

THE TORCHBEARER

NEWSLETTER 57

"56ers Torchbearers Club Inc"

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Merry Christmas

President's Comments

Greetings once again Torchbearers and Partners

With another year drawing to a close and a successful AGM behind us at which executive position, remain as previous, most conversation centred on the enjoyable 60th Anniversary Celebrations that transpired recently.

Editor, Dennis along with Andrew Cummings were singled out for their tireless efforts in publishing *the Torchbearer*.

Numerous suggestions were raised at the AGM for the committee to chew on with an old chestnut resurfacing as to the direction our club should take as our members keep clocking up the years.

According to our Rockhampton colleagues they too had a very successful Celebration receiving quite a good covering from the TV media.

I would like to wish one and all a Happy Christmas and a wonderful Festive Season with safety being a priority at all times. Best of health to all.

Regards
Jim Vallely



WE MUST NEVER FORGET THEM

Kurt Fearnley OAM

Kurt Harry Fearnley was born on the 23 March 1981 in the NSW town of Cowra. He was the youngest of five and was told by his siblings and local residents wherever he lived, that he could do anything. With this understanding there was no other alternative for Kurt to start to believe it.



Kurt Profile & 2012 London Paralympics.

Soon the town of Carcoar (a town of 200 people had raised \$10,000 and purchased a chair. From there Kurt became a gold medallist in the Paralympic Games and 'crawled' the Kokoda Track.

Kurt has a congenital disorder called sacral agenesis that prevented foetal development of certain parts of his lower spine and the whole of his sacrum. In paraplegic events he is classified in the T54 classification.

Kurt focuses on long and middle distance races. He competed in the 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 Paralympic Games.



Kurt on Kokoda trail and award presentation with Prince Harry.

Fearnley won bronze in the 2012 London games marathon and silver in the men's 5000m T54. In competing at the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games he won Gold in the men's 1500m T54 event.

He competed in the 2011 Sydney/Hobart yacht race, and has competed in the 2010 and 2014 New York Marathon in which he was placed third and first respectively. The 2014 NY marathon was the 'toughest race of my life' Fearnley said after the race as high winds nearly had the race cancelled.

Kurt Fearnley has been active in advocacy work and has been an ambassador for the Don't DIS my ABILITY campaign.



Kurt as a boy then as a father.

Fearnley has won the Australia Day, Oz Day 10 k Wheelchair Road Race for the 10th time, joining Louise Sauvage as a 10 time winner of this event.

Fearnley competed in the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games as team captain. He was placed second in the men's T—54 marathon.

A truly remarkable man. Bravo Kurt Fearnley.

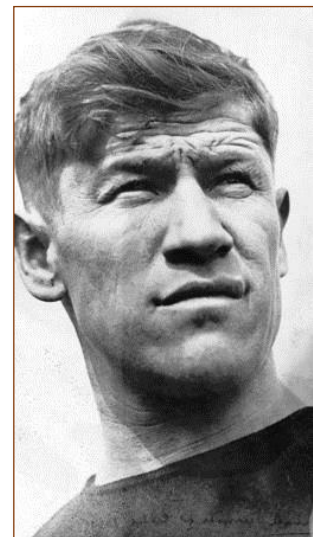


GREAT ATHLETES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

I have previously written brief notes about Jim Thorpe and Jesse Owens in newsletters 43 and 44. I now by courtesy of the book 'Great Athletes of the 20th Century' written by Kavanagh and Tackach more able to outline the history of these great athletes.

JIM THORPE

Jim Thorpe was born in a one -room Oklahoma cabin in 1888 one of twin boys. His parents were part Indian on both sides. He was known as 'bright path' in his tribe and enrolled at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania where Glenn (Pop) Warner built football and track squads around Thorpe's varied skills. He was selected all American in 1908, 1911 and 1912.



Thorpe in 1912.

Between football seasons Thorpe went to Sweden with the US Olympic team in 1912. He swamped the world's athletes in the decathlon and pentathlon. A year later his Olympic triumphs were voided because he had been paid \$15 a week to play baseball for two summers in North Carolina. It was common for collegians to be paid money most did so via aliases. Thorpe naively kept

his name and Olympic officials withdrew his medals and the record of his super performance but they couldn't prevent the King of Sweden calling his performance the greatest in the world.



