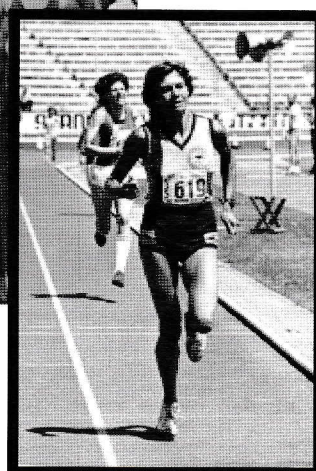
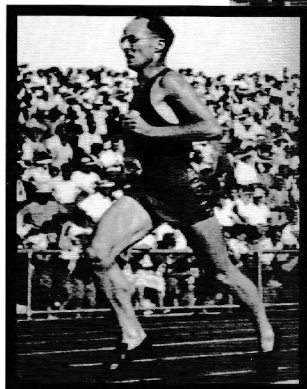
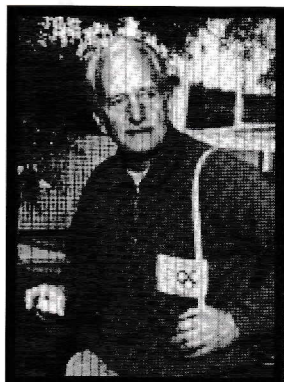


THE VICTORIAN MARATHON CLUB

Collective Memoir 1946-1994



Compiled by the editorial team of Ken Fraser, Fred Lester, Joan Logan, Peter Logan, Vin Martin, Neil Ryan, Stella Barber and Judy Wines

Forward by **Ron Clarke OBE**

This book is dedicated to the pioneers of the Club who, from the love of the sport and desire to give opportunities to all who sought it, created an institution to bring Australia's distance running up to world-class standards.

**Victorian Marathon Club
Life Members**

**Bob Prentice
Fred Lester
Bert Gardiner
Les Perry
Neil Ryan**

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PREFACE

When one thinks of the history of marathoning in Victoria, the great names – Rob de Castella, Steve Moneghetti and Chris Wardlaw come to mind quickly – as do the reports of thousands running Melbourne’s annual marathons over the past 20 years. There is not one history, but several to be told – of the champion athletes, the Spartans who have run 10 or more Melbourne Marathons, the Traralgon Marathon with over 30 years of history, the visionary administrators such as Ted Paulin, Brian Dixon and Bob Ansett, and the thousands of Mums, Dads and ordinary Australians who ran a marathon as a personal goal.

There was a long period however - almost 70 years - when the marathon was an athletic activity pursued by a mere handful of dedicated athletes. The collective memoir that follows centres on the Victorian Marathon Club or VMC. It is now just over 100 years since the birth of Bert Gardiner and Percy Cerutti, two of the founders of the Victorian Marathon Club in 1946, over 90 years since the running of the first marathon from Frankston to Melbourne, 80 years since an Australian completed the Olympic Marathon for the first time. September 2002 is the fiftieth anniversary of the Helsinki Games at which several VMC members represented Australia with distinction.

This collective memoir draws on stories, biographies, minutes of committee meetings, detailed race records, 99 issues of the VMC newsletter and unpublished writings of longstanding VMC members. Several personal reflections were penned by former VMC members just for this publication.

As women did not run VMC marathons until the 1970s, the biographies of early VMC members are predominantly of men. Women contribute significantly to the second half of the club’s history and this is reflected in the range of reflections by VMC members.

The writing of all memoirs is necessarily limited by the time and resources available. This one is no different as all contributors wrestled between dwelling on the past and making tomorrow’s history today at work, home, community activities or continuing running endeavours. However, all the stories presented here illustrate the character and times of the club. The story of the VMC is too good to keep secret and its time has come. We hope this memoir brings as much pleasure to you as readers as it did to us putting it together.

Ken Fraser, Fred Lester, Joan Logan, Peter Logan, Vin Martin, Neil Ryan, Stella Barber and Judy Wines - *the editorial and production team*

December 2002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On 1 April 1966, at Alf O'Connor's Beach Road home in Hampton, 30 members of the Victorian Marathon Club (VMC) met to hold the club's annual general meeting. Fred Lester, Neil Ryan and Ken Fraser were all present at that meeting to discuss the important issue of raising race entry fees to 40 cents. The same three names featured among the small band who gathered 36 years later in the family room of my Hawthorn home for the first of several meetings to guide the production of this collective memoir. Distance runners build up strong bonds of mateship, bonds that run deep and endure through time. This publication would not have come about without the bonds of trust between Fred, Neil and Ken and indeed between many of us who have enjoyed distance running over the years to whatever level of capability.

Other members of the editorial team were Judy Wines (who took minutes of meetings and whose enthusiasm was unstinted), Joan Logan and Peter Logan. Thank you to some former VMC members who responded with time and effort to an invitation to contribute text, advice or support to the production of this memoir: Kevin Falloon, Megan Sloane, John Waite, Carolyn Schuwalow, Dot Browne and Ron Clarke among others. In recent years, Stella Barber, a professional historian and former club member, supported the VMC trustees in keeping alive the idea of a history of the VMC. Les Perry, Doug Oliver, Pat Clohessy and the late Bert Gardiner have made important written contributions on the club's history since its closure.

For a project of this sort, records are vital. The minutes of committee meetings, results of club races, a full set of club newsletters and collections of articles and memorabilia maintained by Fred Lester and the late Bert Gardiner were all important sources of material.

On a personal note, the opportunity to reflect on the origins of marathoning in Victoria with men and women who were among the pioneers was indeed a privilege. I would also like to thank my family, Lois, Andrew, Pamela and Sarah, for welcoming the project team into our home on several occasions and for affording me much priority access to the home computer. The task of taking the contents of this memoir from the manuscript to publishable format was enthusiastically undertaken by Russ Haines, whose talents will be known to many readers through his editorship of the VicVets newsletter.

Thank you to one and all.

Vin Martin (*on behalf of the editorial and production team*)
December 2002

FOREWORD

by *Ron Clarke*

The VMC played an important role in the careers of so many of us during its relatively short life.

Reading through the results and recollections that abound in this gem of a publication, I am reminded of past deeds and doings of hundreds of wonderful athletes and friends who made the history of the Club so colourful.

There isn't any doubt that from its inception in the Collingwood Harriers old Club-rooms on 23rd September 1946 until its final event at Princes Park on 19th December 1993, a few years short of its 50th birthday, the VMC played a leading and integral role in the development of a golden era in Victorian distance running.

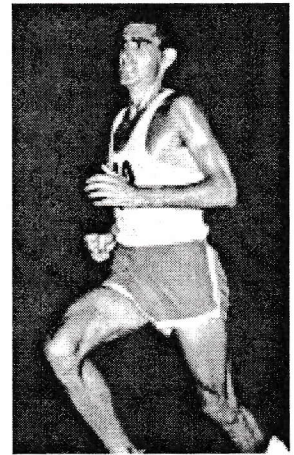
Certainly with the influence of Percy Cerutti and then Les Perry the rapid rise in the standard here was dramatic.

During the sixties and seventies Derek Clayton was the world's best marathon runner and close to it in all the distances from 20km up. He was followed by Rob de Castella and Steve Moneghetti with Chris Wardlaw keeping them honest. No country, let alone a city, could boast their equal. I remember when Derek took an unbelievable 2½ minutes off the old world best for the marathon with his run in Fukuoka on December 3rd, 1967 (2.12.00 to 2.9.36.4). We had known for years how good he was. If ever there was a performance waiting to happen it was Derek Clayton in 1967. A couple of years later he took another minute off his time in Antwerp to record 2.8.33.6, a standard which took almost a decade to be bettered.

With Les Perry's enthusiasm the Emil Zatopek 10 km was born in 1961, my first track 10 km ever. It was a thrill to break away from my two training mates, Tony Cook and Trevor Vincent, even if the time was very ordinary – 30.36.0. Next year, after the Commonwealth Games in Perth, I was able to improve that to 29.53.0 but it was my third Zatopek in 1963 that went down in history. It was the first metric world record ever set in Australia.

I thought I was running well enough to break Sandor Iharos' 6 mile mark but none of us thought anyone would get near Pyotr Bolotnikov's world 10 K record for years. Actually the day before the run I trained at Caulfield Racecourse with my brother and did some downhill 400's in bare feet. Jack ran these with me and was the only one I told about my ambition to break Iharos' record. Just last year I discovered he had told a fellow architect, Daryl Jackson an old friend from primary school days the next day so Daryl and his office colleagues also trotted across from their offices in Hotham Street, East Melbourne. I relate this because they virtually made up half the crowd that were watching – it must have been the most unexpected, and unheralded, world record of all time.

My lead up was typical for the VMC events in that era for all of us. For example, if we were due to run an evening VMC race "Around the Tan", or "The Two Bridges", we would spend the day at our workplace (for me this was the office of Lamson Paragon Ltd, where I was the Head Office Accountant), and then drive or walk down to the venue at Olympic Park (I walked into town from our offices on the Boulevard in Richmond, depending upon whether I had the car or my wife Helen needed it).



That day, I recall, Helen had it because her best friend, Beverley Gibson, was off overseas and Helen was organising a farewell party at which I was expected to attend just "as soon as I finished running".

As can be imagined it took some time to get away from the track after I managed to break both world records and re-lived the race a couple of times. Finally I got a lift out to Moonee Ponds to Beverley's place. I was busting with the news but I passed it on to Helen via a quite "casual" remark when she duly asked "You're late, where have you been? "Oh I broke a couple of world records tonight". I think I hoped she'd swoon but Helen was always the practical one. "That's all very nice but we really need some help here, so grab a couple of plates and circulate".

On the way home I was able to convince her that I actually did break the world records and life would never be the same (but, in essence, it thankfully never did change much).

It was the great fun that the VMC competitions provided which added the extra spice to the VAAA's normal events and we all loved to compete by incorporating the additional races into our training programmes. This did not present any problems.

Great times and great characters abound in my memories of all the years of the VMC era. All of us have a debt to that small group who started it all 56 years ago, and to all those who have helped, as officials and/or competitors, throughout its existence.

To all of them – thanks for the memories. I invite you all to read on and share these treasured moments with me.

September 2002

Paul Clarke

IN THE BEGINNING

Letter introducing the Victorian Marathon Club

Dear Sir

At a meeting held on Monday 23rd September 1946, it was decided to form a club to foster and promote amateur long distance running and to apply for affiliation with the VAAA.

The following conditions were decided: -

Name:	The Victorian Marathon Club
President:	Mr P Cerutti
Vice-presidents:	Nominations to be called for
Hon Sec:	Mr G J Thompson (pro tem)
Constitution:	To be drawn up as simply as possible and submitted to members for adoption
Subscription:	5/- per annum
Meetings:	To be held at least once a quarter
Uniform:	Members to retain first claim club's uniform, but to wear a small monogrammed V.M. on left breast.

Your name was submitted as a possible foundation member and if you desire to become same, please fill in attached form and forward same, together with subscription, to me at your earliest convenience.

Trusting you will give the club your support,

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Thompson

Secretary

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE VICTORIAN MARATHON CLUB

by Vin Martin

Prehistory

In 1896, Edwin Flack was the first Australian to represent the country in the Olympic Marathon. Although Edwin led for much of the distance he failed to finish, for the good reason that he had already won gold medals for 800 and 1,500 metres!! Then in 1908, three Aussies Joseph Lynch, George Blake and Vic Aitken (a Coburg Harrier) all competed but withdrew before the finish.

The first reference in Bert Gardiner's notes to a marathon held in Australia is the unofficial Australasian Championships in Brisbane on 21 August 1909. The winner was Andrew Wood in a time of 2 hours 59 minutes and 15 seconds from a field of 29 starters, 18 of whom finished. That year there were also marathons in several capital cities, the winners being Andrew Syme (Melbourne and Sydney) and C Hildebrandt (Western Australia).

The first recorded marathon from Frankston to Melbourne occurred in 1910. Melbourne runner and walker, Bill Murray, won this race in 2 hours 58 min 48 sec. Bert Gardiner, the VMC's second president, could recall that Bill presented trophies to winners of VMC marathons at Point Cook in the 1950s.

Following a time of 2 hours 54 minutes in a NSW Marathon, Steve Poulter competed for Australia in the Helsinki in 1912. Alas he failed to finish too. In 1920, Sinton Hewitt, a Malvern Harrier, was the first Australian to complete an Olympic Marathon finishing in 30th place in a time of 3 hours 3 min 27 sec. Sinton was a VMC vice-president in 1949.

Marathons continued to be held in Melbourne during the 1920s mostly into fierce winds along the course from Frankston to Melbourne. The last in Victoria before the Second World War appears to have been held in 1931. After Sinton Hewitt, no Victorian ran in the Olympic Marathon before the war. However, there was a better outcome in the 1938 Empire Games.

In a centenary profile of the Malvern Harriers Athletic Club, *Running into History*, the story is told of how the club organised a 20 mile race for Dick Crossley in which he smashed the Australian record for that distance. In the marathon at the Empire Games, Dick finished seventh to be first Australian home.

While the history of distance running may have stalled in Australia during the 1920s, elsewhere in the world developments took place that were to have long-lasting reverberations. Returning to an earlier interest in athletics, Arthur Newton took to distance running at the age of 38 years – long distances – with a vengeance. During a competitive span of 13 years, Newton won six Comrades events and competed over distances up to and beyond the marathon. In his *Lore of Running*, Tim Noakes explains how Newton developed several training principles from his experience including long slow distances in training, the importance of training the mind and avoidance of overtraining.

In 1942, Percy Wells Cerutti at the age of 47 years read Arthur Newton's 1935 book simply titled *Running*. Inspired, Percy embarked on a personal mid-life running renaissance similar to Newton's a few years earlier. Back in 1919, Percy had run 4 min 32 sec for a mile with the Malvern Harriers before dropping out of athletics. Like Arthur Newton, Percy wanted to be recognised for his efforts too – and for this, distance running had to have a higher profile following the Second World War than before.

Birth and Foundations (1946 to 1959)

On 23 September 1946, in the clubrooms of the Collingwood Harriers, Messrs Cerutti, Wally Clark, Ray Coverdale, Dick Ryan and Gordon Thompson agreed to form the Victorian Marathon Club and seek affiliation with the Victorian Amateur Athletics Association. The VMC's first annual general meeting took place on 5 March 1947 with 14 in attendance. Percy Cerutti was elected President and Gordon Thompson, the secretary of the club. Percy held the presidency until 1951. Other members to support the club at this time included Jack Dixon, "Brook" Tovey, Frank Kealy, Ken McPhail, Arthur Butler, Jim McConchie, Gordon Stanley and George Schollick. Even at this early stage, training methods were to the fore. Among the coaching advice discussed at that time was a minimum of 600 miles in training in the lead-up to a marathon, 3 sheets of brown paper across the chest for protection from the cold and Vaseline all over.

Early VMC members were distinguished by a monogram stitched to singlets of primary clubs. As late as 1950 however, this monogram was a source of discussion between the VMC and the VAAA.

The stated objective of the VMC was "to foster marathon running in Victoria" and its initial aim was to see every VAAA club represented in the Victorian Marathon. The VMC offered to assist would-be marathon aspirants with training and coaching advice. The club organised races over 10, 15 and 20 miles in these early years as well as regular Sunday training runs heading out from the Collingwood rooms. From the outset, VMC runners raced well: in 1947 Gordon Stanley won the Victorian Marathon Championship in a time of 2 hours, 37 min 21 sec. The club took particular pride in 1949 when members, Bob Prentice (2 hours 43 min 46 sec), Gordon Stanley and Merv Harburn took out first three places in the Victorian championships.

Much of the club's efforts in these early years appear to have been taken up with developing positions in relation to VAAA and scheduling of its distance events, particularly the marathon. Percy Cerutti, as chair, seems to have tried on several occasions to interest fellow club members in the organisation of races over 30

miles, 50 kms and 50 miles. Committee minutes never record more than discussion. The record of a long meeting held on 26 July 1950 at Percy's home indicates that in relation to a suggested 50 miler, "All these matters were left in the hands of the President to prosecute severally". A highlight in 1950 was Gordon Stanley's 4th place in the Empire Games marathon and Bob Prentice's 10th in the same race; Les Perry ran the 3 mile race and John Pottage the 6 mile.



Les Perry running for the Ringwood Club

Les Perry was first attracted to the VMC after witnessing Percy's 5th placing in State Marathon Championship at Northcote in 1946. In April this year, Les recalled that Percy, with his "colourful and flamboyant personality, allied to his obvious zeal and fitness for his age, was a major influence on distance running in this State over ensuing years", and "was a great publicist for the sport and general fitness and attracted quite a lot of philanthropic support in the form of trophies and sashes from people like Sir Keith Murdoch (Herald), Sir Frank Beaurepaire (Dunlop) and Harry Hopman of tennis fame."

1951 began slowly with a committee meeting in February abandoned due to failure to achieve a quorum. At the fifth annual general meeting on 29 June 1951, with 14 in attendance, Percy Cerutti resigned from the club presidency and Bert Gardiner was elected in his place. In this period, the VMC focussed tightly on advising the VAAA on marathon organisation and the management of its program of 5, 7, 10 and 15 mile handicap races.

Bob Prentice was the club's outstanding marathoner at that time. In an incredible 3 months, Bob ran no less than 4 marathons in a bid to be selected for the Helsinki Olympics. He improved in each race, culminating with the fastest time recorded for an Australian to that date of 2 hours 31 min 51 sec on 1 December in a special trial race organised by the VMC.

The club was buoyed in 1952 by the selection of Bob Prentice to run the Olympic Marathon in Helsinki and Les Perry to run the five and ten kilometre races. Bob ran 37th in the time of 2 hours 43 minutes 13 seconds, a few places ahead of NSW runner Claude Smeal. Don McMillan and a young John Landy in the 800 metres and 1500 metres made up the 5 distance runners who represented Australia at the Helsinki Games.

In 1953, the VMC ran its first club marathon championship, the Comrades Race was first named for a 15km event, and the club participated in a relay to Echuca for that city's centenary celebrations. Coaching clinics were introduced on alternate Sundays and then in 1954, the club organised Saturday training runs when VAAA events were not scheduled. Following a mix-up in one race, the committee saw fit to see that a "Turn Steward" be appointed for VMC events, a spot occupied by Merv Harburn for several years.

