

THE TORCHBEARER

NEWSLETTER 66

"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

Email

admin@56ers.org.au

Merry Christmas

The History of Reduction in Time for the 1500 Metre Event

1884	Walter George	4.18.4	England
1895	Thomas Conneff	4.15.4	America
1913	John Paul Jones	4.14.2	America
1923	Paavo Nurmi	4.10.4	Finland
1931	Jules Ladoumeque	4.9.2	French
1933	Jack Lovelock	4.7.6	New Zealand
1934	Glen Cunningham	4.6.8	America
1937	Sydney Wooderson	4.6.4	England
1942	Hagg & Arne Andersson	4.6.2	Sweden
1945	Gunter Hagg	4.1.4	Sweden
1954	Roger Bannister	3.59.4	England
1954	John Landy	3.58	Australia

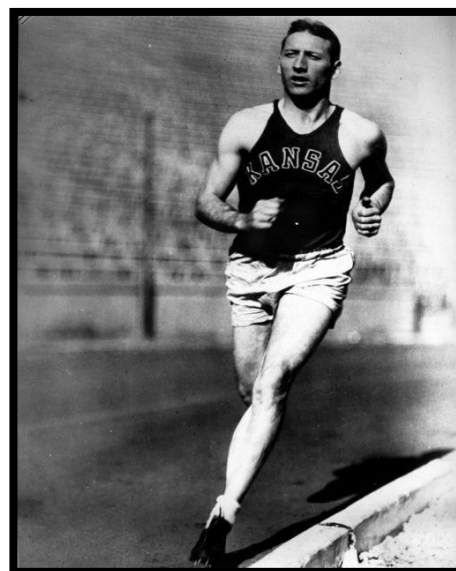
Glen Cunningham

Considered as the greatest American miler of all time, he received the James E. Sullivan Award as the top amateur athlete in the United States in 1933.

Cunningham competed in the 1500m event at the 1932 and 1936 Summer Olympics and finished fourth and second, respectively.

While on the ship, traveling from the U.S. to Germany in 1936, he was voted "Most Popular Athlete" by his fellow Olympians.

Cunningham won the Sullivan medal in 1933 for his achievements in middle-distance running. In 1934, he set the world record for the mile run at 4:06.8, which stood for three years. He also set world records in the 800 m in 1936 and in the indoor mile in 1938.



Cunningham's unachieved goal was a four-minute mile. Many people tried that before and failed. Several theorists proclaimed it was impossible physiologically for humans. Some athletes tried running steady and fast-paced the whole time. Others tried to go steady for the first half then give it all they had. Glenn

worried about the strength of his legs burned in his youth, so he started slow – running in the pack. He would be fresher in the second half – and would almost be sprinting the last 100 yards to the finish.

Cunningham was born in Atlanta, Kansas, but grew up in Elkhart, Kansas. His legs were very badly burned in an explosion caused when someone accidentally put gasoline instead of kerosene in the can at his schoolhouse when he was eight and his brother Floyd was thirteen. Floyd died in the fire. When the doctors recommended amputating Glenn's legs, he was so distressed his parents would not allow it. The doctors predicted he might never walk normally again. He had lost all the flesh on his knees and shins and all the toes on his left foot. Also, his transverse arch was practically destroyed. However, his great determination, coupled with hours upon hours of a new type of therapy, enabled him to gradually regain the ability to walk and to proceed to run. It was in the early summer of 1919 when he first tried to walk again, roughly two years after the accident. He had a positive attitude as well as a strong religious faith. His favorite Bible verse was Isaiah 40:31: "But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

56ers Corner

Ray Kahl's Impression of the 1956 relay

Ray ran his mile 15 miles north of Ingham. Before proceeding with Ray's story I must advise that this story was sent to Bill Chandler who was the organizer of the Torch relay for the Cairns area and this letter was forwarded to Bill in 1999. It has thus been on file since that date. Sorry for the delay in telling it in the newsletter Ray but thank the president for finding it.

