

Right from the Start

1974 - 2014

In celebration of the 40th Anniversary
of WAVAAC and MAWA
The Club for Veteran and Masters Athletics
in Western Australia



by Christine Oldfield

Uniform Singlets



Top: Club uniform – original and new 1981/82 version

Middle: Interstate uniforms used until 1998

Bottom: Club and State uniform from 1998

Embroidered shield badges are sewn on, others are integral

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Author: Christine Oldfield

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Foreword



I had originally discussed the idea of a veterans' club in WA with Cliff Bould in 1971 and such a club was formed in 1974. But the road was not always easy. The idea of veterans' athletics didn't appeal to everyone, with some members of our local sporting media ridiculing the idea. *"You are nothing but a bunch of old men running around"* mocked one sports journalist. But

membership grew and it was not long before women joined the Club's ranks – and they now represent some 40% of the club's membership.

At times the patronising attitudes were hard to take but, forty years on, the concept has proven to be an unqualified success. We were, indeed, ahead of our time. The medical profession now extols the virtues of physical exercise, no matter one's age. And with Australia's ageing population, the benefits of exercise are immeasurable.

Now this story, beautifully told by Christine Oldfield, retraces the steps of the trailblazers through to the athletes of today who pound the turf, infields, tracks, roads, footpaths and soil of our great state, week-in, week-out.

History tells us that it is important to record and preserve details of a club's activities, publications, systems and procedures. Old Father Time stands still for no one so we must take the opportunity to record this story while some of our founding and early members are still around to contribute.

As a founding member, I am delighted that this terrific club is still in good hands and flourishing. I thoroughly recommend the book to all club members.

John Gilmour OAM
Patron

[Photograph from MAWA State Championships 2013]

Acknowledgements

The assistance provided by Club members and others has been enormous and in the preface I have outlined the sort of tasks they have undertaken. It would be impossible to detail each individual's contribution, but those named below, in alphabetical order, know what they did and how much it was appreciated. I've tried to keep track of everyone who helped and hope I have managed not to omit anyone. If I have, I apologise.

Jim Barnes, Jacqui Beaumont, Vic Beaumont, Les Beckham, Shirley Bell, Brian Bennett, Jacqueline Billington, Barbara Blurton, Richard Blurton, Jeff Bowen, Carol Bowman, Geoff Brayshaw, Ivan Brown, David Carr, John Collier, Paul Collier, Graeme Dahl, Brian Danby, Elaine Dance, Richard Danks, Carey Dickason, Bob Fergie, Toni Frank, John Gilmour, Jackie Halberg, Damien Hanson, Bob Hayres, Peter Hopper, Paul Hughes, Sarah Ladwig, Lorna Lauchlan, Ray Lawrence, Tom Lenane, Lorraine Lopes, Wayne Loxley, Peggy MacIver, Alex Malcolm, Paul Martin, Duncan McAuley, Raema McMillan, Val Millard, Lorraine Morgan, John Oldfield, Joan Pellier, Wilma Perkins, Val Prescott, Dave Roberts, Jeanette Robertson, Bob Sammells, Bob Schickert, Lynne Schickert, Rob Shand, Colin Smith, Bryan Thomas, Campbell Till, Ann Turner, Ced Turner, Roger Walsh, Vic Waters, Dorothy Whittam, Jeff Whittam, Basil Worner, Dave Wyatt, Gillian Young

Some of these deserve a special mention in addition:

Jeff Whittam – for allowing me to borrow his precious collection of all the old newsletters during two of my summer seasons in Perth.

Bob Hayres – for providing his newsletter collection for scanning.

Paul Martin – for scanning the newsletters for the website, thus affording me essential access to information whilst not in Perth; also for his always amiable help with publishing and printing, especially his great cover design, all of which made my job so much easier.

John Gilmour - for granting me access to his photograph collection and to his goldmine of memories. Also for agreeing to write the Foreword.

Jackie Halberg – for reading the manuscript and putting me right on historical accuracy and integrity.

John Oldfield – for proof reading the manuscript. But mainly for his loving support. He kept me supplied with copious quantities of liquid refreshment over the two years or so of work and put up with considerable neglect.

Geoff Brayshaw – for undertaking, on behalf of the committee, the application for the Lotterywest grant and subsequent acquittal process.

Lotterywest – for approving the grant. It has meant that the cost of the book could be kept very low.



The Committee – for facilitating and supporting the project.

Quotes – Those quotes that are unattributed come from the Club's publications, committee meeting minutes and other Club documents.

Photographic acknowledgements can be found on the **Sources** page (p166).

Preface



AMA's *Age is no Barrier*, published in 2011, chronicles the history of veterans' and masters' athletics in Australia over a forty year period. In the introduction to that book Bryan Thomas, the author, explains: "*As this history concentrates on the 'big picture' within Australia it does not dwell on the grass roots past of individual clubs*". Now *this* book, also covering about forty years, *does* get down to the grass roots level of veterans' and masters' athletics in Western Australia.

I have included a wide range of quotes and anecdotes intended to capture the imagination of readers and perhaps raise the odd chuckle – so I prefer to call this a 'story' of the Club rather than a 'history'. Throughout, I have used the term 'Club', with a capital C, to denote WAVAAC, WAVAC or MAWA. The book has been over two years in the making and the biggest problem has been selecting what to include and what to leave out. There have been so many worthy events, performances and members that it is not possible to mention them all. Inevitably some readers may be disappointed that they or their input or exploits have not been covered. I have tried to feature those things which contributed directly to the development of the Club, mindful that this was intended to be a book about the Club rather than its members.

The finished product is the result of a great team effort - a truly collaborative venture by Club members, former members and others. They have provided information, documents and photographs, answered questions (often testing long-term memories to the limit) and read through various sections of text for accuracy. Input from some has been considerable, but even those who perhaps provided just one little snippet of information have helped to make this book what it is. I could not have done it without you all.

To minimise costs I have done the editing and publishing myself. The rather poor quality of some of the older photographs is regrettable but unavoidable. Some have been scanned or photographed from very grainy cuttings. So please turn a blind eye to anything which looks anything less than professional.

I have thoroughly enjoyed doing all the research, particularly as it provided the opportunity to get to know better some of the older, long-standing members. What a great bunch they are. And the younger members are shaping up to be equally great. The future of the Club is safe in their hands.

Christine Oldfield
Author and Publisher

Acronyms

Veterans & Masters

Club

WAVAAC	Western Australia Veterans Amateur Athletic Club
WAVAC	Western Australia Veterans Athletic Club (from 1984)
MAWA	Masters Athletics Western Australia Inc (from 2003)

National

AAVAC	Australian Association of Veterans Athletics Clubs
AMA	Australian Masters Athletics (from 2002)

Regional

OAMA	Oceania Association of Masters Athletics
OMA	Oceania Masters Athletics (from 2011)

World

WAVA	World Association of Veteran Athletes
WMA	World Masters Athletics (from 2001)

Open

WA - The Association

WAAAA	Western Australian Amateur Athletic Association (until 1979)
WAWAAA	Western Australian Women's Amateur Athletic Association
AAWA	Athletics Association of Western Australia (1979-97)
AthleticA	(1997 – 2007)
AWA	Athletics Western Australia (from 2007)
AA	Athletics Australia
IAAF	International Association of Athletics Federations

Other

WALAA	Western Australia Little Athletics Association
WAMC	West Australian Marathon Club
WAAS	Western Australia Athletics Stadium
AURA	Australian Ultra Runners Association
ECAC	Ern Clark Athletic Centre (from 2008 - formerly Coker Park)
LOC	Local Organising Committee
CCC	Cross Country Championships
T&F	Track and Field
SR, AR, WR	State, Australian, World Record
PB, SB, PBA	Personal, Season's Best performance, Personal Best in Age-group
RRC, RWC	Road Running, Road Walking Championships

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Over 80s photographs, Life Members, Office Bearers, Committee and Club
Officials 1974 –2014, Presidents & others – photographs, Sources and
Newsletter Mastheads **p148 - p158**

Founders and some first year members (with photo dates)



M90 John Gilmour 1973



Cliff Bould 1980



Dick Horsley c1980



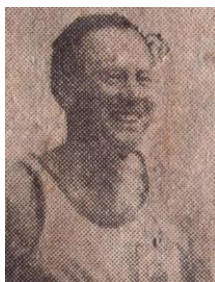
Colin Junner 1973



M80 David Carr 1980



Jack Collins 1974



Keith McDonald 1977



Bill Hughes 1982



M80 Bob Hayres 1976



Garnet Morgan M85



Stan Lockwood M80



Merv Moyle M85



Peter Gare M70

Chapter 1

The Development of the Club

Conception and Birth (1969 – 1974)

There is substantial agreement about how WAVAAC, the Western Australian Veterans Amateur Athletic Club, was formed. However, amongst the printed reports and the memories, there are a few differences in detail. Rob Shand's account in *The Formation and Early Years of WAVAAC (1969-1978)* is likely to be the most accurate since it was compiled within a few years of the Club's inception. It appears in the website archive section and is well worth reading.

Here's how the story goes: Cliff Bould, originally an Englishman, in his fifties and a regular competitor at the inter-club meetings at Perry Lakes, travelled to the USA in 1969 to compete in their National Masters Championships. Cliff took them by storm and returned the following year with Colin Junner and the year after that with John Gilmour. Seeing how strong the veteran athletes' movement was, John conceived the idea of a veterans' club in WA and put the idea to Cliff on the return flight. Cliff agreed the idea was a good one but the labour lasted considerably longer than nine months.

By 1972, partly as a result of a TV discussion and a newspaper advertisement, Cliff, John and Colin had been joined by several other veterans, including Jack Collins, on their regular runs at McCallum Park. The group remained informal until 1974. There appears to be no surviving written record of the meeting at which a committee was formed and memories vary as to timing and attendees. John Gilmour, in his eulogy at Dick Horsley's funeral in 1996, said (according to Richard Harris's report in *The Vetrun*) that "*It was in 1974 when I rang Dick for support to start the Veterans Athletic Club – which he gave*". And in her book, *A History of the Veterans' Athletics Movement in Australia*, Gloria Seymon provides Dick Horsley's written recollection from 1992 saying that

"April 1974 saw the inaugural meeting to form the WA Veterans with 7 people turning up. These were Cliff Bould, David Carr, Jack Collins, John Gilmour, Jim Smith and Dick Horsley."

That only comes to six, so it's a guess as to who Dick thought the seventh was.

On April 20th and 21st, Cliff and Dick had both been in Sydney competing in the second Australian Veterans Championships. This suggests that the meeting probably took place in the last week of April. And David Carr, in information provided for Gloria's book, says that the venue was "*under a tree, at McCallum Park, Perth*". According to others' recollections, there might have been any number between seven and ten people in attendance but it is generally agreed that they included Cliff Bould, David Carr, Jack Collins, John Gilmour and Dick Horsley. Subsequently, Dick nominated Keith McDonald as president. Keith was a member of Canning AC and "*competed on Leederville Oval track at the same time as up and coming youngster Herb Elliott*". According to David, Dick had been the

logical candidate but he had “argued that we were aiming at a younger demographic than his”.

Whatever the date of the meeting and the number in attendance, the Club was finally born before the middle of 1974. It’s interesting that both AAVAC and WAVA, the national and world veterans’ bodies, were also formed in 1974.

The Purpose

Exactly when the Club constitution was compiled is not documented and there doesn’t seem to have been any sort of ‘mission statement’ when the Club was formed. Below are some of the 2012 responses to the question of whether the Club was considered a road running club, a T&F club or just a running club.

“We anticipated being like other state veterans clubs, joining the Australian body, 40+ membership, regular events. We all had a background of road and track. It followed that we would do track, field and road.” David Carr

“Majority thought running club but it catered for all.” Bob Hayres

“There has always been a difference of opinion on this. The club was formed as an athletics club and it was distance races on the track that developed the road running and other longer distances. It was started by track participants who participated in distance races. Some later members refused to accept the track connotation and insisted that it was a road running club – some still do! But the club’s name was Athletic Club” Rob Shand

Marathons, half marathons, road walks and cross country events have featured in the activities of vets/masters clubs in the other states. But none have offered anything as comprehensive and regular as the Club’s Sunday run programme.

A pertinent comment from David shows that not all were happy about the Club

“Soon after our first meeting we received a hostile letter from a member of the South West athletic body. We were reminded that they had been conducting veterans events for years and we had formed a Perth group and were wrong to create a “state” body without reference to them. Quite right. Dick [Horsley] calmed the waters. However, over the years we have done little to foster masters athletics statewide.”

The “objects” of the Club, as detailed in the constitution, have been clear for many years and the current version is stated on the Sunday programme:

“The purpose of the Club is to encourage and promote masters athletics, general fitness and to provide training and competition. Membership is open to men and women aged 30 years and older.”

Infancy (1974)

The inaugural committee, under president Keith McDonald, wasted no time in establishing a routine. Members met each Sunday morning at McCallum Park, which was referred to as “*Club Headquarters*”. Usually there would be one or two organised races or time trials, around the 1000m “*measured flat grassed surface*” or on the 400m course which had been marked out by John Gilmour for Canning Districts AC. The distance most frequently run was 3000m.

“It is popular because most of us like to compare times and chop a few seconds off a previous best. However, times do not drop always and there is some comfort in just being consistent; or in not becoming slower.” Newsletter Nov.1974

3000m was also the distance of the first race whose results were recorded in the *Newsletter*. Both in their 50s, John Gilmour ran 10:39 and Cliff Bould 11:31, times which most of our current M50s can only dream about.

Handicap races, of various distances, were also popular. In July 1974 an 8km handicap race was described as a “*novelty*”, being longer than normal. As usual there were members acting as officials that day but it was reported that “*there was some doubt about times*”. On the Sundays when no formal races had been scheduled, the group would meet anyway and train, either individually or in groups or have a “*pack run*” for an hour or so.

As keen runners, most members wanted more than one outing a week, so they took advantage of every opportunity offered. The Club was first represented at a Marathon Club event in October 1974 and, through Dick Horsley’s connections with WAAAA, it came about that on 2 November 1974,

“For the first time, Vets events were included in the inter-club competition at Perry Lakes. WAAAA co-operated fully.”

In December, a group travelled to the SW Championships at Capel where it seems they were made welcome despite the earlier letter. Club members also participated in twilight meets organised by WAAAA or one of the District Clubs. David Carr reported, from one of these, an incident from a 100m race:

“David Carr fell off his blocks at gunshot and did not get over the starting line until the rest of the field reached the finish.”

By the end of 1974, the Club’s activities at home had already diversified. The first Club walk, a 1000m race at McCallum, had taken place. And, with access to some of the Canning District equipment at McCallum Park, the first field event was held. The *Newsletter* reported that

“Under Dick’s guidance we had a go at putting the shot. It seems a harmless game which could become part of our programme.”

The following week they tackled not only the shot but the javelin and discus as well. Thereafter, those with the inclination and aptitude often did some field training after the normal Sunday programme at McCallum.

To finish off 1974, several athletes took part, and acquitted themselves well, in the veterans' events at the WAAAA Christmas Championships at Perry Lakes. With reference to the 1500m, the comment was made in the *Newsletter* that John Gilmour was *"adapting well to these 'short' distances."*

After only eight months, numbers, though still small, were increasing steadily and there were some quality athletes amongst the members. It was noted that there were several who had already met, or were close to meeting, the WAVA International Standards for Veterans in a broad range of events.

In 2011, John Gilmour, then Club Patron, presented the Cliff Bould Trophy after the event at McCallum Park. In his address he said

"Cliff would be proud to see the way the club we started thirty seven years ago has grown."

The Formative Years (1975 – 1979)



It was in 1977 that the first women were eventually admitted to membership of the Club and it was reported that *"Kath Holland (pictured) from Manjimup and Jean Wijesundera, both intend to compete in Champs at Easter"*. Until then, it was only Dulcie McDonald, wife of Keith, the president, who had run regularly, but not frequently, with the men. She is recorded in the first newsletter as having run a 2000m race – part of a scheduled 3000m handicap.

McCallum Park remained the major focus of Sunday mornings and, although most members also took part in non-Club events, they were told in 1978 that

"The important thing is to go to McCallum Park if you are not participating elsewhere"

Up until then, when compiling the programme, the committee had attempted to ensure that scheduled Club runs did not clash with outside events. So in the 1975 City to Surf, the Club was able to field 14 competitors, all resplendent in Club singlets. And the 1975 open state 16km road running championship was a triumph for John Gilmour who clocked 54:53. The race report said *"That time will read like a misprint to many. But times and distances are accurate."*

In 1978, after complaints that the previous year's winter programme catered only for distance runners, the committee decided to schedule winter training sessions at McCallum with shorter events. They said

"Events will be programmed at McCallum each Sunday whether there is a WAAAA or MC run or not. Members can choose to come or not, run or not and no pressure will be exerted. Hope there is something to suit everyone."

But it didn't suit the sprinters. They refused to risk running on the McCallum course which had been badly affected by rain.

The following year it was announced at the AGM that the Club's forthcoming winter programme had been *"integrated with Association and Marathon Clubs programmes to provide as many varied runs and experiences as possible."*

Those not participating in events on offer elsewhere still attended at McCallum and the broad spectrum of their activities was always reported in minute detail in the *Newsletter*. The following account from a 1979 issue is typical:

"Those at McCallum participated in a variety of activities under the eye of John Gilmour on duty. Jack Collins and Tom Jones were concentrating on sprint training while Alex Cummings, G. Morgan, Roy Kemp, Bob Johnstone and Jim Barnes did a lap of the Cliff Bould course with Merv Moyle and Frank Usher who continued for a second lap. Derek Crowther, Bernie Oliver and visitor Awneta Kastenholz ran the Bridges and laps of McCallum were covered by Cliff Bould, John Gilmour, Dick Horsley, Roy Kemp, Alex Cummings, Jeff Whittam and Jim Barnes. Dave Jones and Ross Riley (recovering from a foot injury) were also present. Field events attracted the attention of Alex Cummings and Jack Collins who had a discus competition, Alex threw the 2k discus 25.9, 26.0, 24.5 and 24.5 and Jack the 1k 17.2, 20.0, 19.9 and 18.5. Jack then put the shot 7.1m and went home."

Jack Collins was custodian of a large box of throwing equipment and members continued to practise on the grass at McCallum after Sunday runs, using two circles put in by Canning Districts. The first pentathlon championship took place in 1978 after field events had been included on the official programme. One Sunday, the *"Relays of Field Events"* were abandoned due to *"problems with elephants and camels on the track"*. Ashton's circus was in residence.

Probably through the influence of Dick Horsley and the interest shown by Jim Smith, both members of the Walkers Club, some race walks were scheduled on Sunday mornings. These included a 4000m relay where pairs competed, each athlete doing a 1000m run and a 1000m walk.

The number, variety and locations of scheduled events increased and the social aspect of the Club was developed. The first AGM in 1975 was incorporated with a run and picnic in Kings Park. There were fixed time races and Paarlauf relays. 'Certificate Runs' were introduced for which an entry fee was charged, and some weeks there were longer pack runs round the bridges and riverside paths. One week, 15 runners did a pack run on the roads around Perth from Healthways, a health club where Jack Collins had access, and

"The cooling off process took place in a swimming pool followed by a couple of swimming races and refreshments."

The Club also initiated its own summer Track and Field Championships (see ch.3). Based on a series of *"Time Trials"*, they were held at the Perry Lakes warm up track. 1978 was a particularly wet year and on several occasions the track and

throwing circles had to be “*dewatered*” before competition could begin. The exercise involved in doing this was seen as warming up.

Initially the time trials took place on a Wednesday but moved to a Thursday before the 1978/1979 season. Part way through that season, it was noted that “*Ross and Kath Holland are in 1st & 2nd place in the time trials after 8 events – 12 still to go*”.

In 1979 a marathon training programme started off with a 37km road run from McCallum at 6am. Thirteen took part, with a following support car. Inspired by Bob Hayres, a run at City Beach was organised and other non-McCallum runs became more frequent. A *Wine Bottling Day* was held one Sunday in 1979 at the Walliston residence of Maurice Johnson. Members had to “*participate in a run first before commencing the bottling, followed by lunch (and wine)*”. Twenty five members attended and two 44 gallon drums of wine were bottled - reckoned to be about 270 bottles from each. About half was sold on the day, at \$1.50 a bottle and the rest sold within a week.

Bob and Maureen Hayres were hosts of the first of the popular ‘Home Runs’. Members and their families gathered at their home in July 1975 for a 10,000m run for anyone who was interested. According to the report, “*The scenery, food, drinks and company were such that we soon forgot those big hills.*”

The second of these convivial occasions was at David and Patricia Carr’s home and many more followed, including Christmas barbecues at the home of Art and Mary Briffa. The Christmas Gift Run became a tradition and began with a \$2 limit on the gifts and a variety of ways of deciding the order in which they were chosen. In 1978, after a 5.2km run around Heirisson Island the slowest of the forty two runners had first pick. A week or so later, the second Boxing Day Run, of around 7km, at Lake Leschenaultia drew around thirty runners and was followed by a swim in the lake, a BBQ and some liquid refreshments.

Wives and families gradually became an integral part of the Club. Some assisted not only with organising post-event refreshments, but also with production of the *Newsletter* and with timekeeping and lap scoring. And they provided moral support for the members. For the 1978/9 season it was decided to try to have one social run per month where wives and families could attend and “*see for themselves that their men really are out training when they say they are!*”

These events were clearly much enjoyed but there was a complaint at the 1979 AGM about dogs and children at runs. This issue has been raised many times over the years and a succession of committees has laid down guidelines in an attempt to satisfy all members whilst having due regard for their safety.

Winter cross country events organised by WAAAA (or W4A as it was usually called) were well attended as were Marathon Club runs. At one of these, the 10km Two Bridges Run in 1976, it was reported that “*George Innes brought his fire engine down for a spin*”. Another, on New Year’s Eve in 1978, was “*McCabes Macabre 10km Torture Trail*”. Wally McCabe then belonged to the Marathon Club and he’d set this race which was claimed by some as “*nearer to 7 miles*”:

“3 laps round the oval on flat grass followed by 3 laps on soft sand, small scrub, log jumps and limestone road in hilly country.”

Long distance events seemed to be a great attraction for many of the vets. The Club fielded two teams that both did themselves proud in the 1977 Perth to Pinjarra relay and a team of eight in the Mundaring to York relay were pipped at the post by only about three minutes. In those days, in individual events, the vets course was often half the full distance. But in the Mundijong Marathon in 1976, where eleven vets competed, both David Carr and John Gilmour elected to do the full distance – it was David’s first marathon. Bill Hughes ran the half marathon sockless and in new shoes, ending up with *“strawberry jam toes”*.

Mundijong was also the location for the state 25km event in 1979. But on race morning there was *“storm and tempest and earth tremors at 6am and rain and squalls continued through the day”*. Out of the 67 starters there were 21 Club members who completed the course. Further tremors at 6pm *“shook glasses in the pub, in the period devoted to replacement of lost fluid”*.

There was often a significant number of withdrawals (and additions?) in these long races, typified by the report of the veterans 1979 inaugural half marathon:

“51 Veterans entered the event, 53 were timed at Half way’ and 32 completed the full distance.”

However, the men that contested the Club’s first 24-hour relay in 1979 stuck it out to the end and one of the teams won the Dunlop Shield (see ch.6).

Most short distance track racing and field competition was still at the Saturday inter-club meetings, where special vets races continued to be offered. Longer track runs were provided at the twilight meetings. At one of these, in 1976,

“The rain started at 5.30pm and lap scorers Jack Collins, David Clark and Rob Shand struggled with soggy paper and pencils which would not write while 23 athletes battled with wind and rain under floodlights in the John Gilmour 10000m”

Vets formed a sizeable group at all these meetings and participated in a range of events, including pole vault. They also competed in the Open State, SW and National Vets Championships. Smaller groups travelled overseas to each of the World Vets Championships, the first of which was in Toronto in 1975.

Throughout these early years, a large number competed in all disciplines and throughout the year. It was expected that each member would play their part in helping to organise and run Club events. The officiating was initially shared amongst the willing few, mainly committee members, but in December 1978 it was announced that other members *“have been rostered to be responsible for conducting the programmed activities from Jan 1979”*.

By the end of the seventies the Club was flourishing with about 200 members, around 30 of whom were women.

Growing Up (1980 - 1999)

The eclectic mix of activities on offer gradually increased and brought in more members. But some decided they didn't want to run the longer distances and others did not want to participate in T&F. There were several suggestions to split the Club into two distinct sections, with the road runners not having to pay the capitation fees to the national veterans' body. However, the idea was never acted upon and there has always been a significant number who regularly attend both Sunday runs and T&F sessions. And even those most entrenched in road running are attracted to the 10km Track Handicap race established by the Whittams in 1988. Followed by a DIY BBQ, this became an annual event.

Following the precedent set by the founders, members continued to compete in non-Club events at a range of levels. And they always punched well above their weight, gaining championship titles, carrying away plenty of medals and breaking records. They also maintained the Club's good reputation, stepping forward to assist with other organisations' events. They acted as officials and marshals, shared their expertise and lent out equipment. All this meant that the Club became a well respected entity within the athletics community. (See ch.8)

Relays became prevalent in the early 80s and cemented the camaraderie that had already grown up amongst members. The 24-hr relays (ch.6) produced a level of euphoria in all those involved that has probably only been equalled during the lead up to the inaugural postal relays of 2008. Vic Water's 1993 comment sums it up admirably: *"Nothing stirs the runner's loins like a good relay."*

From the mid-80s onward, Paarlauf relays continued, but there was no further appetite for lengthy ones. In 1994, a 6-hr relay was wound up after 4 hours. (ch.6). But several members did participate in the Capel to Collie relay in 1996 and in a 12km relay and a (WAMC organised) 40-mile relay in 1999.

On Sunday mornings much remained the same as the years progressed. Some weeks at McCallum Park there were relays, field events, 3000m races or just the opportunity for individuals and groups to do their own thing. In 1982 it was decided to hold a 'New Members Run' each month so that *"new members who are passed at the committee meeting can be introduced"*. In 1985, it was reported in the newsletter that there appeared to be an increasing percentage of women competing every month. Around this time, and presumably tongue in cheek, the newsletter editor had been chastised by Barrie Slinger for using the word 'Ladies'. Barrie considered this *"discriminatory and derogatory"*. The editor's response was to write, in a following run report, that

*"Joan Pellier continued her good form to be the first ~~girl lady~~
woman FEMALE home."*

Committee Matters

Successive committees continued to deal with recurring issues and some new ones. The composition of the Sunday programme was discussed at length and attempts were made to satisfy members' wishes. According to a questionnaire organised in

1986 by Keith Forden, these wishes included an increase in pack runs, home runs and winter cross country runs; a better spread of runs in the metropolitan area; shorter runs and longer runs in addition to standard ones; more handicap races and less novelty events.

It's impossible to satisfy everybody and this was also true of the timing of runs on a Sunday. For race directors there seemed to be two concerns. Some didn't want to be setting a course in darkness; others didn't want to get up too early in order to have the course ready for a very early start. Participants wanted the timing so that it was not too hot or not too cold. Times changed frequently but in 1999 requests for further changes were refused.

Handicapping systems have always been the subject of controversy. In 1985 in response to complaints about his methods, handicapper Bob Sammells said

"any more and we shall revert to the old system. I can just picture it: Barrie Slinger carrying 10 kilos, Morris Warren carrying 15 kilos, Don Caplin carrying Barrie Slinger ... So, take care!"

The idea of Clubrooms was pursued vigorously for a time. In 1985 Rob Shand prepared a report and drawings and discussed extensions to existing buildings at McCallum with Perth City Council. But, despite committee approval for a further meeting, nothing came of this or of the possibility of Perry Lakes as an alternative. Collaboration in WAMC's purchase of clubrooms and a 1992 offer of army barracks near McCallum were declined and the whole idea abandoned.

On the thorny subject of helpers Rob Shand wrote in his secretary's report to the AGM in 1981,

"Those who do their bit do more than their fair share and those who don't, make it harder for others."

And it didn't get better. Pressure on the committee remained high and in 1990, according to the AGM minutes, it seemed things were at crisis point. Those members who did most of the work decided that

"it is no longer possible to carry out all the necessary functions as someone's spare time hobby".

The number of man-hours spent by committee members in dealing with local councils had increased, in terms of paper work required and in negotiation of payments for using ovals and toilet facilities. In 1990 *The Vetrin* reported

"We now have to pay Perth City Council \$28 for use of the toilets (and showers) at our regular McCallum Park venue. All runners are encouraged to get their money's worth!"

Kings Park was a popular venue, with up to six runs there during some years; but the King's Park board also started to become particularly difficult, in terms of the restrictions to the paths the Club was permitted to use.

There were various attempts to try to make sure everyone became involved in helping. On one occasion, runs were listed in the newsletter for the remainder of the season and members were asked to tick one or two runs at which they would help. Only a handful did so. It was suggested in 1998, when the Club was again *“critically short of helpers for runs”*, that it be made obligatory for everyone to help at two runs per year, with a sign-up form being available on Sundays. From 1999 the form for membership renewal required members to select two runs where they would help. Those who didn’t complete this section had two runs allocated. This worked up to a point but didn’t solve the problem.

With membership numbers still growing and longer distance runs (requiring more marshals) being programmed, recording of results on Sundays became a harder task. It was usually carried out by members’ wives, including Bev Thornton (Graham’s wife) and Maureen Pomery (Alan’s wife). In 1985 they were said to have been *“sitting at the recording desk for many years”* and in 1997 it was reported that they were still there doing the same job. But the committee had made a good decision in 1992: *“Weather protection to be bought for race recorders”*.



It’s hard to imagine that the Sunday ‘morning teas’ could provide any bone of contention. But in 1990 the Social Committee decided to axe disposable cups for the hot drinks. Instead, they asked everyone to take their own cup. Two years later they were still trying to persuade the membership to cooperate.

The safety of members had probably always been an important consideration for committees and race directors. But, apart from some reminders at the start of runs, it was generally assumed that members were old enough and sensible enough to take care of themselves. But with increased use of paths, particularly by cyclists, and more road sections included in the Club’s run routes, a more formal approach to safety issues was adopted.

In 1988 marshal’s vests were introduced and, through St John Ambulance, the committee organised and subsidised a *“Life Support Course”*. As a result, 19 members were granted a preliminary certificate. After a couple of incidents, one involving a cyclist and the other a fall, a duty first-aider, a Club member, was present at each Sunday run. In 1994, members were encouraged to take a first aid course and such a course was offered at \$100 per person or \$85 if at least 18 people registered. There were no applicants.

Criticisms about the organisation of Sunday runs continued to be aired. They included accuracy of some course distances and the actual position of the finish line. After complaints about the walk courses, the committee decided in 1989 that *“it is up to walkers to organise themselves in conjunction with our Sunday runs”* and, in 1998, that walks up to 10km would start at the same time as the run, whilst longer walks would start half an hour earlier.

The Vetrun in January 1993 claimed that *“Our race directors are among the most important members of the Vets”*. But they too complained, mainly about the large

volume of equipment they had to ferry around. It was all necessary for the smooth operation of each run but it had got to the stage where “*one medium sized car or two small ones were needed*”. So the committee resolved to “*reduce and redesign*”. A new Director’s Guide was also prepared.

In May 1994, the new committee decided to form sub-committees to oversee particular aspects of the Club management. Interestingly, Joan Pellier, always a firm believer in the fact that WAVAC was a road running club, was appointed to head the sub-committee with responsibility for track and field.

Road and Cross Country

Many runs became annual events. Records for each one were established and, around 1982, they began to be reported in the newsletter. A change in course would require a new base record but the practice continued and proved to be popular with regular runners who used the records as a bench mark.

Some of the early runs continued after the 70s and are still on the programme today. The Cliff Bould Trophy run (see ch.9) began in 1978 and Ivan Brown expects to direct it for the 20th time in 2014. The Friendship Run, started by Bob Hayres in 1979, is a joint venture with the Marathon Club. The Pelliers were race directors for about 20 years and Joan’s brother, Jim Barnes, about 10 years. In 2012, Jim inducted Brett Roach into the job.

1984 saw the inaugural Teddy Birds Picnic run. In those days there were few ‘birds’ (ladies) in the Club and president Barrie Slinger suggested they might like to organise a run. It was made a more obviously feminine event with the inclusion of “*cakes and stuff*” baked mainly by Joan Pellier and Joan Slinger, under the expert guidance of June Strachan. A children’s playground at Kings Park was chosen for the start and finish and prompted the choice of run name. In 1985 “*A new milestone in the club’s history was reached, when over 100 runners assembled for the start of the 2nd Teddy Birds Picnic Run in Kings Park*”. This run remained on the calendar until after the 2011 event when it had to be scrapped because of restrictions imposed by the Kings Park board.

In 1989 “*The inaugural ‘Pagoda Run’ was contested over 3 distances on a flat course along the cycleway from McCallum Park to the Pagoda Ballroom and back (for those who did 16k)*”. The distances were 5km, 10km and 16km and there were 121 finishers including two walkers. Jackie Halberg has been race director since the mid-nineties and in 1995, after a date change, she found that the circus was in town and at McCallum Park (again!). Her run report says

“We were able to set up our start line somewhere between the lion and the donkey.”

The ballroom has long since disappeared but it was only relatively recently that the run was renamed the X Pagoda Run.

The first running of the Garvey Gallop, with Basil Worner in the saddle, was in 1992. Arthur Leggett took it over the following year and continued until 2005 –

when he decided to hang up his spurs after he received some flack for setting the race off a little before the scheduled time. Arthur's equine affinity was demonstrated in 1996 and reported in *The Vetrin* by Richard Harris:

"Many vets will remember the day at a Darlington Dash when a riderless horse came running towards us, pursued by a police motor-cyclist. Arthur stopped running, signalled the policeman to stop, and caught the horse and calmed it."

The Oldfields took over in 2006, and substituted a woodland loop for a road section. In 2011, after further deterioration of the rickety bridge, the course became a 3-lap circuit, on varied terrain, around Garvey Lakes. A course more suitable for the walkers was added the following year.

After a 1981 John Forrest Jog, wine bottling and "*drinking and spilling*" took place at "*Jo and Derek Walker's shanty*". This activity became an annual one, with the main venue again at Walliston, as in 1979. In 1982, the report said:

"Aftermath of the Walliston Wallop Day: The two children who were left behind have now been claimed."

But numbers grew too large and 1988 saw the last Walliston Wallop.

Certificate Runs continued with the first three place-getters in each age-group receiving certificates. In 1989 the events in this series were Mill Point Road, Half Marathon, State Cross Country and Pentathlon.

Home Runs, described in 1988 as having been "*such a feature of our club*", maintained their popularity but their numbers had dwindled by the end of the eighties. During 1987/88 there were a total of eight and there were sometimes up to 100 members in attendance. Logistically, this was very hard for the hosts to cope with. The following year there were only four home runs, and two of these were not actually run from the homes but included a 'do' at the home afterwards. Secretary, Rob Davis, said in his annual report that

"I feel that eventually home runs will be a thing of the past. Perhaps this is one sad aspect of our increased membership as these home runs are always popular and lots of fun."

Handicap races were still well supported but often seemed to cause problems of one sort or another. In a perfect system all competitors would finish at the same time and, in 1986, it would seem the handicapping was pretty accurate for the Perry Lakes event. But race organiser, John Bell, said in his report:

"My apologies to those who lost places at the finish – it was a shambles with batches of 20-30 people coming through the line together." "I feel it is mandatory to set up one chute and that everyone stands IN LINE"

During the 1985/1986 season, the Handicap Championships, a series of 11 handicap races, were held. 148 members competed in at least one event with only

June Strachan running them all. Most in the top placings did 8 or 9 of them. Ray Lawrence won by 5 points from Don Caplin. Over the years, as the number of participants decreased, the number of events was gradually reduced. In time, the series became known as the Handicap Trophy (see ch.9).

In 1989, handicapper Mike Rhodes received some grumbles and so felt that he had to explain his system – which he did, in *The Vetrin*, in minute detail. Also that year, he produced sashes for the Handicap Trophy races. The winner of the previous handicap event was to wear a green sash around the waist and the overall leader a yellow sash. It was probably Jeff Whittam who wrote

“This is so that the other runners will know who to trip up or to beat as the case may be.”

Perhaps the handicappers would have benefitted from John Pressley’s idea for more variety and excitement in handicap races. In 1997, he said in his Deadly Medley run report:

“Roll on next year, as I have got this fiendish handicapping system worked out, based on age, sex, star sign, colour of eyes,, height, weight, size of feet, and magnitude of bribe!”

Novelty runs weren’t always to everybody’s liking but clearly created much fun and laughter. In one of these, in 1987, the 57 competitors were divided into teams of three. On Heirisson Island, everyone ran for about 1km to the edge of a very muddy pond and one member of each team had to be carried across. On the return, all runners had to navigate the pond. And the Hester Park run in 1995 was certainly a novelty for some. After heavy rain the day before, Bob and Phyllis Farrell arrived by canoe. Sue and Merv Jones’ report claimed it was *“Surely a first for the club”*.

Some runs bore the name of the race director. Amongst them were Danby’s Run, Sutherland’s Run, The Warren’s Run, Brian’s Run and the Jim Barnes Run which originally started from his home but had to be moved in 1990 due to increased traffic. In 1989 Lorna’s Run became ‘No Name Run’ and in her report Lorna Butcher, (Lauchlan) said “.... *the longer course was shorter and the short course took a different route ...*” and *“Some of the runners on the short course were suspected of running too fast as police pointed the radar gun at them.”*

The Club continued to ensure that Christmas was celebrated in style. In 1984, after the Christmas Dinner recovery run at Beaton Park, Nedlands, a cricket match was organised between Australia and England. Someone wrote that:

“I am not sure who won or even if the nationalities managed to find the right side to be on, but the game was enjoyed by all”.

For a while in the eighties the Christmas Gift Run was an age-graded handicap but the first of these, in 1982, was a bit of a disaster. Run over 5.2km, *“the accuracy of the timekeeping didn’t work out too well. Lost in the joyfulness of the occasion is the official version”*. John Gilmour came in first *“by a country mile”* but was informed that his time *“could be anything between 17 and 10 minutes”*.

After the run in 1989, some members went off by bus to the Lamont Winery for wine-tasting and luncheon *“in a rustic setting”*. And in 1991, a three year old girl was seen to be staring in amazement, *“seeing men drop their shorts in front of a funny lady who was wearing pink reindeer horns”*. Race director, Sandi (reindeer) Hodge, thought it might be a good idea for the following year to *“extend the foolishness to make this a ‘funny dress’ prize run”*. Thus the tradition of fancy dress was set. Joan and Ron Hillis took over as directors in 1993 and after a few years it fell to the committee, then to Lynne Schickert to keep up the Christmas spirit (ch.5).

The Lake Leschenaultia Boxing Day run continued. The course was around 7km and it was once reported that *“Phyl Bould and Dorothy Whittam acted as animated signposts at the bottom of the track”* Barry Robinson was in charge throughout the eighties then Toni Frank and the Hill family took over until 1998. Then, keen not to see its demise, although the run only attracted small numbers each year, Barrie Thomsett stepped in.

Toni had always paid the hiring fee of \$50 out of her own pocket, but when Barrie discovered in 1999 that an extra charge of \$7 per car was to be levied, he changed the venue to the Yokine Reserve.

Rather than just supporting the Association’s Cross Country events, the Club instigated their own. Favourite venues were Jorgensen Park and Kings Park, particularly for the Championships (see ch.3). Cross country races have been memorable for an assortment of reasons. Brian Danby’s report of a run over the national cross country course at Perry Lakes in 1985 said

“John Pellier showed that he will not miss marathons for anyone by bringing along his telly so we could all watch ‘The Wang Marathon’.”

Later that winter a Yanchep picnic run featured hills, tracks, swamp and bush trails followed by soccer, tug-of-war and lunch – which lasted until 5pm. All present agreed that these picnic runs were *“ideal for our club”* and that at least one other should be added to the annual programme.

The Clontarf Cross Country run in 1988 also provided some amusement - at the expense of the more vertically challenged participants. *“We had a genuine cross country, with fences, walls, bush tracks, open country and, occasionally, a bit of ground water”*. The latter, after a small cloudburst which deepened the water jump, prompted the comment:

“We thought the petites like Pat Carr and Sheila Maslen might have needed snorkels, but they got through.”

Water was again a feature in the Murdoch Cross Country in 1996. According to Jackie Halberg’s report, sprinklers kept *“popping up at random”* so that the earlier finishers enjoyed free showers and

“helpers at the finish line were taking bets on where the next drenching would come from”.

For a time, at the start of summer in 1997 members took full advantage of the “*Angels with Tables*” to soothe their muscles after Sunday runs. These students of massage worked under the watchful eye of supervisor Malcolm Calcutt who had just accompanied the Australian team to Athens for the World Champs.

And to demonstrate that Club members have a social conscience, this extract is from The Vetrin in March 1992:

“Spotted in Floreat early one morning – Jim Langford on a training run, with an armful of empty cans he’d collected from the verge. Perhaps we should insist he carries such a handicap all the time; then we might have a chance of catching him!”

Track & Field

The T&F programme continued much as before, with the twilight and inter-club meetings in addition to the Club’s own events. In 1994, the Club was invited to join Canning District and Curtin for their Wednesday night meets but this offer was declined with the committee asserting that “*WAVAC prefer to be independent*”.

The midweek points scoring time trials programme thrived, albeit with some changes of venues and scheduling. Most often the programme took place from October to December but some years it ran for the whole summer season and in others it only started after Christmas.

One Thursday in 1982, during “*WA’s wettest January*”, the two inside lanes at Perry Lakes were under about three inches of water and it continued to rain for the duration of a 10,000m race. The results were prefaced with the statement:

“In the timing, no allowance was made for wind or tidal assistance”.

However, it probably wasn’t that episode that prompted the move, in 1984, of the 5000m and 10,000m events to the new track at Coker Park. Subsequently, for a while, the whole time trials programme alternated between Perry Lakes and Coker Park. In 1985, the Perry Lakes track was grassed and considered to be unsuitable for the time trials, so they were moved to McGillivray Oval on Tuesday evenings. Perhaps a strange move since this was also a grass track and a hire charge was payable - but it was clearly considered more appropriate. In 1986 the trials alternated between McGillivray and Coker Park, five weeks at each. The next year, when the trials started in September, they alternated week about at the two venues. At that time the Club was levying a charge of \$1 per head for each evening. The two venues continued to be used for the midweek meeting, apart from a short period in the early 90s when Perry Lakes was again substituted for McGillivray Oval “*to avoid clashes with the university club and coaches*” and a period in 1995 when the track at Coker Park was under repair. In 1996, the preferred evening was established as Thursday and in 1998 the time was reduced from 2 hours to 1½ hours and some of the longer track events were omitted. In June 1988, as a trial, a

winter track night had been held, but only thirteen runners turned up. This was not sufficient to cover the cost of the McGillivray track so the idea was abandoned.

