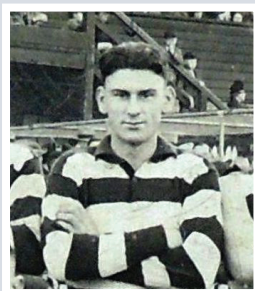




LIFE MEMBER

John William ("Jack") Grant

24 September 1915–1 December 1983



Jack Grant played for Newtown and Chilwell Football Club before he was recruited to Geelong in 1935. He played in the 1937 premiership and won Geelong's best and fairest in 1939 (equal with L. Dean). He

was leading goal kicker in 1940 with 47 goals and represented Victoria in 1939 and 1941. He could play on the half-back or half-forward line and was known for his outstanding pace, long kicking and sure marking.¹

Jack Grant's football was interrupted by war when he was at the peak of his career. He played for Fitzroy for two seasons, topping their goal kicking in 1942 with 43 goals. He then served in the RAAF (see Chapter 10).

After the war, he returned to play for Geelong from 1945 to 1946, captaining the team in 1946. Jack's daughter, Dawn Coster, says that Jack would eat about six pies after the game, only to be served a healthy dinner prepared by his mum when he got

home and he would have to sit and eat it!² Tom Morrow, who started his football career in 1946 when Jack Grant was captain, described him as 'a true sportsman and a really fine fellow who we all had the highest regard and respect for.'³ Despite an interrupted career, Jack played 119 games for Geelong and kicked 99 goals. He was made a life member of GFC in 1946 and was a member of the GFC selection committee in 1946 and 1948.

Jack was also a runner, winning the Stawell Gift in 1938 in eleven and eleven-sixteenths of a second, from a handicap of 11½ yards (see Chapter 11).⁴ During his football years, he also played cricket in the summer. He was a fast bowler said to have played against England when they were touring Australia and was captain of the Geelong Cricket Association Footballers Team when they won the cricket premiership in 1947.⁵

Jack Grant played in the 1950 and 1954 past players' matches. He was Vice-President of the Past Players and Officials Association in 1976 and was made a life member in the same year. Jack was President in 1977.

1946 team, Jack Grant centre row, third from left



Jack's daughter, Dawn Coster, recalls footballers coming to the Grant house from when she was a small child. Russ Renfrey would sing a repertoire of Nat King Cole songs, including 'Mona Lisa' and 'Too Young'. She remembers Jack going to footballers' events at the Geelong West Town Hall and the Palais, and later sitting in the Past Players Stand at home games.

In the 1970s, Jack Grant, Lindsay White and Russ Renfrey called themselves 'the three'. They drank together at the Gold Diggers' Hotel run by Jim Perry, and every birthday and Christmas they would send each other a card and perhaps a pair of socks. The card would be signed 'one of the three'. Jack Grant worked at the Returned Sailors & Soldiers Mill in Geelong, then at the wheat silos. Jack and his wife bought a milk bar which they ran for many years, then they sold it and Jack returned to the wheat silos to work.

Jack Grant introduced football teammate Norm Scott (101 games, 4 goals, 1946–52) to his wife's

sister and they later married. Jack's daughter, Dawn, explains that in those days some of the footballers and their families would go net-fishing, lighting fires on the beach, children playing and families enjoying spending time together. The men would take a big net out into the water and scoop up fish, which the families would cook and eat on the beach.

One night in February 1987, near Breamlea, Norm was on the deep end of the net and was caught in a strong current and washed out to sea. The footballers searched, and some, including Jack Grant, went out every day looking for his body, which wasn't found until a week later. An old fisherman told them it would come in on the third wave on the seventh day, and it did. Norm Scott was aged 36 and his children were aged four and two.⁶

Jack Grant died in 1983 aged 68 and is buried next to Norm Scott at Mt Duneed Cemetery.



1938 team

Back: S. Hore, F. Hawking, J. Sellwood, C. Helmer, G. Dougherty, J. Grant, T. Arklay, G. Abbott, J. Collins
Centre: N. Glenister, L. Slack, T. Quinn (VC), R. Hickey (Capt), C. Coles, J. Butcher, A. Muller
Front: C. Taylor, A. Everett

Sources

- 1 Hutchinson, C. 1984, *Cat's Tales*, Geelong Advertiser Pty Ltd, p.149
- 2 Dawn Coster, talking to Susan Kruss, 8 April 2013
- 3 Unidentified newspaper article from Dawn Closter 1983
- 4 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stawell_Gift
- 5 Dawn Coster, talking to Susan Kruss, 8 April 2013
- 6 Dawn Coster, talking to Susan Kruss, 8 April 2013