Myself and mate since 1948, Ken Wendelin was cutting cane at Enmore, now a suburb of Cairns for Jack Warner. Mr Warners son John came to us one day and asked us if we would show him how to cut sugar cane. He cut for a week in that time we spoke of many things and one of them about the torch relay. At the end of the week John told us he could get us a run in the relay and we jumped at the chance.

We knew very little about the run only that we should run a mile in 6 minutes. So we started training.

My mate was lucky, he had a sealed road to train on. I lived in a newly developed area with a dirt road. Every night I did a couple of laps around the streets carrying a beer bottle filled with water as the torch. Somewhere I got the idea that you had to run the mile without changing hands which I did on the day, only to find out later that I was only one in our group that did this.

I think it was on a Thursday afternoon a gentleman came to tell me pick up time was 1.30am Saturday morning on the dot at the Cairns Council Chambers. Saturday morning arrived and it was raining.

We got on board, two in front and driver and three in the back up against the back with cover over our heads. Away we went in the four gleaming Holden utes supplied by the Cairns City Council. As we travelled so did the weather, it became heading for Cardwell. We had a few pit stops to stretch the legs and get the circulation back in our rear ends. We reached Cardwell in time to see the torch go through the town, every one lined the street. We got our first glimpse of how the torch was lit and passed over to the next runner. Everything was going like clockwork. Now a quick drink of water, maybe a snack. Some ate patty cakes, biscuits one munched a big green

apple, some said don't eat, that it will zap your oxygen

Off we went to our starting pegs with numbers on all. We were off and ready- now the wait. I remember jogging down the road to ease the nerves and going through my mind, don't run too fast for the first two or three hundred yards. I looked up the road to see the army truck coming- it was happening. They called me over to the back of the truck. What a tired lot of blokes- lack of sleep. One picked up a torch unwrapped it and handed it to me and said 'press the red button on the top of the other one when it arrives'. The torch arrived and I lit mine with crackle and smoke coming out. A voice said 'you are on your way'. I ran it with ease and then the reverse procedure. Handing my torch back and receiving my medal. It beat the Toyota add 'O What a feeling'.



One day in Brisbane many years later I met the gentleman I lit my torch from, his name was Yesberg and he was working for the company, Rocla Pipes that I was working for.

This is my memory of the 1956 Torch Relay, hoping to get the chance to do it again.

Ray Kahl.

A Wonderful WW2 Story in May 1945

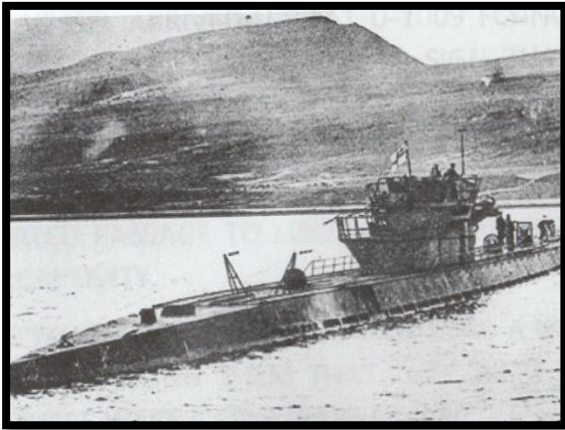
The surrender of Nazi U-boats in Loch Eribol in Sutherland was one of the strangest episodes at the end of WW2. Local were sworn to secrecy and it often assumed that only two or three crews gave themselves up in the sheltered inlet.

Lyn and I visited that part of Scotland in June 2001 on our way around Scotland and attended a Highland Gathering at Durness. There was no B&B available at Durness and we travelled a little further East to Laird on the Western bank of Loch Eribol and booked into a B&B owned by Hugh McLennan- his son was learning the pipes so we had a play on the chanters for a while. Hugh McLennan told us that the Nazi U-boat fleet had surrendered in Loch Eribol in 1945 and this increased our interest in the area. We ventured down to the Loch for a stickybeak but were driven mad by midges. McLennan was also growing oysters in netting bags in the cold waters of the Loch but they were not on the menu that night.