*Thorpe high jumping in the 1912 decathlon.
Looks like the scissors action.*

In 1913 Thorpe turned professional and was player coach for the Canton Bulldogs and made his final appearance in 1929 at the age of 41. During the depression he worked as a movie extra and even worked with a shovel for \$4 a day. In WW2 he served with the merchant marine. Jim Thorpe died of a heart attack in 1953 at the age of 64.

In 1982 the Amateur Athletic Union restored his amateur status in the 1912 Olympics and his medals which had been refused by the runner up where they had been tarnishing for 70 years were retrieved and presented to the Thorpe family.

What shameful tragedy.

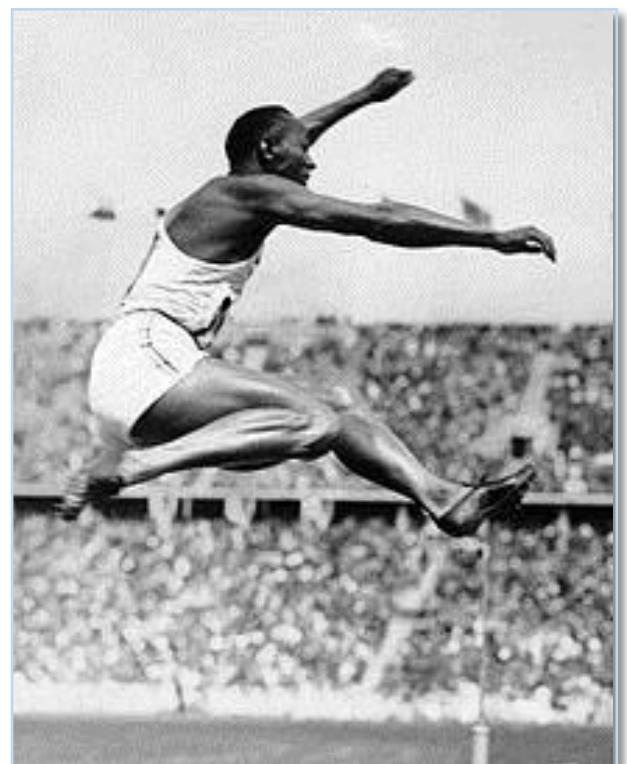
JESSE OWENS

Jesse Owens was born in a small Alabama town in 1913. He gained lasting fame for destroying Hitler's Aryan supremacy theory at the 1936 Olympics.

Owen's journey to Olympic gold began during the depression when his school boy achievements earned him a scholarship to Ohio State University. He burst into national prominence at the Big Ten Track and Field Championships in May 1935. He broke three world records and equalled another. The next year he qualified for the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.

By the time of Owens first race the Berlin crowds had grown accustomed to see Hitler fawn over the winning Aryan athletes. Some comment has it that Hitler looked the other way when the Afro-American won the 100m in 10.3 seconds equalling the Olympic and World records. Snubbed or not

Owens kept on winning-the long jump (broad jump then) with a leap of 26 feet 5 inches, a new Olympic record.

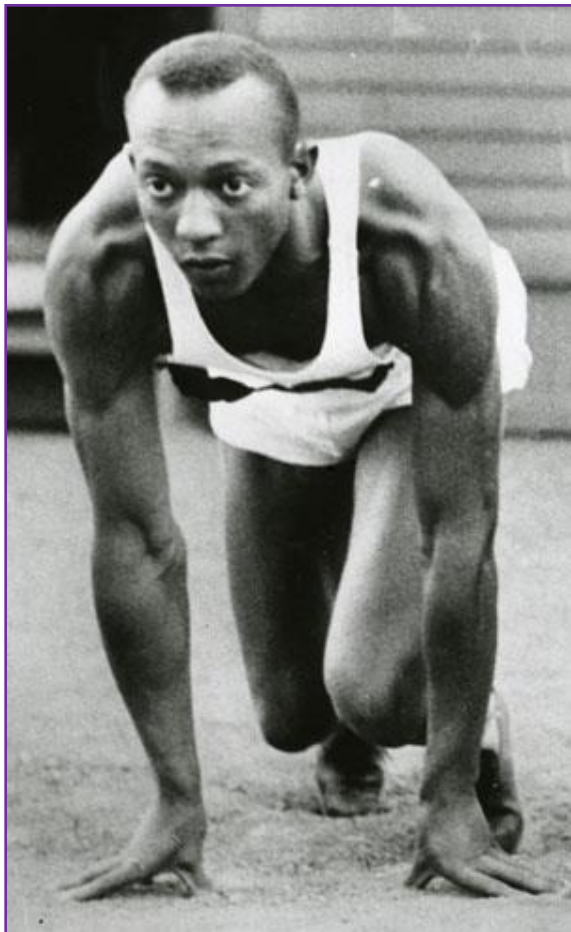


Owens winning the Olympic long jump in Berlin.