Athletes like to compare their results and those of others, so all looked forward to the tables of cumulative results of the trials in *The Vetrin* each month. In 1987 a copy of the cumulative results was produced and made available each week, encouraging fierce competition. At the end of 1991, the weekly results continued to be available but, with such large participation, they were omitted from *The Vetrin* which only carried a comment about each session.

Meaningful athletics competition cannot take place without officials and the Club has always been lucky enough to have had members both qualified and willing to limit their own participation in order to officiate. But the number of competitors and the importance of accurate results for the time trials, meant that others had to be drafted in to help. In 1984 a roster of officials was drawn up to organise and oversee the trials each week and this continued throughout the rest of the eighties and nineties. Sometimes, when the time trials included only short and middle distance events, a 3000m or 5000m race was added to the evening's programme. But the rostered officials were not to be responsible for these events. The competitors had to organise timekeepers and lap scorers.

The list of rostered track and field officials was published in *The Vetrin* each month and during the 90s it became the norm to have "*Directors*" appointed for each week to organise proceedings. Other volunteers assisted. But, as the number of participants increased - up to 105 one evening in November 1998 - volunteers became harder to find. So the voluntary element was removed in 1999 and three helpers for each Thursday evening for October to March were chosen by the committee and the list published in the August newsletter. Also listed were eleven helpers for the 2000 State Championships along with the names of nine others who "*are excused due to other duties*".

A large variety of field events was included in the time trials and interest was such that members were keen to find out about rules and specifications. So, in 1983, *The Vetrin* covered two events in detail each month, courtesy of Bob Fergie. In 1988, there was field event training at Perry Lakes from October to March on Tuesday evenings and the possibility of storage facilities at the venues was pursued. It came to nothing and in 1990 it was reported that the Whittams were transporting the equipment for each session. Sometimes the implements being used were undersized and there were periods when some throws had to be suspended for safety reasons, when the cage was out of commission or to prevent damage to the infield. The problems did not seem to deter the athletes as demonstrated by the growth in popularity of the pentathlon.

In the summer months when there were no time trials, the midweek sessions featured not only races but also programmes of training, either for the trials to come or for the end of season championships. Members were encouraged to "*select the events that best suited their personal training needs*". Members had always been willing to share knowledge and experience and there was a push in the mid-nineties for anyone interested to attend the Level 1 Coaches Course. In 1995, Dave

Wyatt was one of those running training sessions and, in 1996, a walking coach was arranged for the Coker sessions. The summer 1995/1996 summer programme was advertised as “*first two weeks devoted to coaching tips on sprinting and jumps with competition season starting after 2 weeks.*”

That season a steeplechase was incorporated into the programme for the first time. This followed the normal practice of the programme organisers to try to include some events which were outwith the norm. In 1986, in the October to December period, there was a series of relays over five weeks. They included a 4x800m, 4x400m, 4x200m, 4x100m and medley 800m, 400m, 200m, 200m. In October 1991, the first night of the summer season at McGillivray featured the “*rare mile*” event which fielded 28 runners in three heats. Later that season a “*1K trial*” and a “*1K walk trial*” attracted 31 runners and 16 walkers. With the 1K distance being relatively uncommon, there were many PBs. The success of this event prompted moves by the Club to organise a national 1K event. In considering the practicalities of this it was asserted that

“We’ll prove our grasp of modern technology and fax results to the competing clubs.”

The following year the 1K distance was run on the opening night of the season, and WAVAC provided “*the sausages and the fire*” for a round-up BBQ.

The first competition under the new lights at Coker Park took place in 1993. The session was described as “*illuminating*”.

Maturity (2000 – 2013)

As the new millennium dawned, membership was around a healthy 400. This included twenty-five members over seventy years of age with a further fifteen on the verge of entering that category. Ten years on, with an influx of younger members, the age profile of members began to change. This could be attributed partly to the fact that people in their 30s and 40s were by then more conscious of the need to exercise and were seeking ways to do this. But there were other factors too. In 2010 the Club website was revitalised and, with news updated almost daily and results usually posted within 24 hours, it attracted attention from the cyberspace generation. In addition, the moving of the Tuesday T&F sessions to WAAS in 2011 gave huge exposure of masters’ activities to other users of the stadium and some of these decided to join MAWA.

In 2013, Vic Waters looked at the age profile of members and concluded that the average age was reducing. In addition, according to data gathered from membership forms, almost a third of members considered themselves as T&F only. (*Vetrun* April 2013)

The Club’s activities continued to flourish. The early part of the period saw the Wildflower Run, the Club’s only public invitation run since the Sundown Run in the 80s (ch.6). A second midweek T&F session and then a winter session were introduced for the first time. WA’s daylight saving experiment in 2007 was greeted with joy by some and misery by others, as was its demise three years later. In 2009

members farewelled Perry Lakes and christened the new stadium. And in 2011 the 2016 World Masters Athletics Championships were awarded to Perth.

Road and Cross Country

When the new programme was being compiled in 2000, the question was asked whether people actually wanted runs on Boxing Day and Australia Day. And it turned out that they did. But they might have thought otherwise at Yokine on Boxing Day 2007. According to Barrie Thomsett's report it was the "*hottest December day ever recorded in Perth – maximum 44.2 degrees*".

In 2002, the increase in the average age of members prompted the committee to rule that there must be a short course, of no more than 6km, with each of the Sunday runs. The same year, winter runs usually programmed at McCallum Park were moved to Burswood Park because of better facilities. Runs wouldn't take place without race directors so a major recruiting drive had to be mounted for the 2006/2007 season when the directors of thirteen runs withdrew.

When AWA instigated their Synergy Gallipoli Run to commemorate Anzac Day, the Club was asked not to programme a run on that day. A reduced entry fee was offered to MAWA members. The committee decided that for 2008 the Club run would go ahead as planned but the Gallipoli Run would be publicised. It was agreed at the next AGM that, in future, the Club would not schedule any event on that day. In 2009 about 45 MAWA members took part and some now also assist with the organisation of this annual event.

There was more tinkering with the timing of Sunday runs. And the advent of daylight saving in 2007 drew many requests for yet more changes, despite the fact that it meant cooler conditions on a Sunday morning.

Negotiation with the Kings Park board continued to take up a lot of time. In 2011 a sub committee, including Irwin Barrett-Lennard, Paul Martin, John Bell and Ivan Brown, was formed to try to resolve problems. Progress was made as regards cost but restrictions remained on the use of paths. Towards the end of 2013 the Kings Park board introduced a limit of 300 runners on grass tracks – a decision which will affect the annual Friendship run.

Almost every year the subject of lack of helpers was addressed, generally after instances of scheduled helpers failing to turn up on the day and without prior notice. The February 2002 issue of *Vetrin* carried a very apt poem about the givers and takers in a club and Bob Sammells in his President's Report to the 2003 AGM said that "*Any member not helping almost guarantees inadequate support when he or she wishes to compete*". Later, the draft programme was published or sent out at the same time as membership forms, making it easier for members to select the two runs they would help at. And in 2013, the helpers list for the whole year was posted on the website so that all could see where there were shortages. Also in 2013, the committee had to take over the organisation of the Mattagarup run, at the last minute, when no race director could be found. The message on the website read

“If no race director can be found for this and other Sunday runs on next year’s program, the Club will either have to revert to group jogs or will not be able to organise a run each week. Let’s hope this doesn’t happen!”

After the event, Vic Waters reported that he had only seen one marshal - “Chris Frampton, whose job was to guard the massive puddle where we turned on to the Windan Bridge. Chris did really well, constantly refilling the puddle so that everyone had an equal chance of soaking.”

Club members transgressed quite frequently. In 2001 it was noted that “Some are not paying their 50¢ for morning tea” and, in June 2002, that “25% have still not paid their membership fees”. When, in 2006, one runner figured twice in the results, it was soon announced that “doing both the long and short run on Sunday is not acceptable”. This was endorsed by committee in 2011. But at least 3 runners did the 5km run at Aquinas in 2013 and still managed to set off at their designated times on the 10km handicap run. Asked to clarify the ruling, the committee decided that doing two of the Sunday runs was not allowed for multi-lap events but that it should be allowed for handicap events. They advised that any runner who planned to do this should inform the recorders in advance.

Four-legged friends had their status called into question several times. A 2001 AGM motion to allow dogs at venues (but not on the runs) was carried, with owners required to indemnify the Club for liability. The next year, the headline in *Vetrun*, “Dog Motion Begs Consideration”, gave notice that the issue was to be discussed yet again. In 2010, the committee decided that “bikes, skates, prams, pushers, scooters and pets are not permitted at Sunday events for safety reasons”. About six months later, members were sad to hear that Neil McRae’s dog Shep, a regular (and unobtrusive) Sunday visitor for many years, had died.

And thinking of bikes – in 2012, when the Bardon Bash short run become a long run as members searched for the turn, Mike Anderson called for there to be either a bike on the Sunday run courses or for the race director and marshals to have mobile phones so that problems could be quickly sorted out.

Health and safety matters (often referred to by the more irreverent members as ‘elf and safety’) continued to exercise the minds of committees. A *Vetrun* article in 2004 entitled “HOT WEATHER COMPETITION” informed that “if the temperature is above 20 degs at the start time, a warning will be given to competitors by the MAWA race director or club president”.

In fact, the Club had always been mindful of the need for care in hot conditions and it was obligatory for every run to have at least one water station. And, for reasons of hygiene, it had been agreed in 2002 that disposable gloves would be provided to those handing out the cups. Precise instructions on how to handle the cups were issued in *Vetrun* several times. In 2005, helpers were reminded that, if ever gloves were not available, the cups should be held at the bottom and certainly “not with a finger in the cup”.

However, in 2009, the committee received complaints that cups were being held by the top with a gloved thumb inside. Instructions in the race directors' pack were amended to offer advice on exactly how the cups should be offered.

The 1994 attempt to get a large group of members first-aid trained, had been unsuccessful; but members always had the comfort of knowing that a first aid box and resuscitator were available at most events. In 2012 the Club updated its register of members with medical or nursing training. Details of a first aid course run by RLSA were presented to the committee and they agreed to fund a couple of members. In a letter to *Vetrun*, Mike Anderson urged members to avail themselves of the opportunity, saying

"I was staggered to learn very recently on a St Johns refresher programme that a number of the procedures I'd been taught a dozen or so years ago (by St Johns!) are now considered unhelpful, some said to be actually harmful."

Only Colin Smith did the course but, being involved in so many other things "*athleticswa, masters football and umpiring amateur football*", he preferred to fund it himself. Carol Bowman, a nurse, was funded to do a refresher course.

Also in 2012, all clubs were being encouraged to purchase a defibrillator. The MAWA committee rejected the idea, partly because of the cost but also, as recorded in the committee meeting minutes,

"A defibrillator would not be of much help if an emergency happened on a Sunday run with the runner far from the finish."

Probably pertinent, but possibly the oddest issue which has ever been brought up for discussion, was one raised by Bruce Wilson at the AGM in 2012. He asked whether MAWA might be contributing to the spread of dieback disease by putting spikes in the ground. The committee decided "*to deal with the issue if and when it was raised by Authorities over whose land MAWA runs*".

The safety of runners at road crossings is still causing concerns for some of the shires. They began to insist that standard traffic signs were used and that road-crossing marshals were properly trained. So in 2011 volunteers were sought for a course and 'lollipop' signs were acquired. Some members object to the fact that the lollipop signs tell them to "SLOW"! By 2013 the Club had 10 qualified traffic marshals but many more were required if, every week, all road crossings were to be covered adequately. By 2012 Melville had decided that, to permit any run involving a road crossing, they required "*a traffic management plan, drawn up by a professional body*". This was considered to be beyond the scope of Club resources so some changes were made to courses. Following the 15km RRC in Nedlands in 2013, Gary Fisher wrote in *Vetrun* that "*Councils appear to see us as a revenue stream*".

The handicapping system remained fair game for the critics but they must have felt vindicated when, in 2007, one handicap run was won by a competitor who had only just joined the Club that morning. After some delay, the committee in

consultation with handicapper Mike Rhodes, resolved that only those who had done at least three Sunday runs in the previous six months would be eligible to win a trophy. This was re-iterated in 2010 when two of the Handicap Trophy running events were designated as the short runs to give those members who only ran the shorter runs a chance to win the handicap trophy and also *“to save faster athletes from hanging about”*. This was originally a one year trial. In 2012, Richard Danks was the handicapper and Vic Waters the surprised winner of the trophy. He wrote in *Vetrun* of the short runs:

“Most people gave these a miss, leaving room for me to gain some easy points. So, as I have always said – wonderful people, handicappers!”

In 2013 David Brown voiced his opinion in *Vetrun* that the short runs were a *“virtual lottery”* being too short for handicaps to be accurately reflected.

In the early years of the century the Club was still ‘touting for business’. Fliers were distributed after City to Surf inviting participation in the free Wildflower Run in November. It attracted entries from over 100 members and 40 visitors so a large team was needed to organise and marshal the event. Unfortunately the timing tape ran out, so no times were available for the slower runners. In 2002, Rod Tinniswood said in *Vetrun* that helper, Glenda Lawrence, *“reported dutifully to me on her mobile on the progress of the Magpie terror attacks”*.

Cross country continued to draw strong fields and create some minor dramas. In 2000, regarding the Fallen Comrades Cross Country, staged in association with Albany Masters, David Carr reported that Basil Worner *“fell twice and bled copiously from arm and leg”*. Basil’s own comment was *“I didn’t know this was a contact sport, or even a blood sport.”*

After the state CCC in Kings Park in 2004, the race director Ralph Henderson apologised to walkers for the change to their course but believed they *“actually enjoyed their detour via the coffee shop”*.

Reabold Hill cross country in 2008 was, as explained by director Frank Smith, *“the club’s last run in hills because of the large fee imposed on us by the Kings Park board”*. That year there was torrential rain right up to start time but then *“the sun was blazing and conditions became quite steamy; not ideal for hilly cross country running, as shown by the results”*.

No rain, but 29 degrees at the start of the 2012 Alderbury Park cross country saw some of the record 105 finishers suffer *“after getting a little over-heated on the back-end, shadeless part of the course”*. But at least all the runners avoided falling into grass covered holes as some had done the previous year.

From 1999 the Christmas Gift Run had been followed by a wine tasting and sales. But, in 2003, director Lynne Schickert suggested this be discontinued. And it was. Not many contest the fancy dress prizes but there are always a few who go to town with their costumes. And most members do make some effort, even if only with a Santa hat. Speaking of which, for about five years, Paul Martin, resplendent in

Santa hat, did this event with a bag for rubbish, picking up as he ran along. Social conscience was still alive and well. Elaine and John Dance are now the directors of this event.

The Boxing Day run has become ever less serious. Barrie Thomsett declared in *Vetrun* in 2004 that it *“was not meant to be a formal run”* – this to justify the results which showed members running a range of distances from 0km to 8km. Barrie stepped down as director in 2013 for health reasons and the run is designated as a Group Jog for 2014 – with no requirement for a race director.

Kings Park was the venue for Vic Water’s Guess Own Time run and, in 2002, to keep the Board happy, he issued three rules before the event:

- “1. When you fall over, please do not land on endangered species (including other Vets.)*
- 2. If running with another Vet, please keep him/her on a lead at all times.*
- 3. If stopped and questioned by a Ranger, say you’re with the Marathon Club.”*

In 2005, GOT was moved to Hale School where it has continued ever since.

That same year saw the end of an era for the Deepwater Point Run as Dalton Moffett relinquished his long reign as race director. 111 runners competed in the race – *“a possible record”*. Mike and Paula Karra took over from Dalton. At Joondalup, in 2008, the race was reported as a bit of a *“splish-splash for the hardy few”*. And Bob Schickert, who compiled the results, noted that the only four 5km walkers were all named ‘Pat’ - Ainsworth, Carr, Hopkins and Miller. Goings on at Mullaloo seem to attract attention. The 2009 September *Vetrun* carries a photograph, courtesy of Vic Waters, bearing the heading *“Mullaloo Scandal!”* Those featured are Karen March and Frank Smith with the caption:

“Caught hand-in-hand by a frozen paparazzo at Mullaloo: I would have thought nothing of it, but he signed in at the recording table as ‘Smith’!”

At the same venue, in 2012, Mike Anderson’s report pleads for *“A word of commiseration for our boy with the camera – Vic Waters – who was run over by the stampeding mob of runners at the start”*. This time it was Frank Smith who was quick enough to catch the moment on camera and have his revenge.

The 2013 Darlington Dash saw 7 couples contest the team event with Karen and Peter March taking the honours for the 4th year in a row. Perth’s weather had been particularly bad but Lorraine Lopes said that *“Unexpectedly, we had lovely weather this morning! And as far as I know no one tripped up or fell down. The pea gravel just sunk into the ground and it made for quite an enjoyable event. That still didn't mean I went up the hill twice”*.

And to sum up some people's opinion of the masters - in 2011, at the Gwelup Run, when Roger Walsh was a marshal, he explained to a curious member of the public what was going on. The reply was

"I thought the matron at the local aged care facility must have said to the residents OK you lot get out there and run around the lake or you'll get no breakfast!!"

From late 2013, participants at McCallum Park found themselves having to take a longer than usual walk to the toilets. The Town of Victoria Park had decided to charge \$150 for the use of the block in the Taylor Reserve so the public toilets near the tennis courts had to be used.

Track and Field

There were several major changes to proceedings after the turn of the century. In 2003, a second evening session was introduced, so members could choose to attend the most convenient location, McGillivray Oval on a Tuesday night or Coker Park on a Thursday - or both. This proved a great success and drew around eighty participants in total each week. And in 2005, Barbara Blurton gained committee approval to continue Thursday night meetings through the winter at Coker Park – track only, no field events. Bob Schickert undertook to provide tea and coffee, a task later taken over by Carol Bowman, assisted for a while by Nick Miletic. This is much appreciated by the members, particularly on cold and wet evenings. One night in 2006 they were also treated to a cake to celebrate Stan Jones 80th birthday.

In 2010 the UWA authorities asked the Club to alter their competition night at McGillivray Oval. This didn't suit the majority who regularly attended the Tuesday sessions so an alternative venue was sought. John Oldfield suggested that WAAS, the new stadium, would be a good option. The idea of being able to run on a new, fast track was popular, especially since the Coker Park track was in poor repair. The committee was unable to come to an agreement with VenuesWest, the stadium's management company, but John continued to push until a mutually agreeable deal was brokered. Competition began there in the winter of 2010, but with only a few participants – perhaps due to a lack of refreshments. However, numbers picked up considerably during the summer.

For safety reasons, since the facility was shared with other users, the agreement did not include any long throwing events. But it was eventually agreed in 2011 that the Club would pay a token sum for use of the infield after official closing time so that long throws could be accommodated. Throwers started later than everyone else, contested the shot or weight throw and started a long throw at 7.30pm, after the other users had left the stadium.

Timing of the evening sessions has varied little. For a couple of years, evening sessions began at 5.30pm each October and 6pm in the other months, but the early start was soon dropped. There were periodic discussions, especially during the daylight saving experiment, but it wasn't until summer 2012 that there were any further alterations to start times. In August the committee had agreed with John

Oldfield's proposal that "*in order to make full and better use of facilities*", the Tuesday sessions at WAAS would start at 6.30pm. Thus the distance races, would take place at a time when the track was less crowded, making it a more comfortable experience for runners and lap scorers. Also, the throwers would no longer be left as the only folk in the stadium after 7.30pm. The horizontal jumps, however, continued to start at 6pm to suit their long-serving organiser, Les Beckham, and to make it easier for jumpers to do the sprints.

The basic format of the weekly T&F programmes remained much the same – four track events, a horizontal jump and two throws. Thursday sessions were repeated the following Tuesday. In 2000 there was a complaint about lack of long distance events but nobody seemed eager to include anything longer than 5000m on a regular basis. However, the once a year 10km track handicap at McGillivray Oval continued to draw in a good number of the road runners. It celebrated its 25th year in 2013 with Robin King taking the trophy.

Throwing events sometimes caused hilarity, often when inexperienced members decided to have a go. But one Tuesday at McGillivray in 2008, it was the very competent Randall Humich who was responsible. In *TFNL* he was described as star thrower of the night, both in the weight throw and discus but he also

"showed his cricketing credentials by taking a very sharp chance to dismiss the ebullient Toni Phillips, caught at silly mid off."

Towards the end of the 2009/2010 season, the high jump, with Dave Wyatt as coach and organiser, was a popular addition to the programme on Thursdays at ECAC [formerly called Coker Park]. The event was formally added to the programme for the following season and now also takes place on some of the Tuesday evenings at WAAS.

It was suggested that the steeplechase barriers from Perry Lakes be moved to ECAC to allow a steeplechase to be run on Thursdays, but they were unsafe. However, the move to WAAS on Tuesdays meant that from October 2011 a monthly steeplechase was incorporated as the fifth track event. In the winter, in weeks when no steeplechase was programmed, another event was put in.

At the start of the 2012/13 season Mark Jeffery's offer to provide guidance on the pole vault at WAAS on a Tuesday evening never happened due to the lack of available poles. Would-be vaulters would have had some old records to aim for. Noel Goff's 1979 M55 record and Peter Gare's 1993 M50 record still stand.

Barbara Blurton had compiled the T&F programmes for years, but by 2013 it was clear that requirements differed at the two venues, for reasons of logistics and personnel. So the Tuesday director, Barrie Kernaghan, consulted regular Tuesday competitors. Based on their responses, he put to the committee some suggestions for changes to the 2013 winter programme: rescheduling of the steeplechases, both during the month and on the night and fewer "*novelty*" events, like 300m, 600m and 4000m, particularly in the run up to the WMA champs in Brazil, in October.

And some of the changes were made. Les Beckham also volunteered to run horizontal jumps during September.

The transportation of throwing equipment was alleviated somewhat in 2000 when some storage space was made available at Coker Park. Heavier events were scheduled there rather than at McGillivray Oval. But in 2003, when weekly meetings were introduced at McGillivray, the transport problem arose again. Various individuals took responsibility for carrying equipment back and forth between the two venues or from their homes.

The dilemma of lack of helpers didn't fade away with the old century. August 2002 saw *Vetrun* listing helpers for the whole of the summer season. The list showed a regular group of six helpers plus two, three or four extras each week. At season's end Bob and Lynne Schickert issued a survey seeking views on the organisation of the T&F sessions realising that, with two nights to cover each week, difficulties could be doubled. As a result, the August/September 2003 issue of *Vetrun* carried a long, formal and specific list of track duties and personnel for the coming season. Bob was named co-ordinator for both venues with assistance from Jeff Bowen at Coker and Graeme Neill at McGillivray. The throwers were all expected to do their bit in officiating the throws.

In 2004, each member who participated on the track was listed to help at two meetings per year, the published list showing 12 members for each meeting. Henri Cortis, the "*UWA sports venue manager*", transported track equipment on Tuesdays and also did the starting. Val Millard, with helper Gill Edmonds, organised proceedings at the finish. Also that year, Tom Lenane was appointed to oversee events at Coker and he continued as starter. Despite the rosters, some helpers failed to turn up so the situation was never very satisfactory.

In 2005 rosters were dropped. Barbara Blurton headed up the Coker meetings with Tom as starter. He remains in that job, but Barbara who had always been ably supported by Richard Blurton, stepped back in 2012. John Oldfield took over from Henri at McGillivray in 2007 and managed things for three seasons. In 2010 Barrie Kernaghan took over for three years, running both the summer and winter programmes. Henri, John and Barrie did the bulk of the starting.

All these people have been supported on a weekly basis by Club stalwarts like the Schickerts, Jackie Halberg, Pat Carr, Campbell Till and Christine Oldfield. Only a few others, such as Carmel Meyer, are comfortable with recording the finishers and even fewer with lap scoring the longer races. But many members help with timekeeping, even sometimes turning up when they are unable to run. This 'system' works pretty well but is strained when numbers are large – or very small. Even visitors have been persuaded to hold watches, putting to shame the very few regulars who seldom help at all. In 2012 it was decided by the committee that there was no need for "*competition directors*" to run the programmes as "*the events pretty much run themselves*". But a committee member was to be present at each venue to make sure everything ran smoothly. Carol Bowman, at ECAC, and Colin Smith, at WAAS, were assigned to this task. However, Barrie Kernaghan continued to be recognised as the director of Tuesday nights until he stepped down

at the start of the 2013/14 season, disappointed that so few of his programming suggestions for the summer had been adopted. John Dennehy then took over the role of main starter.

Behind the scenes, after each meeting, someone had to type up the results - a task taken on by several members over the period, including Barbara Blurton Peggy MacIver, Christine Oldfield, John Dennehy and Carol Bowman. Results were initially for inclusion in the newsletter or for display the following week. For a while, during the summer season, they went into *TFNL* and nowadays they go on the website. It is important for clarity that the results appear in neat column format and use sensibly the space available. But trying to achieve this can be very frustrating as *TFNL* editor, Graeme Dahl, found out when trying to put together the March 2012 issue of *TFNL*. He declared that “*people with long surnames shouldn't be allowed to run with Masters.*”

The Patron's Trophy started the century with sixteen events to be contested but not many participants completed the required ten events. Discussions of the format of the competition took place amongst members and in committee and various suggestions were made to try to encourage more to take part (see ch.3). Throwers ignored the competition as did many of the younger track athletes. Then, in 2009, an age-graded competition was introduced for throwers. So, thinking that if the throwers could have a competition, why not the trackies, John Oldfield proposed in 2010 and again in 2011 that there should be a “*Club Track Competition*”. This wasn't rejected but the idea was put on hold.

The early 2000s brought changes to event and implement specifications which caused some headaches for those involved in the field and in the pentathlon in particular – not least because records became incomparable.

Australia led the way in trials of new technical specifications. In 2003 this involved new hurdle specs for masters over the 2003/4 season and in 2009, it was trial weights for W75⁺. These were adopted by WMA but the 2kg shot did not suit W85 champion Raema McMillan who said it was so small she couldn't get a grip on it. From 2011 Australia ran a 2 year trial of the 500g javelin for W60-74. WMA adopted this specification starting 1st January 2014.

In 2004 the Winter Throwers group began, meeting on Saturday mornings at Perry Lakes. Around ten members trained in two implements each week and held trials in three implements every fourth Saturday. At the end of the season a weight pentathlon (renamed throws pentathlon in 2009) was held. Problems with venues and regulations were numerous (see also ch.5) but the group was still active until 2012 by which time stadium and council regulations made it near impossible to find venues in which to train. But the new arrangements at WAAS on a Tuesday provided competition for all those who wanted it. Damien Hanson took charge much of the time but others helped out, usually in addition to competing. In a Facebook post in February 2013, Todd Davey thanked regular helper, Raema McMillan “*who at 85+ manages to coordinate field events, bend over for the measurements, write it all down and then put in a throw herself that is an Australian Heavy Weight Record!!!!*”

Since the first AMA Postal Relay Championships in February 2008 was not to include a 4x1500m race, MAWA added one on a Thursday evening towards the end of 2007 – as a warm up and “*just for a bit of fun*”. And great fun was indeed had by both competitors and spectators (see ch.6). Though the novelty wore off a bit, the event was repeated annually until 2012.

Several of the Club’s older members celebrated significant birthdays during the last five years of this period. And they certainly made them count. It started in 2009 when Irwin Barrett-Lennard became M80 and continued the next year as Lorraine Lopes became W70. Bev Hamilton broke five throws records in nine days just after turning 65 in 2011 and the next year, when David Carr became M80, he started to rewrite the record books almost weekly. Lyn Ventris gives these members a few years but she maintained her amazing dominance in race walking, on the track and the road, throughout her transition from W50 to W55. These are the ‘stand-out’ examples but there are also many others who helped make sure that Campbell Till, the statistician, was kept on his toes. The ink was scarcely dry on one record claim form when he had to fill in another.

The number of participants in the T&F sessions grew over the years but there were always some fluctuation when, for instance, facilities were out of action or in a poor state of repair. In 2002 it was calculated that the average weekly turn out at Coker on a Thursday was 39.2. With twice weekly meetings, a growing number of young members taking up track and field and the number of throwers on the increase, the combined average in 2007 was around 70. The average then fell but it picked up considerably in the run up to the 2010 nationals. For the 2012/2013 summer season, October to March, ECAC saw an average of just under 29 and WAAS just under 40. In the five week period from the end of January through February there were over 50 at each WAAS meeting (highest 54) and 28 or above at ECAC (highest 37). From October 2013 numbers were low at WAAS. This was initially partly due to the absence of those still recovering after the WMA championships. Later, attendance was perhaps affected by the upcoming closure of WAAS for several weeks for the relaying of the track in January.

Club members have never doubted that for fitness and strength they compared favourably with others. So it was interesting to have confirmation of this from a couple of fairly recent comparisons. In 2008 the 3km times for three MAWA members (age 33, 43 and 52, average 43) were better than the top three times for the Fremantle Dockers squad with average age 23. And one Tuesday night in 2011, with most of the WAAS track unavailable, normal proceedings were cancelled. But Barrie Kernaghan decided it would be a good idea to present MAWA athletes with a different sort of challenge – the Beep Test. Briefly this universal test involves fast sprinting and, as reported in *TFNL*,

“All of the participants beat the 6.5 required to enter the Royal Australian Air Force and all but two passed the minimum 8.1 requirement to join Western Australian Police Force.”

Chapter 2

Publications and Communications

General

Who could have imagined in the seventies that the methods of communication amongst Club members would change so dramatically? Back then, information was passed by word of mouth or by telephone conversations - from landlines in members' own homes. And all that they read was on paper. How different from today's norm of mobile phones, e-mails, online magazines and Facebook.

By 2011 the increased popularity of electronic communications led to much discussion about whether Club publications and results should continue to be produced in hard copy. Early in 2012, believing that an integrated approach was essential, John Oldfield proposed to the committee that the club needed a Publications and Communications Co-ordinator (PCC), whose job would be to oversee all the different club platforms of communication. His suggestion was met with approval and minuted but discussion was deferred. Unaware of this, in 2013 the new committee came up with the same idea as, later, did Vic Waters who put it to the AGM. The AGM minutes record that

“Paul Hughes advised that the Committee will take on board Vic’s proposal as part of its continuing commitment to developing a comprehensive communications policy.”

In September 2013 Ross Keane (Sundays) and the Thomas family (T&F) were charged with seeking the views of members, via a questionnaire and face to face conversations, about communications between the committee and the members. About 20% of members were surveyed, 97 in total, hailed by the committee as an “*excellent cross-section of views of members*”. The committee felt there was nothing in the survey to suggest that a Communications Officer was necessary.

Magazines

Right from the start in 1974, members' main source of information was the Club *Newsletter* and this became the heart beat of the club. In 2007, *TFNL*, the Club's Track and Field Newsletter, was launched as an electronic publication. Its development and that of the *Newsletter* are chronicled in detail later in this chapter.

Other magazines provided news from further afield. Initially included in the Club membership fee was *The Veteran Athlete*, a national magazine produced by the ACT's Jack Pennington between 1971 and 1979. When the Club ceased providing it free in 1978, only two members showed any interest in paying for it. Members were also encouraged to buy *Veteris*, magazine of the Association of Veteran Athletics in the UK, 1971-1977. In 1978 it went into commercial ownership but failed to recruit subscribers.

In the 1990s AAVAC published *The Courier* monthly and the club received, free, sufficient copies for all members. But the Club had to pay the postage to distribute them. In 2002, Stan Perkins, president of AMA, wrote in *Vetrun* that the magazine would no longer be published. He suggested the possibility of an annual “*Association Handbook*” which would be issued to each registered member. The first of these, called the *AMA Handbook*, was published that year and each year since. In 2007, Bob Schickert and Vic Waters took over its editorship. Bob says he’s had “*enormous input and assistance*” from Lynne, his wife, and that Vic has made it a “*more athlete friendly document*”. Lynne is now officially part of the editorial team.

In 1995, as a “*speculative venture*”, Vic Waters published a quarterly magazine *Athlete WA*, branded as “*The Magazine of Athletics in Western Australia*”. It provided comprehensive coverage of all aspects of the sport around the state and the activities of the veterans were featured prominently. The magazine was initially distributed free to anyone who was a member of an athletics club but after a couple of issues a \$2 charge was imposed. The advertising revenue was insufficient to sustain it and, after just four issues, Vic called it a day.

Books

The newsletter of September 1977 announced that “*We now have a library, firmly established in the boot of Jack Collins’ car.*” Thereafter, at each AGM, a librarian was appointed. The library started off with some contributions, from members, of athletics oriented books. It grew as the committee voted every so often that Club funds be used to purchase more. When Vic Beaumont was librarian in 1988, \$350 was spent. Inevitably, some books went missing and every few years there were calls to scrap the library. But it survived until 1996 when the books were sold off to Richard Harris.

Information about the Club has appeared in a few publications. It had a very good write up in Gloria Seymon’s book, *A History of the Veterans Athletic Movement in Australia*, produced in 1998. In 1999 Richard Harris wrote *All in my Stride*, a biography of John Gilmour, the Club’s star athlete. Athletics was not its main focus but, in 2010, Paul Collier wrote *Lasting the Distance*, a book which did cover John’s athletics career in minute detail. MAWA member and Winter Co-ordinator for AWA, John Collier, Paul’s brother, assisted with proof reading, marketing and various other tasks.

Age is No Barrier, A History of Masters/Veterans Athletics in Australia was published in 2011. It was written by ACT’s Bryan Thomas “*with cajoling, encouragement and support from Club member Lynne Schickert who also handled the collection of photographs*”. And it was edited and designed by Vic Waters. Needless to say, the book did not feature the comment made by Club president, Brian Foley, in his report for the Club’s 1998 AGM:

“There is one concern which will need close monitoring, and that is the growth of the national Veteran’s organisation, AAVAC, which is of small interest to the majority of our members.”

Somewhat indignant that *Age is no Barrier* did not mention the strength of the road and cross country side of MAWA, Joan Pellier, a member since 1980, decided to do it herself. Written as a series of personal reminiscences, the five parts of her *30 Years of Running* are posted on the MAWA website. Lynne Schickert assisted with the organisation of the text and photographs.

Documents

The booklet *WAVAAC History and Constitution 1969 – 1977*, written by Rob Shand with information provided by Dick Horsley, Cliff Bould and John Gilmour, documented the early years of the Club. It was collated and bound by Bob Fergie and sold to members for 50c a copy. In 2012, Lynne Schickert typed up the history part and it is now in the archive section of the website.

Rob also compiled *Club Rankings 1974 – 1979*. This comprehensive booklet listed best track and field performances for all members. Laboriously written by hand in minute detail it can only be described as a labour of love.

As activities grew and diversified, an information document for new members was produced. Called *An Outline of the Club Happenings*, this ran to almost four pages and was published in *The Vetrin* in November 1989. It explained how the Club worked and its various championships and trophies.

From 1993 to 1996, as a result of an initiative by president Brian Foley, some documents emerged including one on *Counselling and Coaching*. A sheet of *Rules of Athletic Involvement* was also sent out with membership forms. In 1996, Bob Sammells and vice president Richard Harris produced a three year *Development Plan* for the Club. It detailed various goals and values to promote the Club and athletics in general for athletes aged 30+. Then there followed an *Administrative Manual of Club Procedures*. In 2004 Lynne Schickert produced *A Club Policy Manual* which was still on file in 2013.

Programme of Events

At the start, it was the *Newsletter* that carried details of future events, often only for a couple of weeks at a time. By 1976 the May to October programme was listed. Over the next few years the programme was detailed for increasing periods and it included events organised, not only by the Club, but also by WAMC, WAAAA and district clubs. The newsletter also detailed the T&F programme (Time Trials) and the midweek twilight runs at Perry Lakes.

As the Club introduced more Sunday runs of their own, their calendar became more congested and in April 1984 a twelve month programme running from 1st April to 31st March was published. A separate Fixture Card was produced in September to run until the end of the financial year. The time trials and the twilight run programmes were still carried in the *Newsletter*.

The Sunday programme continued to be published on card for about fifteen years, varying in size, number of folds, colour and texture. For 1995/96 it was on A4 card with three columns, in a fetching shade of pink and one side glossy. The

programme occupied one side and the other carried information about the Club, details of informal training groups and contact details for the committee. The T&F programme for midweek meetings was published on a separate sheet of paper and was distributed, along with the Fixture Card, with *The Vetrin*.

In 1999, Bob Schickert suggested listing the programme solely in *The Vetrin* as a cost cutting measure. But the card was just replaced by coloured paper and distributed with the *The Vetrin*. As the website facility developed, all the club programmes were made available on it but were still distributed, on paper, to those without Internet access.

Publicity

News of the new veterans' athletics club in Perth got round quickly as members participating in events run by other organisations spread the word to any runner who looked old enough. They also ensured that local newspapers listed the Club's upcoming events, published results and sometimes reported on the vets' activities. In particular, John Gilmour often attracted reporters and the Club made the most of this. Sometimes plans did not work out as hoped as this *Newsletter* account for Sunday 9th May 1976 at McCallum shows:

"Seventeen veterans gathered at 9.30 a.m. to face the West Australian and Channel 9 photographers who were coming down for publicity photographs. The West Australian did not appear so Channel 9 got the "scoop", but unfortunately nothing came of it and the film has been archived for about a month."

Through the eighties and nineties and into the new century, the Club went out of its way periodically to recruit and retain members. 1986 was a case in point with a New Members Evening with "*food & physios*", the WACA Project (see ch.6) and a photo-display which was exhibited in places such as libraries. And at the T&F championships, all three TV stations turned up at McGillivray - a significant achievement even in those days. For two years, membership surged.

In 1996, new member information was reviewed after a query about whether "*there is too much emphasis on the competitive side of the club*". And that year a Club information document was compiled and delivered to shops and businesses. A big publicity drive in 1997 saw one thousand booklets being distributed at the Bridges Fun Run.

During the summer of 1998 the Club held a series of four promotional T&F meetings, two at Coker Park and two at McGillivray. Coordinated by Bob Schickert and organised by Brian Foley, these were financed by a government grant of \$5500 as part of the International Year of Older Persons. In 2007 Tom Lenane produced a publicity poster which members distributed to gyms, local shops, doctors' surgeries and the like.

It has to be said that almost all members have been instrumental to a certain degree in publicising the Club. But possibly none more so than Bob Schickert. From 1998

to 2010, whilst president and then secretary, he was renowned for approaching anyone he came across and telling them all about the Club.

Nowadays, the Club has a comprehensive website and a public Facebook page, both of which attract new members. Tuesday night T&F sessions at WAAS, where the masters conduct their competition in the presence of several other groups, have also drawn new blood, especially of a younger vintage.

Maps

In the 70s, Rob Shand used his skills as an architect to draw up professional quality maps, not only for WAVAAC but also for other athletics organisations. They were large, detailed scale drawings and included the following:

Booklets of routes around Perry Lakes and Kings Park; a McCallum Park map headed “*Home of the WA Veterans Athletics Club*”, produced for the 1977 Australian Vets T&F Championships; maps for the People’s Marathons, 1979 and 1980, for WAMC; maps for the veterans’ half marathon, the state CCC for WAAAA in 1979 and the Australian women’s Road Relay Championships at Perry Lakes for WAWAAA in 1979.

In 1985, WAVAC, with the Department of Sport and Recreation, published a booklet called “*Popular Perth Runs*” which, in 1988, was issued to each new Club member. It contained Sunday course maps and was compiled by K Ann Layman with the assistance of Rob Shand, Isla Lewis and Jeff Whittam.

During 1986/1987 a thirty-two page booklet about Sunday runs, called *Club Runs and Records*, was compiled (see ch.7). In 1995, it was suggested that it be revised and a copy given to each member when they paid their membership fee. But nothing came of this.

As the repertoire of Club runs grew it seems that, until 2008, individual race directors produced a map of their route by any means they could. At that time, Jim Klinge was charged with the task of producing a map for each run. He did so with the aid of the Internet, printed them out in colour and of suitable size and made sure they were available on the relevant Sundays. From 2009 these were all but obsolete as Jim used Google Earth to produce even higher quality maps. By the end of 2011 they were on the Club website. Jim’s A3 copies are laminated by Gillian Young (the events coordinator) who displays them at the appropriate run.

Newsletter, now Vetrun

Overview

In June 1974, about two months after the Club was officially formed, there was a meeting on a Sunday morning to discuss “*how we should operate in the summer season*”. As a result, David Carr issued a three-sheet document dated 1st July and headed W.A. VETERANS ATHLETIC CLUB, NEWSLETTER. It reported on this meeting and listed the Club’s office bearers and the athletes who “*had had a run recently*”. It also carried the results of previous runs.

In 1981 the name *Newsletter* was changed to *The Vetrin* and, in 2001, to just *Vetrin*. In 2007 it was suggested that this title lacked significance since Club members were no longer known as veterans, but the name was retained.

The changes of name did not change the ethos of the publication - to present Club news. In 2001, to emphasise that fact, editor Rod Tinniswood included the subtitle "*THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WA VETERANS ATHLETIC CLUB*" and this became "*MASTERS ATHLETICS WA NEWSLETTER*" in 2003. When Vic Waters started his second spell as editor in 2005, he changed the subtitle to "*The magazine of Masters Athletics WA*" to reflect the fact that, as Vic explained in 2013,

"We now had a professional magazine, not a newsletter, and it deserved a nobler description".

At the time of the 25th anniversary of the newsletter the committee recognised the importance of maintaining an archive for the Club. So, during 1999, Jackie Halberg collated a complete set of all issues. In fact, a paper copy of each issue up to about 2006 had been lodged with the Battye Library and, subsequently, the library has been sent copies electronically. Thanks to the painstaking work of Paul Martin, the paper-only issues were recently scanned so there is now a complete set of the newsletters/magazines on the MAWA website.

Production

Early *Newsletter* issues were typed on wax stencils and copied using Gestetner duplicating machines. First editor, David Carr, did his typing and duplicating at his school and Rob Shand, who succeeded David, co-opted his wife Marion to assist. In 1982, foolscap gave way to A4 and photocopying was used. It was usually the secretary who did the typing but others, such as Doreen Lockwood and Betty Usher were also co-opted. Their work was always acknowledged as in the following at the end of the February 1978 issue:

"WE THANK DOREEN LOCKWOOD FOR THE TYPING OF THIS NEWSLETTER & TO STAN FOR INTERPRETING ROB SHAND'S WRITING AND CHECKING THE TEXT"

As member numbers grew so did the volume of material to report and a roster of volunteers was required to do the typing. It fell mainly to wives and other family members, like "*Fergie's Forces*" and "*Buchanan's Battery*". Additional volunteers were frequently sought. On a few occasions the system broke down and the *Newsletter* had to be hand written. It regularly ran to at least ten pages so the collating and stapling was also a major task. In the early years there were often two secretaries plus an assistant and it was reported in 1980 that

"Each newsletter takes about 8 hours of typing, 15 hours to duplicate, collate, address, and post – not counting the time to collect the info and compose the draft."

