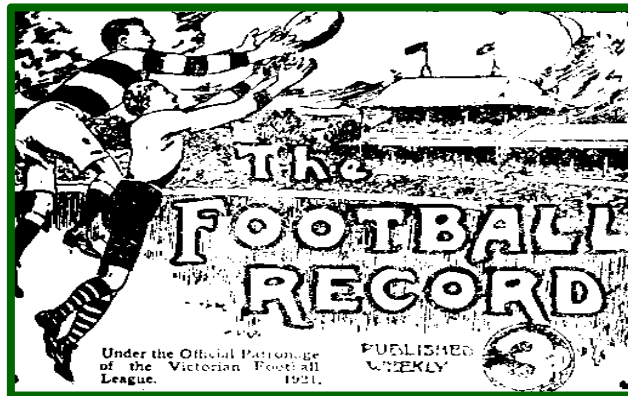


100 YEARS AGO

1921

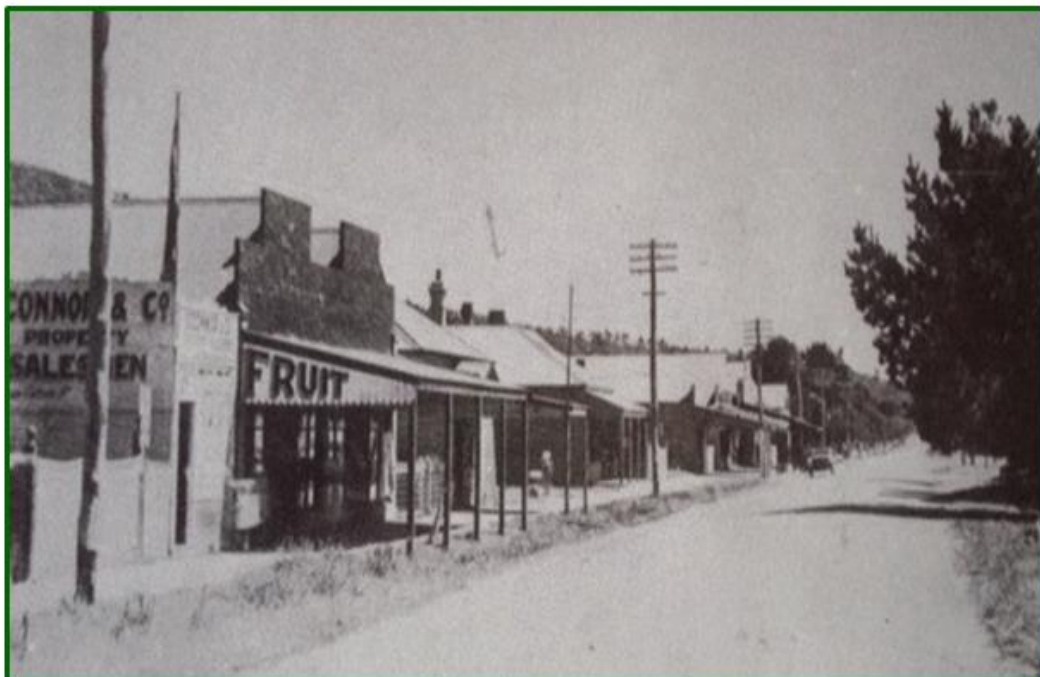
A LONG HARD ROAD TO THE TOP

Reference : 2021/13



INTRODUCTION: THE ROARING TWENTIES

All the raucous fun, wild times and exuberance that marked the era, known as the 'Roaring Twenties', seemed a long way off in the minds of the 'peaceable folk' of Dromana. In the 1920's, the population of Dromana was less than 500; and the town could be best described as a 'quiet and sleepy' coastal village.



Like many country towns in that period, Dromana was in a phase of rebuilding after the grim years of the Great War; and, although things were returning to some 'normality', after the cessation of hostilities, life presented genuine challenges for young and old alike.

Football was a popular winter pastime on the Peninsula Mornington; however for a small community such as Dromana, finding sufficient numbers to field **one** team, across an entire season, was a constant battle. Although the Dromana and Sorrento clubs were formed in the 1890's, the other Southern Peninsula towns were unable to raise teams in that period,

NOTE: Rosebud FC and Red Hill FC were founded in 1929 and Rye FC was formed after the cessation of World War hostilities (1946).

Following the recess of the local competition during the Great War, the efforts undertaken by a small band of local families to rebuild the club were praiseworthy. It was an onerous task and recruiting players and the provision of equipment proved to be wearing.

As history shows, the 1920's were very tough times for Dromana FC; and it was an era when wins were occasional and the patience of the players and supporters often 'tested to the limit.'

