

THE TORCHBEARER

NEWSLETTER 60

"56ers Torchbearers Club Inc"

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President's Comments

Greetings Torchbearers and Partners.

After witnessing a smorgasbord of sporting events covering the first half of the year, climaxing with a wonderful display of rugby league during the State of Origin series the following six months has a lot to live up to.

I envisage the lead up to the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast in 2018 will start to make its presence felt as a number of events will be shared amongst regional centres.

Mackay will be the venue for the North Queensland Games early in the new year at which our club will once again provide \$2000 prize money for the 1500 metre men's and women's events.

Both our assisted athletes Montanna McAvoy and John Dodds continue to achieve milestones as they progress at their chosen events and we are always on the lookout for further young achievers.

In closing, I can't thank Dennis enough for his contribution to our newsletter as I know our readers enjoy his tireless contribution.

Good health to all

Regards
Jim Vallely

President



WE MUST NEVER FORGET THEM GLYNIS NUNN OAM

Glynis Leanne Nunn-Cearns OAM was born on the 4th December 1960. She was an Australian Heptathlete.



Glynis Nunn.

Glynis' maiden name was Saunders and was born in Toowoomba. She began competing in athletics at the age of 9, when she was a student at Toowoomba South State School.

She starred in several events and was thus a natural competitor in the pentathlon (which was replaced by the heptathlon in 1981).

In 1978 she qualified for the Commonwealth Games but could not compete because of an injury.

Early Notice Annual General Meeting: This is to advise that the Annual General Meeting of the 1956 Olympic Torch Bearers Club will be held on Saturday the 4th of November, 2017 at the RSL Club, Esplanade, Cairns. Commencing 11:30AM to be followed by lunch. Wives and partners welcome.

By the time of the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane she had married decathlete Chris Nunn and the couple moved to Adelaide where Chris was studying for a physical education degree.

In the first heptathlon competition at the Games she upset the English favourite and took the title. A year later she was placed 7th in the heptathlon at the inaugural World Championships.

Nunn won gold in the 1984 Olympics beating Jackie Joyner-Kersey with the winning score of 6390 points. In addition to her gold medal, Nunn was placed fifth in the 100m hurdles and seventh in the long jump.



Glynis Nunn hurdling at the Los Angeles Games.

Following these Olympics Nunn abandoned the heptathlon and switched to hurdling. She was hampered by many injuries but managed to win a bronze medal in the high hurdles at the 1986 Commonwealth Games.

In 1985 she received the Medal of the Order of Australia and was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame. She received an Australian Sports Medal in 2000.



Glynis Nunn as newly elected Executive Director of the Gold Coast Academy of Sport.

NOVA MAREE PERIS OAM



Nova Peris was born on the 25th February 1971 is an athlete and former politician. As part of the Australian women's hockey team (Hockeyroos) at the 1996 Olympic Games she was the first aboriginal Australian to win an Olympic gold medal. She later switched sports to sprinting and was selected for Australia to attend the 1998 Commonwealth Games and 2000 Olympic Games.

In 1997 she switched sport and became a double gold medallist in the 1998 Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games winning the 200m sprint with a time of 22.77 seconds and sharing in Australia's 4x100 m relay win. She was named young Australian of the year in 1997.



Sharon Cripps, Tanya van Heer, Lauren Hewitt, Nova Peris acknowledging their win in the 100m relay at Kuala Lumpur Commonwealth Games 1998.

Nova Peris became a Senator in 2013. She retired from the senate in 2016.



Nova Peris sprinting for the finishing line.

Peris continued to represent Australia, taking part in the 200m event at the 1990 World Athletics Championships and 400 metres at the Sydney Olympics. She made the Olympic semi-final in her individual event and ran in the Australian 4x400 m relay team which made the final and finished fifth.



Nova Peris with ABC journalist Annabel Crabb. Probably after a Kitchen Cabinet filming.

In the Olympic year of 2000 a portrait of her was hung in the Sporting Archibald Prize painted by Glenda Jones.

LOSS OF BETTY CUTHBERT

I would guess that 56'ers would have heard of the passing of Betty Cuthbert the Golden Girl of Australian Athletics. The Torchbearers Club would join with all other Australians in moving sincere condolences to her extended family and close friends. Betty's memorable performances will be long held in our minds.



Betty Cuthbert winning the 4x100m relay and the 200m events at the Melbourne Olympic Games.

