

IMAGES OF YALLOURN

1931 - JIMMY MILNE - A STAR OF VFL & COUNTRY FOOTBALL



Yallourn Football Club, 1931.

It is recorded this photograph was taken at the 1931 Grand Final of the Central Gippsland Football Association at Trafalgar. The steps of that 'famous grandstand' can be seen in the background. The players from left to right are: Peter O'Neill, Jim Milne, Ted Hassett, Alan Hutton, 'Skipper' Scott, Keith Shepherd, P 'Plugger' Culph, H 'Mossie' Crawford, J. Brookes, Percy Palmer, R. Smith, Jack Piggott, Stan Comber, Ernie Davies, Hugh Graham, A. 'Skinny' Pratt, P. 'Tiger' Page, Les White and Harry Caddy.

A PHOTOGRAPH FROM KAYE BRILL

Kaye Brill kindly forwarded the above photograph of the 1931 Yallourn Football Club team. The photograph belonged to Kaye's grandmother, Irene (Rene) Stanger.

Kaye was seeking information about the playing career of James (aka Jimmy) William Milne, her grandmother's cousin.

While the above photograph has previously been published on this website, Kaye's correspondence is important in confirming the names of **all** players in the team. Furthermore, the photograph clearly establishes that J. Milne (second from the left) was Jimmy Milne, a star of VFL and country football in the 1920's and 1930's.

THE 1931 SEASON – YFC CLAIM THE FLAG

In 1931, Yallourn Football Club (Yallourn FC) was affiliated with the Central Gippsland Football Association/League (CGFA) (as named in some sources). The clubs competing in the 1931 CGFA season were: Yallourn, Moe, Warragul, Yarragon, Trafalgar and a combined team named Nar-Nar-Goon-Iona (Iona was/is a small settlement near Bunyip). Nar-Nar-Goon won the 1930 CGFA premiership.

Yallourn FC won its way through to the 1931 Grand Final claiming the premiership over Trafalgar FC with a strong exhibition of team football. The final scores were: Yallourn 11.8 (74) defeated Trafalgar 6.6 (42).

Alan Hutton was the outstanding player in the clash; other prominent Yallourn players included 'Tiger' Page, 'Mossie' Crawford and 'Skipper' Stott.



Source: 'The Age' September 7th 1931 Page: 5

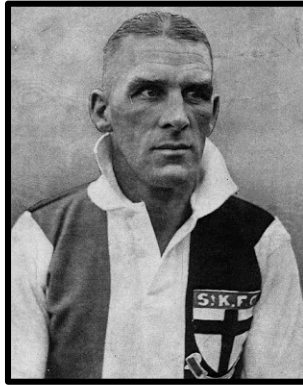
BRIEF NOTES ON JIMMY MILNE'S STELLAR FOOTBALL CAREER



James 'Jimmy' William Milne 1898-1962

- Jimmy, born in 1898 at Allansford, was the youngest of William and Lucy Milne's six children.
- The name 'J. Milne' appears in several football press cuttings in the period 1910-1915; and following Jimmy's war service, (see below) his name was mentioned frequently in the Western District Football Association (WDFA) match reports.
- Jimmy was regarded as a key forward in country football. In 1920, Jimmy and fellow team mate Colin Watson (see below) signed with St Kilda FC.
- Jimmy was 21 years of age when he made his VFL debut on May 1st 1920 against Carlton FC at Princes Park.
- Other well-known VFL players listed in the team with Jimmy and Colin, for that match, included : Wels Eicke, Bill Cubbins, Billy Woodcock and the legendary Roy Cazaly. George Sparrow was St Kilda's coach.
- Jimmy played 53 games (4 goals) with St Kilda from 1920-25. Jimmy's last game was Round 5, 1925 against South Melbourne at the Lake Oval, Albert Park.

- Peter Reville, a renowned player for Brown Coal Mine FC (later known as Yallourn North FC) played for South Melbourne FC in Jimmy's VFL 'farewell game'.



Colin Watson

The Allansford connection – Jimmy Milne's South Warrnambool and St Kilda team mate, Colin Watson was also born at Allansford. Jimmy and Colin made their VFL debuts on the same day in 1920. Colin later won the Brownlow Medal in 1925.

- While Jimmy retired from VFL football in 1925, his friend and team mate Colin played with St Kilda, in stints, until 1935 (Colin was 34 years of age when he retired from VFL football).
- A brief summary of Jimmy's impressive career can be found in 'The Encyclopaedia of AFL Footballers'

"James W Milne...Recruited from South Warrnambool, he started as a centreman and half forward but later played in defence in a back pocket or full back." Source: Holmesby & Main: Page 593.