On the podium for the long jump medal. Note the Nazi salute by the second placed contestant-Luz Long.

He then won the 200m race with another world record of 20.7. Owens won his fourth gold in the 4x100 m relay which was run in 39.8 an Olympic record. The four gold medals won by Owens beat the three gold won by Paavo Nurmi in 1924.



Jesse Owens about to start a very fast sprint.

Jesse Owens came home with an amateurs honours and a depression-era living to make. To support himself and his wife he ran against racehorses and sprinted against baseball players. Eventually his celebrity status enabled him to become a disc jockey. Not a militant he served well as a role model for upward bound blacks until his death in 1980.

EARLY NOTICE

POTENTIAL CHANGE OF CONSTITUTION

Following discussion at previous annual general meetings, the management committee is proposing to put to the next annual meeting a change in the constitution to expand membership from being restricted to actual runners in the 1956 relay to include members of runners' immediate families.



HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The Titanic 1912



The last photograph of the Titanic as it left Queenstown (Cobh) Ireland on the 11th April 1912.

Cologne cathedral

Post war 1945

Two views of the Cathedral and surrounding buildings in Cologne. Note the destroyed bridge over the River Rhine.



An American bomber pilot (whom Lyn and I met on our European trip in 2001) and who flew 21 raids into Germany said that they used Cologne cathedral as a navigation guide and then turned towards the selected target within Germany.



JOKERS CORNER

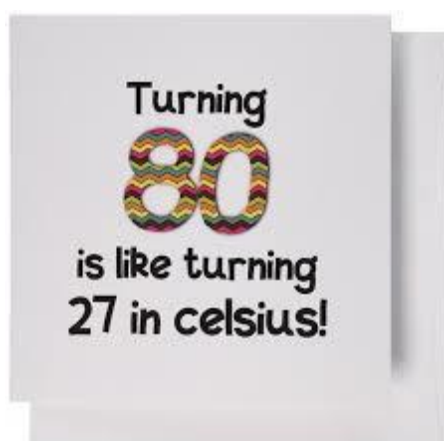
Beautiful English

I called an old school friend and asked him what he was doing. He replied that he was working on 'aquathermal treatment of ceramics, aluminium and steel under a constrained environment. I congratulated him and with further inquiry learnt that he was washing dishes, pots and pans with hot 7 water under his wife's supervision.

Pastors business card

A new pastor was visiting in the homes of his parishioners. At one house it seemed obvious that someone was home, but no answer came to his repeated knocks at the door. Therefore he took out a business card and wrote 'Revelation 3.20 on the back and stuck it in the door. When the offering was processed the following Sunday he found that his card had been returned. Added to it was this cryptic message, "Genesis 3.10'. Reaching for his Bible to check out the citation, he broke up in gales of laughter. Revelation begins 'Behold I stand at the door and knock'. Genesis 3.10 reads, I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid for I was naked'

'A cheerful heart is good medicine' (Prov. 17.22)



Clinton's Cow

Hillary Clinton and her driver were cruising along an Iowa country road one evening when an old dairy cow loomed in front of the car. The driver tried to avoid it but couldn't. The aged cow was struck and killed. Hillary told her driver to go up to 8 the farmhouse and explain to the owners what had happened and pay them for the cow.

She stayed in the car making phone calls. About an hour later the driver staggered back to the car with his clothes in disarray. He was holding a half empty bottle of expensive wine in one hand and a huge Cuban cigar in the other and was smiling happily, smeared with lipstick.

What happened to you, asked Hillary? Well the driver replied the farmer gave me the cigar, his wife gave me the wine and his beautiful twin daughters made passionate love to me.

'What did you tell them?' asked Hillary. The driver replied 'I just stepped inside the door and said, 'I'm Hillary Clintons driver and I've just killed the old cow'. The rest happened so fast I couldn't stop it.'

Apologies to any Clinton supporters.

I join with President Jim in wishing all 56'ers and wives a great Christmas a



Kind Regards

Dennis M Stevenson
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"The Running Scotsman"