

40 YEARS OF RUNNING in the BUNBURY MARATHON AND HALF MARATHON (Now the Bunbury 3 Waters Running Festival)

1982 1983

As the Bunbury Runners Club plans on the clubs and Bunbury's 40th 3 Waters Marathon and Half Marathon, it will be important to reflect on the great names and characters that have embarked on the distance running challenge and the stories that have made this such an iconic event on the WA running Calendar

First held in **1982** under the auspices of the distance runners of the Bunbury Amateur Athletic Club and led by Bunbury Runners Club icon and life member Henk Stoffers the event started a journey which will culminate in the 40th Marathon on the 10th April 2022.

Apart from a Covid interruption in 2020 the event has been an outstanding demonstration of a community club providing a world class event every year, showcasing the natural beauty of the City of Bunbury

There were fourteen competitors including two women in the very first Marathon and 22 in the Half Marathon.

The event was won by Peter Ritson in a time of 2:34:38, followed by Bob Harrison 2:47:17

The first lady was Val Pach in a time of 3:58:50 followed by Erica Mercer 3:59:18

Barry Heys was 4th in a time of 2:59:33 and went on to a stellar triathlon career particularly in the age group categories

Local Runners John Collinridge 1:17:04 and Sharon Franklin 1:34:37 won the first half marathon. John still a regular runner with the Bunbury Runners club, 40 years on.

It is interesting to note John was recognised in the official result as "Colin Bridge" which I'm sure created some amusement at the time. Names like Ken Fleay, Trevor Smith, Max Owen Doreen Dow, Theresa Smith, Paul Vukelic, Cheryl Amies and Phyllis Head, all regular runners for many years to come, completed the half marathon. Frank Stoffers as a very young 10 year old completed the half marathon in 2:11:48.

The 1983 event was sponsored by Brownes and was again organised by the distance runners of the Bunbury Amateur Athletic Club, which then went on to become the Bunbury Runners Club.

The entry fee was \$5 with a \$3 late entry and a further \$3 for the luncheon.

This event started in Queen's Gardens, with 56 Runners in the Marathon and 66 in the Half Marathon.

Peter Ritson again won the Marathon in a super time of 2:28:41 followed by Ray Purdue 2:29:42, Graham Harry in 2:30:24, our own Henk Stoffers was 4th in a outstanding time of 2:31:40

First Lady was Joan Vadala 4:01:33, Joan was the only lady recorded in the marathon.

