

THE TORCHBEARER

NEWSLETTER 53

"56ers Torchbearers Club Inc"

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President's Comments

Greetings once again Torchbearers and Partners

I trust you have navigated your way successfully through the numerous celebrations that go hand in hand with Christmas and New Year. It seems almost inconceivable that come November, 60 years have passed since we were given the opportunity to carry the Olympic torch. I suggest that even in our senior years we should set ourselves small goals to make life more fulfilling.

At the moment our committee is still taking in all suggestions as how we should celebrate our 60th Anniversary, having already set in stone a 56ers Dinner to be held during the North Queensland Games in June.

Our contribution of \$2,000 and \$1,000 each to Men's and Women's 1500 meter events still remains our foremost contribution.

John Dodds, the young high jumper to whom we recently financially assisted has won yet another National Title since the last Newsletter went to press along with securing a Scholarship to the Queensland Academy of Sport.

Our apology for issuing the wrong date for the 60th Anniversary Dinner, the correct date being Saturday June 25 at the RSL Club.

Yours sincerely

Regards
Jim Vallely



FORMER OLYMPIC GAMES

ATHENS 2004

For the first time the Olympic flame was relayed around the world. Athletes made ready and the people of Athens and Greece prepared to welcome the Olympic Games home.



The Athens Olympic Torch. It travelled round the world.

The Games of the xxviii Olympiad quite literally got off to a heart pounding start. The opening ceremony began with a 28 second count down paced by the amplified heartbeat of a runner. The 28 was a reference to the number of modern Olympiads held since 1896.



Celebrating the opening ceremony Athens 2004.

REMINDER NOTICE

60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The club will celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the 1956 Olympic Torch Relay Cairns to Melbourne in association with the North Queensland Games in Cairns on 24th & 25th June 2016. (See reminder notice attached)

The heart beat was followed by a dramatic drumming sequence that made a connection between Athens and Ancient Olympia when the first Olympic race that was run 3000 years ago and the modern celebration of athletics. A Greek team was placed first and last in the team's parade.

Those who attended the Athens games saw both men and women competing. Women wrestlers competed for the first time. One of the shortest women competing in Olympic competition, weight lifter Nurcan Taylan (4ft 11 inches) won the gold medal lifting twice her body weight and set two world records on her way to being Turkey's first female Olympic champion.

A Moroccan, Hicham Guerrouj won both the 1500m and 5000m events. This followed unlucky defeats in the 1500m events in both Atlanta and Sydney.

Kelly Holmes became the first woman to win both the 800m and 1500m events.



Kelly Holmes of Great Britain winning the 800m & 1500m event in Athens.

BEIJING 2008

The Beijing Olympics was awarded to the Peoples Republic of China with the IOC awarding the games after a second round of voting. Human rights concerns were expressed by Amnesty International and the IOC took this into consideration in reaching a decision. The Games were the most watched in Olympic history with 4.7 billion viewers world-wide.

The centerpiece of the Games was the Beijing National Stadium that was nicknamed 'The Bird's Nest'.



The National Stadium (The Birds Nest) where Opening and closing Ceremonies and athletics were held.



The Torch Relay was a widely held event with a route virtually encircling the World. The only continent in which it was not seen, was Antarctica. The flame was carried to the top of Mt. Everest. The route of the torch was accompanied by human rights protesters.



The Beijing Olympic Torch.

In the women's Olympic events Jamaicans' won both the 100m and 200m events namely Shelly-Ann Fraser and Veronica Campbell-Brown. Again Kenyan's Pamela Jelimo and Nancy Jeleet Lagat won the 800m and 1500m events respectively. Sally Pearson gained the silver medal in the 100m hurdles event.

The men were led by Usain Bolt from Jamaica in winning the 100m and 200m events. Walter Dix from the USA was placed third in both these events. Steve Hooker from Australia won the gold

medal in the pole vault with a leap of 5.96m (an Olympic record). Jared Tallent Australia was placed third in the 20km walk and second in the 50km walk.

