

# CHOPPA CHAT

Grand Final Edition – 2017

The Grand Final edition of *Choppa Chat* is with Mandy Gunn. Mandy is a long serving committee member and generally a quiet achiever. She has dedicated countless hours behind the scenes ensuring our club is running successfully and I wanted to give her the spotlight on the eve of the Grand Final. She was reluctant at first but eventually gave in. We sat down in the office she spends so much time in to discuss football committees, her favourite player, family and being a do-er. Here's our chat;

**TA: Earlier this year you took over as Secretary, this is your 6th year in the job. How did you first get into the role?**

MG: I have always been one of those people that is a do-er, so I joined the committee when we took over from Peter Jensen. Then I got talked into taking over from Trevor Byrne and here I am, 9 years later.

**TA: So initially did someone ask you to get involved?**

MG: Well I was friendly with Bobby and Vicky Carlyle and I could just see that everyone needed a hand. And as I said I'm a do-er so I offered. At the time I was actually still the Secretary of the Berwick Basketball club so I was doing two roles for a couple of years there but I eventually left the basketball and took on more responsibilities at the footy club.

**TA: What does the role involve?**

MG: A true Secretarial role is just doing all the correspondence and dealing with the league. That would be a lot simpler but there is never enough people so you always end up taking on more.

**TA: So what does your typical week at the footy club look like?**

MG: It's a lot easier this year because I don't do as much as I used to. But I guess I respond to emails, answer questions, sell tickets, merchandise, do the team sheets, work behind the bar, whatever really.

**TA: How many hours a week do you put in?**

MG: Well this year it's pretty low, I would say 10-15 hours.

**TA: And at your busiest, how many hours were you doing?**

MG: During 2014 and 2015 it was probably over 40 hours.

**TA: Wow! 40 hours! That's on top of working full time?**

MG: I work four days a week.

**TA: That is still huge. What do you do for work?**

MG: That is difficult to explain. I am a business analyst in a specialised industry, Superannuation.

**TA: Right so you were doing four days a week of that and then 40 hours a week of footy stuff. That is massive, you must have been pretty worn out?**

MG: Yeah I was pretty tired by the end of those seasons.

**TA: Do you enjoy it?**

MG: Yeah, mostly. Sometimes I get tired of the responsibility but generally I'm good.

**TA: In the future, as a club, how can we share the load a bit more?**

MG: We need more people on the committee in defined roles. Currently there are more jobs than there are people. But I think that is the case in any sporting organisation.

**TA: Is there anything specific that requires some attention? Or anything that could make your role a bit easier?**

MG: I guess you just need to try and not have single dependencies, you need to have a backup. But at the same time, if you have a defined role, stick to that role and let the people who do the other bits, do their bit.

**TA: Committee members are never thanked anywhere near enough for what they do but you're a two time winner of the Ted Mawdsley award. What is it like to be recognised as the best club person?**

MG: Well the first year was in 2012 and I had absolutely no idea. Public speaking is not really my thing and when I got up onto the stage I just started crying and got all girly. It was pretty embarrassing but I am very passionate about Berwick.

**TA: Obviously you are a great committee member but first and foremost you're a passionate supporter, particularly when watching your son, Tim play. What are you like as a supporter?**

MG: I'm pretty vocal, probably more than people think. I'm not afraid to give the umpires a spray or drop the F-bomb.

**TA: Really? I don't think I've ever heard it?**

MG: No most people don't. I normally sit somewhere along the wing and I like to really watch the game. I need to sit with someone who doesn't talk because I actually won't respond when people talk during the game. And if someone is talking too much I'll just get up and walk away.

**TA: So you do watch the footy with?**

MG: Usually my sister in law, Janine Gunn. She has learnt that I don't like talking during the game. She is a talker but she has learnt that I won't respond. Haha!

**TA: Obviously this weekend we are playing in the Grand Final are you glad you can sit back and watch and not have to worry about hosting the grand final?**

MG: Yep I think it would just be impossible. Because that is the only rule I have, no matter what committee I have been on, when my kids are playing, I watch. I always just stop what I'm doing at 2, watch Tim play and then I'll go back to what I was doing.

**TA: What are your thoughts on Berwick hosting grand finals in the future if we are playing in them?**

MG: I think it would be really hard, we would probably need to hire staff or get other clubs to help us out on the day. Because obviously everybody wants to watch.

**TA: Do you think it is worth it?**

MG: Well financially it is, especially if it's a sunny day. And at the end of the day it's really about winning the Grand Final so if the boys play better at home then maybe that is a good thing to do. We managed in 2012 when the reserves won the Grand Final.

**TA: That is true, we did, but it was tough.**

MG: I guess we'll worry about that down the track.

**TA: What is your favourite memory/moment during your time at the club?**

MG: Apart from the Ted Mawdsley awards it would be 2015. After the siren went at the end of the senior game and as a club we had just won 4 flags it was pretty magic. As a girl I got a bit a teary and I think some of the fellas even did too.