Although the 1920's was a barren decade for Dromana FC, the foundation for greater success in the 1930's was laid. Building a football club requires tireless endeavour; and George McLear and his trusted friends met every challenge 'head on' and with resolve.'

OFFICE BEARERS OF THE P.F.A IN 1921

From what can be gleaned, from the existing sources, the Peninsula Football Association's Office Bearers for 1921 were:

- President: Mr McArthur.
- Vice Presidents: Messrs Firth and McCulloch.
- Secretary: Mr Hutchins. Auditor: Mr T.J. Nihill.
- PFA Patrons: Henry Masterston (Frankston), J.M. Watt (Hastings), L. *Carrigg (Dromana), S. Copsy (Somerville), H. Downard (Mornington) , **Cr Groves M.L.A and ***Commander Darley (Naval Depot).
- Dromana's PFA delegates were George McLear and W. Taylor.

NOTE:

1. *Footnotes regarding Mr Carrigg are included in this article (see below).
2. ** It is known that Cr Frank Groves was a member of the Dandenong Shire Council. From 1910 to 1920, Frank served on the Dandenong Shire Council (1920-24). He became first mayor of the Carrum Borough from 1920 to 1921. Frank's term, as a parliamentarian, commenced in 1917 when he was elected to the Victorian Legislative Assembly for the seat of Dandenong. It is believed that he represented the Nationalist Party.
3. ***Commander Darley was the first Commander of the Naval Depot ...

“The base was officially opened in September, 1920, under the command of Commander FC Darley RN. The idea of using it as a Fleet Base was soon abandoned and it became known as Flinders Naval Depot in 1921. The Depot was commissioned ‘HMAS Cerberus’ on 1 April that year.”
Source: Navy.gov.au

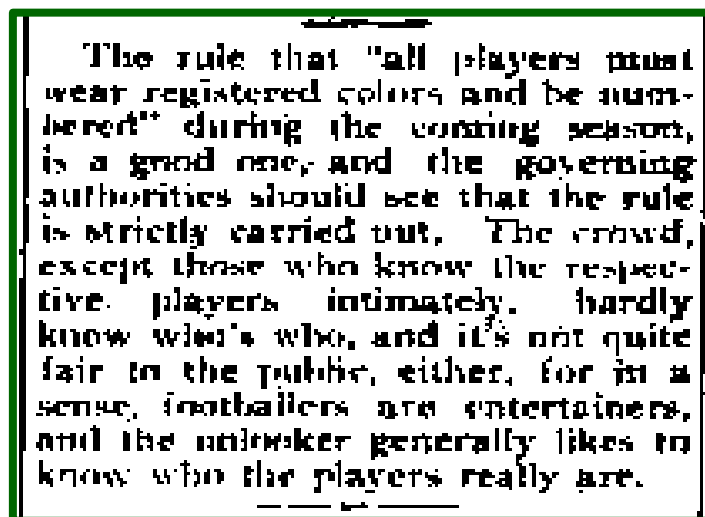
Something that came to light, during this research, was that in 1921 the PFA’s Second Association had an independent organizational structure of office bearers. With the benefit of hindsight, it appeared to be an unwieldy and superfluous arrangement but communications were rudimentary in those times.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE PFA IN 1921

The structure of PFA was comprised of two divisions (called associations in those days)...

- The First Association included teams from: Dromana, Naval Base, Frankston, Mornington, Tyabb-Hastings, Carrum and Somerville.
- The Second Association involved the clubs from Frankston, Moorooduc, Mornington, Somerville and Langwarrin.

One of the main topics of concern for the PFA, at that time, was in relation to players wearing registered club jumpers with affixed numbers. In those early days, Dromana colours were yellow and black.



The rule that "all players must wear registered colors and be numbered" during the coming season, is a good one, and the governing authorities should see that the rule is strictly carried out. The crowd, except those who know the respective players intimately, hardly know who's who, and it's not quite fair to the public, either, for in a sense, footballers are entertainers, and the onlooker generally likes to know who the players really are.

THE PLAYING LIST AT DROMANA FOR 1921

In 1921, it was reported that Dromana had been dealt a heavy blow with the loss of several experienced players but it was said that the club’s ‘core players’ George McLear, Jim McLear and Cesari would form the backbone of ‘new look’ team. There was also a suggestion that Dromana could/would be able to recruit players from the Balnarring district in an effort to build its list numbers.