The VMC went to great lengths to ensure that course distances could be measured as accurately as possible. Consider these quotes from a 1961 UK article by John Jewell entitled *Notes on the Measurement of Roads for Athletic Events*:

- Bob Prentice, Australian Olympic Marathon runner and President of the Victorian Marathon Club has used a 100 yard tape; later 50 yards was found to be more convenient, owing in part to traffic. A team of 7 or 8 with two cars was used, one man being in the centre of the tape on corners and bends. The method was abandoned for a wheel owing to the amount of work involved.
- Bob Prentice recognised the limitations of the ordinary surveyor's wheel. ... He took the frame of an ordinary 28-inch cycle wheel and riveted it to an outer circle of thick steel...works and a counter were added and an ordinary counter added.It was necessary to concentrate on walking straight.....Prentice overcame the inaccuracies due to wobble by using a wheel of much greater width.

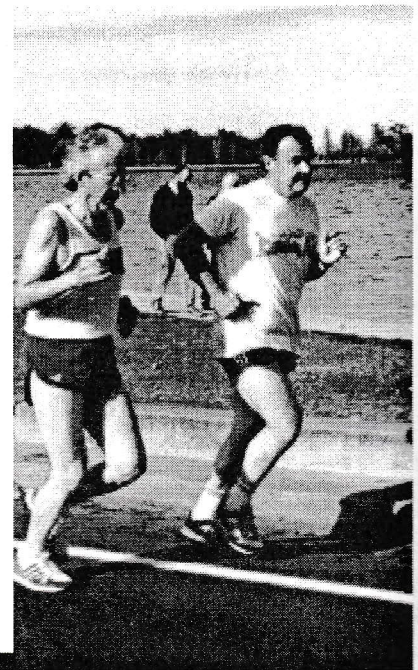
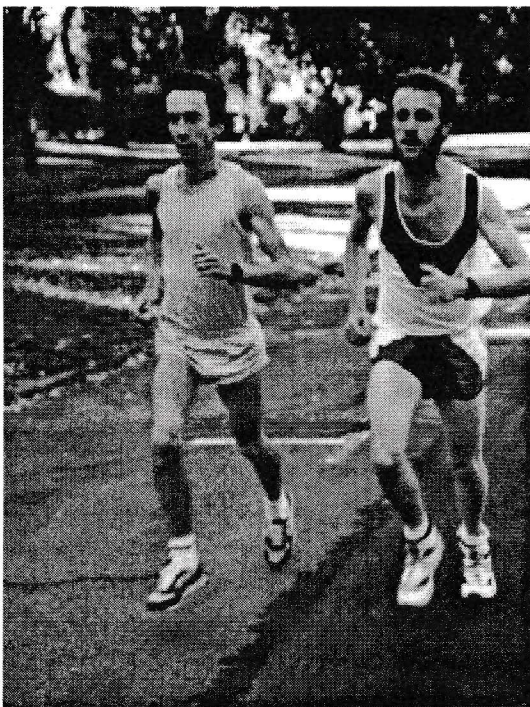
The minutes for 1955 and 1956 are scant in detail, several VMC members either training for selection trials ahead of the Melbourne Olympic Games or actively engaged in its administration. Following a third placing in the Australian Marathon Championship of 1956 in a best-ever-by-a-Victorian time of 2 hours 29 min 8 sec, Les Perry earned selection in the 1956 Olympic Marathon. Unfortunately, Les had to pull out before the finish despite putting up a good show in hot conditions, but interstate runners John Russell (18th) and Keith Ollerenshaw (25th) did finish.

In the four years after the Olympic Games, the VMC went through a phase of quiet consolidation. Bert Gardiner remained as President while Bob Prentice and Les Perry both of whom had represented their country with distinction took on the roles of Secretary and Treasurer. The program of races which had expanded before the Olympic Games was maintained and honed further. In particular, the club introduced a 10 km race in summer.

After 14 years, the VMC had a modest membership of about 40 members, and at races an attendance of around 30 could be expected. The club had a reputation for steady and consistent support of distance running in Victoria, and its small membership included several runners who had represented their country. In this period, long distance running took a back seat to the spectacular growth in interest in middle distance running as John Landy, Merv Lincoln and Herb Elliott captivated the public's attention with their success over one mile and 1500 metres.

Over the next 14 years however, club membership increased almost ten-fold as the Club took centre stage in the long upsurge in Victorian distance running. The causes were many and varied – organisational, athletic and demographic.

VMC Races *In the heart of Melbourne*

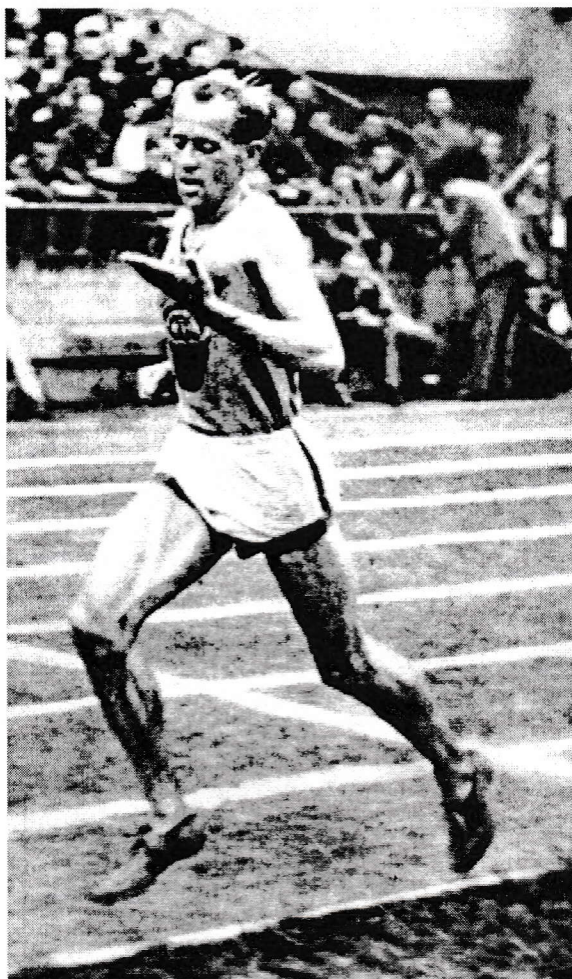


Emil, Ron and Fred (1960 to 1969)

Off the track in 1961, club office bearers changed: Alf O'Connor took over the reins of presidency following Bert Gardiner's resignation after 10 years at the helm, while Fred Lester took over the Secretary's role. On the track, no less than 3 members, Tom Kelly, Tony Cook and Norm Duff, broke 2 hours 30 min for the marathon. Following the lead of Percy Cerutti several years earlier, Alf O'Connor, 54 years old, proved that age was no barrier to athletic achievement with a win in the South Australian marathon in 2 hours 47 min 40 sec, and a quicker time of 2 hours 46 min 31 sec to finish fourth in the Victorian Marathon.

1961 also saw the inaugural running of the Emil Zatopek Trophy. Les Perry recalls his first meeting almost fifty years ago with Emil Zatopek at the Helsinki Olympic Games thus:

- *I was a nonentity among his adversaries at the those Games but he welcomed me on the training track at the Otaneimi Village, housing the Czech team and other Eastern Bloc countries. It was a matter of great pride for me to compete with such a generous natured and experienced athlete and human being in the 5000m heats and final and 10,000m events, which as history now tells us together with the Marathon resulted in a unique treble of gold medals, unsurpassed in the annals of the Games.*



Zatopek on the way to new world records for one hour and 20kms in 1951

After meeting Emil at the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, Fred Lester, Geoff Warren, Les and other VMC members discussed the idea of an annual event in Emil's honour. Fred organised the first staging of the event in 1961 while Geoff crafted the original trophy from an old red-gum railway sleeper – "solid, tough and durable as appropriate to such an event and to perpetuate the name and contribution to world and Olympic sport by this greatest of all distance runners" (Les Perry, April 2002). The inaugural Emil Zatopek Trophy was won by Ron Clarke in 30 min 36 sec just ahead of Tony Cook and Trevor Vincent.

In 1962, the VMC Marathon had a record entry of 46 runners and the club introduced junior races. At a national level however, Dave Power was the Australian doing most to raise the profile of the country's long distance running with a second placing in the Commonwealth Games that year to follow his win in 1958. New South Wales had a long history of supplying the majority of the nation's representatives in the marathon since the end of the Second World War – but all that dominance which had been healthy for raising standards of competition generally across the nation, was about to change dramatically.

In 1963, VMC Club auditor, Ron Clarke, won several club events in record time: 10 miles in 50 min 36 sec, 15 miles in 75 min 78 sec and the marathon in 2 hrs 24 mins 38 sec, but he saved his best effort for the Emil Zatopek Trophy in which he ran a world record of 28 min 15.6 sec for 10 km (including a record over 6 miles of 27 min 17.6 sec). Ron Clarke's

subsequent world record spree is part of athletic folklore. Ron's club marathon record was broken by Fred Howe only two years later, but his 10 km race record stood until Gerard Barrett broke it by 6 sec in 1976. In all, Ron ran 21 VMC events between 1959 and 1969, running at least one event every year except 1967. He was undefeated in the last 16 of these races stretching from December 1961 to December 1969. Ron won the Zatopek Trophy five times.

By 1963, the interest in ultra-marathon running was rekindled among some VMC members. Geoff Watt ran 50 miles to Geelong and Dennis Vinall fell just 6 miles short of his target in an attempt at 100 miles.

In 1964, the club took pride in Ron Clarke's endeavours at the Olympic Games. While the 5 and 10 km were his main events, Ron backed up for a creditable 9th place in the Olympic Marathon, the highest ever placing by an Australian to that time.

By 1965, all major events that the club was known for over the next 28 years were in place, Fred Howe broke several club records at this time, the club selected its first life member in Bert Gardiner and membership had more than doubled to 90 in just over four years.

The Annual General Meeting in 1966 was marked with a presentation by Dr I Zimmerman on conditions likely to be experienced in the upcoming Mexico Olympics – prescient in view of the favourable impact that altitude was to have on times for shorter distances (e.g. Ralph Doubell over 800m and Peter Norman over 200m) and adverse effects on distance runners. Annual General Meetings in these years were notable for the quality of guest speakers. Derek Clayton spoke on his running experiences at the 1969 AGM, Mexico gold medallist Ralph Doubell spoke at the 1970 AGM, while Alan Rose, who ran Frank Sedgman's City Gym, spoke on cardiovascular fitness in 1971. George Perdon spoke on trans-Australian running in 1974.

While Bob Prentice was made a life member in 1967, there were sadder signs of time passing. In 1966, the VMC mourned the passing of Gordon Thompson, the first Secretary of the Club. Sadly, there were a trio of deaths linked to running itself. In 1969, Geoff Watt, one of the club's most prolific participants, died while on a training run at Mount Baw Baw. Alf O'Connor, club president, wrote a moving tribute to Geoff in a poem simply titled "The Runner" for the club's newsletter. Just over a year later, Alf O'Connor too was dead at the age of 64 years from a heart attack after a morning run. With Alf O'Connor's passing, the presidency passed to Wal Sheppard until 1974 and, after a short stint by Ken Fraser, to Neil Ryan who held the post from 1976 until 1985.

The final years of the 1960s were however years of innovation for the VMC. In 1967, the club organised its first women's race, an event over 2km won by Lavinia Petrie. Lavinia can also recall participating in a VMC 10 mile event at Heathmont a year earlier at which race organisers presented her with a biro for her achievement in beating 19 men home. The VMC promoted women's running strongly some 10 years later.

The other major development was the expansion of the club's newsletter in September 1969. The *Australian Harrier* magazine had been a vehicle for telling the wider Australian distance running fraternity of developments and achievements in Victoria throughout the 1960s. However, Sydney's Frank McCaffrey, the inspiration behind that magazine and later, in the 1980s, the *Fun Runner* magazine, had to cease publication of the *Australian Harrier* for financial reasons. Frank led a life rich in running experiences but sadly passed away at 82 years of age in March 2002.

With the launch of the VMC newsletter, the club found its voice in several articles capturing a record of events, runners' travelling experiences, reflections on training methods, and lively debate on trends in local athletic administration. Fred Lester was the largest single contributor of type for the quarterly newsletter, but many members penned their first articles in a VMC newsletter before later becoming contributors to other running magazines.

The Power of the Pen and Pioneering Women (1970 to 1979)

The introduction of the club's newsletter, the success of Australia's top distance runners, Ron Clarke and Derek Clayton, and advances in training methods inspired by Percy Cerutti and New Zealand's Arthur Lydiard were all important factors in the increasing popularity of VMC and its events around this time. By 1971, 250 newsletters were distributed to 200 members and 50 non-members. On the road, race numbers increased, as did the performances of club runners. Peter Bruce began an amazing sequence of five club marathons in 1969 in which he secured a top 3 placing every year and never ran slower than 2 hours 26 min. In 1971, Peter ran 2 hours 19 min 21 sec, the second fastest time for the club marathon in its entire history – but ran second on the day to the all-time holder of that record, Neil Ryan who won the race in 2 hours 18 min 31 sec. In the same season, Neil won all winter events, breaking club records for 20 and 25 km and the 20 mile King of the Mountain event.



Neil Ryan presents 1978 Zatopek trophy to Gerard Barrett

In the 1970s, the babyboomers born in the ten years immediately following the Second World War featured prominently at VMC events. Robert de Castella, Chris Wardlaw, John Birmingham, Rob Wallace, Ian Minter and Tony Williams were among several younger Victorian athletes who used shorter VMC events as stepping stones in the early development of their careers. John Duck is typical of the enthusiastic younger runner attracted to distance running at this time. In 1994, John wrote "*In 1970, at just*

17 years of age, I attempted my first marathon at Tyabb – a sobering and eventually painful and unsuccessful attempt to reach the finish line". John ran several marathons during the 1970s and won the VMC's marathon in 1981.

In 1975, the club could still boast that its members featured prominently in national track and field. At the titles that year no less than eight members medalled: 'Rab' Wardlaw and Andy Hill, 1st and 3rd in the 10 km, Bob Walczak and Bob Hendy, 1st and 2nd in the 3 km steeple, Andy Hill, 1st in the 5 km, and Bruce Power, Paul Grinstead, and Rob Gilfillan in junior events.

While the number of members and race participants continued to rise in the mid-1970s, the club struggled for office bearers. The presidency was vacant for a little while, but fortunately Richmond Harrier, Terry Hunter, assumed the responsibilities of Secretary "to save the club from going down the drain." With the increase in member numbers and the rising popularity of club events, the burden of administrative responsibilities tended to be shouldered by too few.

The idea that women would excel at longer distances was recognised as early as 1971 when the VMC newsletter reported that US runner Beth Bonner had run the world's fastest marathon by a woman in a time of 3 hours 1 minute 42 sec. The athletic community in Victoria took a little longer to embrace the concept of women's distance running. Lynne Tennant, (later Williams) appears among attendees at VMC committee meetings from around February 1975. The minutes of that meeting record "There will be a more thorough sounding out of women athletes as to participation in longer road races." In 1976, the first "women only" Zatopek race was held, won by Anne Callaghan ahead of Claire McKerr and Peggy Smith. All three runners were members of the newly created Victorian Veterans Club, one of the founders of whom was Wal Sheppard, a former VMC president. Earlier in 1976, New Zealand born Lyn McLeod was the first woman to run in a VMC marathon, but in 1977, Lavinia Petrie and four other women – Claire McKerr, Peggy Smith, Anne Callaghan and Joan Cameron (later Logan) – ran the event. Lavinia, in her debut marathon, paced Jim Crawford all the way to finish in 3 hours 0 min and 36 seconds – only 43 sec outside the best time by a woman on Australian soil.

From this point onwards women were prominent in the VMC: from a membership base of 5 in 1975, their ranks grew to 57 in 1979. By 1980, Peggy Smith, Barb Byrnes and Jackie Turney were all VMC vice-presidents, Pam Turney was the Club Secretary, and Joan Cameron, Maggie Johnson and Ann Lynch were all on the committee. The notes of a meeting held in April 1980 reports discussion on such items as child minding and a dinner dance following the Tyabb Marathon. The dinner dance was first held in 1974 and attracted 120 people to the Fly-In Motel, but was abandoned in 1981.

Running Mania, Marathon Boom and the Graceful Decline (1980 to 1993)

From its penultimate peak of 653 members in 1979, club membership did not fall below 500 for nine years, with the absolute peak of 721 recorded in 1986. In 1985, Emil Zatopek visited Melbourne for the running carnival named in his honour; many old VMC members still proudly wear the 25th commemorative anniversary T-shirt that marked the occasion. In the first half of the 1980s, finishers in 16km and half marathon distances topped 300 on a few occasions.

While VMC events were enjoying unprecedented attendance levels, there were significant changes to the Victorian distance running scene beyond the club.

The inaugural Big M Marathon in 1978 attracted 3,000 entries and once and for all took the marathon out of the domain of club athletes into a mass participation event. VMC officials expressed concern in newsletters at the potential for ill-trained runners to enter, with a consequent boon for sports medicine. Athletic club athletes typically ran for many years competitively before embarking on the marathon, but ordinary runners took their chances. Marathon participants discovered the heat, challenging undulations of the Frankston to Melbourne course, and various pre-race preparations. The VMC lent a hand in several ways: Fred Lester was Big M race director until the mid-1980s, Neil Ryan guided many would-be marathoners with advice on appropriate footwear in his Runners World shoe store in High St Kew which he opened in 1975, and VMC members lent a hand as marshals on race day. For new VMC members, the newsletter contained much wisdom on training and race preparation. The VMC events, which largely remained unchanged from earlier years, were now scheduled to fit in with the lead-up to the Melbourne Marathon.

With increased popularity of distance running in the first half of the 1980s, new events, clubs and organisational forms sprung up. While traditional events such as the Traralgon Marathon (the longest-standing Victorian marathon, now into its 35th year in 2002), the South Melbourne Harriers' Marathon and the VMC Marathon enjoyed increased numbers, new fun runs over shorter races proliferated. The general mass of runners no longer relied upon clubs like the VMC or registered athletic clubs to plan an itinerary of races in the lead-up to a marathon.

New popular runs included the Puffing Billy race (still attracting over 2,000 entrants in its 21st year), the River Run along the Yarra (with proceeds to Vision Australia and now into its 25th year), and the Burke Hall fun run around Studley Park. Running also boomed in major Victorian regional centres (e g the Begonia Festival run in Ballarat and the half marathons in Bendigo and Geelong).

Organisational innovations in distance running abounded. The Melbourne City Council supported the establishment of a twice-yearly lunchtime corporate cup series of seven fortnightly 4 km races on the famous Tan track around the perimeter of Melbourne's Botanical Gardens. The Puma Corporate Cup involved monthly road races on Sundays over the middle six months of the year. Both these series still run today. The Sri Chimnoy group ran several well-organised events. Later in the decade, the organisers of the Melbourne Marathon introduced the popular Sussan Classic for women (naming rights have recently transferred to Nike) and the Olympic Dream in which finishers receive a sturdy medal featuring the face of a different Australian athletic champion each year.

