**The following 10 inductees were inducted into the newly formed Hall of Fame in 2008 at a function to officially launch “The Maffra Football Story” – the history of the MFNC written by Bill Traill and Ron Reed.**

**All the inductees were inducted by Allan Evans** **(154 senior games, senior coach 1973-75, 81; reserves coach 1972, 93; thirds coach 1988-89; secretary 2004-05, 07 and life member of the MFNC).**

**Charles Streeter**

Charlie Streeter is the first recorded player from Maffra to play AFL football. He stood 170 cm and weighed 73 kg’s. He was a member of Maffra’s 1914 premiership side and on his return from the war he was a prominent player in the 1919 Maffra side who were the GFL runners up.

In 1920 he was recruited by the Melbourne Football Club and immediately became a regular in defence for the Demons.

In his second year of League football he wore the coveted big V guernsey twice – both times against South Australia.

In 1925 he was named in Melbourne’s best in their preliminary final loss to Collingwood.

In 1926 he went one better having a stellar finals series being named amongst the Demons best in their three finals including 4th best in the premiership win over Collingwood.

When he retired at the end of the 1928 season he had played 133 league games – a record for a Maffra player in the AFL.

An enthusiastic clubman, he was appointed Melbourne’s secretary in 1932 leading to a long association with the club. In 2005 he was posthumously awarded a life membership of the Melbourne Football Club and was further honored by being named as one of the clubs “150 heroes” as part of Melbourne’s 150th birthday celebrations.

Charles Streeter, with his combined achievements at Maffra and at a higher level, is formally inducted into the MFNC Hall of Fame.

**Arthur Batchelor**

Arthur Batchelor first played for Maffra in 1919 at only 17 years of age. He stood a mere 163 cm (5ft 4) and weighed 60 kg. (Same height as Tony Liberatore but 17 kg’s lighter!!).

In 1920 he was a member of the premiership team and in 1921 was a leading playmaker in the undefeated champion team of that year.

In 1922 he was awarded the “most consistent” trophy and was the subject of a flood of overtures from AFL clubs before finally signing with Fitzroy in 1924.

From 1924 to 1931 he represented Fitzroy with distinction playing 112 games and kicking 70 goals.

In 1929 he won Fitzroy’s best and fairest and, although the team finished a lowly second last he was runner up to Collingwood’s Leeter Collier in the Brownlow Medal.

In 1931 he was appointed coach of the Fitzroy reserves whilst still playing in the seniors.

In 1932 he left Fitzroy for a brief stint at Nth Melbourne, playing 3 games – bringing his career tally to 115 games.

In the mid 1930’s Batchelor, now well into the veteran stage, was appointed coach of Warragul finishing 4th in the Central Gippsland League best and fairest in his first year.

Arthur Batchelor could well be considered the front runner for the honour of being Maffra’s greatest ever player and is a deserved inductee into the Hall of Fame.

**Sam Barrett**

Sam Barrett first appeared on the Maffra list in 1924, aged 20. He stood 183 cm (6 ft) and weighed 81 kg and was a superb mark, long kick and a dashing ground player.

He played 3 games for Richmond in 1925 before returning to Maffra.

He represented the GFL with distinction on many occasions in their epic interleague clashes against the Central Gippsland and Wimmera leagues.

He retired in 1933 after a stellar 10 year career having played at least 100 senior games.

He was captain/coach in his last two years – both times making the grand final.

In all he played in 5 grand finals – 1924, 25, 26, 31 and 32, winning the premiership in 1926.

Sam would have been disappointed with his success rate of 1 premiership from 5 grand final appearances with Maffra. It was a victory however that he would savour for the rest of his life. In the 1926 grand final against Traralgon, played in front of 3,500 spectators at Sale, Barrett put his personal stamp on a famous Maffra victory by shutting out the seemingly unstoppable Traralgon superstar, Tom Standing who had been the difference between the two sides in the semi final.

In 1932, his final year, he became the first Maffra player to win the GFL’s top honour, the Trood Award.

He would have few challengers for his favourite centre half back position in a Maffra Team of the Century.

