



Fredrick "Fred" Le Deux

In our second interview in the ACK Old Collegians Assumption Story series we speak to Alumni Fredrick "Fred" Le Deux. Fred grew up in Nagambie, Victoria and attended ACK between 1948 and 1952 (5 years) as a boarder. After leaving ACK he attended Bendigo Teachers Training College where he played for the Sandhurst Football Club. He moved to Ocean Grove to take up a teaching position. During this time Fred went on to play 18 games for the Geelong FC between 1956 to 1958. Fred is a teacher and sheep farmer who lives in Bannockburn (Near Geelong). He is also the proud Grandfather of current AFL Player Tom Hawkins.

Q. What years did you attend ACK?

A. I was fortunate enough to attend ACK from 1948 -1952 (5 years).

Q. How did ACK prepare you for your working and sporting life?

A. The Brothers who taught me were dedicated teachers. They carried out their mission under conditions when compared to modern day were extremely difficult. I remember we had extremely large classes. In my first 2 years (years 7 and 8) we had 80 boys in the classroom. It was very long school hours for the Marist Brothers. Including prayers "for the love of God" a typical day started at 5.30am and finished at 10.00pm, and this was 7 days a week.

Particular names that come to mind include Brothers Damian, Kenneth, Benedict, Bernadine, Sixtus, Finan, Evangelist, Oswald, Methodius, Romulus, Celsus, Ludovic, Arnold and Sylvester. Each of them were able to put a stamp on a particular subject for discipline.

When school would resume, we would leave home for 3 academic terms per year that were 14 weeks in duration with no week-end breaks. This would unsettle each of the boys in different ways. As a result of the hours spent with the Brothers, it was obvious that their influence during our teenage years was greater than our parents.

Modern day educationalists would say we were educated to pass the examinations required to enter our chosen vocation. Despite this type of approach, the Marist Brothers at Assumption College Kilmore instilled a love of the subjects they taught. I remember Br Benedict taught me English Literature and Maths, Br Sixtus French, Br Bernadine Science and Br Romulus was Physics.

Marcellin Champagnat founded the Marist Brothers 200 years ago on the idea of educating under privileged rural boys. The Brothers who taught us truly lived up to that ideal.

Q. What did you think of Teachers or coaches? And did any stand out?

A. When we weren't studying it was time for sport. From 4-6pm each evening rain, hail or snow we got changed into our sports uniform and flooded onto the Main Oval. This was Midgets', Juniors and Seniors representing the age groups in Football, Cricket, Athletics including Tennis and handball. It

was every boys dream to emulate their sporting idols and be selected for the 1st XVIII, 1st XII or Athletics.

If the 1st XVIII won at the weekend we were given a sleep in on the following Monday morning and spared the early mass. Brothers Damian, Kenneth and Celsus were influential Football Coaches and Brother Ludovic was an astute Athletic Coach.

Senior coaches including the junior coaches took their responsibilities very seriously and put many a student on the road to an enjoyable and fruitful sporting life.

Br. Evangelist (Old Nick to us) taught Leaving Geography. During his lessons he would often “detour” rather than speaking about towns, rivers or continents. I recall on one occasion he spoke to the class about would you would call in modern day terms as “networking”. He noted that in future years former ACK student maybe travelling through a particular part of Australia and he would suggest the names and contacts of people living in that particular area. Incidental lessons such as his were invaluable.

Q. Who are you still in contact with from ACK?

A. The number of "old boys" with whom I have contacts now is considerable. We meet at small reunions from time to time, chat on the phone often and visit the College from.

Q. Some people think success is a product of luck and coincidence. Looking back on the journey from ACK to current day. What are the values you learned?

A. The harder one works the luckier one becomes. An age old saying but a very accurate one nonetheless.

The Brothers, as I mentioned earlier were tough disciplinarians, none tougher than Brother Evangelist or Benedict. But deep down they were kind and generous men. After leaving ACK attended Bendigo Teachers College and played football with Sandhurst Football Club. Each year we would play Kyneton and when I would be getting off the bus the first person that would be there to shake my hand would be Brother “Polly” Benedict.

Q. If you had one piece of advice to a year 12 Assumption College, Kilmore student just leaving school, what would it be?

A. If you are absolutely certain of your future give it all you can. If you are however not certain take your time and choose wisely. And remember follow the ACK motto, Quae Supra Quae, calls us to seek the things that are above.

It’s been 70 years since I walked into the ACK foyer when my Father looked up to the Honour Board and said that’s where your name should be. It was the Good Conduct Roll and sadly I didn’t make it.