It is the 65th anniversary of the time of writing the book recording the actions of the surrender and it is now known that no fewer than 33 u- Boat commander surrendered in the space of 12 days in the 10 mile long loch.

u- Boats, nick named grey wolves were of course part of Hitler's plan to starve Britain of food, raw materials and equipment. David Hird has researched the book detailing the Grey Wolves of Eribol. He identified every u-Boat that came to Eribol and was staged to find that 33 had surrendered in the loch.

They included u-1231 which was used as the fleet off licence and was laden with wine. And U-boat 532 that had just returned from Japan with rubber, quinine and other war supplies. It was covered in barnacles as it had been in the ocean so long.



U-1231 in Eribol in 1945. Note the British Ensign flying from the conning tower.

The vessels that surrendered were responsible for sinking 59 merchant vessels and 14 warships-300,000 tonnes of allied shipping. Of the 33 u-Boats that surrendered in the Loch 15 were brought under convoy from Norway by Canadian war ships and all there were disarmed within hours. Explosives and other armaments were dumped over the side. The loch seabed is today littered with these armaments. The u-Boats were then routed to Lochalsh in Wester Ross where the crews were arrested. As part of the operation the u-Boats were sunk in the Atlantic with 121 of the 154 surrendered vessels being sunk in deep waters off Lisahally in Northern Ireland or Loch Ryan in the west of Scotland. In late 1945 and early 1946.

Sailors on British warships told of the moment the first vessel arriving it was flying a tattered black flag from its periscope as a sign it was ready to surrender. The u-Boats were boarded, guns and torpedo firing pistols were thrown overboard and log books and other documents were removed in preparation for the escorted passage to Lochalsh where the crews were taken into captivity. A few tears were shed by the departing crews.

Loch Eribol was chosen because of its isolation and deep anchorage. It also limited any opportunity for any last show of defiance from

U-boat commanders. In one such incident u-295 rammed a Canadian escort ship HMCS Nene punching a hole in the starboard side. The u-Boat captain claimed it was an accident?.

Each u-Boat had about 30 to 40 crew and they were happy to surrender in Scotland as it was the Russians they were worried about.

Some light-hearted information

- Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated.
- Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite.
- An average person's left hand does 56 percent of the typing.
- The shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.
- There are more chickens in the world than humans.
- A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.
- An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.
- Tigers have striped skin not just striped fur.
- No word in the English language rhymes with mouth, orange and silver.
- In most advertisements the time displayed on a watch 10.10.
- Dreamt is the only English word that ends in the letters 'mt'.
- The longest one syllable word in the English language is 'screeched'.
- Almonds are members of the peach family.
- Winston Churchill was born in a ladies room during a dance.
- There are only four words in English which end in 'dous', tremendous, horrendous, stupendous, hazardous.

Contributed by Ron Royes.

Joker's corner

I was talking to an old friend and asked him what he was doing. He said he was doing aqua thermal treatment of ceramics, aluminium and steel under a constrained environment.'

I was impressed....

On further inquiring I have learned that he was washing dishes, pots and pans with hot water...under his wife's supervision.



Being Honest

My teacher asked what my favourite animal was and I said 'Fried chicken'

She said I wasn't funny but she couldn't have been right because everyone else laughed.

My parents told me to always tell the truth. I did.

I told my Dad what happened and he said my teacher was probably a member of PETA. He said they love animals very much.

I do too. Especially chicken, pork and beef.

Anyway my teacher sent me to the principal's office.

I told what happened and he laughed too. And told me not to do it again.

The next day in class my teacher asked me what my favourite live Animal was. I told her it was chicken.

She asked me why so I told her because you can make them into fried chicken.

She sent me back to the principals' office.

He laughed and said not to do it again.

I don't understand. My parents taught me to be honest but my teacher doesn't like it when I am.

Today my teacher asked me to tell her what famous person I admired most.

I told her, 'Colonel Saunders'.

Guess where I am now?

I wish to join with President Jim and Secretary/treasurer Bill in wishing our members and readers of the newsletter and their wives a very special greeting for Christmas and the New Year.



Kind Regards

Dennis M Stevenson
menafalls1@bigpond.com

"The Running Scotsman"