VALE DON WALKER AND ROSS CAVALLARO

We wish to offer sincere condolences to the families of Don Walker and Ross Cavallaro and join with those family members in honouring the two fellow 1956 Torchbearers.

Don carried the flame 11 miles north of Junee and was a Torchbearers Club member. Ross ran his torch through Fishery Falls, 26 miles south of Cairns. He was an active member of the club and attended most annual general meetings.

Rest in peace gentlemen.

The club will always offer condolences to the families of departed torchbearers when we are informed of their passing. We offer apologies to the families of torchbearers who have not been offered condolences.

NORMAN ALFRED MAY THE LAST CHAPTER OF NORMAN MAYS ILLUSTROUS LIFE BY RON ROYES

May spent much of his life working selflessly to raise money for Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games competitors. He was held in such high esteem by the late Sir Donald Bradman, when **The Don** decided to reveal all, he chose Norman May as the interviewer which later became **The Bradman Tapes**.

Perhaps one of highlights of Norman May's career came in 2000 when he carried the Olympic Torch on the day of the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games in Sydney. He stated afterwards. ***It was like a dream come true.***

Too many, Norman May epitomised what the Olympic Torch was all about.

In December 2003, Norman May was honoured with the prestigious **Australian Sports Commission Lifetime Achievement**

Award for his outstanding contribution to sports journalism. May was in illustrious company joining the inaugural and only other winner of the award, **Harry Gordon**.



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In his later years he shared a less demanding rural lifestyle with his constant companion and dedicated carer Roxanne Minchin together with her daughter. Other family members adored him. Ernie, his beloved Jack Russell dog, was never far from his side.

Norman May passed away at 9.00am on Sunday 11 September 2016 aged 88 years and 6 months. He died at his residence at Kurrajong Heights which he purchased in January 2016, following the sale of his Bondi Beach unit.

The tributes flowing to Norman May were significant: - Jim Maxwell 'Sad to hear Norman May has died at the age of 88. A remarkable all round broadcaster who was gold to all of us.

So followed similar comments from Gerard Whateley, Drew Morphet OAM, Stephen Quartermain, Peter Wilkins, Warren Smith FOX, Gordon Bray, and Dennis Cometti.

Norman May's funeral was held at the Sydney cricket ground and amongst the 150 people attending were Olympians Marlene Matthews, Shane Gould and Dawn Fraser. Naturally the service contained the famous expression-'It could be Australia's gold. Five metres, four, three, two, one.... GOLD, GOLD to Australia.....GOLD.'

Ron you have carried out a wonderful work in compiling this story of Norman May-congratulations. Editor.

**SPECIAL SERIES ON
FAMOUS AUSTRALIANS
- DAME NELLIE MELBA -**



Dame Nellie Melba's voice was remarkable for its even quality over a range of nearly three octaves and for its pure, silvery timbre. She had international renown as a soprano, performing in many cities including Milan, Brussels, London, Paris and New York.

She was born Helen Porter Mitchell on the 19th May 1861 at Richmond Melbourne. Her Scottish father David Mitchell, was a building contractor and a good bass vocalist and her

mother, Isabelle (nee Dow) was her first music teacher.

After the death her mother in 1881, followed by that of her youngest sister, Melba accompanied her father to Mackay in Queensland where he was applying his knowledge to buildings in Mackay. She married Charles Armstrong (who was managing Marian mill) in Brisbane in 1883 and they has a son George.



Dame Nellie and son George.

In 1884 she returned to Melbourne and decided to become a professional singer and gave a number of concerts and recitals. She soon had the opportunity to accompany her father to London and a successful audition with the celebrated Mathilde Marchesi in Paris gave her career the boost that it needed. She began lessons with Marchesi and was introduced to such composers as Delibes, Massenet and Gounod. It was Marchesi who persuaded her to adopt a suitable stage name. 'Melba' was chosen as a contraction of her native city.

In 1887 Melba made her operatic debut in Brussels as Gilda in Verdi's Rigoletto and went

on to sing with great success in London, Paris, Milan and New York and other major cities. Within a few years she was regarded as one of the most accomplished and famous sopranos of her time.



A painting of Melba soon after her initial success.

After a successful debut in Paris she subsequently established herself as Covent Garden's prima donna, and the 'Queen of Song' maintained her own permanent dressing room there. One of her most famous operatic roles was that of Mimi in Puccini's La Boheme.

In 1900 her marriage to Charles Armstrong ended. However her triumphant return to Australia involved a concert tour of all States and New Zealand. She returned to Europe, but came back to Australia many times.

