

THE TORCHBEARER

NEWSLETTER 47

But more importantly this young man born under

"56ers Torchbearers Club Inc"

PO Box 2148, CAIRNS Q 4870

Committee:

Patron	Margaret Cochrane	
President	Jim Vallely	Tel 07 40532150
Vice President	Dennis Stevenson	Tel 07 40653223
Secretary/Treasurer	Bill Cummings	Tel 07 40312888

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Hi fellow torchbearers and partners, I trust you are all in good spirits.

I am pleased to inform our members that Montanna McAvoy winner of our sponsored 1500 m event at the North Queensland games has carried her good form to the Northern Secondary School titles in Cairns by decisively winning her selected events in record times.

Our executive committee agreed to assist Montanna in her pursuit for higher achievements at the forth coming state titles by forwarding her a \$500 cheque to cover her traveling expenses to Brisbane.

Athletics is booming in the North at the moment with the Cairns club having last year the largest registration of athletes in any athletics club in Australia, with a great deal of credit going to an extremely efficient and well run committee.

I must pay tribute to our editor Dennis Stevenson for the hours of unpaid research he contributes to produce our newsletter.

Kind Regards

Jim Vallely

FORMER OLYMPIC GAMES

Tokyo 1964

Yoshinoro Saki performed a dual act of significance in the Olympic Stadium on the 10th October 1964. He lit the Olympic flame performing an integral part of the opening ceremony of the XVIIIth Olympiad.

the shadow of the mushroom cloud of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1946 was a symbol

of his countries acceptance of a new role in the World and the Worlds acceptance of Japan.

An age had passed since 1940 when Japan was originally due to host the Olympics- one of two games that were cancelled because of various wars taking place around the World. The Japanese were not invited to the London Games of 1948. The new stadiums inspired competitors to reach new heights. The American discus thrower Al Oerter became the second man in Olympic athletics history to win a gold medal in three successive Olympics. Dawn Fraser won gold in swimming for the third time and Vyacheslav Ivanov similarly in sculling. Al Oerter was handicapped by a dislocated neck but it didn't let it stop winning the gold medal-he discarded his surgical collar a pain killer and won the event with a throw of 200ft one and a half inches.

The USA also had an unexpected win in the 10,000m event. Ron Clarke the holder of the World record led the field through the first few laps but with a lap to go he was being pressed by Mahamed Gammoudi of Tunisia and Billy Mills of the USA. Clarke held on but Gammoudi passed him followed by Mills. Mills was placed first the Tunisian second and Clarke third. Clarke also took part in the 5,000m but was placed ninth. Peter Snell of New Zealand was the gold medalist in the 800m and 1500m events.

The first eight places in the triple jump were won by European athletes.

Betty Cuthbert once again excelled and won the gold medal in the 400m event. This was the first time this event was included for women.

Dawn Fraser as mentioned won her third gold medal in the 100m swimming. Australians won

three of the six individual swimming events with Bob Windle gaining gold in the 1500m, Ian O'Brian in the 200 breast stroke and Kevin Berry the 200m butterfly. In yachting Australia won the 5.5m event.

WE SHOULD NEVER FORGET THEM

STEVE MONEGHETTI

Steve was born in Ballarat on the 26th September 1962. At primary school he was not considered to be a good runner and in attempting to join little athletics club his father was told that he was not wanted. By high school he had blossomed out into an excellent endurance athlete and became one of Australia's greatest marathon runners.



Steve Moneghetti in the City to Surf.

Acknowledgment is made to Wikipedia the free encyclopedia for the information in this story.

He started as a 10,000m runner and finished fifth in the 1986 Commonwealth Games. He ran his first marathon at these Games and won a bronze medal. His first marathon victory was in Berlin in 1990 completed in the time of 2:08.16. This was following his win in the Great North Run in a time of 1:00.34. In 1991 he set a course record of 40.03 for the iconic City to Surf and at June 2014 the record still stands.

In 1994 he won the Tokyo marathon and the marathon at the Commonwealth Games. Steve competed at four Olympic Games- Seoul, Barcelona, Atlanta and Sydney. The Sydney Games

was Moneghetti's last race where he thanked Australia for support during his long career.

Steve was the chef de Mission for Australia at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

Steve is married to Tanya and they have four children.

DEBBIE FLINTOFF-KING OAM

Debbie was born in 1960 in Melbourne and first competed for Australia in the 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games and won the 400m hurdles in a Commonwealth record time of 55.89.

Flintoff finished sixth in the inaugural event at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. In 1986 after setting Australian records at both the 400m flat and 400m hurdles she won both events at the Edinburgh Commonwealth Games. She then won a silver medal at the 1987 World Championships and became the first Australian athlete to win a IAAF Grand Prix Final in that year taking out her speciality event 400m hurdles.

