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 1960, Greensborough avenged the humiliation of 1959, to defeat Heidelberg by 19 points, and take out its 9<sup>th</sup> Premiership.

After that game, Don McDowell and Bob Towler, both locals who had come up together through the ranks, announced their retirements. They had each played in the 7 Grand Finals since 1951, including the Premierships of 1952, 1955, 1958 & 1960. Don McDowell had played exactly 200 games, and was the first Greensborough player acknowledged to do so. Bob Towler had played 168 games.

### *Season 1961*

Despite the loss of the two Premiership veterans, Greensborough still had plenty of talent left on the playing list, and more coming through. Experienced champions Freddie Anderson, Frank Londrigan and David Wickes would continue to play and give great service. They would be ably backed up by seasoned campaigners in Trevor Partington, Graham Geer, Don Williams, Robert Wasley & Don Bell.

Under the inspirational leadership of Joe Murphy, talented younger players like John Crellin, Ron Reynolds, Trevor Browning, Robert Wickes & Brian Altham really started to emerge. Season 1961 turned out to be another beauty for Greensborough.

We finished on top of the ladder with only 1 loss from 16 matches – Round 16 at Epping by 4 points. In our 8<sup>th</sup> Second Semi Final in the past 10 years, we caught up with Epping and crushed them by 64 points. Epping never recovered from this beating, and were knocked out the following week by Lakeside in the Preliminary Final by 46 points.

At Warringal Park again, in the Grand Final of 1961, Greensborough held off the determined Lakeside by 16 points to claim its 10<sup>th</sup> Premiership. It was 'Back to Back' for the first time in the Club's history. The victory was a triumph for Joe Murphy and his team, plus President Dick Ward and his dedicated Committee.

As an added bonus to the 1961 season, Joe Murphy won his second Frank Smith Medal as DVFL Best & Fairest. It had been an outstanding decade for the Club. After our lowest ebb ever in 1951, we had made the finals every year since, and played in 8 out of the 10 Grand Finals – winning 5 Premierships.

While this could not have been done without great players, it certainly would never have been done without a first class and dedicated committee, supported by a group of hard working men and women behind the scenes.

### *Season 1962*

Joe Murphy stood aside as Captain Coach at the end of 1961, but thankfully continued as a player. Again, under President Dick Ward, the Club appointed ex-Collingwood player, Barry Donegan, Captain Coach. With Frank Londrigan, Freddie Anderson and Joe Murphy all still playing, we had three former coaches in the team.

This managed to work well, with each giving admirable support to the new coach. It was another good season in 1962, and we won 15 games and lost 3. Again, we qualified for the Second Semi Final, to face a good Epping side. Although we had beaten them in Round 2 at home by 42 points, they had beaten us by 27 points at Epping in Round 14.

In a big disappointment, and after a tight game, we fell short by 14 points. We then had to face a new threat in the Preliminary Final – the up and coming North Heidelberg. In our only encounter during the year, they had beaten us by 24 points in Round 10 at Greensborough.

Unfortunately, in another tight one, they were to prevail again by 10 points – ending our season and any dream of 'Three in a Row'.

North Heidelberg went on the following week to win its 1<sup>st</sup> Premiership over Epping by 40 points.



### *Season 1963*

In 1963, Greensborough had to play its home and away matches at Warringal Park, Heidelberg. Our home, War Memorial Park, was undergoing major works to re-surface the arena and level-up the sloping southern wing.

The season got off to a poor start, with low attendances at pre-season training. Training had to be at the poorly maintained old ground, at the bottom of town, and the feeling around the Club was flat. Then, to make matters worse, Captain Coach, Barry Donegan, resigned one week before the first game.

Fortunately, Preston VFA ruckman, Bob Murphy (brother of Joe) was 'prevailed upon' and agreed to take the job. Freddie Anderson had broken his leg towards the end of 1962, and was unable to play on in 1963. He subsequently retired after a magnificent contribution since 1955.

We had, though, been fortunate, in regaining the services of Brian Coombs, after an absence of 4 years, and to see some young future champions either consolidate their position, or come into regular contention, ie.

- Leo Muir
- Steven Lee
- John Mitchell
- Lee Adamson
- Dick Burrows
- Robert Burrows
- Graeme Coventry
- Graeme Watson
- Barry Wasley

All things considered, 1963 was not a bad year. We won 15 games out of 18 and qualified for the First Semi Final against Heidelberg – our 12<sup>th</sup> finals series in succession. Although we did not make it easy for them, Heidelberg got the better of us in that final, beating us by 18 points, to knock us out of contention. Two weeks later, Heidelberg lost the Preliminary Final to Lakeside by 29 points.

Under Trevor Johnson, a four time Melbourne premiership player, Epping defeated Lakeside by 13 points for the 1963 Premiership. 1963 was Epping's first premiership since 1940, when they had beaten Greensborough by 33 points.



### *Season 1964*

Bob Murphy stepped down as Captain Coach in 1964. Also, after an outstanding contribution since 1958, Frank Londrigan hung up the boots. Greensborough's new Captain Coach for 1964 was Ross Ousley - an ex-Carlton and Northcote player, originally from Eaglehawk in the Bendigo League.

Our performance during the 1964 home and away season was not good by recent standards. Although form was reasonable at times, things were unsettled. The Captain Coach was not playing well, and our great champion, Joe Murphy, finally succumbed to injury, and was forced to hang up the boots after 13 games.

Joe was a huge loss, because he was the heart and soul of the club, both on and off the field - and a total inspiration to the team. Nevertheless, the players soldiered on. Despite winning only 13 of the 18 games, we managed to qualify for yet another Second Semi Final – this time against Montmorency. We had only played Mont only once during the season, in Round 10 at home, where we had won easily by 50 points.

Although entitled to be regarded as clear favourite, the 1964 Second Semi Final was a tight one. A desperate and focused Montmorency gave us a fright, and we only scraped in by 5 points. Nevertheless, a win was a win, and we had made the Grand Final again – for the 22<sup>nd</sup> time since 1922.

As we well knew from past experience, once you make it, you always have a chance. We had learned that from both perspectives over the years. Montmorency was not able to sustain their form in the Preliminary Final, and Heidelberg beat them soundly by 42 points. Given that result, the stage was set for another battle of the two old foes – both Grand Final experts – and both streets ahead of all other DVFL clubs in terms of Finals played and Premierships won.

Greensborough had beaten Heidelberg on both occasions during the 1964 season – by 14 points at home in Round 4 & by 26 points in Round 15 at home. Despite only just beating Montmorency in the Second Semi Final – Greensborough went into the 1964 Grand Final as favourite. The Heidelberg team was young and relatively inexperienced, but they were led by two very experienced and dangerous campaigners:

- Captain Coach – Brian McMahon – ex-St. Kilda VFL
- Full Forward – Claud Howard – ex-Preston VFA

The game got off to a flying start, and Greensborough led Heidelberg by 16 points at half time, ie.11.11.77 to 9.7.61. Steven Lee was dominating the game for Greensborough, and provided great drive from his wing, and across the centre.

However, shortly after the half time break, all hell broke loose. A ‘melee’ started near the half forward flank, on the Banyule side of the ground, towards the River end. Within a minute or two, the crowd became involved and invaded the ground. The ‘melee’ quickly turned into a full scale ‘brawl’. Steven Lee, at some stage of proceedings, had been knocked unconscious, and was ‘out to it’ on the ground.

Since then, it has been established that he was struck by a spectator who had run onto the ground. After 15 minutes, play finally resumed - but we were badly rattled. Heidelberg was concentrating hard on playing football, but we were only concentrating on ‘evening-up’. Heidelberg kicked 4 goals to our 1 in that 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, and had snatched a 7 point lead at three-quarter time.

At the break, they were full of confidence, could see that our heads were down and McMahon was telling them that we were ‘gone’. In a magnificent last quarter, and superbly led by McMahon & Howard, Heidelberg ran all over us to earn a famous 31 point victory. Howard finished with 8 goals, and McMahon was judged best afield.

For Greensborough, it was a humiliating defeat, and one that would ‘rankle’ with the Boro faithful for years to come. At Heidelberg, it is regarded as their greatest premiership of all time, and to this day, and whenever an opportunity presents itself, they do not hesitate to rub it in. For us, 1964 was truly ‘The One That Got Away’ - *or more cynically put:*

**‘The One We Gave Away’.**

We did not know it then, but the two great DVFL rivals would not meet again in a Grand Final until 2014 - exactly 50 years later.

### *Season 1965*

After the humiliation of 1964, which was considered even worse than 1959, Greensborough did what it always did in such circumstances. The very capable Club elders and administrators evaluated where we went wrong - and set out to remedy the deficiencies.

With the departure of Ross Ousley after only one season, a new Coach was required. The Club was very fortunate to attract John Carmody as Captain Coach for season 1965. Carmody, who by then was playing with Coburg in the VFA, had previously played at both Collingwood and Fitzroy in the VFL.

Also, one good thing to come out of the 1964 Grand Final humiliation was that a number of younger local players had been through it, and would be so much better for the experience.

John Carmody's clearance did not come through until Round 3. He played his first game for Greensborough at home against Diamond Creek, and we had a comfortable 37 point victory.

Our performance during the 1965 home and away season was identical to the previous year, where we won 13 games out of 18. Unlike 1964, however, we did not qualify for the double chance, so would have to mount our premiership campaign from the First Semi Final, starting with North Heidelberg.

North Heidelberg had beaten us by 15 points at their ground in Round 8. In a low scoring final, we were able to reverse that result to record a narrow 8 point victory, and progress to the Preliminary Final.

Heidelberg had not made the finals in 1965, and the Second Semi Final was between Lakeside and Templestowe. In the Second Semi Final the strong Lakeside team, under champion ex-Fitzroy rover Graham Campbell, overcame Templestowe by 22 points to go straight into the Grand Final.

Greensborough duly prepared to meet Templestowe in the finals for the first time since the 1949. In a confidence building performance, we defeated Templestowe by 27 points to progress to our 23<sup>rd</sup> Grand Final.

The 1965 Grand Final, however, was another disappointment. We were no match for a hungry and classy Lakeside, desperate for their first Premiership. Lakeside won that match comfortably by 34 points, and Greensborough were runners-up for the 13<sup>th</sup> time.

***Season 1966***  
***(Introduction of Under15 & Under 13 Football)***

For some time prior to the start of the 1966 season, Joe Murphy, Dick Burrows, Ray Skals, Ray Dickson & Norm Hyde had been of the belief that the DVFL football competition should be extended to permit the burgeoning number of local boys in the area, in the 10 to 15 year age groups, to participate in competition.

These boys were keen as mustard and loved their football, but were too young to even consider playing in the DVFL C Grade for Under 17's. As the DVFL offered no assistance, and due to the outstanding vision of these men, Greensborough Football pushed ahead and did it alone. The Greensborough Midget League was launched in 1966 and, to prove a point, was able to easily establish four Under 13 teams from the available boys:

1. Greensborough Blacks
2. Greensborough Blues
3. Greensborough Maroons
4. Greensborough Golds

Roughly organised on geographical divisions, it was soon obvious that another team would also be required, so this was when Harvey Stevens, a former top-line VFL player with Collingwood & Footscray, got involved. With a group of other fathers from the Watsonia area, it was decided that it was about time Watsonia had a football team to call its own.

