


A BRIEF HISTORY OF ELTHAM LACROSSE CLUB

In 1963, Dr Graham Webb, a teacher (and avid lacrosse enthusiast) at Eltham High School, introduced the game of lacrosse to his students in a very casual and informal way. The seed of an idea had been sown and it quickly germinated into an occasional interschool game against other high schools. As is often the case with novel ideas, interest in the game by those directly involved was high and the appetite now having been whetted, further competition was eagerly sought by both teacher and students. Dr Webb not only organised further inter-school games, but he also discussed the student's interest in the game with other lacrosse identities who lived in the area. As a result of these discussions it was decided to form a new club and use the nucleus of the school team along with a few older experienced lacrosse players to enter a team in the Victorian Amateur Lacrosse Association competition in 1964. Two men stood out as the club's key administrators in these formative years Bob Russell (Formerly with Malvern) and Fred Durham (Formerly with Coburg), and together with Graham Webb they are recognised as the "Founders" of the Eltham Lacrosse Club.

 ELTHAM LACROSSE CLUB 						
	PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER	SNR COACH	GRADE	BEST & FAIREST
1964	G. WEBB	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	D	P. HONEYMAN
1965	R. RUSSELL	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	D	P. HONEYMAN
1966	R. RUSSELL	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	—	—	—
1967	R. RUSSELL	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	C	P. HONEYMAN
1968	R. RUSSELL	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	—	—	—
1969	R. RUSSELL	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	B3	M. HONEYMAN
1970	R. RUSSELL	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	F. DURHAM	B	R. CRUMPEN
1971	R. RUSSELL	P. JARVIS	C. MORRIS	M. ORR	B1	L. ESSEX
1972	R. RUSSELL	G. MEIKLE	G. MEIKLE	R. RUSSELL	C1	A. MONTAGUE
1973	R. RUSSELL	N. TRAEGER	N. TRAEGER	F. TRAINOR	C	F. TRAINOR
1974	R. RUSSELL	N. TRAEGER	J. GOOD	P. TRAEGER M. ORR	B	F. TRAINOR
1975	R. RUSSELL	F. TRAINOR	J. GOOD	M. TRAINOR	A RES	F. TRAINOR
1976	J. GOOD	R. TRAEGER	N. TRAEGER	V. ARTHUR	A RES	D. SCOTT
1977	J. GOOD	A. BLACK	E. CAULFIELD	H. ROCHE	A RES	A. BLACK
1978	J. GOOD	A. BLACK	E. CAULFIELD	N. TRAEGER	B	A. MONTAGUE
1979	J. GOOD	A. ROCHE	A. BLACK	M. CONNELL	C	G. ARTHUR
1980	J. GOOD	A. ROCHE	W. BUCHANAN	G. WEBB	3	R. WADE
1981	N. TRAEGER	A. ROCHE	W. BUCHANAN	R. WADE	3	A. MONTAGUE
1982	H. ROCHE	J. WEARNE	N. DENNIS	M. MOTTAU	2	M. MOTTAU
1983	H. ROCHE	J. WEARNE	S. MYERS	A. MONTAGUE	2	B. HARLEY
1984	A. MONTAGUE	J. WEARNE	S. MYERS	R. BARR-KEMP	1	K. HICKEY
1985	A. MONTAGUE	R. SHANNON	S. MYERS	R. BARR-KEMP	1	M. KAUFMANN
1986	A. BLACK	R. SHANNON	S. MYERS	R. BARR-KEMP	1	D. EMERY
1987	A. BLACK	R. SHANNON	S. MYERS	K. JAMES	1	L. KAUFMANN
1988	P. CLOUGH	H. LOEFF	S. MYERS	R. BARR-KEMP	1	A. MAZZOLENI
1989	P. CLOUGH	H. LOEFF	S. MYERS	B. BELL	STATE LEAGUE	C. WEARNE
1990	R. SHANNON	H. LOEFF	D. ESLER	B. BELL	STATE LEAGUE	C. BELL
1991	R. SHANNON	J. WEARNE	D. ESLER	B. BELL	STATE LEAGUE	C. WEARNE
1992	R. SHANNON	J. WEARNE	K. HAMMOND	B. BELL	STATE LEAGUE	C. BELL
1993	R. SHANNON	J. WEARNE	K. HAMMOND	B. BELL	STATE LEAGUE	C. WEARNE
1994	R. SHANNON	J. WEARNE	K. HAMMOND	W. STAHLER	STATE LEAGUE	C. WEARNE
1995	P. STIGLICH	E. MEACHEM	J. HAMLEY	B. STAHLER	STATE LEAGUE	J. BUCHANAN
1996	M. COBERN	E. MEACHEM	I. NEWALL	R. BENEDIERKS	STATE LEAGUE	B. FLEMING