In 1986, editor Basil Worner pointed out that *The Vetrin* was "*being put together by a production team*" and again appealed for a "*Pool of Typists*".

By 1990, ‘word processors’ were already in use, but, as the editorship changed from Jeff Whittam to Vic Waters, the committee stated that “*Work to be done includes the use of modern technology if possible*”. And from September 1990 to July 1995 the typesetting and printing were done commercially. The format changed to A3 size paper, sometimes glossy, which was folded then stapled. In 1991, despite increased costs, it was voted at the AGM to retain this format.

In 1992, to cut costs, the Club “*bought a computer so that members could type in material and provide it on disc for the typesetter for final pagination*”. In 1993, Vic announced that they were “*going to use desk top publishing to save money on typesetting*”. Jackie Billington, Jackie Halberg and Merv Jones volunteered to learn how to use the package and became part of *The Vetrun* team. But cost continued to be a concern and in 1993 and 1994 the number of issues was reduced. When Richard Harris took over in 1995, the committee decided that, despite the costs, quality was to be maintained and *The Vetrun* was to be published each month. Jackie Billington again volunteered to assist.

Richard abandoned the folded format after four issues and photocopying was used once more. When Katrina Spilsbury took over in 2000, Lynne Schickert assisted with typing up handwritten results and reports. From 2002, editors Rod Tinniswood and then Jeff Bowen tried to keep each issue to eight pages.

When Jeff resigned in 2005, no nominations for editor were forthcoming. Vic Waters was approached and agreed that he would do it only on condition that it became a fully-professional production with typesetting, printing and editing being paid for. He also asked that other members take on responsibility for the associated tasks like assembling race results, producing address labels, mailing and distribution. The extra cost to each member was about \$10 per year. But the new format was well received and, after a short trial, was retained. In 2006 when the number of pages had started to creep up and costs were rising even further, the editor was instructed that eight pages was the limit. That is how it remained until the end of 2013, except when there was a need to report a major event. From 2014 the magazine will appear bi-monthly (see p54).

During his editorship, Vic Waters has spent several periods in Europe during the northern summer. But technology means that *Vetrun* can still be produced as normal – well, almost. In June 2013 he told readers that the following two editions would come from somewhere in England and that

“As that place is so far behind us in every way, each will appear later in the month than usual.”

Layout

How the look of the publication has changed over four decades. David Carr’s initial heading and layout reflect the fact that he just wanted to make sure that members were given information. There was no suggestion that it would lead to a full blown magazine. But during the two years of his tenure, the layout became more organised and information was often presented in two columns.

David produced thirty-four issues and when Rob Shand took over he soon began to number each one. The 2nd issue of May 1976 was “NEWSLETTER NO. 37”. A few aberrations occurred over the years, such as the following sequence: 322 August 2000, 323 September 2000, 322 November 2000, 323 December 2000, 325 December 2000, 326 March 2001.

In 1978, Rob also, and correctly, introduced the word ‘AMATEUR’ into the heading and expanded the ‘W.A.’ to ‘WESTERN AUSTRALIAN’. In May 1981, this masthead was changed to reflect the new name - *The Vetrun*. The order of contents was also changed. Up until then, a chronological report had been the norm. But Rob put news of forthcoming events and reports of “*important events*” that had taken place during the month at the start. Results were collected together at the end, without comment, when space permitted.

The masthead evolved over the years (see end of book) and in December 1990 Vic Waters included the ‘running man’ logo designed by Rob Shand. But he omitted the details of office bearers, which had, until then, almost always been present. Richard Harris and Katrina Spilsbury reinstated these and the ‘professional’ look continued with three neat columns of text. In May 2001, when new member, Rod Tinniswood took over, his first action was to



make the name just *Vetrun* and, on the masthead, the ‘running man’ was joined by a lady. As he said “*The loneliness of the (male) long distance runner has been alleviated*”. He added the subtitle “*The Newsletter of the WA Veterans Athletic Club*” and revised the “*typographical style, away from the plump letters, to a more athletic font*”.

In 2003 Jeff Bowen took over editorial responsibility but Rod continued to design, format and arrange printing. In early 2004, he also handed that over to Jeff who continued as editor until 2005 when Vic once more assumed the role. And the running couple disappeared into the sunset, never to be seen again.

The subtitle was changed to “*The magazine of Masters Athletics WA*” and the layout crystallised into what we see today. The website version appeared in glorious technicolour from May 2010 “*to ‘add value’ to the experience*”. Paper copies were, and still are, printed in black and white.

Distribution

The *Newsletter* was generally distributed to members at Club gatherings or, when Rob Shand was editor, on his marathon training runs. Rob said “*My course was determined by the location of members’ houses*”. But he also said:

“As membership increased the post was used and contact with those who didn’t get down to club events was lost.”

Members were still expected to pick up their copy at Club sessions and, by the middle of 1979, those who didn’t were charged \$2.40 postage for the year. All 200 copies being posted each month were addressed by hand, but towards the end of

1980 the Club purchased “*Electronics Data Processing*” facilities from UWA and this enabled the automatic production of address labels. These still had to be stuck on and the copies posted. Various members undertook these tasks and in July 1992, it was said of Jackie Halberg:

“She’s seen helping at more races than almost anyone, and this wet winter her tarpaulin style raincoat has done service virtually every weekend. Additionally she’s one who labours at getting Vetrun to you each month, looking after post and distribution.”

And for years, at the first Sunday run of each month in the 2000s, the arrival of Jeff Bowen was eagerly awaited by those who still picked up their copies.

Under new postal regulations in 1981, the name, ‘*Newsletter*’, was no longer acceptable to re-register as a publication. So, in June, the title was changed to ‘*The Vetrun*’, a name suggested by editor, Jill Pearton (Midolo). From 1985, the recipient’s address was put on the back page and the newsletter was folded and posted without an envelope - Bob Fergie’s idea. There was no change for many years, except that in 1999 the committee said that address labels should carry an initial and surname only. Mr, Mrs or other title was to be omitted.

From 2000, the feasibility of distribution by e-mail or using the Internet as the primary source of the publication was considered several times. But, each time, it was rejected in committee. In May 2001 *Vetrun* was posted on the website and, by 2002, it was in colour and far superior to the printed black and white version. But it took such a long time to download that only a black and white version was made available when Vic Waters took over as editor in 2005.

In 2006, Vic again raised the subject of electronic distribution, but committee members felt that *Vetrun* was a “*social*” document which members read and discussed and liked to peruse at leisure. However, in 2008, it was eventually made available by e-mail and twenty members opted for this. And by 2011, 55% - 60% of the membership was receiving *Vetrun* this way. From the start of 2013 the e-mail option was withdrawn and members now just view the magazine on the website. At the end of 2013 there were still about 115-120 members who pay to receive paper copies.

Content

The primary purpose of the newsletter is to disseminate information to the members. So it has carried details of upcoming events, both athletic and social, results and reports from competitions, news of members and committee decisions. There have also been reminders of members’ obligations, such as paying the fees and helping at events. The required notice of AGMs and other special meetings is given in the newsletter along with statements of motions that are to be brought. Reports from the president, secretary and treasurer and the meeting minutes are also published, though sometimes the latter have been in summary form. These mundane offerings have always been supplemented with other items to interest and

amuse the readers with the nature and scope of these often reflecting the whims of the editor in control.

The Seventies

Not long after the start, the *Newsletter* began to carry some athletics-oriented articles of interest. Medical matters, accounts of great personal achievements and athlete profiles were the most prolific topics and although some of these were written by members, the majority, in the early days at least, were plucked from other publications. In April 1975, the first ‘Clinic Corner’ addressed the problem of muscle injuries with the following advice:

“Best way to avoid muscle injury is not to run. You will note that our less active friends seldom suffer muscle injuries.”

1977 saw the first of the pithy sayings which headed the *Newsletter* for about eight years. It provided a rather more encouraging outlook:

“I took a liking to running because...it is good for one’s health and fitness and gave one more out of life.” Emil Zatopek

Cartoons featured very occasionally. The first, in 1976, drawn by Rob Shand, depicted the Perth to Pinjarra relay, with the caption *“Baton? What baton?”* In September that year there was a detailed update on progress in organising the 1977 nationals and, in October, members who had not been seen for a while were listed, along with this instruction:

“Anyone knowing the whereabouts of these Veterans should encourage them to come to McCallum to collect Newsletters and explain their absence.”

In 1978 the *Newsletter* carried a list of the fifty-six Club members (of whom only three were female) along with age groups, addresses and phone numbers

“so that you can more easily contact members in your age group or your district to arrange for training runs, lifts to venues etc.”

Results of all events in which members had competed were published, whether road, cross country, track or field, at home or overseas or fun runs. There was usually a brief (and often not so brief) analysis of performances. The Saturday meets at Perry Lakes were always covered in detail and, periodically, records were listed. Non-Club and non-Association events soon became too numerous to monitor and members were asked to send in as many results as they could.

The *Newsletter* gave mentions to individual members unable to compete due to injury or personal circumstances and, to help members get to know each other better, a monthly *“Know your Members”* article was included, written by Waffle – not then identified but now revealed to be Bob Hayres.

The September 1979 issue carried the results and a report from the Australian National Vets Championships Marathon at Herne Hill. Huge numbers of WA

athletes took part including Jill Pearton, Jo Stone and Dianne Turner, the first women to compete in a national marathon.

The Eighties

There were five changes of editor during the eighties and each had their own style. In 1981, under Jill Pearton, the *Newsletter* became *The Vetrin* with content remaining much the same as it was under Rob Shand. But when Jeff Whittam took over in 1982 he included the odd photograph, a series of the 'Peanuts' jogging-oriented comic strips and other cartoons and jokes ranging from the clever and witty to the excruciatingly bad. During both his terms of office his macabre sense of humour was evident.

From 1985 to 1988, in between Jeff's two terms, Basil Worner and then Brian Aldrich took the reins. Sunday run maps and run records appeared and articles on health, fitness and race preparation were frequent. Bob Sammells informed and amused readers with his '*Vintage Vets*' series and his lengthy dissertations about athletics in general. Waffle's profiles continued for a few years and then Bob Johnstone carried them on.

To defray some of the production costs, advertisements were introduced but not every committee was in agreement with this policy. Some worried that it would look as though the Club was endorsing the products being advertised. So the ads came and went as the committee changed.

This decade saw an increase of social events and long relays. All of these were covered in minute detail, sometimes with multiple accounts of the same event (see ch.5). Perth was also host to two national championships (see ch.3) and 1981's August issue carried "*NATIONALS NEWSHEET* [sic] *NO.1*", first of seven information bulletins from the organising committee for the 1982 nationals.

It was not unusual in the 80s for results and reports of Sunday runs to appear several months after the events and a few were never published at all. Analysis and reporting on track and field results was considerably reduced but the Perry Lakes events were still included. In 1985/1986 several '*MINI VETRINS*' were issued to cope with results of the time trials but there were no write-ups.

In 1986 a *From the Committee* report appeared on the front of each issue. It included information about decisions made at their monthly meetings. This became the *President's Corner* in 1988 "*to keep everyone informed about the club happenings – past present and future*". The members' birthday list, which had begun in 1976, was continued and the full addresses, telephone numbers and dates of birth of new members were published each month.

Photographs remained few and far between in the 80s, some of those that did being taken by Brian Aldrich. The May 1987 issue showed the start of two 5000m races at the state championships.

The Nineties

The “*In this issue*” column introduced in 1990 by Vic Waters was continued, in most issues, by successive editors. It appeared under different headings – “*In Vetrin this Month*”, “*In this Edition*” and just “*Inside...*” Another first was the clothing order form which was included for a while on the back page.

A novel money-making scheme was tried out in December 1990 and 1991. A whole page was devoted to Christmas messages from individual members to all and sundry at \$5 per go. The next year, when the editor and Margaret Birks (Langford) didn’t bother to hustle members at Sunday runs, only one message was received – from Leo Hassam, in New Zealand at the time.

During this era, some photographs were provided by Vic Beaumont, Leo Hassam and Rob Davis. But it wasn’t until the middle of the decade, when Richard Harris took over, that members’ insatiable thirst for photographs was amply satisfied. Photos filled each front page and, in some issues, another page as well. This led to an increase in the number of pages, pushing the production costs up again, so advertising was included once more.

The “*Committee Corner*” kept members abreast of what was happening and, in 1990, after some new members had been pestered by an insurance salesman, it reported that only names and dates of birth would be printed in the future – no addresses or telephone numbers. New members ceased to be mentioned in 1996, but the list was reinstated in 1998, without birth dates.

The inclusion, or not, of all track and field results each month was an on-going topic. In 1990 the committee insisted that all results were published including those from the Perry Lakes meetings. But by the end of 1991, with such large numbers participating, it was considered that there was insufficient room to do this. Committee member, David Carr announced in *The Vetrin* that

“We will make some comments on each session. Results and scores will be available at the track each Wednesday.”

This continued through 1992 but in 1993 T&F results were again included in *The Vetrin*. Then, in July 1996, the editor, Richard Harris, announced that he wanted *The Vetrin* “*to be more article oriented than results*”.

In fact, the newsletter had always run a wide selection of articles and features. These included poems, written by members such as bush poets Wayne Pantall and Arthur Leggett. Arthur’s lyrical verses expressed his love of the countryside and running. Medical advice was continued in 1991 in *The Wellness Column* and regular articles gave guidance on track rules and etiquette. One such piece began “*Track and field sessions can become congested and even dangerous*” and included the instruction

“Very important, don’t stand on the one kilometre circuit line that is at the perimeter of the McGillivray field.”

In 1992 *The Vetrin* quoted from a study in the late 70s by Marks and Skitrot. These researchers had examined the effect, on about 2000 male athletes, of the effort of training on a 400m track over a period of twenty years. They said

“The subjects were found to have narrow interests, as reflected in their limited conversation topics, mainly intervals, injuries and shoes.”

In the early 90s, Margaret Birks (Langford), in “*Meet the Veteran*”, profiled some of the founder members. And, in addition, her profile of Joan Pellier was picked up by the *Australian Runner* magazine. In her *30 Years of Running*, Joan tells how it appeared under the heading “*How the West is Run*”, generating good publicity for the club. Joan also had her own column in *The Vetrin*, called “*Running Mates*”, in which she profiled member couples. In late 1999, having exhausted all the couples, her column became “*Know your Race Director*”.

In 1994, editor Vic Waters, published a survey seeking feedback on the future of *The Vetrin*. From a 20% return it was deduced that most people would be happy whether it was published monthly or two-monthly. In 1996, the next editor, Richard Harris, ran a similar “*climate survey*” which concluded that everyone was “*happy with things as they are*”.

From 1996 *The Vetrin* included a brief description of Sunday run courses but this was replaced in 1999 by just a list of upcoming runs and scheduled helpers.

In 1998 Katrina Spilsbury volunteered to take over the editorship after only a year in the club. She continued the committee information in “*Club News*” and member profiles under the heading “*Around the Tracks, Spotlight on ...*”

The Noughties

Late in 2000 Katrina had to relinquish the editorship. Tom Lenane became caretaker editor for a few months before Rod Tinniswood took it over in May 2001. Rod included a “*Notice Board*” and, on the back page, a statement of the Club’s “*Purpose*”. There were photographs galore, some taken by Jim Barnes, but many were not attributed and didn’t have identifying captions. But all the changes prompted the committee to describe the September issue as “*sensational*”. In 2004, when Jeff Bowen took over, there were a few issues without the photos and professional layout until Jeff got to grips with the software and continued as editor until 2005.

The question of costs resulted in advertisements being included again in 2000. Before a year was up they were banned again, but, a little later, members were able to submit small ads in return for a donation.

The problem of T&F results, which sometimes ran to several pages, was ever present. In 2001, Rod outlined the difficulties and in 2005 Vic Waters echoed his comments and suggested again that they be omitted to save space. But the committee emphasised that “*both Sunday and T&F results are required to be shown in Vetrin*”. A month later the subject was re-visited and, from October to

Christmas, the reporting of T&F results was limited to points score events. Full results were again made available at midweek meetings. T&F competitors were understandably disappointed but the new *Vetrun* format was generally well supported. However, the members' articles in 2006 describing '*My First Marathon*' were considered, by the committee, to be taking up too much space to the detriment of results. Vic got over this hurdle by posting a '*Vetrun Extra*' on the website containing any item, worthy of an airing, which he had been unable to accommodate. This included many medical articles by John Bell.

Comments in the newsletter have usually been appreciative of the job done by race directors but criticisms have also been aired. Amongst these are the failure to collect equipment from the previous run, losing equipment, inadequate course marking and incorrect distance measurement – and, in 2000, that some race directors weren't getting results in quickly enough or in correct format.

The list of helpers for Sunday runs became a permanent feature and the course descriptions of the following months' runs were included again as a trial in 2007. This continued until 2010.

The Tens

In 2010, the listing of members' birthdays ceased and Vic introduced colour. Photographs had always been good but now they looked sensational, and there were plenty of them, courtesy of Frank Smith and Vic himself. In Vic's "*My View*" column he continued to air his pet thoughts and members did the same in the "*Letters to the Editor*" column. But the 8-page limit and vast quantities of Sunday run results continued to restrict the range of content.

But several longer articles did appear, describing members' athletic exploits outwith the Club. Various marathon runs were again featured - in Singapore (Peter Sullivan), New York (Peter Bath), Bali (Kim Thomas) and Madrid (John Talbot) along with some amazing ultra marathons (see ch.11). And Marg Saunders and Ross Keane, both accredited coaches, collaborated in writing a regular coaching column, alternating month about.

Since all results were posted on the website soon after each event, Vic decided to run another survey in 2012 to see how members would feel about including fewer results and more features. There were 61 responses, mostly from Sunday runners and, by a small margin, they were in favour of retaining Sunday results in *Vetrun*.

In 2013, the committee decided that the state championship results would not be included in *Vetrun* and printed copies were sent to those members without Internet access. The issue of other results was also discussed and the consensus was that "*Space could be better used for news and items of interest*". In their 2013 communications survey, there was a question about the future of *Vetrun*. As a result, from 2014 only 6 issues of *Vetrun* will be produced each year and full Sunday results will not be included. Printed copies of results will be made available for those who want them. According to editor, Vic Waters,

“Results coverage will be extremely sparse, confined to points of interest, and possibly some relevant pictures.”

As to the number of pages the two-monthly magazines will contain, Vic says this will depend on the volume of material he has, but it could possibly run to twelve.

Also in 2013 the committee broached the subject of advertising yet again but did not discuss the matter further.

There are still some who miss the old style newsletter which, in its earlier years, featured all-encompassing, often haphazard, coverage of all things connected with every member. For practical reasons, this would not now be possible. But it does seem that the committee is in agreement that paper copies should continue to be printed for those who want them (and pay for them) - which will please a significant number of members. And don't be surprised if printed copies start appearing in colour.

Website

The First Thirteen Years

So far as can be ascertained, it was in 1996 when the idea of a Club 'Home Page' on the Internet was first suggested by the Whittam's son-in-law; but it was almost a year before one was constructed. It was designed by John Stone, a member since 1992, and carried just the programme and contact numbers. It cost the Club \$60 per year. Content gradually increased and results from the 1997 World Veterans' Championships in Durban were posted.

John changed providers and website addresses several times to make the site easier to access. From 'www.geocities.com.colosseum/track/7850' in 1998, by 2003 it had become 'www.mastersathleticswa.org', as it still is in 2014. Apart from the annual programmes for both road and T&F, by then it carried state records and links to overseas running sites.

By the end of 2000 the committee were in agreement that the website "*served to promote the Club*" but that "*its value as a recruitment aid was unknown*". At this time the age profile of members was climbing so John Stone was asked to investigate how the website could be used to attract new young members.

In time, other items of interest, like the newsletter, were added and individual visits reached about 200 per week by 2003. There were almost 1000 hits that Easter, during the four days of the nationals in Perth. The last address change had been when it was going to become very expensive to maintain the site. So John had constructed a domain website, hosted on a server, at a cost of about \$250 a year and continued to update and maintain it at no cost to the Club.

In 2007, John Stone left for New Zealand and Mike Karra took over. Around this time the Club's second monthly publication, the Track & Field Newsletter (*TFNL*) burst on to the scene and in 2008 that was also posted on the website. Mike

continued to maintain and update the site and also posted Sunday results during the week after each event. In the middle of 2009, for personal reasons, he decided that he could no longer continue as webmaster. A replacement was sought and in November 2009 John Oldfield volunteered to take over – but only on condition that the website was restructured to allow for expansion and also to make it easier for people to navigate. Professional help was required for this and the committee agreed subject to a maximum cost of \$2500.

The next stage

John Oldfield designed the new website and the technical work was carried out by Scott Buckland. The actual cost was around \$2100, including the software John required. The website went live in early March 2010 with new features including a photo gallery and more diverse news section. Updated by John on a daily basis, it provided Club information and also news concerning members.

In 2011, the world championships were in Sacramento and John, in the UK, used the US Masterstrack website to obtain instantaneous information and results which he posted on the Club's website. He was also able to view, live, the proceedings at the WMA Council meeting where Perth was bidding for the 2015 championships. The awarding of the event to Lyon, and subsequent vote awarding 2016 to Perth, was reported on the Club website even before the end of the meeting. This unofficial reporting earned John a rap over the knuckles.

During the following twelve months, Sunday results, which had ceased being posted, were reinstated. And members' results were reported, complete with analysis, not only from the Club's Tuesday and Thursday T&F sessions, but also from the Friday AWA *Strive* meetings, Bunbury AC meetings and major championships. Club Tops were also published and, as a nostalgic comparison, John posted the top 3 performances in each event from Rob Shand's 1974-1979 rankings booklet. Unfortunately these have since been removed.

Apart from an archive of results, John's vision for the website also included a historical archive. To this end he added lists of the winners of all the current Club trophies and, towards the end of 2011, he organised and posted the first ten years of the Club's newsletter, meticulously scanned by Paul Martin. Rob Shand's early history document, Joan Pellier's personal reminiscences and all of Jim Klinge's Google Earth maps were also posted.

In January 2012 comment boxes were added to Sunday and T&F results pages and also the Home page. This meant that results errors could be reported and rectified swiftly. And members could also have their say, anonymously if they so wished, about any subject relevant to the club - with John having the facility to block inappropriate comment. The 'Contact Us' option sometimes attracted spurious messages from unwanted sources, so it was removed.

By the end of January 2012, hits on the website had begun to soar. After 178 on a Monday, looking at the Sunday results, there were 234, two days later, following Tuesday evening's T&F session at WAAS, with record attendees. By the end of

March hits had reached 5500 per month. But it wasn't just members who were accessing the website and it became accepted that the website was partially responsible for attracting new younger members. And, in addition, there was a fair number of hits from non-members and from such faraway places as Saudi Arabia and Namibia.

Around this time John felt that the restraints he was working under made it difficult to do justice to the job and give members the service they had become used to. So in March 2012 he resigned but offered to do a caretaking job until a replacement could be found. It was decided to immediately appoint Ernie Leseberg, then AMA webmaster, as interim Club webmaster for two months.

Ernie added the useful news feed from the AMA website and he kept things ticking over - but his own business naturally took precedence. So there were often long delays before results were posted and there were no more daily news items or photographs. Hits declined whilst Facebook hits rose correspondingly as news was posted there. In June 2012, Ernie was appointed on a permanent basis, at an hourly rate, and it was announced that

“The website technical base will be changed from static HTML to a web based content system which is a user friendly system and allows direct access by authorised persons.”

This represented a significant investment for the Club but it was claimed that it would provide numerous improvements.

After a while, Hamish McLeod took over the day to day maintenance of the site with Ernie in the background to deal with technical issues. In theory, the changes meant that those responsible for typing up results could post them on the website directly. However, there was a software “glitch” which meant this was not as easy as it should have been. So it was Hamish who posted all but the Sunday results. ‘News’ became limited to official information, but results started to be posted quickly again, usually within 24 hours of the event. John Oldfield’s analysed results returned, though only monthly. He also included results from *parkruns* and from the Perth Trail Series, organised by Bernadette Benson. And another few years’ worth of newsletters was posted. The scanning of all the remaining paper-only volumes had been completed and, early in 2013, Richard Blurton posted these on the website. The committee would have liked John’s T&F database (see ch.7) to be available on the website on the premise that it would do away with the need to post analysed results. But there were various issues, including confidentiality of personal data, which prevented this.

The announcement that, for the first time, championship results would not be published in *Vetrun* boosted website hits for the week after the championships to 1865. Soon after this, Ernie discontinued his technical assistance. Hamish was officially appointed website manager in April 2013 and the committee agreed to pay a technical consultant if ever one was required.

Apart from results, website posts remained few and far between. Eventually members made it clear that they would at least “*like to see a gallery of pictures taken at Club events*”. So the committee bought a \$100 “*Club camera*”. Firstly Lorraine Lopes and then Carol Bowman took charge of it and also of uploading the photos, taken by various people, on to the website. By the end of 2013, it had become part of a race director’s job to ask one of the helpers to take some photos on a Sunday morning. This wasn’t always possible but photographs from most Sunday runs did appear on the website.

There is also now a ‘Search’ facility available for results and news items on the website and late in 2013 a website notice drew this to members’ attention.

The week following the World Championships in Porto Alegre saw over 2000 website hits and, as the end of 2013 approached, there were, on average, about 1700 hits per week.

Track & Field Newsletter - *TFNL*

By 2007, not all T&F results were included in *Vetrún*. They were being sent by e-mail to anyone who requested them but they were not all available to the general membership. So, in December 2007, John Oldfield published the first issue of what he called “*Track & Field Newsletter*” - *TFNL*. He saw this as an electronic publication for the summer season, with no restriction on number of pages and no cost to the Club. His intention was that

“Each month it will give a comprehensive list of all the T&F results, and a short(ish) analysis of some of the more important races during the month. In addition there will be an opportunity for some general information, such as race organisation and plans for future events.”

It was well received and developed quickly into a ‘must read’ publication. Its main draw was John’s painstaking analysis of the results, the likes of which had not been seen since the very early days of the Club. Back then, stalwarts such as David Carr and Rob Shand, *Newsletter* editors, wrote reports of performances for almost every race that took place – and they did it without computers. For John, it was no less a labour of love and, in addition to his written reports, he identified and flagged up personal bests, season’s bests and records.

During 2008 and 2009 he experimented with layout and also included more features and articles, including athlete profiles written by Christine Oldfield.

At first, *TFNL*, as it became known, was e-mailed to those who wanted it. The first ‘special’ issue appeared in January 2008 inspired by Matt Staunton’s 4836 decathlon points in the open state combined events championships. Others followed, covering championships and events such as the Postal Relays. By March 2008 *TFNL* was available on the website and drew a large readership. A “*Roll of Honour*” was introduced as a regular feature, listing records set or broken in the previous month. All performances over 90% were later included. Colour first appeared in 2009 in a photograph with Lynne Schickert’s profile. More photographs followed, with contributions from Vic Waters and Graeme Dahl

supplementing John's own. Unlike the newsletter, *TFNL* has never gone in for jokes, cartoons or pithy sayings. But in 2009 John did share this thought

"Growing old is all in the mind – and the hamstrings, and the calves, and the quads, and"

TFNL took a major leap forward in April 2010 when Graeme Dahl joined the production team. His experience in journalism was immediately evident as the style and format brought the newsletter more into the shape of an e-magazine. He designed a '3D' masthead and brought even the most mundane of articles to life with his use of photographs and backgrounds. Being on the website, the results and analyses were no longer included in *TFNL*. But John continued his reports in the magazine and maintained editorial control over the text. The only downside to this very professional publication was its long download time.

Graeme more or less took over production of all the 'Championship Special' issues, combining John's results lists with his own photographs, headlines and captions to create a graphic memory of the event. Graeme gradually assumed more and more responsibility and in February 2012 he officially became the editor. John's input was much as before but Graeme took the reins.

In March 2012 Graeme made the previous season's *TFNL* issues, back to the *Sacramento Special*, available as a 'virtual book' on a 'virtual bookcase' via a website and Facebook link. This enabled the reader to choose an issue from the bookcase and actually turn the pages to read it. In October John made all the previous issues available through Facebook in 'virtual book' format and they now also appear in that form on the MAWA website.

In 2013, Margaret Saunders joined the writing team with her column "*the edge*" – giving advice on race preparation, management of injuries etc.

In the 2013 Brazil World Championships issue, a broad range of competitors described their experiences under the heading "My Worlds". These served to bring the event to life for those who had not been present.

Social Networking Sites

How do you find out how your friends are faring at the world championships when you are stuck in Perth? In 2007 John Oldfield set up an Internet BLOG and after each day's events in Riccione, he wrote about the day's performances from an Internet café. Club members anywhere were able to read it and could also add their own comments. John did the same from Lahti, Finland in 2009.

In 2011, in consideration of modern trends in communication, John set up a closed group on *Facebook* for MAWA members to talk amongst themselves. Members could be admitted to the group by John or by Toni Phillips, already an avid *Facebook* user. By December the group was being widely used as a forum to organise training groups, recommend good running routes, check details of Club activities, share athletics oriented news and express opinions.

Important aspects of *Facebook* are its interactive nature and the ease and speed with which comments, photographs and information can be posted. So, with committee approval, John set up the public *Facebook* page in January 2012 to publicise the Club, disseminate information and attract new members – which it did. A direct feed to the MAWA website was also set up but was removed towards the end of April 2012 and replaced by just a link. By March the public page was receiving about 600 hits a month. With the lack of immediate results on the website, this rose to over 1000 in April as members sought information from the state, national and world championship meetings taking place. At its peak, the MAWA public page reached almost 2000 hits in a single month.

To keep the troops happy until a faster website service was resumed, John put race reports and some analysis of results on *Facebook* along with photographs from Sunday runs, courtesy of Frank Smith and Vic Waters. And *Facebook* became the outlet for information and reports of members' athletics activities outside the Club with pro-races, *parkruns* and ultras featuring regularly.

Early in 2013 the committee decided that *Facebook* was not to be considered as an “*official communications outlet*” of the Club because the postings under the Club name were not authorised by committee. Since 2010, John had been maintaining Oceania's website and having also taken on an administrative role in AURA in 2013, he decided to relinquish his role as administrator of the public page. Hamish McLeod took over and was joined by Peter March. Hits reached around 580 per week during the time of the championships and at the April committee meeting it was decided that *Facebook* would be “*brought under the umbrella of an official Club communications outlet, beloved as it is by the Club's younger members*”.

However, during the winter of 2013, interest in *Facebook* waned. On the public page, during September and October, there was only one ‘official’ post and only seven other posts, six of them by one individual. In November, Steve Weller joined the administration team, primarily to cover T&F.

The world championships in Brazil brought another flurry of activity and during November there were 1775 hits – by about 350 individuals.

Chapter 3

Championships

“It’s a long way to come from Northam just for a seven and a half second run” said Rudy Kocis one Tuesday night. So, with that level of hunger for athletics competition, it’s hardly surprising that a significant, and also growing, number regularly travel to championship events in far flung places. These events are a motivation and focus for training – and this does not only apply to the Club’s exceptionally talented athletes. All those who take part are dedicated to doing the best they can and often surprise themselves with their achievements.

Championships extend from Club level, through state, national and regional right up to world level. In the latter three categories, WA veterans and masters have always earned more than their fair share of medals and awards.

Club

Millpoint Road Championships

Originally called the Bridges and Mill Point Road Handicap Championships this 10km certificate run began in the late seventies and was held in October. By 1989 it was no longer a handicap race but for that year the course was changed, without notice, on the morning of the event for safety reasons – making the distance about 10.3km. After some adverse comments about this, Rob Davis, the Club Secretary, announced in *The Vetrin*, in capitals, that

“One thing is certain, this committee will always bear in mind the safety of the runners and walkers and these considerations will take precedence over the historical significance of any race.”

However, the race became the 10km road championships for both walkers and runners. Since it moved to July, it has seen some wet conditions. In 1993, race director, Bob Schickert, gave his thanks to *“all the drowned rats who assisted with the organisation”*. But marshal Leo Hassam had enjoyed himself, sitting on his fishing chair by an enormous puddle and watching the runners contend with the *“water jump”*.

This longstanding event lost its championship status from 2013 as the cost of presenting three medals for each age group and gender was proving too great.

Road Running and Road Walking Championships (RRC and RWC)

In 1984 a Club Championship was introduced. Twelve fixtures, from 5km to marathon, were nominated as championship events and the best five counted. Points were awarded according to the age graded system in use at the time.

In 1987 the number of races was reduced to three, 10k, 15k and 25k, for men and women, and the series was named the Road Running Championships. The lowest average time per km, for the 50km, decided the age group winners. Of a total of

nineteen runners, first home were Frank Smith and Tina Carman. The RRC was considered to be “*Morris Warren’s baby*” and, according to Bob Sammells, writing in *The Vetrin* in August 1998, the series was still attracting new entrants after twenty one years. That same year, and not able to run at the time, Morris manned a water station at all the RRC runs. He said

“I watched Dave the Carr go through and back, and I thought, when I start running and could catch up with him, I’ll give him some coaching about arms and upper body movement (although it seems to work very well for him!)”

In 1989, Jeff Whittam introduced the Road Walking Championships, RWC, comprising four distances from 7.5km to half marathon, a total of 53.6km. That year only Jack Collins and Margaret Stone completed all four events. The next year, the number of events was reduced to three and the rules for the two series were reaffirmed in *The Vetrin* of July 1989:

“To qualify in RRC and RWC: you MUST complete all three runs (10, 15 and 25k) and all walks (15, 21.1, 7.2k). Lowest aggregate time over the 3 events in each age group wins.”

Numbers completing all events have fluctuated over the years - anything from 13 to 38 in the RRC and always more men than women, and from 2 to 14 in the RWC where women regularly outnumber men. Numbers now are usually near the top of the range. The RRC distances remained constant but by 1994 the RWC distances were 10km, 15km and half marathon. But when, in 1998, walkers complained that the half marathon was too long, it was omitted and the RWC reverted to four shorter events. The current format of 5km, 10km and 15km began in 2011 with the same courses for both championships - referred to as the Weir, the University and Burswood Park.

Morris has kept a close eye on his baby throughout its life, originally working out all the results. But in 1998 he had to hand over this task to Bob Sammells after ending up in hospital. There were 37 competitors that year, the most ever, according to Bob, “*with a good increase in female runners*”. In 2001, Morris commented in *Vetrin* on Cecil Walkley’s great RRC results over the years, saying that “*Cecil Walkley started life as a miler, then became a real runner.*”

In 2002, Val Millard became the first person to have won both the RRC and RWC and after the 21st anniversary of the RRC in 2007, the ‘Championships Completed’ table was topped by Bob Schickert with 17. Brett Roach has won the RRC a record 5 times (2007 to 2011) followed by Marg Forden with 4 wins spread over three decades. Paul Martin has 8 and Michele Mison 6 RWC wins to their names whilst Val has had 1 RRC and 5 RWC wins. The 2012 RRC winners, from 34 competitors, were Kim Thomas and Lisa Searle, 2 of the 16 who took part for the first time. They won again in 2013 but the total number completing the two events was down by more than 25% on 2012.

In 2013 a **10km Road Walking Championship** event was held. Facilitated by Terry Jones, it was part of an AWA road walk and was fully judged. Garry Hastie,

Tom Lenane, John McDonagh, Val Millard, Lynne Schickert and John Smith took part. Nobody was disqualified and all gained first places in their age group. All were grateful for the tips on technique passed on by the judges.

Club Half Marathon Championships

The inaugural Club Half Marathon Championships was in September 1979 and was the longest run ever conducted by the Club. Starting and finishing at McCallum Park, the course, according to the *Newsletter*, consisted of

“twice round the bridges and twice round part of the Dave Jones Course, mostly on grass with some pavement and some gravel tracks.”

This course prevailed for 2 more years and records were established. In 1982, when the cross country elements of the course were removed, more records were set. But few women have been willing to tackle the 21.1km distance. In 1988 only Phyllis Farrell and Marg Forden competed. In 2013, 61 contested the half marathon - almost double the previous year's total. But there were still only 10 female runners and 3 walkers, only slightly up on 2012.

There was a major revision to the route in 1994 so that the whole course was on foot/cycle paths - particularly appreciated by the walkers. In 1996, there were only two walkers, Paul Martin and Wendy Clements. According to Bob Sammells they had started at a different time and *“in effect walked solo time trials”*. The final running of this event from McCallum Park was in 1999. Thereafter it has been run from Burswood on a frequently modified course.

In 2000, Ivan Brown suggested that the *“State Half Marathon be used as our Club Half Marathon”*. However, it was decided to maintain the opportunity for members to have two races of that distance to compete in.

In August 2003, conditions were dry, despite Perth recording *“its wettest 24 hours for the year”*. Bob Sammells reported that

“The only new Champs record was set by Ann Turner. In a very determined and gritty run she took almost four minutes off June Strachan's M65 [sic] 12 year old mark”. Ann's time was 1:57:20.

In September 2004, Bob published a list of the age group records for both the run and the walk over the event's 25 year history. Until this time, performance percentages had been shown with the results; but in 2005 Bob announced that it was too impractical to continue doing so. But he did continue to do some calculations as shown by his run report in 2007:

“Irwin Barrett Lennard ran superbly to reduce Cecil Walkley's M70 record by several minutes in an 80%+ performance.”

Club and State

Cross Country Championships

The first Club Cross Country Championship took place in 1980 in Jorgensen Park, a venue originally introduced to the Club by Nora and Mike Berry. For safety

reasons, the field of 43 was split. And the ladies and men 50+ had heavy rain to contend with whilst, one hour later, the younger men had just drizzle and even a glimpse of sun. But, for all, the three laps over the old Kalamunda golf course were tackled in genuine cross country conditions - *“flowing streams and boggy swamps contrasting with the drier hills and stony paths”*. The route down to the stream was considered too rocky and dangerous so the course was later reversed. After the races a huge spread was provided, with *“hot meals and sweets provided by an army of family members”*.

In 1982, it was reported that

“It is a fact that the racing interfered with the programme of unbridled sybaritism but most resolutely managed not to let it spoil their day.”

A sybarite is defined as a person devoted to pleasure and luxury!

Also in that year, Maurice Smith had put guide lines through the stream and swamp to direct everyone through the driest route but was reduced to

“thinking of getting Frank [Smith] a Guide Dog, so he will not go off course again on the THIRD lap when he is in the lead.”

In 1983, as well as the Club event at Jorgensen Park, a State Veterans Cross Country Championship was run at Kings Park. This was open to pre-vets and other vets who were non members. Medals were awarded in each age group. But it was the Club event which carried on the tradition of post run feasting. Outside caterers were sometimes used but the most enjoyable occasions seem to have been those where the ladies of the Club worked their culinary miracles. In 1998 it was reported that *“extra apple pies and vegetarian quiches”* were on order. The Jorgensen venue remains a favourite, despite the run being *“tough, very hilly and rough underfoot”*. Lorna Lauchlan says that

“we were usually covered in mud As there was no shower we hosed down outside, then changed in the only toilet. Wonderful days, tough course, an achievement to finish. There were always injuries, sprained ankles, grazes... etc - not the same if no drama!”

She also recalls that whilst *“waiting around”* for lunch to be served the *“drink came out”* and loosened tongues so that many stories were told. So her dismay was understandable when, in 2008, it was announced that the lunch was to be replaced by a post-race breakfast. But a straw poll carried out by Bob Schickert at the first breakfast showed 52 favouring breakfast and 2 in favour of lunch.

Restrictions imposed by Kings Park Board in the mid-2000s meant that there had to be frequent changes to the course for the State CCC. This prompted the decision in 2011 to move the event to Jorgensen and scrap the Club CCC. The annual event is still hugely popular, with food still the highlight. The committee traditionally organised the Jorgensen event but, for 2014, Jim Langford is race director – and it is again listed as Club CCC. Hopefully the *“superb breakfast”* organised by Jacqui Beaumont’s team and much enjoyed in 2013 will continue.

Pentathlon Championships

The **Outdoor Pentathlon** has never been recognised as a championship event by the world masters body but various versions of the event are included in the national championships of several countries.

The Club's first outdoor pentathlon championship, held in 1978, featured the following five events - shot, 110m hurdles, long jump, 200m and 1500m and

"27 started, 14 completed, including 2 women. The hurdles did not prove to be a popular event."

But the Club persevered, despite having to cancel the event in 1980 because

"The Swan River Pageant was in full swing at McCallum - track full of ice-cream vans"

Soon afterwards the dreaded hurdles event was excluded and the composition of the pentathlon became more akin to what it was when first contested in the 18th Ancient Olympiad around 708 BC. The events back then were long jump, javelin, discus, sprint and wrestling. The Club's version replaced wrestling with the 1500m and made the sprint a 100m race. Initially it was only the men who competed but women had soon joined in. It was reported in 1986 that *"Dick Horsley and Dorothy Whittam win Club Pentathlon for the 3rd year in a row"*.

At first, men and women contested the same events in Club competition, but during the mid-80s it was decided that women would run 800m, not 1500m. In 1987, following the norms of AAVAC, the sprint became 200m. And this sequence of long jump, javelin, 200m, discus, 800m or 1500m prevailed until 2008, apart from a few years when the discus was ousted in favour of the shot. Such changes and also some implement specification changes, prompted Bob Sammells to point out that each change meant that scoring tables had to alter and that records were not comparable. 2009 saw the women's sprint reduced to 100m, discus replaced by shot and a change of order.

The Pentathlon Championships were initially contested on a Sunday morning in December but then changed to mid-March. In 1998 a move to a Thursday evening in mid-January brought a large entry (9 women and 14 men) and high level of achievement (7 state records and 3 Australian records). Nowadays the event is incorporated into the period close to the T&F Championships which usually means mid-March again and a weekend morning. Coker Park/ECAC has been the usual venue but for the upcoming 2014 championships, members have voted to pay extra to hold the event at WAAS.

The number and quality of contestants ebbs and flows. A record 19 men and 11 women finished in 2012. Some treat it quite lightly, just enjoying the great camaraderie that builds up between the competitors. But others strive to their utmost to gain as many points as possible, and records are not infrequent.

The first Club **Weight Pentathlon**, consisting of hammer, shot, discus, javelin and heavyweight, was contested in 1996. In 2010, following Oceania's lead, the name

was changed to the more logical Throws Pentathlon. This event is recognised by WMA - but still under the term 'Weight'.

The casual thrower may enjoy having a go at the shot, javelin and discus, but hammer and heavyweight are not for the faint hearted. Those contesting this pentathlon tend to be dedicated throwers. Nevertheless, contestant numbers are usually healthy - 18 men and 11 women completed in 2011.