Consequently, due to the efforts of Harvey Stevens, and others like Michael Walsh, Neil McGovern, Bill Cope, Willy Florres, Jack Bowman and Gerald Browne - the new Watsonia Football Club was born and it entered an Under 13 team in the new Greensborough Midget League.

With regard to the Under 15 boys, Greensborough established one team, and entered it in the Preston Reservoir Junior Sunday Football League. Watsonia were able to do likewise. At Greensborough, the first Under 15's coach was the club's new rover, Laurie Brimacombe, recently recruited from Coburg in the VFA along with his twin brother John. Harvey Stevens himself coached the Watsonia Under 15's, and as it turned out, both Watsonia's sides were outstanding.

Watsonia Under 13's subsequently won the inaugural Greensborough Midget League Premiership and their Under 15's defeated Greensborough by a solitary point in PRJSFL Grand Final replay. The first 1966 PRJSFL Grand Final between Greensborough and Watsonia had been a draw.

The writer played in that Greensborough Under 15 side, under Laurie Brimacombe, including both Grand Finals. Laurie Brimacombe was a magnificent coach, and it was with great pleasure that his boys atoned for that defeat in 1966, by going through the following PRJSFL season undefeated to win the 1967 Premiership.

It was not long before the DVFL decided it had better get involved, and soon formed Under 13 and Under 15 competitions. However, the subsequent success of junior football in the Diamond Valley, that has continued up to this very day, is due to the vision of Joe Murphy, Dick Burrows, Ray Skals, Ray Dickson, Norm Hyde and the Greensborough Football Club.

1893  
*Season 1966*

With the mercurial John Carmody at the helm again in 1966, and Joe Murphy replacing Harold Fraser as President, the Club set out to break the run of disappointments since the triumphs of 1960 and 1961. Harold Fraser, who took over from Dick Ward at the end of 1962, had given outstanding service in the role for the past 3 seasons.

Our 1966 playing stocks were greatly boosted with the arrival of 3 more established players from Coburg in the VFA:

- John Brimacombe
- Laurie Brimacombe
- Charlie Barnes

Also, a number of promising young locals were given their chance, and did not let anyone down:

- Milton Davies
- Johnny McKay
- Geoff O'Brien
- Andy O'Neill
- Nipper West

This group supplemented an already solid group, who had come through over the past few years:

- Dick Burrows
- Robert Burrows
- Graeme Coventry
- John Dobie
- Trevor Elliot
- Bruce Kofoed
- Steven Lee
- John Mitchell
- Leo Muir
- Bob Murphy
- Ron Reynolds
- John Schulze
- Barry Wasley
- Don Watson

The veteran of the side, Trevor Partington, was still a very fine player after 154 games.

After 14 Rounds of the 1966 season, we had won 9 games and lost 4, to be sitting just outside the final four. Due to the evenness of teams in the top half of the competition that season, and with only 4 games to go, Greensborough faced the prospect of missing the finals on percentage. We would need to win each of those remaining 4 games by an average margin of at least 10 goals to qualify for the finals.

In Round 15 at home, against Eltham, John Carmody kicked 13 goals to spearhead a 200 point victory. Earlier in the season, in Round 4 at Eltham, he had also kicked 13 goals in our 98 point victory. The last 3 games of 1966 resulted in victories against South Morang, Macleod and Epping - by 97 points, 72 points and 85 points respectively.



With the victory over Epping, we had made the final four - but only just. The big question was, did we have it in us to now win 3 tough finals? In the First Semi Final we met our nemesis from last season – Lakeside. We had fought out two close games with them during the season. They had won a 'nail biter' by 3 points at Edwards Park in Round 1, and we had got them by 11 points in Round 12 at Greensborough.

However, in emphatic fashion, we partially atoned for our 1965 Grand Final loss, and defeated them by 57 points. In the Preliminary Final, we then had to contend with a confident Diamond Creek, who Templestowe had beaten by 15 points in the Second Semi Final.

In a much tighter game than we had been used to for many weeks, we ended Diamond Creek's season with a 16 point victory, to book a place in our 24<sup>th</sup> Grand Final.

The 1966 Grand Final would be the first between Greensborough and Templestowe since 1927, where we prevailed 10 by points. In our two encounters so far in 1966, the tally was one all. Templestowe had beaten us by 3 points in Round 3 at Greensborough, and we had beaten them by only 6 points in Round 14 at Templestowe.

Although a foundation member of the DVFL in 1922, Templestowe had yet to win a Premiership. In 1966 they had a powerful side coached by ex-Essendon premiership ruckman, Bob Syme, plus star players like Keith Wiegard, Craig Chivers and Carl Bowen.

Although their early tactic was to knock us off our game at every stage, and in this they had some success, this was Greensborough they were playing, and we knew how to deal with this crap. We had learned, at great expense, a very big lesson in 1964. A disciplined Greensborough just kept going for the ball at all costs, and drew ahead in a wet third quarter. Although Templestowe's relentless physical pressure was having an impact, our three quarter time lead would prove invaluable. With a little help from some more rain in the last quarter, we slogged it out for a magnificent 14 point victory.

This 11<sup>th</sup> Premiership was a tribute to John Carmody and his players, not to mention Joe Murphy and his Committee. It was also a triumph for the most experienced Greensborough player on the field, Trevor Partington, who was unanimously voted best afield.

### *Season 1967*

After the triumph of 1966, the Club looked forward to 1967 with enthusiasm, and hoped for 'Back to Back' flags again. John Carmody and Joe Murphy were now a formidable combination, and the 1966 playing list had been kept largely



intact. The Club had also signed Lenny Lawson, another former Tasmanian State Representative, from Latrobe Football Club. Lawson had won the 1965 Wander Medal as Best & Fairest in the NWFU.

To top things off, the following promising youngsters were pressing for selection:

- Gary Partington
- Barry Day

Confidence was sky high after Round 4 with huge wins against Diamond Creek (105 points), South Morang (73 points), North Heidelberg (158 points) and Heidelberg (72 points). We then beat Lakeside by 16 points in Round 5 and thumped Epping by 105 points in Round 6, in the lead up to an anticipated re-match against Templestowe at Porter Street in Round 7.

Bob Syme and Templestowe were still smarting from last season's Grand Final loss, and had lost nothing over the summer break. In a game that drew a lot of interest, Templestowe were too good for us on the day, and won by 16 points. After wins against Eltham (67 points) and Heidelberg West (16 points) we then suffered an unexpected 35 point loss to the up and coming Macleod-Rosanna in Round 10.

Under ex-Brunswick star, Kevin Dillon, Macleod-Rosanna was moving up in the football world, and could play their sloping paddock at De Winton Park to perfection. Fortunately, after that shock performance, we regrouped to win the next 7 games in a row, before having to deal with Templestowe in the last home and away Round.

In a very tough encounter at Greensborough, Templestowe prevailed by 1 point, to give notice they were set on avenging their 1966 Grand Final loss. Our record for the 1967 home and away season ended up 15 wins and 3 losses. With similar records, Greensborough and Templestowe qualified for the Second Semi Final, and it was on again.

We worked hard to win the Second Semi Final by 9 points and advance into our 25<sup>th</sup> Grand Final. When Templestowe got over a determined Macleod-Rosanna by 4 points in a tough Preliminary Final, the stage was set for a replay of 1966. Templestowe had been out for revenge since their defeat the previous year, and were determined to fulfill what they thought was their destiny and win a first DVFL Premiership.

Coach Bob Syme was no 'shrinking violet' and had been vocal with his predictions, but Greensborough had heard it all before, and took it in their stride. Both teams, with only a few changes to their 1966 Grand Final sides, turned out for battle at Warringal Park, Heidelberg, on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1967.

In another magnificent contest for the whole four quarters, Greensborough snatched a lead late into the final quarter, and then were able to extend it to 7 points with only minutes to go. In those desperate final minutes Templestowe knew they were gone, and Greensborough dug in to claim a magnificent 12<sup>th</sup> Premiership.

In a performance as good as his brother's the previous year, and after a desperate 3 year battle to recover from long term injury, Gary Partington was judged best afield after an inspirational performance. It was 'Back to Back' again, in the space of only 7 seasons. Since 1951, we had made the finals 16 years in succession and played in 12 Grand Finals.

We had won 7 Premierships and been Runners-Up 5 times. We were streets ahead of the other teams in the competition, in terms of Grand Finals played and premierships won, and thought we were set to dominate the competition for years to come.

How wrong we were!



CHAPTER FIVE

**BACK TO THE FIELD**

**(1968 to 1982)**

*Season 1968*

Still under John Carmody and Joe Murphy, season 1968 started well with a comfortable 26 point win at Montmorency. This was followed by a 35 point win against competition newcomers, Lalor, at Memorial Park. We thought 'so far - so good' and some started to dream about 'three in a row'.

Suddenly, we then suffered four big and entirely unexpected defeats in a row, and after only 6 Rounds, found ourselves in unfamiliar territory – the bottom half of the ladder! After just managing narrow wins in Rounds 7 and 8 against lowly South Morang and North Heidelberg, we were in real trouble at the Queen's Birthday break.

Worse was to come though, when we were easily defeated in the next 3 games by Epping, Templestowe and Heidelberg West. It was then that the reality struck that Greensborough may well miss the finals. Good wins against Lakeside, Montmorency and Lalor raised our hopes a little, but mathematically it was almost impossible to make it. Even if we did make it, we had not shown we were capable of matching it with the top sides.

After a narrow 11 point loss to an improved Eltham, the wheels completely fell off in Round 17 at Macleod-Rosanna, where we were absolutely humiliated by 157 points. This was the largest defeat in the history of the club to date, and if anyone doubted that an era had truly come to an end, they had no doubt from this point. A last Round win by 16 points over Diamond Creek was no consolation at all.

It was the end of a truly remarkable era, as Greensborough had failed to make the finals for the first time since 1952. In the 16 seasons from 1952 to 1967 Greensborough's performance was unprecedented in the Diamond Valley Football League:

- 12 x Grand Finals
- 7 x Premierships (1952, 1955, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1966, 1967)
- 5 x Runners-Up (1956, 1957, 1959, 1964, 1965)
- 3 x Preliminary Finals (1953, 1954, 1962)
- 1 x First Semi Final (1963)

After being 'bridesmaids' three times to Greensborough since the inception of the league in 1922, and with us now out of contention, Templestowe broke through to defeat Epping by 20 points to win the 1968 flag.

### *Season 1969*

While 1968 was the season that brought our second golden era to an abrupt end - 1969 very much signaled the 'changing of the guard'. Joe Murphy stepped down to concentrate on his expanding legal practice, and, after a magnificent contribution as Captain Coach since 1965, the great John Carmody stepped down to continue as a player only. Club stalwart and tireless workhorse, Dick Tooth, took over the Presidency, and former Fitzroy ruckman, Jack MacGregor, agreed to become our first non-playing coach since 1946.

The new season got off to a disastrous start when we were thrashed by a resurgent Eltham at Central Park by 117 points. Eltham had recently recruited, at great expense, a number of ex-VFL stars such as Neville Withers (Collingwood), Cliff Stewart (Carlton) and Barry Capuano (Essendon), in a desperate attempt to lift themselves back up the ladder.