For the next ten years Eltham fielded senior and/or junior age teams with moderate success at the lower end of the grading structure, starting in D grade in 1964 and slowly progressing. Then in the early 1970's, just when the club was looking its most fragile, a new group of administrators and players emerged to revive the club. Some of these people were from other clubs but now lived in the area (Neil and Rob Traeger, John Good, Keith James, Alan Black, Hugh and Alan Roche, and Bo Trainor) and some were home grown products (Peter Jarvis, Hugh Russell and Alan Montague). Although up to this point the club had produced some very fine individual players over the years it had not won a premiership and could hardly have been called a force in lacrosse. The prospects for the Club improved during the early to mid 1970's improved, at least for a short while.

The senior team was runner-up in 1973 in C grade and then premiers in 1974 in B grade, and was then promoted to A-Reserve in 1975, and fielded two senior teams for a while. The Club started regular junior recruitment drives and fielded extra junior teams and helped get a women's lacrosse team started in the area.

Unfortunately the enthusiasm waned almost as quickly as it developed and by the late 1970's the club was once again near extinction. However one good aspect remained from this buoyant period and that was the number of keen, dedicated and industrious lacrosseurs and ex-lacrosseurs that were still loosely associated with the Club, but nonetheless keen to help it out of its difficulties. People like the Roches, John Good, Alan Black, John Easton, Kendrea Kendall, Marty Mottau, Ken Hickey and Keith James to name but a few who, along with the old stalwarts named previously, were to provide the backbone for the next wave of interest in reviving the club. Despite a lot of recruitment effort by Peter Jarvis and Chris Morris during the mid 1970's, by 1978 the club consisted of only one C grade men's team and an Under 16 boy's team. If not for the success of Alan Montague and Alan Roche in recruiting enough boys to field an Under 14 team in 1979, the club would have shrunk to one solitary senior team.

This new batch of young recruits from Montmorency High was to be the turning point in the club's history. The involvement and interest in the Club, and the game, which these parents showed (and which was skilfully nurtured and promoted by the wily club administrators) was in fact to be the start of a permanent turn around in the Club's fortunes. The following two years saw more juniors and more parents involve themselves in the club. These new lacrosse devotees both inspired and reinvigorated many of the old club stalwarts and this new found confidence and energy was soon translated into fresh ideas and a fast expanding club.

Ray Shannon, who never played lacrosse, but like many became involved when his sons started playing in the late 1970's was among others, instrumental in the development of a school competition recruitment program that involved 14 local schools from 1981, which is still going to this day. Ray also initiated the restructure the Club into 3 distinct areas with discreet powers and funding for men's, women's & junior levels, to ensure longevity for each section and to provide a pool of potential administrators and club helpers flowing through the whole Club.



Montmorency Primary School team, winners of the inaugural ELC Schools Comp in 1981

Back row: Jason Edgar, Gareth Downs, Aaron Wilson, Cameron Luff, Tony Mills, Bill Buchanan (coach) Front row: Andrew Marsh, Trevor Waugh, Craig Schell, Grant Shannon, Jamie Buchanan, Craig Lacy.

Bill & Jamie Buchanan and Grant Shannon went on to play or become involved at senior level with the Club.

People like Roy and Alma Jellie, Bill Buchanan, Lee Thornbury and Judy Emery formed the basis of an early parents support group. Unlike previous efforts at building the club from the top down, this period saw a very different approach. This time it was a bottom up plan. A deliberate and sustained attempt to develop a large base of talented youngsters was organised by Ray Shannon through a massive junior recruitment program. Thanks to the work of a very large number of helpers, most of whom are still connected with the Club today, the size of the Club has increased tenfold and so has the quality of the teams fielded. Much credit for this revival goes to those tireless helpers named above and the many newcomers such as Margaret Cobern, Syd and Wendy Myers, John and Helen Wearne, Neil Dennis, Chris Aldridge, Bill Jellie, Jeff and Mary Montague, Steve Mavric, Jeff Fry, Marino Colautti, Brian Hayton, Rod Barrkemp, Paul Clough, Peter and Helen Stiglich, Rhonda and Brendon Hall, Chris and Eric Meachem and Mary Millar, along with Rod Barr-Kemp and Paul Clough who moved to Eltham after Coburg folded in the mid 1980's.