WE SHOULD NOT FORGET THEM

RAY LINDWALL

Ray Lindwall was born in Mascot Sydney on the 3rd October 1921 and passed away in Brisbane on June 23 1996 at the age of almost 75. Ray was principally a right hand fast bowler. He was a protégé of Bill O'Reilly at the famous St George club. Lindwall renounced Rugby for cricket after WW2 and was uncontested as Australia's new ball bowler. Ashes opponent John Warr held that 'if one was granted one last wish in cricket, it would be the sight of Ray Lindwall opening the bowling in a test match'. Lindwall had a powerful, rhythmic approach, unwavering control and late swing bought a hush to arenas all over the world. When he yorked Len Hutton with the second ball at the Hedingly test of July 1953, it was received with the solemnity of a declaration of war.



Lindwall played first grade cricket with Australia, New South Wales and Queensland.

Like his long time bowling partner Keith Miller, Lindwall could also bat with spirit and adventure: his test century in Melbourne in January 1947 was the second-fastest by an Australian.

Lindwall made his test debut against New Zealand in March 1946 and played in his last test against India in January 1960.

He was made Wisden cricketer of the year in 1949 and installed in the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame in 1996.

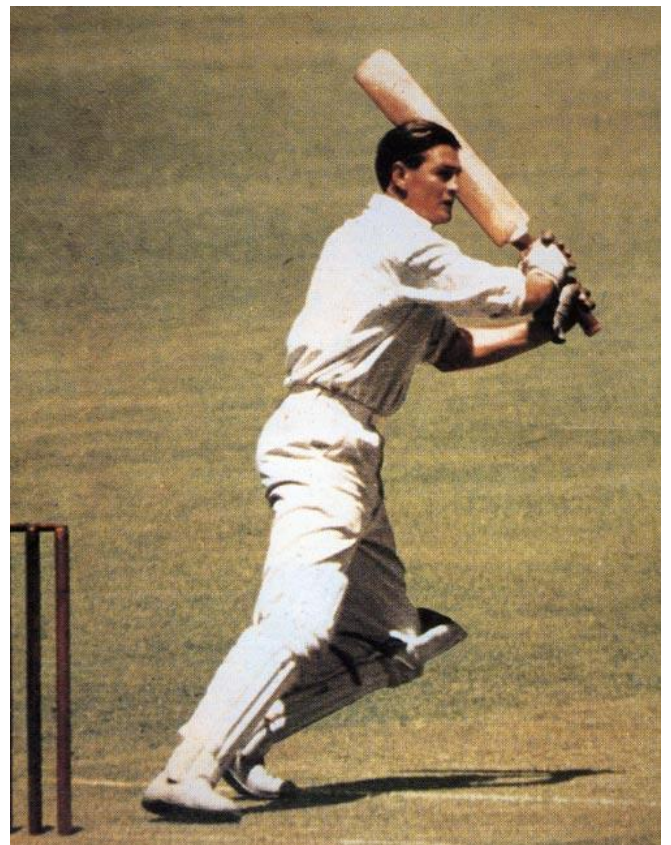


KEITH MILLER

Keith Miller has been described as Australia's greatest cricket all-rounder. He was born on the 28th November 1919 and tragically passed away on the 11th October 2004. Because of his irreverent manner and good looks he was a crowd favorite. An English journalist called Miller 'the golden boy of cricket'. This suggested a nickname of Nugget.

At the time of his retirement he was a member of the record-breaking *Invincibles*.

He also retired with the best statistics of any all-rounder in cricket history.



Miller was born in Sunshine, Victoria and was named after the Australian pioneer aviators Ross and Keith Smith who were half way through their

historic flight from England to Australia when he was born. All the Miller family played Australian Rules in winter and cricket in summer. Their father Leslie taught the three boys orthodox and classical techniques. Miller as a child was small for his age and had to develop techniques rather than use power. At one stage when he was 150cm high he had to use a sawn-off bat.

Miller attended the selective Melbourne High School where his maths teacher was Bill Woodfull Australian Test captain. Miller was a mediocre student and was a disappointment to Woodfull but he noticed his cricket skills. At age 14 he was selected for the school first XI scoring 44. His control and solidarity drew the nickname *unbowlable*. In 1934 Miller failed all his subjects scoring zero in Woodfull's geometry class. He had to repeat the academic year.