Despite retaining a number of premierships players, and adding some promising new recruits, we were no match for the top teams in 1969, and with only 7 wins and 11 losses, we again finished the season out of the finals.

In 1969, it was a small consolation when the Third Eighteen (U17), under the coaching of ex-Collingwood player, George Nelson, defeated Lalor by over 60 points to win Greensborough's first ever DVFL C Grade Premiership.

Eltham came through from the First Semi Final to win the 1969 Grand Final by 35 points to defeat an over confident Diamond Creek, who were playing in their first Grand Final since 1926.

### *Season 1970*

Jack MacGregor stepped down at the end of 1969, to be replaced by ex-Fitzroy player Bob Beattie as Captain Coach. But season 1970 was a poor one, and with only a slightly better record of 8 wins and 10 losses, we finished outside the final four.

### *Season 1971*

Neville Waller, the ex-Collingwood premierships player, who had also coached Montmorency in the 1960's, replaced Bob Beattie in 1971. We did marginally better in 1971 to finish with 10 wins and 8 losses, but again, had missed the finals.

After 3 years as President, and a magnificent contribution to the Club in many capacities since the 1940's, Dick Tooth stood down at the end of 1971, and was replaced from the 1972 season by Trevor Partington – the veteran of 5 premierships and, at the time, the Club games record holder.

### *Season 1972*

Neville Waller also stepped down after one season and was replaced by Ed Murphy, an ex-Richmond reserves player, as Captain Coach.

In our best result since 1967, we had won 12 games and lost 6 by the end of the home and away season. Unexpectedly, we scraped into the 1972 finals on percentage after thrashing South Morang by 98 points in the last game.

In our first finals appearance since 1967, we beat Macleod-Rosanna by 7 points in a tight First Semi Final, but fell short by 19 points against Lakeside in a high standard Preliminary Final. A week later, Eltham, the team to beat all year, defeated Lakeside by a comfortable 32 points in the Grand Final.

### *Season 1973*

In 1973, Ed Murphy moved on and was replaced as playing coach by George Schickert, the ex-Preston VFA centre half back. We again qualified for the First Semi Final, this time against Eltham, and beat them by 20 points to qualify for another Preliminary Final. In the 1973 Preliminary Final, we came up against Lakeside for the second year in succession.

This time, however, we were never in the contest at all, and were outclassed by 72 points. In the subsequent 1973 Grand Final, Templestowe defeated Lakeside by a comfortable 37 points.

### *Season 1974*

George Schickert continued as Captain Coach in 1974, but was unable to lift us into another finals series. George Schickert also moved on at the end of 1974, and was replaced by Barry Morris, another tough ex-Preston VFA player. After 3 years at the helm, Trevor Partington stepped down at the end of 1974 and was replaced by Peter Watkins.

### *1975 & 1976*

Peter Watkins started his first stint as President in 1975, and again under Barry Morris, we only managed to win 5 games for the season – our worst result since 1951.

In 1976, after a much better season, we were in second place on the ladder coming into the last round, and set to play finals. Unfortunately, at home in atrocious conditions, we suffered a narrow 2 point loss to North Heidelberg, and tumbled out of the four.

Morris was an outstanding on field leader, and was a very tough customer – in a similar mould to Frank Londrigan. He would put his body on the line constantly to inspire the side, to such an extent that he finally succumbed to a serious arm injury half way through 1976, and was unable to play again.

Actually, Barry had badly broken his forearm in the process of ‘shirt fronting’ Mario Cippola, the star North Heidelberg centre man. Needless to say – Mario Cippola did not come off too well either.

The only DVFL senior awards in those years went to the writer as leading goal kicker with 86 goals in 1975 & 97 goals in 1976.

### *Season 1977*

Following Barry Morris’s retirement, ex-Collingwood player Paul Walker was appointed playing coach for 1977. In a disappointing year, we won 8 games and lost 10, to again miss the finals. Paul Walker stepped down as Coach at the end of the season

### *Season 1978*

1978 was the year ‘Big Bob’ Johnson arrived at Greensborough. He had played in 5 VFL Premierships with Melbourne, and following a successful stint with East Fremantle in the WAFL, had coached Oakleigh to the 1972 VFA Premiership.



After a patchy year, we did enough to qualify for an Elimination Final against South Morang, where we enjoyed an impressive 54 point win to advance to a Qualifying Final against Lakeside. As well as a high profile new coach, new Greensborough 'recruits' that season were ex-Collingwood players, Jeff Clifton and Graeme Jenkin.

In the Qualifying Final, the momentum continued, and we prevailed by 24 points over Lakeside to earn a spot in the Preliminary Final - against old rivals Montmorency. Unfortunately, the 1978 season ended abruptly when Montmorency beat us comprehensively by 56 points.

In the 1978 Grand Final, Reservoir-Lakeside soundly defeated Montmorency by 37 points.

### *Season 1979*

Just prior to the start of the 1979 season, Bob Johnson unexpectedly stepped down, and was quickly replaced by ex-Richmond player, Brian Morrison. 1979 started well, and by Round 12 we had only lost one game – in Round 3 to South Morang by 30 points. However, after losing the next 4 games in a row, we were brought right back to the field.

Fortunately, we managed to recover and in the last 3 games to qualify for an Elimination Final against Lakeside, who we beat comfortably by 43 points. We then defeated Watsonia by 57 points in that Qualifying Final, and earned the right to take on Montmorency again in another Preliminary Final. After a very slow start, we got back into it in the second half, but after a couple of critical mistakes under pressure late in the final quarter, we let it slip by 4 points.

In the 1979 Grand Final, Montmorency won their 4<sup>th</sup> Premiership over North Heidelberg by 24 points.

### *Season 1980*

Peter Watkins stood down as President at the end of 1979 and Wayne Stephenson took over as President. With Brian Morrison continuing as non-playing coach, we had a good home and away season. After 13 wins and 4 losses, we made the finals for the third season in a row, and faced Templestowe an Elimination Final.

In the only match against Templestowe during the season, in Round 9, they had beaten us by 68 points. In a high scoring game, we had a comfortable 29 point victory, and advanced to the First Semi Final against Montmorency.

In a much tighter contest, we were able to beat Montmorency by 18 points, ending their season and advancing ourselves into a 3<sup>rd</sup> Preliminary Final in succession, this time to face Lalor. For the 5<sup>th</sup> time since our last premiership in 1967, we had failed in the penultimate match of the season, this time by 44 points.

The next week, Lalor went on to defeat Reservoir Lakeside by 20 points for the 1980 Premiership.

### *Season 1981*

Brian Morrison ended his term as coach at the end of 1980 and was replaced in by ex-Essendon player, John Ellis. Our home and away record that season of 10 wins and 8 losses was not good enough to get into the finals, and we were disappointed to finish our season in August.

### *Season 1982*

Wayne Stephenson stepped down at the end of 1981 and Peter Watkins was re-elected President. Ex-Preston player, Brian Preece, was appointed Captain Coach, replacing John Ellis.

With 13 wins and 5 losses, we managed to book a spot in the 1982 First Semi Final against Lalor. In a close and high scoring game, we lost to Lalor by 6 points. At one stage in the third quarter, Greensborough held a commanding 8 goal lead.

It was a disappointing end to a season that promised a lot – as we had hoped to go a lot further in the finals.



CHAPTER SIX

**THE THIRD GOLDEN ERA  
(1983 to 1991)**

*Season 1983*

Under Peter Watkins, in his second year back as President, confidence was given a huge boost at the start of 1983 when Robert Hyde accepted the position of Captain Coach.

Robert, a genuine local, had started with Boro in the Under 13 Midget League in 1966, progressing through to the Seniors in the early 1970's from where he was recruited by Collingwood.

Also in 1983, some very talented products of Greensborough's junior program had fully developed into top line senior players, eg.

- Peter Banks
- Brett Fowler
- Gerard Wilson
- Brian Hyde

In addition, a number of experienced veterans had consolidated their positions in the team and were giving outstanding service, eg.

- Wayne Dobson
- Bob Vickers
- Frank Johnson
- John Ellis
- Peter McCulloch
- Ken Oakley
- Ray Sweeney
- Frank Johnson
- John Wise

At the end of the home and away season, after 13 wins and 5 losses, we qualified to meet Montmorency in the Second Semi Final at Victoria Park. This was our first 'double chance' finals finish since 1967. We had lost both times to Mont during the season, ie. by 14 points at home in Round 3, and by 13 points away in Round 12. After a very slow, start we caught up in the third quarter, and turned for home after the last change with a 6 point lead.

With a long awaited Grand Final berth there for the taking, the boys were never going to let it slip, and they recorded a beautiful 28 point victory. It was going to be our first Grand Final since the 1967 triumph over Templestowe, and the Club was ecstatic.

The following week, in a desperate Preliminary Final, Bundoora ended Montmorency's season with a narrow 3 point victory, to set up a Grand Final showdown with Greensborough. In the Grand Final at Victoria Park, after another slow start, and in a desperately close match at times, a superior and more desperate Greensborough got on top in the last quarter, to record a well earned and memorable 29 point victory.

In a 26<sup>th</sup> Grand Final since 1922, the 16 year drought had been well and truly broken, and an elusive 13<sup>th</sup> Premiership had been won in memorable style. This Premiership was a triumph for Peter Watkins and his committee, not to mention Robert Hyde and his outstanding team.

As an added bonus for the Club, star ruck-rover, Wayne Dobson, won the Frank Smith Medal as the DVFL Best & Fairest award, by a margin of 10 votes over the runner-up. Wayne was Greensborough's first Frank Smith medalist since the great Joe Murphy in 1961.

In the annals of our great club's history, this drought breaking premiership ranks in significance with the 1952 Premiership - which also broke a long and frustrating Premiership drought.

### *Season 1984*

With Peter Watkins and Robert Hyde still at the helm after the 1983 triumph, hopes were very high for season 1984. Although the senior side was still largely intact, a few new players had been picked up in the off season, or come through the ranks to regularly press for senior selection, eg.

- Glenn Meredith
- Neil Brindley
- Glen Townsend

In a similar performance to 1983, we again finished the home and away season with 13 wins and 5 losses, and qualified for a 'double chance' second semi final berth against (this time) a very good Lalor side. Although we had beaten Lalor comfortably at home in Round 9 by 48 points, they had turned the tables on us at Lalor in Round 17 by 52 points.

The following week, in Round 18, we also lost to North Heidelberg by 18 points at Greensborough, making it a very uncertain run up to the finals.

We were very lucky indeed to have a double chance because we suffered another loss to Lalor in the second semi final, this time by 10 points, forcing us into a sudden death Preliminary Final against Templestowe.

In our two encounters with the old foe Templestowe during the season, they had beaten us comfortably by 30 points at Templestowe in Round 6, and we had beaten them by 17 points in a low scoring match at home in Round 14.

The Preliminary Final was a good game for Greensborough, and, this time in a high scoring game, we managed an impressive 26 point victory to progress to a 27<sup>th</sup> Grand Final in search of our 14<sup>th</sup> Premiership.

In the Grand Final of 1984, Greensborough faced the confident Lalor side who had beaten us twice in the space of six weeks, and had enjoyed a week's rest while they watched us battle it out with Templestowe in the Preliminary Final.