He was awarded life membership in 1935 for his distinguished service to the Maffra Football Club and we further honour him tonight by welcoming him into our Hall of Fame.

**Tom (Tiger) Burley**

Tom Burley began his football career in 1925 soon after leaving St. Joseph’s school at age 14. Playing with the Maffra Rovers in their foundation year, the skinny enthusiastic youngster did sufficiently well to be noticed by the senior (Maffra) club and made an unconfirmed senior debut – the youngest ever to don the Maffra jumper.

Tiger began his career as a rover, moving to the wing as he grew, and then at the height of his career to full forward.

As a full forward he won regional acclaim as the fast leading, strong marking focus of a brilliant Maffra forward line in the club’s six grand final appearances from 1932 to 1939.

He topped the GFL goal kicking in 1935 (64 goals), 1936 (54 goals) and 1939 (61 goals).

Burley was a noted big occasion player and he had hauls of 10 goals against Sale in 1936 and 7 against Yallourn in an epic 130 point draw in 1935.

He was playing coach of the 1948 premiership side although a knee injury had him take the field only briefly in the grand final triumph over Sale.

Burley retired in 1950 at the age of 39.

In all he played in 9 grand finals, a Maffra record, winning four premierships.

Tom is Maffra’s longest serving player – his career spanning 22 years and parts of 4 decades and is a worthy inclusion to the Hall of Fame.

**Dave Higgins**

Dave Higgins was born in 1921.

Whilst attending St. Patricks College in 1937 he began playing district football for Old Collegians.

On completing year 11 he returned home and in 1939 played his first game for Briagolong on the wing.

In 1940 a job opportunity saw him move to Longwarry where he played in a West Gippsland League premiership.

Dave served in the Navy during WW II and resumed his football career in 1946 playing with the Wanderers where he won the Trood Award in a 4 way tie.

In 1947 he began his association with the Maffra Football Club where he established an enormous reputation as a leader and perennial best and fairest.

In the 5 years 1947-51 he won the club best and fairest 4 times – ‘47, ‘48, ‘49 and ‘51; was captain in ‘48, ‘49 and ‘50 and played in the 1948 premiership.

In 1952-54 he coached Stratford, laying the foundations for their 1955 premiership.

1955 saw Dave coaching the Maffra Rovers before returning to senior football in 1956 as a resurgent Maffra recruited aggressively to back up newly appointed coach Les Foote. Dave was appointed vice captain, giving the club a formidable on field leadership team.

From 1957-59 Dave was captain/coach of Boisdale, then returned to Maffra as captain/ coach of the Rovers in 1960-61.

He retired as a player after the 1961season, aged 40 after a magnificent career.

As Maffra struggled with the difficult challenges in the LaTrobe Valley League, Dave once more answered the call of his old club, firstly coaching the thirds in 1963 and then the Eagles seniors in ’64, ’65 and ’66; taking them into the LVFL finals for the first time in 1964.

Overall, Dave’s association with district football spanned 30 years and his Maffra connections ran from 1947 to 1966 – a worthy inductee to the MFNC Hall of Fame

**Bill Pleydell**

Bill Pleydell was recruited to Maffra from Stratford in 1960 – playing in the centre in Maffra’s first game in the LVFL.

His impact was immediate – winning the senior best and fairest in his rookie year and laying the foundation for a long and successful career.

Moving to defence later in his career he became a cornerstone of Maffra teams as the club made the difficult transition from the GFL to the LVFL. His heroics in a low scoring thriller against Heyfield in the final home and away game in 1964 – including a “speccy” in the dying moments – contributed greatly to a narrow Maffra win and to securing a spot in the LVFL finals for the first time.

In 1965 Bill played his 100th senior game for the club and confirmed his status as a player of great quality by winning his second senior best and fairest award.

Bill played his last senior game in the first round of 1971 but remained with the club to become a stalwart in the reserves, being named Maffra’s best in the 1972 reserves grand final and winning the reserves best and fairest twice.

Bill played his last game for the club in 1976.

Bill was able to take on a variety of roles within the club, many whilst still a regular senior player.

In summary, Bill played 176 senior games and 81 reserve games – a total of 257 club games, also representing the league at interleague level.