Running clubs larger than the VMC sprung up to cater for runners of various standards. Some corporate running clubs, e g Mobil Australia and the ANZ Bank, were prominent as were neighbourhood-based clubs such as the Knox Road Runners and informal running groups such as the Burnley Runners. The Victorian Veterans Club grew to around 2,000 members with its venue-based weekly running programs on a range of

athletic tracks across Melbourne's suburbs and in selected regional centres. One of the largest such clubs was the Victorian Road Runners (VRR). Established in 1982, the VRR has regularly achieved 300 to 400 members with its well-instituted program of road races up to a half marathon in distance. The VRR is well-known for its monthly Tan Time Trials, in which participants can earn T-shirts and trophies for completing all monthly trials in a given year or achieving milestones of 50, 100 or 150 completed time trials.

Throughout the 1980s, the VMC continued to contribute its own championship race to the national calendar with the Zatopek 10 km on the track. Since the first race in 1971, no winning time was slower than 28 min 42 sec which indicates the consistency of participation by champions during this period. The race is still a major drawcard on the national athletic calendar today with outstanding performances in recent years by Steve Moneghetti, Shaun Creighton, Craig Mottram and a swag of Kenyan runners. The womens Zatopek exhibited similar high quality with Australian records to Megan Sloane in 1980 and 1981, and Carolyn Schuwalow in 1991.

Aside from the Zatopek however, the champion athletes, both men and women, were increasingly lured to high profile runs at both the national and international venues. The US and European road racing circuits and marathons held in major cities around the world lured the champion athletes at other times of year with the promise of good competition and financial rewards for racing success.

In addition, many of the nation's champion athletes were now writing regularly for two new popular running magazines, the *Australian Runner*, published by Terry O'Halloran and the *Fun Runner*, published by Mike Agostini with Frank McCaffrey as editor-at-large. These magazines, plus the US based *Runner's World* (published in an Australian edition by Terry O'Halloran since 1998), brought training tips by senior coaches, the latest in medical advice and experiences of champion athletes within reach of the running public at large.

The move away from VMC events by champion athletes in the 1980s is illustrated in results for the VMC marathon. Between 1961 and 1986, only 2 winners won in a time slower than 2 hours 30 min, the yardstick for excellence by a leading VMC runner in 1960, but no VMC marathon was won in a time below 2 hours 30 minutes between 1987 and 1993. The women's marathon followed a slightly different trajectory but exhibited a similar slowing of winners' times in the latter years. Barbara Byrnes and Jackie Turney in 1980 and Barbara Fay in 1982 all broke 3 hours before the all-time club record was struck by Dot Browne in 2 hours 49 min 6 sec in 1985. Thereafter, only one winner, Maryce Justin, ran under 3 hours, and no other winner ran under 3 hours 10 minutes.

From its membership peak of 721 in 1986, membership fell steadily. At 405 members in 1990, VMC membership was at its lowest level since 1975. By the final year of the club, this number had fallen further to 258. Race participation had also fallen – although not across the board. The last separate VMC marathon was conducted in 1990, while the King and Queen of the Mountain was last staged in 1989. By 1990 participation in races such as the Comrades and the Club Marathon had fallen 50 per cent from their peak. However, the Zatopek series and the accompanying 10 km fun run at Princes Park retained their popularity throughout this period, regularly attracting around 150 runners for its graded divisions of the track races. Since the club's closure, the Zatopek series has continued successfully under the management of Terry O'Halloran's *Start to Finish* organisation.

In the final years of the club, the committee stuck to its guns with Neil Ryan in the role of President, Fred Lester and then Richard Simon in the role of Secretary, and willing helpers such as Mal Cother, Rob Jamieson, Dot Browne and Peter Nelson (an expert course measurer) on the committee or organising events. But too much of the organisational burden had fallen on the shoulders of too few.

In 1991, the VMC joined forces with the Malvern Harriers, the Victorian Road Runners, the Vic Vets and the Victorian Cross Country League to organise the inaugural Peoples Marathon. The first Peoples Marathon, run from the Port Melbourne Football Ground over the VMC's Fishermens Bend course, attracted 300 race entrants in 1991, but only 170 on its third and final staging in 1993. There were no more than 30 VMC members in each Peoples Marathon.

On Monday, 23 August 1993, an "overwhelming majority" of the club membership voted to dissolve the club. A wake was held on 19 December 1993 following the 10 and 3 km fun runs around Princes Park. Fittingly, 278 runners completed the 10 km event, a record attendance in the eleven years of the race's staging since 1983.

VMC - WILLING HELPERS AND OFFICIALS

The VMC only functioned over many years because of the loyal and willing service of many officials and administrators.

The members listed below are some who made significant contributions but whose names do not feature in other parts of this memoir.

These members supported the operation of the VMC throughout Victoria and in other parts of Australia.

Dick Batchelor (Newsletter)

Jim Duggan (Finance)

Jim Gook (Assistant Secretary)

Gerry Hand (Central Victoria)

Len Johnson (media and publicity)

Brian Lenton (Australian Capital Territory)

Bill Luke (Publicity)

Janet O'Dell (Assistant Secretary)

Russell Parsons (Ouyen, North-west Victoria)

Gerry Riley and family (Central Victoria)

Greame Salthouse (Finance)

Bruce Walker (North-East Victoria)

Afterlife (1994 to 2002)

With hindsight, the demise of the VMC was but one signpost of broader institutional trends impacting on the running community. Registered athletic clubs, the Victorian Veterans Club and the Victorian Road Runners have all experienced declining attendances and fluctuations in membership numbers in recent years. All these clubs face the VMC choice: to emphasise provision of well-known running calendars to a loyal, but slowly declining membership, or to branch out in new directions with a view to attracting and catering for new recruits. Many Victorian marathons, run in locations such as Ballarat, Mt Beauty, Halls Gap and Albert Park have all ceased. The babyboomers, who supported both the running boom and the emergence of triathlons in the 1980s, have retreated to more sedate pastimes such as walking, yoga, swimming and cycling for fitness, many under the instructions of their doctors. Younger adults are today going straight to the triathlon or, increasingly, the gymnasium.

With participant numbers stabilised at levels below peaks of the 1980s many Australian capital city marathons have battled for financial survival in recent years. However, famous fun runs such as Sydney's *City to Surf* and Melbourne's *Olympic Dream* have thrived. With a sense of occasion, many Melburnians flocked to Sydney in April 2000 to run over the course for the Sydney Olympic marathon.

In 2002, former VMC members are active in many of the running clubs around Melbourne and Victoria. Just as the earliest VMC members held allegiances to their primary athletic clubs, so too can later VMC members be found among enthusiastic supporters of the Vic Vets, Victorian Road Runners and the continuation of the Zatopek festival. Fred Lester still coaches young runners; Neil Ryan still runs for Richmond Harriers and holds the position of Club Treasurer - he also provides corporate sponsorship to the VRR; Frank Tutchener, who first completed a VMC event in June 1952, still runs VRR time trials fifty years later; Dot Browne and Judy Wines, pioneers of womens running through the VMC, occupy executive positions with the Vic Vets; and Lavina Petrie is still a model of athletic excellence some 35 years after she first participated in a VMC event. Some VMC stalwarts, notably Bert Gardiner, have passed away in recent years, while others such as Les Perry live quietly in retirement. Some younger runners who excelled in the final VMC events of the early 1990s, such as Tania Warrick and Karen Moir, went on to win marathons in New Zealand and Malaysia, continuing a tradition of regular achievement by VMC athletes in international marathons in Korea, Japan, Europe, the United States and, almost annually, in New Zealand. Commonwealth Games bronze medallist over 10,000 metres in Manchester 2002, Susie Power, was the inaugural recipient of the "Fred Lester Distance Running Scholarship" awarded annually to up-and-coming distance runners by trustees of the VMC from earnings on the financial assets accumulated by the club at the time of its closure.

There will be never be another VMC: its time and circumstances have passed. But the spirit of distance running in competition, excellence and camaraderie live on in many forms in the Victorian running community - with *a minimum of fuss*.

THE RUNNER (for Geoff Watt)

By Alf O'Connor

He climbed into the land of pain
High above his peers,
And if there was not any gain
What use to live with fears?

On winter nights, in pouring rain,
Beneath a blazing sun,
At all times, in all weathers,
He lived his life to run.

He was seen on darkest nights
When lights in windows shone,
A knock at door, a cup of tea
He'd ask for – then be gone.

He was here but now he's gone,
And what is left behind?
Do efforts and achievements
Live on in the mind?

In frost and ice his body lay
Whom no terrors could daunt.
His stocky figure lives unseen
Wherever runners haunt.

Who once climbed, the summit of the
Mount of Snows to gain,
His spirit will be with us
In sun and wind and rain.

What was earnt at so much cost,
Can it disappear?
The fruit of his endeavours will
Not lightly leave us here.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Warragul runner Geoff Watt competed in 52 VMC events before his untimely death while on a training run at Mount Baw Baw in the winter of 1969. See the section on biographies for more detail.

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MY FIRST MARATHON

By Lavinia Petrie

(abridged version of an article in Spring 1977 Newsletter)

When Ann Callaghan, Claire McKerr and Peggy Smith, all members of the Vic Vets told me that they were going to run the VMC Marathon on 12 June 1977, I thought well, why not. If they can, so can I. When my training companions (male members of my husband's club) learned of my decision they immediately dubbed me marathon woman, wonder woman and would you believe, bionic woman? My training consisted of almost continuous running for 12 years and constant running since Christmas. I never exceeded 60 miles per week in training and the 5 or 6 weeks immediately before, I averaged 50 – 55 miles.

The day of the race came. I tried to stay calm, well as calm as you can in between 10 visits to the toilet and trying to remember everything which I could possibly need during the race – dry top (it was raining when we left home), dry shoes and socks in case of blisters, Vaseline (very necessary), drink (Staminade), plenty of warm clothes for after.

Final last go to the toilet, liberal use of Vaseline, change into lighter pair of shoes. Down to the start. "You haven't warmed up" says Trish very anxiously. I jog up and down the road, feeling sick in the stomach. "You're only going for a run" says Bob, my husband. Whistle goes – 5 minutes to go. "How do you feel?" they ask. I couldn't really tell them. Jog around at the start. "Hi Jim {Crawford}, what are you hoping to run today?" "Seven minute mile pace, if I can." "Great, mind if I try to run with you?" "Not at all". The gun goes. We're on our way. Try not to get carried away. Conversation flows thick and fast. Jim says "Concentrate on your running, try to run as far as you can for as long as you can". He should know, this is his 62nd marathon.

As we're running, guys are renewing acquaintances, introducing each other. Through the main streets, there seemed to be crowds all over the place, cheering and shouting, "C'mon Lavinia, stick with them, you're going great. Jim is just there, G'day John, Hi Trevor, Hello Mary, Hey there Judy, hello kids". These guys really are incredible –telling jokes, making fun of each other. They're only running with this group because they enjoy female company. The pace is easy, no drinks, no sponges. Conversation is still flowing but I am told "don't talk unless it's necessary". Pretty hard for me, you'll be saying.

We're into the main street on the last lap. Everyone's singing out "You can make it". Jim's talking to me – not far now – you've run great – keep going. I'm passing boys, they're shattered, but all sing out encouragement. You've got 9 minutes – you'll make it. Nine minutes to what? I thought. We run on through the main street and turn towards the motel. This must be the 385 yards. Ever tried running a 400 at the end of a training session? We run to the line and Jim lets me run ahead of him. I run a little way and eventually stop. Everyone crowds around. The *Age* reporter asks "What was the worst part, how do you feel?" I can't even think, let alone feel. They tell me my time – that's great, under seven minutes per mile and only 43 seconds outside Tess Bell's best on record in Australia. Went for a shower, followed by a fan club – June, Marie, Ann, Louise, Fiona, Kerry, Jackie and Pam. I don't think I stopped smiling for a week.



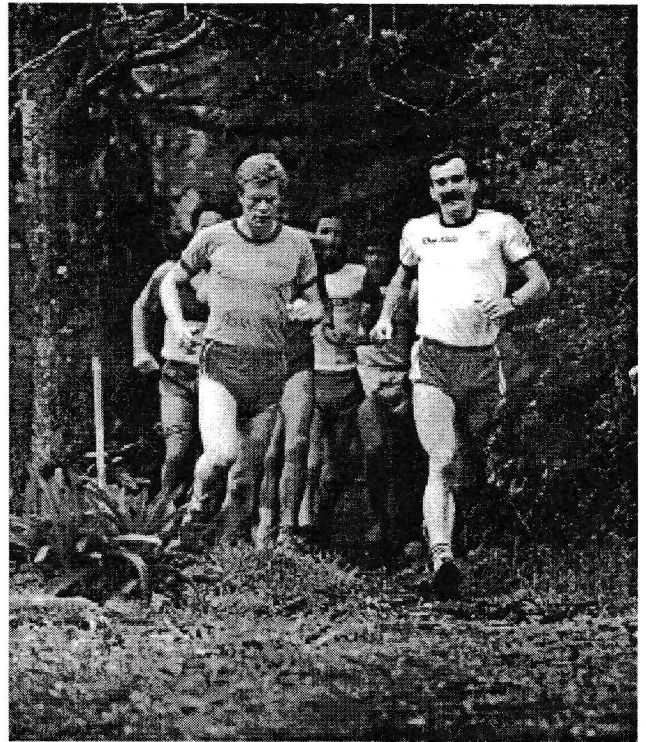
Lavinia (2nd from right) celebrating with friends at the 2001 World Veteran Championships

ROBERT DE CASTELLA

– excerpts from an interview by Nick McGuigan, VMC Newsletter, December 1979.

The VMC newsletter was more like a magazine than a newsletter, often documenting major milestones in athletics and developments among athletes. Never is this more exemplified than in a rare interview of a 22 year old Robert de Castella on the cusp of his international marathoning career. The interview, conducted by Nick McGuigan, appeared in the December 1979 edition and extended to eight pages. Long interviews are rare, the most well known being those set out in the books by Brian Lenton. For this publication we have chosen a selection of quotes that are as refreshing to read today as when they were originally printed.

At the time of the interview, Rob had progressed from a junior champion at cross-country and track at Xavier College and the Old Xaverians Athletic Club to a young adult at the Glenhuntly Athletic Club who had represented Australia at cross-country. Rob had recently completed his first two marathons. The excerpts below cover Rob's beginnings, his relationship with his coach, reflections on diet and the experience of running his first marathon.



Robert de Castella (right) training in the Sherbrooke Forest

In the beginning

Q: When did you start running? How did it go from there?

A: I started running at school in about Grade 6..... early in the morning with the old man (Rolet). He used to drag me out of bed. At Form 3, I went to Xavier Senior School, where I got in with Pat Clohessy....with a group consisting of Tim O'Shaughnessy and Tim Kelly. I suppose I would have been running 72 – 80 km per week, runs ranging from 8 – 16 kms. Mainly because I was pretty consistent with my training, I improved. My big improvements came in the winter season. I think I've always enjoyed cross country, more so than track. I was about 16 or 17 when my placings went from 10's and 20's to coming second. The transition was quite rapid over one winter season.

Transition from school to open age

Q: At what stage did you start to run open competition?

A: Pat's always encouraged his runners to not only look at the small pond of schoolboy athletics but also the much larger field of Victorian athletics, even national athletics. It's probably a mistake of most coaches that they tend to get their kids to peak for just the school competition and once they leave the school there's nothing for them. Pat's always highlighted the importance of open running and when there was a clash between a school race and a Victorian championship, he'd always encourage his good runners to run the latter even though the school might suffer. Pat started me training with Chris Wardlaw and Hugh Wilson at the MCG a

couple of times a week. It was a fairly gradual process which Pat had worked out. It was very well planned and instead of getting to the end of my schooling years and then nothing – I almost already had one foot in the door.

Q: Even at this stage, you were going up the hills, were you?

A: In my last two or three years at school we were going to Ferny Creek on Sundays. We'd do about 21 km through the hills, maybe running one or two hills strongly, but the rest at a nice leisurely pace. On Mondays we would follow it by a fairly relaxed run so that we could absorb Sunday's run. On Tuesday we'd do a hills circuit: 5 km warm-up, maybe 6 or 8 hills, 150 - 200 m long, 3 km back to school. The Wednesday run would be fairly relaxed to absorb the hills session. On Thursdays we might just do a short sharp track session, 200s or 150s. Fridays would be just 6 kms, if at all. Quite often we'd take Friday off altogether and compete on Saturday.

The Coach – Pat Clohessy

Q: (in the context of world cross-country) Pat did a great deal for you all?

A: He's very good with the whole team. He understands open athletics and many things that athletes experience which I think other managers could learn from, especially Olympic managers. They don't seem to realise how mature an attitude you have to have just to be able to get to the stage where you're competing in the Olympics or competing internationally. They take it upon themselves as their own crusade to make sure that you perform well, when really they should just be there as someone to help you if you need help, and more a steadying influence rather than an instructing influence which many of them try to be. Pat's always there when you need him. He's always the same – very stable.

The First Marathon

Q: You've recently got into marathon racing. In particular you started off with a very good run in the Victorian Championship. Can you tell us a bit about your training and subsequent run?

A: Pat's recently admitted that he's had this plan for the last four years. It's only over the last four years that he's told me about it. Now, I'm doing about 210 km a week – 33 kms at Ferny, a 20 km hill session on Tuesdays, 29 kms around town on Wednesdays, track on Thursdays and a 5 mile session every morning. I went into the marathon very relaxed and very calm, confident. It was more of an experience than a competitive race. I went into it and ran the first 26-29 kms very relaxed, just jogging along with a few of the other fellows. I felt really good, just flying along. I got to about the 32 km mark, still feeling great. Then, Pat was driving along in the car and we had a chat and I said to him "Do you think we should pick it up a bit now?" Pat nodded and I picked up the pace a bit and ran the last 10 kms at 5 minute pace and the last couple in under 5 minute pace. I kept waiting for this brick wall that's supposed to be jumping out from the gutter to hit me in the face and it just never came. I just felt good all the way. As a result I ran 2 hours 14 mins 44 secs, and recovered pretty well after it. I was really surprised because all along people were telling me how really hard the marathons were, but I'm convinced that if you're properly prepared and rested up and you're running well it's not such an ordeal at all.

THE WAY WE WERE - REFLECTIONS OF THE VMC

Pat Clohessy

(National Coach - Distance Running, at the time of writing)

I believe one of the decisive factors in the spectacular development and expansion of distance running in Victoria – and Australia – is the VMC.