**TA: That was probably great reward for you, as 2015 was probably your busiest year at the club.**

MG: Yeah it probably was because I was doing lots of the treasury and secretary roles as well that year but it was worth it. Another favourite memory would be when Tim kicked 6 goals in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter against Beacy. I just remember how funny Jammo was, telling people to stop being selfish and just kick it to Tim. He was very funny as he always is.

**TA: Other than your son who is your favourite player to watch at Berwick?**

MG: That is difficult to say. I can't pick favourites I would feel mean. So I'll just say Tim..... and Lukey (Sheppo)

**TA: Sheppo is your nephew?**

MG: Yeah my nephew. I love all the boys, I just want to see them win. When they are good, they are good.

**TA: Lets talk a bit about your kids, Tim and Tara. Do you have a favourite?**

MG: No! They are very different though.

**TA: How so?**

MG: Tara is more outgoing, a bit moody, I don't know they are just different.

**TA: So whats Tim like?**

MG: He's very quiet, even at home. He just does what he wants, he knows what he wants and he just does it. He doesn't really waiver from what his plan is. He's pretty hard to talk around, he won't do something he doesn't want to do.

**TA: Is it true you get up early every morning to make Tim's breakfast and lunch?**

MG: Haha! No that is not true.

**TA: Was it ever true?**

MG: No not breakfast but I did used to make their lunches the night before.

**TA: Before school or work?**

MG: Before work, but I don't do that anymore unless there is leftovers and I'll put it in a container for them. But they both make their own now.

**TA: Well I expected that from Tara but I wasn't sure about Tim.**

MG: Tim is actually handier than she is.

**TA: Ok then what is Tim like around the house? Does he help you out?**

MG: Yes, he mows the lawns. He doesn't clean the house unless I ask him too. He will help me make pizza or something but he generally doesn't do much cooking.

**TA: Are you hoping Tim settles down with a girl soon?**

MG: That would be nice.

**TA: Do you see it happening anytime soon?**

MG: No not really haha!

**TA: Have you ever tried to introduce him to any of the netballers or anything like that?**

MG: No, that's up to him. There's enough girls around. Whether he wants to take that opportunity, is up to him. It's not my choice.

**TA: Yes that's true, I've tried for him, been unsuccessful.**

MG: You're not the only one.

**TA: Haha! I know. Are you encouraging the kids to move out?**

MG: Well Tara has already got a house and land package and she moves out in February. Tim just a put a deposit down on a block of land. I just want to see them get ahead, it's not about them moving out. Just want them to do well.

**TA: Ok lets talk about you now. So when you're away from work, away from the footy club, what do you do in your spare time?**

MG: I like watching footy. I like sport in general. I like watching other people I know play sport. I like basketball. I don't mind watching rugby. But I also like watching movies and I'm also very crafty, I like making things.

**TA: What do you make?**

MG: I like knitting and crochet and I do scrapbooks. I also love to travel.

**TA: What is your favourite place travelled?**

MG: I can't say. I went to Europe last year and that was pretty amazing. I've just got back from a cruise through the south pacific with Tara, which was very good.

**TA: Did you play sport yourself growing up?**

MG: I played netball and hockey but I didn't do much once I left school. But even back then I always watched footy. When I was about 14 we would always go and watch footy.

**TA: I should have asked this earlier but where did you grow up?**

MG: Aspendale on the beach. I used to catch the train up to Moorabin and watch the saints but I've always been a tiger's supporter. Friends all went for St. Kilda and we would go to their games because we lived close but I was always Richmond.

**TA: Why Richmond?**

MG: My next door neighbour was a little bit older than me and he was a Richmond supporter and I think I just got it from him.

**TA: How did you end up in Berwick?**

MG: Well I got married at 20, we moved to Boronia and then we bought a block of land in Berwick in 1987. It was pretty cheap back then, about 30 grand.

**TA: What is your alcoholic drink of choice?**

MG: Bacardi, I've got a few friends who could testify to that.

**TA: So when we are celebrating on Saturday night it would be great if people would shout you some Bacardi's**

MG: I don't know about that.

**TA: I'm just trying to get you some free drinks.**

MG: Haha ok maybe.

**TA: Anything else you would like to add?**

MG: No it's been hard enough just doing this.

**TA: I know you don't like being in the spotlight but you deserve it.**

MG: Well I just love Berwick and all the boys, I think they are a great group and I just want them to win on Saturday.

**TA: Well a win for you on Saturday is the least we can do.**

MG: Couple of flags would be great.

**TA: Finally I would just like to say on behalf of all the players and supporters of the Berwick football club thank you so much for everything you do and have done for many years. The club wouldn't be in the position we are in without your massive contribution over the years. So thanks again and thanks for chatting!**

MG: Thank you.