Track and Field Championships

Newsletter no. 62 of March 1978 carries tables headed 'Club Championships Summary – Field Events' and 'Club Championships Summary – Track Events'. These detail the best performances in each event during the 77/78 season with the names of the champions. But this was superseded by a more far-reaching and taxing competition to determine overall Club champions.

In 1976 there had been a series of "*Time Trials*" (despite the fact that distances were involved) incorporated into the Club's programme. Points were awarded by age, over 23 weeks. Members could do as few or as many of the 43 events as they wished. David Carr accumulated about 23,000 points – the highest.

In a similar competition in the 1978/79 season, the 17 events included all track races, even "*the old mile*" and, on the field, all except the vertical jumps. Ross Holland won, with 6858 points. The high level of participation prompted the thought that such a competition could be the Track and Field Championships. This was implemented in 1979 with the competition being conducted over 20 weeks



with 45 events. 73 men and 12 women took part. The Club Patron, Bill Hughes, donated and presented two trophies for the male and female winners. That year, the winners were David Carr and Dorothy Whittam. And it was also decided that Ross's name, should be engraved on the men's trophy as the inaugural winner.

Thereafter more rules were introduced. In 1980, athletes had to participate in at least 9 of 11 track events, one of which had to be a walk, and in 4 of the 5 field events – so in 13 out of 16 events on offer. There were three opportunities to compete in most of the events. By 1985 there were just 12 events and the number has continued to vary over the years. In 1988 it was decided to hold each event twice, once at each venue, with the better performance to count. In 1998 the best 10 out of 16 events counted - and there weren't any restrictions. It was said that the contest "*favours athletes who have a go at everything*". In 2012 there were 14 events of which 10 were to count. These had to "*include 3 field events, at least one of which is a jump*". Walks have come and gone (since walks judges aren't always available) and the 60m was voted in then rejected. John Oldfield's suggestion that the high jump be substituted for the hammer, to even up the jumps and throws, was agreed to for 2013/14. The timing used to vary but it latterly settled into the eight week period before Christmas.

The term ‘Patron’s Trophy’, as referred to the event, was first coined in 1980 but it wasn’t until 1985 that it was used officially as a title for the competition. In *The Vetrin*, Bob Fergie explained the ethos of the competition:

“The time trials points system was designed to allow a competition between competitors of all ages and sexes.”

Points were loosely based on the international pentathlon and decathlon point system but in 1985 they were revised to be more realistic. The validity of the system was frequently called into question and from the 1997/98 season, new age graded tables from WAVA were used instead. In 2010 some claimed that the structure of the competition and the bias of these age graded tables gave an advantage to the older competitors, especially women.

Numbers contesting the Patron’s Trophy gradually reduced and from around 2005 discussion took place about the possibility of separating the competition into track and field with no gender split – to avoid the possibility of ‘trackies’ injuring themselves trying to throw and to put men and women on an equal footing without the need for an extra trophy to be provided. The committee rejected the suggestion in 2008.

In 2011, when the Tuesday meetings at WAAS did not include throws and the ECAC cage was out of commission for a while, it was agreed that throws done at the Friday *Strive* meetings at WAAS, within a week either side of the date scheduled for the event, could count towards the Patron’s Trophy. That year 21 members qualified, the highest for some time. The 2013 trophy events began a little later than usual and were extended through to January. But the closure of WAAS that month restricted members’ options and numbers fell.

The most prolific winners of the Patron’s Trophies, up to and including 2012, are David Carr, with 19 wins out of 33 and Peggy Macliver with 15 from 32.

In 2005, at a committee meeting, Bob Schickert had raised the issue of “*how to get throwers more involved in the Patron’s Trophy*”. Unsurprisingly, that problem remains unresolved but the **Age Graded Throwers Championship**, instigated in 2009, went some way to satisfy the throwers’ needs. Certificates were presented to all who completed the five events.

State

State Marathon Championships

The term ‘State Championships’ for this event ceased to be used some years ago when WAMC, rather than the Club, took over the presentation of medals. Age group winners now receive medals whether MAWA members or not.

In 1979 the second National Veterans Marathon and the Open Veterans State Marathon were held in Perth, in conjunction with the People’s Marathon. Rob Shand was Organising Committee Chairman and was congratulated for doing a superb job in such a complicated event. The Club had seven finishers in the top 25 with M40 Ted Maslen, in 25th spot, having run in bare feet.

In 1984, 43 club members participated in the Veterans Marathon which was run in conjunction with the Milk Marathon. From 1988, after a lapse, it was again included with the Perth People's Marathon and the next year president, Keith Forden reported at the AGM that the *"reintroduction of the State Veterans Marathon Championships last year was very popular and we should be careful to make this an annual event."*

This they did, though there was an exception in 2001 when the event was run in conjunction with Bunbury RC's 20th Marathon.

In 2000, running from the WAMC's new riverside HQ, conditions were very wet and footpaths flooded. Anne Shaw was the first woman home in 3:07. It is quite remarkable that, of the 260 entrants, 195 were between the ages of 30 and 71 - the oldest being the Club's own Cecil Walkley.

The Club continues to support this event and it draws many first-timers.

SW Championships

The South West Amateur Athletic Association Championships, which dated from the mid-fifties and later fell under the auspices of AAWA, was a magnet for Club members. And from 1977 the broad range of events included several for the over 35s. From 1974 until 1992 large numbers travelled to Bunbury or Capel for the weekend - and returned with at least their fair share of honours.

There was a *"big turn out of club members – most camped at a caravan park on the Collie River"* in 1978. And though the grass track at Bunbury's Payne Park was slow *"Don Caplin set 2 meeting records despite very hot and windy conditions"*. In 1983, it was reported in the *Newsletter* that

"Dorothy Whittam was halfway through her luncheon banquet when one of her opponents in the long jump said they were holding up the event for her, it's that friendly a meeting."

In 1990 the championships were cancelled but in 1992, their last year, over 30 members competed. Most used the camping facilities provided by Capel Shire - with hot showers. And *"the nearby beach provided relief from the heat"*. As to why the event did not continue, Jeff Whittam says

"I think the reason that it finished was the athletes were blamed for someone driving a car around the bowling green which was adjacent to the track and tearing up the surface during the night, although we did not find out until the Sunday morning."

Veterans/Masters State Track and Field Championships

When WAVAAC agreed to host the Nationals in Perth in 1977 John Gilmour suggested that a State Championships might be held in conjunction with that meeting. That idea was rejected *"for practical reasons, especially as regarding presentations"*. The idea was discussed again in years that followed but it was not until 1982 that the first State Track and Field Championships (including cross-

country) took place. Run in conjunction with the nationals, many state records were set and also a few national records, including Dorothy Whittam's W45 100m hurdles and Eileen Hindle's W30 long jump. But the star of the show was John Gilmour with an M60 world record in the 5000m.

Later that year the committee made the decision that State Championships be held annually, before the nationals at Easter. For about two decades, it was a sub-committee of up to six members which organised the event, often starting work about four months in advance. Amongst those who served, David Carr, Bob Fergie, Brian Foley, Ross Holland, Bob Sammells, Rob Shand and Bob Schickert featured prominently. In 2004 Barbara Blurton took over the driving seat and handled most of the organisation on her own – as she still does. She says *“I was comfortable doing it myself”*. At the 2013 Championships she was presented with a memento in recognition of her service over 10 years. Richard Blurton assists Barbara with scheduling where *“a second brain and a sounding board are always useful”*.

Bob Schickert suggested in 2006 that the championships be held alongside the open and WADSA events to make better use of facilities and officials. At the time, nothing came of it but, in 2012 and 2013, the MAWA and WADSA Championships were successfully held alongside each other.

Provision of equipment has always been a concern, with items often having to be borrowed - as in 1993 when a \$30 donation was paid to Canning Club for items lent. More usually equipment is purchased just before the championships. For the smooth running of such events, a huge number of officials and helpers is required. Their time and expertise is given voluntarily but in 1993 the starter was paid a *“monetary enticement of \$100”*. In 1985 Dick Horsley co-opted several AAWA officials and from then on most of the technical officials came from the Association - a significant number being MAWA members.

UWA's McGillivray Oval was selected as the venue in 1983 and 129 athletes produced 22 SRs and one AR – again from Dorothy Whittam, this time in the 400m hurdles. Dorothy was judged 'Athlete of the Meet'. The oddity of this meeting was the fact that the hammer circle was square. The University

“had no area for hammer throwing, so Bob Fergie managed to obtain a square of terrazzo 6ft 6in square for us to throw from. This was placed in the middle of the desert!! on the other side of the road from the track where no damage could be done.”

A change of venue to the Gerry Archer track in 1985 saw twenty new records. And what had become known as the *“Hank-Frank”* double duel continued in the M40 5000m/10,000m. On that occasion, Hank Stoffers took the 5000m by 3.6s and Frank Smith took the 10,000m by 0.6s.

The committee's aim in 1986 was *“to achieve an entry from every member for the State Champs”*. They didn't quite succeed but the entry was up 40% on the previous year. The event, again at McGillivray, had *“comprehensive media*

coverage before, during and after”, was opened by the Minister for Sport and Recreation and followed by a BBQ after the Sunday events.

As the range of events increased, several were held before the main weekend – amongst them the pentathlons and the steeplechase. In 1995, the 10,000m was scheduled under lights at Coker Park and the pentathlon ran concurrently with individual events. The steeplechase was initially held at McGillivray then, later, in conjunction with the Association meetings at Perry Lakes and WAAS. It, and the 5000m walk, are now included in the Club’s Tuesday programme.

The main weekend moved to Coker Park about 1990 and everyone was kept fed and watered by a posse of ladies who ran the canteen throughout the two days of competition. Amongst the stalwarts who did most of the organising over the years were Lorna Lauchlan, Sue Jones, Sue Danby, Maggie Flanders, Val Wheeler, Elaine Dance, Pam Toohey, Gillian Young and Melissa Hynds - and they were ably supported by a hard working band of assistants. For some years there was also a BBQ on the Sunday to mark the end of activities.

By the early 2000s, the track was virtually unusable but was replaced before the 2005 championships. Members achieved *“a swathe of new records and high level performances”*. This new track deteriorated rapidly and negotiations began in 2011 for the use of WAAS for the 2012 championships. Costs were high but terms were eventually agreed and a booking made. But, in December, VenuesWest reneged on this booking, preferring to accommodate a lucrative rock concert. A tentative booking had also been made for Coker Park (ECAC) and this was firmed up. Members’ aired their feelings on *Facebook*, and *TFNL* carried a summary of comments in January 2012. Among them, the following:

“That’s appalling. So, they build a multimillion dollar athletics track, the pollies puff out their chests and they cancel a state championships athletics meet to hold a concert.”

By February, with insufficient tickets sold, the concert was cancelled and the Club booking was reinstated. In 2013, a request to hold the Championships at Bunbury was considered impractical so WAAS was approached again. As the Club’s preferred dates were not available, a booking had to be made for March 9/10, earlier than normal. In January the committee reported an extra *“non-negotiable charge of \$500 to be paid for cleaning”*. And since all refreshments have to be provided by VenuesWest, officials’ lunches were a major cost. Some continue to mourn the passing of the more personal ambience of Coker Park.

By the mid-nineties, championship entries were comfortably in excess of 100 and this rose to a record 160 in 2004 when the event was supported by BP’s Kwinana Refinery. 18 state records were set and W50 Barbara Blurton won the new ‘Anne Shaw Athlete of the Meet’ Award for her time of 2:21.7 in the 800m. Online entry, a huge time saver, was first employed in 2010 as a result of Richard Blurton’s work with Ernie Leseberg on his proprietary software. In that year the state championships were run in conjunction with the nationals and entries surpassed 200. The 2012 championship produced 7 Australian and 17 state records along

with two world records from Lyn Ventris. Athlete of the Meet was W70 Lorraine Lopes with two Australian records which scored over 98%. 2013's event was no less of a success. David Carr was Athlete of the Meet with a 99.44% performance in the 400m.

The number of Bunbury athletes travelling to Perth for the championships has increased. Lyn Ventris is their most high profile athlete but others also make their marks. *TFNL's* State Championships Special in 2009 noted an example:

"Most of us feel that we've done well if we manage to complete four or five events successfully. Put your hands together for Bruce Cornish. He entered all 17 events for which he was eligible, completed them all and took home 17 medals."

And the Bunbury folk are not without a sense of humour. *The Vetrin* which reported the 1993 Championships carried the following clip re Ruth Johnson:

"You would only hear it at a Vets meeting. Bunbury supporter watching exciting woman's 400m: "Come on Ruth – she's really got the bit between her teeth today!"" Another Bunbury supporter: *"She hasn't got any teeth."*

Open State Championships

Club members first competed in the Open State Championships, run by the Association, in 1974. They were held at Christmas at Perry Lakes and there were special vets' races. In future years some vets also competed in the open events - even in pole vault, triple jump and discus. The establishment of the Club's own championships led to the withdrawal of special vets' events and members had no choice but to compete on the open stage with the younger athletes – and this they have continued to do with great success. In 2013 it was reported on *Facebook* that *"MAWA has five state open champions!"* These were Garry Hastie (10km track walk), Byrony Glass (hammer), Matt Staunton (hammer), Todd Davey (javelin) and Melissa Foster (long jump).

National

National Veterans/Masters T&F Championships – main meeting

Cliff Bould and Dick Horsley were present at the meeting, after the 2nd national championships, in Sydney in 1974, when AAVAC was formed. There it was decided to charge an affiliation fee for clubs, and the locations for upcoming championships were also determined. Perth was awarded those of 1977. This award was discussed during the 1975 championships in Adelaide but the WA delegates were not invited to the meeting. This was described as just an oversight but they were not told about another meeting on the following day.

At least the handful of WA athletes who travelled to Adelaide went home with eight gold medals and had part of their fares refunded by the Commonwealth. The following year, in Brisbane, with John Gilmour the star performer, the award of the

1977 championships was confirmed. To date Perth has hosted six of the forty-one national championships.

The event has traditionally taken place on four days over Easter but in 2014, in Hobart, they will be held before Easter and over 2½ days. This means that some events have had to be omitted. At the AGM in 2013 MAWA's throwers voiced objections to AMA's decision, pointing out that the lack of multi-events was a particular disadvantage for WA throwers. It was agreed to put a motion to the AMA AGM in September to the effect that the nationals should "*encompass the full spectrum*" of events. In July 2013 AMA announced that pentathlons would be held in Launceston on the night before the main championships. Members were not happy with the inconvenience and extra cost incurred by this arrangement. At the AMA AGM, it was decided that the Hobart trial would be evaluated and discussed at the 2014 AGM.

Nationals with Perth as Host

1977

In 1977, with less than fifty members, the Club was hard pressed to stage such an important event as the national championships, especially as only a handful had first hand experience of the previous four championships. But the steering committee (with an athletics sub-committee) was formed well in advance and worked systematically to cover all aspects of the organisation. And they did an exemplary job. The original committee comprised Dick Horsley, Cliff Bould, Jack Collins, Jim Smith, John Gilmour, Keith McDonald and Fred Stewart. Keith withdrew for personal reasons but Rob Shand, Peter Gare, Bill Hughes, David Carr, Bob Hayres, Art Briffa, Colin Baker and David Jones all became involved during the last few months of planning.

Detailed minutes of all their meetings were reported in the *Newsletter* and all members were expected to pull their weight. Assistance was also sought from outside the Club, particularly from technical officials. In October 1976, Fred Stewart, an official of the Association, was elected Championships Manager.

The cost of the event was a major concern and Patron, Bill Hughes, sent out twenty three formal letters to businesses and government seeking sponsorship, advertising or other financial help. There were many rejections but also some successes. One donation of \$20 was forthcoming. Rob Shand says he thinks that "*Bill Hughes had an interest or owned a printing works and they did all the programmes gratis*". Fundraising events also played their part.

The championships were held at Perry Lakes on what was described on the entry form as a "*rubber bitumen*" track. The entry fee was \$1 per event and there were 138 entries, about 60 from WA. The steering committee organised "*billeting*" for athletes from other states and made sure that they were met at the airport. WA won 52 gold, 25 silver and 20 bronze medals, almost 100 in all and a third of all the medals awarded. Only five women competed, with Kath Holland taking gold medals in the 100m, 200m, 800m, long jump and discus. In the *Newsletter*, the

table of gold medals awarded to Club members detailed the winning times and distances for the men - but not for Kath.

The steering committee had decided to offer an unofficial cross country 10km race for the first time. It was so successful that it was agreed that one would be included in future championships. Also well received, and at a cost of just \$5, was the post event "*Social at the Rugby Club at the Warm-Up Track*". Rob Shand later acknowledged the substantial contribution made by the "*behind the scenes wives of the helpers who encouraged (or did not discourage)*".

In December 2009, as the Perry Lakes stadium was being dismantled, a set of results for these first Perth nationals was found amongst the archives and, for interest's sake, posted on the Club website.

1982

Rob Shand and some other members initially advised against Perth hosting these championships. They thought that "*there was waining interest in T&F*" and also recognised how daunting a task it would be for an "*inexperienced incoming committee*". But they eventually went ahead, again at Perry Lakes, in conjunction with the first State Championships. Bob Fergie, Bob Hayres, David Jones, Derek Walker and Brian Danby volunteered to head up major segments of organisation and Bob Sammells and Don Stone also joined the group. When Derek Walker had to pull out, Roger Walsh took his place. In the lead up to the event, *The Vetrin* included a series of monthly "*Nationals Newsletters*", keeping members informed of decisions and progress.

Fundraising events were held and advertising included in the programme – this time printed by Paul Martin. Sponsorship was obtained from R&I bank and recognised on the official T-shirts. After the event it was asserted in *The Vetrin* that, although the success of the Championships was down to so many people, Bob Fergie was an "*organising genius*". He was also singled out, along with Brian Danby, by president Bob Sammells "*for getting things done*".

That year all entries and results were computerised, courtesy of Jim Langford who did the programming and provided the machine. A Chronomix Clock and timing equipment were borrowed from the Marathon Club.

Club members took 61 gold medals with John Gilmour setting a new M60 World Record in the 5000m.

1989

Numbers were lower than expected. This was attributed to the reluctance of athletes from eastern states to make the journey to Perth with the world championships in Eugene, USA, just a few months later.

However, with sponsorship from Bill Hughes' company, Westwools Carpets, and with some 'old hands' at the helm, these championships were a triumph once again. Dick Horsley, Bob Fergie and Bob Sammells along with 'novices' Bob Schickert and Brian Foley served on the LOC under the leadership of David Carr.

“Appreciation medals” were awarded to club members who had made a significant contribution to the organisation and running of the event.

Despite athlete numbers, these championships at Perry Lakes produced five world records. Three went to WA athletes, Lynn Carter (hammer), Eileen Hindle (80m hurdles) and Anne Shaw (steeplechase) – all W40s. The Mucky Duck Bush Band featured at the championships dinner.

1996

From the forty companies approached by the LOC for sponsorship, only one response was positive and this *“provided just 5% of the cash pool required”*. So fundraising was essential and started in 1995. After the event, *The Vetrin* in April 1996 carried two detailed reports, from President Brian Foley and from Ivan Brown, LOC leader. Both lauded the efforts of the LOC members and provided a detailed insight into the amount and scope of the organisation involved in the staging of such a huge event.

Briefly, Dave Wyatt was committee secretary and produced first class minutes, did fundraising and was media contact. Bob Fergie compiled the programme of events and he and Jim Langford (who both competed) processed entries, allocated numbers and produced prompt results. Paul Martin designed artwork for the T-shirts and organised the printing of the T-shirts and also the 52-page programme. Brian Foley was a *“man for all seasons”* making about 500 phone calls. It was *“comforting”* to have a person of John Mison’s standing as financial controller; and presentations coordinator, Val Prescott, was *“perfect in that role”*. John Bell led the medical team and Sue and Merv Jones, with a willing band of helpers, *“organised superb catering”*. Sue also arranged a River Cruise with food and music. Jackie Halberg, a *“key player”*, recruited and organised about 40 officials for each day. According to Ivan, Jackie’s role *“required charm, patience, persistence and the temperament of a saint”*.

Around 400 competed and Club members set 86 SRs and 8 ARs. Amongst these were Murray Tolbert’s M50 triple jump, Garry Hastie’s M30 20km road walk and Sydney Coleman’s M80 discus throw. The three of them still retain these SRs and Syd’s mark is still an AR.

2003

These Championships, sponsored by Telstra, Healthways, BP and Alcoa, and again held at Perry Lakes, were generally acclaimed as *“the best ever in WA”*. With glorious weather, the cross country and road walk events in the parkland were particularly appreciated. The organising committee, set up in 2001, and headed by Lynne Schickert, consisted of Dave Wyatt, David Carr, Bob Fergie, Brian Foley, Paul Martin, Katrina Spilsbury, Jackie Halberg, Arnie Jenkins, Bruce Wilson and John Ventris, SW liaison.

AthleticA approached their officials regarding helping out and in January 2003 they organised a training session for all prospective officials. It was conducted at Perry Lakes by Warren Davey and Jeanette Robertson. About 25 attended and

Lynne said they learned “*some of the finer points relating to Competition rules and protocols*”. As usual, a huge army of helpers was also recruited.

Photofinish was used for the first time and 47 state records were set in a wide range of events and age groups. In *Age is No Barrier* it was pointed out that “*Four of the stand-out performers of the championships were from the home state*” – M70 David Carr won three gold medals while W45 Lyn Ventris, W50 Lynne Choate and W55 Peggy Macliver won two each.

The entertainment side of proceedings was once again a River Cruise, costing \$48 per head, with buffet dinner and DJ.

2010

This time, Richard Blurton led the LOC with the responsibility for various different aspects of the organisation being taken by Delia Baldock, Barbara Blurton, Jackie Halberg, Paul Hughes, John Oldfield, Lynne Schickert and Roger Walsh. Christine Oldfield compiled the championships magazine with Paul Martin again doing the printing. Work started early in 2009 and by the end of the year \$10,000 worth of sponsorship had been secured from Black Swan Events Financial Planning, Mundaring Community Bank, Cafe Bean and some members, including Jim and Margaret Turnbull. Expenses were relatively more than they had been for previous nationals due to the hiring of Perth’s brand new stadium and also to having to purchase the officials’ lunches from VenuesWest. But the change of venue for this championships event clearly went down well. In *AMA’s Age is No Barrier* it was said that

“One of the features of the championships was the magnificent new Athletics Stadium. What an improvement on the old Perry Lakes Stadium that had been built for the 1962 Commonwealth Games!”

The only criticism was that the stands provided no shade during the afternoon. But that didn’t dampen the support given to the competitors as they churned out numerous record performances. Two of the athletes attracted broad media attention. Queensland’s Ruth Frith, who was followed around everywhere by her own film crew, set a W100 world record in the hammer throw and the Club’s own M90 Peter Kennedy participated in twelve events one of which was the pentathlon where he set a championship record.

For the first time, entry to the championships was online using a new system devised by Ernie Leseberg of NSW. 527 athletes registered, a record number, and over 100 more than had been in Adelaide the previous year. And at the Sunday evening Awards Dinner, David Carr received his fifth AMA award – this time as most outstanding male athlete.

Hosted in Other States

In the 70s there were never more than ten members who made the trip to a national championships outside Perth. But they sometimes got more than they bargained for. In the *Newsletter* (obviously written by a member who had experienced it), the cross country event at Sydney’s 1979 nationals was described as two laps of 5km

“over wooded undulating hills, narrow (one man wide) bush tracks, some sealed road (about 300m), sand trails, tussock grass, swamp (ankle deep which would have been much deeper had it rained), forest tracks, hills and a creek to jump, finishing down a steep hill with 200m of grass to sprint over. A mass start of 120 runners shattered the peace of the countryside and scattered would be picnickers in the way of the galloping horde.”

Organisation of the nationals has been praised on some occasions. Hobart was described in 1985 by Barrie Kernaghan, who achieved three first places, as *“a spot-on championships”*. *“Every event was right on time and the atmosphere was great”*. After the strenuous competition, he and the other WA athletes were *“persuaded to do a run with the local Hash House Harriers – very hilly”*.

During the eighties and nineties numbers rose to the mid-teens and after the turn of the century they soared. More than 40 went to Brisbane in 2011 and a record number made the trip to Melbourne in 2012. Graeme Dahl noted in *TFNL* that *“Of the 58 athletes who made the trip east, 47 won at least one medal”*. The record was broken in 2013 with 60 entrants in Canberra. The team often includes a few supporters and on a few occasions Les Beckham has driven across the Nullarbor and beyond to officiate the horizontal jumps. The WA contingent is very supportive of all athletes and has earned a longstanding reputation for being a cohesive and vociferous bunch. Following the nationals in Melbourne in 1990, *The Vetrin* described the 18 Club competitors as *“easily having the most colourful and vocal cheer squad, led by Alan Stone.”*

At that meeting, Pat and David Carr represented WA at the opening ceremony and the 18 athletes took home 22 gold medals. The top performers included Karen Gobby, Anne Shaw and Margaret Robinson (cross country and distance events) and Barrie Kernaghan, Keith Martin and Murray Tolbert (track).

The haul of medals in Hobart in 1992 was also impressive:

“WA’s 15-strong Nationals’ team had an excess baggage problem returning to Perth, laden with 48 medals – 13 G 17 S 18 B. Lynne Choate and Keith Martin each with 3G and Maxine Santich and Dorothy Whittam each with 2G.”

Only a small WA contingent went to Adelaide in 1993, but Eileen Hindle and Lynne Choate, both W40s, showed their class winning 5 and 3 gold medals respectively. W60 Pat Carr achieved 3 golds and in so doing, beat husband David’s 2. M35 Mike Edwards also took a gold.

Medal opportunities increased in 1995 when the championships were a *‘Double Barrelled’* competition in conjunction with the Queensland Masters Games. Athletes could enter both championships and get two medals for one event. W60 Noela Medcalf excelled with 5 gold and 4 bronze medals and 3 state records.

Lyn Ventris competed in her first ever interstate championships in Canberra in 1999, winning gold in both the 5km track walk and the 10km road walk. That year

too, there was discussion at the Athletes Forum regarding the timing of the pentathlon

“which was run on the Sunday morning instead of the traditional Monday and this precluded a lot of people entering as there were still finals to go on the Monday.”

From a relatively small contingent in Brisbane in 2005, David Carr and Irwin Barrett-Lennard claimed three gold medals each and 90%+ performances were achieved by Barbara Blurton, David Carr and Henri Cortis.

A record medal total was reported for Sydney in 2008: *“29 Athletes: 53 Gold, 21 Silver, 11 Bronze 1WR, 1AR, 8SR - a first class result”*. Equivalent figures for Canberra in 2013 were about 60 athletes: 70 gold, 57 silver, 43 bronze. The more even spread of medal colours would indicate that members have realised that it is not just the top athletes that can compete and succeed at this level. It bodes well for the Club that there was a huge surge in the number of younger members and also in the number of successful throwers. *TFNL Championship Special* reported that *“Mal Clarke had a purple patch in the field events, winning all M40 throws, throws pentathlon and high jump”*. All the supporters who travelled with the athletes were, justifiably, as vocal as ever.

In Adelaide in 2009 the SAMA team did a great job but they hadn't arranged any changeover judges for the relays. But, as reported in *TFNL*, the MAWA group came to the rescue *“with John Oldfield raising a team of nine officials, six of them qualified”*. That year, Northern Territory 'guests' Allen and Kerrie Whitley and Nola Brockie ran in WA colours and were a welcome addition to the ranks. Allen was a Club member in the late 80s and still holds several state walks records. And M75 David Carr broke his WR in the 2000m steeplechase.

Many members have set records at the nationals - state, Australian and world. All these achievements usually come with age-graded performances over 90%. The Club statistician keeps records of such performances. After the nationals in Melbourne in 2012, Campbell Till reported some amazing statistics in *TFNL*

“There were eighteen 90%+ Age Graded Performances, headed up by Lorraine Lopes' astonishing 100.78% in the 5000 metres. The other high achievers were David Carr, Peggy Macliver, Byrony Glass, David Clive, Marg Saunders, Barrie Kernaghan and Garry Ralston.”

Other meetings

National championship events that can't be fitted into the main meeting, take place in various locations and sometimes attract a few Club members. In 2013, in Bendigo, Toni Phillips, W40, became national heptathlon champion setting an inaugural state record for the event. And Don Chambers, in the decathlon, beat his own 2012 state record by 1 point.

National Postal Relay (NPR) Championships

AMA's novel idea of postal relays, announced at the end of 2007, was initially met with a degree of scepticism and some considerable mirth. How would the jumps and throws relays work? The minds of would-be cartoonists ran riot.

Only a small number of members ever have the opportunity to do relays. So these Postal Relays were a great attraction. Out of the woodwork, to support their peers, came Sunday runners, old runners and lapsed runners, encouraged by relay coordinator, John Oldfield. And during February 2008, no fewer than 82 different athletes, in 35 teams took part. Results for 24 track and 3 field teams were sent to AMA and, MAWA took 19 titles. Then the following year, from the 35 team entries put in (20 runs, 4 walks, 2 jumps and 9 throws) there were 26 titles.

The highlight of the 2010 series was the 4x800m world record set by the M80 team comprising Irwin Barrett-Lennard, Cecil Walkley, Vic Beaumont and Stan Lockwood. They clocked 16:01.8, knocking about 83s off the previous record set by Victorians. But, despite a record number of submissions that year, only 13 of the titles fell to MAWA. John explained why in *TFNL*:

“In the previous two years of this competition the other states have shown spasmodic interest, allowing WA to dominate the podium. But this year total entries almost doubled as the ACT, NSW and Victoria made a greater effort to end our domination.”

In 2011 it was reported in *TFNL* that, with many athletes sidelined by injury, it was hard to field optimum teams and *“No more was this evident than when M80 Derry Foley was conscripted to run in the M40s team.”*

However, athletes were as committed as ever and excitement was just as high. There were 9 titles for MAWA that year and the same in 2012. Organisation of the relays was taken over by Chris Neale in 2012 and by Colin Smith in 2013 when, by strange coincidence, there were again 9 titles for MAWA.

The relays started off by being held at Coker Park/ECAC after Thursday T&F sessions. In 2011, the weather blighted the 4x100m so it was re-run at WAAS. Sprinters so appreciated the superior track that the 4x100m event was held at WAAS again in 2012. Thereafter some of the relays were held at both venues, but this diluted the strength of teams.

Initially the events contested were 4x100m, 4x400m, 4x800m and 4x800m walk relays along with the long jump, shot, discus and hammer 'relays'. Since MAWA's 4x1500m warm up events had been so popular, John Oldfield asked the committee to propose that this distance be included in the NPR series. The suggestion was taken up and in 2013 the 4x1500m replaced the 4x800m relay.

After the 2012 relays, the AMA Board decided that certificates would no longer be given. They also put it to the 2013 AGM that the relays be abandoned due to lack of interest - but this was not supported. States were given the option to participate or not and the MAWA committee decided not to programme them.

Regional

Oceania Veterans and Masters Games/Championships

In the early 80s, Art Briffa and Rob Shand had attended the SE Asian Masters Championships in Singapore. And in 1990 it was reported in *The Vetrun* that

“Australia has re-joined the Oceania region of the WAVA world ‘sub-division’ and this may encourage Australian Vets to attend the 5th Oceania Games in Auckland.”

Liz Helliwell, Karen & Des Gobby, Erica Mercer, Norm Richards and Mike Faunge responded and returned with a *“bag of medals, records and placings”*.

These championships operate a two year cycle in venues, often islands, around the Pacific. Norfolk Island, even smaller than Rottneest, has been host on two occasions. There, in 1992, Eileen Hindle was the most successful of five WA athletes with six first places. Erica Mercer, Barrie Thomsett and Dorothy and Jeff Whittam each gained several placings. Between them they set four Oceania records. In 2000, 15 members travelled to the little island and 12 competed. In total they won 41 medals, 13 gold, 13 silver and 15 bronze. Peggy Macliver was the star with 6 golds and two championships records - 400m and 800m.

In 1994 Erica Mercer was the Club's sole representative in Fiji, competing in the steeplechase, 300m hurdles, triple jump and high jump. But there was a small contingent in Geelong in 2002. They included the Schickerts, the Misons and also Bert Carse, who did them proud with 6 gold medals and the Clem Green Trophy for the best age-graded performance in a 1500m race. 2004 saw nine WA competitors, ably supported by Pierre Viala, making the trip to Raratonga in the Cook Islands, scheduled to be the venue again in 2015.

Tahiti has also been host twice. In 2010 Björn Dybdahl, Bev Hamilton, Bob and Lynne Schickert and Don Chambers won more than thirty medals. New Zealand was more popular and in Tauranga, in 2012, around 16 members amassed a huge number of medals including 21 individual and 2 team golds. At the end of 2013, 25 MAWA athletes were preparing to leave for the 17th Oceania Championships in Bendigo, Victoria, in January 2014.

World

World Veterans/Masters Championships (Originally Games), Stadia

November 1974 brought the announcement of the very first World Veterans Games, to be held in Toronto, Canada, in August 1975. Women were invited to participate, but only in a limited number of events. The Australian team of 52 (who had achieved the requisite standards) were each given a government grant of \$200 towards their travel costs. The team included seven veterans from WA – Cliff Bould, John Gilmour, Noel Goff, Dick Horsley, Col Junner, George Cavill and Wally McCabe. John took gold in the 3000m and 5000m whilst Dick achieved gold and world records in both the 5000m and 25km race walks. The Results Book

for the Games contains a detailed report, signed by the eleven organisers, with the following comment:

“There were more results than just the times and distances. For example, we believe there was a whole lot of fun and a general feeling that it was worth doing.”

John Oldfield’s observation in the *TFNL* Lahti Special of 2009 echoed this:

“WMA championships come around every two years. Some wish to test themselves against the best in the world. For others it’s a chance to visit new places and enjoy the camaraderie of masters’ athletics in a different setting. For whatever reason, these championships are eagerly awaited, an event not to be missed.”

Alan Merret’s WR in the 3000m steeplechase came in Gothenburg in 1977 and Kath Holland flew the flag for WA women that year and also in the following four world championships. Each time she won golds and in Christchurch in 1981 she won the accolade of “*top lady*”. John Gilmour did the same for the men, achieving numerous gold medals and records and being hailed “*Star of the Games*” in Hanover in 1979. In Puerto Rico, in 1983, only Kath and John represented the Club but nine members, 3 men and 6 women, competed in Rome in 1985. As editor of *The Vetrin* at that time, Basil Worner collected together all the results and anecdotes brought back by the athletes. Amongst the latter was the following description of the bus rides they had to endure:

“... a combination of anaerobic effort, a sauna, and upper-body weight training as one swung endlessly from a grimy strap for 40 minutes.”

Melbourne 1987, with 4700 competitors, was thought to be the largest T&F event ever to be staged anywhere in the world. 69 of these athletes were from WA. The jumps were dominated by WA women with world records from Pat Carr and Dorothy Whittam in the triple jump. And *The Vetrin* reported that

“Ted Maslen in the 3000m steeplechase was always in the first 3 and on the last lap was clear 2nd when he stopped after jumping the first barrier and then carried on, clearly in distress, falling into the water jump, but finished the race with a dislocated shoulder. That’s guts.”

It was in 1989, in Eugene, USA, that the World Veteran Games became World Veteran Championships. 15 athletes and 4 supporters went from WA and this time the stars were John Gilmour and Frank Smith. Both won individual and team golds and John was voted an outstanding athlete of the championships.

In Turku, Finland, in 1991, John Gilmour and John Malloy were the Club’s best performers and, in 1993, the former won his 10km cross country race in Japan. And Roy Fearnall and Barrie Kernaghan, as half of the relay teams, won two golds each. This was the 10th running of the championships and John had attended all of them. The hosts laid on evening entertainments and, according to Allen Tyson’s report in *The Vetrin* of November/December, some people found themselves being

instructed in the arts of origami and calligraphy. The exceptionally high temperatures in Buffalo, USA, in 1995 took their toll on many but Lynne Choate won two golds as a member of the relay teams.

Durban, 1997 was a great event for Barbara Blurton who took four of the six WA gold medals – with one each to Pat and David Carr. All those going to Gateshead in 1999 were treated to a farewell “*smorgasbord luncheon*”, and a special meeting at Perry Lakes provided some good warm-up competition. David Carr took a fistful of English gold as did Peggy Macliver. Nearer to home in 2001, Brisbane, with over 6000 competitors, was the biggest athletics meeting ever to be held in Australia. Sixty four made the trip from WA.

Then came 3 consecutive championships in Europe. In 2005, in San Sebastian, Spain, the M35 category was included on the world stage for the first time. 16 Club members competed and they brought home 67 medals including 23 gold. 28 members travelled to Riccione, Italy, in 2007 and, as Vic Waters reported,

“For the first time, club members at home in Perth were able to follow the progress of our athletes at the World Championships on a day-by-day basis. Thanks for the initiative, John Oldfield. He set up a dedicated online blog, and posted regular bulletins.”

The event was memorable, not only for bus journeys (like the ones in Rome in 1985), or the fact that the Italians saw fit to issue Lyn Ventris with 3 red cards in the 5000m track walk, but also for the horrendous storm that engulfed the first event – the older ladies’ cross country. W60s Jackie Halberg and Christine Oldfield had to battle their way through and over fallen branches and course marking tape blown across their path by the gale. All the other cross country races were then postponed - causing havoc to many runners’ schedules.

But the weather improved and John’s blog next day reported that

“Everybody is having a good time, despite the stormy weather. The sun looks set for the next few days, so we can start planning the rest of our training. Lots of wine is also being drunk, you’ll be pleased to hear. This region’s Sangiovese is cheap and good!”

And Jackie, loudly cheered, went on to run 5:55.03 in the 1500m, a new SR.

John repeated his blog in 2009 from Lahti in Finland. Here, Peggy Macliver did the sprint double, winning the W65 100m and 200m and David Carr’s M75 gold in the 400m achieved 99.41%. These, along with many other great performances, inspired Christine Oldfield’s 11-verse poem *Looking Back on Lahti*. It appears in the *TFNL Lahti Special* but this verse gives a flavour of the emotion generated by the championships:

*“And those representing our own western state
Were hauling in medals at a phenomenal rate.
Gold for Lynne, Roy and Bert and for David and Toni,
Plus we’ll claim one for Don and then two more for Peggy.*

*And for Irwin, at eighty, there are three more to score
While for Lyn, just believe it, a big clutch of four!
They're World Champions!"*

In Sacramento in 2011, many witnessed the “*One-arm sensation*” captured on the cover of August’s *TFNL Special*. It shows M40 Mark Jeffery propelling himself off the ground to perform a one-armed pole vault. Having broken his left arm before the championships he still contested the decathlon, shunning a plaster cast and using only a brace. He won the bronze but the German winner acknowledged that, without his impediment, Mark would have taken the gold. The Australian team won a total of 49 golds, and 124 medals overall, to place second behind the USA. But another memorable occurrence at these championships will have lasting impact on the Club and the wider Perth community – Perth was awarded the WMA Championships for 2016.

Before the 2013 championships in Brazil the WMA website featured an in-depth article about Lyn Ventris and a series of interviews with “*Ambassadors to Porto Alegre*” including Don Chambers, David Carr, Nick Miletic and Lynne Choate. MAWA fielded 21 competitors, 2 officials and some supporters.

The organisation of this event was woeful on all counts. The laying of the main track was completed just five days before competition and stands were being erected as athletes arrived; much of the promised transport did not materialise; local officials were ill-prepared and few spoke anything but Portuguese; the poor facilities are well illustrated by the fact that the decathlon pole vault was conducted in the dark, lit by a car’s headlights beaming down the runway. And with two days of thunderstorms and torrential rain it is not surprising that, in general, many performances were below par.

Officials, both Brazilian and international, had to contend with these problems (and more besides) in addition to working exceptionally long days. Spanish-speaking officials, Christine and John Oldfield, also found themselves in great demand as interpreters, so they at least managed to establish excellent relations with the Brazilian officials and Latin American athletes. And MAWA athletes, despite everything, clearly enjoyed themselves and came up trumps as usual. They took 38 medals including 16 golds – Marg Saunders (S/C), David Carr (400m, 800m, 1500m & S/C), Melissa Foster (LJ & TJ), Todd Davey (throws pentathlon), Barrie Kernaghan, Roy Fearnall and Lynne Choate (all in the 4x100m and 4x400m relays), Lynne Schickert (team 10km walk) and Bob Schickert (team XC).

The Perth 2016 booth attracted great interest, not least for the fact that Bob Schickert and a small band of helpers were giving away tiny koalas to those who expressed interest and left their e-mail addresses. These little bears became very much sought after, particularly amongst the Brazilian officials.

Perth 2016

In 2010, after discussions between WMA, AMA, MAWA and Eventscorp, Perth's expression of interest to host the 2015 WMA Championships was first announced. WMA council members who visited Perth in 2011 were satisfied with what they found, giving the go-ahead to present a bid in Sacramento.

Richard and Barbara Blurton and Lynne and Bob Schickert were on the bid committee and they, along with Club helpers, manned the promotion booth at the Sacramento championships to publicise the bid. But, at the General Assembly, the 2015 championships were awarded to Lyon, France. However, for practical reasons, it had been proposed that the championships change to even years and a motion to do this was then passed. Further voting awarded the 2016 event to Perth rather than Poland, the other contender. Richard's official statement informed the Club that

"Following 12 months of work by the Perth Bid Committee I am pleased to announce that in Sacramento at the WMA General Assembly Perth won the right to stage the 2016 World Masters Athletics Championships"

In 2015, a large MAWA contingent is expected to make the journey to France but in 2016 there will surely be an overwhelming number of members taking part when the world championships are on their own doorstep. The WA government agreed to underwrite the event but at the 2012 and 2013 AGMs some concern was expressed about whether the agreement would *"survive a change of government intact"*. This was not considered to be a problem. And Lynne reassured that *"there is no financial liability for MAWA in running the World Masters event. MAWA will do most of the work though"*.

At the 2013 AGM it was announced that the *"Perth 2016 Company has been established and Richard Blurton, Bob Schickert and Geoff Brayshaw have been appointed to the board"*. Also at that AGM, Barrie Kernaghan suggested that during the Perth 2016 event, which will be the 22nd running of the world championships, those who have competed in 10 or 20 of these championships should be recognised. The idea was approved unanimously.

As 2013 drew to a close the three board members along with Lynne Schickert and Barbara Blurton had had some meetings, latterly, according to Richard, *"mainly to talk about final issues on the contract"*. That refers to the *"WMA-AMA contract, which governs how the event will be managed"*. At that stage the possible composition of the LOC was being kept under wraps. And rumour had it that the original plan for three championship venues might be scaled down, but negotiations were still underway.

