

TAURANGA RAMBLERS HARRIER CLUB

GOLDEN JUBILEE



1956 2006

**EACH RUN IS SUCCESS - THE RICHEST AND
MOST DEEPLY SATISFYING.**

Anon.

CLUB OFFICIALS 2006

Patron Lloyd Christie

President Malcolm Taylor

Vice Presidents Robyn Winter Bev Smith

Chairman Paul Chapman

Secretary Thelma Lindup **Treasurer** Alex Whimster

Events Secretary Bev Smith

Winter Club Captain Malcolm Taylor

Summer Club Captain Murray Clarkson

Committee Ross Hynds Carol Ririnui

Coaching Co-ordinator Malcolm Taylor



50th Jubilee Committee

Chairman Ken Evans

Committee Mike Powell

Wayne Smith

Paul Chapman

Malcolm Taylor

Euan Ross

Front cover: Entrants awaiting the start of the
Club Cross Country Championships, Oropi,
19 June, 1993.

CLUB PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Tauranga Ramblers Harrier Club is proud to celebrate fifty years of running, competing and enjoying the sport. We look back with gratitude to the hundreds of people who have been members and who have helped form the club and make it what it is today. Our gratitude goes to our far-sighted founders in 1956, to our runners past and present, to the officials, coaches and committee members who have given generously of their time and skills, to our sponsors and to the many other friends, especially partners and parents who have supported the club with loyalty and encouragement. As we reach this point in our history, membership is steady over a wide range of ages and the club is in good heart. People are coming to discover what harriers have long known – that running in any form, competitive or otherwise – is a joyful and fulfilling activity.

The organisation of this anniversary has been very much the work of our Jubilee Committee. Ken Evans, our Chairperson, also headed the highly successful 25th celebrations in 1981. They have undertaken the major tasks of compiling lists of past members, contacting everyone who could be traced, finding and sifting through the club's records to produce this history booklet, and organising the programme of events. We are deeply in their debt.

The Club and Jubilee Committee welcome all past and present members, officials and supporters to this special occasion. A warm welcome and thank you goes to those former members who have travelled to Tauranga from other centres. Some have been unable to attend but have forwarded their best wishes and congratulations and the hope that Ramblers will continue to go from strength to strength.

It is my sincere wish that all present members of the club will long continue to run, and that some of our present junior members will still be running for the Club when it celebrates its one hundredth birthday. To our future members I extend our good wishes and a warm welcome. I know that you will ensure that the club's spirit will not only be maintained but will go on to reach new heights.

September, 2006.

Malcolm Taylor.

INTRODUCTION

Many people have assisted in the writing and publication of this record of events occurring during the first 50 years of the **Tauranga Ramblers Harrier Club**. Their association with the club ranges from Opening Day in 1956 to the present day.

For many the memory of the 25th Jubilee celebrations are still fresh in their minds and they will be looking forward to renewing friendships and reminiscing on past achievements. Of the present day membership, eighteen were Ramblers back then. Courses and venues have changed but the spirit that has made the Club 'special' carries on. The organising committee have gone to great lengths to ensure as many past members as possible have been notified of the event, and we welcome those who have returned.

In compiling this Jubilee booklet, old club records have come to light but a lot of reliance has had to be placed on people's memories together with newspaper cuttings and personal scrap books. I have to pay special credit to those wonderful Newsletter editors over the years and to Ray Young for his weekly "Runners Chat" which featured in the Bay Sun for a period in the 1980s. Malcolm Taylor and Ray Young with their great memories have been of special help with checking dates and details. A lot of research and proof reading have gone in to the production, but no doubt there are errors and omissions. For these I apologise.

I have endeavoured to give as many members as possible a mention but this was not attained by any means. Some achievements stand out but a club is based upon each and every person in it and no matter your age or ability you are all an important part. The officials, parents and supporters also fall in to this category.

I would like to thank those who have written articles, helped with research or in other ways, and those who have lent photos and personal items. I would especially like to thank Fay Smith, and Brad Thomson for helping me become more computer literate. A big task.

Unless otherwise specified, all articles have been written by the editor. May this booklet bring back many happy memories of harrier days gone by, and inspire us all for the future.

Euan Ross Editor. 30 September, 2006.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE: "You have to wonder at times what you're doing out there. Over the years, I've given myself a thousand reasons to keep running, but it always comes down to self-satisfaction, comradeship and a sense of achievement."