The VMC has achieved two complementary goals: it has provided top competition in good conditions for the elite; and it has shown a sensitive appreciation for the needs and interests of the equally keen majority. And, in addition, thirdly, it has promoted and pioneered opportunities for women in the distance field.

The Zatopek 10,000 metres is a leading example of the pioneering role of the VMC. Since the world record days of Ron Clarke, the Zatopek has grown into the prestige race of the Australian distance calendar. The race exemplifies the ideals of the VMC, catering as it does for Australia's top 10,000 metre runners and hundreds of other enthusiasts, both men and women.

Certainly, the VMC and its hardworking Lester band can view with much satisfaction the spectacular rise in distance standards, distance depth and distance running interest in recent decades.

Peg Smith

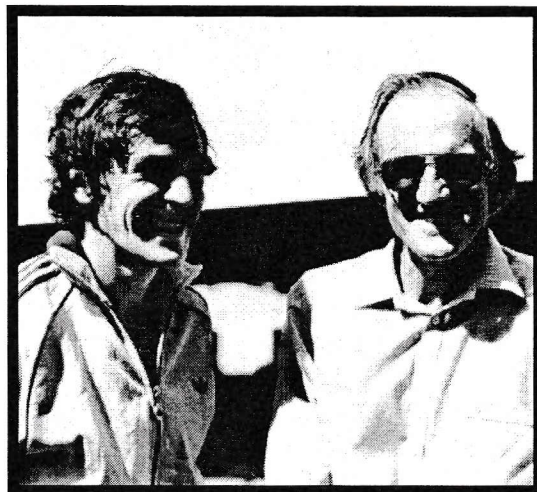
When I was asked to write a few words about the VMC, I thought back, searching for the path that changed the whole direction of my life.

My moment was New Years Eve, the start of 1977 at the VMC Two Bridges 8km race. I can't remember what time I ran, but it wasn't fast. I was a new chum runner but first woman to finish; this of course was not surprising as there were no other women running in that event. At that time women ran only in the short race. What I still remember were the congratulations and camaraderie of the VMC members. It didn't matter that I wasn't an elite runner; here I was breaking barriers of what distances women were expected to do.

The VMC Tyabb marathon became my goal. I wanted to be one of the first women to run an official marathon. As I started "training", I was told I was an "inspiration" to some other veteran women who were also running distances, "If Peg can run a marathon, anyone should be able to."

Because of the support the VMC gave women, Ann Callaghan, Clare McKerr, Lavinia Petrie and I took part in that VMC marathon, where we became the trail blazers for all the distance women athletes today.

Recently I was at a function where I met women I hadn't seen for 15 years or more. So many of them came and said how I inspired them to take up running, not because I was fast or a world beater, but because I was willing to have a go, thanks to the VMC.



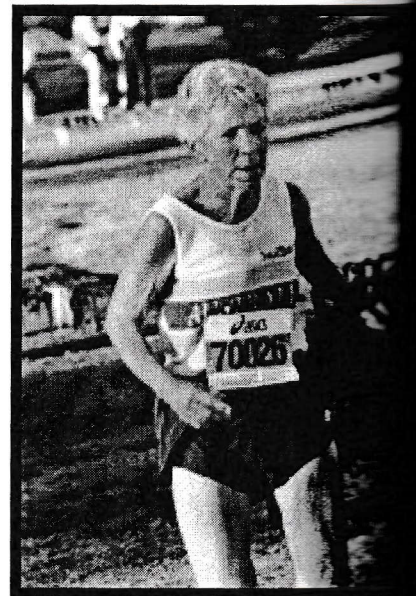
Robert de Castella (left) and his coach, Pat Clohessy

Shirley and Ron Young

People remember the VMC in many ways. I began running with St Stephens Harriers (SSH) as a teenager late in 1946 and my first memory of the VMC would probably be in the early 1950's when a couple of long standing senior members of SSH began talking about the new renegade club that had started up called "The Victorian Marathon Club" and issued a warning that the VMC could start drawing people away from existing clubs, undermining club memberships.

How wrong they were – the VMC gave many athletes who were interested in distance running, a chance to meet and compete with other runners who all shared a common interest. In the long term it probably enabled many athletes to continue running in distance competition, long past the time they would have with their own clubs.

To my wife Shirley who only began running in 1977 at the age of 47, the VMC was a huge stepping stone that enabled her and many other female athletes to become interested in distance running. Around this time women were just beginning to break through and show their ability as marathon and distance runners. Joining in the long runs with other female members of the VMC was her introduction to distance and marathon running.



Shirley Young, World Veterans Championships, Brisbane, 1977

Then of course there are common memories we all share of the VMC – the Sunday morning races around Albert Park Lake starting from the old "Walkers Club Rooms", the 25 Km and half marathon runs from South Werribee, the Anzac Day Fallen Comrades race around the Tan – and who could ever forget the marathons at Tyabb followed by a great meal and dance at the Motel Restaurant!. Nor could you forget the change that took place during the course of the evening.

People used to think we were mad when we said we were going to run a marathon at Tyabb and then go to the Dinner Dance afterwards. A group of sore and sorry runners would hobble into the Motel dining room after the race to enjoy a meal. As the evening progressed, the drinks began to flow, the music got louder and faster and everyone was up on the floor "rocking and jiving" and yelling for more. Gone were all the aches and pains and sore spots and all that was left were a lot of very happy runners having a hell of a good time.

When recalling the VMC, the great "Zatopek 10K" comes to mind. Runners would come from all over the place to have a run in this event. It didn't matter if you were an "E Grader" running on the first Monday night or an elite "A or B Grader" running a week later. Everybody came along, had a run, enjoyed themselves and supported all of the other runners for the rest of the week.

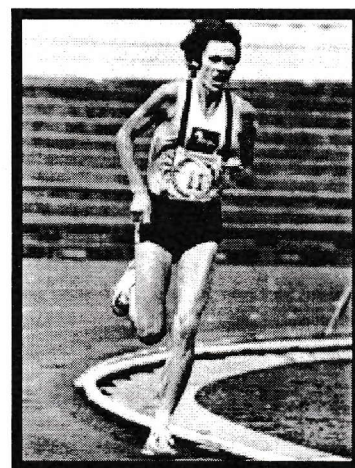
Who would ever forget the memory of standing on the starting line at Olympic Park ready for a Zatopek 10K and listening to my old friend Fred Lester, or as he was commonly known, "The little man in the Brown Straw Hat", giving his pre-race instructions to the runners. It usually started off with "shut up and listen to what I'm saying". "You are running 10K, that's 25 laps – make sure you keep count and make sure you stay in the inside lane if someone is going to pass you – don't move out all over the track like Brown's cows – just stay in the inside lane and let them go around you"!! That was our Fred – or if you like "Mr VMC".

What a huge debt we owe both Fred and Neil Ryan for the endless work they did over many years so that we could enjoy ourselves doing what we love to do most – running! Of course you could probably say Neil's pet event was the New Year's Eve Midnight Run which he sponsored each year and was run around the Two Bridges course on the banks of the Yarra. We spent many New Year's Eve Runs taking part in the 8 Km, then celebrating the New Year with a drink and a barbecue on the river bank with family and friends till the early hours of the morning. Unfortunately, those days have gone now, just as the VMC has gone, but thankfully the memories of all these wonderful events over so many years and the friendships we made by taking part in those events live on and will continue to do so for the rest of our lives, and so much of it we owe to "the little man in the Brown Slouch Hat".

Thanks to the VMC from all of us.

Megan Sloane

Fuelled by a desire to lower my track and road times, I was always looking for opportunities to race over distances of more than 5km or in familiar settings over non standard distances. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, distance running events for females were restricted to winter cross-country events which varied only by terrain and location - not by distance- or to summer, interclub events of 1500m one week and 3000m the following week. VMC membership seemed a sensible choice as they conducted regular runs from 4km to 16km over the two bridges course at 6.30 pm in spring and summer in addition to many other runs at Princes Park, the Tan or Albert Park. Most of these courses were in pleasant, shady areas and allowed competition without pressure.



Megan Sloane running track

A favourite race of mine was the Midnight Run held on the Two Bridges course on New Year's Eve (start time 12.00 am!). I always found it exhilarating to dash past the revellers and catch the odd comments from those who did not understand why a motley mix of young and older fanatics were spending New Year being serious. In fact, it was more fun to be in the race than to spectate. I was the recipient of shoes and champagne in that race on a few occasions. I still appreciate the generosity of the sponsors and those members who gave time to organise or record times and places for those of us who raced. The atmosphere was light-hearted and zany. Age group plus spot prizes ensured that members had a chance to go home with some useful gear. If a Midnight Run existed today, I'd be there every time.

Friendliness and encouragement were the hallmarks of those in the VMC. One could match names to the characters who competed regularly and the newsletter provided a comprehensive list of fun runs, official VAA races and interstate and national events. Articles covering a diverse range of distance running topics and controversies appeared each month, satiating the desire to be "in the know".. Even now they make interesting reading and conjure up images of runs and runners who have figured in the local history of our pursuit.

I hold a special place in my heart for the Emil Zatopek 10,000m races. For females, the race attracted the leading runners from interstate as well as providing the only opportunity for women and girls to compete in close to ideal conditions. Publicity was ensured due to the profile of the men's A race so, in turn, the event gained a higher status and gave recognition to women's distance running in Victoria and Australia. The chances to race in the Zatopek races were influential steps up the ladder of success for me. I loved the atmosphere on race night. Memories of those feelings stay with me. I am thankful for the vision of those who committed their time and energy to create the VMC.

Peter Bruce

Reflecting on the VMC, I have three very profound memories – of strong friendship and camaraderie, of great competition, and of a wonderful man named Fred. Fellow competitors such as Fred Howe, Neil Ryan, Terry Harrison, Tom Kelly, Terry Phelan, Norm Duff, Jim Crawford, Peter Battrick and the late Geoff Watt, have etched a permanent place in my memory.

I was not a member in its foundation days, although I fully appreciate how the club came to be when one bears in mind that the only longer distance events available to Victorian athletes up till that time were the State Marathon, fifteen and six mile titles and the Australian Marathon Championship held every two years.

As a club, the VMC is possibly unique in having two world records broken in one of its events. Both Ron Clarke and Derek Clayton used VMC races as part of their running development. In those days, to win the VMC Marathon was more prestigious than to win the State Title. The event possibly reached its highest point in 1972 when both Neil Ryan and I broke the 2 hours 20 minute barrier, with Neil winning in 2 hours 18 minutes 30 seconds.

Personally, the VMC provided a great stepping stone to my eventually reaching State and National rankings in the Marathon. One of the greatest thrills of my life was being selected to represent the VMC in the Hamilton Marathon in New Zealand – my only international appearance – and I won it!

Fred Lester is one of the warmest and friendliest men I have ever known. He made every one feel important whether you were a leader or a straggler (unless you turned up late or broke his rules!).

When it comes to awarding honours for services to sport, Fred Lester gets my first vote. The VMC and Fred have been a very important part of my life.

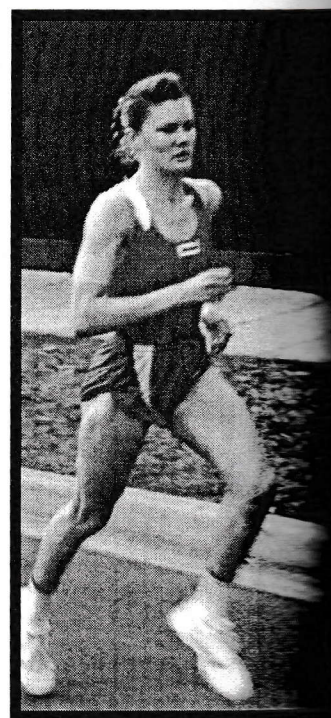
Carolyn Schuwalow

I first became involved with the VMC in 1978. My first race was The King of the Mountain, a 30km run to the top of Red Hill on the Mornington Peninsula. I was 12 years of age. I remember mucking around at the start and a grumpy man called Fred Lester telling me to line up and get ready.

My VMC running highlights are as follows:

- being the first and only woman in VMC history to win a VMC race outright (Point Cook); and
- being a three-time winner of the prestigious Zatopek classic 10km track race.

The Zatopek has always been a precursor to greater things for me. In December 1987 I was part of the great 10km track battle between Lisa Martin (later Ondieki) and Jackie Perkins. I placed 3rd in that race in a PB time of 32mins 30secs, and won selection in my first Olympic team at 21 years of age. Subsequently, I led for 12 laps of my Olympic 10km heat, ran a national record (32mins10 secs) and reached the first ever women's Olympic final over 10km on the track.



Carolyn Schuwalow
in training

The most memorable Zatopek classic for me was the 1991 10km track race. I went into this race as the favourite; having run a 3km PB 10 days before in 8 mins 54 secs. I had set myself up to break my 1988 Olympic games record and knew that a pace of 76 - 77 secs per lap would achieve this. It was by no means an easy task in windy conditions and against the best competition in Zatopek history. Other contenders that year included Jenny Lund, Sue Hobson and Krishna Wood. I led on the first 16 laps but these girls shadowed me closely and knew that I would have to run the race of my life to beat them. I started fading with 6 laps to go, at which time Jenny and Sue passed me and started surging. I began to drop off but still remained in contact. With 4 laps to go I knew the record would be broken and I wasn't going to get it by giving up. So I got back in contact. With 2 laps to go Jenny took off in a 67 sec lap and somehow I hung on. With one lap to go I began to sprint. I ran out of steam with 150m to go but a 64 second last lap allowed me to hang on for a 2 sec win. My winning time of 31 mins 54 secs was a national record, Jenny Lund came second in 31 mins 56 secs, Sue Hobson third and Krishna Wood fourth. We all ran under 32 mins 20 secs.

I'm tired just thinking about it.

My personal highlight of the VMC is the people I've met and friendships that still stand even though the VMC is no more.

I would like to thank all members of the VMC for all your encouragement and friendship during my running career.

Vin Martin

In the 1980s, the VMC catered for all runners. As Fred is reported to have said once:

- *It is also important to be aware of the tail-enders, also-rans and in-betweens whose achievements are no less important to their lives.*

My first VMC event was the 1986 club marathon at Fishermens Bend, which I completed in a then PB of 3 hrs 36 min. That day, the first 50 placegetters (in a field of 85) finished in 3 hrs 16 min or better, so you can imagine my bemusement upon finding most of the other competitors looking completely relaxed after 20 minutes of recovery, sharing a chat, a cup of tea and a sandwich as if that is all they had done that morning!!

I was hooked. Over the coming eight years, I lined up at the beginning of several VMC events – more marathons, the Fallen Comrades over 3 laps of the Tan near Anzac Day, a 25 km at Albert Park, a 10 km at Princess Park and the famous annual Zatopek 10 km runs at Olympic Park. I ran other fun runs of course, but whenever I targeted a PB attempt, I focussed on a VMC event. I knew it would be held over an exact distance, impeccably marshalled and documented for all time in the VMC Newsletter.

I found the tips from VMC elders invaluable: for example, Fred advised me on how to break stride in long training runs and how to break 3 hours for the marathon (which I eventually achieved), while Ray Callaghan advised me on how to negative split a marathon (which I have just recently managed to achieve on my 29th attempt!).

But it is not the PBs as such or the statistics that matter but the moments, the friendships. Four that remain permanently etched in my memory are:

- The Zatopek races, including my first in 1986, and another in 1989, when I first met good friends over the years to come: Jim Grellis, Elias Saheli and Malcolm Brown. I still participate annually in the Zatopek festival.
- When my son took to running at the age of ten, father and son trained in earnest for the Easter Monday run over 3 km around Latrobe University. We ran valiantly into third place but were upstaged by a father and his 20 year old son who was a B-grade athlete !!
- The opportunity to publish my first long article on running in the second last edition of the VMC newsletter – an article on long Sunday group runs.
- Fred's support for my application to enrol in a Grade 1 coaching course in 1993.

While the VMC as an institution is no longer, its spirit lives on in several forms. The continuation of the Zatopek 10 km series is one obvious reminder, as too are the friendships which linger among old VMC members. When the Victorian Road Runners (VRR) started up a family day a few years back, thoughts of the VMC Easter Monday run came flooding back. And guess what? In 2002, the VRR shifted its family day from February to Easter Monday !! Long live the spirit of the VMC!!

John Duck

(excerpt from letter sent to VMC Secretary after announcement of the club's dissolution)

The VMC has played a major role in my running career for the past 24 years, more importantly in the early years when people such as Peter Bruce, Terry Harrison and Neil Ryan provided real inspiration for a young aspiring marathon runner.

In 1970, at just 17 years of age, I attempted my first marathon in the VMC Marathon at Tyabb – a sobering and eventually painful and unsuccessful attempt to reach the finish line. However, later that year I broke through the mental and physical barrier to complete the Victorian Marathon at Werribee in just 24 seconds over 3 hours and the following year lowered the time by a further 19 seconds to finish 21st in the VMC Marathon at Tyabb. From then on, nearly every marathon I ran over the next 10 years was a PB, and I ran at least two marathons each year until 1990, completing 50 in all.

Much of the credit for my eventual all-time PB of 2:19:47, run in Hamilton NZ in 1981, must go to the VMC providing several (albeit relatively unsuccessful) previous trips to Hamilton, culminating in the Club's subsidised attempt of the extremely successful 1981 venture.

The taste for international success enabled and motivated me to run marathons in London (twice), Vienna, Penang (5 times) as well as all around Australia.

And now, as the VMC is no more, I reflect with a large degree of sadness but a wealth of pleasurable memories on the friendships, achievements, memorable races, conviviality, outstanding athletes, personalities, gutsy efforts, warm informality and years of belting around the Yarra at midnight / New Years Eve, the Zatopek festival, the marathon. As the memories cloud the mind the ever-present background theme is Freddie's dulcet tones . . . "Line up, line up, line up . . .!"

John Waite

The names of Fred Lester and the Victorian Marathon Club run together in the annals of Australian distance running history. The golden age of Melbourne distance running for me was the well calendared program

events catering for the guys and few gals who would never be stars but loved a good hard race conducted effectively in strong verbal European overtones – by the legendary Fred Lester.

There was no better regular competition available than the VMC. The Club's standards were always high with a level of achievement that may not be evident in today's competition.

In 1988, for example, at the VMC's Zatopek 10,000 metres, 22 runners ran under 30 minutes, whilst even more remarkably, all runners in the E Division ran under 40 minutes. Even in F Division 13 ran under 40 minutes. I wonder whether the overall running standards are as good today.