Eltham B grade team 1985

Rod Barr-Kemp not only held the senior team together in very poor training conditions but took them to Div 1 level along with Peter Stiglich, who was instrumental in developing and coaching the junior players.

Brian Bell joined Eltham as coach in 1989, after having coached Malvern state league and the Victorian senior team, and brought a new level of professionalism to the Club, introduced international players to the Club, raised the standards for the senior team not only to remain in state league, but also develop into a team capable of playing in a premiership. He also encouraged the up and coming players to successfully try out for state and national teams. Brian coached from 1989-1993 and again from 2000-01.

Former Victorian and Australian coach Bill Stahmer also coached the senior team from 1994-95. Ric Benedierks was appointed coach following Bill Stahmer from 1997-99 and again 2004-07 and 2013-14, again lifting the standard of play to successfully win their first state league premiership in 2004.

Despite having such experienced coaching for more than a decade a state league premiership had eluded the Club, being runners-up in state league five years in a

row from 1998-2002. But following the breakthrough in 2004, Eltham won the state league flag for the next 3 years, with a further runners-up in 2008 - a very dominant period for Eltham in the most senior competition.

Former Caulfield champion Peter Stiglich's firm but fair approach to coaching developed the juniors into tough, hardened and skilful senior players, who went on to play in many senior finals.

	PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER	5 th COACH	GRADE BEST & FAIREST	5 th COACH	GRADE BEST & FAIREST	
1987	M. COOPER	E. MEACHEM	I. NEWALL	A. BENEDEKIS	N. STIGLICH	R. STIGLICH	A. MAH	S. HARRIS
1988	M. COOPER	M. COOPER	I. NEWALL	A. BENEDEKIS	D. NICHOLAS	R. BENEDEKIS	A. MAH	R. STIGLICH
1989	J. HENDALL	M. COOPER	L. SPARKS	A. BENEDEKIS	B. FLEMING	A. MAH	A	J. CARTER
1990	P. KENDALL	M. COOPER	C. SPARKS	A. BENEDEKIS	D. NICHOLAS	C. WARR	A	J. CARTER
1991	P. KENDALL	M. COOPER	C. SPARKS	A. BENEDEKIS	N. STIGLICH	K. NYBERG	A	J. CARTER
1992	P. KENDALL	M. COOPER	C. SPARKS	A. BENEDEKIS	D. STIGLICH	G. ESLER	A	J. HACKETT
1993	P. KENDALL	M. COOPER	C. SPARKS	A. BENEDEKIS	J. BUCHANAN	G. ESLER	A	J. HACKETT
1994	J. FRY	N. TRAEGER	N. TRAEGER	N. STIGLICH	B. FLEMING	G. LARSEN	A	J. BENEDEKIS
1995	J. FRY	R. HALL	R. HALL	R. BENEDEKIS	D. NICHOLAS	R. BENEDEKIS	A	J. BENEDEKIS
1996	J. FRY	R. HALL	R. HALL	R. BENEDEKIS	D. STIGLICH	R. BENEDEKIS	A	J. BENEDEKIS
1997	J. FRY	R. HALL	R. HALL	R. BENEDEKIS	N. STIGLICH	J. BUCHANAN	A	J. BENEDEKIS
1998	M.C. MILLAR	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	F. STIGLICH	N. STIGLICH	J. BUCHANAN	A	J. CARTER
1999	M.C. MILLAR	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	B. ROSS	A. NELSON	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2000	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2001	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2002	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2003	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2004	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2005	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2006	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2007	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2008	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2009	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2010	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2011	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2012	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2013	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2014	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2015	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2016	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2017	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2018	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2019	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2020	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2021	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS
2022	R. SHANNON	G. ELLIOTT	M.A. MILLAR	J. BUCHANAN	C. HALL	D. NORMAN	B	J. BENEDEKIS

The Club can boast many players who have gone on to represent Victoria and Australia at senior level, including Terry Sparks, Dan & Nathan Stiglich, Darren Nicholas, Wayde Hammond (Box), Caleb Hall, Tim Fry, Scott Barrkemp, Al Mazzoleni (still playing at 50+yrs) Jamie Buchanan, Ben Fleming, Keith Nyberg Steve Mackie, Shannon Halliwell, Craig Wearne and Glen Esler to name a few.

Since that first flag in 2004 Eltham Lacrosse Club has continued the consolidation of its strong position within the lacrosse fraternity and is now one of the largest lacrosse clubs in Australia, and in the world. It fields on average 15 teams each season, spanning men's, women's and juniors. Its under-age teams frequently dominate in most grades with many state team representatives in its ranks. The club now fields men's teams in the state's two highest grades and is working towards achieving a similar strength in women's lacrosse.