Greensborough proved the point that a week off in the finals is not always the best prescription as it soundly defeated Lalor by 41 points, and claim a magnificent 14<sup>th</sup> Premiership. That 41 point victory was the second highest in the Club's history, at that time ranking just below the 52 point triumph in 1952. Also, for the third time since 1958, we had gone back to back.

This was a truly remarkable effort and such a splendid reward for Peter Watkins and the Club's many loyal supporters & workers, who worked so hard through some very ordinary years since the halcyon days of the 1960's.

### *Season 1985*

With Robert Hyde moving on after two brilliantly successful years, Peter Watkins and his Committee turned to former Collingwood captain, Ray Shaw, as Captain Coach for 1985.

In a manner very similar to 1963, the pre-season was lackluster with poor attendances at the early training sessions - a scenario most unsatisfactory to a professional like Ray Shaw. Eventually though, momentum and enthusiasm returned, and after we had won two out of three practice matches, things were back on track.

Despite the loss of approximately 10 players from the 1984 premiership side, the new season got off to a great start with four outstanding victories in a row, well and truly silencing those who thought we were a spent force. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, we then suffered a severe mid-season slump, losing 7 of the next 10 games, and tumbling to 7<sup>th</sup> place – a clear 2 games out finals contention with only 4 games to go.

Due to the magnificent enthusiasm and commitment of the players, from this point Ray Shaw was able to inspire tremendous improvement, and we recorded wins in each of the remaining 4 games by convincing margins.

After quite an uneven home and away performance, our record was an ordinary 11 wins and 7 losses – but this was more than enough to qualify us for a First Semi Final berth against Heidelberg - the old enemy. They had beaten us convincingly by 41 points in Round 5, and triggered a mid-season slump, but we had got them back at Greensborough in Round 13 by 15 points.

Confidence was high as we ran out to start a 4<sup>th</sup> successive finals campaign, and it was particularly pleasing to end the Heidelberg season by 13 points. This was the first time the two deadly enemies had met in a final since that legendary Grand Final in 1964 – and it was nice to pay them back - even in some small measure.

Our opponent in the Preliminary Final was another old foe – Templestowe. Again, with Templestowe, our season record was one win and one loss. We had a 37 point win by us in Round 2 at Memorial Park – and they had an 8 point win at Porter Street in Round 10.

Although they showed poor form to be soundly beaten in the Second Semi Final by North Heidelberg, in the Preliminary Final, they gave us a real run for our money and were very competitive for three quarters. In an outstanding last quarter, we ran all over them to run out 14 point winners, and qualify for a third Grand Final in succession – our 28<sup>th</sup> since 1922.

North Heidelberg had beaten us on both occasions during the season – by 18 points in Round 6 at Greensborough, and by 20 points at Shelley Park in Round 14. Although we approached this third encounter for the year with a good degree of confidence, and despite coming back gallantly from five goals down to draw level in the final quarter, we fell short by 13 points. 1985 was over, and it was time to look toward 1986.

In a wonderful personal achievement, however, Greensborough full forward, Glen Townsend, kicked 103 goals for the season to win the DVFL Goal Kicking Award. To this day, that tally remains the highest number of goals kicked in a season by any Greensborough senior player.

### *Season 1986*

With Ray Shaw moving on after only one season, season 1986 saw former player, David Miers, return as Captain Coach. Once again, pre-season training numbers were down, but as often happens, within a few weeks, attendances improved and enthusiasm began to build.



Practice match form was good, and the season got off to a great start with four wins in succession.

An unexpected 7 point loss to Heidelberg West in Round 5 triggered successive losses to Templestowe and Montmorency in Rounds 6 & 7. It was thought that a very solid 55 point victory over Diamond Creek in Round 8 would steady the ship, but the following week, in Round 9 at Memorial Park, we were humiliated in a 111 point belting from Heidelberg.

At the half-way mark of the season we found ourselves out of the top four with only 5 wins to our name from 9 games. A number of serious knee and leg injuries had impacted badly on team balance and confidence, but it was hoped determination and perseverance would see us through. After 4 wins from the next five games, we were in a position from where we really only needed to win 2 out of the last 4 games to make the finals.

Rather than a confidence boosting set of wins leading up the finals, the wheels fell off completely, and we lost each of the last 4 games. Season 1986 had come to a sudden and unexpected end and we found ourselves back to the field - and out of the finals - for the first time since 1981.

### *Season 1987*

David Miers relinquished leadership duties at the end of 1986 to concentrate solely on playing, and Greg Jones accepted the role of non-playing coach for 1987. Champion player and 1983 DVFL Best & fairest winner, Wayne Dobson, was appointed captain, and Colin Gray was appointed Secretary, replacing Glen Harris, who had stepped down at the end of 1986 after four years service. To be Secretary of a football club is a very demanding job at the best of times, to also be a regular senior player at the same time, is truly remarkable.

Season 1987 got off to a bad start when we suffered a heavy 55 point loss at North Heidelberg in the opening round. At the half way mark of the season our record stood at 5 wins, 3 losses and 1 draw. The wins were over Bundoora (84 points), Heidelberg West (13 points), Diamond Creek (41 points), Templestowe (44 points) and Epping (69 points). The losses were to North Heidelberg (55 points), Lalor (23 points) and Heidelberg (13 points). The draw was at Montmorency in Round 3.

The loss to North Heidelberg was emphatically paid back in Round 10 at Greensborough as we held them goalless for the entire match and cruised to a 74 point victory. Incredibly, the next week we travelled over to Bundoora, who we had soundly beaten by 84 points in Round 2, to be belted ourselves by 74 points.

Consistency was a real problem, but the last 7 games saw a big improvement as we won 6 games by solid margins, only losing the once – narrowly to Heidelberg West in Round 13 by 7 points.

Our last 5 games of 1987 were all won in succession, with an average winning margin of 65 points. With 12 wins, 5 losses and 1 draw for the season, we managed to make the four and qualify for a 1<sup>st</sup> Semi Final against Bundoora.

We won the 1<sup>st</sup> Semi Final against Bundoora by 15 points and progressed to the Preliminary Final against Montmorency. In our two games against Mont that season, we had played a draw at their ground way back in Round 2, and had beaten them comfortably in Round 12 at Greensborough by 32 points. Unfortunately, our run of 6 wins in succession came to halt as Montmorency enjoyed a comfortable 25 point win and progress to the Grand Final.

The following week, Montmorency was no match for North Heidelberg in the Grand Final and went down by 34 points.

Although crashing out in a Preliminary Final for the sixth time since 1972 was very disappointing, the Club was thrilled for captain, Wayne Dobson, who won a second Frank Smith Medal as the DVFL Best & Fairest for 1987. In another outstanding effort, former captain coach, David Miers, won the Club Best & Fairest Award.

Unfortunately, at the 1987 Annual General Meeting, Peter Watkins confirmed that he was stepping down from the Presidency after many years of outstanding service. A Greensborough man all his life, Peter's dedicated service to the Club dated back to the 1960's. First elected President in 1975, to succeed the great Trevor Partington, and, apart from 1980 & 1981, Peter presided for 11 seasons.

Importantly, he was an integral part of a leadership group that worked so hard to bring sweet premiership success in 1983 and 1984, and break a long and frustrating 16 year drought.

Since 1922, the longest serving Greensborough Football Club Presidents have been as follows:

- P Watkins – 1975 to 1979 & 1982 to 1987 (11)
- PJ Holohan – 1927 to 1934 (8)
- Dr EP Cordner – 1952 to 1959 (8)
- J Buchanan – 2001 to 2005 & 2007 (6)
- S Gration – 2008 to 2013 (6)
- R Brindley – 1988 to 1991 (4)

Peter's 11 seasons in the chair rank him as the longest serving President in the history of Greensborough Football Club since 1922, and probably the longest serving of all time.

### *Season 1988*

After the relative disappointment of another Preliminary Final loss in 1987, and the departure of its long serving and very successful President, the Club quickly re-grouped and looked to season 1988 with confidence.

Off field, Rex Brindley had moved into the Presidency, and Greg Jones continued as non-playing coach. On field, the club was still very strong, and well served by very talented and highly experienced senior players such as;

- Wayne Dobson (Captain)
- Brett Fowler
- Peter Banks
- Peter Mastin
- Glenn Meredith
- David Miers
- Geoff Mason
- Brett Smith
- Glenn Sievers
- Ray Sweeney
- Rod Cann

Also, by now, a number of very good youngsters, plus some exciting new and experienced recruits, had come into prominence on the list, ie.

- Russell Dickson (returning to the Club from Collingwood)
- Neil Brindley (another junior back from Collingwood)
- Neal Carroll (recruited from Northcote Park)
- Paul Smith (an outstanding Boro junior)
- Derek Shaw (ex-Collingwood)

The season started with good, but unspectacular wins against Lakeside (24 points) and last season's premiers, North Heidelberg (19 points). A Round 3 loss by 35 points to Montmorency at Para Road set us back a bit, but we recovered to win the next 8 games, including two close ones in Rounds 7 and 8 against top ranked teams Bundoora (by 2 points) and Heidelberg West (by 1 point).

After winning 8 games straight, including a huge 133 point win over Lalor in Round 9, we quickly came back to earth in Round 11 after a narrow 1 point loss to North Heidelberg, and a then another very disappointing 25 point loss to Montmorency at Memorial Park. The last 6 games produced 5 very good wins against Heidelberg (41 points), Templestowe (27 points), Diamond Creek (91 points), Heidelberg West (31 points) & Lalor (50 points).

Our only loss in the run home that season was the narrow 3 point loss to Bundoora in Round 16 at Greensborough, but our 14 wins for the season had earned us a prized double chance, and an opportunity to have another crack at Bundoora in the Second Semi Final.

Both encounters against Bundoora had been close affairs, with us winning a narrow one in Round 7 by 2 points, and them getting over us by 3 points in that Round 16 game at Greensborough.

The 1988 Second Semi Final was another tight game between the near neighbours, but with so much at stake, Greensborough did not let it slip, and with a magnificent 6 point victory, booked a place in its 29<sup>th</sup> Grand Final since 1922.

The following week in the Preliminary Final, Bundoora recovered to record a solid 24 point win over North Heidelberg, and earn another crack at us in the big one.

The Grand Final of 1988, the Bi-Centennial year, was a magnificent day for Greensborough Football Club. Playing inspired and powerful football, Greensborough won its 15<sup>th</sup> Premiership in memorable style, completely outclassing Bundoora by 43 points. The 1988 margin of 43 points was the Club's second highest Grand Final winning margin in its history, and second only to the 52 point victory over Eltham in 1952.

Interestingly, Greensborough won the 1934 premiership on the 'Centenary of Victoria' in 1934, and had now, 54 years later, won the 1988 premiership on the 'Bi-Centenary of Australia'.



*Season 1989*

Due to business commitments, Greg Jones was unable to continue coaching in 1989. Also, Wayne Dobson, the 1988 Premiership Captain, dual DVFL Best & Fairest Winner and three-time GFC Best & Fairest Winner, decided it was time to hang up the boots after a magnificent career.

In an astute move, the Club secured the services of the highly credentialed ex-Preston VFA star Harold Martin as non-playing coach for 1989, and appointed the retired Wayne Dobson his assistant.

On field, champion rover and four-time GFC Best & Fairest winner, Brett Fowler, was appointed Captain.