He won two senior and two reserve best and fairest awards.

He coached the reserves in 1973 and 1981 and the thirds in 1964-67.

He was treasurer – 1964-67 and 1969, secretary – 1970-76 and 1988-90 and president in 1994.

In recognition of his significant service, achievement and influence at the MFNC over a long period of time Bill is hereby inducted into the Hall of Fame.

**John Vardy jnr.**

“Jack” Vardy’s massive contribution to the Maffra Football Netball Club is best summed up in statistical form –

President: 1982-86, 1998-2000 and 2004-07 – 12 years; a record for the club.

Played 108 senior games and 174 reserve games – 282 club games; a record for the club.

Reserves best and fairest 1976.

Reserves coach 1977-80.

League reserves best and fairest 1973, 1976 and 1977.

Starting playing with the 3rds in 1962.

Played his first reserves game 20/6/1964.

Played his first senior game on the 7/5/1966.

Played his last senior game round 17 1978.

Played his last reserves game 1st semi 1980.

Jack Vardy has had a continuous association with the club since 1962. He has had a significant influence on the club over a long period of time combined with great achievement and service and as such richly deserves to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

**Graham Robbins**

Graham Robbins was born in Maffra in 1949 but did not play with the club until the age of 33, after a distinguished AFL (Richmond), VFA (Oakleigh), SANFL (Sth. Adelaide) and country career, returning to coach a struggling Maffra side in 1983-84.

Over the next 4 years, although into the veteran stage, Graham played 74 senior games out of a possible 82, thrilling supporters with his sublime mixture of hand, foot and evasive skills.

Although his senior games tally is modest in comparison to others, off the ground Graham has had a significant influence on the club over a long period of time and has been instrumental in taking the club from the mediocrity he inherited to its current level of success.

In the late eighties with the club struggling to find a coach he volunteered to run the pre season program and as part of the recruiting committee had a major role in securing a number of quality high profile players who helped lift the club into the finals.

In 1991 he was appointed the clubs junior coaching coordinator. The thriving Maffra junior program is in no small measure his creation and the fruits of it are evidenced by the fact that over 70% of the senior premiership players over the past six years have come through the juniors.

Graham also coached the thirds in 1991-93 making him one of only a handful of people who have coached at the club for a total of 5 seasons or more.

In 1997 he lured Wayne Butcher back to the club to coach the thirds and acted as his assistant. Together they guided the thirds to the grand final only to go down by a single point to a powerful Sale combination.

When Butcher was appointed senior coach in 2002 Graham was immediately approached and appointed chairman of selectors, a position he held for two seasons. Graham’s input in creating the modern day game plan and assistance in operating it on game day was a major factor in the club winning the premiership in both seasons.

After stepping aside after the 2003 season, Graham returned to the club to help rookie coach Hayden Burgiel in 2006. His knowledge and ability to read games once again proved pivotal in the team achieving the ultimate success.

Graham has had significant influence on the club over a long period of time and as such is hereby inducted into the Hall of Fame.

*Update: Since Graham’s induction to the Hall of Fame in 2008 he has further enhanced his formidable contribution to the club being senior coach 2009-2011, steering the club to back to back premierships in 2009-10 and to a preliminary final in 2011.*

**Jeff Gieschen**

Aged only 15 Jeff Gieschen burst onto the football scene at Maffra in sensational fashion in 1972. In his rookie year he played every senior game including the elimination final and took out the best and fairest award. Jeff confirmed his class the following season by again playing every senior game and once more winning the best and fairest.

He was recruited by Footscray in 1974 and over the next 5 seasons played 24 senior games and 86 reserves games and was twice runner up in the Gardiner Medal – the league best and fairest in the reserves.

After persistent and persuasive efforts by president Buck Linaker, Gieschen returned to Maffra and coached the club in 1979-80, taking the side to a narrow preliminary final loss in 1979 and winning the club Best & Fairest in both years and the league Best & Fairest in 1979.

Jeff won the club B&F again in 1981 and 1982 and the league award in 1982 – making it 6 club awards and 2 league awards in 6 seasons with the club!!

