

THE TORCHBEARER

NEWSLETTER 44.

"56ers Torchbearers Club Inc"

PO Box 2148, CAIRNS Q 4870

Committee:

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PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Greetings fellow club members and partners, now that the New Year is well underway our attention turns to the North Queensland Games in Townsville in early April at which our club members sponsor the men's and women's 1500m event and is keenly contested by aspiring milers.

Dennis is calling on members to pass on their personal story of activities that surrounded their original torch run. I'm sure that there are some good yarns out there.

Once again Cairns dodged the bullet with recent cyclones and is well and truly open for business for all holidaymakers. I look forward to touching base with club members in April.

Regards
Jim Vallely

FORMER OLYMPIC GAMES

AMSTERDAM OLYMPICS 1928

The 1928 games in Amsterdam were remarkable for the rather grudging inclusion of women track and field

competitors and a somewhat less grudging welcome to the 300 strong German team.

A new stadium was built on marshy ground to accommodate 40,000 spectators. The 400m athletic track was surrounded by a 500m cycle track. Japan secured its first gold medal with Mikio Oda in the triple jump with a leap of 15.21m or 49ft 10.75inches. Some 38 years later in Tokyo the Olympic flag-pole was exactly 15.21m high.

The president of the US Olympic committee, Major General Douglas MacArthur, encouraged the folk back home with the words, "The opening of the games finds the American team at the peak of form. We have assembled the greatest team in our athletic history." Unfortunately the American team obtained only one gold medal in the individual track events-the 400m. Canada's Percy Williams won both the 100m and 200m events. The powerful Finns won four track events and the decathlon. Paavo Nurmi won a further gold medal and two silver to those won at Antwerp and Paris. The women's Canadian sprinters won the four by 100m relay in a time of 48.4secs. Compare this with Betty Cuthbert's team time of 44.5secs at the Melbourne Olympics.

The women's 800m event was disturbing to Olympic officials when many of the competitors showed signs of distress. The event was subsequently dropped and didn't return for 25 years.

Australian Bobbie Pierce won the single sculls by a margin of four lengths.

General MacArthur described the games as "A model for all future Olympics".

LOS ANGELES OLYMPICS 1932

The Los Angeles Olympics was the first held in the Americas since 1904 (St Louis). For the first time an Olympic village to house 1,300 male athletes was specially constructed. The women athletes were housed in a hotel.

The track events were notable for the introduction of an experimental electronic timing system. Hand operated stopwatches and a movie camera were both used. The 3,000m steeple chase was a strange event in that a heat winner was timed at 9 minutes 14.6secs but the final was won by the same chap (Volmari Iso-Hollo of Finland) in 10minutes 33.4secs, but the official counting laps had not recorded correctly and an extra lap was run - the length of the race final was 3,460m.

The marathon was remarkable in that the 65seconds time between the first four place getters was the closest finishes in history at that time. These games were the first time that the USA did not win the high jump that was won by a Canadian. The most outstanding female athlete was Mildred 'Babe' Didrikson of the USA who won the

80m hurdles and javelin and was placed second in the high jump and she shared the world record with the winner.

In the rowing, Australia's Henry Pierce won the single sculls retaining the title he won in Amsterdam in 1928.

BERLIN OLYMPICS 1936

The pre games publicity was claimed by the Nazi's 'as an infamous festival dominated by Jews.' At that time Hitler was not the undisputed leader of Germany but he quickly woke to the immense propaganda value of the games and spared no expense in making the games the most efficiently equipped in the history of the games – clearly designed to advance the Nazi ideas.

A number of private scraps broke out in the months preceding the Berlin Olympics. Russia was threatening China and Japan. Greece and Austria were at odds. Japan invaded Manchuria and Italy helped themselves to Ethiopia. Spain erupted into civil war. Over all of this hung the brooding shadow of the swastika.

The Nazi's tried everything possible to remove German IOC members who had the smallest amount of Jew in their blood but to the IOC'S credit they refused to bow to Hitler's demands and he reluctantly acquiesced.

A bell weighing 14 tons summoned the youth of the World to Berlin. It was hanging-in a special tower at the Olympic Stadium and swastikas outnumbered Olympic flags in this Nazi showpiece.