Season 1989 got off to a cracking start with big wins in the first 4 games over West Preston (46 points), Heidelberg West (91 points), Diamond Creek (112 points) & Montmorency (57 points). A reality check was delivered in Round 5 against a resurgent Lalor, where in a high scoring game, we went down by 4 points. In Round 6, at home against Reservoir Lakeside, we recorded a huge 114 point win, but then failed against a determined Heidelberg by 9 points at Warringal Park in Round 7.

From Round 8 to Round 15, we had a very good run and chalked up 8 wins on the trot. We were sitting pretty on the ladder with only 3 games to go, and looking forward to a return bout against Heidelberg at Memorial Park in Round 16.

At the most inopportune time, it seems that Heidelberg save their best performances each season for the Greensborough games - because in Round 16 1989 they did it again. Although it was another tight game, Heidelberg prevailed by 8 points to remind us, yet again, that we should not expect to have everything our own way in the finals - especially if they had anything to do with it.

The final two games of the 1989 home and away season were not very impressive either, and a little worrying. In a tight game at North Heidelberg in Round 17, we managed to hold on by only 11 points, and in Round 18, in a disappointing performance at Greensborough against Bundoora, we lost by 14 points. Despite our indifferent form in the last 3 games, we did qualify for a double chance, and earned another crack at Bundoora in the Second Semi Final.

However, it seems the week's rest was just what was needed, because in a very solid performance, and a complete turnaround in form, we enjoyed a comfortable 33 point victory and qualified for direct entry into the 1989 Grand Final. Remarkably, this would be the Club's 30<sup>th</sup> Grand Final appearance since 1922, and the 5<sup>th</sup> appearance in the 7 contested seasons starting in 1983.

Despite putting up a gallant performance the following week, in the Preliminary Final against Lalor, Bundoora's season ended with a 9 point defeat. This cleared the way for another Greensborough v Lalor clash in the Grand Final – the same as 1984.

The DVFL Grand Final on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 1989, was a history making day for Greensborough Football Club. In an awesome display, Greensborough outclassed Lalor to win a then record 15<sup>th</sup> Premiership by 65 points. Apart from setting a new benchmark in the DVFL for the number of senior grade premierships, this victory was also historic from the Club's perspective.

This magnificent 65 point winning margin surpassed the Club's previously highest Premiership winning margin of 52 points set in 1952.

Also, the Club had now won 'Back to Back' Premierships for the 4<sup>th</sup> time since 1960/61. In fact, the Club's last 8 premierships had been won as part of a 'Back to Back' sequence;

- 1960 & 1961
- 1966 & 1967
- 1983 & 1984
- 1988 & 1989



The 1989 Premiership was an absolute triumph for the grand old club, which could now rightly claim to be at the pinnacle of success.

### *Season 1990*

With great anticipation, and perhaps with just a little expectation, the Club set out in 1990, for a 5<sup>th</sup> time since 1967, in search of perhaps the only 'mountain' it had yet to conquer – a magical three flags in a row. The committee was settled under Rex Brindley in his 3<sup>rd</sup> year as President, and the Club's finances were in a very sound state under the astute stewardship of Phil Money, now in a 5<sup>th</sup> year as Treasurer. Harold Martin was continuing as non-playing coach, with Wayne Dobson as his assistant.

1990 got off to a good start with solid wins against West Heidelberg at Memorial Park by 61 points and at Diamond Creek by 21 points. After Round 9, and at the half-way mark of the season, we weren't exactly showing premiership winning form, and our record showed only 5 wins and 4 losses. The losses had been to Bundoora (23 points), North Heidelberg (1 point), Lalor (14 points) & Heidelberg (21 points).

However, our form recovered well in the second half of the season, and we won 8 out of the 9 games leading up to the Finals. Our only loss in that 9 weeks was a 42 point drubbing by ... *(you guessed it)* ... Heidelberg in Round 15 at Warringal Park. With 13 wins and 5 losses, we were only able to qualify for a sudden death First Semi Final berth against Lalor – our opponent in last year's Grand Final.

Our record against them during the season was a 14 point loss at Lalor in Round 9, and an 18 point win at Greensborough in Round 16. In a high scoring 1990 First Semi Final Greensborough scored an impressive 37 point victory, ending Lalor's season, and advancing to the Preliminary Final.

In the Second Semi Final, Heidelberg, who had qualified for a double chance, suffered a 19 point defeat at the hands of Bundoora, thus setting up a clash with us, their mortal enemy, in the Preliminary Final. Unfortunately for us, our hopes of achieving the magical 'three in a row' came to a crashing halt in the 1990 Preliminary Final.

As had been the case since our last win against them in Round 13 of 1988, Heidelberg were simply too good, seeing us off with a comfortable 30 point beating. Always a very dangerous finals opponent, Heidelberg showed an inaccurate Bundoora what Diamond Valley finals football was all about, and recorded a very impressive 39 point win in the Grand Final.



1990 was Heidelberg Football Club's 7<sup>th</sup> appearance in the Division 1 finals since the epic and controversial (*to say the least*) victory over Greensborough for the 1964 Premiership. Those appearances had resulted in 4 Grand Finals for 2 Premierships (1986 & 1990). On the other hand, since the 1964 Grand Final, Greensborough's 16 finals appearances had resulted in 8 Grand Finals for 6 Premierships (1983, 1984, 1988 & 1989).

Overall, since the inception of the Diamond Valley League in 1922, and up to the end of 1990, Greensborough had claimed 16 Premierships compared to 14 by Heidelberg. Heidelberg's tally of 14 Premierships to the end of 1990 includes a Division 2 title in 1983, plus titles in 1928 and 1929 in the name of 'Heidelberg Juniors'.

Although not a foundation member, after only two seasons, Heidelberg Football Club considered itself too good for the Diamond Valley competition, moving in 1925 to a competition described as the 'VFL Sub-Districts League'. It is thought that Heidelberg Juniors was formed as a second team so that Heidelberg could reserve a place for itself in the DVFA. Interestingly, the original Heidelberg team rejoined the DVFA in 1930, and Heidelberg Juniors appears to have then just faded away.

### *Season 1991*

After the disappointment of not meeting the expectation of 'three in a row' in 1990, the Club set out on its 1991 campaign. Rex Brindley, continuing in his 4<sup>th</sup> season as President, and Phil Money his 6<sup>th</sup> season as Treasurer, welcomed former Junior Football Club President, Rex Smith, to the Secretary's job in 1991. Glen Harris, Secretary from 1983 to 1986, had stepped back in for one season in 1990 after the resignation of Colin Gray, who had held the post from 1987 to 1989.

The 1991 season commenced with the club in a sound financial position after reaching the A Grade Preliminary Final, being Runners-Up in B Grade and winning the C Grade (Under 19) Premiership. Harold Martin was continuing for a 3<sup>rd</sup> year as senior coach, and recently retired premiership player, Brian Hyde, was appointed reserves coach.

Season 1991 got to a good start with solid wins against Diamond Creek (38 points), Lakeside (53 points), North Heidelberg (34 points) and (importantly) Heidelberg (13 points), in a high scoring game at Warringal Park. In Round 5, however, we received a reality check by virtue of a 55 point thrashing from Lalor at Greensborough. In Round 6 we copped another one, this time at Montmorency, where we went down again by 21 points. Our record of 4 wins and 2 losses after 6 rounds had progressed to 7 wins and 5 losses after 12 rounds.

Disconcertingly, our good wins against North Heidelberg and Heidelberg in the first 6 rounds, had been reversed in the second 6 rounds. While our third loss in a row to Lalor, in Round 13, caused some to fear the finals may be missed for the first time since 1986, the team lifted to win the last 5 games of the home & away season convincingly and qualify for a First Semi Final place against Bundoora.

Our record against Bundoora during the 1991 season had been excellent, with a 40 point win at Greensborough in Round 7, and an even better 55 point win at Bundoora in Round 15. This apparent dominance over Bundoora was confirmed in the First Semi Final, as we beat them soundly by 46 points, to earn a place in yet another Preliminary Final.

Our opponent in the Preliminary Final was North Heidelberg, who had qualified for a double chance, but had suffered a 19 point loss to Lalor in the Second Semi Final. The record against North Heidelberg that season had been mixed. We had enjoyed a comfortable win by 34 points at Greensborough in Round 4, but they had beaten us by 12 points at North Heidelberg in Round 12.

The Preliminary Final of 1991 was not a good day, and North Heidelberg easily advanced to the Grand Final with a comfortable 30 point win. After the ultimate triumphs of 1988 & 1989, we had now struck out in a Preliminary Final for the second season in succession.

Lalor subsequently won the 1991 Grand Final by 34 points, in conditions so bad that North Heidelberg failed to score a goal.

One bright note for the year was that two outstanding Greensborough players, Neil Brindley & Peter Mastin, shared the 1991 Frank Smith Medal for the DVFL Best & Fairest players. Off the field, the 1991 season had not been a complete success either.

Difficult economic conditions, particularly in the state of Victoria, had impacted heavily on bar trading and raffles, and also made sponsorship harder to attract. Rising costs in almost every department had also compounded the situation. It was with a sense that, *just maybe*, another great era was coming to an end, the Club looked forward with an uncertainty that had not been felt since the 1970's.

CHAPTER SEVEN

**BACK TO THE FIELD AGAIN**  
**(1992 to 1995)**

*Season 1992*

Rex Brindley stood down following a superb contribution in his 4 years at the helm since 1988, as did Phil Money, who had been Treasurer since 1986. Into these roles stepped Graeme Clark as President, and Col Davis as Treasurer.

Rex Smith continued into a second year as Secretary. Harold Martin, however, decided to relinquish the coaching job, and was replaced by former player, Frank Mercuri.

On field, the playing list was still considered strong, with a good spread of experienced players still on the list:

- Peter Banks
- Glenn Meredith
- Neil Brindley
- Rod Cann
- Neale Carroll
- Nigel Sannholm
- Russell Dickson
- Scott Didier
- Steven Ellis
- Peter Mastin
- Nigel Sanholm
- Glenn Seivers
- Derek Shaw

During 1992, Brett Fowler announced his retirement after a record 250 A Grade games for Greensborough. In a Club noted for its great rovers as far back as the 1920's, Brett ranked right up there with the best of them. Starting as a junior in 1972, he stayed with Greensborough all through a magnificent career that included 4 Premierships and 4 Best & Fairest awards.

After a very mixed season of results, we finished the 1992 home & away season with only 9 wins from 18 games. Consequently, we missed the finals for the first time since 1986, and for only the second time since 1981.

### *Season 1993*

With Graeme Clark, Frank Mercuri and Rex Smith continuing in their roles, the Club set out with determination to get back into the finals in 1993.

The year started badly though, with losses against North Heidelberg (33 points) and Bundoora (31 points). Things then started to look up after three consecutive wins against Mernda (125 points), Montmorency (28 points) and Diamond Creek (125 points). However, after Round 5, the season did not progress to plan, and we were only managed to win 4 out of the remaining 13 games, finishing clearly out of the finals again.

Season 1993 had been a difficult year both on and off the field, with finances tightening further in the continuing difficult economic conditions.