The 1980's were good years. For example, in 1981 there were 152 entries in the VMC Marathon at Crib Point, Hastings. Some of the runners of those days still run today – like John Duck, Judy Wines, Bob Schickert, Ken Fraser, Tom Davison and John Gosbell. Who could forget the David Ward Half-Marathon at Burnley, the 10 km Anzac runs and Puma VMC coast 32 km road challenges from Brighton to Mordialloc back to Brighton, which hundreds of runners would use as preparation for the Big M Melbourne Marathon a month or so later.

Joan Logan

At 12 years of age, I joined the Springvale / Noble Park womens athletic club and first fell in love with running. Seven years later, at the age of 19 years, I had a driving instructress, Clare McKerr, 26 years my elder, who loved to keep fit. Claire was an enthusiastic distance runner and an adherent of the Van Aaken training method which centred on long but slow running. Training together, we both improved in form and fitness. Once our confidence kicked in, we decided to enter a marathon - the VMC Marathon at Tyabb held on 12 June 1977.

Before we were allowed to compete in a marathon, the Women's Athletic Association (WAA) insisted we obtain a medical certificate. Although our longest run in training was only 14 miles (or 23 kms for readers unfamiliar with British measurements), we were declared "very fit". Before 1977, only one woman had ever run the VMC Marathon - Lynne McLeod from New Zealand a year earlier. In 1977 however, I was one of five women entrants, the others being Claire, Peggy Smith, Anne Callaghan and Lavinia Petrie. Anne completed the course alongside Ray, her husband - almost certainly the first married couple to run a marathon together in Victoria. Lavinia ran close to the fastest marathon by a woman in Australia - see her story elsewhere in this publication.

We all finished the race in under four hours - quite an achievement as none of us had raced the distance before!

Fortunately for me, all the training for the marathon gave me the stamina and speed to start winning cross country and track races. For the first time, I was selected in the Victorian cross-country team. Subsequently, I represented Australia in the Avon Cosmetics International Marathon for Women held in London in 1980.

The camaraderie and encouragement of the running community including WAA athletes, the Victorian Veterans and the VMC with its longer and varied runs, ensured increased participation of women in the sport and the public awareness that women could run long . . . and survive! Thirty-five years later, we are all here to tell the story.

Dr Tarquin Oehr

My first experience of the VMC was driving down to Tyabb with Stewart Handasyde one mid-winter afternoon in 1970 to run my first marathon. Upon arrival, we were ushered into a dencorub-smelling changing room to have the compulsory medical check-up by a doctor before being allowed to start. I have strong memories of the guy at the start in the funny hat with all the badges and the post-race exhilaration and stiffness, but the race itself is a bit hazy. While I just missed the 3 hour barrier that day, I presented the next month for the VAAA marathon and completed the double on several occasions subsequently.

Over the years I ran several VMC runs, enjoying the camaraderie of other distance runners. The newsletter was always anticipated for interesting articles and comments and its detailed lists of results (one always likes to see one's name in print).

After a few years working and running overseas, I returned in 1980. Eager to have some road runs over the next few months, I took to the "Two Bridges" runs — these were a great experience and we always enjoyed a barbeque on the Yarra banks afterwards. I remember proudly displaying my new daughter at one of these events and even accepting a sausage. There were some savage temperatures and I had my only experience of heat exhaustion after the 12 km event one evening in which I chased in vain the sweaty back of Trevor Vincent in front of me.

The Zatopek, of course, was a rare opportunity to run a 10 km track race and the organisation was fantastic. A grade event was a highlight of the distance year. I won the C Grade one year and was promoted to B Grade the next. I received as much encouragement coming last in the B grade race as I had received running first in the C Grade. That's what the VMC represented to me — a club to make the keen as welcome as the talented. These days focuses too much on winning rather than competing. I've never been a star but am still competitive after 35 years and it is sad that the VMC ceased.

Doug Oliver

(reflections submitted in a letter to Joan and Peter Logan, dated 6 December 2000)

My first recollection of the Victorian Marathon Club was in 1961. I ran in a 15 miler at Princes Park and was also invited to become Treasurer. I took over from Geoff Warren and continued for 8 years until 1969. I ran my first marathon in 1961 at the age of 24 years. The marathon was from Mentone via South Spring Road, Chelsea Heights and return. There were only 25 starters and no officials to man the feeding stations. We ran 15 miles without a drink, which is unheard of today. My only nourishment was a few jelly beans. Harry Logan and I were always on the lookout for new marathon and 20 mile courses.

During the 1960s and 1970s, a popular marathon course was the one that ran from Tyabb to the Warrens and return. It was a fairly flat course except for a hill at the 23 mile mark. Unfortunately, for the first two years we had to run over a gravel section for approximately 2 kilometres. I remember running two marathons on this course in the space of 2 months and there was only six seconds difference in time.

I remember a funny incident while running the Tyabb Marathon course in 1968 or 1969. I was running with Bernie Murphy and at the 15 mile mark I noticed a bicycle race in progress coming towards us. The field was spread out across the road. I saw that there was a car parked on the side of the road approximately 100 metres ahead. I speeded up to get to the car before the bikes but the bikes and I reached the car at the same time so I had to run to the left of the car and into the bush to avoid them. Approximately 2 km further Bernie was driven past in a car. He dropped out of the marathon because he thought he was slowing down. As I had speeded up but did not tell him my intentions.

I also remember running in the country marathon at Euroa in 1965. Harry Logan and I were running with local identity Lindsay Neelands and we had to run up 3 big hills near the 10 mile mark. I always ran fast uphill and slow downhill and Harry ran slow uphill and fast downhill. After halfway we left Lindsay far behind. When he finished he said he was astounded at the tactics we used. He did not know whether to go on with me or stay back with Harry.

I had a very enjoyable time during my association with the Victorian Marathon Club. It was a very sad day for me running in the final run at Princes Park.

Lynne Williams

Do your memories also improve with time? My recollections of the VMC cover a period around a quarter of a century ago, and start in 1970, when I first 'found' the pleasures of distance running. In those days, it was legitimate to call yourself a distance runner if you ran 3 km or more. These days 3km is classed either as a novelty event, or somewhere between a sprint and middle distance! But the VMC was always there for the really serious distance runner. Its fixtures offered races of varying distances (at least up to the marathon) over a variety of terrains: road, cross country and track.

My favourite event was always the Midnight New Year's Eve Run around the Two Bridges which I only had the discipline to participate in (i.e. no drinking before) a couple of times, but used to enjoy watching. The event was always hotly contested, but almost as much fun was watching the reactions of other revellers on the banks of the Yarra to these sweaty, obviously very fit individuals racing around on New Year's Eve! Priorities?

The other event that always received my top viewing priority was the annual Zatopek 10 km track. While no longer directly associated with the VMC, this event remains the prestige track 10 km event in Australia. The Women's Zatopek was not introduced until the late 1970s. I regret to this day that I never ran it: 10 km on the road used to be my favourite event, but for some reason the thought of running around a track 25 times never appealed. I do recall watching folks like Lavinia, Joan, Sally, Megan and Annie pioneer the status which the Womens' Zatopek now enjoys. And through it all, there was always Fred putting in countless, free, thankless hours of organisation and publicity to provide opportunities for athletes of all levels to participate. Yes, we have moved on, and the whole distance scene is now more 'professional', with a much more extensive calendar. But those of us whose memories do go back more than 30 years will always recall the major and important role the VMC played in the distance runners' calendar, and the impetus it provided to distance running in general.

Dot Browne

I remember with great affection the many enjoyable runs I had with the VMC from around 1979 when I first started running. Bob Schickert introduced me to the club by giving me a newsletter, which I found very interesting. I started turning up at some of the runs and loved them. Freddie Lester was an unforgettable identity, a human dynamo, slight of build and skinny in stature, but always totally in charge as race organiser. He barked decisive instructions at runners and officials with his clipped European accent and we all appreciated the fact that his runs were well-organised with an accurate time and distance.



I loved the VMC marathons, with the early ones at Crib Point and the later ones on the flat course and Fishermens Bend. They were great. In those days three of us organised the first of the 10km & 5km Queen of the Lake runs for females only, around Albert Park Lake, which still survives today.

Remembering these runs and the special feeling of the time in the height of the running boom, reminds me of other great institutions (like the VMC) that no longer exist. Remember the Avon Marathon for women. So many of our aspiring female marathon runners flew to Manly to try out for the international women's marathon in San Francisco. Barbara Byrnes, Margaret Reddan and myself were successful in that one. I'll never forget two suspect "nuns" in full habits who always featured in the women's marathons.

The Team Trot was another one. I remember squashing into Alexandra Parade with the Dorchester on our way to an enormous crowd. Every runner was wearing the special Team Trot singlet (that, I'm sure, is now complete in our running singlet drawer) and we were fully hyped. I had agreed to lead blind runner Graeme Hamilton on a metre cord in this one and, on recollection, it was a nightmare. When the crowd jumped traffic island we went round the roundabout to avoid the gutters. When there were cars backing out of driveways, we gave them a wide berth. When there were council footpath works, we detoured out onto the road to avoid crashing into the bunting and ending up in the hole. Where there were overhanging trees on the footpath, I had to come and yell out, "Duck NOW Grae!" Drink stations were stress-out places. Other runners cut us off as they ran across to the drink station, causing me to pull hard on the rope or end up tripped on the road. I never realised there were so many hazards to running in the suburbs for an unsighted person. I was a nervous wreck at the time.

The Sun Superun over Westgate Bridge was another popular run. There were a few crazies in that one. My friend ran as an emu with a skinny neck and head on a stick that looked out over the crowd; others wearing long pigtails pulled a rickshaw. How many thousands were in that one?

It was also the height of the Melbourne to Sydney Westfield Run. Cliff Young had won it with his "tortoise" strategies in 1982 and shuffled into the spotlight to become a household name. I was on the losing side the winner for the following year, Geoff Molloy, an experience I'll never forget. The Sri Chimnoy Temple runs were also very active at that time. They taught us how a run should be organised, with their friendly public relations skills, accurate times and course measurement and fruit and wholemeal cakes at the end. They were wonderful.

But I think the highlight of the VMC year was always the New Year's Eve midnight Run, with the sponsorship by Runners World's Neil Ryan. He overwhelmed us all with his generous donations of running gear, after we'd been sprayed with champagne and kissed by drunken revellers having fun around the 2km stretch of the two bridges Yarra River course.

They were great times. It made me very nostalgic recalling the period when the VMC was in its heyday.

Helen Van Der Nagel

I am a baby boomer. I was born in 1957 so I just made it. I am also a running boomer, as I started running in 1973, ran my first race in 1977 and my first marathon in 1981. I had no athletic training as I had never been a member of a club but in 1984 all that changed. I joined the VMC and running doors were opened for me.

I met other runners: some have remained good friends. I met Mick, Joan, Peter, Dot, Ken and, of course, Fred. Sincere words of advice came from Fred. He pestered me about LSD runs till I ran a PB in a VMC Team Run. I loved those runs. I remember Ken Emery yelling at me "What's wrong with you, you're running like a sheila!" while making my way to the finish line along the banks of the Yarra River. I recall meeting

said "It's good to see a young person running with the VMC." Years later she said "It's good to see a young person running with the Vets!". I certainly like the idea of staying youthful forever. I still see Joan and Peter around the traps while Mick and his cheery smile "pop" up all over the place.

I bought a VMC singlet. Didn't everyone? I treasure mine, wear it sparingly and wash it by hand. I don't want to wear out. At last year's Zatopek somebody yelled "Who did you borrow that from? They're a collector's item!" Remember the Zatopek? I was encouraged to enter in 1984 "... just to make up the field", said Fred. I ran last and loved it. I run in the B grade now and still love it.

Speaking of collector's items, I have retained the newsletters. I used to look forward to them. I enjoyed Dot's long descriptive articles on ultras and Fred's letters to Mr Cain, the Victorian Premier, with pleas for safe road circuits. I confess I loved seeing my name in print, and never minded coming 183rd. Leafing through some of the old mags has reminded me of the great races the VMC used to organise, including the New Year's Eve "midnite" run, the Laser half and the Beach Road Bash.

I was saddened to see the end of the VMC because through my small involvement I gained training knowledge, racing information, life-long friends, fitness and joy. Without the VMC, I doubt that I would still be running and racing today.

Dave Byrnes

The only way to describe the VMC's impact on my running career and life is profound.

When I first began attending VMC events, I found them to be a venue for the average club runner (as I was) to compete regularly in some different events, do a little better competitively than in the tougher VAAA (as it was then) races and get to know runners from other clubs. It was both fun and rewarding, and I'm sure that I became a better runner and a tougher competitor as a result. I have very many fond memories of racing in the King of the Mountains, the Two Bridges races, the Tyabb Marathons and the Fallen Comrades, amongst others.

However, I think the VMC had an even greater personal impact on me than that described above. As my marathon running improved, with times consistently around 2:35/2:40, I was lucky enough to come second to a New Zealander in the 1976 VMC Marathon Championship in a time of 2:31. As the first VMC member, I received an airfare to compete in the Hamilton Marathon in New Zealand. I can still remember the euphoria I felt as I strolled along the Seaford beach that evening, at both my time and the prize. I had to keep pinching myself to believe that it was real. But better was to come. In Hamilton I ran 2:22, taking about 10 minutes off my previous best time and coming 7th in a competitive field. Incredible! In later years, I have come to believe that the Hamilton course was short, as a number of runners never improved on the personal bests they set that day. Nevertheless, my performance made me believe that I could run those kinds of times. In 1977, I once again came second at Tyabb to a New Zealander, this time in 2:24. I increased my training and followed up with a number of times around the 2:20 mark in subsequent years, with a best of 2:19:06.

I still wonder whether I ever would have become a consistent 2:20-ish runner if it hadn't been for the great VMC prize that sent me to a race where I exceeded my wildest expectations and developed new confidence in my abilities. The VMC truly did change my life and I'm very thankful to all of its members and, very especially to Fred Lester who had the vision and made it happen.

SHORT BIOGRAPHIES - SOME VMC PIONEERS

PERCY WELLS CERUTTY b.1895 – d.1975

Percy Cerutti was the first president of the VMC and held that office for the first five years of the club. He only took up serious running at 45 years of age when he joined Malvern Harriers. He ran his first marathon distance in 1945 and the following year at 51 years of age he finished fifth in the Victorian Marathon title (but the first Victorian to finish) in 2 hours 58 mins 11 secs.

Percy's contribution to Australian athletics, particularly the period from the 1952 Helsinki Olympics to the 1960 Rome Olympics, was considerable. He was one of the world's greatest and most controversial athletic coaches. He coached two of Australia's best middle distance runners – Herb Elliott and John Landy – and influenced many other top class athletes.

Many world-class athletes and sportsmen visited his Portsea Training Camp where he put his athletes through his own rigorous brand of teaching. In later years he used to appear on his 110 metre circular track between 11.00 am and 1.00 pm to talk of the golden era of Australian distance running – of Elliott, Landy, Thomas, Power and Perry. Part of his talk would incorporate his sexual desires and achievements but although much of his talk was useless and irrelevant, there was always something to learn from the deliberations, jumping up and down and occasionally tearing off around the track.

He had at least eight books published including "Be fit or be damned" and "Athletics: How to become a champion" which became textbooks on athletics.

Many experts criticised his methods and labeled him a crank. Others maintain he was the greatest individual coach this country has produced. Whatever the verdict, this small, dynamic, extroverted, controversial character achieved fame in athletic circles throughout the world.

NEIL RYAN b.1942 ...

A VMC marathon champion, life member and past President, Neil Ryan played a significant role in the affairs of the club over a long period of time. At school, Neil mainly played football and cricket until he became involved with athletics at Moreland High School. He joined the East Melbourne Harriers club and at 16 years of age ran 51.5 secs for 440 yards, 1 min 55.5 secs for 880 yards and 4 mins 19.5 secs for the mile.

Neil transferred to Richmond Harriers in 1963 to join the great distance running group led by Brendan McVeigh. This group bushwalked, attended Percy Cerutti's Portsea training camp and competed regularly in track, road and cross-country events so that by 1966 Neil was at his peak. In 1966 and 1967 he won almost every road event conducted by the VMC. By 1969 he had run a VMC marathon record at Tyabb in 2 hours 21 mins 59 secs and finished second in the Australian title in 2 hours 24 mins 8 secs.

A trip overseas provided very stiff competition, which paid off with a string of top performances in VMC events when he returned home, culminating in 2 hours 18 mins 31 secs in the 1971 VMC marathon – the fastest time ever for this club event.

Neil recognised a lack of attention to runners' needs in footwear so he opened his Runners World retail store in High St Kew in 1976, opening on Friday nights and Saturday mornings. Within months it was trading regularly and it continues to service the running community today with goods and advice.

ALF O'CONNOR b. 1906 – d. 1970

Alf O'Connor was President of the VMC from 1961 to 1970 and during this time he generously made his home available for the club's Annual General Meetings. In his first year as President, he competed in three marathons for a fourth place in both the VMC marathon and the Victorian State title (in a time of 2 hours 46 mins 31 secs), and a win in the South Australian marathon title in Adelaide.

In 1919, at 13 years of age, Alf received his first taste of athletics at the Preston State School in a winning relay team. He originally competed for Melbourne Harriers but upon his return from an overseas trip in 1935 Alf joined his local club Preston and competed regularly over middle distance and cross-country, the latter as a member of a winning team in the Victorian Cross-Country Championships.

After competing in his first marathon in 1956, he tackled the task of marathon training in his characteristic fashion. He trained every day and was a regular at Frank Sedgman's city gymnasium.

Alf's achievements provided tremendous inspiration in encouraging older men to become athletically active well before the introduction of veteran athletic competitions.

GEORGE WILSON b. 1912 – d. 1988

George Wilson did not enter athletics until 1968 at 56 years of age but in his second year he was one of only four Victorians to complete all four marathons conducted in Victoria in 1969 – Traralgon, VMC, VAAA State title and Ballarat.

His early sporting years were taken up with cricket and squash before he embraced athletics. He competed enthusiastically in both VMC and veterans events both here and overseas.

His most memorable races included the 1969 Traralgon marathon where only 14 of the 34 starters finished the course in rain and near Arctic conditions and the World Veterans Marathon in Cologne, Germany in 1972, also held in pouring rain.

George thoroughly enjoyed his running and one of his favourite stories concerned one of the slower runners in the Boston Marathon who was asked in the closing stages of the event if the traffic worried him. He replied "No I don't mind the traffic, the only upsetting thing was seeing a newsboy on a corner at the 15 mile mark with the winner's name in the headlines".

George served as Treasurer of the VMC for several years and often contributed his time to organising VMC events and helping out in the VMC office.

Arthritis in the knees in George's last few years curtailed his running so he took up exercises with weights and a stationary bike to maintain his fitness. He suffered a stroke late in 1988, which led to his passing away in December of that year.