Steve Prefontaine

TAURANGA RAMBLERS HARRIER CLUB

1956 - 2006

50th Anniversary Reunion - 30th September, 2006.

PROGRAMME

WE ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME YOU HERE TODAY

The celebrations will be held at “ROPER’S HALL” in the afternoon and at the TAURANGA CITIZENS CLUB in the evening.

SATURDAY: 1.00p.m. Nostalgia Run from the Band Hall, Pemberton Park, Greerton. (renamed Roper’s Hall for the day). We will meet and greet new and old friends.

5.00p.m. to 7.00p.m. Two Happy Hours for catch up time at the Tauranga Citizens Club, ARTY STEWART LOUNGE, corner 13th Avenue and Cameron Road.

7.00p.m. to 8.30p.m. Dinner time at the Citizens Club. The Club offers either bar meals downstairs, or a full dining room service upstairs.

8.00p.m. to 12.00p.m. Time to talk, find old friends, tell stories, brag a bit, remember names, view photos on screen, remember past members, check trophies on display, re-run past events, have fun.

Bar service and meals at own cost.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

*The following notes were put down by Geoff Willacy shortly before his untimely death
6th December, 1977.*

There is no doubt that the success of Tauranga Ramblers was mainly due to family interest. As I look back through the years to our beginning, this is how it all started back in 1955.

I have always enjoyed running. I was a harrier runner in 1948-49 with the Matamata Harriers, then moved to the Kaimais which was very isolated, and although a constant jogger I was without a club to attend. Then we moved to Greerton. I kept on jogging around the roads and the racecourse without purpose. Before long I had one or two others join me.

Then one day after a run my eldest stepson, Bill Zimmerman, piped up-
“Why don’t you start up a harrier club?”

“Don’t be daft, me start a club. It’s been tried several times before in this town, but still no club. There’s not enough of us!”

“Of course there’s enough, there’s you,” he said to me, “and Eddy here and Bob Morris, he’ll be in and I’ll help, and Jim here (my third stepson), that makes five. There must be others.”

Well that was the start of it all, with me the only runner in the family. I was certain that with Bill’s enthusiasm combined with Jim’s help, we would have a Harrier Club in Tauranga. I can well remember our inaugural meeting on April 15th, 1956. It was held at Bill Zimmerman’s home in Greerton. A pretty short meeting, and a sub committee was formed to call for a further meeting of interested people. This took place at Hayman’s Hall on **May 20th, 1956** and 12 interested runners attended. My most vivid memory was the actual naming of the club. There were all manner of suggestions. ‘Tauranga Harriers’ was out as the name was already attached to the Tauranga Athletic and Cycling Club, but it was no longer functioning. It was at the first committee meeting that, after a vote, “Tauranga Ramblers” was selected and a new affiliated club sprang in to life. The club colours were to be green and the racecourse was to be our weekly gathering place.

Bill Zimmerman was elected president and Jim Sandison secretary/treasurer. The first committee consisted of Geoff Willacy, Eddie Law, Bill Morris, Brian Schinkel, Ken Evans and John Coombes. The others in attendance were Johnny Frost, Roly Paton, E. McPherson, and Terry Lounds. Bill Zimmerman was to be handicapper and time keeper.

Well, that was it and Ramblers were away laughing. Bill Zimmerman and Jim Sandison combined as a first class team in building the club. The main feature of the early years was Bill’s terrific enthusiasm. Everything was on with Bill. Saturday running had to be abandoned because of college rugby etc. so we

ran the club on Sundays. He roped in rugby, soccer and hockey players. Bill was always at the college cross country steeples, from where he gathered in the top college athletes. Terry East, Eddy Low, Owen Stephens, Ken Evans, the Lutz brothers, Peter Bradley, Bob Morris, John Morris, Roly Paton, Johnny Frost, Ross List, Terry Lounds and Brian Schinkel were early runners.

The competitive strength of the club in those early days was always in the junior and colts ranks. The club made its presence felt in the Waikato in its very first season by winning the Kawerau to Whakatane relay and the Lakes relay at Rotorua. We hired a bus and also made flasks of soup for the boys. To add to these wins, Ken Evans and Ross List were among the top three Waikato runners in the junior grades and along with Bob Morris, Pete Bradley and Roly Paton, team's placings were always theirs for the taking. Ramblers were never without a pretty good group of top liners throughout the Waikato.