- Following his playing career with St Kilda FC, Jimmy coached and played at Allansford FC (formerly known as West End Allansford FC) in W DFA.



Jimmy Milne

Caption: Jimmy Milne-the well-known St Kilda player who is to coach Allansford in the Western District. Source: 'The Weekly Times' March 14th 1925, Page: 82

- It is interesting to read that the 1925 coach of Camperdown FC was a certain 'Pat Keneally' a name that has significant meaning (but different spelling) in the history of the Yallourn FC.

- Following his coaching/playing career at Allansford, Jimmy moved to live and work in Yallourn where the construction of the power station was in 'full swing.'
- According to Australian Electoral Rolls, Jimmy lived in the West Camp in those early days (see below). *Note: Jimmy worked with the State Electricity Commission, Victoria (SECV) until 1961.



The West Camp tents – Six power station stacks can be seen in the background.

- Jimmy was a key player for Yallourn FC and a celebrated personality in Gippsland football. It is hard to establish how many games Jimmy played for Yallourn FC but his impact in the local competition cannot be understated. His magnificent kicking was noted in one article.
- 1931 was Jimmy's last season for Yallourn FC. In 1932 the 'Gippsland Times' (May 2nd 1932) reported that Jimmy had been cleared to Moe FC where the next chapter in his incredible football journey unfolded.
- It was at Moe FC that Jimmy firmly established himself as one of the legendary figures in Gippsland football. Jimmy not only coached Moe but was vice-captain of the Central Gippsland Football Association (CGFA) in the much-vaunted clash against the Gippsland Football League at Traralgon in 1932.
- In 1937, Jimmy hit the news when his resilience and longevity in the game of football was highlighted in 'The Weekly Times'...



Source: 'The Weekly Times' July 24th 1937 Page: 72.

- Jimmy was about 40 years of age when he 'hung up his well-worn leather boots.'
- Following retirement as a coach and player, Jimmy continued his off-field football involvement for many years as a trainer for Moe FC.

- Jimmy was selected in the Moe FC Team of the Decade(s) (1920-1949). Former Yallourn players, Stan Attenborough (North Melbourne 1943-44) and Col Mahoney, were also members of that Moe team.
- Jimmy was awarded Life Membership of Moe FC. It was a just reward for a life of dedicated service to his club and football.
- James William Milne died in 1961 aged 62 at Moe.

JIMMY MILNE'S WAR SERVICE RECORD IN TWO WORLD WARS

Jimmy Milne was one of a select group of men and women who enlisted for military service in both World War I and World War II.

Like so many other young Australians, Jimmy heeded the 'call to arms' and enlisted for military service in May 1916. As recorded in Barb Cullen's book 'Harder Than Football', Jimmy served with the ANZAC Cyclist Battalion (patrols and reconnaissance etc.) in France. Jimmy was wounded in battle during a mustard gas attack in 1919 and...

"He was sent to Beaufort War hospital in England for treatment after being gassed by a mustard shell..."

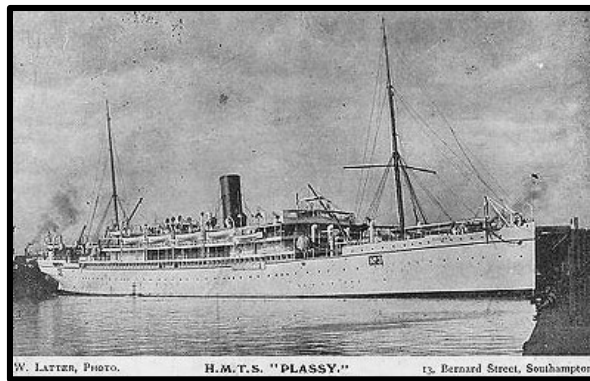


Beaufort War Hospital, Bristol, England

Some readers may have seen pictures of World War I soldiers wearing gas masks. Mustard gas was a lethal chemical (a sulphur based colourless gas) that was directed or fired by the enemy across the trench lines. These attacks had frightful consequences for victims as the gas caused blisters on exposed flesh and affected eyes, nasal passages and breathing etc.

Of the 416,000 Australian men and women who enlisted for military service in the Great War (WW1) some 60,000 were killed in action. According to Australian Government data, there were 215,000 casualties during WW1 with 12% being a consequence of gas attacks.

Jimmy Milne was repatriated to Australia in March 1919 aboard the Hospital Transport Ship 'Plassy' (as seen below).