The torch relay was held for the first time and passed through European countries. As the final runner approached the brazier the background was flooded with swastikas a truly non Olympic scene.

The march past was held, and would you believe, Hitler took the salute.

The outstanding athlete of the games was Jesse Owens. He won three individual gold medals the 100m and 200m, and the long jump and the 4x100m relay. Legend has it that Hitler congratulated (even after being told by the IOC it was not his responsibility), Aryan winners of the first three finals but snubbed African/American winners including Owens.

The Olympic flag was lowered in the Berlin twilight on the best organized and for that reason the least truly Olympic Games. It was to be 12 years before the World would awake to the austerity games in battle weary and bomb scared London.

56ers CORNER

SOME LETTERS FROM THE 2013 AGM

Our secretary Bill received some letters from members and one other for the AGM. Notable among them was one from Anne Marsden who wished that her condolences be passed onto the club and Con's family.

A letter was also received from Andrew Hayes who has reported on the permanent exhibition of the 1956 torch run in the National Sports Museum at the MCG, highly

recommended and well worth a visit. Andrew has submitted the National Sports Museum web site <http://www.nsm.org.au>.

Ralph Schubert has been at his favourite past time and in addition to his success at the Masters Games in Cairns has participated in the Pub2Pub Charity run in the suburbs of Sydney which raised \$2349 for people with intellectual disabilities. He also organized a National Flag Day Celebration at his retirement village.

Talk about retirement!!.

NORTH QUEENSLAND (RACQ INSURANCE) GAMES (Written by our patron Margaret Cochrane)

Hello 56ers, wives / partners...

First let me say how honoured I felt to be nominated as your Patron at the last AGM, a particular privilege as I succeed your very special member and Patron, the late Con Verevis. Thank you.

A little about me, I have grown up in Cairns, not born, but came with my parents only a few years after.

My Dad was known to some of you. He was Fred White, school teacher, Cairns North, Paramatta and Edge Hill schools! I attended school here to junior level at St Monica's College. I graduated as a trained nurse from the then Calvary hospital, married a Brisbane boy, had three children, now have 9 grand children and still live in this magical place of Cairns.

I became involved in Sports Administration in 1986 when my son was playing junior soccer and things grew from there. I spent 14 years on that committee, 10 of those years as President. I was elected to the Cairns City Council in 2000 and appointed Chairperson of the Sports, Art Culture and Community Services committee, thus beginning the journey of being involved with all types of sport for the next 12 years. With my Council role I was appointed to the North Queensland Sports Foundation as Cairns representative in 2000, and still remain on the Board of the foundation to this day. I was elected as Chairperson of the board in 2004 and remain in that role.

What is the North Queensland Sports Foundation?

We are a body of all Local Government Authorities from Mackay in the South to Cooktown in the North and Mt. Isa, a total of 22 councils. The council is a unique organization: there is no other like it anywhere in the country. We celebrated our 30th anniversary last year. In those past 30 years there has only been 5 presidents, all of whom are still alive and I am hoping will be present at the NQ games in Townsville this year.

The Foundation was set up with the vision of a few people across the North and mainly from Townsville in 1983, expressly for the purpose of providing a higher level of competition for the athletes of the North as there was not the opportunity for higher level competition in those days due to the expense and distance of travel to the South and capital cities for higher level competition. The first games were held in

Townsville in 1984 and held every two years in centers Townsville, Cairns, Mackay and Mt. Isa until 2008. The games are now only rotated between the three coastal centres as support for the Mt. Isa leg became lean.

In 2009 the foundation introduced the Western Games along the Western line to Mt. Isa and are held every two years. These games are increasing in numbers and sports each time and are held in the 'off year' to the NQ Games. The games give the community a regular event in their calendars.

Now where do the 56ers fit into all this!!!

In order to maintain the history of the 56ers and the wonderful effort made by you all by running the mile in 1956 with the Olympic Torch, an approach was made by another of your wonderful members, the late Keith Barrett, to the then foundation manager Stuart Gibson, to include in the NQ games a race of approximately the distance of the 'mile'! The 1500m race was introduced to the games in Townsville in 2008.

It was initially for 'men'!!! That changed quickly and the Foundation introduced the 'girls' to the track.