### *Season 1994*

At the end of 1993, after two years in the job, Frank Mercuri relinquished the coaching position, and was replaced by Peter Nicholson from East Burwood. Graeme Clark and Rex Smith continued in their roles, with Les Smith taking over from Brian Hyde, who had filled in last season as Treasurer, under difficult circumstances.

Season 1994 started off spectacularly with a 134 point victory over Heidelberg at Warringal Park, surpassing our previous highest 130 point victory over them in 1992 at Greensborough. After Round 7, we had enjoyed a further 5 impressive victories, for just the one 3 point loss at Bundoora in Round 6. By the end of the 1994 home and away season, our record stood at 13 wins and 5 losses, and we qualified for a First Semi Final berth against Epping.

Actually, that finish was a disappointment because our 45 point last round loss to North Heidelberg had cost us a top two finish and a double chance. Our record against Epping that season had been a 95 point win at Greensborough in Round 2, and a 34 point loss at Epping in Round 11.

In the First Semi Final, again at Epping, we simply did not come to play, and lost by 33 points in a very disappointing end to 1994.

### *Season 1995*

In difficult financial circumstances that had not shown any improvement over recent years, Neil Rogers took over from Graeme Clark at the end of 1994 - and Peter Nicholson continued into a second year as coach.

A significant and unwelcomed development in 1995 was the inability of the Club to field a C Grade (Under 19) side in the competition – a problem that was to continue in 1996. Important links and pathways from the two local junior clubs, Greensborough Junior Football Club and St Mary's Junior Football Club, were clearly not functioning.

Although some good wins were recorded during 1995, we were just unable to match it with the top order teams, and our 9 wins and 1 draw for the home and away season was not good enough to make the finals. This was the first year since 1977 that Greensborough did not have a Firsts, Seconds or Thirds team in the finals, and the future did not look good.

From the late 1940's until the mid-1990's, Greensborough had produced many fine junior players, many of whom had gone on the VFL/AFL honours;

- Ken Carlon (Melbourne)
- Ray Poulter (Richmond)
- Ray Willett (Collingwood)
- Dick Burrows (Richmond)
- Ted Potter (Collingwood)
- Lee Adamson (Collingwood)
- Dennis O'Brien (Collingwood)
- Robert Hyde (Collingwood & Essendon)
- Bruce Gonsalves (Collingwood)
- Tony Keenan (Collingwood)
- Craig Balme (Richmond)
- Russell Dickson (Collingwood)
- Neil Brindley (Collingwood)
- Danny Stevens (North Melbourne)

The demise of our Thirds team was particularly disappointing, especially as the Club had almost single handedly introduced Under 13 and Under 15 football to the Diamond Valley in 1966, and been so successful in C grade since 1969.

— 1893 —

CHAPTER EIGHT

**DIFFICULT & DESPERATE TIMES  
(1996 to 2003)**

Although the Club had endured lean spells, where it had not made the finals, these periods were not usually prolonged, ie.

- 1935 to 1937 (3 seasons)
- 1947 (1 season)
- 1950 & 1951 (2 seasons)
- 1968 to 1971 (4 seasons)
- 1974 to 1977 (4 seasons)
- 1981 (1 season)
- 1986 (1 season)
- 1992 & 1993 (2 seasons)

Although not realised at the time, season 1996 was the start of the most difficult and unsuccessful era that Greensborough Football Club has ever known. In the 9 consecutive seasons from 1995 until 2003, we did not make the finals at all - and finished well out of contention every season.

Year	Wins	Losses	Drawn
1995	9	8	1
1996	8	10	
1997	2	13	1
1998	10	8	
1999	4	14	
2000	5	13	
2001	8	10	
2002	5	13	
2003	1	17	

During this period, most of the top flight clubs were relative newcomers to the League, and located in growing areas. They often had no shortage of enthusiastic supporters, sponsors with deep pockets and legions of workers.

Huge payments on offer to big name recruits really escalated, and the best recruits from the big league and the country, usually go where the money is. Greensborough's general philosophy, thankfully, has never been to pay a fortune for big name recruits – and specifically – to avoid unsustainable debt.



Despite the tireless work of many dedicated and hard working people, Greensborough just could not keep up with the big spenders, and our on field performances fell away dramatically - particularly after 1998. Also, the impact of not fielding an Under 19 side (Thirds) during 1995 & 1996 should not be underestimated.

The following people, and no doubt many others, gave their all during this time to the Greensborough Football Club;

- Presidents – Neil Rogers, Terry Long, Gerard Wilson & Jeff Buchanan
- Secretaries – Rex Smith, Gerard Wilson & Jim Lawrence
- Treasurers – Les Smith, Peter Jolley, Keith Evans & Alan Baird
- Committee – John Garlick, Russell Dickson, Russell Waites, Russell Dower, Glenn Meredith, Colin Gray, Jean Wild, Phil Rogers, Grahame McLeod, Mark Trotter, Geoff Mason, Rob Mason, Glen Seivers, Graeme Clark, Damian Craven, Anthony Bond, Rod Paine, Paddy Rowell, Rob O'Neill, Neale Carroll, Keith Evans, Peter McCulloch & others.
- Trainers – Neil Cann, Ray Hattenfels
- Coaches – Peter Nicholson, Frank Johnson, Grant Lawrie, Brent Heaver, Glenn Seivers.
- Bar & Canteen – Bob Johnson, Dawn Ritchie.

It is easy to remember great deeds and services rendered during the good times - when premierships are won, and records are set. But - we must never forget the hard times - and acknowledge the equally heroic contribution of people like those above. Without their passion and dedication, the Greensborough Football Club would now simply not exist.

Season 2003 was possibly the most disappointing since 1922. A single win from 18 games (10 points over Eltham in Round 16) was the poorest return for a season since 1935. Worse than 1935, and unlike recent poor seasons, relegation could not be avoided and we went down to Division 2 for season 2004.

Although bitterly disappointing and humiliating for the proud Club, all was not lost.

In sense, a break from the frenetic pace required to stay afloat in Division 1 was a relief for those who had worked so hard. It was also an opportunity to take stock, refresh the Club - and set about renewal.

CHAPTER NINE

**RELEGATION & DIVISION 2  
(2004 to 2006)**

*Season 2004*

In 2004, with Jeff Buchanan into a 4<sup>th</sup> year as President, and former premierships player, Glenn Seivers, the new senior coach, a long and arduous journey began.

It would have been tempting to sit back in Division 2 and take things easy for a while; but Greensborough Football Club did not believe that Division 2 was a place from where it could sustain itself - and could never accept for one minute that Division 2 was where it belonged. With grit and determination, it focused immediately on getting back into the top division as soon as possible.

The landscape in Division 2 was not completely new to us, and in 2004 we were able to renew on-field 'acquaintances' with some old adversaries;

- Diamond Creek
- Heidelberg West
- South Morang
- Macleod
- Reservoir
- Lalor

The first game of 2004, against Lalor at home, resulted in a narrow 4 point loss. This very quickly put paid to any thought that Division 2 was going to be a 'walk in the park'. Despite the unexpected start, the next 8 games were won in fine style, and included some huge wins - albeit over inadequate opposition.

After a disappointing 30 point loss at Diamond Creek in Round 10, it was demonstrated that in Division 2 there was a huge gap between the top half of the competition teams and the rest. Over the remaining 8 games of the 2004 home and away season, we won 6, lost 1 (again narrowly to Lalor) and drew with Macleod.

Our first season of Div 2 football, saw us finish the home and away season with 14 wins, 3 losses and 1 draw. Although it was enough to qualify for the finals, it was not adequate to earn the double chance.

Our opponent in the 2004 Elimination Final was Panton Hill, who we had beaten soundly at Greensborough in Round 7 by 50 points. However, in a very disappointing Elimination Final performance, we went down by 12 points, to effectively book another year in Division 2.

Lalor, our nemesis on two occasions that season, won promotion to Division 1 in 2005 with a 33 point victory over Reservoir in the Grand Final.

### *Season 2005*

Russell Dickson took over from Glenn Seivers as non-playing coach in 2005. Russell had an outstanding playing record, starting in the Greensborough juniors, and progressing to Collingwood in the VFL - where he played 20 games from 1985 to 1987. Back home at Greensborough, amongst other honours, Russell played in both the 1988 & 1989 premierships and had won GFC Best & Fairest awards in 1995 & 1996.

In the cumbersome 16 team Div 2 competition Greensborough had an outstanding home and away season to record 16 wins, with only 1 loss and 1 draw. The loss had been to South Morang by 7 points, surprisingly at home in Round 6 – and the draw had been at Macleod the previous week in Round 5.

Finishing second on the ladder with a double chance, our opponent in the Second Semi Final was Mernda. Our only encounter with them so far that season had been a difficult low scoring game at Mernda in Round 13 - which we managed to win by 13 points.

The Second Semi Final, although close again, was open and high scoring – and we prevailed again by the slightly smaller margin of 10 points. With a degree of confidence, and just a little bit of relief, we looked forward to our first Div 2 Grand Final.

After losing the Second Semi Final, Mernda were eliminated the following week by Diamond Creek, who beat them by a resounding 49 points in the Preliminary Final. For the Greensborough faithful, it was both exciting, and a great relief, to be in a Grand Final again. We had been a long time away from the big stage in September – since 1989 in fact – a period of 15 long and, at times, very difficult years.

Although equivalent to the 15 year period out of the Grand Final between 1967 & 1983, the 15 years between 1989 & 2005 had been particularly difficult, and at times, the very existence of the Club was in doubt.

In our two games against Creek during the 2005 season, we had accounted for them reasonably comfortably on both occasions, ie. way back in Round 1 at Greensborough by 21 points – and again at Diamond Creek in Round 16 by 31 points.

Although well prepared and confident, Greensborough did not come up well after the two week break, and were unable to subdue a more desperate and in-form Diamond Creek.

In a close match, and making the most of every opportunity, Diamond Creek prevailed by 10 points to win a much deserved title and earn promotion back to Division 1.

In an historical context, this 2005 Grand Final between Greensborough and Diamond Creek had a few interesting points and parallels, ie.

- Greensborough played its first ever documented match against Diamond Creek on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1893.
- Prior to 2005, the last time Greensborough and Diamond Creek had met in the Grand Final was 1926, ie. 79 years earlier.
- 1922 Greensborough premiership player, Bill McDowell, played in the Diamond Creek team that defeated Greensborough by 10 points in 1926.

*(Bill had played for Greensborough from 1922 until 1924, but after marrying Ellen Coventry, and moving temporarily to live in Diamond Creek, was obliged to play for Creek due quite strict DVFA residential zoning rules that then applied.)*

- Greensborough premiership players, Neale Carroll and Glenn Meredith, were coach and assistant coach of the 2005 Diamond Creek Premiership team.
- After his enforced stint at Diamond Creek, and then 2 years at North Melbourne, Bill McDowell returned to Greensborough to captain the 1931 Premiership and play under Vin Broderick in the 1934 Premiership.
- Neale Carroll subsequently returned to Greensborough to coach the Club and serve with great dedication until his untimely death in 2011.
- Glenn Meredith subsequently returned to Greensborough to serve in many roles and continues to serve the club with great dedication to this very day.
- As in 1926, the result was quite similar – a narrow win to Diamond Creek, i.e. 13 points in 1926 - and just 7 points in 2005.