The founding success of Ramblers lies with the efforts of its organizers. Bill Zimmerman was president for nine years and Jim Sandison secretary/treasurer for ten years. The club honoured their efforts by electing them as joint first full life members. Another personality of those early years was Alec Turner. He will always be remembered for he lit the primus and made tea at the racecourse. Alec also made and donated the junior and senior points and championship shields for the club.

As the years progressed Ramblers were always well endowed with officials. The Malyon family came to the club with Leo and his four youngsters as competitors, and Mrs Dora Malyon with her exceptionally capable organizing way, a truly wonderful and memorable personality. And there was the Nelson family from Kaitemako. Les and Russell, two very rugged runners, and their mother, the loveable and treasured Gladys Nelson. The Nelson 10 mile road race was introduced in her memory. Also worthy of mention is Gordon Prosser, father of the remarkable athletes Noel and Alan. These are the personalities who have made Ramblers a top club. A club which has been worthy of top rating in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty all its life.

In later years the Palmer family proved of immense value, with Pat and Les giving very experienced and capable assistance. Their son Gary needs special mentioning for his remarkable achievements in the N.Z. cross country events. The contribution of Lloyd Christie is apparent for all to see.

Where have we gone – 1976 – 20 years. Where are we going? Ramblers, richly endowed in officialdom, still prevails. I scarcely need to name them but I will because if mention is reward, then the names of the now club president, Graham Bennett and the now club captain, Gordon Taylor,

will certainly be written. Today Ramblers are at their strongest in both numbers and ability. It is quite remarkable to notice that almost none of the personalities who have given so much to Ramblers have been top line athletes, but without them Ramblers would not exist.

Me, being the guy I am have not had to think too hard to recall what I have written. It's all in my heart to stay, and I bet that goes for all you other members also. I've probably forgotten quite a few personalities who deserve mention and if I have then you guys carry on the praises due, and if the club is blessed with officials in the future like it has been in the past, Ramblers will continue to be one heck of a harrier club.

Signed: *Geoff Willacy* (The only guy in the universe who can claim to have been a full club member from its first year until he becomes fertilizer for daisies).

POSTSCRIPT: *Geoff died on the Tauranga Domain, wearing his running gear, shortly after finishing a 4000 metre race. He would certainly have wished to go this way doing his favourite occupation -*

R U N N I N G.

December 6th 1977. 55 years R.I.P.

A general meeting was held at Hayman's Hall on 20th May, 1956 with the intention of forming a harrier club. The meeting was successful and the Tauranga Ramblers Harrier Club was born. (From Minute Book).



Rotorua Racecourse Junior Start 1956



Rotorua Racecourse Senior Start 1956

PLACINGS GAINED BY CLUB IN FIRST YEAR.

Rotorua C.C. 1st in Sealed Handicap. Six Man Team. 3rd in Colts – K. Coombes
3rd in Juniors – R. List

Putaruru 1st in Junior Teams Race. 2nd in Juniors – K. Evans
2nd and 3rd in Junior Handicap – K. Evans, B. Morris.
2nd and 4th in Colts – T. Lounds, K. Coombes.

Tauwhare 1st in Tauwhare Cup. 1st in Sealed Handicap – R. List

Rotorua Relay 1st in Sealed Handicap. Six Man Team.

Rotorua Road Race 1st Colt – P. Lutz. 2nd Colt – K. Coombes. 2nd, 3rd and 4th Juniors.
1st in Junior Teams. 1st in Sealed Handicap. 3rd in Senior – R. List.

MEMORIES AS RECALLED BY BOB MORRIS

Bob was one of the original twelve foundation members of Ramblers. He still resides in Tauranga.

When Geoff Willacy moved from the Kaimais to Greerton and lived right next door to my family home in Mitchell Street, we would go running together and he would often talk about starting up a Harrier Club. I remember at one of the first early meetings, held at the Willacy residence, we realised we could not use the name Tauranga Harriers as the name had already been taken. I suggested that it be Tauranga Ramblers, and it was later confirmed that Tauranga Ramblers it would be.

