

THE TORCHBEARER

"56er's Torchbearers Club Inc"

PO Box 2148, CAIRNS Q 4870

Committee:

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THE PRESIDENTS MESSAGE.

Greetings fellow members and partners.

Little has transpired since our previous newsletter. Dennis' first—and I am sure you will agree he certainly raised the bar and has us looking forward to this coming edition. RACQ Insurance has been confirmed as the major sponsor for the NQ Games and our committee would be eager to hear from any member venturing to Mackay the weekend commencing 22nd June and also I would encourage our group to keep Rockhampton in mind for their celebrations in November.

Regards
Jim Vallely
President

THE GREATEST MILE RACE IN HISTORY.

56'ers will no doubt recall the mile event at the Vancouver British Empire (Commonwealth) Games in September 1954. The race between Dr Roger Bannister and Australia's John Landy was eagerly awaited by sports minded people. At the time of the games only two athletes had run a mile in less than four minutes- Roger Bannister and John Landy. Sports commentators billed an event between them as the greatest individual contest of the 20th Century.

There was six other champion milers in the race.

Landy far left and Bannister third from the right started with great expectations.



Landy led initially. Bannister (329 head obscured) was placed fifth at the last turn of the first quarter.

However Bannister began to draw up close to the leader and used Landy as a pace maker and Landy knew that his only chance was to somehow take the drive out of Bannister's finishing spurt.



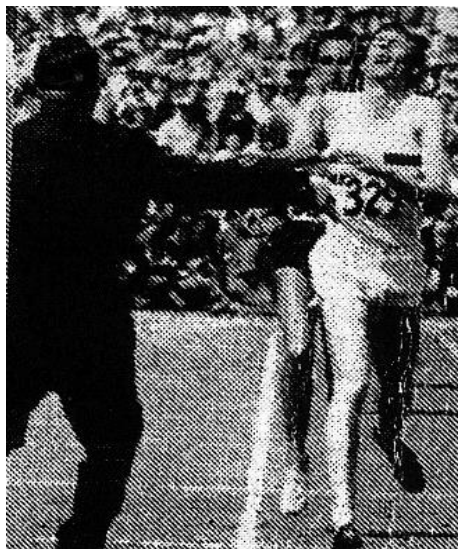
In the middle of the back stretch of the second lap and again on the third lap Bannister was holding his own and at the start of the last lap he pulled himself up smoothly to Landy's heels.



The photo above shows Bannister behind Landy but putting on steam - Landy looks to the left and saw no one. The next thing Bannister passed him with enormous strides. Landy did not slow down but could not make his legs move faster.



Timekeepers lined up at the finish in accord with the old style timekeeping.



Bannister produced a time of 3 58.9 and Landy A time of 3 59.8.



Bannister recovers and cools off by jogging with Landy. Classic sportsmanship typical of the old times.



Bannister collapses exhausted and is assisted by medics with some fast nose blowing.



A statue of Roger Bannister and John Landy erected in Vancouver to honour the significance of this mighty event.

Thanks are expressed to the editors of Life International for the facts and photos used in this report.

56'ERS CORNER.

In newsletter No. 35 President Jim referred to the many letters received from members apologizing for many good reasons for not attending the AGM. There were a number of literary pearls and not wishing to exclude any, letters from Trevor Masters, Maurie Kelly and Barry Davidson are deserving of publication.

Trevor Masters (thirty one miles North of Innisfail)



I was runner 29 and delighted and proud to be part of the Olympics of 56. In 2007 my wife and I travelled to Cairns on a holiday and visited the Memorial along the ocean front. Inquiries led me to joining the club. Enclosed is a photo of myself at the memorial which I cherish. The hand bag belongs to my wife and I had to hold it whilst she took the photo. (It suits me don't you think?)

Trevor Masters and hand bag. Trevor no doubt is enjoying holding the torch once again.

Over the years a lot of us run our last mile but we are here we have to hang onto memories of our past actions and inactions and it is with great pride that I hold memories '56 dear and whilst this finds me reasonably fit and well who knows what the near future holds. Bill please extend my best wishes and thoughts to all concerned in the Club and keep 'one foot after the other for a long time'.

Trevor Masters

Maurie Kelly (Twelve miles south of Tully).

I think back often to the mile I ran in the relay. Having been lucky all my life, my good fortune continued when I was told I would carry the torch at around 2.30 am on a section of the Bruce 'Highway' across what was then known as the Murray River Flats south of Euramo. As it was in the Cardwell Shire and Tully being noted for rain, when a car left me beside the gravel road and moved on with the next runner, a steady fall of rain made life more interesting. Imagination works overtime when you are sitting all alone in the dark and the slightest sound could be identified as a three metre crocodile(sorry, nine feet and a bit) sneaking up on its prey, me, so that's what I did pray.

When I saw the Relay for the Sydney Olympics and the crowds and the television and newspaper coverage, I thought back to waiting to be CMS which roughly translates to Crocs Midnight Snack and thought, where were the crowds on the Murray flats? Even my darling wife was home asleep in bed. Still the torch came along, I ran my mile, a soldier thanked me, slapped a medal in my hand and off the escort truck went to Melbourne. Where did that leave me-sitting in the dark, in the rain, on the Murray flats thinking is there another croc here for his CMS and would Irene wake up when I reached home?