### ***Season 2006***

Russell Dickson and his team must have felt that they had let an opportunity slip in 2005, and set out with fierce determination to make amends in 2006. In a generally brilliant season, Greensborough powered through the home and away games with only one blemish – a 16 point loss at Whittlesea in Round 4. Even including that loss, the average winning margin over 18 games in 2006 was a very impressive 74 points.

As we prepared for and contemplated another tilt at the Flag, the only cause for concern was a narrow 8 point victory over the vastly improved Macleod in the final round at De Winton Park, where they had matched up against us very well and been hard to beat. In our first match that season, at home against Macleod in Round 3, we had beaten them easily by 78 points. They, however, had made great strides during the season, such that they qualified to meet us in the Second Semi Final.

The 2006 finals series was an absolute triumph for Greensborough Football Club - and an important watershed in a long and illustrious history.

In the Second Semi Final we played all over a nervous Macleod, who themselves had fought their way back from near oblivion in recent years.

A comfortable 56 point victory, in front of a large and enthusiastic crowd, was a huge confidence booster, and certainly put a big dent in Macleod's confidence. To their credit, Macleod recovered well from their Second Semi Final loss and enjoyed a confidence restoring 74 point victory over Reservoir in the Preliminary Final.

Division 2 Grand Final day in 2006 was one of the most memorable days in the history of Greensborough Football Club. In an outstanding performance, Greensborough completely over-powered Macleod to win its 17<sup>th</sup> senior premiership since 1922. The 78 point margin remains the biggest winning margin in any final, including Grand Finals, in the history of the Club.

Also, in 2006, Greensborough set another Club record by winning Premierships in all 3 grades – Seniors, Reserves and Thirds (U19's). At no time, either before or since, has the Club won premierships in all three senior grades on the same day. These three premierships were a cherished and just reward for the all the hard work that had gone into them, and were very welcome after such a long, and at times very painful, 17 year drought.

It was with relief, and not a small amount of trepidation, that the Club set itself to rejoin the now fiercely competitive Division 1 in 2007.



CHAPTER TEN

**THE HARD ROAD BACK  
(2007 to 2014)**

*Citing ‘unresolved issues associated with corporate governance, fiscal control, strategic direction and administrative structure’ - AFL Victoria took over of the Diamond Valley Football League before the start of the 2007 season.*

Then, in May 2007, the Diamond Valley Football League, of which Greensborough was an inaugural member in 1922, and which we had all grown up with, was renamed the Northern Football League.

At this stage only three of the foundation clubs were still playing in the league;

- Greensborough
- Diamond Creek
- Eltham

From six original clubs in 1922, the League/Association had grown to 24 senior clubs in 2 divisions by 2007, with dozens of junior teams extending down to as young as an Under 10 level.

***Season 2007***

In season 2007, which did not start until the first weekend in May due to the lingering drought – and with a degree of trepidation - Greensborough Football stepped back into Division 1.

With Jeff Buchanan back in the chair as President, and Russell Dickson still coach, we got off to a great start in Div 1 via a 21 point win against Diamond Creek at Memorial Park. Unfortunately - that was one of the few highlights of the season. We only tasted victory on 4 more occasions, and copped some very big defeats at the hands of the top teams.

Nevertheless, the major objective for that season was fulfilled, as 5 wins from 18 rounds wins was sufficient to finish 8<sup>th</sup> in the 10 team competition, and comfortably avoid relegation.



### *Season 2008*

After a great contribution as coach for three seasons, including Premiership success in 2006, Russell Dickson stepped down at the end of 2007. Jeff Buchanan also stepped down after his splendid contribution as President, which started back in 2001.

Shane Gration, former player and a Club stalwart, was elected as the new President. Also, Neal Carroll, the former champion player, and Club games record holder, returned after his stint coaching at Diamond Creek, to become non-playing coach.

Season 2008 was an improvement over 2007, and we were able to move up the ladder. Our record of 7 wins, 10 losses and 1 draw, however, was only good enough for 5<sup>th</sup> place and we failed to make the Finals. We were still finding it very hard to match it with the top teams, and had suffered big losses to the top teams like Heidelberg, Montmorency, North Heidelberg & Bundoora. Despite that, good progress had been made, and things were moving in the right direction, ie. away from the dreaded 'wooden spoon' and relegation !

### *Season 2009*

Shane Gration and Neale Carroll continued in 2009, but momentum stalled and slightly reversed, as we only recorded 5 wins to finish 9<sup>th</sup> in the 10 team competition. Again, some very solid defeats were handed out to us by the top teams, and were it not for Thomastown, who enjoyed no wins at all in Div 1 that season, we would have been relegated.

### *Season 2010*

Season 2010 was another very hard and frustrating season, and life back in Div 1 was certainly proving difficult. The flash clubs were paying a fortune for name players with AFL, VFL or Country League reputations.

It really was an 'Arms Race' of sorts, but to its credit, Greensborough Football Club knew it could not sustain such an approach to player payments, and was not tempted to join this race. It preferred to only offer affordable money to new recruits and put more faith and effort into its outstanding juniors.

After the 2010 home and away season, we only had 6 wins, 11 losses and 1 draw to our name. Although finishing in a disappointing 8<sup>th</sup> place – only one better than in 2009 – we were, nevertheless, well clear of the 'Wooden Spoon' and relegation.

### *Season 2011*

Shane Gration continued into his 4<sup>th</sup> year as President, but Neale Carroll stepped down as coach at the end of 2010. Neale was replaced by Brian Cole, a former Montmorency premiership player, Collingwood VFL player and Montmorency Coach.

Tragically, on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2011, Neale Carroll suddenly passed away. Neale's premature death was a great shock to everyone. Neal had arrived at Boro from Northcote Park in 1987 with new coach Greg Jones. Playing in the 1988 & 1999 Premierships, Neale won GFC Best & Fairest Awards in 1988 & 1989. He coached Greensborough Reserves from 2002 until 2002, and the Seniors from 2008 until 2010.

Despite such a sad start to the season, great strides were made under new coach Brian Cole in 2011. After 18 rounds of the home and away season, our 12 wins and 6 losses placed us in 3<sup>rd</sup> place on the ladder. Greensborough was back in the Div 1 finals for the first time since the First Semi Final loss to Epping in 1994 – 17 long and hard years.

To 'top it all off' - our opponent in the Qualifying Final was to be Heidelberg – the old enemy. Our two encounters with Heidelberg that year so far had been very tight. We beat them by 8 points at Warringal Park in Round 2, and they had beaten us by 3 points in Round 15 at Memorial Park.

Unfortunately, we were no match for Heidelberg in the Qualifying Final, and they thoroughly enjoyed inflicting a solid 39 point defeat. We did not fare much better the following week either, as West Preston-Lakeside handed us an even worse 44 point defeat to abruptly end our season.

Departing the finals in straight sets is something Greensborough Football Club had not had much experience of. At least, however, we had made big advances since the dark days of 2003 – and it was thought that we *may* not be that far away from seriously challenging again for top grade honours.

---

1893

### *Season 2012*

After the vastly improved ladder finish at the end of last season, and despite the straight sets exit from the finals, the Club looked forward to playing finals again in 2012. Unfortunately, and despite some good performances during the season, the side was inconsistent. Crucial losses in critical games saw us finish in 7<sup>th</sup> place and miss the finals.

Our 7 wins, 10 losses and 1 draw was simply not good enough, and after not fulfilling the promise of 2012, we had to face the fact that we still had a lot of ground to make up before we could challenge the ladder leaders.

### *Season 2013*

Brian Cole stepped down at the end of 2012 after two seasons at Greensborough, and returned to coach at Montmorency.

Some serious work must then have gone on behind the scenes, because, to the great delight of all, Captain Coach of the 1983 & 1984 Premiership sides, Robert Hyde, agreed to coach the team in 2013. As a real bonus, his son Matthew, a fine and seasoned player with Bundoora, was also coming to Greensborough to play under his father.

Despite great anticipation, season 2013 season was more about restructuring, recruitment and discipline, than about rising up the ladder and storming into the finals.

At season's end we had only finished 8<sup>th</sup> on the ladder – one place lower than the previous season – but something told the wise ones at the Club that it was finally on the right track - and that things were about to change – and change for the better.

### *Season 2014*

After completing 6 seasons as President from 2008 to 2013, and having made a magnificent contribution to the survival and re-establishment of the Club in the Division 1, the very popular Shane Gration stepped down at the end of 2013 to take on more inconspicuous and less demanding roles.

Dynamic Vice-President, Russell Grubb, stepped into the Presidency, and together with Robert Hyde and the dedicated committee, set out to make a statement in 2014. Recruiting had been strong, both from outside the Club, and also from within via our outstanding Reserve and Under 19 teams.

The season got off to a good start with 7 wins and 2 losses after Round 9. The losses had been to Macleod in Round 4 by 16 points at Greensborough – and to Heidelberg in Round 9, also at Greensborough, by 21 points. In an interesting irony, the second half of the season turned out the same – 7 wins and 2 losses – with the losses to Heidelberg and Macleod again.

In the second half of the home and away season, the losses had been to Macleod by 15 points at Macleod in Round 13 – and Heidelberg by 8 points at Warringal Park in Round 17. Competition in 2014 was so close during the year, that no place inside the top five on the ladder was assured coming into the final round of the home and away season.

In Round 18, Heidelberg and Greensborough were fighting it out for top place on the ladder, while Montmorency, Bundoora, Macleod, West Preston Lakeside and Lower Plenty were competing for the other three places in the Final Five. Heidelberg subsequently finished in top spot after a narrow come from behind win at Macleod in that last round.

Greensborough finished in second place on the ladder despite a 92 point win at memorial Park over Whittlesea. In the 2014 Qualifying Final, Greensborough's opponent was close neighbor and great rival, Montmorency, who had finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. During the home & away season, we had beaten Montmorency comfortably on both occasions – by 69 points back in Round 1 at Greensborough and by 27 points down at Mont in Round 10.

In that Qualifying Final, on the wide open spaces at Cramer Street Oval Preston, but in a much tighter game, Greensborough defeated Montmorency by 13 points to advance to the Second Semi Final. That Qualifying Final was the first Division 1 finals victory by Greensborough since its First Semi Final win over Bundoora in 1991 – a span of 23 years.

The next hurdle was Heidelberg in the Second Semi Final, and although they had beaten us twice during the season, the margin had only been 8 points in a close game in Round 17, and it was thought we may just have their measure in a final.

Although Greensborough played very well for three quarters, a well rested Heidelberg kicked the last five goals of that Second Semi Final to overrun us by 15 points, and earn direct entry into the 2014 Grand Final. Apart from having to now play the following week, this loss meant we had to face our other problem team that year - Macleod - in a Preliminary Final.

By the time they reached the Preliminary Final, Macleod was on a bit of a roll. They had dispatched Bundoora by 26 points in the Elimination Final, and then Montmorency by an impressive 28 points in the First Semi Final. They were no doubt looking forward to inflicting a third beating on us for the season in that Preliminary Final.

In a fast and high scoring game, Greensborough struggled early, but due to a brilliant 7 goal burst in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, we earned a very credible 19 point victory and qualified for our first Division 1 Grand Final since 1989 – our first in 25 years.

To add a little 'gravity' to the occasion – that Grand Final was going to be against Heidelberg – our mortal enemy for over a century. It would be the first time we would do battle with them in the big one since 1964 – exactly 50 years from when they 'sucked us in' and snatched the 1964 premiership from within our grasp.

