

### **FARMER, GRAHAM VIVIAN “POLLY” (1935-2019)**

Graham Vivian Farmer, known to all as ‘Polly’, is universally acknowledged as one of the most talented and innovative players of Australian Rules Football, revolutionising ruck-craft and the use of handball as an offensive weapon. He is also considered to be the most accomplished indigenous player of our indigenous game. In addition, he has been formally recognised as the greatest player from Western Australia.

Polly grew up at Sister Kate’s Children’s Home in the Perth suburb of Queen’s Park. It was here he earned the nickname Polly the Parrot because of his talkative nature. In a 1994 interview, Polly gave great credit to the Anglican nuns for giving him his best chance at “making something of myself. I was one of the lucky ones”.

Despite having one leg shorter than the other, Polly was extremely athletic and soon became a promising footballer. His star-studded career in the West resulted in five Premierships, three Sandover Medals (one awarded retrospectively), four Simpson Medals and the coveted Tassie Medal for best player at the Australia-wide National Carnival.

His move to Geelong FC in 1962 was big news. Despite missing that first year with a serious knee injury, Polly went on to win a Premiership with the Cats the very next year, in 1963.

1968 saw him back in WA, as Captain-Coach of West Perth and between 1973 and 1975 he coached Geelong. In all, across his three clubs, he won ten Best & Fairest awards, a feat it is unlikely any other elite-level player has achieved.

Polly Farmer died in 2019 at the age of 84, twenty years after being misdiagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease. In fact, he had been experiencing the impact of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a cruel disease that eats away at the brain, robbing sufferers of their physical and mental capacity. Polly is the first Australian Rules footballer to be diagnosed with CTE. He also leaves a valuable legacy in the establishment and success of the Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation, creating educational opportunities for Aboriginal children throughout Australia. Thus, in death, as in life, Polly Farmer is a trailblazer. The fond memories of this much admired gentle and exceptionally talented man will endure for generations.

*From Abacus Auctions catalogue, [http://abacusauctions.com.au/images/auction\\_241.pdf](http://abacusauctions.com.au/images/auction_241.pdf), page 36*

MN	ACC	meterage / boxes	Date donated	CIU file	Notes
3397	10343A	1.2 m	29 July 2020	BA/OM/19/0077	Purchased, Abacus Auctions All items located in the rare room
<b>SUMMARY OF CLASSES</b>					
AUDIO-VISUAL RECORDINGS AWARDS CERTIFICATES CORRESPONDENCE EPHEMERA INVITATIONS MEDALS MENUS				NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS PLAQUES PRINTS PROGRAMS PUBLICATIONS SCRAPBOOKS TRADING CARDS	

REQUEST USING THIS NUMBER	DATE RANGE	DESCRIPTION
		AUDIO-VISUAL RECORDINGS
<b>ACC 10343A/1</b>	ca.1980s	'The Dynamics of Goalpower Football : A Personal Success Programme' by Graham (Polly) Farmer. 6 audiocassettes in folder, with note from Graham Farmer. WANFL approved product
		AWARDS
<b>ACC 10343A/2</b>	1971	Member of the Order of the British Empire, presented to Graham Farmer. Includes MBE medal (no clasp), original MBE certificate signed by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip, miniature medal, booklet, and letters
		CERTIFICATES
<b>ACC 10343A/3</b>	1976	'Western Australia's Football Night of Champions : The Champion Team 1945-1975', framed certificate with photograph of Farmer showing him selected as First Ruck and Captain (32 x 40 cm)
<b>ACC 10343A/4</b>	2004	'175 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Western Australia, In recognition of the contribution of Indigenous players to football in Western Australia, Presented to Graham Polly Farmer', framed certificate (52 x 40 cm)
<b>ACC 10343A/5</b>	2006	Blank certificate from West Perth Football Club 2006 League Legends Day
<b>ACC 10343A/55</b>	2006	Certificate from East Perth Football Club acknowledging Graham 'Polly' Farmer as player no. 605; and certificate, East Perth Football Club Team of the Century, 1945-2005, presented to Graham Farmer
		CORRESPONDENCE
<b>ACC 10343A/60</b>	1959	Congratulatory letter and two telegrams sent to Graham Farmer after being appointed captain of the W.A. State Team for a tour of the eastern states
<b>ACC 10343A/6</b>	1959-1960	Collection of 4 fan letters, including from children, written to Graham Farmer during his time playing for East Perth
<b>ACC 10343A/7</b>	September 1960	Collection of 15 congratulatory telegrams sent to Graham Farmer after winning the 1960 Sandover Medal. Includes telegrams from notable W.A. people, including politicians and Eric Sandover (son of Alfred Sandover, donor of the Sandover Medal)
<b>ACC 10343A/8</b>	September 1960	Collection of 8 congratulatory letters sent to Graham Farmer after winning the 1960 Sandover Medal