World Masters Indoor Championships

These run every two years, the first being in 2004. In 2010, in Kamloops, Canada, Björn Dybdahl and Debbie Wolfenden flew the flag for WA and Debbie set an

inaugural AR for the 60m sprint. The 2012 event in Finland included a half marathon and a 10km road walk as well as the indoor action. Four Club walkers went along – Lyn Ventris, Lynne Schickert, David Smyth and Ray Hall. Having little or no indoor experience they had to come to terms with the short laps and the camber of the track - as well as the bright but freezing outdoor conditions. Lyn achieved a world best in the 3000m walk and a WR in the 10km road walk. After Porto Alegre, some members, like Melissa Foster, started preparing for the indoors in Hungary in July 2014.

World Veterans/Masters Championships, Non-Stadia

The first of these was in 1992 and they ran every two years until 2004, when a disappointing turn out in Auckland heralded their demise. However, the Club was represented there by, amongst others, Brian and Margaret Bennett, Bob and Lynne Schickert, Lyn Ventris and John Doust. Between them, in a variety of events, they achieved several first and second places.

Masters Games

Nowadays the term ‘Games’ implies a meeting which incorporates a variety of sports, with athletics being just one of them. They aren’t championship events, but members enjoy participating in them so they are included in this chapter.

State

In WA itself the State Masters Games, under the auspices of AAWA, started in 1990 in Albany and occur every two years. In 1998, with 30 members present, Duncan MacAuley stood out, winning four events including the Masters Mile in 5:16.1. Attending in 2004 were Toni Phillips, Rob Antonioli, Mark Hamilton and Bert Carse and it was reported that Toni out-jumped the men in the long jump. More recently, after the 2012 Games, Michele Mison reported in *Vetrun* that Bert Carse won a cash prize based on age graded performance and that Jan Jarvis had returned to running. Michele said these Games were “*a pleasure to attend*” and encouraged others to go in future. Club member, Barbara Wilson, has been involved since the beginning, moving up to be the “*main person doing everything*” – according to Carey Dickason. Carey, also a Club member, has also been on the organising committee since 2010 and is now treasurer.

The Inaugural Fremantle Masters Games were held in September 2001 with Lynne and Bob Schickert on the organising committee and Richard Harris in charge of publicity. The Club arranged seven athletics events and Bob Fergie and Bob Schickert marked the lanes on a very rough oval in Fremantle. In return, the Club received a \$10 sports fee from each competitor, netting a tidy sum for Club funds. The Games were a success despite “*frequent rain showers and a strong Freo wind*”. The Schickerts also encouraged Damien Hanson to join the Vets. He went on to become the Club’s representative on the Games committee and helped build up the athletics aspect. By 2009, the last of the Games, there were ten T&F events plus a cross country race and a road walk.

National and Regional

The first staging of the Australian Masters Games was in 1987 in Hobart and Erica Mercer made her mark with a 1st in the long jump and placings in several other events including the W40 triathlon. These Games follow a two year cycle and take place in a variety of locations. In Perth, in 1993, WAVAC members formed the basis of the organising committee. Their input ensured that the Games actually took place and also “*saved the organisers thousands of dollars*”. At these Games the standards were not high but the vets did well with 31 SRs and 4 ARs. In 2011, in Adelaide, 8 MAWA members won 42 medals in total.

The inaugural Central Australian Masters Games in Alice Springs in 1986 saw Dawn Fraser competing. Known as the “*Friendly Games*” and held every two years, they are popular with Club members. In 2000, about 4000 competitors between the ages of 35 and 91 converged on Alice. *The Vetrin* reported that

“The Northern Territory Health Service sexual health clinic has been distributing condom parcels to hotels and motels with the message: Be Masters of Your Own Game – Wear a Condom”.

Without implying any connection whatsoever, two years later a larger than usual contingent of Club members made the journey to Alice. Amongst the medal winners were many club stalwarts - Maggie Flanders, Barrie Thomsett, the Whittams, the Medcalfs, Jan Jarvis, Keith Atkinson, Richard Harris and Mary Heppell - who won bronze in the Masters Mile.

The first Great Barrier Reef Masters Games was held in Cairns in 2013 and it proved to be “*a gold mine*” for the Club. Only three members took part but Greg Urbanowicz, Todd Davey and Don Chambers netted a total of 26 golds.

The Pan Pacific Masters Games have been held on the Gold Coast every two years since 2002. In 2012 thirteen members went, all with goals in mind; but none more so than David Carr. With three other M80 Australians, he planned an assault on the 4x400m world record. They all ran in Perth 2016 shirts and duly performed, with a time of 5:32.29 - knocking more than 27s off the WR set by a Japanese team in 1998. In December’s *TFNL*, David said it was “*the result of months of preparation to have runners from four states, phone and e-mail arrangements, baton practice and uniform provision.*”

According to the *TFNL* report, others also did pretty well:

“Sprints, hurdles, middle distance, distance, cross-country, jumps (horizontal and vertical), throws – medals galore in each sphere of competition filled the return luggage on flights home to Perth.”

World

The inaugural World Masters Games was in Toronto in 1985 and thereafter has followed roughly a four year cycle. Bob Sammells was sceptical but his reservations disappeared. He pointed out that people compete as individuals, not as members of a particular nation and relative costs to the host are much smaller than, say, the Olympics - and the benefits are huge.

The Games have also been held in Europe, America, Canada and Australia and a few Club members have taken part in some of them. When in Australia they are more popular and in Bob Sammell's account of the 1994 Brisbane Games he describes the fantastic performances of members like Syd Coleman, Sharon Moloney, Pat and David Carr and many others. (*The Vetrin* Nov-Dec 1994).

More than 20 Club members competed in Melbourne in 2002 and there were golds for Lyn Ventris and John Gilmour and also for Barbara Blurton, Bert Carse and David and Pat Carr (*Vetrin* December 2002). MAWA's medal haul was impressive in Sydney in 2009. Records were also broken and there were plenty of performances around 90%. David Clive, Bev Hamilton, Neil Morfitt and Don Chambers get well deserved mentions in the write up in the November *Vetrin*. At the 2013 event in Torino, Italy, M55 Björn Dybdahl was the only MAWA representative and won silver in the 3000m steeplechase.

Chapter 4

Venues and Equipment

Sunday Run Venues

Sunday runs have always made use of different venues in the city and environs and usually start and finish in a park or reserve. Members' homes have been used as a base too, as have school grounds. In addition to road sections, runs normally include a section along the river or foreshore, through a woodland area or round a lake. Some provide an opportunity for a swim. All incorporate essentials like toilets and shade and those with power connection are popular for the Club's morning teas. The bases most frequently used over many years have been McCallum Park, Kings Park, Burswood Park and Jorgensen Park.

Initially, no arrangements were made with shires or councils. But, as numbers grew, it became necessary to obtain permission for runs. This made sure that toilet blocks were opened early enough. As venues became more popular with other groups, a firm booking was essential and charges began to be levied. And they regularly increase as does the associated bureaucracy. Restrictions by some authorities on which paths can be used and on how road crossings are managed have meant alterations to some courses and locations for Club runs.

Track & Field Venues

McCallum Park

This is where it all began. In 1974 it was already the base of Canning Districts Athletic Club, of which John Gilmour, Colin Junner and Wally McCabe were members. So the newly formed WAVAAC made a home there too and shared the facilities. David Carr, Bob Hayres and Rob Shand have similar recollections of what the facilities were. A clubhouse stood at the north of the tennis courts and hurdles and throwing implements were stored in a fenced area. There were 2 throwing circles, a jump pit and a 400m grass track. The latter, and five 100m lanes, were marked out each season in oil or creosote by John Gilmour. There was, in addition, a longer, unmarked course which according to David

“went around the rose garden at the Causeway end and the throwing circle at the Taylor end. John Gilmour and Canning club had already called it 1000m. It seemed about right.”

There was also a measured route of 2.233km from McCallum which included Taylor Street and Canning Highway. Known as the 'Dave Jones Course' it saw races designated as 2DJ or 3DJ depending on the number of laps. Rob Shand prepared maps of the regular routes for display at the appropriate meetings.

In 1978, after a particularly wet winter season when McCallum was regularly flooded, Peter Gare and Ross Calnan declared in the *Newsletter* that there was no

way they would risk life and limb on the McCallum surface. Instead they suggested that *“Perry Lakes would be good – with showers etc”*.

The absence of a proper track and good field facilities meant that other venues had to be used for training and competition. Championships also had to be held elsewhere. McCallum is no longer used for T&F but it remains a popular venue, not least because of the morning teas that follow Sunday runs there.

In June 2013 the committee announced that

“MAWA celebrates 40 years in 2014. To mark this achievement there will be a birthday party after the McCallum Lakes run on February 9th.”

Perry Lakes

Built in 1962 for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games, Perry Lakes became the major hub of athletics activity in Perth. The stand was designed to hold 5000 and the venue provided the ‘proper’ facilities that members needed. They used the main track and the lower warm-up track for training and took part in the inter-club meetings staged by the Association. The warm-up track surface was initially grass, then bitumen and then grassed again around 1985. David Carr says the tree roots *“made for big bumps”* on the track, rendering it not suitable for the time trials, which moved to McGillivray Oval.

The inter-club competition moved to the lower track during 1978 while the main track was being ripped out and replaced with *“Rekortan”*. It was ready in October, just in time for 49 vets to do their 1 hour run on it. Perry Lakes was also host to the five vets’ national championships between 1977 and 2003.

In April 2009 with WAAS, the new stadium, ready for action, Club members attended the *“Farewell to Perry Lakes”* meeting which proved an emotional occasion for those who had been competing there from the beginning.

Gerry Archer Track (Belmont)

In the late 70s, several twilight meetings were staged at this venue on its 440 yard *“rubber bitumen track”*. The Club’s 1984 AGM took place here and also the vets’ state championships in 1984 and 1985. But it is probably remembered best as the location of four inspiring 24 hour relay events (see ch.6).

Coker Park/ECAC

This *“new Cannington track”* was opened officially on 28th October 1984 and christened with the John Gilmour 10k along with 100m and mile events. The Club was already planning to use this venue on Thursday evenings as a lead up to the 1985 vets’ championships and they duly moved their long distance races there. Later it was used alternately with other venues for the regular midweek meetings and by 2000 some storage space became available. In 2008 the Club was asked to refer to the venue as the Ern Clarke Athletic Centre, ECAC.

In 1992 the Club made a donation of \$500 towards the provision of lights and these were celebrated in 1993 with a special meeting for several organisations. The City

of Canning announced in 1999 that it would be closing Coker Park in 2004 to extend the High School. Since the Club had a financial interest, an objection was lodged. But despite meetings and an Athletics deputation to the Minister of Education, it was said that the track's condition was so bad that it would be too expensive to redevelop the facility. However, in 2001, the news came that "*Coker Park was not going to be knocked down but get a \$50,000 upgrade*". The Club asked that storage facilities might also be upgraded. The new facility was ready by 2005 and included storage space for MAWA's use.

At the start of 2008, the Club's committee agreed in principle to donate \$500 for a photo finish room and a high jump cover. They also pointed out that the hammer cage was hard to get ready. In fact, by the time athletes had erected it, they were too worn out to compete. Problems occurred quite frequently and in 2011, with the cage again out of commission, some throwing events at AWA's *Strive* meets were accepted for the Patron's Trophy. No progress was made regarding a photofinish room but in 2013 the City of Canning proposed replacing the hammer cage with a permanent discus cage. Representations by MAWA to try to reverse this decision failed and safety netting for a discus cage was installed. If notice is given the hammer netting can be erected but this may attract a charge.

The track laid in 2004 deteriorated so rapidly that it was not long before it was displaying surface damage as well as some subsidence. When, in 2012, it was a possibility that the state championships would have to be held there, several athletes stated that they would not risk injury by competing.

McGillivray Oval (UWA)

As far back as 1976, McGillivray Oval was used for twilight meets supported by several clubs. In the mid-eighties, a hire charge was by then payable, but the time trials were scheduled there, on alternate weeks with Coker Park. In 1988 a trial winter competition was held there but, with a grass track, this was not a success. The hiring fee rose but the venue was popular with members. Those living in the western suburbs found the location convenient and the grass track was kind on the feet. Tuesday sessions there were very relaxed and lacking in pressure which was particularly appreciated by the less talented athletes. UWA took over the administration of McGillivray Oval in 1996.

A grass track has drawbacks and it was not unusual to arrive on a Tuesday and find that the grass had been cut, thus obliterating all the markings on the track and throwing sectors. Some events had to be abandoned and results for others were generally posted with a health warning. Hammer throwing had also had to be abandoned because it made too much of a mess on what was a football pitch. In 2007, on a night when McGillivray was not available, the meeting was moved to the **Noranda track**. This was exposed and windy and much like a cross country course in places, making everyone better appreciate McGillivray.

The Club ceased using McGillivray Oval for their Tuesday T&F sessions in 2010 but the annual 10km Track Handicap event continued to be held there.

Western Australian Athletics Stadium (WAAS)

Described as a “*boutique*” stadium, WAAS was designed so that both track and field events could take advantage of prevailing wind conditions. The stand seats about 2000 with space for around 8000 around the shaded grass bank. In May 2009 the opening Invitational Meeting featured some of the state’s best athletes and also a group of Club members who contested a 400m handicap race.

Club members regularly compete here in both track and field events in AWA’s Friday night open meetings. The track is a fast one and some masters’ records have tumbled on it. The masters’ national championships were held at WAAS in 2010 and, despite some problems with bookings, it has become the regular venue for the state championships. The Club’s Tuesday night sessions moved here in 2011 and the Saturday morning training group also uses the facilities.

The track was supposed to be top quality but flaws appeared during the first year. In 2013 it was announced that it was to be relaid, halting competition there during January 2014.

WAAS will be the primary venue for the 2016 World Masters Championships.

Equipment

If someone were to take stock of every item of equipment currently owned by the Club, and put a value on it, what do you think that value might be? Well, in 2012, the Club secretary Val Millard compiled an Assets Register and when considering the issue of insurance a ball park figure of \$15,000 was suggested. The accumulation of items started early on in the Club’s history and by 1978 it was considered essential that someone look after it all. So the position of Club ‘armourer’ was created. This was a “*non-Official position*” entailing being the “*custodian of Javelin and Shot, Discus and Trophies*” – and the Club’s trailer. The role of ‘armourer’ became ‘equipment officer’ in 1985 and was sometimes shared by two members. Brian Danby was in the post for a year or so in the early 80s and again in the 90s for a further seven year stint, helped, for a while, by Kirt Johnson. In 1997 the committee decided that the club did not need an equipment officer so the position disappeared. Equipment, and responsibility for it, was shared out amongst several members and that arrangement remains.

When the Club was in its infancy most paperwork was produced courtesy of members’ own typewriters and duplicating facilities at their work places. The 80s saw purchases of typewriters and in 1982 the Club bought a photocopier. Documents must be stored so in 1985 the secretary, Duncan Strachan, bought a two drawer filing cabinet and “*raised a file on each subject*”. Heavy use of the photocopier for the newsletter meant high servicing bills in 1988. The 90s saw typewriters replaced by a succession of word processors and computers and a hand photocopier was also acquired. A desk and chair was bought in 1996 for use with the computers. In 2000, a digital copier was bought and also a laptop and printer for the Club secretary. Bob Schickert didn’t use them whilst he was secretary so they were sold off in 2007. In 2010, the laptop bought for Sarah Ladwig, Bob’s

successor, was stolen and the Club now owns no computing equipment. Costs incurred whilst using personal facilities for Club business are reimbursed.

Timing is an essential part of the Club's services to members and the provision and maintenance of watches and clocks is of paramount importance. It started with simple stop watches but, in 1982, the Club borrowed a 'big clock' from WAMC for the Club Cross Country at Jorgensen Park. Asked whether they thought it was useful, members' responses were overwhelmingly positive. So the Club bought it from WAMC at the start of 1983 and used it for Sunday runs and T&F. In 1990 a printer watch was acquired. The instrument stock is added to regularly. The most recent purchases have been a GPS watch (2006), a batch of stop watches (2008) and two big clocks and another printer watch (2010). When the WAAS clock was beyond repair in 2013 a further big clock was purchased. Since 2001, John Allen has carried out most of the repairs and maintenance on the timing devices and he is kept pretty busy.

A first aid box is always available at Sunday runs and T&F competitions. Items are regularly checked and replenished as necessary. In 2012, the resuscitator was discarded since it was very old and could not be kept sterile.

As the equipment required for Sunday runs increased, a trailer was required to transport it. But it was heavy and unwieldy and the job of storing and towing it was never popular. Brian Danby tells how he used to go dancing on Saturday nights until the early hours and, sometimes still in an alcoholic daze, he had to hitch up the trailer and get it to the Sunday run venue well before start time. In 1994 equipment was almost reduced to "*a boot load*" so the trailer was sold off in 1997. Race directors then had to use their own cars to collect equipment from the previous week's run and store it for a week. The timing devices, loud hailer and visitors' table were given to other members to transport each week.

The Sunday run equipment comprises a variety of items. The Club acquired its first measuring wheel in 1979 and a second in 1992. There were three 'Jones Counters' – "*instruments which could be easily fitted to a cycle for measuring a road course*". Some directors now use a GPS to measure their course. Flags are usually used to delineate the courses and have changed from fabric on long metal spikes to short stubby plastic ones. And they regularly get lost. It was claimed in 1990 that about fifty were missing and in 1995 about seventy. In 1997 it was reported that "*Flags are becoming an endangered species*". Stocks were replenished frequently with 100 being purchased in 1997 and more in 2013. In 1990, kilometre markers were bought but they are seldom used. In 2008 two 'Caution Runners' signs and some marshals' high-visibility jackets were purchased and in 2012, official road crossing signs had to be bought.

The Club's first banner was acquired in 1979 and more were made between 2003 and 2005 mainly for use at championships to advertise the Club. The finishing chute was upgraded in 1994 and again in 2005. The equipment also includes tables for water stations and morning teas along with water containers, cups, gloves, electric leads and an urn - which has been replaced several times. Jeff Whittam pointed out in 1999 that the urn was actually dangerous – "*it has a burning smell*

and leaks". Initially a loud voice was sufficient for giving out notices and instructions before the runs. But, by 1983, numbers had grown and a loud hailer was first used at the Christmas Gift run to "*encourage the runners on Herrison [sic] Island, from McCallum Park*". It has since also been replaced a few times. Tables and chairs for the recorders have been replaced frequently. But recent chairs have been very low. So in 2013 Val Millard loaned two metal chairs for a trial. Although they were "*well liked*" by the recorders it was pointed out that "*a small cushion would be handy*".

The Club's first tent was donated by Dick Horsley in 1988 for protection from the sun and sometimes rain. Since then others have been bought, lost, found again and sold off. They have been used for the benefit of athletes and officials at championship events and also to shelter recorders at Sunday runs. In 2010, at the Herdsman run, Margaret Langford pointed out that the recorders' tent looked much like a dunny and could only accommodate one person at a time. A *Healthways* grant of \$2500 in 2008 covered the purchase of two shade tents. These provided very welcome shelter during the 2010 national championships.

Track equipment fits into large boxes, apart from the big clocks and the tables. After years of being carried around, almost all items are now stored at ECAC and WAAS. Track equipment includes items such as chairs, folders, starting equipment, stopwatches, cones, flags, a bell, relay batons and paperweights. Two sets of starting blocks were purchased in 1997 but the next year one set was stolen from Coker Park. After always borrowing two wind gauges for championships, the Club eventually bought one of its own in 2008. It's also used midweek if anyone is likely to break a sprint or long jump record.

Track races have been started by a gun, of a type which uses caps and does not need a license. But in 2012, caps were impossible to come by so Tom Lenane used an electronic gun on Thursday evenings. Athletes were unhappy with its fuzzy sound so, in 2013, a megaphone kit was bought to remedy the problem. With caps again becoming available there has been a return to the old guns.

Horizontal jumps require several items of equipment and the Club is fortunate that, for the past thirteen years or so, Les Beckham, who takes charge of these events, has provided all that is necessary – and more besides.

But throwing equipment is provided by the Club. Apart from the implements, it includes trolleys, flags, cones, marking spikes and measuring tapes. A steel tape, for record purposes, was bought in 2008. In 1979 there was a call for someone to make "*40 field event marker discs*". Once made, they disappeared, along with a tape measure, from behind Don Caplin's car after a time trials meeting. Nowadays, the acquisition of equipment has progressed from being a 'DIY/gather from where you can' operation to a more professional process.

Initially some throwers had their own implements and others were borrowed. The Club owned very few. So it wasn't uncommon for throwers to have to use an implement of incorrect weight. Field implements vary with gender and age so, as the age profile of members grew, more equipment was needed. The Club added to

its stock only sporadically, with some committees being thought to be particularly miserly. When Damien Hanson joined the committee in 2003 as field representative, there was barely enough equipment to satisfy even one venue. So, until the provision of storage facilities at Coker Park and, more recently at WAAS, it all had to be carried between the two venues, mainly by Damien himself. And, for championships, implements had to be borrowed. He worked hard on successive committees and gradually built up a comprehensive stock. In 2004 some implements, described as “*No longer needed. Not all perfect specs*”, were sold off, as had also happened under previous committees. Towards the end of 2012, it was agreed to fund the provision of sufficient implements to cover both venues, eradicating the need to transport anything. And, in 2013, the state championships were conducted without having to borrow any implements. Damien said the Club was “*set up for a decade*” as far as field equipment went. But, of course, it wasn’t!

Chapter 5

Non Competitive Activities

The majority of participants in the Sunday runs and the midweek track and field sessions are keen, after each competition, to see and analyse their results and compare them with those of their competitors. But they also like to get together at other times to share training sessions and social occasions. There has always been ample opportunity for all of this within the Club. Members can avail themselves of these opportunities, without any obligations, as much or as little as they wish – and some do and some don't.

Informal Training Groups

Many of the serious, and not so serious, Club members devote a significant amount of time to training. Doing it with others keeps them focussed and motivated so the formation of small groups has been inevitable. Some don't admit to the word 'training', preferring to think of it as a social pleasure.

The importance and effect of such groups are illustrated by Sue Bullen in the June 2002 *Vetrun*. She had won the Achievement Award and put her success down to the training she had done within three different groups. She said

"I have special permission to speak for Kirt's Friday morning girls and we can't say enough nice things about him. He so often sacrifices his own run to help someone else. He is always positive about our abilities and wise in his advice but mostly he just doesn't let us slack off!"

Kirt Johnson is just one of many experienced members who have, over the years, given their time and shared their knowledge within these small groups.

Some of the groups were mentioned in the newsletter but their existence and activities were usually just passed around by word of mouth. But from the nineties, the groups which had become almost permanent fixtures were listed on the back of the Sunday Run programme. However, in 2002, it was decided to delete them from the programmes "*to avoid any public liability*". That did not happen but in 2004 it was made clear that these groups, though listed, were informal and not organised by MAWA. Listing stopped in 2007. The Club's group and public pages on *Facebook* now tend to be where members find out about training groups. Were any member to feel inclined they could probably find a group to run or train with on any day of the week.

Several groups started in the early eighties. When Lorna Lauchlan joined the Club in 1979 she first ran with a few female members and a regular group was formed. They ran 10km-13km on Saturday mornings from someone's house, and gathered afterwards for breakfast. Amongst the group were Jill Pearton (Midolo) and Sandi Walton (Hodge) who rejoined the Club late in 2013. The group is now reduced to two – just Lorna and one former member.

A group, started by Dick Blom about 30 years ago and including several Club members, runs on Monday evenings from Point Walter. Numbers have fallen from 30ish to about 10 in recent years but they run come rain or shine. Neil McRae says no refreshments follow but that does not mean it's a serious group.

There was also a Tuesday morning group. Dick Horsley, Cliff Bould, Sheila Maslen and several others were training on the Perry Lakes track and Dorothy Whittam and Val Prescott decided to join them. In the following years people "*dropped off or died*" while others retired and went along. Since they lost the Perry Lakes track, the group has split slightly. Some train in track and field at McGillivray Oval, some use the WAAS track when available, others run, or walk, round the lakes or in Bold Park. But they all meet up for morning tea at around 9.30am. According to Dorothy, the group "*celebrates birthdays with cake and champers and enjoys a BBQ breakfast about 3 times a year*". The group has around 18 participants each week and is still going strong.

A "*social*" group met early on Tuesday evenings in Kings Park – a great venue for hill training. A notice in *The Vetrin* in 1983 explained that "*two groups go out, a ladies' group and a men's group. You may run with either*". The year after this, numbers were down to four or five. This was put down to the fact that it was no longer listed in the programme so the editor was asked to give it a mention. In 2008 it was reported that many of the "*Tuesday night irregulars met again at Kings Park to honour and remember Keith Forden*". They talked then of whether and when the group should start meeting again.

In the mid-eighties, a few months after Paul Martin became a Club member, he joined a training group which included Patron, Bill Hughes and his son Paul (president since 2012). They met in different locations in the southern suburbs around Fremantle early on a Saturday morning and ran around 30km. They were gradually joined by others, some in response to plugs in *Vetrin* like that in 2006, where Paul Martin, Paul Hughes and Dick Blom asked "*Want to run down West?*" They described the group, numbering around ten to fifteen, as a "*convivial bunch of club members*" and their activity as being a "*run/jog/walk followed by breakfast*" – which Paul felt was the "*motivating reason for doing it*". In 2012 Paul said "*now they are much more sedate and 10km is about the limit*" but he emphasised that "*breakfast afterwards is an absolute essential*".

Also in the eighties, Thursdays saw lunchtime track and speed training at Perry Lakes and interval training at McCallum Park. A midday group, run by Dick Horsley, surfaced again in the mid-nineties but changed to 8.30am in 1997.

In the late eighties a summer throwing group met at Perry Lakes on Tuesday evenings in preparation for the Saturday inter-club competitions. In May 2004 an announcement in *Vetrin*, headed "*A bunch of TOSSERS*", heralded the start of a winter throwing group on Saturday mornings, also at Perry Lakes. It was led by Damien Hanson with Lindsey Glass as coach. In the next two years only a few attended and in 2006 a planned throws pentathlon was cancelled. As encouragement, Damien put a notice in *Vetrin* saying "*All club members are welcome to join us; BYO thermos and scones!*" At the start of the 2008 winter

season numbers were averaging around a dozen but only a handful remained by June. The next year started off with about twenty which was “*great but difficult to organise*”. They moved from Perry Lakes to WAAS in June but the ground was not prepared for hammer throwing. The turf contractor complained about the damage done. And it was the same at McGillivray. So Lindsey persuaded Landcorp to let them use Perry Lakes before its demolition. This they did until the bulldozers moved in. After that the group hardly trained but a significant number still competed at Club meetings on Tuesday nights and the Friday AWA *Strive* meetings. Damien revived the group in August 2013, at WAAS on a Saturday morning, with Lindsey again doing the coaching.

A Friday morning group began in late 1998, with Eileen and Trevor Brown and Ann and Ced Turner. Gradually other people joined and numbers rose to well over twenty. Late in 2013 the average was fifteen or so. They run or walk from 6am to 7am so that those who have to, can still get to work on time. An item about the group in *Vetrin* in February 2003 said “*there are no rules, except we don't wait for anyone who has not arrived by 6:00am*”. Ann says:

“We start from various locations and visit a different café each week for breakfast (the best part, some say). At Christmas we go to Jetty's Restaurant in Hillary's Boat Harbour for a nice buffet meal and exchange small gifts and cards.”

Ced admits that they once got thrown out of a café. But, he claims, this was not because of any misbehaviour – they just couldn't cope with the numbers. This caused him to ask, in 2007, that the reference to informal training groups be removed from the back of the club programme. And it was.

Sprinters and middle distance runners have traditionally trained on Saturday mornings, at Perry Lakes and now at WAAS. In 1993, a group did speed work to train for the world vets championships in Japan; and in 1995, Dave Wyatt coached a group in which Lynne Choate and Norm Richards prepared for the world championships in Buffalo. Numbers rose in 1999 as members trained for the Gateshead world championships. In June 2002 there were about 25 attending these sessions and the group still meets today

For a few years, in the late nineties, “*Roma's Group*” ran from Roma Barnett's house. All women and mainly ‘single’, they ran for fun and to train for specific events. After each run “*there was often porridge and then sauna or spa*”.

From 1994 to 2005 Duncan McCauley coached and organised training groups through the Rockingham/Mandurah Club for a wide range of age groups from 14 to 70+ and invited Club members to join in. The group met three times a week for a mixture of fartlek, intervals and endurance running.

Started around the mid-2000s and also meeting on Saturday mornings, first at Perry Lakes, now at WAAS, is a group under the tutelage of David Carr. This group concentrates mostly on intervals for middle distance training and has a regular group of devotees that David drives hard.

From about 2003, Toni Phillips and Tom Lenane ran various groups for short and middle distance athletes. They were open to anyone but attracted a number of masters. Toni has now left Perth but the group still meets with Tom, either in Kings Park or at City Beach Oval. These days they have forsaken the cafés and take food to share after training. It seems the cheese platters are to die for!

In 2006, Mike Anderson catered for Northern Suburbs members with training groups on a Wednesday evenings at Joondalup Arena and early on a Saturday morning at Neil Hawkins Park; and in 2013 Jim Barnes set up a marathon training group at McCallum on Saturday mornings, to be repeated in 2014.

Undoubtedly there have been, and still are, many other groups which are not mentioned here, but also provide great opportunities to train and to socialise.

Social Events

In her report for the 1998 AGM, secretary Jackie Halberg noted that “*Our social activities were not as well attended as in previous years*” and cited as a reason: “*Many of our regular socialites were on overseas trips*”. But she went on to point out a reality that is recognised by the majority of members -

“One of the best ways to get to know your fellow members is through the social gatherings we have”

It is likely that the spirit of camaraderie that has always existed in the Club can be attributed, at least in part, to members’ desire to avail themselves of every opportunity for activities other than running, jumping or throwing. But in the last ten years or so, the variety of such events has shrunk. In 2012, in response to reading Joan Pellier’s account of the 80s, Elaine Dance wrote in *Vetrun* that she would like to see more social events on the Club calendar. But Social events all require a great deal of organisation and many individuals have been involved in the staging of them, sometimes on their own, sometimes as part of a small group or an official Club sub-committee. Without their input the activities described below would never have taken place.

Running then Revelling

Just as refreshments follow many of the training sessions, so it is after Sunday runs. In a tradition that goes back decades, members who wish to, plant their folding chairs in a suitable shady spot, take out their eskies and thermos flasks and partake of a DIY breakfast which can last for several hours. And the Club sometimes provides morning tea. Alan Chambers organised it for several years and in 2000 handed this important role over to Vic and Jacqui Beaumont who still continue their good work. The croissants, jam and cream provided in the early days were a luxurious indulgence but the feast of fresh fruit on offer now is certainly healthier and more refreshing – though the biscuits and cake don’t sit around for long. The cost of all this had been just 50c “*for ever*”. But at the start of 2013 inflation took its toll and the price was doubled to \$1. This 100% hike caused plenty of mock consternation. Although Club business is often transacted during these breakfast times, chat is more often of a social nature.

Special competitions have frequently been marked by post event celebrations. As early as 1977 there was a gathering at Art Briffa's house after the second day of the open State Championships where many vets had competed. Others had run the WAMC half marathon that morning or had run circuits around McCallum Park. All of them - 26 vets, 8 WAMC members and their wives – enjoyed a convivial evening and raised a significant sum towards fundraising efforts for the national championships which WAVAAC was hosting that year. And a social was held at the Rugby Club at the end of those championships.

The end of time trials was always a good excuse for a get-together and, until a special “*Presentation Day*” was instituted in 1994, trophies were sometimes presented at these events. At Perry Lakes in 1980 the last of the trials was the 10,000m and the participants and officials had to finish the race with the aid of a spotlight. A BYO BBQ for all of them, plus their families, was followed by a film of the vets in Hanover for the world championships. Trophies were then presented. The next year, everyone “*spruced up into a good crop of elegantly dressed men and women*” - and enjoyed a fabulous spread (courtesy Dorothy Whittam and helpers). Dancing and presentations were followed by a sing-song with song sheets compiled by the Pelliers. In 1987 a great send off was organised by Lorna Butcher (Lauchlan) and Jim Barnes for members going to the world championships in Melbourne - food was BYO and drinks were on sale. The feasting after cross country championships was detailed in ch.3.

The BBQ after the T&F state championships was described in 2001 as “*an important social activity*”. Barbara Blurton was championship director from 2004 and says “*It was not an organised thing at all. Very low key – John Dance brought some sausages and Bob [Schickert] some box wine*”. In 2006 it was reported as being complimentary for officials and helpers with others able to buy sausages and beer. It was open to officials, helpers and anyone else who cared to stay on and socialise after the event. The tradition fell by the wayside after 2011 with the move to WAAS.

The committee decided that the Club would celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2014 after the McCallum Lakes run on February 9th. Late in 2013, they announced that “*Formalities will start at 8:15 followed by refreshments and birthday cake*” – and the launch of this book.

Festive Season Frolics

Christmas provides a great opportunity for getting together and the vets made the most of it. It started in 1976 with a BBQ at Art Briffa's which went so well that it was held for several years. In 1977, the Club provided a 10 gallon keg and everything else was BYO. Ninety folk attended, made up of vets, WAMC members and their wives. It was recorded later that the calorific content of the evening “*would be beyond calculation*”.

The Christmas Gift Run (or “Race”, as it was originally called) began in 1978 and is still going strong. Times have not been recorded for some years. After the run in 1982 there was “*a tempting array of cakes, biscuits, scones, jam and cream*

(*provided by the women*)". In addition, Patron, Bill Hughes, made a presentation to Dick Horsley to mark his athletics accomplishments over a 50 year period. These accomplishments were enumerated by John Gilmour. Then President Bob Sammells made a presentation to Tom Jones who, at 89 years of age was still competing after being a champion sprinter in the army during the first World War. He died in 1992, shortly after reaching 100, but he still holds the M90 100m state record with a time of 24.0s.

When Lynne Schickert took over as race director of the Gift Run she upheld the fancy dress tradition by appearing as the Christmas Angel and in 2003 she was transformed into 'The Snowflake Fairy'. In 2013 she was still appearing in her flowing white dress but from 2008 it was Elaine Dance, as Mrs Santa, and husband John, as attendant elf, who took over the reins. Photographs of the extravagant outfits which vied for prizes over the years are preserved for posterity in the newsletters.

The Boxing Day run at Lake Leschenaultia was an evening event and generally followed by a BBQ and a swim. From 1999, at the Yokine Reserve, there was no swim but the temptation of a BBQ continues to draw a stalwart few.

In 1980 a "*Christmas Party*" followed a night of time trials and was greatly enjoyed. In future years this was replaced with what they called the "*Annual Dinner*". A "*Christmas in August*" celebration was held in 1991 and a New Year's Eve Supper Dance celebrated the new millennium. This was organised by Joan Pellier and was so enjoyed that it was repeated the following year.

Fine Dining

The "*Annual Dinner*", usually held around November, became an institution. The seeds were sown in 1976 when the Vets joined WAMC for dinner and presentations at Park Towers Hotel as a wind-up to the winter season. About ninety attended and it went well "*despite the Beer Strike*". A vets' dinner was soon mooted but it was not until 1981 that the first official one took place at Nedlands Golf Club. The next year, at the same venue, 85 enjoyed dinner and dancing. Speeches made by Barrie Slinger and Colin Leman "*added greatly to the entertainment*". There was an amusing episode in 1984, at the same place:

"Quite a few eyebrows were raised during the later part of the evening, when a number of men were seen entering the ladies' toilet door, and leaving talking of the 'sporting spectacle' going on in there. It was later discovered that there was a T.V. room off the corridor before the ladies' toilet and that the Australia v Scotland Rugby Union Test match was being telecast direct"

Other venues have also been used. They include the WACA (in 1990 where adjectives used were "*warm, noisy, well-fed, moderately alcoholic*"), Pinewood Lodge, Seraglio Park at Armadale, Nedlands Yacht Club, Gloucester Park, Langley Plaza, the Sandringham Hotel and the Metro Inn. In 2004 interest in a formal dinner was waning and it was suggested that it might be replaced by a progressive

dinner. This idea did not generate any interest and, in 2005 “*as no suitable venue was found and support was luke warm*”, there was no dinner at all. But it did return for while, being held at Frenchy’s which, in 2009, became Ribaud’s. For almost a decade, Elaine Dance was the prime mover for these events with some help from Pam Toohey. There have been no official dinners since 2009 – perhaps there will be one to celebrate the Club’s 40th anniversary.

A dinner *was* held to mark the 20th anniversary. In fact it took place a year too early, in 1993, on 5th November, at the Quality Langley Hotel. It was referred to as the “*20 Years of the Vets*” dinner with a Club subsidy keeping the cost down to \$25. Dick Horsley, Cliff Bould, John Gilmour and David Carr were honoured with a presentation of founders’ badges. Garnett Morgan, the only other first year member able to attend, was awarded a 20 year badge.

Fundraising and Fun

Fundraising was the *raison d’être* for many social functions over the years, with the eighties and nineties being the era of quiz nights. Few details are reported of the earlier ones but in 1985, at Churchill’s Tavern, “*Jackie Greenfield [later Billington] showed glimpses of herself behind a small hill of prizes at the start*”. The quizmaster, Barrie Slinger, had “*put together a well-balanced battery of questions*” for the 160 participants, many of whom were not Club members. The evening netted about \$800 for Club funds but it was decided not to hold another one. However, a year or so later, maestro Slinger did it again and, for a few years, a Quiz Night became a regular feature of the Club’s social calendar. In 1991 David Carr was primary quizmaster for about 150 participants at the rugby club rooms where

“The lack of cigarette smoke was notable at the quiz night, with just a couple of (younger, unfortunately) visitors polluting the atmosphere.”

Other events were arranged just to have fun. And alcoholic refreshment usually seemed to have a role in that. The first of several wine-bottling days (see ch.1) took place in 1979, after a Sunday run. In 1990 Morris and Margaret Warren invited members to celebrate “*Rabbie Burns’ Day*”. Jim Barnes, a butcher, made the haggis which was duly piped in and addressed and served with traditional fare of neeps and tatties. It appears that a 10,000m run was started, but there is no report of it finishing – perhaps a result of the other compulsory Scottish tradition of drinking a wee dram.... or two. Winery trips, like the one in 1991 to the Swan Valley, were also much enjoyed. Ten years later Brian Danby reserved forty tickets for vets at a Bush Dance at the Irish Club on a Saturday night – an event that sounds to have been anything but dry.

In the late eighties there were some orientation evenings for new members, a World Games film night and an evening with Bob de la Motte who recounted his experience in the Comrades ultra-marathon. The early nineties also featured a car rally and a bowling afternoon.

Away Weekends

The 80s and 90s were the heyday of long weekends away. There were usually two of them each year, one in spring, one in autumn and a significant portion of the membership attended both. Cottages, chalets, or other suitable (or not so suitable) accommodation was shared as was responsibility for providing meals. These weekends still attract a hard core of the “*Club’s socialites*” but a large proportion of members, mainly younger ones, don’t get involved. By all accounts they miss out on great occasions, some of which are described below.

Rottnest

In 1978 a group of vets, all men, spent a long weekend on Rottnest enjoying themselves “*with lots of running, swimming and drinking*”. On the last day, lunch consisted of the remains of the contents of the two fridges including “*Puffs, Spam with Ham and Eggs, Peas and Beer*”. Only ten vets attended so the next year a call came to make it a family weekend. But, due to lack of suitable accommodation, it was considered impractical – and didn’t happen.

A more developed Rottnest became a popular venue again in the nineties. In 1993, Barrie Thomsett wrote an account of one weekend which claimed that

“Jeff Whittam was seen and photographed wearing long pants, and for someone who wears shorts to the Christmas dinner function, this photo must be a collector’s item.”

When the accommodation was in Kingstown Barracks in 1999, the Pelliers gamely still attended with Joan pushing John in a wheelchair after he had fallen off a ladder and broken his hip. Next year, Jeff Whittam partnered Mary Heppell “*on the tandem cycle around the island*”. A couple more weekends were spent on the island in the early 2000s, organised by Margaret Bennett.

Wellington Mills

From 1986 to 2004, about seven camps were held at Wellington Mills. There were 44 there in 1993 and, before lunch below the dam on Sunday, President Joan Pellier offered \$1000 for “*the first nudie into the water*”. There were no takers. Margaret Bennett observed in her report of the 1998 weekend that

“As usual, Jeff Whittam managed to be in the cottage with a bevy of unescorted women. (How does he do that?)”

She also described how there were

“tame resident kangaroos and Splendid Blue Wrens flitting around the bushes, making for an idyllic location to recharge ones batteries, and to reminisce on past weekends spent with congenial company.”

Maybe there was a change of emphasis over the next few years. In 2003, Julie Wood’s camp report asked “*What do you do if you want a relaxing getaway? DON’T go to the Veterans’ Athletic Club summer camp*”. But she continued

“However, if it’s a physical, fun and entertaining weekend you have in mind then this is just the ticket.” Clearly people were not put off and 45 turned up the next year to what Graeme Neill called *“Masters Boot Camp”*.

Eaton

1983 saw the first of many weekends at the Eaton Scout Camp. The tradition of one night BBQ, one night a ‘casserole night’ was established that year. The inaugural visit was organised in the autumn by Hank Stoffers and, on the Saturday morning, after an early run and breakfast

“it was off ‘en masse’ to the polling station to record our absentee votes and give the voting officer the shock of his life when a mob turned up wanting their cards written out all at once.”

In 1988, Morris Warren organised the Eaton Olympia Games in which forty participants competed in two teams. The Games included twelve events. No.5 of these was *“Toss the Caber. Bring your own caber. Reg. size 1 ft dia. x 19 ft long”* and No.11 was *“Cockroach Race. Reg. size 1½” long. Bring your own”*. Nobody had remembered their cabers and they *“were unable to extract any of the telephone poles from the ground”* so event No.5 was abandoned. But the Games were repeated the next year.

Donnelly River

The spring away weekend in 1983 was organised by the Slingers and Lemans at Donnelly River, where, on the Friday *“a little (???) liquid refreshment was taken during the evening”*. And the report claims that the Saturday morning run *“was shared for about 1km by 5 emus”*. The weekend was such a success that it was repeated the following year – with 62 members and their families attending. But it was here, in 1988, that an episode, quite uncharacteristic of Club members, occurred. Referred to as the *“Donnelly River Incident”*, those involved were sent letters by the committee stating that *“fighting amongst members at a club organised event is a serious matter”*. Notwithstanding this aberration, the venue was used on a few more occasions up to 2004.

Lewana Cottages

In 1995 a surprising number signed up for the weekend at Lewana (between Balingup and Nannup) and some had to camp. After one more visit in 1998, it was not until 2005 that Margaret Bennett, still in charge, signed up 40 people for another camp there. Janis Malin’s report in *Vetrun* said that on a morning run *“There were islands in the mist, mobs of kangaroos, and galahs stripping the pines”* and that evening activities included *“bbq, quizzes and karaoke”*. The Lewana Cottages were still being used in 2013.