She won a gold medal at the Seoul Olympics despite receiving news of her sister's death. Her winning time of 53.17 still stands (at 1/6/14) as the Australian record.



Debbie Flintoff- King in full flight in her favourite 400m hurdles.

Flintoff-King was one of the bearers of the Olympic Torch at the opening of the 2000 Sydney Olympics. Married to her coach Phil King and has three children. She coached Australian sprinter Lauren

Hewitt in the early 1990's and has mentored World Champion Jana Rawlinson.

She received an Order of Australia in 1987 and was inducted into the Australian Hall of Fame.

THE START OF THE 56ERS' OLYMPIC TORCHBEARERS CLUB.

By Bill Cummings.

Forming the club was Con Verevis' idea.

It all started in the run-up to the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games when there was a major effort throughout Australia to raise funds for the staging of the event and the participation of the Australian team. The Australian Olympic Council and the State bodies put a lot of energy into raising the necessary funds. As part of this, in each region throughout Australia, they engaged with local authorities and key civic organizations to form ad hoc support committees with a view to highlighting that the games were approaching and to solicit donations. Because of my involvement with civic organizations, I had been involved in this process in relation to previous Olympic Games.

As I recall, the 56ers' involvement started when there was a news item in the Cairns Post about Barry Davies (who at the time was the owner and operator of the Terry TOO Trinity Inlet tourism cruise), highlighting that he had run in the 1956 Olympic relay as I recall somewhere in New South Wales. The Cairns City Council's public relations/media person at the time was John Lane, a former television station manager at Cairns. The Council had delegated to John much of the responsibility for the local fund raising coordination. John learnt of my involvement and that the anniversary of the event fell on the 9th November. Being a good media man John immediately recognized an opportunity for a great story and a great way to highlight the fund raising effort. The Cairns Post was organized to take a photo of Barry and myself with our bronze medallions to appear in the paper. John organized various media outlets to invite relay runners to contact the Council. The Queensland Olympic

Council who were responsible for the fund raising in Queensland fully cooperated.

A special function was organized at the Cairns Airport for the 9th November 1999 to mark the event and torchbearers invited to attend. My knowledge of the relay was limited at that time to having participated in the trials and selection at the Cairns Parramatta Park Show Grounds and actually participating on the day. However via Jim Vallely who had retained links with the Cairns Athletic Club over the years, contact was made with Bill Chandler who still had all the records of the original committee set up in Cairns, to lobby for the start of the relay (in which they were successful), and then organize the Cairns leg and South to the Ingham/Townsville leg. The event was held in the old ANA hanger at the airport where the torch landed on the 9th November 1956. It was a great success with a strong turnout of runners.

Among those who made contact was the first runner Con Verevis, who was well known and respected in the Cairns business community. Con as a descendent of Greek migrants had been symbolically chosen to be the first runner. An aging Roy Clarke, well known retired Ansett manager informed us that as ANA manager at the time, he had been involved in ANA flying Anthony Mark in from the Mitchell River Mission (now called Kowanyama) to Cairns to participate in the run. Unexpectedly, the late Dennis George, an iconic participant in Australia's leading role in the invention of artificial pearl cultivation in the Torres Strait (the story is that Mikimoto Pearls got the technology from Australia, turned up. Dennis was of Greek origin and recounted how he had carried the torch in first Olympic relay from Greece to Berlin in 1936.

After the success of the airport gathering, council invited the 56 relay runners to a further function at the Council Chambers. There was a good attendance and after it, Con put forward the idea of forming a club of the relay runners. With a fully functioning office in the city, I volunteered to help. John Lane and the Council were enthusiastic and the idea received the support of the Queensland Olympic Council.

In the Club records are the following minutes.

Minutes of inaugural meeting of "56ers association held at the Cairns city council chambers commencing at 4pm on Thursday 17 February 2000.

ATTENDANCE: W S Cummings, C Verevis, J Vallely, G Oswald, G Scofield (representing John Lane, Cairns City Council).

Formation of Unincorporated Association:

Further to the gathering of 1956 Olympic Torch bearers held at the Cairns Airport in November 1999 on the anniversary of the landing of the torch in 1956 and the indication of support from those present for the formation of such association, on the motion of C Verevis, seconded G Oswald it was resolved to form an unassociated association to be called the "56's Association" with a view to applying for and becoming an incorporated association in due course.

Office Bearers:

President: Con Verevis

Vice President: G Oswald

Secretary/treasurer: W Cummings

Committee members: Jim Vallely, John Lane

An initial constitution was drawn up modelled on the old unincorporated association of the Cairns Chamber of Commerce that had served the chamber well from 1907 until it was incorporated under state legislation in the 1990's.

