

## 50 Years Strong

### When the Saints started marching - 1955

Owen Torres was about 14 years old in 1955 when he ran out for a brand new Broome footy team called Saint Mary's. Organised by Father Kevin McKelson, the St Mary's team wore Carlton jumpers. Fr McKelson was a Carlton fan and the Melbourne Club had kindly donated the Guernseys.

The game against Beagle Bay was played on land where the Civic centre and Shire Offices are now. Owen remembers it being as rough as guts. "All buffalo grass, sand and bloody gravel. We played in bare feet."

Owen was on the wing for the game in which St Marys dominated. At the final turn they were up by

about six goals.

"But in the fourth quarter Beagle Bay just went spare, kicking goal after goal."

He went to full back while Peter Matsumoto went from centre to centre half-back. "And that changed the course of the game. We won. Just."

That was the first ever match for St Mary's, which officially became Saints FC in 1960 under Fr McKelson, Captain Donnelly Mckenzie.

Owen and his brothers played footy, basketball and boxing. "We were fit and sportsminded and trained a lot."

"But Fr McKelson was

actually a League man! He started out training us in rugby league. Only later he switched to football." Owen regularly comes to barrack at Saints games.



**Front Row:** Owen Torres, Ronny Bell, Dominic Peter 'Nugget' Matsumoto. **Second Row:** Alec Howard, Gilbert Rhumba, Martin Shadforth, Peter Edgar, Father Kevin McKelson, Dennis Jucora, Robin Hunter, Bruno Cox, Ray Djiagween. **Back Row:** Keith Carter, Fenton Dantoine, Dicky Chi, Phillip Matsumoto, Albert George, Michael Everett, Lennard Sampi

### Saint Donnelly: the first Club Captain - by Vanessa Mills

For Donnelly McKenzie, 1960 was a memorable year. He married in February, was made the inaugural Captain of the Saints Football Club, turned 20 in June, and won the Club's first premiership in September.

"It seems like a long time ago," says Donnelly, sitting in the shade on a hot Broome afternoon 50 years later.

"I was 19 when I began with the team. I used to play a lot of sport in my teens, like basketball for St Mary's. I loved sport."

"When we were little kids, when someone got a Killer (a cattle beast) we used to

blow up the bladder and kick that around for a footy."

Donnelly started playing junior football aged 13 or 14 and it wasn't long before he was asked to play for Towns when they were short in the seniors. There were two men in that team whom Donnelly looked up to as mentors and heroes who said they'd look out for him in the rough matches.

"I never looked back after that. I played for Towns from 1954 to 1959. I was even Captain for a game when Donny Gibbs was in hospital. It was the grand final and I made sure we won."

There were only three teams in the competition at the time; Towns, Meatworks and Commonwealth. They played on a field where the Civic Centre now is; the goal posts where the Shire offices and Bank are.

"Oh it was rough!"

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