Other Venues

In 1981 a large number of vets accepted the offer from David and Pat Carr to “*Dash Down to Dave’s at Northcliffe*” for the Easter weekend. David arranged for the local High School to be used as a base, with members bedding down in classrooms. David and Pat hosted “*Evenings of gossip*”.

In 1982, Ian Sutherland and his wife Gloria hosted a long weekend’s camping on what was advertised as the “*Sutherland’s ~~Block~~ Estates*” in Pemberton and in 1986, 32 enjoyed a weekend at Old York Hospital. Tone River was a spring venue in 1989 and 1999 and the early 90s saw a couple of autumn visits to Myalup. Fully catered weekends at Waroona were a novelty in 1996 and 1997.

The spring weekend of 1996 was in Margaret River and Joan Pellier says this occasion marked the beginning of the relationship between Margaret Birks and Jim Langford. Margaret was so affected by the weekend that she wrote a 20-verse poem for *The Vetrin* to describe the occasion in brilliant detail (Apr 96).

There were also some spring visits to Dryandra and, in 2003, the participants spent their time “*walking orchid hunting watching footie eating quizzing*”. Jarrahdale was visited in 2005 and 2006 and it was said that, on the first visit, there was “*some problem with a noisy group – not part of MAWA*” and that “*someone still young at heart went for a slide down the falls*”.

Recent Away Weekends

In 2008 Margaret Bennett handed over the organisation of the away weekends to Denise Viala and at the same time Ced Turner relinquished responsibility for setting the run courses to Steve Toohey. Peter March took over that role a few years later. When, around 2013, Denise started spending more time away from home, Margaret, reluctantly, took back the reins again but was hoping someone else would volunteer.

In 2007 Margaret had introduced Dwellingup to the weekend repertoire and that was still being used up to 2013. In 2009 Denise’s account of the trip included only two mentions of a “*run/walk*” but about eight mentions of food including pub, coffee shop, café, picnic, and this, on “*casserole night*”:

“The desserts were to-die-for including Graham Thornton’s famous sticky date pudding, with its (NOT) low fat sauce”

From mid-2010 to mid-2012 there were no references to away weekends, let alone reports, in *Vetrin*. But, undoubtedly, these weekends would have been full of interesting, humorous and maybe even outrageous happenings. There was a brief report of the September 2012 weekend at Dwellingup expressing regret that there could be no recipients for the traditional “*best on ground*” award. This was because “*everyone remained perpendicular*”. It also told of the bus trip to Bridgetown for the grand final lunch. There was panic as “*the bus almost did not make it up the hills*” – and that was **before** anybody ate lunch!

Chapter 6

Out of the Ordinary Club Runs and Walks

It is said that variety is the spice of life and this notion is certainly borne out by the enthusiasm of Club members to take part in anything which deviates from their normal routine. Unusual Club events have often spurred people on to do things they have never done before or are not sure they can do. In recent years, with so many activities on offer, both inside and outside the Club, there have been fewer out of the ordinary Club events. But the elation of being involved in such experiences has not diminished. Some of them are described below.

Relays

“On a relay team the people you run with become family” (Internet, Anon)

Fixed Time and Fixed Distance Relays

If you have ever been in a relay team, you will empathise with this. And in a long relay in particular, the large and dedicated team of officials and helpers also becomes part of this family. In 1979 it was reported in the *Newsletter* that

“The Club was looking to some way of adding to the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Swan River Colony.”

And so the Club's first 24 hour relay was initiated. It was held that September at the Gerry Archer Track and 20 runners completed it. The M35⁺ team *“was only there to provide competition”* for the M40⁺ team. But the Australian vets records fell to both of them. Bob Sammells and David Carr were a part of the M40⁺ team which ran a total of 244mls1280yds, and won the Dunlop Shield. Other Club members provided invaluable support in recording times, laps and distances and a group of ladies *“kept the coffee, hot soup and snacks going”*. A full report fills in all the details in the October 1979 *Newsletter* No.89.

Two years later, Dorothy Whittam and Joan Pellier were the prime movers in organising another 24 hour event at the same location. At the scheduled start time, with several no shows and only two reserves, four officials and two others stepped in at the last minute. Officiating tasks were passed on to folk who had just gone to support. The ladies W35⁺ team covered 186 miles, setting an age group world record. The M40⁺ team ran more than 250 miles, breaking their AR. Again, a fascinating report is in *The Vetrin* no.112 of January 1982.

Joan Pellier was the instigator of the December 1983 24 hour event. By then, Belmont had laid a 400m track, so each leg had to be reduced to 1600m. The M40⁺ team, which included Jim Barnes and Frank Smith, ran over 430km thus breaking the world record set in 1982. The M50⁺ and the W35⁺ teams set national and state records respectively and the open team came very close to 400km. Bob Johnstone's amusing report in *The Vetrin* of February 1984, captures the occasion and the atmosphere perfectly:

“In the early hours of Sunday anyone coming upon this scene would view what looked like Napoleon’s camp at Waterloo. There were the rows of tents, sentries on duty, kits hung out to dry, the medical quarters, the canteen, the walking wounded, the Florence Nightingales, the exhausted, the manic, the delirious [sic], the silent observers, the puffing participants, the calls of encouragement and the shouts of direction. All of which would appear on the surface to be a mad mosaic and rich tapestry of mans inhumanity to his body.”

Having missed out on the world record, the ladies were keen to have another go. The men were clearly less eager so in October 1984 it was just two ladies’ teams who lined up at Belmont for a re-run. Preparation had been meticulous. They had special T-shirts and organised newspaper publicity before and after. Don Caplin had put them through training sessions on Saturday mornings for about 5 months. Of the 28 who had started out, only 19 saw it through “*due to injury etc*”, so a last minute replacement was drafted in. Officiating duties were also well planned with a roster listing 2 hour stints. And some did three of them. The W35⁺ team, with Marg Forden, ran more than 353km and the W40⁺ team including Joan Pellier, Lorna Butcher and Dorothy Whittam, ran more than 314km. Both were age group world records. Bob Sammells report in *The Vetrin* that November recalls that “*The team-spirit was quite superb.*”

Despite Joan’s attempts, in subsequent years, to persuade the troops to do it all again, the Club has not staged another 24 hour relay since that one in 1984. But ten years after that, in 1994, they did manage to organise a 6 hour relay at Coker Park. Ten teams took part but “*by common consent due to hot, windy conditions and the fact that none had trained specifically for the event*” action was curtailed after 4 hours. Interestingly, when some of the participants were approached in 2011 for advice about the rules they had used, none could remember running in it.

The Deadly Medley, a 12km fixed distance relay, was on the regular Sunday programme and provided great fun. In 1999 there were nine teams, each of four runners, calling themselves Creeping Codgers, Iron Idiots, Eager Elders, Gasping Greyhounds, Ancient Athletes, Fabulous Foot Sloggers, Doddering Dawdlers, Hobbling Hamstrings and Blundering Bouncers. The Creeping Codgers won in a time of 46:32.

In 2011, Dorothy Whitham challenged the younger members of the Club to do what she and her peers had done back in the mid-eighties. There was still no appetite for a 24 hour relay but Vic Waters and John Oldfield organised a 6-hour race at Yokine Reserve. Four teams were speedily put together to race on 3rd December but, the forecast for that day being for temperatures in the high thirties with strong winds and storms, it was postponed for a week. The W40⁺ team, with 6 runners, just beat the M60⁺ team, with 5 runners. There was also a mixed walkers team and a mixed ‘informal’ team (not eligible for records). A report can be found in the January 2012 *Vetrin*.

And a post script to that race ... the Club’s resuscitator (there for emergencies) went missing. Unasked, Maurice Creagh made a special journey back to Yokine in

an effort to locate it. The rubbish bins had all been emptied but, there in the bottom of one of them, was the resuscitator in its nondescript plastic carrier.

Only a small number of members were involved in that relay but a spark had been lit and it was agreed to include a 6 hour relay in the programme for the following year. Claire Walkley volunteered to be race director. But, despite her early call for teams to get together, it ended up again, in 2012, with teams being formalised at the last minute. Each team had 6 members and the W40, W45 and mixed 50+ teams all set records. The mixed walkers team, including three ‘oldies’, Bob Fergie (77), Jeff Whittam (78) and Lorna Lauchlan (82), covered a brilliant 47.7km. See December 2012 *Vetrun*.

The event was considered a great success, not least because of the great mix of age groups and both long-standing and newer members. Amongst the officials was Joan Pellier, who reminisced about the past as she faithfully recorded the changeover times. Her brother, Jim Barnes, stood for the full six hours, calling out times for each change. Dorothy Whittam kept an eye on proceedings and encouraged all the participants.

Unfortunately, in 2013, the event was cancelled due to lack of support.

Track Relays

When AMA announced their National Postal Relays in December 2007 John Oldfield came up with the idea of a preliminary 4x1500m relay race (a distance not included in the national events) in order to encourage participation. It was put on one Thursday night, shortly before Christmas, and was described in *Vetrun* as “*a sporting occasion to live long in fond memories. Above all we celebrated true sportsmanship and the camaraderie that excels in team efforts*”.

Five teams took part and Australian records were set by the M65, W45, W60 and W35 teams. The first three of these would have been WRs if WMA had not ceased recognising the event. The M60 team set a state record. There are full reports in *Vetrun* (Jan and Feb 2008) and *TFNL* (Jan 2008). The latter also includes a poem inspired by the euphoria of the night.

Some who missed that night requested a repeat. So, in January, nine teams, two of them female, were in contention. Between them they set 9 SRs, 6 ARs and what might have been 4 WRs. The February *TFNL* reported it thus:

“So there it was again – same atmosphere, same heat, similar support and camaraderie and wonderful assistance from all those who gave their time to man the recording, the watches, the clock, the changeover umpiring, the starting”

Similar events took place in subsequent years until 2012.

Paarlauf Relays

Literally meaning ‘pair run’ these relays can be fixed time or distance. The course is usually short and participants select the distance they want to run. Many variations exist.

From the late seventies the Club ran Paarlauf relays quite often as part of their Sunday programme, often being organised on the spur of the moment. Some were as short as 15 minutes. On one occasion in 1985 *“Teams were sorted out by Jeff Whittam (bribes were accepted)”*. Each of his seven teams was led by a lady. The distance was six laps of the ‘Dave Jones’ course at McCallum Park. In 1997, while the Club Pentathlon Championships were in progress, four three-person teams (2 runners, 1 walker) did a 40 minute Paarlauf relay around the Coker track. It was not well supported but was enjoyed by all who were there.

Miscellaneous Moments

Veterans Sundown Run

Initially David Carr’s concept, to promote the club and raise funds, this 9.6km evening run from Riverton Bridge started in 1980. An entry fee was charged and age group winners received awards. In 1981 the proceeds went into the fund for the 1982 Nationals in Perth. In later years, the prizes were drawn, not awarded and funds went to organisations such as WADSA. In 1986 it was a Club run only. After the 1985 event *The Vetrun* summed up the situation thus:

“Originally for veteran runners only, it has been made “open”, had three different venues and been switched from sundown to morning and back to sundown again in attempts to attract greater participation by members. All had little success.”

US Navy Nights

What do you do when the US Navy is in town? Well, during several of their visits to Fremantle in 1981, the Club helped to organise fun runs for them at some of their favourite venues. This resulted in

“a large number of T shirts, etc. for club members, some good hard runs, and enjoyment for men of the Navy.”

Described as *“one of the best of these occasions”*, a 10km run at Perry Lakes, was organised by Jim and Pat Barnes, helped by John and Joan Pellier.

The WACA Project

In 1986 the Club managed to convince the relevant people in the Perth cricket world that it would be good entertainment if John Gilmour were to make a record attempt during the break in play at an Ashes test at the WACA. A track had to be laid and measured and, despite not being in the best of form on the day, John broke the world 2 mile record and scored a *“best ever”* for 3000m for a 67 year old – in front of 12,000 spectators. These were unofficial world records since the official

marks are in five year age groups. But, nevertheless, it boosted the Club's public image. In the December *Vetrun* of 2006, also an Ashes year, Basil Worner relates his memories of the event and says

"I can still remember legendary all rounder, Ian Botham, walking right across the ground and greeting us with a smile as broad as his shoulders."

New Zealand Invasion

In 1997, around 90 Kiwi veterans passed through Perth in July on their way to Durban for the World T&F Championships. David Carr and Dave Wyatt organised an informal competition with them at Coker Park. In her report to *The Vetrun*, Jackie Halberg described it as a "*friendly affair*" in which the Kiwis had done their share of helping.

Peace Run

This global torch relay was founded in 1987 by Sri Chinmoy. Whilst on its way around Australia in 2013, a few participants attended the Herdsman Run. After a short talk by Grahak Cunningham and a moment of silence to ponder world peace, Grahak ran one lap with a torch.

Chapter 7

Administrative Matters

The Name

The Club was named the Western Australia Veterans Amateur Athletic Club (WAVAAC) but the word ‘amateur’ was frequently omitted. It was not until June 1978 that newsletter editor Rob Shand introduced the word ‘amateur’ to the heading. When the word was dropped from the Australian Association’s name in 1984 the Club decided to go along the same road. A special meeting approved the necessary change to the Club’s constitution and the Club became the Western Australia Veterans Athletic Club (WAVAC) in September 1984. This was reflected in that month’s issue (no.144) of *The Vetrin*.

In 1998 it was suggested that the word ‘veteran’ might be responsible for the lack of younger members in the Club. Both World and Australian bodies made the change to Masters in 2001 so the issue was again discussed with interest within the Club. In 2002, Stan Lockwood wrote a letter to *Vetrin* saying

“Further to the Masters/Veterans debate, there is one salient point which appears to have been completely overlooked. That is: if we become Masters, then presumably all the ladies of the Club become Mistresses. Put my name down for two please! PS Cecil (Testo) Walkley will probably require three – at least!”

Bob Schickert’s view was that “*Every other State is now Masters Athletics*” and he believed that “*the advantages of ‘Masters’ outweigh the sentiment attached to ‘Veterans’*”. *Vetrin* editor, Rod Tinniswood, suggested Masters Athletics Western Australia - MAWA. Some heated debate followed which also brought up the differences between those who saw the Club as a road running club and the ones who saw it as essentially a track and field club. Rod summed up the mood admirably saying

“The possibility of a change of name has made some members feel uncomfortable, but on the night it will be the members’ vote and the consensus will carry.”

When the proposal for the change was put to the vote at 2003’s AGM, there were 50 votes for and 6 against. And the committee announced in May 2003: “*It’s official. The club has now been registered with its new name: Masters Athletics W.A.Inc.*”

And ‘MAWA’ is how it has remained. It is notable that all the other states put their state abbreviation first. Rod had obviously rejected the acronym WAMA.

The Constitution

The Club’s constitution cannot be changed without the approval of members at a General Meeting. Because of various happenings and official requirements it has

had to be changed several times. Interestingly, some out-of-date clauses were always left untouched. For example, all versions until 2012 prescribed details of the Club's original "*costume*". Government bureaucracy now means that making changes has become a lengthy and expensive process.

A 1977 version of the constitution, just a few pages long, is reproduced at the back of the paper copy of the brief history of the Club which was written by Rob Shand that year. Amongst the 'Objectives' was one that said the Club had to operate "*under the jurisdiction of the Western Australian Amateur Athletics Association*". This clause remained until around 2005.

When, in 1984, the Club was incorporated "*to protect committee members, present and future, from personal liability to any creditor of the Club*", the constitution was again changed as necessary.

The committee agreed in 2011 that the constitution would be posted on the website. During the following year John Oldfield painstakingly undertook a major revision with some assistance from his daughter, Allison I'Dell. This had to satisfy the requirements of the new Act which was about to come into force. Amongst the items he removed were the references to costume and to amateur status. The document had grown longer on each previous change but this time it almost doubled to about seventeen pages. Despite some hiccups regarding the proper procedures for having the document approved by the membership, it was accepted unanimously at a special five minute meeting before a Sunday run in August 2012. It was approved by the Commissioner in October 2012 -and amended again in 2013 to reflect the change in the financial year.

Badges, Medals and Logos

The Club's original badge, designed by Rob Shand, was an embroidered shield to pin or sew on to a piece of clothing. Featuring a black swan in the outline of the state, it bore the words 'WA Veterans Athletic Club'. The colouring was black on a gold background. Around 1978, the shape became circular but all other features remained the same. Apart from a wording change to 'Masters Athletics WA' in 2003, this still remains the Club logo. The background varies between gold, white and a mixture of the two (see back cover). In 2012 there was a suggestion to alter the positioning of the words to avoid any confusion that might arise – but by the end of 2013 no change was evident.

Rob Shand also produced designs for lapel badges for life membership, round and rectangular medallions and the Patron's Trophy shield. Some were used, some were not accepted. The running man that featured on the mastheads of the newsletters and the running man with shadows, on Club sweatshirts and t-shirts, came from Don Stone. In 1990 rectangular iron-on emblems, described as "*a kind of unofficial badge of the club*", were put on sale at \$2.50. Available in red, black or white, they bore the running man with shadows and the words 'WESTERN AUSTRALIAN VETERANS'.



Les Beckham produced, for a favoured few, a badge just like the original, but bearing the new name.



Uniform and Clothing

Uniform

Original Club uniform was a white singlet with the embroidered shield. Black shorts were a specified addition. In 1976 some members were chastised for not being properly “*tagged out*” when on runs, such as team road races, where they represented the Club. They were told that singlets were available at \$3.75 each and “*it would be appreciated if all members purchased one and wore it at all Club runs*”. Badges were available at \$1 and black shorts were being made. By 1978 the singlet had black piping round the neck and armholes.

It was re-iterated strongly that “*our club shorts are plain black*” when in 1979 it was noted that, at Association events,

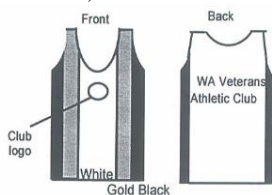
“a number of running shorts are appearing decorated and trimmed in various ways with white and other stripes”

And stringent rules were in place about how the uniform was worn. In 1989 it was emphasised that

*“At the start of your event the singlet **MUST** be tucked into the shorts otherwise you may be deemed to be “out of uniform” and not allowed to start.”*

After discussions and suggestions during 1981 and 1982, singlets were made available in a lightweight white mesh fabric with 5 inch black band around the chest and a black trim, in both a male and female design. The new round Club badge had to be stitched to the black band. The fabric was changed in 1985 to polyester-cotton. For interstate competitions, members were required to wear a “*gold vest with black trim and badge*”. In 1994, the need for both Club and state uniform was queried. But a decision was deferred and 100 state uniforms were purchased the following year ready for Perth’s nationals in 1996. At the Melbourne nationals in 1997, Rosie Kemp (W30) was pictured in a crop top.

In 1998, Club uniform for both state and national championships became black shorts with white, black and gold singlet and club badge, as illustrated in *The Vetrin*. Women's singlets were "*shaped in all the right places*" and crop tops were also promised.



With the Club's name change in 2003 the wording became Masters Athletics WA. More mesh was introduced in 2008 but the design remained the same and survives today. Somewhere along the line the black shorts were dropped. Indeed, in 2011 the committee stressed that Club uniform was singlet only.

The committee agreed in 2012 to a request that Bunbury athletes be allowed to wear their own club uniform when competing in the State Championships. This decision also extends to other clubs.

In 1990 the committee had approved a request to wear a one-piece uniform as long as the correct colours were used. It is not recorded who made the request or whether it was ever worn. But in 2013 an identical request was granted to Melissa Foster and she sported her 'one piece' at all the summer championships.

Clothing

Ever since the late seventies a huge variety of Club clothing has been available. The newsletter sometimes carried details and order forms and items have been on display sporadically at Sunday runs. The uniform singlets and crop tops are usually also available at T&F meetings, courtesy of a succession of members willing to carry a stock around in the back of their cars.

Ordering, storing, selling and stock control is a huge task which used to be a committee member's responsibility. Dick Horsley, Geoff Wall, Jack Collins, Frank McLinden, Bill Crellin, Bob Sammells and Rob Farrell all played their part. In the nineties, sometimes referred to as the "*clothing coordinator*", were Joan Pellier, Jackie Billington, Lorna Lauchlan and Sue Bullen. At the start of the century Sue handed over to Maggie Flanders who had some help from Margaret Bennett and from Lynne Schickert who dealt with track suit orders

In 2005, Barrie Thomsett took over before Patricia Hopkins stepped forward as "*wardrobe mistress*". John Oldfield helped in 2007/2008. He sold off old items, found a supplier for non-designer track suits and advised the committee on how to avoid a build up of stock. Peter March then also assisted. Pat bowed out in 2012 and *Vetrin* advertised for a "*Clothing Manager*". Sandra Stockman volunteered and was welcomed on the website as the new "*Uniform Manager*". In March 2013 the Club held just over \$6000 worth of clothing stock.



To detail just some of the longer lasting items which these people have had to deal with: 1978 - long sleeved T-shirts "*in club colours*" - yellow with a black stripe down the sleeve and black cuffs; 1983 - white windcheaters with black logo; 1990 - T-shirt with collar and three stud fastening, gold with black trim

and club badge on left breast; 1994 - T-shirts, short sleeve or long, round or vee neck; 1996 - grey T-shirts long and short sleeved with 3-colour running men motif; fleecy windcheaters with running men motif; 1999 - caps and sun visors; 2000 - track suits at \$100, two styles; 2003 - new designer track suits, black with large gold and white Vee on the jacket's back at \$120-\$125 (change was mainly because it was the year vets became masters); 2004 - polo shirts with separate designs for men and women, white with chequered collar and Club badge; 2008 - cheaper track suits; 2012 - 'cool dry' T-shirts, similar to those for the Perth Nationals in 2010, white with dark navy trim and gold Club badge in centre of chest. Towards the end of 2013 new tracksuits were being looked into – again.

And there has been the odd mishap. In 2007, there was great mirth when someone noticed that the grey T-shirts that members had been wearing for some time, carried the words "*Masters Athletics*" on the back. Those that remained were sold off cheaply but the next order still bore the spelling error and had to be returned. The promised crop tops finally arrived in 2006 but the sizing was wrong and even the smallest member could only just squeeze into a 'medium'.

Membership

A members' list has always been maintained by either a committee member or, more recently, a Club Registrar. The list was initially published periodically in the newsletter but this ceased when numbers grew too large. In 1986 data was transferred to computer, courtesy of Phyllis Farrell. Since 2008 Peggy Macliver has been Club Registrar with responsibility for updating the list each week. It has been possible, since 2011, to join the Club online via *RegisterNow*. This aspect, and also the sending out of welcome packs, cloth numbers and AMA handbooks, is now handled by Barbara Blurton. The treasurer Geoff Brayshaw deals with the dwindling number of paper applications.

In 1976, still with only male members, the issue of women was addressed. It was pointed out that, in the constitution, reference to eligibility used the word "*persons*". Thereafter, women were at last made welcome.

From 1974, membership had grown steadily so that, by the end of 1978, there were 8 women members and 123 men. Around 1987, numbers "*topped 300 for the first time*" and in the following decade, they hovered around 400. In 1998 it was reported that there were many new members each month but that "*few were retained*" and in 2001 that "*membership is dropping*". It then rose to 490 in 2007 and, in 2009, after another dip, reached a "*new high of 504 – well up on previous years*". Boosted by the 2010 Perth nationals, the numbers rose to a record 524 and this was exceeded during the following 18 months. In 2013, the secretary's report to the AGM stated: "*Current membership stands at 559*" and "*The greatest growth has been in new track and field members*". The male to female split was a healthy 60% to 40%.

At that time, John Oldfield calculated that about 332 (two thirds of members) were 'active' - defined as having competed in at least three of the regular Club meetings (Sunday or T&F) during the preceding twelve months. Those who took out

temporary membership for the championships and those who are full members but do not run at MAWA meetings were excluded. Of those 332, approximately 215 were active on Sundays, 180 in T&F and 63 in both.

Acceptance of Members

In 1980 the *Newsletter* carried the following reminder:

“The filling in of an “Application for Membership” form does not automatically entitle the applicant to club membership. The application will be considered by the committee and be accepted or rejected.”

It was also stated that members who were two months late in paying annual fees would be considered to have resigned from the club and would have to rejoin – which would incur the joining fee as well as the annual fee and would also mean that the application would have to be considered by the committee.

In 2001 the committee decided that members would be sent their welcoming letter on receipt of their membership fees rather than waiting for acceptance by the committee. Badges were ordered at the same time to minimise the delay. But the committee had emphasised that *“Age eligibility still must be checked”*.

The procedure whereby each prospective member had to be formally *“passed”* or *“accepted”* by the vote of the committee continued until mid-2006. From then, names of new members were just read out at a committee meeting. This only lasted about a year and they are no longer mentioned in committee.

Age of Members

Initially, men had to be over 40 and women over 35 to join the Club. In 1993, when the possibility of reducing each of these by five years was put to a Special Meeting, the voting was tied. Two years later, after much discussion, members voted at an Extraordinary General Meeting to make the qualifying age 30 years for both men and women, as it is today. It is the same throughout Australia and Oceania but elsewhere in the world the qualifying age is 35 years.

The age profile was contemplated on several occasions – usually when it was becoming obvious that the membership was ageing. In 1991 it was noted that *“Lots of the regular and talented members are turning 60”*. Around five years later the median age was 49 but by 2001 it was in the 55-59 age group. There was also a large M60 group. A snapshot of membership published in *Vetrun* in 2009 showed that of a total of about 420 members in 1992, 37 were over 65. In 2009 with around the same total membership, the number over 65 was 159. And also *“the runners making headlines are in the most senior ranks”*. Today we have many members over 80 but, in the April 2013 issue of *Vetrun*, Vic Water’s article asserts that the average age of members is reducing – at last.

Different types of membership

Early on, Life membership was conferred on those who had been members for five years and had made a significant contribution to the Club. By 1983, when eight

awards had been made, the rule was changed to ten qualifying years with no more than two awards each year – as it is today. No further awards were made until 1988. Life members are exempt from paying subscription fees but, according to Roger Walsh, treasurer for eight years until 2012,

“In practice most pay the full amount, some make a donation (less than the full fee) and some don’t pay the fee at all.”

Nowadays they are asked to pay the cost of *Vetrún* if they have a paper copy. Until 1991, life membership mugs were given as well as engraved medallions. With just minor variations, the medallion design has endured (see inside back cover). Life members wear their badges to the AGM each year. (See list p159)

Honorary membership was granted automatically to any member on reaching the age of 70. Recipients paid no fees but had no voting rights or rights to trophies. From 1998 they were invited to make a donation to cover expenses like *The Vetrún*. Two years later honorary membership was reviewed in the light of the fact that there were 25 members over 70, soon to increase to 40. The possibility of raising the qualifying age to 80 was discussed but rejected at the AGM in 2001 and honorary membership was abolished. From 1994, life and honorary members were required to complete a renewal form each year in order to be retained on the membership list. Life members still do so today for insurance purposes with AMA.

Affiliate Membership and Associate Membership existed until the mid-nineties, perhaps created to suit the needs of particular persons and, in 2001, the idea of “*Non-active Membership*” was discussed but rejected.

In the late nineties there were various proposals for two types of membership - “*non-Association (Sunday runners only) and Association (T&F and Sunday Runners)*”. In 1999 members were asked to indicate on their renewal forms whether they wished to participate in T&F or not (and so pay capitation fees to the Association or not). 21 renewing members said they did not want to be part of the T&F programme. But an explanation of capitation fees was carried in *The Vetrún* and the option of not paying them was withdrawn.

The membership form for 2013/14 offered the choice of ticking Sunday events or T&F. In November, still having trouble recruiting helpers for Sundays, events coordinator, Gillian Young, is reported as telling the committee that

“a number of T&F members who also run on Sundays don’t put down help dates for Sunday runs. If T&F people run about 4-5 times Sundays, they need to help”.

Annual General Meetings

“Our club has always been regarded as a very friendly club, but, for some reason the A.G.M. seems to bring out the beast in some of us.”

Keith Forden AGM report 1989

In 1975 the first “*Annual Meeting*” was held at King’s Park after a Sunday run and was followed by a family picnic. For some years thereafter the venue was “*under*

the trees at McCallum”, either before or after “*some athletic effort*”. And there, at a mini AGM in 1986, “*Due to inclement weather it was decided to abandon the signing of the attendance book*”. At 1987’s AGM with almost 100 present, “*A discussion took place on the possibility of an indoor venue for next year’s meeting*”. And so, from 1988 onwards, the AGM has been held on a weekday evening at the Hockey Pavilion at Perry Lakes.

Reports to the AGMs from the president, treasurer and secretary are generally published, sometimes in abbreviated form, in the newsletter. But Rob Shand’s 1980 secretary’s report was just short of ten closely typewritten foolscap pages – so it did not appear in *The Vetrin*. In 1992, treasurer, Bill Crellin, recorded everything by hand, in a ledger, and it was typed up especially for the AGM.

Some consider the AGMs to be too boring to bother with, but in 1995 in *The Vetrin*, Vic Waters tried to encourage members to attend, saying:

“Intense drama, shredded nerves, crushed ambition, and born-again hope; all will be paraded. The Vets annual meeting is the closest thing to Gunfight at the OK Corral you’ll ever witness.”

Having almost always taken place during April, the timing of 2014’s AGM has been changed to July to reflect the change made to the financial year.

Committee and Officials

(See lists on pages 160-164)

Under the patronage of Bill Hughes (1976-2008) and then John Gilmour (from 2008), the composition of the committee has remained consistent since 1983, with four office bearers and four ordinary members. Prior to this there had, at times, been three vice-presidents (perhaps so as not to have to choose one great man over the others), at least one secretary’s assistant and fewer members. At the AGMs in 1979 and 1980, the secretary, in recognition of work done, was voted an honorarium. Officials’ posts have included the newsletter editor, statistician, handicapper, librarian, auditor, registrars and equipment officer or “*armourer*”. The jobs of website manager, *TFNL* editor, clothing manager, morning tea providers and Sunday results coordinator have, more recently, also sometimes been listed as Official positions. The ‘Officials’ posts were sometimes considered part of the committee and, in particular, the newsletter editor was, until 2005, required to attend committee meetings.

Until the turn of the century, the proceedings of the committee were reported in the newsletter in some detail, under various headings (see ch.2). In the early 2000s there was sometimes a brief paragraph or two but, from 2005, even this disappeared and committee business often went unreported. After some gentle prodding at the start of 2013, the committee considered having a “*Committee Corner*” tab on the website. This didn’t happen but some significant decisions are now posted on the website and passed to the *Vetrin* editor for publication.

As the Club developed and committee tasks became more onerous, an article in the *Newsletter* in March 1980 summed up the situation:

“When we started, it did not matter that we seldom saw the treasurer; he had little to collect, count or pay.” “We grew and policy changed. careful planning is required if we are to cater for the needs of members and potential members.”

In February 1986 *The Vetrin* carried “duty statements” for some committee positions so that members knew what they were nominating for. The next year positions were described as “Pres (running events coordinator), VP (Social events coordinator), Secy (Editor of *Vetrin*), Treasurer (Publicity coordinator)”. In 1994 sub-committees and working groups were set up for computing, equipment, social events, race programming, T&F, uniforms and clothing. That year, too, the committee began to wear badges (see inside back cover).

Brian Foley was president during the nineties and thought the Club needed a Development Policy. At the end of 1993 he held a “Think Tank” after a T&F meeting. One suggestion was to “create two operational committees: Road Running/Walking (Sundays) and T&F”. Brian Aldrich wrote that the meeting “highlighted the emerging split in our membership. Numbers who take part in both are in a minority”. As a result of the meeting, Basil Worner, Keith Martin and Dave Wyatt formed a group to look into counselling and coaching. They reported that it “was essential to target both old and new members” but that the “focus of special assistance should be on new members”. And about fifty members then attended a Development Meeting after a Sunday run – but very few new ideas were put forward. In 1996 a draft of the Development Plan was presented to the committee with goals and strategies set out for nine aspects of the Plan. There soon followed the publication of an Administrative Manual of Club Procedures and the next year 1500 information brochures were printed.

By the turn of the century there were new issues that the Club had to consider. Bob Schickert said in his secretary’s report to the AGM in 2003 that a number of things had “occupied him during the year”. They included public liability insurance, the Privacy Act, risk management and safety policies. To reflect this, Lynne Schickert produced A Club Policy Manual in 2004, modelled on the SA manual and covering Risk Management, Anti-Harassment & Discrimination, Hot Weather Competition, Disability and Privacy - amongst other things.

Money Matters

The many and varied facets of activities offered by the Club mean that finances are complicated. Several different members deal with money as it comes in and goes out and the treasurer has to keep tabs on it all. Credit Card facilities were set up in 2001, not only for the convenience of members but also to minimise the quantity of cash being handled. And, by 2012, members could pay their subscriptions and entry fees online through Paypal. Since 1978 there has been an annual audit of accounts. Jack Collins was the first to take on the role and after three years it passed to Ray Lawrence who occupied the post until 1998. John Mison then served

for eight years followed by Liz Tilmouth for four. The current auditor, Dave Roberts, took over in 2011.

The financial and membership years had always run from 1st April. But in 2013 treasurer, Geoff Brayshaw, proposed that the financial year be changed to run from 1st July. A special resolution ratified this at the AGM. The change means that the year's accountings will be able to incorporate membership renewals and championship finances - giving a "*true picture*" of the financial situation.

Fees

The annual subscription started off in 1975 at \$5 which included the WAAAA registration fee. The next year it was \$3.50 which included *The Veteran Athlete* but excluded WAAAA registration at \$4. The following year the two figures were both \$6.50. In 1978 there was a joint fee of \$10 for a married couple and subs stayed like that until 1980. Then, an increase in membership and the cost of postage were factors in the decision to raise fees to \$10 (single) and \$15 (joint). A "*joining fee*" of \$2.50 (S) and \$3.50 (J) was also levied.

In 1982 the fees were upped again to \$15 (S), \$20 (J) and new members also paid \$5 "*to cover car sticker, name badge and copy of constitution*". These fees were "*partially determined by newsletter costs*". A reduced fee was offered for country members. Fees continued to increase and by 1996 had doubled to \$30 (S) and \$40 (J). An 11% rise applied in 2007 meant \$45 (S) and \$61 (J). The equivalent fees for the 2013/2014 season were \$55 and \$75. In November 2013 it was announced that the membership year would run from January 1st instead of April 1st, effective from 2014. This was to avoid the "*perennial problems with managing the Sunday run program and with registration of T&F athletes for national championships*". A \$10 joining fee was introduced at this time for new and re-joining members "*to cover administration costs*". Budget considerations in December 2013 prompted the committee decision to raise the fees by \$5 per person for 2014 – making them \$60 (S) and \$85 (J). Country members still pay less, the discount for some time having been \$10.

In 1988 the average cost of *The Vetrin* was \$7.47 per member but in 1996 it accounted for about 40% of expenditure. In 2005 the committee ruled that no fee reduction would be given to those accessing it electronically. This decision was reversed in 2010 to give a \$10 discount to such members – almost 200 of them. In 2012 it was calculated that printing and postage cost around \$20 per member who received paper copies. So, for 2013/2014, all those who received the magazine electronically received a discount of \$15. The committee also decided to discontinue mailing copies to other athletics bodies, instead inviting them "*to view and enjoy the Vetrin on the Club's website*".

Almost every year the committee fights a losing battle to persuade members to pay their subs timeously. In 1994 a third of members hadn't paid by October and in 2006 about 130 out of 470 hadn't paid by May. It was said that "*many of these are T&F athletes*". In 2013, despite many requests, May arrived with just over a third

of members (again) having not renewed. At the end of the year there were still over 100 who had not renewed.

Club registration fees to the Association had ceased in 1997 but the committee agreed in 2009 that MAWA would pay an annual \$100 affiliation fee to AWA. This covered AWA membership for six Club members who officiated at AWA meetings (in fact, there were more than that number of MAWA officials). This \$100 fee continues to be paid and includes Public Liability insurance and some property insurance through the Athletics Australia scheme - but does not now include officials' membership.

A significant chunk of each member's subscription was paid in capitation fees to AAVAC, later called AMA. This was the cause of major conflict in the nineties between those who were and those who were not T&F athletes. The fee per member has been \$7 for some time.

Except for Certificate Runs and a few special events, members have never paid fees for the regular Sunday runs. But the visitor's fee has risen to \$5 over the years. A quote from an undated document, probably from the mid-eighties, headed "*Checklist Events Coordinator*" summed up the Club philosophy:

"We look to maximise our opportunity to collect visitors fees, by providing tempting events of ours, when the Marathon Club, either has no event, or an unpopular event."

It was resolved in 1999 that members' children should not pay fees for Sunday runs but this was rescinded in 2009 with the announcement "*Children to pay \$5 each at T&F and Sundays even if in family group*". Visitors at Club events have been required, for many years, to sign in, to satisfy insurance and liability purposes. But in 1988 an item in *The Vetrin* headed "*Visitors Book*" claimed "*forms not always being filled in and some folk run for nothing – both Sun and Thursday nights*". Plus ça change.

For the weekly T&F sessions, which are subject to a venue hire fee, members currently pay \$3 and visitors \$5 – sums which have also risen over time. These fees have usually covered the hire charges but the arrangement for the use of WAAS on a Tuesday evening now means a small outgoing for the Club.

Entry fees for state championships have changed somewhat since they began in 1982. In 1986 the cost was \$1 per event, in 1997 a flat fee of \$18 was charged and in 2000 the fee was \$5 per event up to a maximum of \$20. This resulted in a deficit and the following year there was a flat fee of \$10 plus a charge of \$5 per event, with no cap. In 2013 a "*Registration fee*" of \$15 plus a charge of \$8 per event covered all expenses.

Funds

The Club has always maintained a healthy balance either in bank accounts or in term deposit. And from time to time members have argued that the money would be better spent on new equipment or activities. Successive committees have

claimed that a reserve must be maintained to finance, for example, events like championships. However, in 2007, the treasurer's report to the AGM

“reinforced the committee's intention that subscriptions cover operating expenditure while the costs for other activities such as State Track and Field Championships and social events are at least covered by charges to members participating in the events.”

The sum in hand was not large in the first ten years or so. In 1984 it was just \$500 but the amount grew rapidly so that, in 1990, it was \$16,000. This was despite the report to the committee in 1988 that *“Our Gold savings account is earning only 9%”*. Those were the days! There have been fluctuations along the way due, amongst other factors, to significant equipment costs, grants received and, in 2012, to *“electronic secure sites and production costs of Vetrin”*. Nevertheless, thanks partly to a boost from a profit from the nationals in 2010, the total Club funds in April 2012 stood at over \$65,000. But by October the treasurer reported to committee that *“the club is running at a loss”* and that fees would have to rise. However, the sum in hand by the AGM in 2013 was almost \$66,500.

For about twenty years, the Club occasionally made donations to charities and other good causes but this no longer happens. The Club made use of several grants over the years, such as in 1998 when some events were staged with help from grants from the ‘Year of Older Persons’. Some state and all the national championships have had sponsors. The main sponsor in 2010 was Black Swan Event Financial Planning and their support continued until 2013. Thereafter, efforts were concentrated on obtaining sponsorship for Perth 2016.

Ages, Numbers and Results

Age Groups

Early members competed in five year age groups denoted by 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B and 4 (4A and 4B for women). 1A was men age 40–44 and women of age 35–39. The category PV (pre-vet) was for men age 35–39. A nomenclature change *“throughout the Veteran Movement”* in 1978 resulted in category 1A becoming M40 or W35, 1B becoming M45 or W40 etc. Men's category 4 and women's 4B became M70 and W70, and included all ages of 70 and over.

The lowering of age groups was discussed frequently but it wasn't until 1995 that the qualifying age for both men and women became 30.

In 1985 Bob Sammells was congratulated in *The Vetrin* for entering the G1 category – defined as *“Grandfather for the first time”*.

Numbers and Results - Sunday Runs

Until 2002, the recording of results on a Sunday sometimes entailed queuing by the competitors. At first, names were taken before the run, often delaying the start, and the finishing positions were recorded as the line was crossed. In 1985 the Club

experimented with numbered “*run cards*” which were handed to finishers in order. They were then taken to the “*official table*” where names were recorded against the finishing position. The run cards were later replaced with “*place discs*”. The run card/place disc system worked well, though in 1993 *The Vetrin* reported that the Garvey Gallop had started late because one of the marshals had gone off to his post with the discs in his car.

It had been decided at the AGM in 1985 that members would be issued with numbers. This was reviewed in 1986 at a mini AGM and a decision deferred. The idea was rejected in 1987. The issue surfaced twice in 2001 and was again rejected. In 2002, when the Club acquired a laptop, Bob Sammells, developed a spreadsheet for results. Since numbers were an integral feature of the system, membership numbers were allocated. The list was made available to members in a folder on the recording table each Sunday. President Bob Sammells wrote in *Vetrin*: “*We ask that you find out what your number is and remember it.*”

The system prevailed for a while but of course the inevitable happened – some members never bothered to find out their numbers and others who did, didn’t remember them. Some felt being numbered was too much “*regimentation*”. It was suggested that chest numbers would be useful but, because of the cost, it wasn’t until 2004 that a trial took place. Then, with considerable perseverance and persuasion from Jim Barnes, cloth numbers were eventually issued later that year. Cloth numbers, of course, can also be forgotten and the committee decided in 2007 that those not wearing numbers on a Sunday run would, in future, not be timed, recorded or named in results. It does not appear to be documented whether this has ever been enforced.

Bob Schickert had explained in *Vetrin* that numbers were allocated “*by year of joining and alphabetically within that year*”. A fair system but John Byrne pointed out in *Vetrin* in 2011 that it neglected to take account of members, some of whom had made significant contributions to the Club, who had died or whose membership had lapsed before 2002. There were many of them, including founding fathers Dick Horsley, Jack Collins and Keith McDonald along with very early members such as Tony Morton, Noel Goff, Dave Jones and Jim Smith. But to allocate numbers to those who, for whatever reason, were no longer members wouldn’t have been sensible or practical.

In 2004 the committee resolved that, once allocated, “*numbers would not be recycled*” and that when they reached 999 the Club would obtain another set from 1000 upwards. But just a year later they discussed the idea that numbers **could** be reallocated – but “*The general view of the meeting was that the very low numbers should not be re allocated*”.

A decision was deferred but at the start of 2006 the committee agreed to Bob Schickert’s proposal that numbers above 200 could be allocated to new T&F members because these would probably not be used in competition. So by mid-2007 all numbers from 200, which weren’t in use, had been reallocated. Cloth numbers from 1000 up to 1499 were bought in 2010 but only began to come into use in December 2011 with Monique Fountain becoming number 1000.