As well as breaking the longest Division 1 drought in the Club's history, those who could remember the 1960's were hoping we could avenge that humiliating 1964 defeat. For the master coach Robert Hyde, however, that stuff was just irrelevant history, and no doubt far from his mind. He and his boys only wanted one thing – to win that coveted Premiership.

In what must now be acknowledged as the greatest day in its illustrious history - Greensborough Football Club won the 2014 Premiership with a masterful 41 point victory over Heidelberg.

After a tight opening quarter, we raced to a 31-point lead by half time. We then restricted Heidelberg to just 2 goals with the wind in the third quarter, to maintain a 26-point lead at three-quarter time. It was not long into the last quarter when everyone knew we were not going to let this one go, and we cruised to a glorious 41 point victory.

Much of Greensborough's improvement in 2014 came from within, as the majority of our playing list that year had risen from the club's junior ranks. Jason Rogers & Matthew Fowler both emerged as top mid-fielders alongside Co-Captain Lachlan McQuilken. Ricky Mullins emerged as a tough little rover in the tradition of our many great rovers of the past like Bennett, Anderson, the Brimacombes, Douglas & Brett Fowler. Brent Ryan & Liam Emery became regulars in defence and gave great support to Matthew Hyde & Drew Wilson. Co-Captain, Tim Bongetti, despite his late season suspension, was a dominant force up forward, kicking 63 goals in 18 games.

Three recruits also played a big part in the premiership win, most notably;

- Michael Hooper, who won the GFC Best & Fairest Award and was best on ground in the Grand Final.
- Daniel McLinden, who came from Bendigo and enjoyed a superb season.
- Andrew Stellas, from Bundoora, played every game and was crucial in the first three weeks of the finals without Tim Bongetti.

The result provided the perfect farewell for master coach Robert Hyde, who announced his retirement in the week following the match. In this, his second stint as coach of Greensborough Football Club, and after a break of nearly 30 years, he had become the only man in its history to coach it to 3 Premierships. It was so fitting that his son Matthew was Co-Captain on the day, and his father Norm, a dedicated Boro man for well over 50 years, was able to see it. This famous victory was Greensborough's 18<sup>th</sup> Premiership from 33 attempts since the inception of the Diamond Valley/Northern Football League.



It was an absolute triumph for Russell Grubb, his Committee, the Coach, the Players & Supporters and a season that will be long remembered.

It was also a tribute to those people who went through the very dark days, and did the very hard yards, during those desperate years from the mid-1990's until relegation in 2004 – plus those who worked long and hard to rebuild the Club during the long climb back up the ladder after reinstatement to Division 1 from 2007.





CHAPTER ELEVEN

**ANOTHER GOLDEN ERA ?  
(2015 & Beyond)**

*Season 2015*

In 2015, President, Russell Grubb and his Committee called on Under 19 coach, Ben Turner, to fill Robert Hyde's shoes as Senior Coach. Ben had coached the Under 19's to the Premiership as well in 2015.

In a great home & away season, Greensborough won 15 out of the 18 home and away matches. We kicked more points per game than any other side in the competition, while conceding the fewest points. With Heidelberg falling off the pace in 2015, we were effectively locked in a two-way battle with Macleod all season for top position on the ladder. They had defeated us in Round 2 at Macleod by 26 points, and again in Round 8 at Greensborough by 11 points - and it very much looked as if they would finish in first place.

Our only other loss during the season was to Eltham by 4 points in Round 14. Unexpected and successive losses by Macleod in the final two home & away rounds saw them slip to second place. We duly finished on top of the ladder with a 6 point margin and looked forward to facing Macleod again in the Second Semi Final.

The Second Semi Final was an easy run for Greensborough. Our crushing 46 point victory over an injury depleted Macleod was one of our best finals performances of all time. We had broken Macleod's winning streak over us and, as we thought, given their confidence a shake.

As they rested again, to await the outcome of the Preliminary Final between Macleod and Eltham, thoughts of 'back to back' glory was very much on the minds of the players and coach.

As it turned out, with a number of key players back in the side, Macleod recovered magnificently from the solid beating we had inflicted in the Second Semi Final. They recorded a very impressive 39 point victory over Eltham in the Preliminary Final to qualify for the Grand Final. Macleod's long road back to the top in Div 1 started 3 years after ours, when they won the 2009 Division 2 Premiership. Macleod's previous Division 1 success had been way back in 1971, so they were ecstatic to be on the cusp of glory after an agonising 44 year wait.

Grand Final day 2015 was a bitter disappointment for Greensborough Football Club. After a close contest during the first half, Macleod broke the game open late in the third term, and went on to record a fine 21 point victory.

It might be said that Greensborough went stale and became lethargic after playing only once over the space of 4 weeks - but we cannot deny that Macleod played inspired and hungry football in that second half - and thoroughly deserved their historic victory.

It was the first time since 1958 that Greensborough had failed to defend a Division 1 premiership, having gone back-to-back the past four times we have won premierships in Division 1.

The Grand Final loss was a disappointing way to the end an outstanding season, and provided lessons are learned, no defeat is devoid of any value.

### *Beyond*

After 34 Grand Finals and 18 Premierships since 1922 - the question now for Greensborough Football Club is *'where to from here?'*

Will the great effort and drive that has taken us into the last two Grand Finals continue to build - and herald another golden era – *or* will we fail to grasp our opportunities and fall back again?

Greensborough Football Club has been the heart and soul of the little town on the Plenty River for well over a century. It has played an important and sometimes central part in the lives of the many wonderful men and women who have served it so faithfully since 1893.

On behalf of all those who served in the past - I call on all those who still serve today - to grasp the future with both hands and take this mighty Club to its greatest era ever.

**GREENSBOROUGH  
FOOTBALL CLUB**

— 1893 —

### Author's Note & Acknowledgements

This small volume started life as the script for a verbal narrative to be presented at Greensborough Football Club's inaugural Hall of Fame induction on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2016.

As work progressed it became obvious that the subject matter was going to exceed the original scope, so with the encouragement of the Club President, I agreed to continue and publish the material in the form of this small book.

This book has been compiled from information accumulated by me from a number of sources over many years, ie.

- My personal memories, recollections & research since the late 1950's
- The fine research undertaken, documented & generously shared by former Club Secretary - Rex Smith – particularly the obscure early years
- Countless recollections, anecdotes and stories that were related to me as a young child, and into adulthood, by the following members of the Greensborough Football Club family, who served the Club from as far back as 1922:
  - Bill McDowell (grandfather & former player)
  - Jack Partington (grandfather & former player)
  - Alan Partington (grandfather's brother, former player & official)
  - Don McDowell (father & former player)
  - Herb Collard (family friend & former player)
  - Wally Meakin (family friend & former club secretary)
  - Ken Richmond (personal friend & former team mate)
  - Alan Banks (cousin, personal friend & former team mate)
  - Many others too numerous to mention

This book is not intended to be a definitive and historically accurate text book, but rather an amateur attempt at laying down, just for the record, one person's account of Greensborough Football Club's truly outstanding record of achievement since 1922.

Please accept my sincere apology for any errors, omissions or misstatements of fact - and for any hurt or offence that any such error, omission or misstatement may cause.

I regard myself as fortunate to have personally witnessed some of the great achievements of this Club since the late 1950's, and to have been associated with, and to have personally known, many of its great champions, dedicated workers, passionate supporters & wonderful characters.

Bruce McDowell  
13<sup>th</sup> August 2016



**GREENSBOROUGH FOOTBALL CLUB – 90 SEASONS**

---

**ACTIS NON VERBIS  
(Deeds Not Words)**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>FINALS</b>	<b>GRAND FINALS</b>	<b>PREMIERS</b>	<b>RUNNERS UP</b>	<b>OPPONENT</b>	<b>MARGIN</b>
1922	Yes	Yes	Yes		Diamond Creek	28
1923	Yes					
1924	Yes	Yes		Yes	Diamond Creek	-15
1925	Yes	Yes	Yes		Heidelberg	4
1926	Yes	Yes		Yes	Diamond Creek	-13
1927	Yes	Yes	Yes		Templestowe	10
1928	Yes					
1929	Yes	Yes		Yes	Heidelberg Juniors	Unknown
1930	Yes					
1931	Yes	Yes	Yes		Heidelberg	38
1932	Yes					
1933	Yes					
1934	Yes	Yes	Yes		Eltham	28
1935						
1936						
1937						
1938	Yes					
1939	Yes	Yes		Yes	Epping	-29
1940	Yes	Yes		Yes	Epping	-33
1941	Yes	Yes		Yes	Heidelberg West	-16
1946	Yes	Yes		Yes	Reservoir	-31
1947						
1948	Yes					
1949	Yes	Yes		Yes	Eltham	-8
1950						
1951						
1952	Yes	Yes	Yes		Eltham	52
1953	Yes					
1954	Yes					
1955	Yes	Yes	Yes		Montmorency	6
1956	Yes	Yes		Yes	Heidelberg	-14

**GREENSBOROUGH FOOTBALL CLUB – 90 SEASONS**

---

**ACTIS NON VERBIS  
(Deeds Not Words)**

YEAR	FINALS	GRAND FINALS	PREMIERS	RUNNERS UP	OPPONENT	MARGIN
1957	Yes	Yes		Yes	Heidelberg	-2
1958	Yes	Yes	Yes		Heidelberg West	15
1959	Yes	Yes		Yes	Heidelberg	-53
1960	Yes	Yes	Yes		Heidelberg	19
1961	Yes	Yes	Yes		Reservoir – Lakeside	16
1962	Yes					
1963	Yes					
1964	Yes	Yes		Yes	Heidelberg	-31
1965	Yes	Yes		Yes	Reservoir – Lakeside	-34
1966	Yes	Yes	Yes		Templestowe	7
1967	Yes	Yes	Yes		Templestowe	14
1968						
1969						
1970						
1971						
1972	Yes					
1973	Yes					
1974						
1975						
1976						
1977						
1978	Yes					
1979	Yes					
1980	Yes					
1981						
1982	Yes					
1983	Yes	Yes	Yes		Bundoora	29
1984	Yes	Yes	Yes		Lalor	41
1985	Yes	Yes		Yes	North Heidelberg	-13
1986						
1987	Yes					
1988	Yes	Yes	Yes		Bundoora	43
1989	Yes	Yes	Yes		Lalor	65
1990	Yes					
1991	Yes					
1992						

**GREENSBOROUGH FOOTBALL CLUB – 90 SEASONS**

---

**ACTIS NON VERBIS  
(Deeds Not Words)**

YEAR	FINALS	GRAND FINALS	PREMIERS	RUNNERS UP	OPPONENT	MARGIN
1993						
1994	Yes					
1995						
1996						
1997						
1998						
1999						
2000						
2001						
2002						
2003						
2004	Yes					
2005	Yes	Yes		Yes	Diamond Creek	-7
2006	Yes	Yes	Yes		Macleod	78
2007						
2008						
2009						
2010						
2011	Yes					
2012						
2013						
2014	Yes	Yes	Yes		Heidelberg	41
2015	Yes	Yes		Yes	Macleod	-21

90	57	34	18	16
----	----	----	----	----