Miller joined St. Kilda club in 1934/1935 season but could not find a place in any of its five teams. He continued with other clubs but did not reach great heights. He was even dropped from the first team at Elsternwick for his poor fielding. Miller soon joined South Melbourne where he met Ian Johnson and Lindsay Hassett future Australian captains. In a 1936 match against Carlton, Miller (then aged 17) made 61 to win the game and the crowd gave him a standing ovation and he was compared to Ponsford and Kippax.

He began to grow during 1936 and grew by 11 inches in one year. This put a halt to his ambition to be a jockey. He completed year 10 that year and left high school starting work as a clerk.

During the years 1937 to 1939 he played first class for Victoria and reached a score of 181 against Tasmania at the MCG. He as yet had not played in the Sheffield Shield competition.

Miller achieved success as a footballer. He lacked the strength to hip and shoulder his opponents and relied on his running ability and accurate kicking. He made his breakthrough in the 1939-40 season when he was selected to play Sheffield Shield cricket where he made just 4 and 7 runs batting at number 5. When they fielded Miller run out Don Bradman. So started his career in first class cricket. During that season Miller made 108 against South Australia but had a moderate season finishing with 298 runs.

His sporting career was interrupted by WW2. He joined the army reserve and was assigned to a motor transport Company. He was fined for using insulting language to a superior officer. He became Dusty Miller with his tendency to be involved in fist fights. He was granted leave to play interstate cricket. He reached 140 runs and took his first maiden first class wicket. He also played VFL during that year but was recalled back to duty. He soon enlisted in the RAAF.



Miller in a pensive mood after reading Wisden Cricketers Almanac in 1951.

To be continued in Newsletter 54.

56ERS CORNER

TONY STEVENS' LONG LOST PHOTOS

Tony Stevens has contributed to the newsletter on a few occasions and in newsletter 52 his age for the relay was discussed. Soon after that the editor received two photos that had been misplaced by Tony for his story in newsletter No.43. They have now been located and ready for a belated appearance in the newsletter. Wasn't Tony a handsome lad? He has advised the editor that a person who he doesn't or didn't know took the photos and took the trouble to identify and locate him and delivered the photographic record to him. What a wonderful gesture. The editor contacted Anne Marsden to see if she could recognize the official in the photo but she was unable to identify the chap. She said it was not Marcus her late husband and author of 'Carrying the Torch'.



Tony Stevens exchanging relay torches at Charlestown near Newcastle in 1956.

DON LOWE'S RELAY RUNS

Don Lowe (11 miles North of Tully) took part in three runs including the mighty Torchbearers Melbourne relay.

'In 1956, Innisfail along with all of Far North Queensland was somewhat remote with events in the 'South' rather irrelevant to local daily life

As a lad of eighteen at the time, football mad and the proud owner of a new car, I was only distantly aware of the Olympic Games to be staged in with the preceding torch relay touching many areas of Australia.

It was only as the event drew nearer and the hype increased that I began to understand the significance and honor of being a torch bearer. Consequently I submitted my name but by then all runners had been selected. However I was added to the list as a reserve. To my great surprise, a few days before the torch run, I received a phone call directing me to be at El Arish Golf Club House on the required date-a Friday night, I think at 7.00pm.

I drove down with friends and couldn't believe the crowd. Apparently a local youth with hero status was to run this sector but for reasons unknown had withdrawn. Maybe with such poor lighting the locals were unaware of his replacement. At this time the highway passed the golf club, took a few turns and then crossed over the main railway line. As I was fit, I had no trouble in running this mile sector. I took off to the sound of cheering (no doubt meant for the local) but did my change over in relative silence in the middle of nowhere in pitch darkness that bought me down to earth.

My friends had followed the run for my pick up after which I returned to Innisfail to show my participation medal. Sadly I never had a photograph to record this tumultuous event as part of my sporting achievements.

However my Olympic related career did not end at this point as thirty-four years later with a crook back and footballer's knee, the local 56'ers were again summonsed to participate in re-enactment of their run to promote a bid for another Olympic Games in Melbourne.