The rest is history as recorded in the club's minute book. Much of it was to be written by the late Keith Barrett who volunteered to take over the role of secretary and was appointed to that position on 27th October 2000.

The first torch bearer dated January 2001 records a message from President Con Verevis:**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:**

G'day fellow56's. Well I suppose you have all been wondering what is happening now that the games are over and you are probably thinking that the association has wound down. But that is not the

case. Your committee has been conducting monthly meetings and working hard to give meaning and direction to the association. We now have a new secretary (Keith Barratt a 56's) very experienced in sporting club secretarial duties that gives our past secretary (Bill Cummings) now a committee member, more time to use his expertise e.g. formulating policies, sponsorship promotions and guidance in forward planning.

Apart from providing a vehicle for contact between 56's our future policy is for the promotion of aspiring young athletes in all sorts of sport in your various areas. Hopefully we might be able to produce an AUSTRALIAN & WORLD CHAMPION. Your views on this would be appreciated. Due to the distance from our starting base here in Cairns, to achieve our goals we will be looking for representation from various parts of Australia. If you are interested please contact our secretary on (07) 40532002, fax (07) 40 311108 or myself on (07)40 914283 or fax on (07) 40914283. Our policies for our representatives will be defined early in the New Year.

Regards

Your president Con Verevis.

MARK ROWELL'S TORCH RUN

Mark ran his mile two miles South of Ingham and exchanged the torch with Ollie Kaurila on the outskirts of Ingham.

The Ingham Racecourse was a training ground for the 1956 relay runners in Ingham for the Melbourne Olympics. During that period races were held on a regular basis although it's now becomes a more annual occurrence.

Usually the torch runners training for the relay took place after the last race. As a consequence the grassy turf was cut up by the hoof marks that made it precarious for the relay runners.

Both the runners and the horses took the shortest way home, the inside rails. Although I remember once a scrubber once coming into the straight, veered off to the outside rail despite the futile efforts of the jockey.

So not only did the runners have to keep their time for the mile under 7 minutes the requirement to be an eligible relay participant the challenge was compounded by the cut up turf.

The four minute mile became a great focal point of athletics with the coming of 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne. In 1954 the English man Roger

passed away but participation in the relay still remains with many that were involved.

I have to acknowledge the resolve of the Cairns 56 runners to preserve the event with their initiative in maintaining recognition of the event nearly 60 years ago.



*Ingham to Townsville, Qld. Some Torchbearers pictured with other training squad members. Standing (from left): A Armstrong, G. Carr, K. Muhling, Koitto Kaurila, H. Pilspanen, **M. Rowell**, O. Kaurila, R. Carr, Kauko Kaurila, V. Cantamessa, A. Kaurila. Front (from left): S. Mammino, V. Smith, B. Regan, M. Kangas, A. Coppo, R. Coppo, M. Kaurila, N. Crossley.*

Bannister officially broke the four minute mile, later John Landy was narrowly beaten by Bannister, both runners breaking the four minute mile. While there was a requirement for seven minutes for the mile by runners to qualify, it appeared pedestrian compared to Landy and Bannisters times.

I can recall the near summer conditions added to the weight of the 3 pound (1.36kg) metal flaming torch for the NQ relay runners along the Bruce Highway. The training runs were well received by the patrons of the Ingham Racing Community.

The Ingham Relay team was unique in that it had five brothers of the Kaurila family in the event. Unfortunately some of the relay runners have

THREE 56'ers TOGETHER.

It is not common for three 56's from disparate places to find themselves in the same function together, but recently at a mini reunion of the 1952 scholarship class of Gordonvale State School held at Fishery Falls, Les Stager, Bill O'Neill and the editor met for a delightful lunch with class mates. Bill was up from Melbourne, Les who lives at Russell Heads with his wife Lee who was a class mate at Gordonvale School and myself who now lives at Mena Creek had the following photo taken.



Bill O'Neill, Les Stager and the editor at Fishery Falls Hotel.

Les went to Babinda state school and I often competed against him in interschool sports. He usually beat me but of course we always talk fondly about the contacts. On one occasion he outperformed me in the high jump (it was close) but the Gordonvale head master who often delivered six of the best to me surprisingly came up and congratulated me on my performance. I was most surprised and my dislike for Ernie Patton change drastically. It didn't stop him dishing out the cane however.

WHISKY STORY CONTINUED.

I *hate* to keep up the banter about whisky but the following story is just too good to ignore.