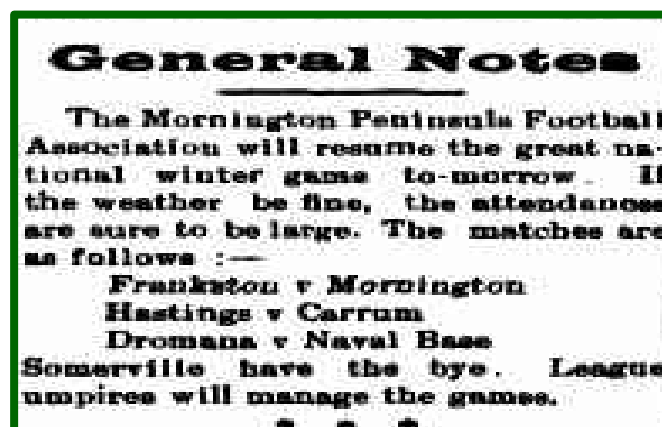
George McLear (pictured below) was the undisputed dynamo of Dromana FC in the era. Not only was George the club captain but he had the role of secretary and club delegate. His diligence and energy were indeed admirable.



Other players listed with Dromana in 1921 included: J. McLear, H. McLear, W. Stirling, W. Singleton, A. McGregor, F. Chilton, J. Dyson, R. Dyson, A. Stirling, McFadzen, W. Taylor, Redmond, Nielsen, Peatey, T. Singleton, A. Stirling, A. McGregor, R. Clydesdale and White. It is not clear if Cesari and Gibson, took the field for Dromana in 1921 and that needs to be verified.

CAN YOU HELP? Any reader who can assist in clarifying the first name of Mr. Peatey (shown above) is asked to contact the club. It is known that John Edward Peatey, who served in 21st Battalion, died on the battlefield in France on March 13th 1917. John lies at rest at the Achiet-le-Grand Communal Cemetery (near Arras in France).

1921- A SEASON OF HIGH INTEREST BUT LOW RETURNS .



The PFA Association season commenced on May 14th; and Dromana's first outing, was against the Naval Base at home. In a tight and tense contest, Dromana won by the narrowest of margins.

It was an impressive display by the 'new kids on the block (Navy); and the PFA must have been pleased with the Naval Depot's strong showing in local football. Details of that historic match are elusive but it is known that Umpire Harvey took charge of proceedings at Pier Street that day.

Bob Clydesdale received warm praise for his polished display around the packs that day. As can be seen (above) Somerville had the bye; and the premiership flag holders of 1920, Mornington, met Frankston in the 'Match of the Day'. Dromana's McFadzen's (perhaps Stan) 'long bomb' goal had the locals talking...

...
 best was, I think, 80 yards. Why, in the first match this season, McFadzen, of Dromana, got a goal against the Naval Base from 72 yards."

Carrum overcame Dromana by 21 points in Round: 2; and the final scores were: Carrum 7.13 (55) defeated Dromana 5.4 (34). Goal kickers for Dromana were: McFadzen 2 McFarlane 2 and White 1. The match review made mention of the high marking skills of Dromana's forward Mac McFadzen. He seemed to be a player of some status.

In a thriller at home, Dromana fell short in a titanic tussle against Somerville. Somerville 5.9. (39) defeated Dromana 5.4 (34). Dromana's better players were listed as: Clydesdale, McFadzen, Chilton and the McLear boys.

A week later, Hastings defeated Dromana by 14 points. The final scores were Hastings 6.13 (49) to Dromana 5.5. (35). Dromana's best players were: McLear brothers, Clydesdale, McFadzen and McGregor.

After four rounds, Dromana had won a solitary game while Carrum had 'conquered all' and sat on top of the table. A further defeat against Frankston (by 9 points); and a heartbreaking loss to Mornington (4 points) saw Dromana plummet to 'rock bottom' on the PFA Ladder. Players to stand out with strong performances in those games were: Redmond, Dyson Singleton, McGregor, Chilton McFadzen and the McLear brothers. The club's lack of depth was causing a concern as the 1921 season unfolded.

PFA LADDER						
Carrum	4	4	0	0	16	16
Somerville	3	8	0	0	12	12
Mornington	3	2	1	0	12	8
Dromana	4	1	3	0	16	4
Naval Depot	3	1	2	0	12	4
Hastings	3	1	2	0	12	4
Frankston	4	0	4	0	16	0

On July 21st the 'Standard' reported that Dromana was hopeful to raise a Second XVIII in the future, As often happens in football, the winter months had taken a severe toll on Dromana's 'short list' and the old adage 'a football club is only as strong as its reserves' was proving accurate.

On July 22nd, Dromana hit the headlines when a formal protest, lodged by the Carrum delegates, created a storm and a bitter exchange ensued. Jim McLearn was mentioned in dispatches; and George McLearn and Lou Carrigg uttered some strong words during the disagreement...



On July 29th it was reported that Dromana had broken through to claim its second victory of the season against Hastings, The final scores were: Dromana 10. 5 (65) defeated Hastings 7.6 (48) .