In order to attract caliber athletes, prize money was offered by your organization for the men's race, the foundation matched those funds for the women. The race is conducted as part of the opening ceremony of the games to highlight the importance of the history of the event so that your efforts can live on.

I note that 2016 will be the 60th anniversary of the Melbourne Olympics and your efforts with the torch. The NQ games will be held in Cairns that year and it will be truly wonderful to have as many of your members represented at the games, and I will be proposing that there be 'something special' included in the opening ceremony for your members. I intend to propose that your members form a relay around the track of Barlow Park with the torch. In fact I know where there is a 1956 torch, so will get hold of that one to use for the event. It would be fantastic for as many out of town 56'ers could be in Cairns for this event as it would be a wonderful way to celebrate your 60 years!!!

I will probably not be a member of the Foundation committee by then but as I received Life Membership last year I will certainly ensure this is carried out. We can perhaps arrange other functions around the same time for you all.

Margaret Cochrane.

**NORTH QUEENSLAND
(RACQ INSURANCE) GAMES
TOWNSVILLE 2014**

A gentle reminder to 56ers that these games are set for 4-6th April 2014 in Townsville and all members are invited to attend. You will enjoy watching the events particularly the young people and their wonderful sportsmanship. The official opening and 1500 meter events will be held on Friday the 4th April.

**BIRTH OF THE SHERBROOKE LITTLE
ATHLETICS CENTRE**

Members will recall the story in newsletter 43 about the Sherbrooke Little Athletics Club. The editor and Bill O'Neill have been in touch with the president of the club, Richard Wicks who has provided a story about the formation of the club that has been operating since November 1970. Contact details are advised in newsletter 43.

During the winter of 1969, I responded to a small article in the local newspaper asking for persons interested in forming a Little Athletics Club in the Shire of Sherbrooke with the intention of competing in the already established Knox Little Athletic Centre.

As the only junior sport available at this time was under age football conducted on Sundays, little athletics was a Saturday morning innovation by the legendary Trevor Billingham. I could see that my four sons, the eldest being Andrew, six at the time, would benefit from this in years to come.

I arranged to meet with a family called Hutchinson and was impressed with their enthusiasm. John was a member of the Australian Army and was not able to do much of the ground -work, but contributed much valuable time and expertise once the club was set up. Wife Joy was as enthusiastic as any person could be about such a project as this. Joy was a pleasure with which to work. Between us we made arrangements to meet with the principals of the local primary schools.

After information flyers were distributed to parents the response was very positive and a meeting was held at Joy and John's home. A small committee was formed and a club known as the Sherbrooke Little Athletics Club was entered in the Knox Centre competition for the season 1969-70 at Chandler Park in Boronia.

As word got around by children as well as parents the season finished with the club boasting 90 members, the highest membership of any club at Knox Centre.

With this many members in mind, I put to the committee that if we could get so many members in three close areas we could surely get enough from the entire shire to form our own center. The proposal was not well received by the majority of the committee as they could not envisage parents and children traveling from the distant parts of the shire and where would a center from this shire compete.?

As I was working permanent night shift I had a good relationship with the then Shire Secretary. I arranged a meeting with him and explained my vision. He was very enthusiastic and promised the use of Kings Park in Upper Ferntree Gully. This was a grass on cinders track that had been the home of a now defunct athletic club.

During the next few months I had meetings with every primary school principal in the shire and received 100 per cent cooperation. Much work was still to be done, such as responsible parents from the various schools being invited to attend a meeting in August 1970 for the purpose of forming a little athletics center. Knowing

that transport was high on the agenda we met with the owner of US Motors. He kindly agreed to provide buses free of charge to pick up children on the way to arrive at King's Park at 9.00am. In attendance at this meeting was the founder and chief executive of Little Athletics, the shire chairman and members of the VLAA board. Plus 60 enthusiastic members of the public.

After much discussion a committee was formed and Mr. Trevor Bole-Brown was elected the first president of the Sherbrooke Little Athletics Centre. An official committee of officers supported him and seven more were elected as members.

On the first Saturday 28th November 395 children plus numerous adults followed a police Drum Horse, Gendarme into Kings Park for their first experience of Little Athletics.