During the period from 1904 to 1926 Dame Nellie produced almost 200 recordings.

In 1909 she toured the Australian outback and purchased a property at Coldstream near Lilydale Victoria and engaged the architect John Grainger (father of the composer Percy Grainger) to design Coombe Cottage. Dame Nellie whilst in London purchased a house and called it Coombe and named her Australian property Coombe also. (Coombe is now a

highly successful wine producing organization and a restaurant.)



During WW1 she worked tirelessly to raise funds for war charities.

Dame Nellie-photograph (1922) by Harold Cazneaux located in the National Portrait Gallery Canberra.

Melba became a grand-mother with the birth of Pamela (Lady Vestey) who later managed Coombe.



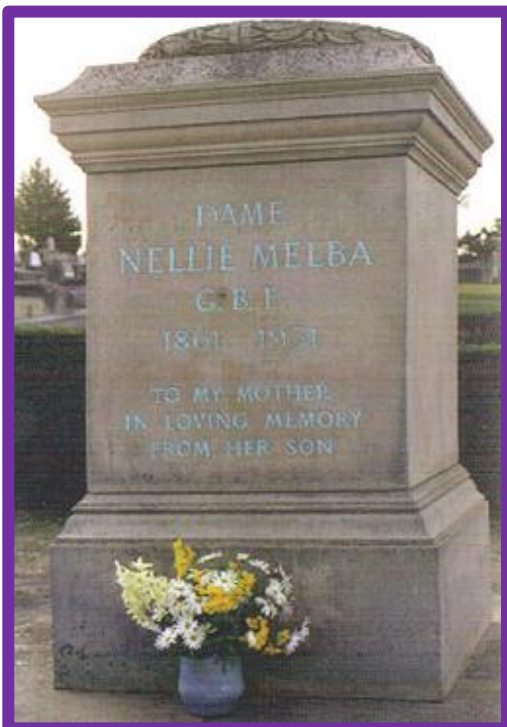
Dame Nellie Melba holder her grandchild Pamela.



Dame Nellie singing at the opening of the old Parliament House in 1927

She was made a Dame Grand of the Order of the British Empire.

Dame Nellie performed her final and emotional concert in Australia in 1928. She died in Sydney in 1931 and was buried in Lilydale cemetery.



Dame Nellie's well-earned resting place at Lilydale Cemetery.

Dame Nellie has her photograph on the Australian \$100 bank note.



The house she lived in whilst early married and disliked is now located on the banks of the Pioneer river close to Marian. It is a much sought tourist spot.



The Melba House in its original position at Marian Mill Mackay.

JOKERS CORNER

Another cracker yarn from Roy Brown, Babinda.

In Church, the preacher asked the congregation, 'How many of you have enemies? Please put your hand up!

About half put their hand up. So he said 'come on almost every one has enemies let us try again. How many of you have enemies? Everyone put their hand up except one very old woman right at the back. He asked her how old she was. '93' she said. 'Could you come down and stand in front of the congregation please?'

She tottered slowly down to the front. 'Now', said the preacher, 'can you tell the congregation how you lived to 93 and have no enemies.' She said,

'I OUT LIVED THE BL..HES'.

A light bulb joke

I urgently needed a few days of work but I knew the boss would not allow me to do so.

I thought that if I acted crazy he would tell me to take a few days off.

So I hung upside down from the ceiling and made a few strange noises.

My co-worker (who is blonde) asked me what I was doing.

I told her that I was pretending to be a light bulb so that the boss might think I was crazy and give me time off.

A few minutes later the boss came into the office and asked what in the name of goodness is going on?

I told him I was a light bulb.

He said I was clearly stressed out, so go home for a few days and recuperate.

I jumped down and walked out of the office.

My co-worker followed me. When the boss asked her where she was going?

You are going to love this.

I am going home too, I cannot work in the dark.



The Irish Charitable Tradition

On a flight from Dublin to Boston, the lead flight attendant in her beautiful Irish brogue announced.

'Ladies and Gentlemen I am so very sorry but there seems to have been a mix up in our catering service. We have 103 on board but only received 40 meals. I truly apologize for the error'.

When the muttering from the passengers had died down she continued 'Anyone who is kind enough to give up their meal so that someone else can eat will receive free and unlimited drinks for the duration of our 10 hour flight'.

Her next announcement came 2 hours later.

'If anyone is hungry we still have 40 meals available'.



Kind Regards

Dennis M Stevenson
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"The Running Scotsman"