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<b>ACC 10343A/9</b>	25 May 1961	Two page letter on Hawthorn Football Club letterhead from club Secretary Ron Cook to Graham Farmer, enticing him to join the Hawks
<b>ACC 10343A/10</b>	1960s-1970s	Collection of letters to Graham Farmer. Includes telegram from Sir Charles Court wishing the West Australian team well in the first State of Origin match
<b>ACC 10343A/11</b>	1994-1997	Collection of letters to Graham Farmer
<b>ACC 10343A/12</b>	1999-2000	Letters and payslips for royalties from Fremantle Press (for Steve Hawke's biography) and payslips for work with Main Roads Department on Graham Farmer Freeway
<b>ACC 10343A/13</b>	ca.2000s	Collection of undated letters to Graham Farmer, including letter of advice written to Wanneroo Football Club
<b>ACC 10343A/14</b>	2001-2015	Collection of letters to Graham Farmer, including letters about awards and honours
<b>ACC 10343A/15</b>	2004	Collection of letters from Year 7 students at Rangeway Primary to Polly Farmer following a school visit. Also includes laminated certificate of appreciation
		EPHEMERA
<b>ACC 10343A/16</b>	ca.1990s	Brochure promoting the Polly Farmer Foundation, including biography of Farmer, proposed projects of the Foundation, and supporters of the Foundation
<b>ACC 10343A/17</b>	ca.1990s	Brochure promoting sale of special edition photograph of Farmer, personally signed by Farmer
<b>ACC 10343A/18</b>	ca.1999	Information sheet on the Graham Farmer Freeway, opening 2000
<b>ACC 10343A/19</b>	ca.2000	Brochure, 'How to use the Graham Farmer Freeway'
		INVITATIONS
<b>ACC 10343A/20</b>	1999	Invitation to pre match function for the Ford Australia Rugby Series, Australia v Ireland, Saturday 19 June 1999, in the Polly Farmer Room at Subiaco Oval
<b>ACC 10343A/21</b>	2000	Invitation to official dinner launching the 2000 West Australian Football League season, in the Polly Farmer Room, Subiaco Oval, on 8 March 2000
<b>ACC 10343A/22</b>	2002	Two tickets to the State Game Luncheon, for the Western Australia v Queensland state game 15 June 2002
<b>ACC 10343A/23</b>	2005	Invitation from Mr John Ah Kit MLA, Minister for Sport and Recreation (Northern Territory) for Mr Polly Farmer to a reception to welcome members of the Indigenous All Stars and Western Bulldogs teams at Parliament House, Darwin
		MEDALS
<b>ACC 10343A/24</b>	1959	1959 Simpson Medal. 9ct gold with footballer, grandstand and text 'Dr F.W. Simpson Medal 1959'. Engraved on verso 'WANFL Grand Final, Oct 10 <sup>th</sup> 1959, G. Farmer Fairest & Best'
<b>ACC 10343A/25</b>	1960	1960 East Perth Best & Fairest Medal. Gold plated badge, engraved on front 'EPFC, 1960, Fairest & Best', and engraved on verso 'G. Farmer'
<b>ACC 10343A/26</b>	1960	1960 Sandover Medal. 9 ct gold with football (star engraved in centre) and text 'Sandover Medal'. Engraved on verso 'WANFL Fairest & Best Player 1960 won by Graham Farmer'
<b>ACC 10343A/27</b>	1986	Gold coloured medal, 'National Aboriginal Sports Awards 1986' in presentation case