A feature of the day was the attendance of champion sprinter Ricky Dunbar who gave our sprinters tips on this event. Others to thrill the crowd were high jump champion Ian Moss and female sprinter Heather Burge.

Patron of the centre the Hon. VT Hauser MLC officially declared the Sherbrooke Little Athletics Centre open.

Seven clubs were represented on the day and another joined in 1971-72.

Ken Walters

(founder Sherbrooke Little Athletics Centre)

What a wonderful path this highly successful venture followed. It must stand as a model for other centres to approach.

Editor

SOME USELESS INFORMATION ABOUT SCOTCH WHISKY

(not quite related to the 1956 relay but...)

The term whisky derives originally from the Gaelic 'usage beatha' or 'usquebaugh' meaning water of life.

Whiskey can be spelt two ways whisky and whiskey. The former is attached to Scotch and Irish products while whiskey is the American made product (probably bourbon).

Scotch whisky was thought to be first distilled in 1494 where there is a reference in the Scottish Exchequer Rolls when Friar John Cor acquired 8 bolls of malt to produce aquavita.

The whisky process comprises four main stages.

- Malting
- Mashing
- Fermentation
- Distillation

The malting process occurs when harvested barley is allowed to partially germinate and the barley secretes the enzyme diastase that converts the starch to maltose a mono sugar and this takes from 8-12 days. (there is some spilled barley in this

process that is great food for the rats. There is also some very fat cats that must feed on the rats.)

The germination can be stopped by heating the barley in a kiln, sometimes using peat fuel to generate heat. This process imparts the peaty characteristic flavour to single malt whisky. The Highland Park distillery at Kirkwell in the Orkneys uses peat for drying malted barley. This flavour can be obtained by using peat flavoured water from high mountain run off. The Talisker distillery at Tobermory in Skye uses peat water in their mash.

The mashing process grinds the dried malt and the grist is mixed with hot water in a mash tun. The soluble sugary liquid is known as wort and is drawn away and any solids remaining fed to cattle.

Fermentation allows the yeast in the wort to convert the mono sugar(maltose) into crude alcohol. The wash also contains some un-fermentable matter and certain other products of fermentation.

Distillation is carried out in large copper pot stills. The first distillation separates the alcohol from the fermented liquid. This distillate known as low wines is distilled a second time. When the spirit reaches an acceptable standard it is collected in a spirit receiver.

Both malt and grain whiskies must be matured and the new spirit is filled into casks of oak wood where in due course it becomes a mellow whisky. Some times a little quantity of caramel is added to allow colour. Some oak barrows that have sherry (Spain) or bourbon (USA) matured in them

are used for colouring as materials remaining in the barrels (probably cream of tartar) is capable of imparting the necessary whisky colour. The barrels are made in Dufftown in a factory almost opposite the Glenfiddick distillery but they are sent to Spain and America for sherry and bourbon and sent back to Scotland for maturing whisky.

More information on whisky production will be included in the next newsletter. If you can stand it!?

JOKERS CORNER

A WOMAN'S REVENGE

Cash, cheque or charge?, the cashier asked the woman bringing her purchases to the register. As she fumbled for her wallet the cashier noticed a remote control for a television in her purse. Do you always carry your TV remote control with you?

No, replied the woman, but my husband refused to come shopping with me and I figured this was the most evil thing I could do to him legally.

CREATION

A man said to his wife one day I don't know how you can be so beautiful and so stupid at the same time. The wife responded, allow me to explain. God made me beautiful so you would be attracted to me and he made me stupid so I would be attracted to you!

CATHOLIC DOG

Muldoon lived in the Irish country- side with only a pet dog for company. One day the dog died and Muldoon went to the parish priest and asked. Father my dog is dead___ could ya' be saying mass for the poor creature?

Father Patrick. I'm afraid not, we cannot have services for an animal in the church, but there are some Baptists down the road and there is no telling what they believe. Maybe they will do something for the creature.

Muldoon said I'll go straight away Father. Do ya' think \$5000 is enough to donate to them for the service?

Father Patrick exclaimed Sweet Mary, Mother of Jesus! Why didn't ya' tell me the dog was a Catholic?

Dennis M Stevenson
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