This time I carried the torch along the Bruce Highway in Innisfail from Kane's Cordials and up Goondi Hill but was 'buggered' at the Golf Club about half way. To my great relief the railway gates were closed for an on-coming train which gave me a five minute breather, otherwise I may never have made the full sector to Beaurepaire's.

I was selected as a torchbearer for the 2000 Games in Sydney with the run highly organized and promoted. The process reflected the community involvement of participants but fortunately I made the cut and ran with pride. Sadly the official photograph of both change overs from Ty Williams to Catherine Mc Avoy were out of focus and useless but I have my torch and family photographs as treasured memories.

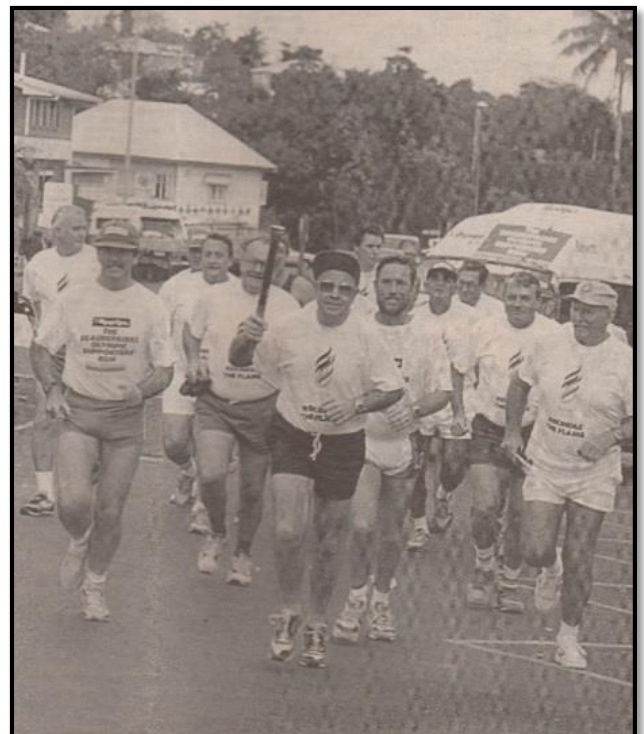


Don Lowe running the Sydney Olympic torch in Innisfail.

THE BEAUREPAIRE RERUN IN 1992

It is strange how one suggestion or contribution can add to a story. For the Torchbearer 52 Bill Mussared forwarded a photo of he, Inness Garner and Lance Andrews pictured after running the "Rekindle the Flame Run" of 1990. Don Lowe above and Brother John also ran the Beaurepaire torch along with quite a lot of Innisfail 56'ers (*see the story in newsletter 52*). The editor was searching through torchbearers files and came across the photo of a group of us running towards the Innisfail Shire Hall, exhaustedly led by Jim O'Brien.

Jim was an Innisfail champion miler in his youth and was the second 1956 torchbearer to depart from the Civic Reception in Innisfail on the 9th November 1956. Jim was chosen to lead the torch from the reception area but another J O'Brien whose father was the Shire Chairman was given the first run by Jim so that the other O'Brien could receive the torch from his father. A wonderful gesture from Jim O'Brien.