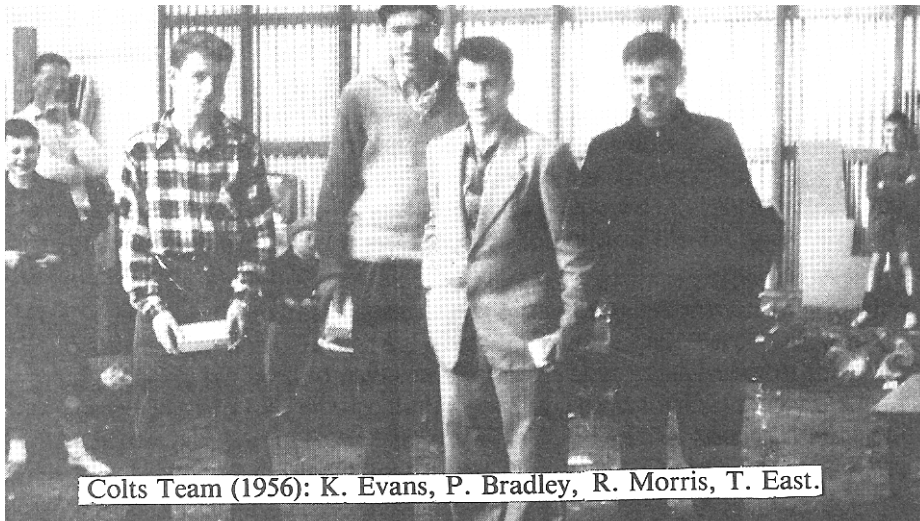
Geoff, along with his wife Pearl, contributed many hours to the club, with cups of tea and eats, as well as hot soup. Geoff, with Billy Zimmerman and Jimmy Sandison were very enthusiastic and encouraging to the club members, especially new members.

I remember a photo of Ken Evans, Peter Bradley and myself representing the Bay of Plenty/Waikato Colts to run against Auckland and North Auckland. We also won the Colt's team race from Ngongotaha to Rotorua. There were photos of us lining up on the start line for races at Tauranga Racecourse in the 25th Anniversary booklet.

Following are some of the names I recall: Colt Runners: Bob Morris, Ken Evans, Peter Bradley, Terry East, Brian Schinkel, Roly Paton, John Coombes, Johnny Frost, Terry Loundes, and Gary Rankin. Seniors: Geoff Willacy, Ross List, Eddie Law and Alex Turner. I also remember a guy named Clive (forgotten his surname), who had a brother who was in the Navy and they would often run with us on some of the club days.

Jimmy Sandison was Club Secretary for 9 years, 1956 to 1965.

Bob Morris



JOHN COOMBES RECALLS....

My recollections are a bit hazy after 50 years, however, prior to the formation of the club, Geoff Willacy, Eddie Law and myself used to run several nights a week. Both Eddie and myself boarded with the Odey's in Second Avenue and used to bike off to Geoff and Pearl Willacy's in Greerton two or three nights a week, go for a run, and then cycle home. Must have been a lot fitter in those days. I am not sure what became of Eddie Law – his parents lived in Thames but Eddie was a bit of a “transient.” Another of the early members was Ross List who as I recall was a very good runner. I was just a plodder!!!

We didn't have fancy running shoes in those days. A pair of well worn sand shoes comprised our footwear and I recall my mother made my first track suit and sewed 'Ramblers' across the back.

I am looking forward to attending the reunion.

John Coombes

NEW ZEALAND JUNIOR CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPION

It is difficult enough to win a New Zealand Cross Country title once but Gary Palmer achieved this feat three times. In 1972, 1973 and 1974 he reigned as New Zealand Junior champion and went on to be a force to be reckoned with over a wide range of distances and to represent his country. He left the club in 1978 to attend university in Auckland. On entering the senior ranks he came second in the 1981 N.Z. Cross Country trials and went on to compete in the World Cross Country Championships in Madrid, Spain. We did have a club member representing us at that event as Barry Ellis also qualified. At his peak Gary was doing training runs of 140 miles a week. Being a regular member of the Auckland University relay teams of the 1980s Gary and his fellow runners set race and lap records almost every time they set out.

In late 1981 he set a marathon time of 2h 14m 03s to qualify for the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane the following year. His best half marathon time of 64m 25s was set at Stramilano in 1983. He still runs regularly in Auckland but does not have the motivation for making a comeback. Gary has done some coaching but his business and other sporting interests occupy most of his time.

Gary's advice to young athletes of today is if you have the talent you are lucky but the ability and desire to put in the required training is as important. Train hard and smart and you will avoid injury and, eventually the results will come. Keep in mind that eventually you will not be able to make a living from athletics so keep a career in mind and work towards that as well.

