

## A local sporting legend farewelled: Horrie Hubble obituary

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Horace George Hubble (Horrie) was born on April 14, 1916 and died on July 18, 2007 aged 91 years.

Horrie's parents were John (Hairy) and Ethel Hubble and he had eight brothers and sisters—Hazel, John (Les), Lorna, Norman (Barney), Thelma, Gwen, Maree and Kelvin.

Horrie was born and educated in Maryborough and lived there all his life except for the years of his World War II service



He left school at an early age to work with his father in the building industry. He would tell the story of he and his father riding their bikes out around Timor looking for work even on Saturday mornings, but always returning in time to play football that afternoon.

Horrie served his war years with the 7th Battalion, rising to the rank of Warrant Officer 2 and his service included time at Balcombe for training, Darwin for the 22 months of the bombing, New Guinea and Bougainville during the surrender of the Japanese.

There is many a mention of Horrie in the 7th Battalion history written by Allan Pedder, but most of these are about his sporting prowess.

Only in recent years would Horrie talk about his experiences during these times and this was usually restricted to how great it was to be a participant in the football matches—players were trucked to the game and spectators were forced to march miles to the games.

Horrie returned home, and as the family businesses had been sold, he started worked for Bill Berger in his sports store in High Street. This relationship continued for 25 years.

Apparently not much work was done on Mondays,, when all would congregate out the back of the shop to discuss the sporting events of the weekend or receive a lesson in whatever sport they pursued—football, cricket, tennis, golf or even carpet bowls.

When Bill Berger sold the business, Horrie worked for Colman's in their sporting business until he retired at the age of 60. While Horrie said he retired, he remained very active and worked at various part time jobs, none more enjoyable to him than working with Cliff Phelan in his funeral business, thereby returning to one of the original family businesses.

Horrie met his wife to be, Heather Summers, in the late 1940's while playing tennis at the VRI courts. Heather and Horrie started courting and were engaged for two years before marrying on April 8, 1950, meaning they spent nearly 60 years together.

Over the first seven years of their marriage four boys were born—Kelvin, Ian, Brian and

Graeme. Obviously they were desperate for a daughter and seven years later Jennifer was born. Heather is, and Horrie was, the proud grandparents of 12 wonderful grandchildren.

Sport played a large part in Horrie's life and basically he finished playing his sport before he settled down. If it were not for the war years, he would certainly have played VFL football and district cricket in Melbourne. Horrie has been described by many as one of the greatest sportsmen ever seen in Maryborough.

He played and captained the Maryborough Cricket Club for many years as well as captaining the Country Week side on many occasions.

But it is football where Horrie really excelled and he played with Maryborough from an early age until 1948. His major achievement was to win the best and fairest in the Ballarat League in 1948 at the age of 32, after missing the last five games due to injury. He was also runner-up in the Bendigo League best and fairest prior to the war.

He was chased by every VFL club for many years and would tell of one of his frequent Sunday morning visitors, Jack Dyer, trying to recruit him.

In 1948 while still playing for Maryborough, he coached Primrose in the Maryborough and District League and he continued to coach them until the early 1950's. During this time he coached John Nicholls and his influence on John was lasting as John documented in his book *Big Nick*.

Horrie was very proud to be inducted into the Goldfields Sports Association Hall of Fame on July 25 2003, particularly as his certificate was presented to him by John Nicholls.

Horrie remained attached to his comrades from the 7th Battalion and for 30 years organised a weekend reunion here in Maryborough. Over 300 people would attend but in recent years the numbers had dropped down to around 40. This did not deter Horrie as he kept the event going.

Horrie was an active firefighter from 1939 to 1981 and remained involved with the brigade until recent years. He was resident officer from 1964 to 1971 and also a life member of the brigade.

Horrie's involvement with the Maryborough Fire Brigade and the esteem he was held within that group and the community was demonstrated by the funeral procession they gave him.