The Hospital Ship, H.M.T.S Plassy

Kaye Brill also stated that Jimmy's older brother also served in the Australian Infantry Force (AIF) during World War 1...

"James' older brother, Arthur Douglas Milne, enlisted in the AIF on 12 June 1917 at Warrnambool, Victoria, serving with the 2nd Machine Gun Company, Reinforcement 15. Arthur was repatriated to Australia on the 'SS Demosthenes', disembarking in Melbourne on 2 March 1919."

It is incredible to think, that after suffering such hardship, Jimmy took his place in the St Kilda FC team for the first-round match of the 1920 VFL season against Carlton. It speaks volumes of Jimmy's love of football, spirit and, above all, his inner strength.

Using the official team lists for the above match (i.e., Jimmy's VFL debut), it is possible to establish that seven other players in the St Kilda FC line-up had also served overseas during WW1. Several players saw action at Gallipoli and also on the Western Front. The list of 'St Kilda ANZACs' on that day were: Arnold Beitzel, Albert Bragg, Wally Cameron, Bill Cubbins, Norm Hallett, Percy Jory, Bill Lloyd and Jimmy Milne.

Between the wars, Jimmy made his mark in VFL and country football (as described above).

At the outbreak of the WW2, Jimmy once again enlisted in the Army and served as a member of the Army Reserve in the 37th Employment Company where he rose to the rank of Corporal (March 1941 - July 1944)

THERE IS MUCH MORE TO THE JIMMY MILNE STORY

There is much more to the story of the Jimmy and the Milne family however it is best that Kaye Brill tells that in her own way via her meticulous research. Additional information about Jimmy Milne is available on the National Archives Australia 'Discovering Anzacs' website [James William Milne | Discovering Anzacs](#) and Virtual War Memorial Australia [James William Milne | WWMA](#).

THERE IS MUCH MORE TO THE LIFE & FAMILY OF KAYE BRILL

Many former residents of Yallourn and readers of this website will remember Kaye Brill's mother (Lauris Stanger) who was a most prominent and active person in the township of Yallourn. Among many other things, Lauris was an ardent supporter of Yallourn FC and was Honorary Chiropodist for the Blues.



Lauris Stanger and Ivan Brill

Lauris and Ivan's July 1954 wedding at the Yallourn Presbyterian Church. The bridesmaid on the left is Betty Mitchell (Lauris' second cousin). Betty's brother Jim was a wingman for Yallourn FC. Betty's husband, William (Bill) Jackson, was a champion midfielder for Yallourn and was also signed by Melbourne FC in 1953.

Lauris' father, Thomas Stanger (shown on the right) was a popular figure around town and was a long serving Official SECV Guide (1946-63) and recognised for assisting guests/tourists with excursions to the power station, open cut coal mine and the briquette factory. In 1954, Thomas was a member of the official party when Queen Elizabeth II visited Yallourn.

FOOTNOTES

1. Stories regarding Peter O' Neill, Alan Hutton and the 1933 Yallourn FC premiership team can be found on this website.
2. A story about Jack Turner who kicked 28 goals against Bairnsdale in 1933 can be read on Virtual Yallourn. Jack Turner was the only Yallourn FC player to boot 100 goals in a season. Jimmy Milne and Jack would have known each other via their work and sporting involvement.
3. Articles about Yallourn FC premierships and former players (e.g Bill Jackson and Jim Mitchell) can be found on the website.
4. Stories about a long list of VFL players who transferred to Yallourn FC are also on the website.
5. Stories and photographs regarding the Stanger family of Yallourn can be found on this website.
6. Kaye Brill's family photograph and notes regarding the Yallourn FC in 1931 have clarified several vague aspects of that season of CGFA. They are most valued contributions to the history of Yallourn FC and town.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere thanks are expressed to Kaye Brill for forwarding the 1931 Yallourn FC team photograph which has finally confirmed that Jimmy Milne played with Yallourn FC that season. Thank you so much Kaye and your assistance in preparing this article has been appreciated.

References used in writing this article included:

1. 'Harder Than Football' by Barb Cullen (AFL Historian).
2. AFL statistics and archives
3. 'Encyclopaedia of AFL Footballers' by Russell Holmesby & Jim Main.
4. Archives of Virtual Yallourn (regarding Yallourn FC history).
5. St Kilda FC website.
6. World War I Service Record.
7. World War II Nominal Roll.
8. AWM records and archives.
9. Various newspaper articles from the National Library of Australia.

This article was written by Roger Spaul and presented on the Virtual Yallourn website by Julie George in August 2021.