KEN EVANS

Ken has the distinction of being a member who took part in the Club's very first run in 1955. During those first years as a colt he had a lot of success and represented Waikato in his age group several times. He also had three successive College Steeplechase victories, which first caught the eye of the club's talent scouts. The Rambler's colts relay teams were a force who were always to the fore and much respected throughout the Bay of Plenty and Waikato.

Like many other youngsters at the age of 18 and 19, Ken found other interests and these took him away from the running scene for a while. However his love of the sport brought him back to Ramblers in the 1970s where he very soon made steady improvement and with the veteran ranks approaching this acted as a spur for even more effort. His personal performances in Waikato veteran events stand out and the club's veteran representatives were always a force to be reckoned with.

Ken's favourite events were in the cross country but he also performed well on the road. He was particularly pleased that Jocelyn and members of his family shared his love of the sport and would join him. He attended an Arthur Lydiard training camp which resulted in more hill running becoming a feature of his training and leading to further improvement. Several club titles have also gone his way.

Ken was chairman of the 25th Jubilee Committee and this is the position he holds for the present anniversary. A lot of hard work and planning has been involved but it is sure to culminate in this Jubilee being at least as equally successful as the last. Ken has enjoyed playing an active role in the administration of the club which means so much to him.

CLUB SUCCESSFUL IN 1969 SCHOOL EVENTS

All sections of the Tauranga Boys' College steeplechase were won by pupils who are members of the club. Malcolm Taylor, Senior; Grant Hill, Intermediate; and Robin Horn, Junior. The Otumoetai College result was the same with Stanley Taylor, Ken Nelson and Gary Palmer doing the honours, while Kevin Pollard was successful in the Intermediate race at Mount Maunganui College.

UNIFORM IMPROVEMENT

1970 saw an improvement to our uniform with the decision to have the words "Tauranga Ramblers" printed on the singlets and blouses. This also saves all those people asking, "Who are the runners in the green singlets?"

MEMORIES OF A JUNIOR RUNNER 1956

As recalled by Geoff Willacy (Jnr.)

In an age when hopscotch, marbles and hula hoops were weekend entertainment for a nine year old, harriers on a Sunday afternoon seemed quite exciting. My Dad, along with my brothers Bill and Jim were keen to start a harrier club. Tauranga Ramblers was formed, and club days arranged for Sunday afternoons because we couldn't compete with rugby on Saturdays. We couldn't compete with horse racing either, nor could we compete with the pub. So Sundays it was, with the racecourse as our base – a mixed group of 'want to be' runners, 'never will be' runners like me, a few rugby players and just one or two who had real potential. All off on a pack run, around the racecourse, out on to Cameron Road and then the back streets of Greerton. Everyone jogging except me, I was running as fast as my skinny legs would go, just managing to keep up.

After a few weeks and months a nucleus of keen runners emerged, and planning was under way to send teams to Whakatane to compete, also to Rotorua 'around the lake' relay and to individual races in the Waikato. This meant bus trips, early starts, packed lunches and for me having the whole family involved. (I said it was exciting.)

The emerald green singlets were becoming more prominent in these events and prize giving ceremonies always seemed to have lots of Tauranga Ramblers going up to receive hand shakes and silverware.

The bus trips home had jokes, singing and plenty of food to share. I remember one such trip where, on the way home, the bus was diverted to Mt Maunganui (via Welcome Bay in those days) to view a large freighter which had run aground. It had experienced steering trouble while entering the harbour and ended up beached under the Mount. A momentous event to witness first hand in the life of a nine year old.

Formation of the club brought with it family chores. I remember our largest pot on the Neeco stove, bubbling away, full of green dye and lots of white jockey singlets for our representative runners. Somehow a very small pair of Y fronts got in the pot as well, and one or two items belonging to my sisters. Judging by their reaction, emerald green underwear hadn't yet become a fashion item.

One of the first 'Tauranga Open' races was where we invited runners from other centres to compete in Junior, Intermediate and Senior grades. Courses needed to be marked out and the flags were made on our lawn. About 100 pea sticks were required and with red material scrounged from somewhere and cut in to triangular flags, then being attached. Early on the morning of the races I went with Dad to mark out the course. This involved going around the Junior course placing flags, around the Intermediate course

placing flags, and then around the Senior course placing flags. I was exhausted. However I recovered well, as a couple of hours later I ran a spirited second to last. "Good on you boy," said Dad. The best thing though, Tauranga Ramblers was up and running, and going from strength to strength. Our memories fade and names become harder to recall, different events become blurred, exaggerated or forgotten, but I have never lost my appreciation of the experiences I had as a nine year old 'never will be' runner with Tauranga Ramblers.