Initially it was the Club secretary's job to compile results for the *Newsletter*; then it fell to each race director. By 1987 some were doing this on computer but others still typed or handwrote them. Results also had to go to the Club handicapper. In 1990 this was Mike Rhodes and, after he received four sets of results all at once, a plea was made in *The Vetrin* asking race directors to get their results in as soon as they were legible rather than wait until "*the muse has struck*" for the composition of the race report.

The recording of results started off being done by a few devoted non-running women but it became the responsibility of the race directors to allocate this job to two of the assigned helpers. There was a short period when the Club laptop sat on the recording desk and finishers' numbers along with the length of their run/walk were entered directly into the spreadsheet. But there were some practical difficulties associated with this and details are now handwritten on specially designed Event Recording Sheets.

Bob Sammell's spreadsheet from 2002 has undergone a few modifications but is still used today. In 2003 Barrie Thomsett took charge of entering the results and continued until 2012. Jackie Halberg stepped in temporarily then handed over to Lorraine Lopes. The Sunday results have always been published, when possible, in the next available issue of the newsletter – although in the eighties they were sometimes four or five months late. Since 2009 they have been put on the website, sometimes within 24 hours of the event.

The way results are reported has varied. They have been listed in order of time, by age categories, in alphabetical order (sometimes with only a surname) and, on occasions, quite randomly. A survey carried out by Merv Jones, on his own initiative, "*got a total of 49 (printable) responses. 32 want strict finishing order, 9 don't care, 8 want age groups*". Nowadays, results are listed by time except for championship and medal events, where age group order is used.

In 1990 race directors were reminded that it was Club policy to list visitors' results separately because

"It's galling for one of our members, who has put in a good run, to find a visitor who might be 25 years old, ahead of him or her in the final results."

In those days visitors were listed by name, unlike nowadays when they appear in correct time order but are only denoted by V1, V2 etc.

A printer watch, which produces a paper tape of times, has replaced the simple stop watch for timing of Sunday runs. Times are then typed into a computer, even though it is actually possible to download them directly. The formatting of times was standardised by the committee in 1990. Race directors were instructed to record all times "*as Hr:Min:Sec so eg 1:03:2.5*". Today, fractions of seconds are not recorded.

Results - Track & Field

Those participating in midweek T&F sessions have always resisted suggestions that they wear their numbers. Recorders write down the names of finishers as they cross the line – and if they don't know them they improvise.

Up until 2002, with only a few exceptions, results in the newsletter were given in age order, men and women separately. Thereafter, each heat was reported in strict time order and in standard format, using tenths of a second.

Results originally appeared in the newsletters, when space permitted. And from 2007 to 2009 they were published in *TFNL* and on the website. They were e-mailed to anyone who requested them from 2006. Since 2009 they have been available on the website only, usually within 24 hours. Until 2012 they were accompanied by John Oldfield's analyses but, now, this feature is only posted monthly – although the committee did note that the *“need for SBs and PBs in weekly results to be reviewed after new arrangements are bedded down”*.

Until 1984, Club members' results from W4A inter-club competitions were also published in the *Newsletter*. But results were hard to come by and, in the end, Club competitors were asked to submit their own results. From 2008, the results from AWA *Strive* meetings were published in *TFNL* and these are now included in the monthly posting on the website, as are *parkrun* results.

Since 1988, a computer has been used to process state championships results. And, almost ten years later, in 1997, Bob Sammells suggested looking into the US system, Hy-Tek Meet Manager, for future championships. He had noticed its use at the world championships in Durban and he explained in 2012 how he

“went to the control room one day and had their chappie explain it to me and also give some idea of the costs.”

These being around \$600, it led to the decision to look for an alternative. One such system was installed but Bob says *“it didn't calculate performances. So I used a system that I developed so that the best % performances for the Meet's Champion could be calculated”*.

Bob persevered and the Hy-Tek Meet Manager system was purchased in 2002 and some members were *“trained up”*. It was first employed in 2003, operated by Katrina Spilsbury who then instructed Richard and Barbara Blurton. The Club upgraded to the latest version 4 in 2013.

Statistics and Records

Rob Shand took it upon himself to collect, collate and report Club results and records from 1974 but the official position of *“Club Records Officer”*, today's 'statistician', was not created until 1978 when Dick Horsley took over. Rob's comprehensive booklet of T&F rankings for 1974 to 1979 was painstakingly handwritten, with updates appearing periodically in the newsletter. The task was continued and extended by Dick, regularly publishing tables of Club and state records for all age groups, all events and both male and female. In 1985 the Club

announced that coloured certificates were to be presented for state records – still often called club records at that stage. Another responsibility of the statistician is to identify all records (state, national and world), ensure that claims are correctly documented and presented and that certificates are issued.

In 1986/1987 president, Leo Hassam, with input from others, put together the booklet *“Club Runs and Records”*. This 32 page publication, referring to Sunday Runs, contained a list of runs, each with map, comments, description, course record and race director(s) for all the Club runs on the calendar.

Dick was statistician for ten years and, after taking over in 1988, his successor, Bob Sammells, served thirteen years. There was some upset in mid-1990 when WAVA decided that no hand times recorded after December 7th 1989 would be eligible for record purposes. This meant that world records set at the 1990 nationals in Melbourne were not recognised. However, as a plus for that year, certificates were instigated for both national and world records.

Bob Sammells updated the state records list in 1990 and put it on view at Sunday runs. It wasn't published in the newsletter as it *“took up too much room”*. In 1992 Bob Sammells compiled a 63 page computer file of state records current at the time and also of progressive records since 1976. It contained *“entries from 60m to six days, covering all road, track and field and marathon events”*. It also detailed national and world records. It has been updated as far as 2011 when it was posted on the website. In 1997 Bob wrote an article concerning records for *The Vetrin* and he was able to make use of his file to report the following:

“Since the Club was founded in 1974, 21 men and 17 women have set individual Australian and World records” and “a quick count shows that John Gilmour has set 45 World Records in five different age groups.”

The following year, also in *The Vetrin*, he listed records for the 50km RRC from its inception in 1987 and it was maybe this that prompted the suggestion that national records be extended to include road running *“since road runners do pay capitation fees and get nothing for it”*.

State record certificates, promised in 1985, did not materialise. In 1999, Bob Sammells proposed the idea again. He also asked that athletes who were trying for records should let timekeepers know in advance. The next year it was said that Bob was *“collating computer records”* and Brian Foley was *“preparing certificates for state records”*.

Katrina Spilsbury maintained the records lists for a year or two before handing them over in 2003 to Campbell Till. Campbell admits that, early on in his masters' membership, he was identified as a bit of a *“statistics tragic”* so it seemed natural that he would eventually fill the role. In his preliminary perusal of the lists he discovered, amongst other things, that John Gilmour's M80 10,000m performance at the nationals in Perth that year had given him his 100th state record and that

David Carr achieved his 100th just a few months later at the world championships in Puerto Rico.

Campbell accumulated all the old pentathlon, decathlon and throws results in order to convert them to current scoring tables and thus make performances comparable. And each year, before the AGM, he provided the committee with the total number of records set during the year and details of all performances over 90%. The records and 90+% performances also appear each month of the summer season in *TFNL's Roll of Honour*, courtesy of John Oldfield.

In 2009, John started analysing the weekly track and field results and began to establish a database of individual performances going back three years – all he could find. With this complete, and realising that PBs are few and far between as athletes get older, John invented the concept of the PBA, Personal Best in Age-group, a marker which most of the track and field athletes have come to value highly. By April 2013 he estimated that the database held over 50,000 individual T&F results. It enables him to compile lists of the top three athletes in each age group, in each event, each year (Club Tops) – reminiscent of Rob Shand's Club Rankings in the late 70s.

The eligibility of athletes to claim records is a ticklish problem and members have always held conflicting views. A 1977 document lists “*Open Records*” and “*Residential Records*”. In 2012, David Carr explained the difference:

“The two sets of records were in common use in Australia. Residential records are for performances by residents of WA. They may be earned in any sanctioned meeting, anywhere. An open record is a residential record or a better performance in WA by a visiting athlete. Dick kept stats for club members. Later Bob Sammells attributed records to athletes other than our members. I remember the club committee agreeing to this. Bad move.”

The term “*residential*” didn't last long but discussion turned to the distinction between Club and state records and the eligibility factor. Bob Sammells wrote in *The Vetrin* in 1990 that

“a record claim by a Western Australian veteran will only be accepted if the person was a financial member of the WA Veterans Athletic Club at the time of the performance.”

In 1994 the committee agreed that “*State rather than ‘Club’ records should be kept – ie open*”. Bob Sammells reported that record claims from non members would henceforth be accepted – but not retrospectively. Three years later he queried this decision but the committee confirmed that state records would remain open to all athletes eligible by age. Bob reported that “*possibly uniquely in Australia we maintain Open State Records*”.

In theory this policy survived for some years but was rarely acted upon. Today, to be eligible for a record, an athlete must be a financial member of MAWA. This includes any athlete of masters' age who pays a temporary membership fee to

compete at the state championships and sets a record at that meeting. A question regarding non WA residents being awarded records was put to the committee again as recently as 2013. They re-iterated the standing policy.

Campbell continued in the post of statistician for ten years, until 2013, when Barbara Blurton took over.

In 2012 AMA made it a requirement that sprint times being submitted for an Australian record claim must have been obtained electronically. And in 2013, the MAWA committee, in consultation with Campbell and Barbara, decided that, in future, state records could only be set on certified courses, that walks must be judged and that non-standard distances would be “*state bests*”. Near the end of 2013, the number of members doing *parkruns* stood at around 40 and was growing. John Oldfield’s proposal to include *parkrun* bests was accepted and at this time he took over from Barbara as ‘keeper of the bests’.

Chapter 8

Collaboration with Other Organisations

Official Club programmes used to be made up largely of events organised by other local clubs and organisations. And the Club has never been slow to step forward to assist other clubs, regularly lending equipment and officiating at their events. A 1989 letter from the Schools Organising Committee thanked the Vets for “*an excellent job as rostered club for the Championships*”. Many other such expressions of gratitude have been received and the Club has a well-established reputation in the athletics community for being willing, efficient, cooperative and competent.

The Association

In the 70s, the only meaningful local T&F competition that members could be a part of was the weekly summer inter-club Saturday meeting. It was staged at Perry Lakes stadium by “*The Association*”, WA’s parent body for open athletics. The organisation frequently changed names, and ethos, and, at times, was kept afloat and propped up chiefly by the intervention and efforts of WAVAC. Many Club members have been, and still are, Association officials.

Western Australian Amateur Athletic Association (WAAAA)

Dick Horsley, was a leading light within the Association, then often referred to as W4A. It was through his auspices that a special vets’ sprint race was put on at Perry Lakes in September 1974. Vets were also permitted to compete in the distance race. Some, particularly those who were also members of a district club, participated in other events too, including the open state championships.

But in 1976 vets were forced to join district clubs if they wished to compete – and when these clubs did not need them in their teams they did not get to run. The WAVAAC committee wrote a letter to WAAAA in September regarding the “*ridiculous situation regarding veterans*” and asked that things be rectified for the imminent 1976/77 season. In November, the vets were paired with Belmont AC but this did not solve the problem. It just meant that vets could be called on when Belmont was rostered to provide officials

Negotiations continued and in May 1977 it was reported that “*vets are now recognised by WAAAA as a graded club for T&F*”. The vets responded with increased participation. That year they were required to provide six helpers to act as officials each Saturday – or the Club would be fined. The Club was also rostered to help in the canteen on Saturdays and Rob Shand was elected to the W4A Competitions Management Committee.

In 1978, Rob Shand, with Bob Fergie as proxy, was Club delegate, able to attend Association meetings. And John Gilmour and Dick Horsley were elected to sit on selection committees for T&F, cross country and road walks. With 53 members registered with W4A and 2 with the Women’s Association, the Club requested that

vets events be included in meetings when other races were not open to them, eg in championships and national or international meetings.

A 5000m event at a W4A twilight meeting in 1978 was a great success:

“50 starters, including 17 Vets lined up for what must have been one of the greatest mass starts, short of a Fun Run, seen at an Association event. The results are as near as the officials could get them under the circumstances.”

And at a twilight 10km shortly afterwards “56 started, 41 finished including 13 vets”. The Club thought the Association should consider more evening events to avoid the Saturday “heat and howling gale down the straight”.

By 1979 Kath Holland was holding her own and “in so doing is encouraging other women to join in”. She hoped her efforts would lead to veteran women being afforded the same status as men.

The vets finally felt they had been accepted when, at the 1979 end of season wind up, the Association, for the first time, presented Certificates of Merit to vets for their performances in the vets’ events at the Christmas championships.

Athletics Association of Western Australia (AAWA)

At the beginning of the 1979/1980 summer season WAAAA and WAWAAA, the women’s association, became AAWA. And it was announced that women would be able to compete as veterans. The registration fee was \$35 for Club affiliation and \$15 for individual members. All Club committee members were rostered twice in the summer season for stadium duty. Two members refused to do this but secretary, Rob Shand, reminded them that “any club needs lots of volunteers and all should be prepared to do their bit”.

With Jo Stone turning thirty in 1980 there were four female Club members registered with AAWA – Jo, Val Prescott, Dorothy Whittam and Bev Wall. AAWA agreed to incorporate age group sections in all senior runs during that winter season. But also in that year, AAWA decided not to provide drink and sponge stations at the People’s Marathon. So, according to a newsletter report

“Vets took on the task with Jim Barnes in charge of coordination – principally to support vet runners but also supporting others. They (mostly Rob Shand) also called split times by keeping just ahead of the runners.”

The vets’ efforts were much appreciated as demonstrated in a letter to the Club from Peter Hopper, current MAWA member who, at that time, was secretary of the WA Harriers Athletics Club.

Vets were performing well in T&F and also fielded teams in other events. In 1984, in AAWA’s York to Toodyay relay, the Club won ‘B’ Grade and ended 4th overall. The 1985 AAWA state championships saw Eileen Hindle coming 2nd in the heptathlon, Barrie Kernaghan breaking the M40 record in the 400m hurdles and

David Carr running 800m in 2:14.6. That same year 3 members won places in the WA team for Sydney's Australian Marathon Championships - Joanne Collins, Alicia Ansell and Frank Smith. A spokesman for AAWA said:

"It's a tribute to the standard of the Vets Club that 3 athletes can make the State team in open competition."

Val Prescott was appointed by the Club as Association Registrar in 1983 and the next year was joined by Brian Foley. They shared the role until 1992 when David Carr took over from Brian. In 1985 the Club was rostered to help with various special events including WA School's Cross Country Championships (to supply marshals and people to take registrations), the Australian Schools Cross Country Championships and the State Marathon Championships (to set courses and provide marshals).

Late that year AAWA announced that they required "*affiliated clubs to have a minimum of 20 members registered to compete in T&F from Oct 1 to Sep 30 1986*" – and the fees would be \$100 per Club and \$26 per individual. The fees were paid and vets continued competing. And their help in various areas didn't diminish. In 1989 the Board of Management of AAWA thanked WAVAC for their assistance in getting equipment into store for the winter at Perry Lakes. Seventeen vets had turned up and, according to a thank you letter from A. L. Rice the Executive Director, they formed "*the largest working party that this Association has been able to raise during my two years in Perth*".

In 1990, vice president, Brian Foley, wrote in *The Vetrin* that "*about 10% of our members regularly compete at PL or run in winter road and CC*". He also pointed out that these competitions weren't just for the elite. But by that time the individual registration fee was \$45 and fewer members registered than in the previous year. Brian said that if numbers kept decreasing "*the Vets may not be able to continue competing in Association events*". By February 1991 there were only about ten participants. But AAWA continued to seek support, asking the vets in 1992 for help with the Masters Games. The Club agreed to "*assist in conducting events but not organising the carnival*".

Meantime, behind the scenes, AAWA, concerned particularly about the falling participation in T&F athletics, sought help from the State Government. It set up an umbrella organisation with responsibility for co-ordinating all athletics in WA. Initially called the WA Athletics Federation, by 1992 it was known as Athletics West. By this time the Club committee had financial concerns about AAWA. The Club affiliation fee had risen to \$300 with \$50 per member. Club president, Joan Pellier, said she didn't know where Vets fitted into the picture.

The Club deliberated for some time about signing up with Athletics West, considering it "*by no means a finished product*". There was little immediate effect on WAVAC and the Club continued to compete within AAWA.

Only eight vets registered for 1993/94, less than the twenty required to remain within the Association. But with individual fees at \$60 it is not surprising that the

Club secretary's 1994 report confirmed that "*Members competing in the AAWA summer season have now fallen to the lowest numbers for some years*".

In December 1994, deciding that there would be benefits for both sides, the Club affiliated with Athletics West. For WAVAC it meant no joining fee for two years along with the enjoyment of being involved in "*the development and progression of the sport*". But Brian Foley pointed out that

"We will probably put much more into the organisation than we will get out of it, as our members are the backbone of athletics in WA, and we have so much experience to offer."

And he was right. Doing away with the simple summer/winter divide in 1995, AAWA designated disciplines separately. And four out of seven on the new committee for Cross Country and Road Competition were Club members – Margaret Saunders, Bruce Wilson, Duncan McAuley and Ivan Brown.

That year Dave Wyatt encouraged vets to register to try to keep things going. But most affiliated clubs were already in decline and at the Club's May 1996 committee meeting it was reported that "*AAWA has closed its offices for the duration*". Events were being run by volunteers, most of these being vets. But AAWA didn't disappear and were still raking in registration fees at \$73 each.

Despite everything, vets continued participating in competitions and did well. In the 1995 Fremantle to Perth relay the "*Magnificent 7*" vets team of Duncan McAuley, Ivan Brown, John Stone, David Carr, Brian Foley, Vic Waters and Dennis Miller "*upheld a proud tradition of never being beaten by a girls' team*". The next year, in the first winter team event, the vets team had more runners than any other club and won. By 1997 the vets were still one of the biggest clubs competing within AAWA. However, it was mainly during the winter season with T&F falling by the wayside.

By then, only one AAWA Board member remained. The Club held discussions with the EO of Athletics West "*re future of WAVAC in the light of AAWA's demise*" and shortly afterwards Club president Brian Foley met Wayne Loxley, their General Manager. With a court case pending, Athletics West devised new licensing arrangements. But they didn't suit WAVAC. As *The Vetr* reported

"Vets would like to participate in the track competition, but not as a licenced club. Athletics West will accommodate us, as a special group".

A month later, in September 1997, AAWA became insolvent and Athletics West took over the running of the summer season.

Athletica

In November 1997 Athletics West was rebranded as AthleticA. The Club was to pay no affiliation fee but registered individuals still had to pay \$50 for the year plus a fee on each night they competed.

In 1998 Athletics Australia commissioned Coopers and Lybrand to conduct a study of athletics in general. Brian Foley attended a meeting with that firm and put forward his view that within AthleticA “*professional organisation lacked professionalism*” and pointed out that, despite government funding, AthleticA was inefficient compared with WAVAC which relied on voluntary efforts and had no government finance. In 2002 an annual fee of \$55 was set, but this was soon rescinded after complaints. However, the weekly fee rose from \$6 to \$8.

During 1998 and 1999 several Club members had upgraded their officiating qualifications and continued to officiate at AthleticA events. In 2001 AthleticA was struggling to organise their winter events so the Club permitted them to share three of theirs. Vets also organised the AthleticA State Cross Country Championships at Jorgensen. It was considered “*good for the club to have an influx of young blood*” on some of their runs. In 2004 AthleticA agreed that MAWA would be removed from the duty roster.

Annually from 1997, AthleticA hosted one of Athletics Australia’s Grand Prix events at Perry Lakes and the Club was invited to participate by organising a vets’ event. In 1997 they put on a 200m race. The following year, when Cathy Freeman was competing, they shortened this to 100m. Mike Edwards easily won and Arnie Jenkins broke 14s for the first time in years. By 2001, the preferred race at the annual Grand Prix had become a 400m handicap without use of lanes – so there was “*interesting congestion at the top of the straight*”. That year, Lyn Ventris and Robin King also competed in the 3000m walk. In 2002, apart from the vets competing in the 400m handicap there were 20 vets officiating at the meeting. In 2003, Cathy Freeman was again the star of the show but the 13 vets in the 400m handicap were disappointed that she “*chose to run in the other 400m*”.

The team element of the summer T&F meetings disappeared around 1998 and the *Strive* competition, with athletes competing as individuals, came into being. Programmes were reorganised and reduced and in mid-1999 *The Vetrin* said “*roughly a quarter of Club members have competed or officiated at AthleticA*”. In 2002, in AthleticA’s Open Championships, Bert Carse, Bob Schickert and Bruce Wilson took the first 3 places in the men’s open steeplechase. And in the Open State Relay Championships of 2003, Toni Phillips organised six masters’ teams for the relays. The W30s won a bronze and two of the other teams set SRs. Very few Club members competed in 2004 but about fifteen officiated. Winter competition proceeded as before with vets usually making up around 30% of the total turnout in the cross country races. But this number steadily decreased from the late nineties.

Val and David continued to share the registrar’s role, but after the 2005/2006 season the position lapsed. It was replaced by the post of Winter Coordinator and Patrick Smith took on this responsibility for three years. From 2003 up to 2009, Bob Schickert was a Board member of AthleticA and, for most of that time and, up to 2010, also the MAWA representative for club meetings.

Athletics Western Australia (AWA)

Another change of name came in 2007 as AthleticA became Athletics Western Australia. A \$10 athlete registration fee was introduced along with a fee of \$5 for each competition day. This included cloth competition numbers, insurance and free competition on the first evening. By October about seventeen MAWA members had registered and this rose to about eighty in 2010. John Oldfield's results and reports of the *Strive* meetings in *TFNL* had encouraged many to register but others just liked the security of the insurance and had no intention of competing. Officials who did not compete were not required to pay the registration fee. The move, in November 2009, from weekends to cooler (often cold) Friday nights also gave numbers a boost. By early 2013 there were more than 40 MAWA competitors participating in all disciplines, with the throwing group being particularly strong. In 2012, Colin Smith was appointed as Club representative attending meetings of the *Strive* committee.

In 2009 John Collier became Winter Coordinator and made sure that the Club was represented at as many events as possible. Twelve masters ran in the cross country and there was at least one masters team in each relay event. But the number of events fell and for the next three seasons only a few Club members took part - insufficient to field a relay team, even after John's encouraging 2012 message that the *"women's team has an excellent record in the 15km North Beach Relay often competing against teams of private school girls"*. In 2013 the Club was omitted from AWA's Cross Country flier for the 4th consecutive year but, in any case, John said

"This season's winter programme is very disappointing as all team relay events have now been discontinued. These events traditionally attracted a small group of our club's regular track middle-distance runners from which we were able to form competitive teams, particularly in the women's events."

The tradition of MAWA's 400m handicap race continued at Grand Prix events and, in 2012, at the Perth Track Classic, Sally Pearson was the main attraction. Amongst the qualified officials were ten MAWA members and four other members volunteered to help at short notice.

The steeplechase has grown in popularity in the last five years. The 2000m and 3000m events are both included regularly in the *Strive* programme and a large number of masters, male and female, have taken the opportunity to compete – many for their first attempt in this event. The masters state championship steeplechases were held in conjunction with *Strive* races until 2013, when they were conducted as part of the Club's Tuesday night programme.

Strive fees were raised for the 2013/14 season with the registration fee set at \$20. The weekly competition fee became \$10, or \$15 for those not signing in online by 7pm the previous night. Two months into the 2013 season, 18 Club members had competed on the track and 8 on the field. Also 12 of the regular *Strive* officials are

MAWA members. Just before the start of the season, one of them, John Oldfield, heard he had passed the Athletics Australia Level A track exam. This doubled the number of active Level A qualified track officials in Western Australia, AWA's Geoff Garnett being the only other.

Late in 2013 AMA were considering a *“Memorandum of Understanding to an Agreement in Principle with Athletics Australia to forge a closer relationship”*. Each state was advised to have discussions with their local state AA body and, although they are sceptical about any advantage to MAWA,

“The Committee has agreed that discussions with AWA should take place to ascertain the benefits/disadvantages to each association.”

District Clubs

A number of Club members also belong to District Clubs and some have been active within them. John Gilmour founded Canning Districts AC in 1950 and, in 1998, Duncan McCauley helped to get the Mandurah/Rockingham Club off the ground. Events were sometimes shared, with regular twilight meets at Perry Lakes and McGillivray Oval. And in 1996, at Coker Park, John Gilmour organised a *“Combined Twilight Meeting (under lights) between Canning Districts and WA Veterans’ Club”*. Cash prizes were offered. A similar meeting took place in November 2000.

Bunbury Clubs

Club member Hank Stoffers was a founder member and stalwart of Bunbury Runners Club which stages road races. Their first full and half marathons took place in 1982 and these events have attracted large numbers of Club members ever since – around 60 in 1990 and also in 2006 for the 25th Jubilee. A 50km race and a walking section in the half marathon were introduced and in 2003 it was reported in the newsletter that vets were represented in all four events and that vets came first in all but the half marathon. In 2013, M35 Todd Ingraham won the 50km ultra event with a state best time. W45 Claire Walkley and M50 Peter March also achieved state best times in their age groups.

The Club fielded three teams, one running, two walking, in the 1995 Bunbury Runners Club, Capel to Collie Classic 92km relay. A dog joined the running team shortly after the start then took up with a walking team and continued to the finish. A full account is in the October newsletter.

In 2005, Bunbury Regional Athletics Club, a track and field club, challenged MAWA to a day of competition down in the country. Their president, Rob Antonioli, and secretary, Carey Dickason, were both MAWA members. The following year, *Vetrin* looked back on that meeting and reported of it that

“Only a small number of MAWA members attended but those who did had a great time (particularly as the city won the challenge.) It’s on again this season, and there are to be two days of competition. Events are 100m, 200, 800m, 3000m, shot and discus – so there is something for everybody. As last time, the Bunbury people will

generously provide a BBQ afterwards and all you need to bring is your own drinks.”

The event became an annual one, referred to as the City v Country Challenge, and the number of events has grown over the years. Lyn and John Ventris have several times donated prizes and extended hospitality through their café. In 2010 a new Mondo track was laid in Bunbury and in 2012 sixteen athletes travelled south. Colin Smith was one of the stand-out performers that year, with two wins and two second places. In 2013’s closely contested match the Country narrowly won – with a team that contained several MAWA members.

Star masters athlete, Lyn Ventris, hails from Bunbury as do about 20 other MAWA members. Those with dual membership regularly compete in the State Championships and some also make the trip north for midweek T&F sessions.

The West Australian Marathon Club

On a Sunday evening in October 1974 at McGillivray, five vets took part in a fixed-time run around the 1000m course. Organised by the Marathon Club, it was the first opportunity for the vets to run as a Club in another club’s event. For non-vets the run was 60 minutes, and for vets 30 minutes – although John Gilmour elected to run the full hour. The WAMC dated from 1970 and several of the early vets were already members. Club members did not just participate – they also assisted with organisation of some events, in particular the annual Perth Marathon. Vets and masters have variously acted as marshals, manned water stations, provided and operated the clocks and organised the medals.

An event in 1999 saw the two clubs in fierce competition but with strategic planning the vets came out on top. This was the WAMC-organised 7-leg, 40 Mile Relay where the vets made up five of the fifteen teams. The “A-Team” was chosen especially to succeed and they did it in style, finishing 24 minutes ahead of the best WAMC team and setting a course record. Jim Klinge, Jim Langford, Chris Maher, Dave Roberts, Tony Heppener, John Cresp and Gary Fisher made up the team. The other four teams (unbeknown to them) were named by Vic Waters as Seven-down, Seven-dipidy, Seven Wonders and Seven Deadly Sinners (the all ladies team).

The Kings Park Friendship Run, on the programme of both clubs since the seventies, is an annual celebration and reminder of the cooperation between the two clubs. WAMC members usually pay for their Sunday runs but this one is free – like all MAWA’s Sunday runs. And since MAWA deals with the (always large) number of visitors, the Club gains the visitors fees.

Some of the Club’s newer and younger members have come from WAMC. One of these is Jane Elton, leader of one of the groups that do WAMC’s Saturday morning training runs in the Hills. Several other MAWA members join in with these. Early in 2013 Jane also organised an ultra running seminar for the Marathon Club and arranged the hosting of Bruce Fordyce, legendary South African ultra-runner and nine times Comrades winner. A sizeable group of MAWA members attended the dinner where he spoke of his experiences.

Others

The Club's participation in the annual City to Surf race began in 1975 when vets ran proudly in their Club singlets for the first time. Later, they became involved in the organisation and used the race to publicise the Club. In 1995, the *"21st Channel 9 City to Surf was considered the best fun run in the history of the event"*. Vets were thanked for their *"invaluable support"*. When the Activ Foundation took over as sponsors, the Club lent equipment and officiated at the event. Over time, when participation increased and several distances were offered, input from the vets decreased. This perhaps caused the *"disorganisation"* which the Club committee complained about in 1998. In 1999, 70 Club members participated. 2011's event was called a *"shambles"* after many runners took the wrong route. The 2013 event was reportedly much better organised with, according to the MAWA website *"Some great performances, but too many to pick out all of your results"*.

The Centurion Athletic Club was founded in 1933 in Cape Town for those who had completed 100mls in 24hrs. In 1985 the Centurion Runners Club was formed in Perth with the same membership criteria. Vets member, and ultra runner, Charlie Spare, sat on the committee. In 1985, seven vets took the challenge at McGillivray Oval - Morris Warren, Charlie Spare, Allen Tyson, Colin Leman, George Audley, Trisha Spain and Jill Bower. Jeff Whittam was *"on results"* and others also helped out. In 1989, the Centurions held a 12 and 24 hr relay, also at McGillivray, in *"atrocious conditions – rain for first 18 hrs"*. Again, a few vets participated and Jeff Whittam kept hourly totals.

In 1986 the Club was asked to organise a run with Swan Districts footballers. Teams of six, three vets and three footballers, did the Bridges run. The winning team included vets Allen Tyson, Dalton Moffett and Mitch Loly. In a thank you letter, Swan District coaches said *"All the League squad thoroughly enjoyed themselves and bettered all previous times over such a distance."*

In the early days, several vets took part in the Walkers' Club activities. Dick Horsley was a keen member and he and Don Stone figure amongst the winners of, the Don Rapley Trophy. A large group of vets took part in the 1997 Rockingham Mature Age Games, competing in cross country, walks, 100m to 10km runs, jumps and throws. From 1998 to 2000 the Club participated in the Year of Older People and Have-a-Go day with Club members instructing novices in throwing events.

A number of Club members have honed their fitness doing orienteering and rogaining. The Whittams were heavily involved in these sports and, in 1996, Bob Fergie and Barrie Thomsett finished as the third Super Veterans Team in the World Rogaining Championships. There were 700 competitors from six countries and other Australian states. Other vets competing including Toni Frank, Dave Muir and Theresa Howe. In 2005, while Jim Langford was the Rogaining Association President, Bob Fergie and Dick Blom won the Ultra Vets (over 65) men's title. Rogaining sounds like serious business, but Jeff Whittam's report in *The Vetrin* in September 1996 might suggest otherwise. He describes the two Super Veterans mentioned above as wearing *"purple knickers over their pants"* and a *"cape flowing from their shoulder"*.

Chapter 9

Performance Recognition

Certificates and Medals

Certificates were issued for most runs from 1978 - 1979. They were made for each event using a printed card with a border which contained the Club badge and names of secretary and president. All the other lettering was done by hand with *Letraset* stick-on letters and numbers. After that time only a few specific runs were designated as “*Certificate Runs*” and an entry fee of 50c was levied. Certificates were awarded in different ways, sometimes to the first three in a handicap, sometimes to each age group winner etc.

In 1990 the committee decided to award certificates to age group winners in the Club’s championship events. And in 1994, Morris Warren’s persistence paid dividends - the committee agreed to provide trophies to winners of these events and a medal to those who completed all events in the RRC and RWC.

But medals were deemed too expensive to award to winners in the state T&F championships, so from 1984 certificates were awarded here too. With Jackie Halberg as Championship Director in 1995, this issue was re-visited and it was agreed to award medals, with entry fees being raised to make it viable. It was reported afterwards that “*Medals and Ceremonials were popular*”.

For some time, certificates have been awarded to each athlete who completes the Patron’s Trophy, detailing their total points score, and all members who achieve a state, national or world record, receive a certificate to prove it.

In 2013 the committee decided that Trophy Certificates would be presented with all the perpetual trophies.

Trophies

In 1988 the committee established a trophy register so that the Club secretary could maintain proper records of winners. The original folder of hand-written sheets survives today. Most lists start at 1988 but a few winners from 1985 to 1987 have been added. Earlier winners are not recorded. Some trophies were ‘unofficial’ so, in 1992, the committee decreed that “*new Perpetual trophies must be approved by a full committee meeting before being launched*”. Every so often the trophy register is reviewed and decisions made about whether any trophies should be withdrawn. A list of current trophies, with winners’ names, is in the archive section of the website.

General Trophies

Achievement Award: Presented by 73 year old Reg Briggs in 1979 for the most improved veteran, this was originally known as the **Reg Briggs Trophy**. The inaugural winner was Bob Fergie, chosen from a long list of contenders. New guidelines for the award were given in 1998 so that it would go to

“the athlete recording the greatest improvements in performance in the Club year ending 31 March” and “Frequent participation as a competitor and helper in all vets club events is an important consideration.”

Latitude was allowed on the latter. In 2002 the trophy had run out of space so the committee decided to purchase a new one and change the name. Hence it became the Achievement Award with the criteria remaining unchanged.

John Gilmour Trophy: Dating from 1996, this trophy is awarded for the best single age graded performance during the Club year. A replica is retained by each winner. Roy Fearnall, who achieved a 95.1% performance in the 400m at the World Veterans Championships in Buffalo, was the inaugural winner. In 2013 it was Lyn Ventris who walked away with the trophy for her 101.65% performance in the 20km walk at the 2012 Adelaide nationals.

Track and Field

Patron’s Trophies: These two age-graded trophies are for the male and female winners of a competition which comprises both track and field events. The trophies were acquired in 1980 (see ch.3).

Athlete of the Meet Award: This trophy was awarded from 1988 for the best age graded performance in the state championships. W50 Anne Shaw won it in 2000 for the 10,000m in which she achieved 92.38% - the first time it had been won by a distance runner since age graded tables were adopted. After she died, the award was named after her; so in 1994 Barbara Blurton won the new “*Anne Shaw Athlete of the Meet Award*” for her time of 2:21.7 in the 800m.

10km Track Handicap Trophy: Instituted in 1989 by the Whittams to let the Sunday runners have a go on the track. The inaugural trophy winner was W45 Jackie Greenfield (Billington) who had never run 10km on the track before.

Road and Cross Country Runs and Walks

The Road Running Championships (RRC) Trophies: Based on the results of 3 races over a total distance of 50km. This event has been running since 1987. **The Road Walking Championships (RWC) Trophies:** From 1989. Based on the results of a varying number of races, now 3, and a total distance of 30km. (See p61 for details of both of these.)

Cliff Bould Handicap Trophy: This trophy was first presented by Cliff Bould [pictured in 2008] in 1978 when 36 vets ran the two lap 10.4km course, starting and finishing at McCallum Park. Celebrating the contribution of a founder member of MAWA, the race is run on a beautiful course around Heirisson Island in the middle of the River Swan. Inaugural winner was M40 Noel Thomas who was presented with the perpetual trophy and also a silver plate “*to take home and keep*”. The website entry only lists winners from 1987.



Weir Run Trophies: Now awarded to the two winners of the Kent Street Weir Run, these magnificent art works are called the John Tarrant and Dot Browne Trophies. The men's award dates from 1980 and was for the John Tarrant Trophy Run. The women's trophy wasn't awarded until 1984. From 1989 the event was the Jim Barnes Run and in 1998 it took on its current name.

Handicap Trophy: First presented in 1986 and based on the cumulative results of a series of handicap races held throughout the Club's year. Criteria, events and method of calculating results have all changed over the years. Initially the series was based on races of around 10km but in 2010 some shorter runs were made the handicap event. Changes for the 2013/14 season meant eight events, of which contestants had to run five to qualify. The winner is the one with the lowest total for their best five positions.

Andy Wright Memorial Trophies: After he died in a motor accident in 1985, Andy's daughter, Anna Cosford, presented trophies for the male and female winners of the Aquinas Run. Since 2002, walkers in that event have contested the 10km sealed handicap **Aquinas Walk Handicap Trophies**.

Age Graded Walk Trophies: These Dick Horsley trophies, for the Racecourse 10km handicap, go to the male and female with the highest age graded percentages. Donated by John and Michele Mison, the 2001 inaugural male award went to Paul Martin. He also won it in 2002 and again in 2003 when he was joined by the first female recipient, Lorna Lauchlan.

Dick Horsley Trophy: The Darlington Dash used to be run over distances of 16km and 8km but in 2008 it had to be cut as a deluge had wiped out part of Delia Baldock's course. She decided thereafter to make the distances 14km and 7km. The trophy, first awarded in 1987, was for the husband and wife team with the best overall results, one in each race. In 2001 the committee decided



Photo 1996

that it would be awarded on the basis of joint membership. Since then some winners have not been married. [Joint membership is now defined as two participants joining jointly as a family – when might we see a man and his son, or maybe even his grandson, running away with this trophy?]

Guess Own Time Trophies (GOT): The *"Timeless Trophy"* was awarded to the person who estimated most closely their finishing time on the 8km Birkwater cross country run. First presented in 1991, it is a work of horological art. In 2001 the event changed to GOT and in 2005 the venue became Hale School. A short run trophy was introduced in 2003 and described by Vic Waters as *"an alarm clock rampant on a bed of jarrah"*.

Jim Barnes Trophy: John Oldfield presented this trophy in 2008 to celebrate Jim's amazing feat of completing one hundred marathons. It is awarded for the highest age-graded performance in the Perth Marathon. Inaugural winner was M66 Bert Carse with 83.89% and M65 Bob Lane won it in 2013 for the third year running, with a fantastic 85.87%.

Fred Hagger Trophy: This award, first won in 1998 by Chris Maher and Anne Shaw, ended up being presented to the first male and first female finisher in the 15km RRC University and Back run – each holding it for six months. It was donated by Fred but it took some time to choose what it would be for. It was decided in 2004 that this trophy would be discontinued as Fred was no longer a member - but this did not happen. But it **was** withdrawn after 2012.

Ted Maslen Trophy: Ted died of heart failure on the 1996 Point Walter run. The trophy, instigated in his honour, was presented to the M60 winner of the Club Cross Country Championships. Richard Harris was the first recipient in 1997. The trophy was discontinued after 2012 at the request of Sheila Maslen.

Stone Trophy: Margaret and Alan Stone donated this trophy in 1993 for the best female walker in the East Perth sealed handicap event. First winner was Peggy Macliver. The trophy was withdrawn after 2012.

Carr-Shand Trophy: This handicap trophy, donated in 1982 by Jo and Derek Walker, was for the male and female winners of Jo-Anne's Jolly Jaunt at Rocky Pool, Bickley. It was held for six months each, ladies first. Subsequently it was presented for various other runs – The Shoalwater Ten, The Women's Run and the Carr-Shand Trophy Run. In 1994 it was Rob Shand himself who shared it with Anne Shaw. In 2001 David Carr (with Rob's approval) suggested their names be removed since the trophy had never been approved by committee. He also suggested that members' deaths not be marked by trophies and that all trophies be approved by committee and have a “*sunset clause*”. After 2002 this trophy was withdrawn and the run became the East Perth Handicap.

West Coast Challenge Trophy: This perpetual Challenger Shield Trophy was presented from 1982 to the winner of the Floreat Beach run, devised by Bob Hayres. A woman's shield was first introduced in 1991. The awards were discontinued after 1993.

Brockwells Run Trophies: From 1989, these unofficial, inscribed, perpetual trophies were provided by Chris and Tessa Brockwell for the male and female winners in each age group. In *The Vetrin's* 'My Favourite Run' feature, Arthur Leggett, in 1996, chose “*the Brockwell's Run, of course*”, saying

“Everyone in the club knows I have an intriguing technique for winning trophies. I don't outclass the competition: I simply outlive it.”

He won the 6km trophy as an M70 and the 13km trophy as an M75. In 1997, a disappointing turnout led to this run's demise.

Presentations

In the early 80s there were a few sparsely attended presentation evenings. Then, after the 1994 decision to present medals for several events, Roma Barnett suggested that the Club should have a Presentation Day. The inaugural event, at Northbridge's Rosie O'Grady's, took place after a Sunday run. This venue was used until 2005 apart from gaps in 1999 and 2000. There were often up to 100

attending and it wasn't until 2001, when Rosie O'Grady's expanded, that everyone could be accommodated in one room. Other venues include the Sportsmen's Association of Australia, Jorgensen Park and the Metro Inn. The last of these, first arranged by Elaine Dance in 2006, followed Jacqueline Billington's run at Bassendean. After 4 years at the Metro Inn the event went to Miss Maud's and continued there through 2013, usually in September.

Trophies presented at this event included those for the Road Running and Road Walking Championships, the Half Marathon, Mill Point Road Championships (until 2012, see ch.3) and the Jim Barnes Trophy. The John Gilmour Trophy, Achievement Award, Handicap Trophy and Patron's Trophy were presented at the AGM. Other presentations were made at the events themselves or soon after.

The financial year change means that the AGM will be held in July from 2014. So the committee decided, in principle, that winter trophies could be presented at the AGM and summer season T&F trophies at the State Championships. The May 2013 committee meeting minutes recorded that the 2013 Presentation Day was "*likely to be the last*". Only 43 attended the event that September, but committee meeting minutes recorded that "*all enjoyed the day*".

External Awards

Veterans/Masters organisations

In 1975, the Club's most famous athlete, John Gilmour, won the International Veterans Association world track and field award for the 55-60 age group and in 2009 he was inducted into the AMA's inaugural Hall of Fame.

AMA Merit Awards, for services to athletics, were presented to Brian Foley (in 2002) and Jackie Halberg (in 2007). Nine Club members have won 24 awards "*for outstanding performances during the year*": Lyn Ventris (9), David Carr (6), Peggy Macliver (3), Pat Carr, Lynne Choate, Byrony Glass, Mark Jeffery, Anne Shaw and Lorraine Lopes. And Administration/Officials Awards went to Brian Foley (2003) and Bob Schickert (2004). Some of these members, along with Raema McMillan, David Clive, Mark Hamilton, Greg Urbanowicz and Roy Fearnall, also contributed to the total of 20 awards for top performances at national championships. Awards are presented at the championships dinner. Categories and winners of AMA Awards can be viewed on the AMA website.