Still it has been one of the highlights of my life and the medal holds pride of place in our home and the story is told when there is one to listen. If there is anyway I can help, don't hesitate to ask.

Regards Maurie Kelly

Barry Davidson (13 miles south of Lismore)

Dear Bill,

Thank you for the recent newsletter and pass on congratulations to Con Verevis on being elected patron. Also his stewardship as club president. Congratulation are sent to Jim Vallely on being elected club president.

It is a fine movement you have in Cairns marking the Torch Relay of 1956. I am pleased you were able to save it from 'Davey Jones Locker'.

Interestingly Bill we don't have cyclones in Northern NSW any more. The weather bureau has arranged for them to become 'East Coast Lows' once they pass Coolangatta. Regardless of this great feat by the Bureau we still get our share of rains and winds at times.

Regards Barry Davidson.

Future Stories of Interest

Whilst there are some 56'ers stories on file more are needed, so gentlemen please email your serious or funny stories for the newsletter. I have heard from Col Morwood a 56er and gymnastics judge at the Melbourne Olympics who has indicated that he will contribute a story or two-so we look forward to another perspective to the magnificent event we all loved.

Vern Tomasich photo reflections.

Vern's camera was very busy while we were present at the MCG and the book launch (Carrying the Torch). Some rare pictures are produced in this newsletter.

The Australian women's relay team won the 100 metres relay. Pictured together are two members of that champion team and three other Australian Champions, John Landy, Dawn Frazer and Ron Clarke.



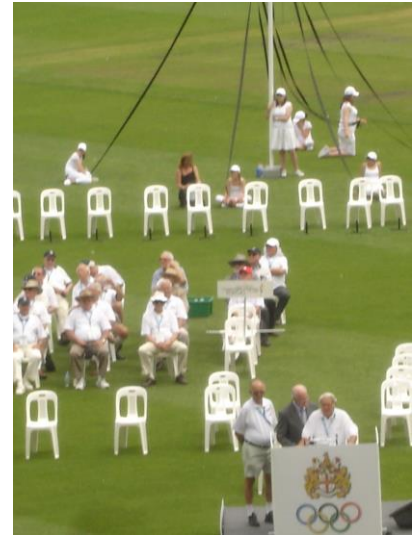
Betty Cuthbert and Norma Croker.



John Landy, Dawn Frazer and Ron Clarke at the MCG.

Con Verevis and Keith Barrett spoke to the crowd and were pictured on the MCG screens. The picture captures them both at the podium. Following the ceremonies Keith Barrett satisfied a long held ambition to run on the MCG and took off at a scorching pace and covered 200 metres on the hallowed turf. He came back as happy as a lark as a result. The 56'ers attending are seated behind - a handsome bunch aren't we!

Many thanks again to Vern Tomasich .
(AND THERE IS MORE TO COME)



Jokers Corner.

Keith Barrett was a clever joke teller - I could not even get close to his quality but will try!!

A TOUCHING CHRISTMAS STORY.

A couple were shopping at the mall on Christmas eve. Walking through the packed mall the surprised wife looked up and her husband was nowhere around. Using her mobile phone she called her husband to ask him where they could meet to finish their shopping.

The husband in a calm voice said, "Honey, remember the jewelry store we went to five years ago where you fell in love with that diamond necklace that we could not afford to buy and I told you that I would get it for you one day?"

Crying with happiness, she said, "Yes sweetie, I remember that jewelry store."

He said, "Well I'm at the bar right next to it."

THE IRISH MOOSE HUNT.

Two Irish hunters hired a pilot to fly them into the Canadian wilderness where they managed to bag two gig bull moose. As they were loading the plane to return, the pilot of the plane said that he could only take their gear and one moose.

The hunters objected strongly saying, "Last year we shot two and the pilot let us take them both, and he had exactly the same plane as yours!"

Reluctantly the pilot not wanting to be out done by another bush pilot gave in and everything was loaded.

However even under full power, the little plane couldn't handle the load and went down crashing in the wooded wilderness.

Somehow surrounded by the moose, clothing and sleeping bags, Paddy and Mick survived the crash.

After climbing out of the wreckage Mick asked, "Any idea where we are?" Paddy replied, "I think we're pretty close to where we crashed last year."

Apologies to any Irish torchbearers in our midst.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER.

The president has reminded members of the dates for the NQ Games at Mackay and the Rockhampton 56th Anniversary reunion of Torchbearers.

The important dates are:

- **NQ Games Mackay, 22nd to the 25th of June 2012.**
- **The Rockhampton Anniversary, Friday 9th to Sunday 11th November 2011.**

Please advise the Secretary/Treasurer Bill Cummings if you are able to attend either function.

The committee has set Saturday the 3rd of November 2012 for the AGM. This date has been fixed to allow members to attend the Rockhampton Anniversary function on the 9th to the 11th of November 2012. Please keep this date in mind. A notice of meeting will be forwarded at the appropriate time.