Geoff, (and wife Viv) continued their family association and support for the club in to the 1980s when Geoff revealed his true running talent and that he had graduated well beyond the 'never will be' runner category. Children Dean and Michelle, became members too and continue the Willacy family connection up to the present.

MEMORIES RECALLED - BRUCE JOHNSON

President 1964 - 1965

When I became president, the Ramblers had no meeting place other than the racecourse gates. Tom Roper suggested his father might allow us to use his boxing gym and so with Mr Roper's permission we had a base with a roof. This made the preparation of the after race 'cuppa' easier and a shelter from the weather on stormy days.

Lloyd Christie, who had a farm at Oropi, offered us a cross country course and a special committee set out a new track. A series of working bees made the hurdles and pegged out the course. I consider the work of that early committee was excellent, as apart from a few minor changes the cross country course remained the same as the original.

This permanent course allowed us to promote inter-club events with great success. We had a strong club in seniors, juniors and colts, both male and female, and competed successfully in Waikato and inter-club events.

Some of the outstanding club members I remember were – Tom Roper and Alfred Johnson, who represented the Waikato in the national cross country team in Christchurch. Sue Balfour won the Tauwhare Ladies Cup, Lyn Merrick was fourth and Caroline was sixth. Ross List and Laurie Fitzgerald were great competitors in the seniors as was Alan Prosser in the colts. All of these were selected to represent the Waikato in the annual Auckland-Northland-Waikato meeting.

1965 was another good season. Leaders in the juniors were Alfred Johnson, Alan Prosser and Murray Nelson while seniors, Ross List, Laurie Fitzgerald, Ian London and Leo Malyon ran with distinction in the green colours. Hawera came to visit and were full of praise for our cross country course, although they found it very tough.

EARLY CLUB HIGHLIGHTS 1969 - 1987

As recalled by Graham Bennett, Club President 1968 - 1987.

- 1969.** We hosted the first unofficial B.O.P. Cross Country championships at Oropi followed by the Waikato C. C. champs. Our B grade Colts, Gary Palmer, Robin Horn and Grant Hill filled the first three places in the latter event.
- 1970.** The Auckland-Northland-Waikato triangular Cross Country championships were hosted at Oropi and won by Waikato. The hills proved too much for Auckland and Northland. Our first trip away for the Wairoa to Gisborne relay.
- 1971.** Our Colts and Juniors were dominant in the Waikato and we had seven in the Waikato team of ten. Our new venture, the Beazley Cross Country Open was run during the Queen's Birthday weekend and was an outstanding success.
- 1972.** We hosted the B.O.P. Cross Country champs in the fog and rain. The fog was so thick that you couldn't see the finish line till you were nearly there and it was only the line of markers which stopped you getting lost.
- 1973.** We gained the fastest times in the Rotorua Lake relay, the Senior Team's race at Tauwhare and also the Sydney to Surf race. We hosted the Waikato Road champs on a course at Omanu.
- 1974.** Gary Palmer won the Junior National Cross Country champs for the third successive year. Our Senior A team won the Kaimai Relay and broke the record by 2min 31sec. We won the team's event at Tauwhare.
- 1975.** We won the Senior team's race at Tauwhare for the third year in succession and hosted the Waikato C.C. champs at Oropi. G.W. Taylor Industries sponsored our Oropi Open and with popular T shirts. We won the Kaimai Relay again by 77sec and the Matamata Relay by 19sec.
- 1976.** Hosted the B.O.P. Cross Country champs. Ian Simpson broke the ten year old record for the Race Course time trial by 5sec. A thrilling win in the Matamata relay by 1sec.
- 1977.** Membership reached 100 and Pauline Hanna became our first woman to compete in the Rotorua marathon. Gordon Taylor took the Nelson Memorial for the second time. We used buses six times during the season and these proved very sociable.
- 1978.** We ran the Waikato Cross Country champs on a course at Tauranga Racecourse and on the 12th August we staged the **N.Z. National Cross Country Championships** including the Veteran Nationals. A great team effort by club members.