DEREK CLAYTON b. 1942

Derek Clayton was born in Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire in 1942 but at the age of eight his family moved to Belfast, Northern Ireland. He started his running career at 19 years of age, concentrating on the mile. Upon

arrival in Melbourne in 1963 he joined St Stephen's Harriers where he switched to longer distance races. Just four weeks after arriving in Australia he ran in a marathon as a training run and finished in 3 hours and 2 secs.

It wasn't until 1965 that he ran in his first serious marathon. He won in a new Australian record time of 2 hours 22 mins 12 secs and broke this record the next year with another marathon championship win in 2 hours 18 mins 28 secs. Then came wins in the Australian National Marathon title and a trip to Fukuoka, Japan for a world best time of 2 hours 9 mins 36 secs.

The highlight of Derek's running career was his exceptional run in the marathon in Antwerp, Belgium on 30 May 1969. In perfect conditions and on a relatively flat course he beat a class field of the world's best marathon runners to record a world record time of 2 hours 8 mins 33.6 secs.

Although Derek was not a member of the VMC he did compete in several club events and, following his participation in the Mexico Olympics, he was guest speaker at the VMC Annual General Meeting held at Alf O'Connor's home.

Despite recording world best times, Derek was unable to achieve his ambition of an Olympic gold medal. Although he competed in the 1968 Mexico Olympics and the 1972 Munich Olympics, injury, heat, and altitude combined to deny him his opportunity. Throughout his athletic career he underwent nine major operations but his determination kept him competing until finally, and reluctantly, he retired from serious running in 1974 at the relatively young age of 31.

GEOFF WATT b. 1932 – d. 1969

Warragul runner Geoff Watt (father of Olympic cyclist Kathy Watt) was a keen supporter of the VMC. Geoff was a regular at Percy Cerutti's Portsea training camp and competed in athletic events in many overseas countries during his varied running career.

Between 1959 and 1961 Geoff traveled around the world on a shoestring budget, competing in marathons and distance events. These experiences included completing the 54 mile Comrades Marathon in South Africa, training with Abebe Bikila in Ethiopia, running the Fukuoka marathon in Japan and the Boston Marathon in the USA, and finishing the National AAU New York Marathon in fourth place.

The Cerutti diet inspired Geoff to claim, "Horses eat oats, horses run faster than men, I'll eat oats and fly". In Boston the sports columnist for the Boston Globe dubbed Geoff "The bearded galloper from Down Under" and headlined his column "Eat oats and fly".

One humorous story from these travels relates to the Kosice marathon held in Czechoslovakia. Geoff was photographed with Abebe Bikila and two Japanese runners in their race numbers. By a happy coincidence, Bikila wore race number 1, the Japanese runners numbers 2 and 3, and Geoff number 4. Later, when traveling through Ethiopia, Geoff showed the photo to local residents who, upon recognising Bikila, would turn to Geoff admiringly "Four? You are number four?" to which Geoff would reply "Yes but Bikila is a long way ahead". After such a display of modesty, the Ethiopians couldn't do enough for him. What Geoff omitted from his answer was that while Bikila won the race, Geoff finished in 28th place.

Geoff was the VMC's most prolific participant in club events, 52 in all, before his untimely death while on a training run at Mount Baw Baw in the winter of 1969.

FRED LESTER *b. 1923 ...*

Everyone who has been involved with the VMC has memories of Fred Lester in his old army hat mustering runners to the start of VMC events and providing instructions on the proper conduct of the race. One member recalled Fred's race instructions that stated "when you finish you should give your name, age and whether you are male or female, in case the person recording cannot tell".

A Life Member of the club, Fred was secretary from 1961 to 1972 and from 1975 to 1990. He had a long and successful career competing for Kew-Camberwell (formerly YMCA and YMCA-Camberwell). He ran his first marathon in the Victorian Marathon Championship on the Melbourne Olympic course in 1956 and finished third (behind Les Perry and Mick Skinner) in 2 hours 44 mins 51 secs. He has a marathon personal best of 2 hours 34 mins 20 secs.

Fred joined the VMC in 1959 at the Annual General Meeting and with only 27 members present he was immediately elected to the committee. Two years later he became secretary. Fred was very conscious of the role the club could play in providing much needed competition for road runners to complement the programs conducted by the state and national athletic bodies. The national marathon championship was held only every second year until 1967 and there was only one marathon per year in each state. However in Victoria, where the VMC provided an additional marathon event, there were five opportunities every two years for Victorian athletes.

Under Fred's guidance the VMC program was increased from 7 or 8 races in the 1950s to up to 15 races, plus the Emil Zatopek 10,000 metres series in the following decade.

Fred was not a great fan of the coaching methods of Percy Cerutti but he recognised the contribution Percy made to the club in its early days. He tells the story of how at one stage Percy trained his athletic group around the tan and as he passed Fred going in the opposite direction he called Fred a no-hoper. However Fred recalls that to his satisfaction he beat every one of the group trained by Percy at that time over the next couple of years.

With the disbanding of the VMC on 31 December 1993 the club set up a trust fund known as the Fred Lester Athletic Scholarship in his honor. This fund is to provide an annual grant to a male and a female distance running athlete under the age of 25 who had displayed outstanding aptitude and performances in the current calendar year and are registered with Athletics Victoria.

CHARLES HERBERT (BERT) GARDINER *b. 1902 – d. 1994*

Bert Gardiner was an almost permanent presence at any athletic meeting or gathering in Victoria for over 70 years. His enthusiasm and efforts for the sport he loved were recognised with Life Memberships to the AAU (now Athletics Australia), the VAAA (now Athletics Victoria), Moreland A.C., the VAWC and the VMC. He was also honoured by the IAAF as one of the seven most outstanding athletics administrators in Australia.

Bert competed in inter-club competitions over a period of 26 years and, although his favourite event was race walking, he competed over every distance from 100 yards to the marathon. In his early days he won Australian and Victorian titles in the walk and when he returned to competition at the age of



Bert, on the right, winning the three mile walk in 1924

85 years he was a silver medallist at the World Veterans Games in Melbourne in 1987.

Bert was a founding member of several athletics clubs, including Preston AAC, Moreland Women's AC, the Victorian Amateur Walking Club and the VMC. He was a member of World Statisticians and his love of the statistics and history of athletics provided a mass of information, which he passed on to Athletics Australia and the VMC. His statistical knowledge led to Bruce McAvaney, Australia's foremost Olympic TV presenter, commenting that Gardiner "recorded a lot of heroics and records of the sport." He went on to say that while "you think of statisticians being rather clinical people, you could always see the joy in Bert's eyes."

Bert was Australian athletics team manager for the 1958 British Empire and Commonwealth Games, officiated at the 1962 and 1982 Commonwealth Games and was Chairman and Referee, Road Events at the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. He also chaired the Australian Selectors panel for 18 years.

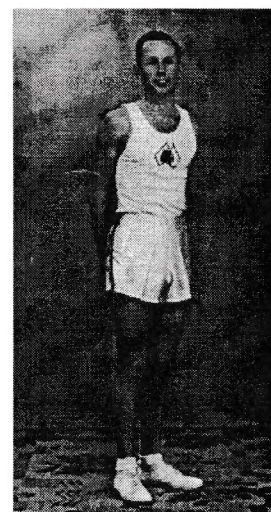
Bert's son Bob inherited his love of race walking and became a triple Olympian who finished fifth in the 50 km walk at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics.

As a founding member and life member of the VMC, Bert Gardiner maintained an active interest in the club over the whole period of its existence, including 10 years as President.

ROBERT (BOB) PRENTICE b. 1917 – d. 1987

Bob Prentice was elected a Life Member of the VMC in 1967. He was a great advocate of Australian distance running, especially marathon running. He joined the VMC in 1946, soon after its formation, while at the same time competing regularly for Coburg Harriers.

With Gordon Stanley, Bob initiated the rise of Australian marathon running. Coached by Percy Cerutti, he was the winner of the first AAU recognised National Marathon Championship held in Perth in 1949. He finished second in 1951 and won again in 1952. Bob won both the Victorian and NSW marathon titles in 1950, 1951 and 1952 and the VMC title in 1953 in a time of 2 hours 35 mins 33 secs. He represented Australia the 1950 Empire Games in New Zealand where he finished 10th. To achieve the qualifying time for selection in the marathon for the 1952 Australian Olympic team to compete in Helsinki, Bob ran three marathons in quick succession, the third producing an Australian record of 2 hours 31 mins 51 secs.



Bob Prentice, Australian Olympian, Helsinki 1952

LES PERRY b. 1923 ...

While still a novice at running and awaiting discharge from the Army, Les Perry witnessed Percy Cerutti finish first Victorian home in 5th place in the 1946 State Marathon Championship. Thus began Les's initial support and enthusiasm for the VMC. That same year, Les joined the Williamstown AC, and later, in 1962, he founded Ringwood AC. He is a life member of all three clubs.

His athletic career culminated with Olympic representation in the 5000 metres at the 1952 Helsinki Games (where he finished sixth behind Emil Zatopek in the final) and in the marathon event at the 1956 Melbourne Games. He won the National 3 mile (5000 metres) title from 1950 to 1953 and was placed in the one mile title on three occasions.

Together with Bert Gardiner and Fred Lester, Les initiated the now traditional Emil Zatopek 10,000 metres series in memory of the super-human feats of this great Czech runner.

Les Perry served as secretary of the VMC from 1956 to 1961. He helped conduct a number of the club's 20 mile King of the Mountain events in the 1960s.

ALF ROBINSON b. 1907 – d. 1977 and MABEL ROBINSON b. 1910 – d. 2000

The VMC had a long and very close association with Alf and Mabel Robinson over many years, especially in relation to the production of the VMC Newsletter, which was a joint effort between them and the editor, Fred Lester. Alf provided the use of his office for putting together the VMC Newsletter and with eight to ten members circling the table collating the pages there was considerable noise, discussion, comments and laughter as the newsletter was prepared for distribution.

Alf and Mabel were significant contributors to ensuring that winter and summer VMC events dove-tailed as much as possible between metropolitan and country VAAA fixtures to maximise opportunities for all athletes. Alf was instrumental in inviting the VMC to arrange to have the Emil Zatopek 10 km track race presented in conjunction with the all schools championships. This led to the development of the Emil Zatopek program of events and established a consistent venue for the races. Previously the Zatopek had been held at a number of different venues.

Alf occupied executive positions as secretary or president of several clubs and associations between 1927 and his death in 1977, including the VAAA, the Metropolitan AAC, the VWAC and the Federation of Walking Clubs of Australia. He was elected a Life Member of the VAAA in 1968.

In 1962 Alf was manager of the Athletic Section of the Australian team to the Commonwealth Games in Perth and in 1956 he managed the road events for the Melbourne Olympics.

Mabel was one of athletics' longest serving officials as she devoted nearly a lifetime to the sport she shared and loved with Alf. Competing with Malvern Women's AAC as a walker she was placed in the national titles four years in a row and won four Victorian walk titles. She held the position of President to both the VWAAA and the AWAAA and was vice president of the amalgamated men and women's Union from 1978 until 1983. In recognition of her contribution to athletics Mabel received an MBE and was awarded life membership of Athletics Australia.

Alf and Mabel's co-operation with the VMC contributed to the success of the club and their efforts were greatly appreciated by all athletes.

JIM QUINTON CRAWFORD b. 1935 ...

Jim Crawford is one of Australia's most prolific marathon runners with 130 marathons, including 90 under three hours and a best time of 2hr.31mins.35sec. His athletic career commenced in 1951 when he joined the South Melbourne Athletic Club, mainly competing in track races. The marathon in the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games inspired him to try the marathon distance himself and he ran his first marathon in 1957, finishing 4th in 3hr.13mins. From then on he was hooked and in 1958 he represented Victoria at the Cardiff

Games trial in Sydney. In extremely hot conditions only five runners finished, Jim pulling out at 22 miles – one of only two non-finishes in his career.

Jim went to Rome in 1960 to watch the Olympic Games and from there he travelled to England to run in the legendary Windsor to Chiswick marathon over the original course. This race set him on his great record of never again dropping out of a race. He was very unfit but was determined to finish and did so in 3hr. 17min. He and his brother Colin spent some time working and running their way around Europe and, while in London, ran with both Ilford and Enfield Athletic clubs.

In 1962, Jim represented Victoria at the Perth Games marathon trial before heading north to the Balgo Aboriginal Settlement for 8 months to install a piped water system. He trained every day at Balgo, and soon became known as “that crazy white man – Jim Runabout” by the Aborigines. They could not comprehend why anyone would choose to run anywhere when they did not have to, so Jim’s 10 to 20 mile daily runs confused them greatly. They would enquire where and why he was going and, on his return, what he had brought back in the way of game for food. Around that time many of the Aboriginal kids could be seen wearing South Melbourne Athletic Club singlets distributed by Jim among the community.

Jim returned to racing marathons, running 8 in under 2hr. 40min. between 1965 and 1968, before recording personal best times in all distances from 1 mile (4min. 19sec.) to the marathon (2hr 31min 35sec) in 1969. He credits his improved times to the influence of Les Perry who encouraged him to increase his training mileage and inspired him to have confidence in himself. He was also greatly inspired by Percy Cerutti who once said to him after a 50 mile race in which Jim finished third, “Terrific! How can you run that well without my tuition?” to which Jim replied by pointing to his heart and saying “it’s all in here, Perc.” From then on Percy encouraged him whenever he saw him race.

Early in 1970 Jim had an ear operation and although he still ran 4 marathons that year, he never regained the times of 1969.

But for what Jim lacked in terms of quality, he more than made up in quantity. In 1974, his 21st year as a club member, Jim ran his 50th marathon in the VMC Marathon. In 1978 Jim ran 8 marathons, the most he had ever run in a year. He nominates the 1969 and 1979 Traralgon marathons, held in rain, hail, sleet, and gale force wind, as the toughest marathons in which he competed.

Jim Crawford considered himself a battler but most of his opponents and club mates learned to respect this runner who always had a good word to say for everyone whether they beat him or not. His interest and respect for others was returned to him in full and, as former VMC member and distance runner Fred Howe stated “Jim Crawfords don’t grow on trees and I think it will be many years before such an enthusiast as Jim comes on the scene.”

PARTICIPATION OVER THE YEARS

FALLEN COMRADES (15 km)

Shrine, 2 June 1953

1	Les	PERRY	46.58
2	Geoff	WARREN	47.46
3	Terry	SULLIVAN	48.15
4	Arthur	DUNN	49.01
5	Bill	HUGHES	49.47
6	Doug	HANDS	49.59
7	Max	NEGRI	51.12
8	Dave	STEPHENS	51.17
9	Bob	PRENTICE	51.45
10	John	POTTAGE	51.45
11	Mark	SHILSTON	52.57
12	Bob	STERRY	53.20
13	Jim	BRYCE	54.03
14	Geoff	WATT	55.02
15	Gordon	WHEELER	55.02
16	Bob	AULD	55.14
17	Jim	JACK	55.30
18	Neville	BLISS	56.29
19	Ken	MCPHAIL	57.25
20	Dick	ATKINSON	57.30
21	Bob	SUDHOLZ	58.03
22	Jack	DIXON	58.58
23	Frank	BRINDLEY	62.49
24	Lindsay	MCGREGOR	64.54
25	Arthur	BUTLER	65.53

VMC MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIP, TYABB

Saturday, 26 June, 1971

Weather: cold, blustery, few showers

1	Neil	RYAN	2:18:31
2	Peter	BRUCE	2:19:21
3	Rod	MACKINNEY	2:26:50
4	Terry	HARRISON	2:28:56
5	Julian	SCOTT	2:29:51
6	David	MCINNES	2:31:08
7	Trevor	VINCENT	2:33:04
8	John	BERMINGHAM	2:33:04
9	Bruce	HICKS	2:33:18
10	Ray	BROWN	2:34:15
11	Tom	KELLY	2:36:25
12	Clive	VOGEL	2:37:34
13	Alan	HICKS	2:39:17
14	Kevin	ROCK	2:40:12
15	Doug	LE BAS	2:41:26
16	Keith	ROUTLEY	2:52:44
17	David	INNES	2:55:46
18	Wolf	VOIGT	2:57:07
19	Jim	CRAWFORD	2:57:51
20	Doug	OLIVER	2:58:30
21	John	DUCK	3:00:05
22	Arch	THOMSON	3:01:21
23	Ron	DAVIS	3:01:46
24	Wally	SHEPPARD	3:02:50
25	Rod	MCDOUGALL	3:05:13
26	Ted	BONE	3:05:45
27	Martin	THOMPSON	3:09:21
28	Donald	COLLINS	3:10:54
29	John	MCDONNELL	3:10:56
30	Leigh	THOMPSON	3:13:38
31	Barry	JONES	3:15:24
32	Kevin	ONLEY	3:16:32
33	Geoff	LONT	3:17:12
34	Con	BUTKO	3:23:44
35	Colin	CRAWFORD	3:25:05
36	Kerin	RYAN	3:27:00
37	David	BRADFORD	3:37:07
38	Bert	PHILLIPS	4:31:25

**KING AND QUEEN OF THE MOUNTAIN
RED HILL, 30 KM, 9 September 1989
Showery, blustery wind**

1	Tony	DIDONATO	1:49:30	23	Gerry	RILEY	2:17:58
2	Rodney	WILEY	1:52:05	24	Geoff	HOOK	2:20:39
3	Russ	JOHNSON	1:54:43	25	Barry	WATSON	2:22:02
4	Ian	RANDS	1:57:10	26	Mary	EDWARDS	2:22:38
5	Garry	POLLARD	2:00:44	27	Ken	WHYTE	2:22:39
6	Bob	BROWN	2:03:09	28	Wayne	THOMPSON	2:22:40
7	John	KNEEN	2:03:25	29	Sam	HILDITCH	2:23:16
8	Les	BRADD	2:05:50	30	Chris	LEVY	2:24:29
9	Simon	BENJAMIN	2:06:06	31	Bruce	CARLILE	2:24:35
10	John	WAITE	2:06:20	32	David	FULLER	2:25:58
11	Ross	MARSHALL	2:08:04	33	Kelvin	MARSHALL	2:26:05
12	David	RICKARD	2:08:31	34	Barry	THOMAS	2:28:51
13	Paul	MCLUSKEY	2:09:59	35	Doug	PETROFF	2:29:45
14	Jim	DONOGHUE	2:10:53	36	Bill	FULTON	2:29:45
15	Malcolm	BROWN	2:11:29	37	Tiki	DAHM	2:30:43
16	Steve	BUCKLEY	2:12:21	38	Garry	JOWETT	2:30:51
17	Keith	MACINTOSH	2:12:32	39	Lois	WEBSTER	2:31:43
18	John	RASKAS	2:13:56	40	Stephen	MARSHALL	2:32:45
19	Roger	WEINSTEIN	2:14:33	41	Eddie	SWAN	2:37:51
20	David	ANSELL	2:15:20	42	Ann	VAVASOUR	2:38:10
21	Graeme	RUSSELL	2:16:38	43	Colin	BROWNE	2:44:50
22	Tony	MAQUEDA	2:17:11	44	Annette	NUNN	2:45:33
				45	Jim	CLARKE	2:45:33
				46	Doug	OLIVER	2:54:56
				47	Clint	JEFFREY	2:56:16
				48	Kerry	CUTHBERTSON	3:10:14

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APPENDIX

Selected VMC races - Results

1. Emil Zatopek 10 km (1961 to 1993)
2. Emil Zatopek Fun Run 10 km (1983 to 1993)
3. Comrades Run 12 km (1961 to 1993)
4. King & Queen of the Mountains 30km or 32km
5. VMC Marathon (1953 to 1993)
6. Queen of the Lake 10 km (1987 to 1993)
7. VMC Runners World Midnight Run 8 km approx. (1973 to 1993)

1 Emil Zatopek 10 km track

First held in 1968, it was split into two divisions in 1971. This grew to six divisions by 1978. The first women's division was held in 1979 and this grew to two divisions in 1986.