In 2011 and 2012, Lyn Ventris was voted Best Masters Athlete of the year by IAAF/WMA. She was presented with the awards at gala dinners in Monaco and Barcelona where she rubbed shoulders with Sally Pearson and Usain Bolt. David Carr was nominated for this award in 2013 by Oceania but it was won by American sprinter, Charles Allie.

The Association and Athletics Australia

The governing body of athletics in WA has always recognised the contribution made by members of the Club. Old records are hard to come by but, in 1995, the AAWA honoured Charlie Spare M55 with a Merit Award for his service to

athletics over 40 years, as an athlete and official. Charlie was considered to be “*a totally reliable and conscientious official, whose humour, good nature and cooperative manner have won him many friends.*”

In 2003, AA instituted Gold Service Awards for more than thirty years’ service as officials. Recipients include Val Prescott (2003), David Carr (2006) and Bruce Wilson (2010). And in 2012, AA and AWA jointly presented Australian Athletics Awards to Bob Chalmers and Jackie Halberg, who each received gold awards for 30 years’ service, Kate Glass silver for 20 years’ service and Henri Cortis, Lynne Schickert and Bob Schickert bronze for 10 years’ service.

Life Membership of the Association has been conferred on a number of Club members – David Carr, Patricia Carr, Bob Chalmers, Brian Foley (dec), John Gilmour, Jackie Halberg, Ross Holland, Dick Horsley (dec), Val Prescott, Margaret Saunders, June Streeter and Bruce Wilson.

WALAA

Bob Chalmers received a WALAA Merit Award in 1985. In addition to being a key official at Association events he has various coaching qualifications and has held numerous offices within Little Athletics.

Sports Awards

Amongst John Gilmour’s awards is WA’s Associated Sporting Committee’s Sportsman of the Year 1975, when he was hailed as an “*extraordinary example to other sportsmen*”. And, in recognition of a lifetime of achievements, he was awarded the Commonwealth Sport Achievement Award in 2002. Information about his other awards is detailed in his book, *Lasting the Distance*.

Karen Gobby, described as “*one of the best women distance runners of her age in Australia*” was selected as Times Sports Star of the Month in April 1990 for her performances in the vets championships in Melbourne. She took four gold medals – in the 10,000m, 5000m, 1500m and 10km cross country events.

Peggy Macliver was in the 4x400m world record breaking W55 relay team at the Gateshead World Veterans Championships in 1999. The Australian Sports Industry chose this as the best veteran team performance in all sports. Jackie Halberg, Bob Schickert and Bob Chalmers were each awarded the Australian Sports Medal (ASM) in 2000 for services as volunteers and servants of their sport. In 2001 Bob Chalmers was chosen as Sports Volunteer of the Year. In 2004, at the WMA Non-Stadia Championships in Auckland, Lynne Schickert was in the W60, 20km Road Walk Team which received an Australian Sports Award in the Masters Sport Award - Team Achievement section.

Individuals Elected to Higher Office

Members have always contributed to the organisation of the Club and of other organisations locally. For example, Dick Horsley was president of WAAAA in the seventies. And some members have served the national, regional and world masters’ bodies. In 1974 Cliff Bould was elected as one of two vice-presidents of

the newly formed AAVAC and he served as VP again in the early eighties. In 1996, Brian Foley was elected secretary and he continued until 2005.

At first, the president of the state club hosting the national championships was automatically appointed president of AAVAC for that year. Cliff Bould (1976), Bob Sammells (1981) and Keith Forden (1988) each held the office under this arrangement. After that, presidents were elected. In 2003, when AAVAC had become AMA, Lynne Schickert became the first woman to hold this office. In 2008, with Lynne in her 5th year in the role, Bob Schickert was elected to the board of AMA. So, as was claimed in *Vetrun*, our state played “*a key role in directing Masters Athletics throughout the nation*”. Lynne was president until 2009 and then she remained on the board until 2013. Bob was still in his post for 2013/2014.

Lynne has been on the Oceania Council since 2004 and was elected as Oceania delegate to WMA’s Women’s Committee in 2007. Bob was elected secretary of the Oceania Association in 2008 and in 2009 Lynne was elected as regional delegate to the WMA Council itself. They still occupy these positions. Late in 2013, Lynne and Bob were the only nominations, for president and secretary respectively, of OMA and both were duly elected in January 2014.

Individuals Representing their Country

Who wouldn’t be proud to be chosen to represent their country? Amongst the Club members who have had this honour are Cliff Bould, who was selected in 1984 to represent Great Britain at the European Vets T&F Championships in the M65, 5k and 10km; Karen Gobby who represented Australia in the world half marathon championships in Britain in 1992; Bernadette Benson and David Kennedy, selected for Australia in 2012 in the World & European 24-hour Championship; Jodie Osborne, selected for Australia in the 2013 100km World Championships – an event subsequently cancelled due to venue problems.

As a 19 year old, Jim Langford twice ran for Australia in open cross country competition and won Australian open marathon and cross country titles. He went on to become one of the Club’s fastest distance runners and, in 2008, was honoured by being one of the first athletes inducted by Victoria Park into its Walk of Fame.

The 2000 Sydney Olympics provided the opportunity for some Club members to be part of a global event. Amongst them were Brian Foley, a starter for the Paralympics and Bob Sammells, a volunteer in Media Access Control at the Olympics. Included amongst the torch bearers in the Olympic torch relay were John Gilmour, Robert Young, Noela Medcalf, Lesley Romeo, Lynne Choate, Gary Clark, Barrie Kernaghan, Ross Parker, Phyllis Head, Mary Heppell and David Clive. Bob Chalmers officiated at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne in 2006 where Brian Foley was also a call room official. Bob also officiated at the Paralympics in Christchurch in 2011.

John and Christine Oldfield were proud to be selected as representatives of both the UK and Australia on the team of international officials for the WMA Championships in Brazil in 2013.

Australian team managers are always required for the world championships and Lynne and Bob Schickert are amongst those who have been selected for these roles. Both served in Brisbane in 2001, Lynne in Puerto Rico in 2003 and Bob in San Sebastian in 2005.

Chapter10

World Record Breakers

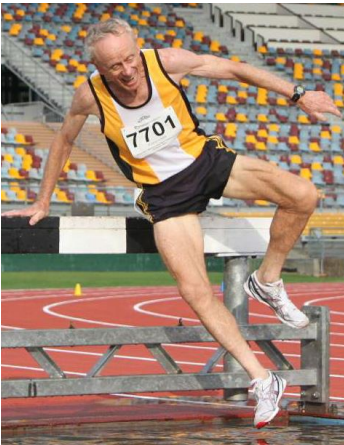
Individual

The Club is privileged to count amongst its members, past and present, some truly world class athletes. Knowing them and competing alongside them has been a great inspiration for other members. According to the website archive of progressive records there are four men and seven women who have set or broken individual world records or world bests in 'standard' events while they were members of the Club. As with any large quantity of data, there is always the small possibility of errors or omissions, especially when collected over a span of forty years. But the details which follow are hopefully accurate.

Below, with the eleven world-beating athletes in alphabetical order, is a brief summary of some of their wonderful achievements. The total number of world records achieved in each event, and whether they are still current at the end of 2013, is in brackets. Those with multiple records in the same event are either for different age groups or for breaking their own records. For full details of dates, times, distances, venues etc. - have a look at the website archive.

It is interesting to note, whilst considering records, that of the men mentioned below, three rank amongst the eighteen Club members (two of them women) whose forty two state records from the seventies still stand today.

David Carr: 800m (3- inc. 2 equal times, all still current), 2000m steeplechase (4, 2 still current), mile (1 still current)



David's achievements are legendary and he is the only founder member of the Club who still competes. He has amassed a vast quantity of medals and, apart from his world records, he frequently sets or breaks state and national records in middle distance and steeplechase events as well as in sprints, the outdoor pentathlon and team relays. Up until 2012 he had won the Patron's Trophy eighteen times and has been honoured with more than just a handful of AMA awards. He has also served the Club well in an administrative capacity, having been president, convenor of the LOC for the 1989 national championships and inaugural editor of the Club newsletter. Within days of turning eighty in the middle of 2012, he began a successful assault on the M80 records, adding more world records to his collection. And to cap it all he was nominated by Oceania in 2013 for the IAAF/WMA award for Masters Athlete of the Year.

Patricia Carr: Triple jump (1)



Pat initially supported husband David and helped at events, but then joined the Club in 1980 as a novice athlete. From modest beginnings she went on to gain many medals along with state and national records in both sprints and jumps. She holds Australian records in three consecutive age groups in triple jump and two in the long jump. She also became quite a competent thrower and her name is engraved twice on the Patron's Trophy. Her W55 triple jump world record, earned in Melbourne, is her most memorable achievement. In 2012, when she turned eighty, she continued to keep officials and the Club statistician busy, taking several records in her new age group.

Lynn Carter: Hammer (1)

Lynn's time as a Club member was brief but she demonstrated that she was a sprinter as well as an accomplished hammer thrower. In 1989, after her W40 world record throw at the nationals in Perth, the *West Australian* newspaper was sufficiently impressed to report her achievement. She had broken the previous record, held by a Victorian, by over 3m.

John Gilmour: 800m (3), 1500m (5), 1 mile (1), 3000m (4), 5000m (7), 10,000m (7), half marathon (2, 1 still current), Marathon (3), 1 hour (4, 3 still current)

John was one of the state's top distance runners in the forties and fifties but his achievements on the world stage came as a veteran. They are well documented in two books and they are hard to summarise in just a few words. He has held countless national and state records, some of which still stand today and he had a habit of breaking records by a significant amount. In setting his still current half marathon world record (now called a 'best') in 1989 he took almost ten minutes off the M70 time. At the 1979 World Vets Athletics Championships in Hanover, with five golds and a WR, he was dubbed "*star of the games*". As a founder of the Club he always played his part in the administration. He was Club vice president for six years and served on the committee for the nationals in Perth in 1977. In 2009 he was inducted as one of the three inaugural members of the Australian Masters Athletics Hall of Fame. He is presently Club Patron and well into his nineties but his interest in the club is as strong as ever.



Eileen Hindle: 80m hurdles (1), triple jump (2)

Eileen joined the Club in 1981 as a W30 athlete and proved to be outstanding in sprints, hurdles and jumps. She competed in almost every national and world veterans' championships. At the Oceania championships in Norfolk Island in 1992 she recorded six first places in six events. In 1985 she was selected as AAVAC representative on the voting panel for the Australian Sports Awards. Injuries put an end to her competing but she turned up at one of the ECAC track and field sessions in December 2011 to say hello and reminisce with old friends. One of these commented "*she was like poetry going over the hurdles or in the jumps pit – a real natural*". She still holds 18 state records and 3 Australian records.



Dick Horsley: 1500m walk (1), 10km road walk (3)



Dick was one of the founder members of the Club and provided an important link with WAAAA. As far back as 1956 he had been an official at the Olympic Games in Melbourne and his continuing officiating experience with WAAAA was invaluable to the fledgling Club. He started as a middle distance runner but later took up race walking with considerable success. In 1984, just one day after his 73rd birthday, he took part in the open division of the 3000m walk at Perry Lakes. Out of a field of 14 he came 3rd. In 1992, nearing 80, he was said to be "*still among the most active, and vigorous, of club members*". He passed away towards the end of 1996 and, in the subsequent issue of *The Vetrin*, the editor Richard Harris reported that

"Probably the only person who was comfortable at the funeral of Vet Dick Horsley in December was Dick himself. He was dressed for Glory in his WA Vets' track suit lying in his box over which was draped the Australian flag."

Alan Merrett: 3000m steeplechase (1)

Alan was a Club member from the 70s and, according to Dick Horsley, he was "*one of Australia's leading distance runners*". He competed at world level in masters' cross country events and in T&F championships. David Carr remembers that he "*was a fine steeplechaser*". His WR came at the world championships in Gothenberg in 1977. He was an athletics official and officiated at the Commonwealth Games in 1962. He was also interested in sailing and, sadly, it is reported that he took his boat out, solo, from a Perth metropolitan ramp one day and never returned.



Margaret Robinson: 2000m steeplechase (1)



Having brothers like Jim and Fred Langford perhaps meant it was inevitable that Margaret would also shine in athletics. Her repertoire ranged from 800m all the way up to marathon. For around two decades, from 1982, she broke many state and some national records within several age groups and in nine different events. Her state 10,000m W60 record was only broken in 2006 – by Peggy Macliver. Her W50 WR came in 1990 at the nationals in Melbourne.

Antoinette Shaw: 2000m steeplechase (7)

Anne, as she was known, joined the Club in 1989 and immediately began to make her mark on the record books, regularly achieving performances of over 90%. Her world records, gathered over three years, were all in the W40 2000m steeplechase. She competed in the 800m and all distances up to marathon but her collection of state and national records covered events from 1500m up to 10,000m. In the latter, she still holds the W50 Australian record. She was first lady home in the 1997 Perth Marathon, her first, in a time of 3:01:19. And in Sydney, three years later, managed 3:06:53, after what she herself described in *The Vetrin* as “an embarrassing bowel collapse less than half way through”. In 1999 she was awarded the AAVAC middle distance/steeplechase trophy. She died in 2003 and in 2004 the Club decided to name the Athlete of the Meet trophy after her.



Lyn Ventris: 3000m walk (4, three still current), 3000m walk, indoor (1, still current), 5000m walk (8, two still current), 10km walk (track & road, 6, three still current), 20km road walk (8, three still current, including the one as a W55 which she broke by about 10 minutes in 2012)



Lyn, based in Bunbury, joined the Club in 1999 and, that same year, went to Canberra and won two golds at the nationals. In 2000, as a W40, she began her record breaking performances. In 2001 she was considered to be WA's fifth best athlete. She has also received many AMA awards for her remarkable successes in race walking.

Everyone thought that the jewel in her crown was the IAAF/WMA award as female Masters Athlete of the Year in 2011 – until she won the award again for 2012. She continued her winning ways in Finland at the 2012 Masters Indoor Championships with a world best and a

world record. Wilma Perkins, Oceania President, said at the start of Lyn's 2012 WMA/IAAF award nomination

“Lyn Ventris has had an outstanding 12 months, setting an incredible eleven world records and winning two gold medals, both in world record times, in the W55 category at the WMA Indoor Championships.”

Dorothy Whittam: Triple jump (1)

In the late 70s, soon after her husband Jeff joined the Club, Dorothy decided that *“if you can't beat them, join them”*. And she turned out to be a good all-round athlete. She has held state records and the odd national one in several age groups and in a variety of events including sprints, hurdles, walks, jumps and throws. Her WR triple jump was in 1987 at the world championships in Melbourne. Although she thinks she broke it again in 1989, it doesn't appear to be documented. She won the pentathlon championships three years in a row, was prime mover in getting the 24-hour relay off the ground in the mid-80s and was part of the race walking team in the 1996 Capel to Collie Classic relay. She has undertaken officiating duties and has provided refreshments at various social events. With Jeff she organises the Club's annual 10km Track Handicap.



And someone who must also be mentioned

Byrony Glass made an impact even before she joined the Club at age 30 and as soon as she was a member she rewrote the state record books in every throw but the javelin. At the Nationals in Melbourne in 2012, just nine days after turning 35, she set an Australian record in the hammer throw. And, with a prodigious throw of 17.29m, broke, by about 25cm, the world record for the weight throw set the previous year. It was broken almost immediately so she decided not to submit a world record claim, confident that she would soon better the new mark. And, in 2013, she did, with an 18.02m throw. Record claims were submitted, but although it has been accepted as a state and Australian record, it has not been ratified by WMA.



Other individual world records

After joining the Club for the 1993/94 season, Barbara Blurton moved east, returning to Perth in 2001. She set WRs but because she was a Victorian athlete at the time, she isn't mentioned above. But her achievements are no less worthy of note. Within a month of each other in 1996, she set two WRs in the 800m. She still holds a clutch of WA state records. She is also the current W45 European



record holder for 400m set in 1995 and the W45 UK record holder for 800m. She is a past president of the Club and has organised the state championships for ten years. Unfortunately, ongoing injuries and health problems over a number of years put a hold on her continuing success on the track.

Relay and Other World Marks



David Carr and Peggy Macliver (pictured) hold current WRs for the 4x400m relay. Barbara Blurton also held a WR in that event and also in the 4x100m relay. The Club's M80 team, comprising Stan Lockwood, Cecil Walkley, Vic Beaumont and Irwin Barrett-Lennard still holds the WR for the 4x800m set in 2010. Stan, who is Club number 7 and Bob Hayres, number 4, are amongst the numerous members who have run in 4x1500m relay teams which have set or broken what should, arguably, be considered as world records or bests. But, as former statistician Campbell Till said, "*The 4x1500m is still in WMA limbo land*".

In an issue of *The Vetrin* in 1997 statistician Bob Sammells wrote

"Cliff Bould still holds an age 54 World Record for the One Hour run. The late Dick Horsley held many road walk World Best times."

These road walks were distances of 1 mile, 8km, 15km and 16km. Along with the one hour run they are not 'standard' events, so the Veterans/Masters body does not list records. But someone, somewhere has been keeping note. There are also other members with world records for events which are out of the ordinary. In 2003 it was mentioned in committee that

"The club currently has 3 world record holders – John Gilmour with several, George Audley has a few and the third is the WAVAC M40 24hr relay record set in 1983."

John Gilmour's haul of world records includes the 15,000m, 10 miles and 20 miles, whilst George Audley's includes events of 48 hours (he beat the WR by 12kms) and 6 days (beating the WR for M65 by 34 km). World records were set by both the men and the women in 24 hour relay teams in 1981, 1983 and 1984. These, and more, are detailed on the website in the Records section.

Chapter 11

Marvellous Members

Right from the start the Club has drawn members who lead fascinating and amazing lives. Their personalities and experiences have contributed greatly, not only to the Club itself but to the camaraderie and the bonds which have been forged and have endured, some through almost four decades, between the members. If told, their stories would occupy several volumes. The preceding chapters have offered just a few brief tasters and some more follow.

In 1972 Cliff Bould, John Gilmour, Colin Junner and Wally McCabe went on a European tour, competing in England and Scandinavia before going on to the first World Veterans Championships in West Germany. In the AMA's *Age is No Barrier*, these four men were hailed as “*trailblazers*” for the sport within Australia. Following in their footsteps, later members have continued to find the attraction of distant or unusual events equally irresistible.

In 1987 a group of eleven Club members competed in the London Marathon. They sent back a telex with results saying

“WEATHER FINE AND COOL. WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE WITH GOOD PARTICIPATION, VICE PRESIDENT ALIVE AND WELL AND MIXING WITH ROYALTY”

Times ranged from Joan Pellier 4:24 to Colin Leman 2:59 with the Fordens, the Slingers, Sandi Walton, Brian Danby, Maurice Johnston, Vic Beaumont and Garnet Morgan in between.

‘Pro races’ have always been popular with a small group of members. In 1992, Lynne Choate and Norm Richards competed in the Mazenod professional Gift races. Norm won the Kalamunda Toyota 70m sprint off a 16m handicap and Lynne was the first woman to win the Bunnings sponsored race, beating Dean Capobianco in 12.23s off a 25.5m handicap. In July 1997, a long report in *The Vetrin* features the York Pro Meet and says that

“A hardy troop of vets showed up – Mike Edwards, Garry Doyle, Norm Richards, Diane, Richard Parker, Clive and Lynne Choate, Lisa, Barrie Kernaghan, Joe Stewart and David Clive in the spring [sic] events, while John Malloy, Arnold Jenkins, Duncan McAuley, Greg Vander Sanden, Dave Reid, David Eltringham and David Carr fronted up for the middle distance event.”

Norm “*ran like a man possessed and almost found himself \$2500 richer*”, but was just pipped at the post. In 2011 Mark Elms posted a video on YouTube of his win at the Dardanup Gift and Colin Smith was in danger of missing his 50th birthday party in 2013 whilst competing in a pro race at Mandurah.

The variety of endurance events contested by Club members is awesome. And the level of pain they undergo, both physical and mental, is almost beyond comprehension. In 1987, George Audley, country member and ultra runner, completed the Sydney to Melbourne run in 8 days 1 hour and 35 mins. In 2001 he ran the Trans Australian Footrace and the COLAC 6-Day Race.

The Vetrin of July 1988 is worth a read as it carries Charlie “*Never Again*” Spare’s story of the gruelling Hi-Tek 24-hr race at McGillivray Oval. He also tells that Jim Turnbull and George Audley became the 2nd and 3rd Australians to both run and walk 100mls in less than 24hrs. And Trish Spain finished 2nd overall and shattered her own SR with 182km.

Two of the Club members who rated a generous mention in the AMA history (P124) were Grahak Cunningham and David Baird. Grahak ran the “World’s Longest Race”, the New York Self-Transcendence 3100 mile race four times, winning it in 2012 in something over 43 days. Each time he carried on after finishing in order to make it a round 5000 miles. In 2008/2009 David became known as “*wheelbarrow man*” as he completed several epic journeys, running with his barrow around and across Australia for charity. From Perth to Sydney he took a leisurely five months but he ran the 940km from Alice Springs to Uluru and back in only 18 days. In 2013, no longer able to run any distance, he entered the International Natural Body Building Association Perth Classic and became the Men’s Super Ultra Masters winner (age 70). Best not to make any comment on that or on the photo that appeared on *Facebook*.

For many ultra runners, *Comrades*, at around 88km, depending on the exact route, is the pinnacle of dreams and a number of members have successfully completed it. Amongst them is Cecil Walkley who finished first in the M65 age group in 1994 clocking 10hrs 25mins 06secs. John Smith, at age 72, ran *Comrades* in 2007 and tells how Oscar Pistorius “*came bounding by me at the 50km mark*”. In 2013, W45 Jane Elton completed her 8th *Comrades* and Jodie Osborne missed her target of 8 hours by just 1 minute. Todd Ingraham ran an amazing 6:58 whilst Claire Walkley clocked up a very creditable 10:09.

Bernadette Benson was the female winner of the Coast to Kosciusko 240km race in 2012 with the best time ever by an Australian woman. In the 24 hour World & European Championships in Holland in 2013, David Kennedy ran over 220km with Bernadette not far behind with over 216km. This distance broke seven Australian and Canadian road records despite the fact that, for some hours in the second half of the race Bernadette says she “*battled mentally and physically with the extreme cold, rainy, windy conditions and various aches*”. Later in 2013 she was 1st woman, 2nd overall, in Canada’s ‘Lost Soul 100mile’ race.

In 2012, Brian Bennett ran WA’s 6-inch Trail, a 46km race on difficult terrain. This race has been popular with members for a few years and Brian was joined by six other masters – Michael Barton, Karen March, Jodie Osborne, Sandra Stockman, Rachel Evans and Kerriann Bresser. Shortly afterwards, in early 2013, Brian contested his second Taupo Ironman in New Zealand, coming second in the M65 category. At the end of that year he came first in the M65 category in the

Busselton Ironman competition. And one has to wonder why it is not called the 'Ironperson' when considering the achievements of Shirley Bell who has several Half Ironman and also Full Ironman events under her belt. In December 2013 she was second in her age category in Busselton. Shirley is 65 and a great-grandmother nine times over. She says

"It seems the older I get the more I love to compete in these events, I guess I'll KEEP GOING AS LONG AS I CAN!!!"

In 2013's Dusk to Dawn Ultra at Larkhill, Port Kennedy, David Kennedy completed the 100km distance and Karen Hagan, John Oldfield and Rachel Evans the 50km distance in darkness and on undulating and uneven terrain. In Canberra, the 2013 open Australian 100k championships saw Jodie Osborne coming 3rd in just over 9 hours, running overnight round a 1km circuit. Shortly afterwards, she broke the Australian record for the 12-hour road race.

Imagine choosing the Uluru Outback for your first marathon attempt. But Clive Choate did exactly that in 2013 and was the second M60 home in about 4hr18min.

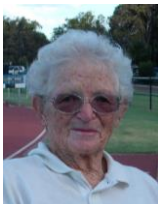
These are by no means the only stories that are worth telling. But perhaps they will whet the appetite for more. And more can be found on MAWA's website. Member profiles and obituaries are available for all to read in the past issues of the Club *Newsletter/Vetrun* which appear in the Magazines section and also in Joan Pellier's personal reminiscences in the Archives section. Profiles of track and field athletes are available both within past copies of *TFNL* and separately under the T&F tab.

Over 80s

Still competing in T&F in 2012/2013



Peter Kennedy
M90



Raema McMillan
W85



Chris Tittel
M85



Irwin Barrett-Lennard
M80



Cecil Walkley
M80



Lorna Lauchlan
W80



Patricia Carr
W80



Rob Shand
M80



David Carr
M80



Ray Hall
M80

Still running or walking in Sunday competitions in 2012/2013



Vic Beaumont
M80



Ray Lawrence
M85



Kirt Johnson
M80



Leo Hassam
M80



Elaine Sillery
W80



Norm Miller
M80



Bob Neville
M80

Some other 80+ members and recent former members



Top: John Gilmour **Middle:** Bob Hayres Garnet Morgan Merv Moyle Wal McCabe Basil
Worner Derry Foley Dalton Moffett Frank Usher **Bottom:** Brian Aldridge Gordon
Medcalf John Russell Stan Lockwood Berwine Barrett-Lennard Stan Jones Arthur
Leggett Alan Pomery **Not pictured:** Stan Delandgraft



Age is no Barrier

Whilst investigating the longevity of Club members the following amazing statistics came to light. In 2014, the 40th anniversary year, four more members will turn 80: Sylvia Byers, Jeff Whittam, Tom Crossen and James Davis. Seven members will turn 85: Irwin Barrett-Lennard, Vic Beaumont, Derry Foley, Kirt Johnson, Stan Lockwood, Gordon Medcalf and Cecil Walkley. This will make a total of 12 in the 85-89 age group. Also Garnet Morgan will turn 90 and John Gilmour 95 – giving the Club four nonagenarians. Rumour has it that John may be planning an attack on the M95 records.

Life Members and Date of Award

Cliff Bould (dec)	1979	Brian Foley (dec)	1998
David Carr	1979	Bob Schickert	1998
Jack Collins (dec)	1979	Merv Jones	2000
John Gilmour	1979	Graham Thornton	2000
Dick Horsley (dec)	1979	Jackie Halberg	2001
Bob Hayres	1981	Lynne Schickert	2003
Rob Shand	1981	Jim Barnes	2005
Bob Fergie	1982	Val Millard	2005
Bob Sammells	1988	Barrie Thomsett	2007
Jeff Whittam	1988	Vic Beaumont	2008
Bill Hughes (dec)	1989	Jacqui Beaumont	2008
Val Prescott	1989	Morris Warren	2009
Dorothy Whittam	1990	Vic Waters	2009
Barrie Slinger	1991	Keith Atkinson	2011
Joan Pellier	1993	Elaine Dance	2011
Brian Danby	1994	Barbara Blurton	2012
Kirt Johnson	1995	Roger Walsh	2012
Basil Worner	1995	Damien Hanson	2013
Jacqueline Billington	1996	Paul Martin	2013

Some life members not pictured elsewhere



Val Prescott	Jacqueline Billington	Merv Jones	Graham Thornton	Jacqueline Beaumont	Keith Atkinson	Elaine Dance	Damien Hanson
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Office Bearers & Officials 1974 - 1988

Patron: Bill Hughes 1976 - 2008

John Gilmour 2008 -

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
74 - 75	Keith McDonald	John Gilmour	Cliff Bould	Cliff Bould
		David Carr		Asst. Tony Morton
		Jack Collins		
75 - 76	Keith McDonald	John Gilmour	Cliff Bould	Tony Morton
		David Carr	Asst. Dick Horsley	
		Jack Collins		
76 - 77	Keith McDonald	John Gilmour	Rob Shand	Jack Collins
	then Bob Hayres	David Carr		
		Dick Horsley		
77 - 78	Bob Hayres	John Gilmour	Rob Shand	Jack Collins
		David Carr		
		Dick Horsley		
78 - 79	Bob Hayres	Dick Horsley	Rob Shand	Bob Sammells
		John Gilmour	Asst. Bob Fergie	
		David Carr		
79 - 80	David Carr	Dick Horsley	Rob Shand	Bob Sammells
		John Gilmour	Asst. Bob Fergie	
		Bob Hayres		
80 - 81	David Carr		Rob Shand	Bob Sammells
			Asst. Bob Fergie	
81 - 82	Bob Sammells	Barrie Slinger	Val Prescott	Roger Walsh
			Dorothy Whittam	
			Asst. Bob Fergie	
82 - 83	Bob Sammells	Barry Slinger	Val Prescott	Colin Leman
			Dorothy Whittam	
			Asst. Bob Fergie	
83 - 84	Barrie Slinger	Don Stone	Fraser Deanus	Colin Leman
84 - 85	Barrie Slinger	Dick Horsley	Duncan Strachan	Frank McLinden
85 - 86	Leo Hassam	Lorna Butcher	Duncan Strachan	David Roberts
		Jackie Greenfield		
86 - 87	Leo Hassam	Jackie Greenfield	Duncan Strachan	Rob Farrell
87 - 88	Basil Worner	Keith Forden	Sandi Walton	Rob Farrell

Office Bearers & Officials 1974 - 1988

Year	Committee Members
74 - 75	None specified
75 - 76	<i>"Programmes"</i> Dick Horsley David Carr
76 - 77	David Carr Jack Collins Bill Hughes David Jones Jim Smith
77 - 78	Art Briffa Cliff Bould
78 - 79	Cliff Bould Allen Tyson Bruce Buchanan
79 - 80	Cliff Bould Don Caplin Bruce Buchanan Dick Horsley
80 - 81	Denys Butcher Bruce Buchanan Don Caplin Jeff Whittam
81 - 82	Jeff Whittam Gloria Sutherland Don Stone
82 - 83	Sue Leman Don Stone Rob Shand
83 - 84	Joan Pellier Sue Leman Bob Fergie Brian Danby
84 - 85	Fraser Deanus Brian Danby Lorna Butcher Margaret Warren
85 - 86	Jackie Greenfield/Kath Penton Don Caplin Bob Sammells Jeff Whittam
86 - 87	Bob Sammells Brian Danby Kath Penton
87 - 88	Paul Martin Brian Foley Barrie Slinger Lorna Butcher

Office Bearers & Officials 1988 - 2014

Patron: Bill Hughes 1976 - 2008			John Gilmour 2008 -	
Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
88 - 89	Keith Forden	Sandi Hodge	Rob Davis	Rob Farrell
		Brian Foley		Ernie Moyle
89 - 90	Bob Schickert	Brian Foley	Rob Davis	Bill Crellin
90 - 91	Bob Schickert	Brian Foley	Bob Fergie	Bill Crellin
			Brian Foley	
91 - 92	Joan Pellier	Brian Foley	Brian Foley	Bill Crellin
92 - 93	Joan Pellier	Sandi Hodge	Brian Foley	Bill Crellin
				Irene Ferris
93 - 94	Brian Foley	Sandi Hodge	Bob Fergie	Irene Ferris
		David Carr		
94 - 95	Brian Foley	Joan Pellier	Bob Fergie	Irene Ferris
		Bob Sammells		
95 - 96	Brian Foley	Richard Harris	Bob Fergie	Janet Jarvis
96 - 97	Brian Foley	Richard Harris	Jackie Halberg	Sue Jones
97 - 98	Brian Foley	Richard Harris	Jackie Halberg	Sue Jones
98 - 99	Bob Schickert	Keith Atkinson	Brian Foley	Ray Hall
99 - 00	Bob Schickert	Keith Atkinson	Brian Foley	Arnold Jenkins
00 - 01	Bob Schickert	Keith Atkinson	Brian Foley	Arnold Jenkins
01 - 02	Bob Sammells	Keith Atkinson	Brian Foley	Bob Schickert
02 - 03	Bob Sammells	Lynne Schickert	Bob Schickert	Paul Hughes
03 - 04	Lynne Schickert	Graeme Neill	Bob Schickert	Margaret Bennett
04 - 05	Val Millard	Graeme Neill	Bob Schickert	Roger Walsh
05 - 06	Val Millard	Barbara Blurton	Bob Schickert	Roger Walsh
06 - 07	Val Millard	Barbara Blurton	Bob Schickert	Roger Walsh
07 - 08	Ivan Brown	Barbara Blurton	Bob Schickert	Roger Walsh
08 - 09	Barbara Blurton	Jackie Halberg	Bob Schickert	Roger Walsh
09 - 10	Barbara Blurton	Jackie Halberg	Bob Schickert	Roger Walsh
10 - 11	Barbara Blurton	Jackie Halberg	Sarah Ladwig	Roger Walsh
11 - 12	Barbara Blurton	Irwin Barrett-Lennard	Sarah Ladwig	Roger Walsh
12 - 13	Paul Hughes	Richard Blurton	Val Millard	Geoff Brayshaw
13 - 14	Paul Hughes	Richard Blurton	Val Millard / ?	Geoff Brayshaw

Office Bearers & Officials 1988 – 2014

Year	Committee Members
88 - 89	Lorna Butcher Brian Foley Paul Martin Jan Johnson
89 - 90	Mike Rhodes Jan Johnson Peggy Macliver Brian Danby
90 - 91	Joan Pellier Merv Jones Mike Rhodes Marg Forden
91 - 92	David Carr Marg Forden Barrie Thomsett Maxine Santich
92 - 93	Margaret Birks David Carr Brian Danby Barrie Thomsett
93 - 94	Vic Waters Brigitte Cheek David Carr Barrie Thomsett/Bob Sammells
94 - 95	Margaret Birks Jackie Billington Roma Bettles Bob Sammells/Jackie Halberg
95 - 96	Jackie Halberg Jackie Billington Bob Sammells Ced Turner/Joan Hillis
96 - 97	Margaret Ward Graham Thornton John Pressley Merv Jones
97 - 98	Merv Jones John Pressley John Stone Graham Thornton
98 - 99	Lorna Lauchlan Milton Mavrick Val Millard Joan Pellier
99 - 00	Val Millard Alan Chambers Sue Bullen
00 - 01	Sue Bullen Katrina Spilsbury Bridget Carse Shirley Bell
01 - 02	Val Millard Maggie Flanders Rod Tinniswood
02 - 03	Maggie Flanders Keith Atkinson Rod Tinniswood John Smith
03 - 04	Jim Barnes Barbara Blurton Jeff Bowen Damien Hanson
04 - 05	Jim Barnes Barbara Blurton Jeff Bowen Damien Hanson
05 - 06	Jim Barnes Damien Hanson Jackie Halberg Helen Lysaght
06 - 07	Graham Ainsworth Jackie Halberg Damien Hanson John Oldfield (from Oct)
07 - 08	Jackie Halberg Damien Hanson Peggy Macliver John Oldfield/Jeff Bowen
08 - 09	Lachlan Marr Damien Hanson Peter March Val Millard
09 - 10	Damien Hanson Lachlan Marr Keith Atkinson Jeff Bowen
10 - 11	Richard Danks Damien Hanson Chris Neale Bob Schickert
11 - 12	Damien Hanson Chris Neale Gillian Young Greg Wilson/John Oldfield
12 - 13	Damien Hanson Gillian Young Colin Smith Carol Bowman
13 - 14	Damien Hanson Gillian Young Colin Smith Carol Bowman

Club Officials 1974 - 2014

Newsletter/Vetrum Editors

74-76	David Carr
76-80	Rob Shand
80-82	Jill Pearton
82-85	Jeff Whittam
85-87	Basil Worner
87-88	Brian Aldrich
88-90	Jeff Whittam
90-95	Vic Waters
95-98	Richard Harris
98-00	Katrina Spilsbury
00-01	Tom Lenane (interim)
01-04	Rod Tinniswood
04-05	Jeff Bowen
05-	Vic Waters

Librarians

77-79	Jack Collins
79-80	Stan Lockwood
80-88	Allen Tyson
88-90	Vic Beaumont
90-92	Pat Miller
92-95	Jeff & Dorothy Whittam
95-96	Brian Danby

Registrars for the Association

83-84	Val Prescott
84-92	Val Prescott, Brian Foley
92-06	Val Prescott, David Carr

Winter Coordinators (Assocⁿ)

06-09	Patrick Smith
09-	John Collier

Club Registrar

(Membership Secretary)	
08-	Peggy Macliver

TFNL Editors

07-12	John Oldfield
12-	Graeme Dahl

Website Managers

98-07	John Stone
07-09	Mike Karra
09-12	John Oldfield
12-	Hamish Macleod

Statisticians

74-78	Rob Shand
78-88	Dick Horsley
88-01	Bob Sammells
01-03	Katrina Spilsbury
03-13	Campbell Till
13 -	Barbara Blurton

Auditors

78-81	Jack Collins
81-99	Ray Lawrence
99-07	John Mison
07-11	Liz Tilmouth
11-	Dave Roberts

Equipment Managers

(‘Armourer’ until 1985)

78-79	Jack Collins
79-80	Don Caplin
82-83	Andy Wright
83-84	Andy Wright/Brian Danby
84-85	Brian Danby
85-86	Maurice Johnston
86-88	Stewart Hoskins
88-90	Vic Beaumont
90-91	Brian Danby
91-93	Brian Danby/Kirt Johnson
93-97	Brian Danby

Handicappers

82-85	Andy Wright
85-86	Bob Sammells
86-88	Keith Forden
88-89	John Madison
89-92	Mike Rhodes
92-93	Paul Hughes
93-98	Bob Schickert
98-04	Graham Thornton
04-06	Keith Atkinson
06-09	Mike Rhodes
09-	Richard Danks

Facebook Managers

12 – 13	John Oldfield	
13 -	Hamish McLeod, Peter March,	
	Steve Weller	

Presidents



Keith McDonald



Bob Hayres



David Carr



Bob Sammells



Barrie Slinger



Leo Hassam



Basil Worner



Keith Forden



Bob Schickert



Joan Pellier



Brian Foley



Lynne Schickert



Val Millard



Ivan Brown



Barbara Blurton



Paul Hughes

Members frequently mentioned but not pictured elsewhere



Top Bob Fergie Jackie Halberg John Oldfield Barrie Thomsett Jeff Whittam Barrie Kernaghan
Campbell Till Dave Wyatt **Bottom** Paul Martin Jim Barnes Brian Danby Morris Warren
Vic Waters Margaret Bennett Roger Walsh Tom Lenane

Sources

Text

Club publications and documents:

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Newsletter, The Vetrin and Vetrin 1974-2013

Track & Field Newsletter (TFNL), 2007-2013

30 Years of Running, Joan Pellier, 2012/13

Minutes of AGMs and committee meetings

The Magazine of Athletics in Western Australia, Vic Waters, 1995

A History of the Veterans Athletic Movement in Australia, Gloria Seymon, 1998

Lasting the Distance, Paul Collier, 2010

Age is No Barrier, A History of Masters/Veterans Athletics in Australia, 2011

Websites of MAWA, AMA, WMA, AWA

Facebook – MAWA group page and public page

Input, written and verbal, and acknowledged elsewhere, from:

Club members and former members

AWA, AA and AMA personnel

The State Library of Western Australia

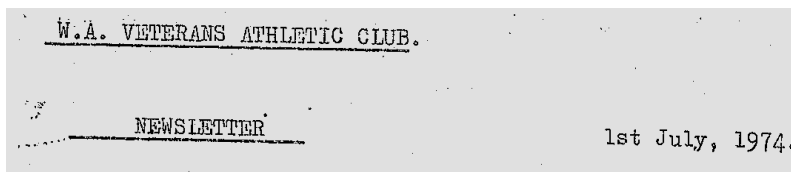
Photographic

All photographs obtained have been cropped to suit their purpose in this book – that is, to put a face to names mentioned.

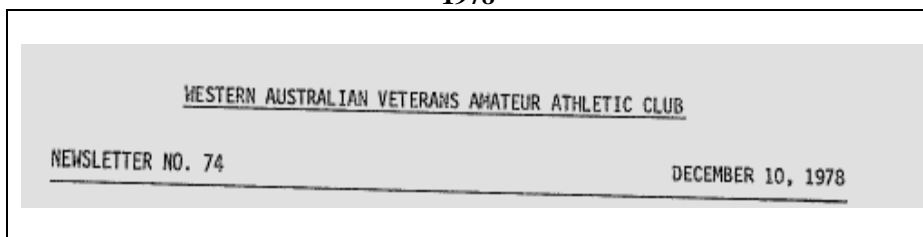
It has not been possible to ascertain the original sources of all the photographs used. They have been gleaned from Club newsletters (where the photographers were often not acknowledged), personal collections, the Internet and cuttings from old newspapers; some have been taken specifically for this book. Amongst the known photographers, photograph providers and scanners are Vic Waters, Graeme Dahl, John Oldfield, Vic Beaumont, John Gilmour, David Carr, Lynne Schickert, Joan Pellier, Paul Hughes, Liz Neville, Alison Aldrich, Marilyn Davey, Jeanette Robertson, Wally McCabe and Allison I'Dell. From those provided, the most appropriate have been included.

Sample Newsletter Mastheads

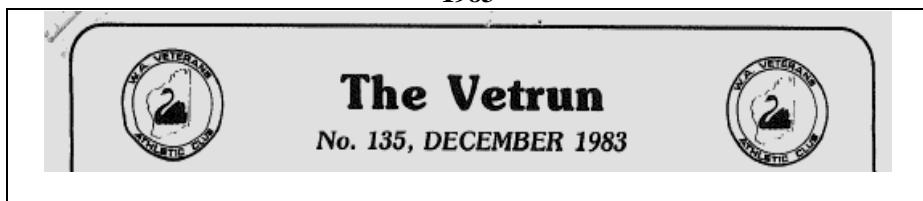
1974 – The first issue



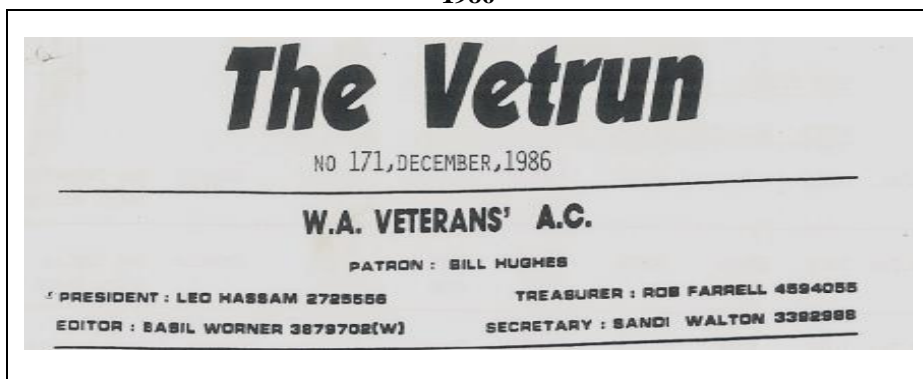
1978



1983



1986



1992



1995



1999



2003





Coloured Badges



Badges/logos used throughout the period

Original – 1974 to 1978



1978 to May 2003



May 2003 to present



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