Much of the Club's current strength and depth is due to a new group of administrators and supporters who have carried on the good work of their predecessors and have added initiatives like regular touring teams of juniors (Both boys and girls) to the USA and Canada and the fabulous social atmosphere created in the clubrooms after games. Although there are still many things to achieve, Eltham has certainly come a long way since the shaky times of the 1970's.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE


In 1980 Kendrea Kendall (Lacrosse Victoria Life Member and former Australian player) was asked to be the Women's Director of Eltham. After some preliminary work in 1981-82, Eltham Women were up and running in 1983, joining the women's

competition then known as the Victorian Women's Amateur Lacrosse Association, with an entry into the Under 16 girls competition. A full team of local schoolgirls took part in the first team representing Eltham. Eltham Women grew out of the demise of Montmorency Lacrosse Club which ran for only a few years in the mid 1970's. Since Eltham Women's entry into the competition back in 1982 it has had teams compete every year since, with the first senior team in 1983.


Kendrea Kendall was the catalyst for the start-up and growth of the women's teams and was the driving force to keep it going. Kendrea played, coached and was the leading administrator of women's/girls lacrosse at Eltham from the outset. Kendrea came from a lacrosse dynasty at Williamstown and was involved in women's lacrosse as a young senior player at Footscray from the outset when women's lacrosse was introduced in Victoria in 1962 and she went on to represent Victoria and Australia on numerous occasions.

Women's teams have been entered in A and B Grade over the years and have won a number of premierships in both senior and junior grades, including 5 years straight in A grade. Eltham Women have seven life members (A Life Member at Eltham Women is a player who has played more than 200 senior games for the club), 5 of whom still play for Eltham.

A number of Eltham women have proudly represented Victoria and Australia in both junior and senior competitions. The Club also has had many junior girls who were or are playing and participating in state and national squads. Eltham Women continue to be an ever present force in Lacrosse Victoria's women's competition and will continue to be in the future. The Club has been running a local schools competition for over 30 years, which has driven successful recruitment at junior and senior levels.



ELTHAM WOMEN'S LACROSSE CLUB



YEAR	DIRECTOR	SNR COACH	NO.1 TEAM	B & F
1983	KENDREA KENDALL	K. KENDALL	B. GRADE	A. GRIFFIN
1984	KENDREA KENDALL	K. JAMES	A. RESERVE	K. GRAVINA
1985	DEIDRE OWEN	H. ROCHE	A. RESERVE	K. GRAVINA
1986	PAT DUNLEAVY	M. & L. KAUFMANN	B. GRADE	E. JOHNSTON
1987	PAT DUNLEAVY	H. ROCHE	B. GRADE (Premiers)	J. KEENE
1988	V. LINCOLN	H. ROCHE	B. GRADE	R. WEARNE
1989	V. LINCOLN			
1990	MARGARET COBERN	K. KENDALL	A. RESERVE	R. WEARNE
1991	MARGARET COBERN	R. BARR-KEMP	A. RESERVE	R. WEARNE R. THORNBURY
1992	MARGARET COBERN	R. BARR-KEMP	A. GRADE	R. THORNBURY
1993	MARGARET COBERN	C. WEARNE	A. GRADE	R. THORNBURY
1994	MARGARET COBERN	D. MONTAGUE	A. RESERVE	D. MONTAGUE
1995	MARY MONAGUE	D. MONTAGUE	A. RESERVE	B. EASTON
1996	ANN FAULKS	S. FAULKS	A. RESERVE	T. WEBSTER



The victorious Eltham Gold team from 2023

60th ANNIVERSARY

Eltham celebrates its 60th anniversary in men's lacrosse in 2024 (42nd for women's lacrosse) and fielded 2 senior and 3 junior men's teams (31 seniors and 53 juniors), and 2 senior and 2 junior women's teams (15 seniors and 35 juniors), a total of 134 registered players, encouraging numbers, reflecting a short but successful history and a very bright future.

All successful clubs need those altruistic people who give their time and effort to not only keep the club going from year to year but also to grow the club and develop young players, with the hope that each generation will remain with the club after their playing days are finished. As can be seen by the honour boards, where life members are recognized for their commitment and contribution to the Club, many of the children or relatives of the early contributors have remained faithful to the club and carry on the legacy of their predecessors. Note that a "Player" life member is recognition of 250 games played in the men's teams and 200 in the women's teams.