13-16 December 1993		MEN	WOMEN
Paul Patrick	27.59.64		Carolyn Schuwalow 32.28.50
Garry Staines (GB)	28.02.24		Michelle Dillon 32.35.48
Steve Moneghetti	28.03.65		Barbara Moore 33.00.88
Starters 84 Finishers 6 Divisions			Starters 22 Finishers 2 Divisions
14-17 December 1992			
Steve Moneghetti	28.06.25		Jackie Gallagher 33.14.16
Malcolm Norwood	28.44.47		Sue Malaxos 34.01.23
Pat Carroll	28.59.38		Maryann Murray 34.12.99
102 Starters 96 Finishers 6 Divisions			21 starters 19 Finishers 2 Divisions
8-12 December 1991			
Steve Moneghetti	27.57.48		Carolyn Schuwalow 31.54.95 AR
Rod Higgins	28.14.25		Jenny Lund 31.56.35
Andrew Lloyd	28.20.28		Susan Hobson 32.05.42
119 Starters 114 Finishers 6 Divisions			15 Starters 15 Finishers 2 Divisions
10-16 December 1990			
Steve Moneghetti	28.01.76		Jenny Lund 32.41.06
Andrew Lloyd	28.39.85		Tani Ruckle 32.56.44
Peter Brett	28.44.57		Elizabeth Rose 34.36.01
105 Starters 103 Finishers 6 Divisions			17 Starters 16 Finishers 2 Divisions
4-7 December 1989			
Steve Moneghetti	27.55.05		Susan Hobson 33.01.66
Peter Brett	28.16.72		Jenny Lund 33.12.25
Malcolm Norwood	28.33.01		Tani Ruckle 33.13.88
107 Starters 94 Finishers 6 Divisions			23 Starters 21 Finishers 2 Divisions
12-15 December 1988			
Jamie Harrison	28.42.55		Coral Farr 34.15.46
Darren Wilson	28.45.11		Elizabeth Rose 34.42.71
Adam Hoyle	29.18.32		Annette Dwyer 35.00.13
131 Starters 115 Finishers 7 Divisions			21 Starters 20 Finishers 2 Divisions
9-12 December 1987			
Andrew Lloyd	27.57.24		Lisa Martin 32.22.56
Steve Moneghetti	28.07.37		Jackie Perkins 32.26.34
Jamie Harrison	28.24.22		Carolyn Schuwalow 32.31.00
151 Starters 135 Finishers 6 Divisions			22 Starters & Finishers 2 Divisions
16-18 December 1986			
Andrew Lloyd	28.07.51		Tania Turney 34.11.50
Peter Brett	28.11.25		Kerry Jukes 34.47.40
Danny Boltz	28.15.00		Pia Hunter 35.17.00
156 Starters 150 Finishers 6 Divisions			25 Starters 24 Finishers 2 Divisions
16-19 December 1985			
Rex Wilson (NZ) (Invite)	28.22.39		Gaylene Clews 33.53.10
Geoff Shaw (NZ) (Invite)	28.47.67		Anne Lord 34.02.00
Steve Moneghetti	28.49.37		Tania Turney 34.15.00
157 Starters 151 Finishers 6 Divisions			31 Starters 27 Finishers 1 Division
10-13 December 1984			
Andrew Lloyd	28.18.60		Sally Pierson 33.52.70
Gary Henry	28.22.50		Megan Sloane 34.37.00
Rex Wilson (NZ) (Invite)	28.26.10		Nicky Taws 35.53.00
178 Starters 164 Finishers 6 Divisions			23 Starters 21 Finishers
12-15 December 1983			
Gabriel Kamau (Kenya)	27.59.10		Sally Pierson 33.31.40
Robert de Castella	28.02.20		Megan Sloane 35.00.00
Lawrie Whitty	28.26.30		Dot Browne 36.26.00
144 Starters 138 Finishers 6 Divisions			21 Starters 19 Finishers

Emil Zatopek 10 km track (Ctd)

13-16 December 1982		WOMEN	
John Andrews	28.09.70	Carolyn Schuwalow	35.12.70 AJR
Robert de Castella	28.12.20	Sally Pierson	35.38.20
Bryan Lewry	28.58.90	Sarah Fisher	38.51.00
143 Starters 133 Finishers 6 Divisions		16 Starters & finishers	
14-17 December 1981			
Andrew Lloyd	28.25.40	Megan Sloane	34.12.80 AR
Gerard Barrett	28.54.40	Sally Pierson	34.40.00
Steve Poulton	29.08.70	Dot Browne	36.58.00
135 Starters 124 Finishers 6 Divisions		15 Starters 13 Finishers	
15-18 December 1980			
Steve Austin	27.54.30	Megan Sloane	35.56.20 AR
Gary Bentley	28.44.00	Jenny Walker	36.11.00
Steve Poulton	29.20.00	Mary McLennan	37.42.00
157 Starters 151 Finishers 6 Divisions		22 Starters 21 Finishers	
17-20 December 1979		First Women's Division	
Robert de Castella	28.23	Joan Cameron	36.01
Max Little	28.56	Sue Bradley	36.52
Gary Henry	29.07	Lavinia Petrie	37.01
147 Starters 130 Finishers 6 Divisions		23 Starters & finishers	
11-14 December 1978			
Gerard Barrett	27.51 AR	Joan Cameron	36.38
Steve Austin	28.08	Kathy McLean	38.34
Bill Scott	28.20.135	Mary McLennan	39.15
135 Starters 116 Finishers 6 Divisions			
12-15 December 1977			
Dave Chettle	28.19	Joan Cameron	38.32
Steve Austin	28.21	Anne Callaghan	42.54
Andre Lambden	28.49	Peggy Smith	43.40
135 Starters 112 finishers 5 Divisions			
14-16 December 1976			
Gerard Barrett	28.09 AR	Anne Callaghan	43.18
Steve Austin	28.23	Clare McKerr	44.29
Dave Chettle	28.38	Peggy Smith	45.39
114 Starters 103 Finishers 4 Divisions			
15-17 December 1975 ALL MEN		16-18 December 1974 ALL MEN	
Dave Fitzsimmons	28.21	John Axsentieff	29.25
Graham Crouch	28.53	Chris Wardlaw	29.29
John Bermingham	29.00	Max Little	29.59
90 Starters 79 Finishers 4 Divisions		80 Starters 73 Finishers 3 Divisions	
19-20 December 1973 at Aberfeldie Track		19-20 December 1972 at Olympic Park	
Bill Scott	29.04.40	Derek Clayton (Not VMC member)	29.43 (Inv)
Peter Fuller	30.08.40	Bruce Jones	30.29
Arch Sansonetti	30.30.00	Arch Sansonetti	30.43
49 Starters 46 Finishers 2 Divisions		76 Starters 52 Finishers 2 Divisions	
20 December 1971 at University Track		21 December 1970 at Yarra Park Track	
Tony Benson(not entered officially)	29.29	John Coyle	29.36
Tony Williams	29.46	Bruce Hicks	30.35
Trevor Vincent	30.51	Terry Phelan	30.51
Arch Sansonetti	30.53		
52 Starters 38 Finishers 1 Division		47 Starters 41 Finishers 1 Division	
17 December 1969 at Yarra Park Track			
Ron Clarke	29.15.40		
Ian Blackwood	30.57		
Neil McLennan	30.59		
50 Starters 36 Finishers 1 Division			
Previous Winners 10Km Track		Previous Winners 10Km Track	
1968 Ron Clarke	29.25.6	1964 Tony Cook	31.09
1967 Barry Tregenza	30.37	1963 Ron Clarke (world record)	28.15.6
1966 Ian Blackwood	29.50.6	1962 Ron Clarke	29.53
1965 Ian Blackwood	28.58	1961 Ron Clarke	30.36

2 Emil Zatopek 10 km. Fun Run at Princes Park

This fun run was introduced to the Emil Zatopek program during the height of the fun running boom of the 1980s. It was the final event conducted by the VMC on the 19 December 1993.

MEN		WOMEN	
19 December 1993 - 278 Finishers			
David Ramsden	31.29	Tania Warwick	37.06
David Owen	31.54	Karen Moir	38.01
Marcus Tierney	32.33	Anne Ziogos	39.43
20 December 1992 - 147 Starters 143 Finishers			
Andrew Lloyd	31.34	June Petrie	38.49
Tony Moran	32.27	Marianne Hibbert	41.26
Greg Mandile	34.06	Joan Logan	43.09
15 December 1991 - 200 Starters 196 Finishers			
Ian Gainey (wheelchair)	28.49		
Bruce Salisbury	34.02	Alison Cumming	36.39
Paul Portebello	35.07	Pat Trowbridge	40.30
Didier Martin	35.53	Sue, Rhodes	42.42
15 December 1990 - 219 Starters 204 Finishers			
Ian Gainey (wheelchair)	29.20		
Mike Letch (wheelchair)	29.21		
Jim Golledge	31.14	Tania Warwick	39.22
Tony Moran	31.25	Louise Nicholson	40.01
Roger Simondson	31.51	Monica Monsour	41.14
10 December 1989 - 99 Starters 97 Finishers			
Colin Oliver	32.06	Marianne McKay	43.34
Mike Letch (wheelchair)	33.01	Susan Byron	43.49
Stephen Miller	34.13	Robyn Todd	44.18
Phil Stephenson	35.00		
18 December 1988 - 196 Starters 167 Finishers			
Ian Gainey (wheelchair)	32.01		
John Duck	32.21	Joan Logan	41.14
Joe Chawke	32.39	Janet Hayes	42.32
Lew Harvey	32.45	Marianne McKay	42.49
13 December 1987 - 270 Starters 234 Finishers			
Des Woods	31.50	Stella Severs	42.51
Tony Moran	32.06	Jan Morrey	43.00
Roger Simondson	32.17	Lisa Kennedy	44.55
14 December 1986 - 167 Finishers			
Andy Cochrane	32.22	Joanne Sheppard	39.58
Brendan McCartney	32.48	Elizabeth Downie	43.07
Bill Donald	33.44	Mary Smith	45.37
15 December 1985 - 203 Finishers			
Simon Blincoe	33.34	Dot Browne	43.08
Rod Cedaro	33.36	Thelma Callanan	43.46
Robert Mandile	33.52	Susan Charlton	43.47
9 December 1984 - 125 Finishers			
John Philpotts	33.49	Kerryn Schulze	39.44
Leon Hauptman	33.58	Linda Malmberg	43.06
Les King	34.03	Glenda Humphreys	45.01
11 December 1983 - 126 Finishers			
Murray Johnson	34.33	Jeanne McLean	42.19
Peter le Busque	34.49	Jean Albury	44.31
Russ Johnson	35.06	Elizabeth O'Kalyi	49.38

3 Fallen Comrades 12 km

Between 1953 and 1960 the distance was 15 km. In 1961 it was changed to 7.5 miles or 12 km. The race was held each year with the start adjacent to the Shrine of Remembrance at the Domain, except for Anzac Day 1976 when it was held at Albert Park. An additional race was held at the Domain on 3 October 1976 to maintain the race's traditional links with the Shrine.

MEN		WOMEN	
14 March 1993 - 50 Starters 48 Finishers			
Grant Morgan	40.21	Leanne Healey	51.49
Lew Harvey	40.34	Marisa Pezzimenti	52.48
Peter Risk	41.22	Anne Hamilton	60.49
15 March 1992 - 60 Starters & Finishers			
Marcus Tierney	39.42	Joan Logan	46.32
Andrew Cochrane	39.48	Melody Schultz	49.54
Lew Harvey	39.52	Jo Elmer	52.37
17 March 1991 - 30 Starters 28 Finishers			
John Philpotts	40.20	Karen Moir	46.46
Joe Campisi	41.4	Roslyn Powley	56.48
Tarquin Oehr	42.45	Paula Hodge	65.04
18 March 1990 - 91 Starters 87 Finishers			
Tarquin Oehr	41.56	Anne Nunn	57.25
Tony Styant-Browne	42.07	Anne Hamilton	57.37
Paul Smart	43.28	Christine Griffiths	58.10
20 March 1988 - 60 Starters 56 Finishers			
Peter Noordhoff	38.55	Joan Logan	43.29
Graeme Smith	38.59	Helen van de Nagel	59.23
George Edmonds	39.35	Gill Robertson	62.15
15 March 1987 - 64 Starters & Finishers			
Andrew Cochrane	38.11	Joan Logan	45.56
Brian Johnson	38.59	Marie O'Brien	51.03
Tony Mandile	40.40	Sharon Desailly	54.51
16 March 1986 - 86 Starters 84 Finishers			
Rob Wallace	37.17	Pat Trowbridge	46.12
Graeme Smith	39.35	Joan Cameron	49.21
Peter Gaffney	39.38	Nanette Gage	49.47
28 March 1985 - 67 Starters 65 Finishers			
Noel Philpott	39.10	Sandra Dungleison	55.41
Geoff Nicholson	39.14	Clare Rhoden	66.37
Pat McMahon	40.05		
29 April 1984 - 84 Starters 81 Finishers			
Lindsay Thomas	40.25	Tania Turney	44.14
Pat McMahon	40.39	Marie McDonagh	45.42
Mark O'Brien	41.14	Joan Cameron	46.35
17 April 1983 - 77 Starters 74 Finishers			
Andrew Cochrane	38.32	Barbara Fay	48.07
Graeme Smith	38.39	Geraldine Riley	50.16
Phil Lear	41.54	Ann Holcombe	51.23
18 April 1982 - 69 Starters & Finishers			
Andy Cochrane	38.25	Kim Richardson	48.25
Ken Duxbury	39.12	Barbara Fay	50.15
Tom Danos	41.33	Jean Albury	50.27
26 April 1981 - 59 Starters 54 Finishers			
Graeme McDonald	39.00	Joan Cameron	44.50
Gerry Sofianos	39.34	Barbara Fay	49.59
Robert Mandile	40.18	Annette Bird	53.43
24 April 1980 - 119 Starters 111 Finishers			
Keith Hylands	37.36	Joan Cameron	43.28
Marcus Clarke	38.12	Barbara Byrnes	46.52
Frank Jordan	38.30	Dot Browne	49.33
25 April 1979 - 178 Starters 163 Finishers			
Graeme Kennedy	37.25	Joan Cameron	45.10
Steve McCauley	37.30	Barbara Byrnes	47.40
Geoff Nicholson	37.51	Jackie Turney	48.00

Fallen Comrades 12 km (Ctd)		MEN	WOMEN
25 April 1978 - 155 Starters 140 Finishers			
Robert de Castella		36.35	Lynne Williams 43.48
Rob Wallace		37.19	Joan Cameron 46.26
Bob Welsh		37.51	Kathy McLean 47.59
25 April 1977 - 162 Starters 151 Finishers			
Andy Cochrane		37.23	Joan Cameron 48.23
Paul O'Hare		37.34	Anne Callaghan 52.07
Ray Wilson		37.47	Clare McKerr 53.05
ALL MEN		ALL MEN	
3 October 1976 - 44 Starters & Finishers		25 April 1976 - 151 Starters 122 Finishers (Albert Park)	
Phil Hamer		38.00	Graham Crouch 31.13
Gerry Sofianos		38.52	Phil Hamer 31.27
Rob Wallace		39.38	Graeme Gardner 31.35
24 April 1975 - 188 Starters 176 Finishers		24 April 1974 - 136 Starters 119 Finishers	
Chris Wardlaw		35.53	Chris Wardlaw 37.21
Andy Hill		36.02	Ian Minter 38.24
Robert de Castella		36.27	Neil Ryan 38.32
25 April 1973 - 94 Starters 93 Finishers		30 April 1972 - 123 Starters 88 Finishers	
Peter Share		39.01	Peter Bruce 38.06
Paul O'Hare		39.15	Terry Harrison 38.20
David Gazley		39.24	Bob Hendy 39.11
2 May 1971 - 70 Starters 67 Finishers		25 April 1970 - 140 Starters 129 Finishers	
Neil Ryan		36.40	Trevor Vincent 37.26
Ray Brown		37.24	Peter Bruce 37.45
Andy Boychuk		37.54	Ian Minter 37.55
25 April 1969 - 107 Starters & finishers			
Trevor Vincent		36.59	
Ian Blackwood		37.20	
Neil Ryan		37.42	
Previous winners Fallen Comrades 12 km		Previous winners Fallen Comrades 12 km	
1968	Ian Wheeler	38.05	1964 John Coyle 36.39
1967	Geoff Walker	36.59	1963 Norm Duff 38.54
1966	Geoff Walker	36.47	1962 Norm Duff 39.36
1965	Ian Blackwood	37.04	1961 Rob Bonella 39.25

4 King & Queen of the Mountains 30km or 32km

The original VMC King of the Mountains was a 20 miler from East Ringwood, up Mount Dandenong Road via Montrose up the tourist road to Five Ways at Kalorama and back via Canterbury Road and Heathmont. It was usually held around April/May but increased traffic made it impossible to continue the race with sufficient safety. Harry Logan, a long time VMC member, established the Point Leo up Arthur's Seat and return course in the late 1950s. The date was eventually changed to September as it was felt the football finals would create less traffic on Saturday afternoons. The distance was changed from 32km to 30km in 1976. The first woman to compete and finish the race was Anne Callaghan in 1977. The 1990 race was cancelled due to the large number of fun runs being held and the difficulty in getting officials to control the race. It was not held again.