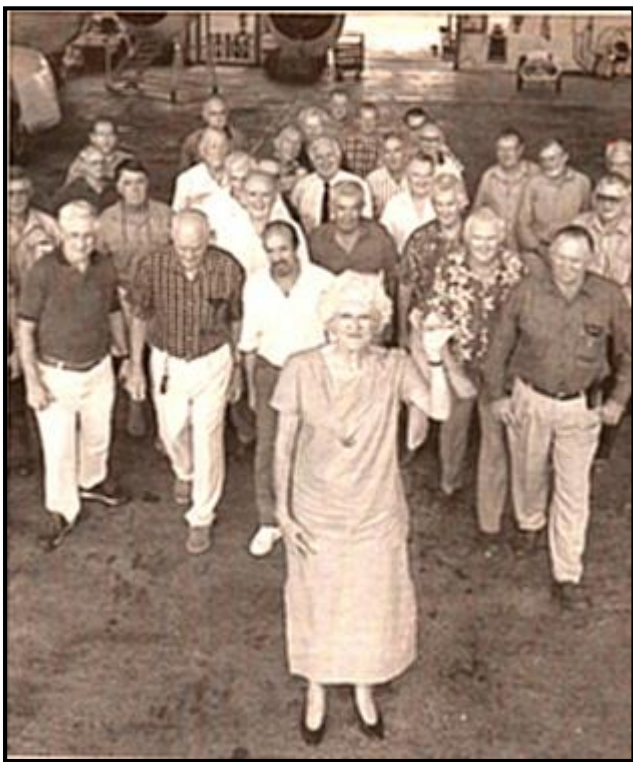


Jim O'Brien leading a bunch of exhausted ancient 56ers to the reception area in 1990.

THE EARLY FORMATION OF THE TORCHBEARERS CLUB

We are aware that the Torchbearers Club was basically formed by the initiative of Con Verivus. To advance the Clubs formation, 56'ers were invited to a meeting at the Cairns Airport Ansett hanger where the 1956 flame was received from Darwin.

Norma Fleming (nee Croker) the first Queenslander to win an Olympic Gold medal visited as a special guest. The story of the full formation of the club written by Bill Cummings is contained in newsletter 47. Norma with her gold medal resplendent is seen with a gathering of 56'ers at the airport on the 9th November 1999.



Norma Fleming posing with 56ers at the old Ansett Terminal where the Olympic Flame was received on the 9th November 1956. Norma is holding high her Olympic Gold medal won for her contribution to the winning Women's 4x 100m relay team in 1956.

FAMOUS QUOTES BY THOMAS JEFFERSON

'The democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not.'

'My reading of of history convinces me that most bad government results from too much government.'

Jefferson was elected the third President of the United States at the age of 57. He was in office for 8 years from 1801 to 1809.

The American Constitution was signed by 12 of the 13 participating states in 1787 with Rhode Island not signing. However the stripes on the US flag amount to 13 in spite of Rhode Island not agreeing initially to the union. Jefferson was not present at the signing being in France as American Minister.

JOKERS CORNER

Adam and Eve

A little girl asked her father, 'How did the human race start?'

The father answered 'God made Adam and Eve, they had children and so all mankind was made.'

Two days later the girl asked her mother the same question. The mother answered, 'Many years ago there were monkeys from which the human race evolved'

Confused the girl returned to her father and said, 'Dad how is it possible that you told me the human race was created by God and mum said they developed from monkeys?'

The father answered, 'It is very simple. I told you about my side of the family and your mother told you about hers.'



Logic from an uncluttered mind

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales.

The teacher said it was impossible for a whale to swallow humans because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

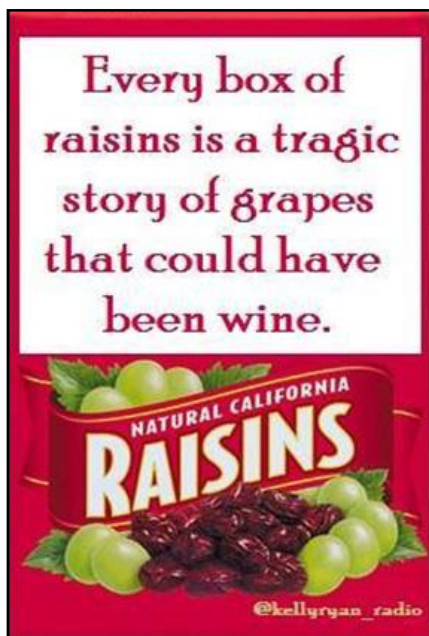
The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

Irritated the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, 'When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah.!

The teacher said, 'What if Jonah went to hell?'.

The little girl replied, 'Then you ask him.'



A German man walks up to the immigration desk at Warsaw airport. The immigration officer asks: 'Occupation?'

The German replies: 'No, just a holiday.'



Q: What time does Sean Connery arrive at Wimbledon?

A: Tennish



Kind Regards

Dennis M Stevenson

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"The Running Scotsman"