Dromana's best players were listed as: Dyson, McFarlane, the McLear brothers, Clydesdale, Taylor, McGregor and Singleton. In the context of the race to the finals, it was a dent in Hastings' quest for the flag.

FIRST ASSOCIATION						
Carrum	11	10	1	0	44	40
Somerville	11	9	2	0	44	36
Mornington	11	7	4	0	44	24
Hastings	11	5	6	0	44	20
Frankston	12	5	7	0	48	20
Dromana	11	2	9	0	44	8
Naval Dept	11	2	9	0	44	8

An interesting piece of news, regarding local football, was that when Carrum travelled to play at Mornington, a special train was organized to carry spectators to the match.

With one game to play in the 1921 season, Dromana and the Navy shared the bottom rung on the ladder with just two wins apiece. On the 13th August, Dromana caused one of the biggest upsets of the season with a victory over Mornington at Pier Street.

It was a satisfying way to bring down the curtain on another demanding year; and the three wins ensured that the club did not have the ignominy of receiving the 'wooden spoon.'

The final scores were: Dromana 9.2 (56) defeated Mornington 2.2 (14) but the only given detail was that Mornington had many players missing from its regular line-up because of illness. It appears that the game degenerated into a 'sham affair' until it was eventually abandoned as can be seen in the extract.

Despite the chaotic end to the season, Dromana supporters had something positive to chat about after the game. That victory over Mornington offered a sense of hope for 1922.

A "Cruel" Incident

A correspondent at Dromana writes:—Dromana beat Mornington by 8.9 to 2.2. Mornington lobbed here with half a team—the rest were very ill in bed!—and played for about one hour, when their secretary, standing on the boundary, got hit on the head with the ball, and the game was abandoned! Poor Braddy; it was too cruel!

In the 1921 PFA Grand Final, Carrum won the premiership by defeating Hastings by 14 points. The game was played at Somerville in front of a very large and enthusiastic crowd. It was Carrum's first-ever flag.

It was reported that the NSW Australian Rules football team visited Frankston in August. Among its contingent, was the former Essendon super-star Tom Fitzmaurice. Little information was given about the team's visit to the Peninsula; but for younger readers, Tom Fitzmaurice was regarded as one of VFL's all-time champions. He was a powerful player who could hold down any position; and, it is said that he was idolized by the Essendon faithful.

It is little wonder that the people of Frankston were so excited to have such a celebrity in their midst. In that era, any visitation by sports stars, to country towns and community clubs, created a buzz of excitement. In 1921, Tom was the captain of the NSW team that played against Victoria.



Tom Fitzmaurice starred in VFL football with three clubs Essendon, Geelong and North Melbourne. In all, Tom played 188 games and kicked 246 goals. He represented Victoria on 12 occasions and also played for New South Wales in one match.

FOOTNOTES REGARDING LOUIS CARRIGG.



Louis Carrigg- A Patron of the Dromana Football Club.

- Sadly, and for some unknown reason, the contribution made by Louis Carrigg to the DFC has been overlooked for decades. However, Louis deserves eternal credit for his service to DFC. The documentation, of that time, indicated that Louis was a loyal and dedicated member of DFC for at least twenty years.

- According to the available archives, Louis was the DFC President from 1925-28 and again in 1930-31.
- It is known that he was Secretary in 1938. It is stated that Louis, an accountant in his earlier days, married Nellie (Dewar) before settling in Dromana and taking over the local hotel.
- Louis appears to have been a man with a deal of energy and an indomitable spirit as he served the club during the 'best and worst of times.' Louis was listed as DFC delegate to the PFA in 1919; and volunteered in that capacity for more than a decade. As shown in the above article, was a Patron of the PFA in 1921.
- There is little doubt that Louis was a positive force in ensuring the good stewardship of the Dromana Football Club; and his background in accountancy would have been of great benefit in the sound financial management of the club.
- Louis Carrigg died in 1941 and the following obituary was published in the 'Standard' newspaper, in January...

"OBITUARY: MR. LOUIS CARRIGG. Mr L. Carrigg , who was well known throughout the Peninsula, died at his residence in Dromana on Tuesday. Mr Carrigg was the proprietor of the Hotel Dromana; and for several years occupied the position of president of the Dromana football club. He also represented his club at the delegates' meetings on numerous occasions. Mr Carrigg leaves a widow and a daughter. The burial took place at the Dromana Cemetery on Wednesday." Source: 'Frankston Standard' January 17th 1941. Page: 3.

- Carrigg Street in Dromana (which runs off Pt Nepean Road) is a further indication of the Carrigg family's contribution to the local community.

REFERENCE & RESEARCH INFORMATION:

Sources: NLA-'Frankston Standard' -DFNC Records-DFNC Handbook-Personal files.

Article reference: '1921- One Hundred Years Ago.' (Ref: 2021/13)

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