King & Queen of the Mountains 30km or 32km

MEN		WOMEN	
9 Sept 1989 (Red Hill) - 53 Starters 48 Finishers			
Tony Didonato		1.49.30	Mary Edwards 2.22.38
Rodney Wiley		1.52.05	Lois Webster 2.31.43
Russ Johnson		1.54.43	Ann Vavasour 2.38.10

King & Queen of the Mountains 30km or 32km (Ctd)

MEN		WOMEN	
17 September 1988 - 44 Starters & finishers			
Russ Johnson	1.47.40	Jan Donaldson	2.18.15
Steven Miller	1.47.56	Sue Ward	2.24.19
Bruce Salisbury	1.51.45	Dot Browne	2.34.34
19 September 1987 - 37 Starters & finishers			
David Potts	1.45.17		
Tony Bird	1.49.20	Nadine Dobell	2.43.36
Andrew Thomas	1.50.44		
20 September 1986 - 55 Starters 52 Finishers			
Tony Bird	1.47.56		
Peter Moore	1.51.28	None	
Noel Philpott	1.53.03		
14 September 1985 - 116 Starters 113 Finishers			
Rob Wallace	1.40.20	Dot Browne	2.05.55
Noel Philpott	1.44.51	S. Parker	2.26.47
Damien Cook	1.44.55	Jean Albury	2.37.44
15 September 1984 - 92 Starters 90 Finishers			
Damien Cook	1.48.09	Chris Setterfield	2.14.23
Wayne Thompson	1.49.18	Cathy Edmonds	2.31.18
Ian Rands	1.57.56	Jenny Byrnes	2.37.27
17 September 1983 - 130 Starters 124 Finishers			
Neil Ryan	1.44.50	Cathy Edmonds	2.17.02
Phil Hamer	1.46.05	Evelyn Rupp	2.22.48
Ross Shilston	1.48.59	Dale O'Rose	2.50.20
18 September 1982 - 68 Starters 66 Finishers			
Ian Minter	1.45.05	Jacqui Gilmour	2.18.37
Bernie Carroll	1.47.55	Geraldine Riley	2.32.20
Phil Harris	1.50.18		
19 September 1981 - 108 Starters 102 Finishers			
David Byrnes	1.44.56	Jacqui Gilmour	2.24.42
Ken Duxbury	1.46.23		
Des Minogue	1.51.27		
29 September 1980 - 97 Starters 93 Finishers			
Colin Donald	1.45.23	Miriam Ansell	2.37.55
Ken Duxbury	1.46.45	Geraldine Riley	2.45.06
Ross Shilston	1.48.24		
15 September 1979 - 64 Starters 56 Finishers			
John Nolan	1.45.20	None	
Ian Rands	1.47.03		
Stephen Both	1.50.06		
16 September 1978 - 62 Starters 57 Finishers			
David Byrnes	1.45.14	Kathy McLean	2.03.54
Paul Drinkwater	1.46.18	Barbara Byrnes	2.10.45
John Nolan	1.46.34	Carolyn Schuwalow	2.49.32
3 Sept 1977 (30km) - 34 Starters 32 Finishers			
Stewart Handasyde	1.44.50	Anne Callaghan	2.36.45
Ken Duxbury	1.46.00		
Ross Shilston	1.51.30		
ALL MEN		ALL MEN	
1 May 1976 (29km 773 m) - 55 Starters 49 Finishers		27 July 1974 - 38 Starters 34 Finishers	
Phil Hamer	1.35.21	Phil Hamer	1.47.00
Rob Gilfillan	1.38.09	Bob Rayman	1.50.08
Terry Harrison	1.39.57	Ian Minter	1.51.21
6 September 1975 (32km) - 28 Starters & Finishers		28 July 1973 - 43 Starters 29 Finishers	
Gerry Sofianos	1.48.39	Dave Marburg	1.54.14
Rob Gilfillan	1.48.39	Bernie Carroll	1.57.51
Dave Marburg	1.51.33	Rod Pitt	2.01.53

King & Queen of the Mountains 30km or 32km (Ctd)

ALL MEN		ALL MEN	
13 May 1972 - 67 Starters 51 Finishers (including 10 New Zealanders)		1 August 1971 - 42 Starters 29 Finishers	
Rod McKinney	1.45.20	Neil Ryan	1.46.52
Peter Bruce	1.46.24	Colin Eaton	1.53.38
Terry Harrison	1.48.38	Bruce Hicks	1.53.58
27 June 1970 - 63 Starters 48 Finishers		28 June 1969 - 37 Starters 34 Finishers	
Peter Bruce	1.47.33	Neil Ryan	1.47.43
Rod McKinney	1.50.13	Tom Kelly	1.53.05
Geoff Green	1.50.51	Colin Eaton	1.54.12
Previous 20 Mile (30Km or 32 Km) Winners		Previous 20 Mile (30Km or 32 Km) Winners	
1968 Ray White	1.48.59	1957 E. Bentley	1.59.29
1967 Barry Sawyer	1.50.25	1956 Les Perry	1.48.55
1966 Derek Clayton	1.47.47	1955 Mick Skinner	1.54.13
1965 Fred Howe	1.51.27	1954 Mick Skinner	1.55.25
1964 Tom Kelly	1.51.42	1953 A. Dunn	1.49.56
1963 W. Rogers	1.55.29	1952 Bob Prentice	2.06.01
1962 -		1951 Bob Prentice	2.03.45
1961 Tom Kelly	1.52.45	1950 H. Dennis	2.06.14
1960 Norm Duff	1.55.10	1949 G. Stanley	1.57.55
1959 Tom Kelly	1.55.55	1948 G. Stanley	2.05.58
1958 Mick Skinner	2.00.35	1947 John Pottage	1.53.33

5 VMC MARATHON

MEN		WOMEN	
3 October 1993 (Port Melbourne) 170 Finishers (Incorporated with the People's Marathon)			
Michael Whimpey	2.36.38	Claire Bowker	3.26.27
Mark King	2.37.36	Anne Hamilton	4.06.17
Alan Jenkins	2.57.26	Shayne Walthers	5.37.06
4 October 1992 (Port Melbourne) 255 Finishers (VMC 29 Fin) (Inc with the People's Marathon)			
Lew Harvey	2.34.31	Judy Wines	3.55.55
Graeme Alford	2.38.41	Jody Daff	4.40.55
Russ Johnson	2.39.18	Pashmina Jehanzadeh	4.49.44
6 October 1991 (Port Melbourne) 260 Finishers (VMC 21 Fin) (Inc with the People's Marathon)			
Lew Harvey	2.35.57	Cynthia Herbert	3.36.18
Peter Shone	2.40.33	Shirley Young	3.38.05
Tony Morgan	3.01.09	Merrilyn Tait	4.24.16
27 May 1990 - (Fishermens Bend) - 63 Starters 52 Fin.			
Ian Gainey (Wheelchair)	2.08.38	Mary Edwards	3.10.33
Mike Letch (Wheelchair)	2.08.39	Claire Bowker	3.26.44
Glen Western	2.49.40	Dawn Parris	3.40.38
Mick Whiteoak	2.55.41		
John Pilkington	2.55.58		
18 May 1989 (Fishermens Bend) - 60 Starters 50 Finishers			
Laurie Brimacombe	2.40.44	Maryce Justin	2.58.07
Kevin Hill	2.43.34	Claire Bowker	3.18.54
Max Carson	2.49.19	Shirley Young	3.34.55
29 May 1988 (Fishermens Bend) - 65 Starters 49 Finishers			
Tony Didonato	2.31.16	Claire Bowker	3.27.0
Peter Noordhoff	2.34.46	Lois Webster	3.27.3
Bruce Povey	2.41.07	Cynthia Cameron	3.51.36
24 May 1987 (Fishermens Bend) - 94 Starters 69 Finishers			
Tony Didonato	2.32.10	Barbara Fay	3.21.36
Russell Johnson	2.38.56	Claire Bowker	3.28.38
Tony Phelan	2.46.51	Cynthia Cameron	3.54.28

VMC MARATHON (Continued)

MEN	WOMEN
25 May 1986 (Fishermens Bend) - 85 Finishers	
Paul James 2.28.28	Sharon Desailly 3.32.49
Peter Nordhoff 2.29.47	Jan Delphine 3.52.08
George Edmond 2.34.42	Stacey Brown 4.31.16
26 May 1985 (Fishermens Bend) - 92 Starters 62 Finishers	
Carl Stevenson 2.28.35	Dot Browne 2.49.06
Peter Shone 2.42.14	Beverley Begg 3.51.43
Leif Michelsson 2.42.18	Noreen Moore 4.11.08
27 May 1984 (Crib Point) - 70 Starters 45 Fin	
Mick Heeley 2.34.31	
Norm Beck 2.38.26	Anne Callaghan 3.54.25
Brian Bloomer 2.45.10	
22 May 1983 (Crib Point) - 65 Starters 46 Fin	
Max Little 2.20.37	Helen Doyle 3.46.51
Graeme Smith 2.36.35	Janet O'Dell 4.05.26
Peter Rush 2.39.32	
3 May 1982 (Combined with the VAAA Marathon at Crib Point) 86 Finishers (VMC 59 Finishers)	
Gary Henry (not a VMC member) 2.22.16	Barbara Fay 2.59.44
Ewen Wilson 2.24.02	Shirley Young 3.27.06
Eric Sigmont 2.24.09	
Ian Minter 2.24.24	
7 June 1981 (Crib Point) - 107 Starters 89 Fin	
John Duck 2.29.32	Marie Stanway 3.19.01
Greg King 2.34.53	Judy Wines 3.40.49
Robin Young 2.38.53	Annette Bird 3.41.31
15 June 1980 (Crib Point) - 123 Starters 111 Finishers	
Bob Guthrie 2.24.23	Barbara Byrnes 2.56.10
John Duck 2.25.49	Jackie Turney 2.58.39
Norm Beck 2.40.02	Peg Smith 3.37.3
17 June 1979 (Tyabb) 85 Starters 74 Finishers	
Ken Duxbury 2.32.53	Nil
Ian Rands 2.33.42	
Steve Saunders (NZ) (Invite) 2.34.00	
11 June 1978 (Tyabb) 94 Starters 81 Finishers	
Rob Wallace 2.21.14	Barbara Byrnes 3.15.15
Paul O'Hare 2.25.03	
John Duck 2.30.36	
12 June 1977 (Tyabb) 90 Starters 74 Finishers	
Graham Struthers (NZ) (Invite) 2.23.36	Lavinia Petrie 3.00.36
David Byrnes 2.24.12	Joan Cameron 3.38.13
Bob Guthrie 2.26.11	Peg Smith 3.42.41
13 June 1976 (Tyabb) 55 Starters 31 Finishers	
Mike Ryan (NZ) (Invite) 2.20.59	
David Byrnes 2.31.03	Lynne McLeod (NZ) (Invite) 4.10.15
Eric Sigmont 2.34.44	
ALL MEN	ALL MEN
21 November 1976 (Olympic Anniversary Marathon at Princes Park)	
Gerry Sofianos 2.21.42	1 June 1975 (Traralgon) - 65 Starters
Ken Duxbury 2.35.01	36 Finishers
David Byrnes 2.36.29	Andy Hill 2.26.16
	Paul O'Hare 2.29.39
	Dave Edwards (NSW) 2.30.03
17 June 1974 (Tyabb) 63 Starters 46 Finishers	
Neil Ryan 2.20.59	2 June 1973 (Tyabb) - 63 Starters 46 Finishers
John Robinson (NZ) (Invite) 2.28.35	Terry Harrison 2.22.43
Neil O'Sullivan 2.32.45	Peter Bruce 2.25.32
	John Harty 2.27.17
24 June 1972 (Tyabb) 85 Starters 45 Finishers	
Derek Clayton (Invite) 2.20.25	26 June 1971 (Tyabb) - 69 Starters 38 Finishers
Peter Bruce 2.22.35	Neil Ryan 2.18.31
Terry Harrison 2.27.36	Peter Bruce 2.19.21
John Bermingham 2.27.36	Rod McKinney 2.26.50

VMC MARATHON (Ctd)

ALL MEN			ALL MEN		
25 July 1970 (Tyabb) - 60 Starters 34 Finishers			26 July 1969 (Tyabb) 84 Starters 49 Finishers		
Peter Bruce		2.20.11	Neil Ryan		2.21.59
Tom Kelly		2.25.00	Terry Phelan		2.23.03
Norm Duff		2.26.47	Peter Bruce		2.24.07
Previous winners VMC Marathon					
1968	Barry Sawyer	2.22.56	1959	Ian Hassel (NSW)	2.33.04
1967	Fred Howe	2.24.13		John Murray (Vic)	2.39.05
1966	Geoff Walker	2.23.40	1958	Frank Tutchener	2.41.34
1965	Fred Howe	2.22.18	1957	E. Bentley	2.48.47
1964	John Coyle	2.26.05	1956	Mick Skinner	2.36.52
1963	Ron Clarke	2.24.38	1955	Mick Skinner	2.35.40
1962	D. Thackeray	2.27.37	1954	Mick Skinner	2.36.46
1961	Tom Kelly	2.29.45	1953	Bob Prentice	2.35.33
1960	Tom Kelly	2.40.30			

6 Queen of the Lake 10 km (All Women)

11 July 1993 - 224 Finishers		12 July 1992 - 292 Finishers	
Susie Power	35.26	Jo Campbell-Smith	33.59
Marcie Sheer	35.42	Marcie Sheer	34.35
Lisa Scrle	35.57	Tania Turney	34.38
14 July 1991 - 321 Finishers		15 July 1990 - 273 Finishers	
Rhonda Makepeace	33.56	Maree McDonagh	33.41
Maree McDonagh	34.42	Anne Cross	34.34
Kate Anderson	36.36	Rhonda Makepeace	34.56
16 July 1989 - 753 Finishers		17 July 1988 - 290 Finishers	
Jackie Perkins	33.37	Maree McDonagh	33.48
Maree McDonagh	33.45	Anne Cross	34.18
Roseanne Brisbane	36.12	Lindy-Jane Tresize	36.12
27 July 1986 (VMC Women's 10 km) 12 Starters 10 Finishers		26 July 1987 - 39 Starters 35 Finishers	
Chris Setterfield	39.39	Theresa Baird	36.47
Debbie Williams	40.32	Sue Macko	40.10
Rosalind Stevens	40.45	Emma Riley	40.20

7 VMC Runners World Midnight Run 8 km approx.

The Midnight Run was first held at the Two Bridges course opposite Olympic Park on New Years Eve in 1973. At the stroke of midnight the race around four laps of the course commenced. In 1992 the race was shifted to Duncan MacKinnan Reserve and shortened to 6 km

MEN		WOMEN	
1 January 1993 6km - 37 Starters 36 Finishers			
Chris Murphy	21.19	Mary Cassidy	28.00
Jeff Boot	22.12	Moira Chalk	30.56
Hayden Mathysen	22.26	Carol Burns	33.36
1 January 1992 6km - 43 Starters & Finishers			
Philip Bowes	19.34	Natalie Harvey	23.07
Jeff Boot	22.36	Sandy Lowi	24.11
Tony King	22.46	Mary Cassidy	27.00

VMC Runners World Midnight Run 8 km approx. (Ctd)

MEN		WOMEN	
1 January 1990 8km approx. - 90 Starters 85 Finishers			
Peter Williamson	25.13	Anne Cross	30.10
Ian Leitch	25.14	Lavinia Petrie	30.34
John Duck	25.24	Linda Meadows	30.34
1 January 1989 - 136 Starters 96 Finishers			
Stephen Crowley	24.50	Lavinia Petrie	31.24
John Duck	25.36	Wendygrace Kane	32.35
Roger Moresi	26.08	Dot Browne	33.05
1 January 1988 - 100 Starters 94 Finishers			
Dean Livingstone	25.24	Annette Pelgrim	31.40
Scott Sloan	25.50	Gaye George	33.43
Ian Cornthwaite	25.54	Lisa Kennedy	34.47
1 January 1987 - 99 Starters 96 Finishers			
Peter Mitchell	24.30	June Petrie	30.30
Maurice Hearn	25.20	Lisa Kennedy	33.45
Michael Wylie	25.52	Jan Brimacombe	34.35
1 January 1986 - 178 Finishers			
Brian Lewry	23.57	Megan Sloane	27.49
Stephen Crowley	24.11	Louise Burke	32.03
Leigh Pertill	24.22	Geraldine Riley	32.22
1 January 1985 - 130 Finishers			
Brian Lewry	23.42	Dot Browne	29.19
Stephen Crowley	24.22	Jean Albury	33.38
Bruce Cook	24.42	Marianne Crawford	34.47
1 January 1984 - 103 Finishers			
Paul Tucker	24.28	Dot Browne	29.33
Ian Minter	24.38	Sandra Middleton	30.57
Ross Shilston	26.06	Jane Anderson	34.44
1 January 1983 - 83 Finishers			
Russ Haswell	24.52	Geraldine Riley	30.34
Paul Bennett	25.04	Sandra Middleton	32.04
Neil Hooper	25.22	Glenda Humphreys	35.33
1 January 1982 - 99 Finishers			
David Potts	24.58	Megan Sloane	27.41
Ian Minter	24.59	Carolyn Schuwalow	28.40
Neil Hooper	25.36	Tania Turney	29.39
1 January 1981 - 111 Starters 91 Finishers			
Bruce Petts	24.17	Megan Sloane	28.08
Rob Gilfillan	24.25	Tania Turney	29.17
Tim Adams	24.42	Dot Browne	30.23
1 January 1980 - 108 Finishers			
Rob Gilfillan (course record)	23.19	Joan Cameron	28.27
Guy Green	24.40	Kelly Lacombe	28.41
Rod Pitt	24.42	Jackie Turney	29.49
1 January 1979 No results available			
1 January 1978 - 92 Starters			
John Bermingham	23.55	Joan Cameron	31.48
Brian Lewry	24.02	Clare McKerr	34.15
Rob Gilfillan	24.08	Peg Smith	35.20
1 January 1977 No results available			
1 January 1976 - 51 Starters			
John Bermingham	23.41	1 January 1975 - 45 Starters	
Brian Lewry	23.52	Gary Zeuner (SA)	24.10
Andy Hill	23.56	Gerry Sofianos	24.15
		Andy Hill	24.49
1 January 1974 - 42 Starters			
John Axsentieff	24.15	1 January 1973 - 22 Finishers	
Gary Zeuner	24.20	Kerry Pearce	24.20
John Stanley	24.26	Paul O'Hare	25.18
Karen Walker (only female)	41.52	Rowan Harrison	25.20

