

Be the Future

Walking to the library this evening had me wondering about “The Future”, what is ahead of me tonight in a quiet household, what is ahead tomorrow, next week, in a few years when all my kids have moved out of the house and I am not bound by the regularity of family routine. What is the future of my writing, I’ve hit a wall with my painting, what is the future there. It’s all dreaming because as I take each step to the library a little of that future is upon me. Moment by moment, breath by breath until no more of either is to be had.

Jim Stynes died this week and we remember his moment and his bigger than his given days, life. We think of his family, may they find strength, and his legacies, both emotional and physical. I wonder if we take with us all, a little bit of the spirit of Jim Stynes. May we pass on moment by moment some of his love and joy of the world.

At the St.Kilda Football Club Family Day on Sunday, we were all “the future”. From infants to grandparents, 3000+ faithful waited in line for the gates to open and then flooded in, lining up to get autographs at the 8 Autograph booths, kids finding the clinics set up for a session with their heros, tents around the periphery with membership, food, merchandise and the rest.

I found myself among Angels. I’d not known about the Angels before Sunday, a volunteer group of women who supported their club the Saints. Since its inception in 1986, The Angels have donated \$250,000 to the Club in various ways, including sponsoring numerous players. Their mission statement reads:

- To provide a platform for passionate Saints supporters to socialise, network and ultimately contribute to the success of the Football Club of which they are so proud to be part.
- In line with the Club’s “Community Engagement Strategy”, the aim of The Angels Supporter Group is to raise funds, through its social network, to purchase memberships and game day experiences for needy families in the wider community.
- Groups who receive donated memberships from the Angels include Bayley House, Marriott Support Services, Baringa School of Moe, Sacred Heart Mission and Challenge, as well as a number of local schools and families in need
- To support the Club financially through player sponsorships, which builds awareness of our group and helps promote our social events and raise funds.
- To embrace change and provide support to our Club, as we work for the future success of the Red, White and Black.

Guess who’s now a paid up member and can legitimately be called “An Angel”.

After my promotion to being a member, I continued my stroll around the perimeter. My young friend Amanda, 20 years old like my son, the daughter of a friend of 16 years, had gone to see if she could locate friends. I found a cuppa and a seat and chatted to a supporter from Bendigo and her friend, an elderly man and they held the table for their friends but allowed me to rest my feet for a few moments while I perused my surrounds. They pointed out that the Merchandise Van was manned by players, so I finished my tea and headed off for a look. Lo and behold, there is Nick Riewoldt, Nicholas Winmar, Sam Gilbert and Brendon Goddard signing members t-shirts and hats. I couldn’t resist, and got a package for my footy buddies and myself. This year, Sinters had to buy

their own hats, scarves and t-shirts, for \$40. That's what happens when your club makes a loss. I hadn't so far purchased the package, but I was pushed over by the salesmen. So three hats were signed by all but Nicholas Winmar, there wasn't much white to write on or it just passed him by. I don't usually get autographs, and they write their Guernsey number next to their scrawly signatures, thankfully, because they are illegible otherwise. I must say that I am glad I purchased because it's the best quality hat I've ever gotten from the Saints. All made in China of course, but better quality than the usual, so it sits proudly on my head, autographs and all. Further, last years looked like Collingwoods' or the Swan's from the back, poor design, this year, there is red, white and black everywhere. Best hat ever.

Mobile phones allowed Amanda and I to find each other again, and she lined up again and got the t-shirts signed by Brendon, but then all the boys were whisked away to go to the autograph tents where people were patiently lining up. When we went to look/see, we found ourselves in Queue 9 which hadn't existed before but did now, so luck was upon us again and after a ½ hour wait, we got the autographs of Steven Milne, Terry Milera, Dean Polo, Beau Wilkes and Sam Dunell. Amanda got the autographs and I took photos. She asked them for no more drawn games. They all laughed and agreed.

The last part of the day was the Guernsey presentations, where from 1-46, players were called up and presented, by one of the youngsters of the days' events, to hand their idols a jumper and have a photo taken. Riewoldt came out last of the players, followed by the new coach Scott Watters, who had a few encouraging words to say before the very good woman MC wrapped up the event and thanked us all for coming.

We drove home happy and sated, having enjoyed each other's company, my two Carlton kids would never have come with me, and my one Sainter daughter otherwise occupied, and I was amused driving home by the scores of text messages between Amanda and her young friends.

So we are part of the future again. Part of the family day, in the same way as Rina and I and many others were part of the advertising campaign to "Be the Future" for the Saints. I'll finish with the poem on the back of the Angels booklet.

An Angel's Wish:

We didn't think the day would come

When Angels we would be

We thought we'd walk through heaven's door

Into eternity

But now we're earthly Angels,

And work there is to do,
Helping our favourite footy club
To successfully come through.

Earthly Angels we well may be
Angelic we are not.
When other players hit our boys
That's when our blood runs hot.

Holy Angels one day we'll be
And go through the pearly gate
So please, another premiership
Before it is too late.

There's a Jewish saying, "from your lips to Gods ears". Let's hope the footy Gods have good hearing, a sense of humour and some room for long suffering Saints supporters. And that he/she please give a warm and loving welcome to our mate Jim, and all other worthy souls.

Yvette Wroby

21st March 2012