- 1979.** Another exciting season with a thrilling finish to the Kaimai relay when Gay Read-Smith the last runner for our women's team held on to win narrowly. A very successful return to the Wairoa to Gisborne relay by our A and B teams to win both events.
- 1980.** The first outside event was the Kawerau Mountain race in which Tauranga won the teams event- Malcolm Taylor, Athol Williamson, Craig Pattie and Colin Boocock. On the 25th April our Jubilee committee organised a Fun Run from Greerton to raise funds. Our annual run at Ross List's Ohauti farm was another enjoyable affair.
- 1981.** The Geoff Willacy Memorial races caused another large turnout with over 100 runners taking part in the four events. The Racecourse Time Trial was about 125 metres shorter this season due to having to run on the inside course.
- 1982.** Our opening day run was the usual easy run through Yatton Park and enjoyed by a large gathering of old and new harriers. We ran the Complan Women's marathon and a small group of Ramblers flew to Rarotonga for the Round Rarotonga Road Race and won the team's race.
- 1983.** The weather was good for the Tauranga Open and the most outstanding run would be Rosemary Wright's win over Diane Rodger in record time. We fielded twelve teams in the Matamata relay and in a most spectacular finish Hamilton just held out Trevor Wright by one second.
- 1984.** There was a full muster for the Geoff Willacy Memorial sponsored by Athletic Attic. Lucky cup winners were Derek Wilson, Aaron Prior, Bruce MacKenzie, Nicky Roberts and Wayne Gardner. The season finished with the Club Road Champs at the Mount followed by the prize giving and sausage sizzle at Leisure Island.
- 1985.** We visited Te Puke for a cross farm pack run. Grant Young revelled in the miniature lakes at Tauwhare to take out the Senior title, with Barry Ellis second.
- 1986.** A great win for Mark Furlan at Hawera to win us the Hughes Memorial, ably supported by Ashley Dustow, Barry Ellis and Mike Powell to take the team's race from a strong New Plymouth team.
- 1987.** The Tokoroa relay was the first of seven bus trips away. The Taupo Cross Country races were well attended with wins to Gavin Bint, Boys 4000m and Mark Forsyth in the Junior Boys. Good seconds gained by Mark Furlan, Anne Forward and Richard Powell.

THE CLIFTON CONNECTION



The Clifton family's involvement with Ramblers commenced in the early 1970s and the connection has continued through to the present day with Colin still being an active member. Wife Pat was involved as a recorder and reliable general helper. The four daughters Wendy, Julie, Carol and Susie became active members and in due course their supportive father progressed from watching them to becoming fully involved himself. He had a go, enjoyed it and hasn't stopped since.

Eldest daughter, Wendy was their first harrier and she won the club's senior women's title in her first year and the Waikato junior title in her second season. She went on to create club records over the Oropi course as a senior women. Her sisters followed in her footsteps and among them they gained several club and BOP wins. At one Tauranga Open Cross Country, Wendy, Julie and Carol finished 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the Women's race.

Dad ran in everything he could and was a consistent and capable performer. He was always up there with the best in his age group and has carried off a mass of titles and placings over the years. He preferred cross country but achieved success on the road and track as well. He entered in to running the marathon distance in Hamilton in 1972, and produced his best time of 3hr 10min 24sec, aged 54 at Wiri in 1980. In recent years he has ventured in to ultra running and long distance walking events. Some of his best performances are: 80km Tree to Sea, 7hr 53min; 100km Pukekohe, 10hr 23min; Placemakers 24 Hour Relay, 156km covered at age 69 and 152km at age 70.

Colin has immersed himself in all club activities and some positions he has held have been Club Captain, Vice President, committee member and in 1995 he was made a life member in recognition of his services.

As he enters in to his 80s he can look back on 37 years as a club member, and having completed 35 marathons, twenty-two 24 hour events and thirty 50km, 80km and 100km ultras.

RUTH MacLOUGHLAN

Congratulations to Ruth on her well deserved selection as 1983 Waikato Veteran Athlete of the Year. Her two gold medals at the World Veteran Champs. in Puerto Rico, her N.Z. Cross Country and N.Z. 800m, 1500m, and 5000m track titles, along with her first place in just about everything else run in her age group in the Waikato, made her the obvious choice.

BEAZLEY'S OPEN CROSS-COUNTRY

JUNE 3rd, 1972

Conducted under N.Z.A.A.A. rules by Tauranga Ramblers Harrier Club at the Oropi Hall - 7 miles up Oropi Road, off the Tauranga by-pass road

GOOD PRIZES FOR ALL EVENTS

Senior	12,000m	1.30 p.m.	1st, 2nd, 3rd,
Women	3,000m	1.35 p.m.	and sealed
Midget Girls	1,500m	1.40 p.m.	handicap for all
Midget Boys	1,500m	1.45 p.m.	events.
Junior Women	3,000m	2.15 p.m.	
Veterans	8,000m	2.20 p.m.	
Junior Men	6,000m	2.25 p.m.	
B Colts	3,000m	2.35 p.m.	
A Colts	6,000m	2.45 p.m.	