WHISKY REPLACES TRADITIONAL CHAMPAIGNE AT NAMING CEREMONY FOR HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH AIRCRAFT CARRIER.

The naming of HMS queen Elizabeth took place on the 4th July at Rosyth and was a unique occasion of historical significance as it marked the beginning of a new era of UK carrier operations.

Workers from across the UK contributed to construction of the ship but as the ships birth took place in Scotland, it is only fitting that it was 'christened' with whisky, the 'water of life'.

Bowmore distillery on the Isle of Islay was selected, as it was the first distillery Her Majesty the Queen ever visited in an official capacity.

World class whisky and world class shipbuilding are two of Scotland's finest products so the 4th July was a special day when the two of them were blended.

Defence Secretary Phillip Hammond said 'This ship the biggest the Royal Navy has ever had, is a demonstration of the UK at its very best with workers from across the Union contributing. The launching will be an occasion when it's okay to spill a drop'.

In recent times champagne has traditionally been used for the bottle smash during a Ship Launch or Naming Ceremony. Submarines traditionally use bottles of 'home brew' beer. The Naval Historical Branch confirm that there is no particular folk law with regard to the choice of one liquid over the other. During the Nelson era brandy or Madeira was likely used.

One notable exception to the champagne tradition was HMS Sutherland in 1996 when Macmillan Single Malt Whisky was used. Whilst unusual, this was justified due to the ship's strong Scottish connections, including her Scottish dukedom name and affiliations to Southerland and Scottish Regiments.

The editor believes that this is still an extravagant waste of whisky. The same as champagne is wasted during motor celebrations when it is sprayed over successful winners.

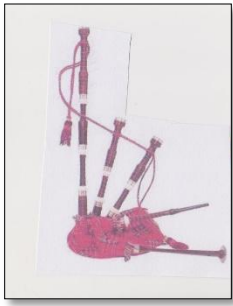
A search of the piles of Torchbearers Club records has revealed 23 fridge magnets designed by Keith Barrett and Andrew Cummings. The magnets pictured below are available for \$3 and members contact Bill Cummings seeking copies.

JOKERS CORNER

THE DROVER AT THE PEARLY GATES.

A drover from a huge cattle station in the outback appeared before St. Peter at the Pearly Gates.

Have you ever done anything of particular merit? St. Peter asked.



Well I can think of one thing, the drover offered.

Once on a trip to the back blocks of Broken Hill out in NSW, I came across a gang of bikers who were threatening a young Sheila_ I told them to leave her alone, but they would not listen. So I

approached the largest and most heavily tattooed bikie and smacked him in his face, kicked over his bike and ripped out his nose ring and threw it on the ground. I yelled, now back off! Or I'll kick the life out of the lot of ya!.

St. Peter was impressed, when did this happen? He asked.

A couple of minutes ago was the drovers reply.

NEIGHBOURHOOD NOISE.

Would you believe it!,

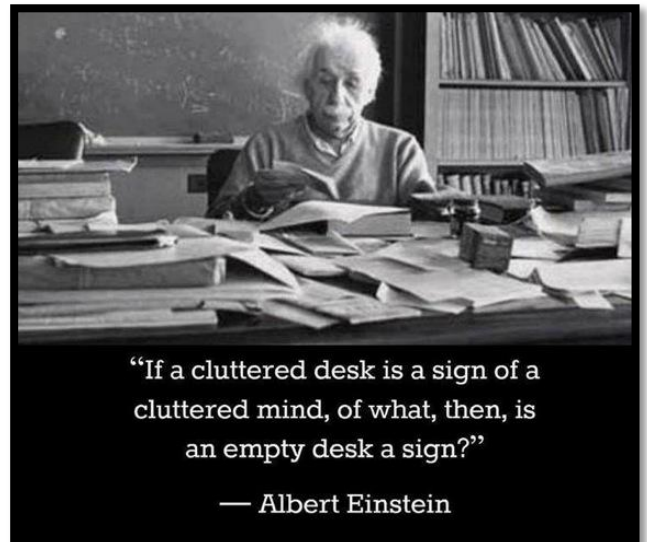
My neighbour was knocking on my door at 2.30am this morning...Luckily I was still up playing my bagpipes.

A THOUGHTFUL SCOTSMAN.

A thoughtful Scottish Husband was putting his coat and hat on to make his way down to the local pub. He turned to his wee wife before leaving and said 'Heather- poot your hat and coat on lassie.'

She replied, 'Awe Mac that's nice-are you taking me tae the pub with you?' 'Nay'. Mac replied 'I'm turning the heater off while I'm oot'.

Brilliant words from Einstein.



Kind Regards.

Dennis M Stevenson
menafalls1@bigpond.com