Jeff continued as a player with the club until the end of 1985, adding another B&F in his final year and finishing with a total of 151 senior games, 7 club B&F’s and 2 league B&F’s over 9 seasons.

From 1986 – 1991 inclusive Jeff coached the Wodonga Bulldogs with distinction. He won the club B&F in his first year before retiring as a player upon medical advice after 2 games in 1987. Under his coaching the club finished no lower than 4th, winning the flag in 1987 and 1990 and were runners up in 1989. In total Jeff coached the club in 129 games for 95 wins, 32 losses and 2 draws.

In 1992 Jeff moved to WA and coached West Perth in the WAFL for 3 years, making the grand final in 1993.

In 1995 – 96 he coached the Geelong reserves and in 1997 took over as coach of the Richmond reserves and was appointed to the senior role when Robert Walls was sacked late in the season. Gieschen held the post for the next two years before being replaced by Danny Frawley in 2000.

Jeff was then appointed AFL Director of Umpiring – a position he still holds today.

Jeff’s record speaks for itself and it is with pleasure that he is inducted into the MFNC Hall of Fame.

**Wayne Butcher - LEGEND**

In 1977, after coming through the Maffra juniors, Wayne Butcher made his senior debut, a skinny 17 year old playing on the wing.

He quickly established himself in the senior ranks and in 1979 played every senior game and was named in Maffra’s best in their narrow preliminary final loss.

Through the early eighties and in particular under the coaching of Graham Robbins he cemented his reputation as a relentless, combative and ruthless on baller; possessed with an iron will and a “whatever it takes” attitude. These traits were carried into every game but were particularly in evidence whenever Maffra played the old enemy, Wayne’s most hated opposition – Sale. His awkward kicking style was more than compensated for by the sheer number of possessions he accumulated. During this period Wayne played his 100th senior game (round 6 1983) and won the senior best and fairest in 1984.

In round 16 1988 Wayne played his 200th senior game and three weeks later was named amongst the team’s best in a disappointing preliminary final loss to Morwell.

In 1990, in the twilight of his senior career, Wayne was appointed coach of the Maffra reserves. In a sensational coaching debut the reserves took out the premiership with a resounding win over league reserves pacesetters Traralgon. During the season, in round 14 against Bairnsdale, Wayne played his 210 and final senior game.

The following year Wayne was appointed captain coach of the reserves and made it back to back flags, once more beating Traralgon in the grand final. Named amongst Maffra’s best the grand final was Wayne’s last game for the club – finishing with 210 senior and 55 reserve games for a club total of 265 club games.

In 1992, with an unblemished coaching record, Wayne was appointed senior coach of Boisdale. Over the next 5 years he took Boisdale to 4 grand finals and 1 premiership before returning to Maffra to coach the thirds in 1997 who went down by a point in the grand final against Sale.

From 1998 to 2001 Wayne was back at Boisdale guiding them to back to back flags in 2000-01.

In 2002, after a high profile coaching appointment failed to come to fruition, Wayne was appointed senior coach of Maffra. From 2002-05, under his astute guidance the club rose to unprecedented heights, making the grand final in every year and winning three premierships in row, the third as premiers and champions. Under his coaching the club also had an unbeaten run of 45 games – a league record, and set new club record scores and winning margins against a number of opposition teams.

In 2004, after coaching 5 senior premierships in a row (two at Boisdale, three at Maffra), Wayne was honored by being named the Victorian Coaches Association Coach of the Year.

After standing aside as senior coach after the 2005 season Wayne was appointed coach of the Maffra fourths, taking them to the grand final in 2006 and premiers and champions in 2007.

Wayne has coached at all 4 levels in the club; seniors, reserves, thirds and fourths; the first person to do so. His 10 seasons coaching at the club includes 6 premierships and 3 runners up.

His overall coaching record from 1990 to 2008 reads: 19 seasons for 9 premierships, 6 runners up, 3 preliminary final losses and a minor final loss.

Given his outstanding service, influence and achievement Wayne is hereby inducted into the Hall of Fame with the added title of “Legend of the Club”.

*Update: In 2009-2011 Wayne was an assistant coach at Gippsland Power.*