BLAST FROM THE PAST – GREAT SOUTHERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE Interviewed by Jan Bache 24/7/17

An interesting afternoon spent with 3 stalwart players of the Encounter Bay Football Club. The Encounter Bay Football Club was established in 1921 and the games were “friendly games”. The GSFL established in 1923 and the competition then become

a competitive competition.

Gentlemen interviewed were Don Bartel, Alan Armstrong & Richard Littlely. A brief history of their playing careers as follows:

Don Bartel first played “A” grade for E/Bay in 1938 at the age of 14 years. His career spanned until 1963 and in that time

he played way over 250+ games (No records kept) for E/Bay and was successful in playing for Sturt Football Club in SANFL. D.Bartel thought stab pass the best kick, playing for sturt v Glenelg player Alex Donaldson far too qui ck for Don, but Don eventually got the ball and kicked 2 goals, great memory. Don’s accreditation was 2 Mail Medals 1951 and tied in 1957, Life Member , Best & Fairest numerous times also leading goal kicker. Don Was Captain 1953-1959 and played in the Centre Half Forward position. He was Coach for 2 years and enjoyed that role immensely. In those days the players were very fit and lifestyle of the day made people very well conditioned and no injuries were incurred. Don was able to drive a car or motor bike to footy which made it easy but great discussion had re change room conditions. The Old Red Shed was built as changerooms and there were no showers, just a Cement bath, lit with wood chips,great fun had when quite a few of the boys had a Bath after the game. Opposition players not invited to Bath facility.

Don played with a great number of superb footballers and to mind was the 2 Tugwell brothers and Alan Field amongst many.

Alan Armstrong first played ‘A’ grade for E/Bay in 1946 at the age of 13 years. His career spanned for 20 years and in that

time played way over 200 games (no records kept), was a very quick Rover and played in the Lovelock Shield competition

GSFL v SFL with not much success. He remembers playing 5 years straight Grand Finals but only winning one, all were

against V/Harbor FC. Alan lived close to the oval so was able to ride his push bike to the oval, and remembers vividly

playing away from the E/B Oval, all had to catch a Bus, and had to pay for own fare, also pay entrance to oval to play.

Alan remembers the oval had a very good surface but had a big knob in the centre of the oval. Don remembers coaches

who he respected: Don Bartel, Lawrie Quinliven and Reg Masters. Players who he remembers well were Tugwell brothers

and Ron Reid.

Richard Littllely. Richard commenced playing in 1961, playing ‘B” grade until 1963 and commenced playing “A’ grade 1964.

Richard’s last year playing was 1981 and unfortunately records not kept for games played but 350 or more.

Richard played in Association side GSFL v SFL Lovelock shield twice, losing both. He played 4 ‘A’ grand finals, v Strathalbyn,

won 2 lost 2. Richard remembers players and officials working as volunteers to build change rooms as the boys moved on from the Old Red Shed, it was a great community venture with many businesses donating cement, steel rods, roof to finish the

change rooms. 1980 built current clubrooms, done on weekends with players , officials, real club effort

Both Don & Alan have trophies named after them honouring their outstanding commitment to Encounter Bay Football and to Australian Football. Bartel Trophy B&F medal “A’ grade. Armstrong trophy ‘A’ grade kicking trophy. This is a Family trophy, Carl Armstrong (Alan’s father) was a wonderful footballer.

The 3 boys had a lot of Stories to tell, some not repeatable but all with a great sense of comradeship and friendship between

member clubs.

Ian Millard played for Glenelg FC & E/Bay. One match mentioned, Ian playing for the E/Bay whose scores was 6 goals up, (side in front) but at ¾ time announced he had to go home and milk cows, and the Bays lost the game, so disappointing. Lot of the E/Bay Boys never could finish game off, didn’t train hard enough but V/H were strongest opposition who went premiers 7 years straight and they trained.

Clarrie Cannon played for Mt. Compass and West Adelaide F.C. Was a good player, played the game hard and one day was playing at E/Bay oval, he knocked a player from E./Bay, a scuffle occurred, quite a melee and the Police were called to the game.,

.At the pub where the boys went for a drink before 6 o’clock closing, an umpire approached Alan Armstrong and asked if he was the player who hit Clarrie, during the melee, Alan said Yes, Ump said congratulations . No report was made..

When playing at Goolwa, opposition players apprehensive to go close to boundary as they would be hit with a sticks from supporters, , no offence taken just the way it was.

During a match v Goolwa, a player played F/back each week,, ruckman didn’t turn up so he was told to play ruckman, said he would not play that position, but coach directed him to. After a goal kicked first centre bounce he fell over and just sat in middle of oval, play went on, another goal kicked, play came back and he just sat, Coach sent him back to Full Back.  **He was making a point he did not want to play ruck he was a full back.**

One of their players was little under the weather upon arrival at oval, he had himself a Personal Trainer and as the game progressed his PT guy would run onto the oval and give him a drink, another swig of sherry to carry on and play. Guy with a great character.