REQUEST USING THIS NUMBER	DATE RANGE	DESCRIPTION
		MENUS
<b>ACC 10343A/28</b>	19 March 2004	Menu for the HMAS Stirling Warrant Officers and Senior Sailors Mess training mess dinner, for which Graham Farmer was the Guest of Honour. Includes placecards for Graham and Marlene Farmer
		NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS
<b>ACC 10343A/29</b>	1954-2014	Files of newspaper cuttings about Graham Farmer, arranged chronologically. Some undated <i>(2 boxes)</i>
		PLAQUES
<b>ACC 10343A/30</b>	1985	Western Australian Hall of Champions plaque. Framed plaque 'Graham Farmer, (1935- ), Australian Football ... Western Australian Hall of Champions, Foundation Member, August 19 1985' (23 x 16 cm). Includes three 'Western Australia, Hall of Champions' booklets
<b>ACC 10343A/31</b>	2000	'West Perth Football Club Team of the Century 1900-2000, Member, FARMER, Graham MBE, Position 1 <sup>st</sup> Ruck'. 30 x 22 cm
<b>ACC 10343A/32</b>	2010	'Western Australian Hall of Champions, LEGEND, Graham Farmer MBE, Australian Football, Inducted as a Legend of the Western Australian Hall of Champions, November 27 2010', framed plaque (45 x 33 cm)
		PRINTS
<b>ACC 10343A/33</b>	2004	'West Australian Football Hall of Fame : The Inaugural Legends', framed print with signatures of Merv McIntosh, George Doig, Graham Farmer, John Todd, Bill Walker and Barry Cable (45 x 56 cm)
<b>ACC 10343A/34</b>	2007	'The Best from the West : W.A.'s representatives in the AFL Indigenous Team of the Century', framed poster (28 x 38 cm)
		PROGRAMS
<b>ACC 10343A/56</b>	1954	The "Royals" Eastern State Tour, 1954, visiting: Albury, Shepparton and Melbourne. Booklet with travel itinerary
<b>ACC 10343A/57</b>	1956	Melbourne v East Perth Souvenir Programme : Official Organ of The Western Australian National Football League, Inc.
<b>ACC 10343A/35</b>	1958	1958 Australian National Football Council Centenary Championships itinerary booklet, 'Football Record' (autographed by Farmer), Collingwood Social Evening for WANFL. Also includes two telegrams congratulating Farmer on selection as State Captain (from Ken Colbung) and wishing him luck (from Mick Cronan)
<b>ACC 10343A/36</b>	1960	'The "Royals" Eastern States Tour, 1960 : visiting Kalgoorlie, Adelaide, Broken Hill, Mildura, Melbourne, Port Pirie', booklet with itinerary and details of tour
<b>ACC 10343A/58</b>	1983-1984	East Perth Football Club (Inc.) 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner for 1958 Premiership Team and 1959 Premiership Team. Includes some reprinted team photographs of 1956 (4 copies), 1958 and 1959 Premiership teams
<b>ACC 10343A/37</b>	1986	Program from Inaugural Aboriginal Sports Star Awards Presentation Banquet
<b>ACC 10343A/38</b>	1998	Graham "Polly" Farmer "Simply the Best" Tribute Dinner, program and menu
<b>ACC 10343A/39</b>	1999	7 <sup>th</sup> National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sports Awards, autographed by Graham Farmer on page 4

REQUEST USING THIS NUMBER	DATE RANGE	DESCRIPTION
ACC 10343A/40	2001	'A Service of Thanksgiving for the Work of Sister Kate's Children's Cottage Homes Queens Park in the Chapel of the Guardian Angel, 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2001'. Order of service
		PUBLICATIONS
ACC 10343A/41	1970	Signed copy of Weekend Football News '70, Graham Farmer on cover
ACC 10343A/42	1984	Mary L. Urquhart, Eye to Eye. Book with personal note to Graham Farmer inscribed by author in front, section on Farmer p.58
ACC 10343A/43	1995	Football Greats of Western Australia Volume 1. Section on Graham Farmer starts p. 23
ACC 10343A/44	1996	Two copies of Westside Football, vol. 18, no. 3, ed. 506, both signed on cover by Graham Farmer
ACC 10343A/45	1999	Herald Sun. Football's fabulous century part 3 : Geelong. Graham Farmer mentioned in several places
ACC 10343A/46	2000	'Western Australia's 100 Greatest Sportstars : Countdown 1-50', signed on front cover by Farmer
ACC 10343A/47	2001	'From little things big things grow : Reaching for success. The Story of the Clontarf Football Academy'. Also includes invitation for Polly Farmer to attend launch
ACC 10343A/48	2003	Graham Polly Farmer 'Simply the Best' Trust, financial report and income tax return for the year ended 30 June 2004
ACC 10343A/49	ca.2007	The West Australian. 'Western Australia's 100 most influential people', newspaper insert. Signed by Graham Farmer on front cover
ACC 10343A/50	2008	The West Australia. 'Field of dreams : celebration of Subiaco Oval's 100 <sup>th</sup> year'. Graham Farmer included in all-star team since World War II in centre spread
		REALIA
ACC 10343A/59	2006	Keyring celebrating East Perth Football Club's centenary year, with engraving on back 'Graham Farmer, Player No. 605, 1953-1961, 176 games'
		SCRAPBOOKS
ACC 10343A/51	1954-1957	Scrapbook of newspaper cuttings related to Graham Farmer. Scrapbook wrapped in brown paper
ACC 10343A/52	1957	Scrapbook of newspaper cuttings related to Graham Farmer. Green cover, black pages tied together with string
ACC 10343A/53	ca.1958-1960	Scrapbook of newspaper cuttings related to Graham Farmer. Black hardcover book with dark red binding, not all pages filled
		TRADING CARDS
ACC 10343A/54	1907-1909	1907 Sniders & Abrahams 'West Australian Footballers' (1/56) H. Ward, Subiaco; 1908-1909 'Australian Footballers - WAFL' (1/60) W. Loughridge, East Perth

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