<u>Entry Fees:</u>	Seniors & Veterans	30c	Women	25c
	Juniors	25c	Junior Women	20c
	A & B Colts	20c	Midget Girls	10c
	Midget Boys	10c		

ENTRIES CLOSE MAY 24TH WITH THE SECRETARY

Changing facilities available at the Oropi Hall

AFTERNOON TEA WILL BE SERVED AFTER THE RACES

Note: All entries to state: Club, Name, Event, and handicap off scratch man, who shall be named and have two times for the distance. All times must come from Club Handicappers. These details are required for all events, including Midgets.

Secretary: Mr K.W. Smith,
Newnhams Rd,
Te Puna, R.D. 2,
Tauranga.

GEOFF WILLACY REMEMBERED

By Wayne Smith

The trophies for the Willacy Memorial Handicap Cross Country races were donated by the family of the late Geoff Willacy. Geoff was one of the founders of the club and a very supportive and dedicated runner.

I first met Geoff when I joined Ramblers as a schoolboy in 1967, or thereabouts. I used to bike from Te Puna to Geoff's place in Moffats Road and he would give me a ride to wherever the run was based – usually Oropi for cross country and Roper's Hall (Yatton Park) for road runs. Geoff had a rattly old truck that he used to go to harriers in. After harriers he would regularly stop at the Greerton pub to fill his sherry flagon.

Geoff loved handicap races and it makes me wonder whether the word "burglar" in regard to such races came from his exploits. Geoff would never miss a day at harriers for anything, and those were the days when the club kept attendance points for Saturday/Sunday runs. You could always be pretty sure that Geoff would win the end of season points trophy. (Which was for a combination of handicap race points and attendance points.)

Many years later Geoff died suddenly while competing in a track race at the Tauranga Domain. He was doing what he loved most – running.

SYDNEY TO SURF

A new club venture in 1973 was a trip to Sydney where "some of the boys" competed in the annual 15km Sydney to Surf race. There were about 5000 starters and our club of Robin Horn, Noel Bennett and J. Fleming won the team's race. A fine effort.

MEMBERSHIP

This commenced with just 15 in our first year and rose slowly at first then with a steady improvement over the next 15 years to reach 100 in 1977. With the running boom of the 1980s our membership rose dramatically to reach 278 in 1981 and although holding at around the 200 mark for a few years following, this total has never been surpassed. There was great interest in marathon running at the time, and a condition was that entrants needed to be registered with a club before they were eligible to compete, and many of these people didn't front up for any further events.

A club Marathon ranking list was published in the newsletter in the 1980s and in 1981 it had 94 names on it and the following year there were 118 club member's names.

In recent years our harrier membership has hovered around 100.

MARATHON CUP RETURNS

As reported in THE BAY OF PLENTY TIMES January 28, 1976.



More than 60 years after a handsome trophy was presented to the marathon champion of the day, the Tauranga Amateur Athletic and Harrier Club yesterday received it back. Returning it was 89 year old John Saunders, now resident of Rotorua.

The magnificent silver cup with its lavish engraving has been more than half a century on shelves or sideboards 'out in the garage' or hidden in an obscure closet. Its simple inscription reads: "Presented to J. T. Saunders Marathon Winner, 1912.

Mr Saunders recollects the field of 1912 leaving the Domain and running out past Gate

Veteran marathon champion, John Saunders, re-presenting his silver cup to Gordon Taylor, Club President, Tauranga AA & H Club. Mr Taylor said the trophy would be presented to the Club winner of this year's Rotorua marathon.

Pa, returning and completing four circuits of the grass paddock that was the Domain in those days. "It was probably about ten miles," said a remarkably alert Mr Saunders yesterday. "And although we didn't worry much about recording times then, I think I recall somebody mentioning 54 or 55 minutes – I won by a lap of the track.

He competed again the next year and came second. His medallion to mark that performance notes 'fastest time' so it would seem the race was run on a handicap basis. World War I came and Mr Saunders joined the army.

Correspondence for the return of the cup were commenced the previous year and at a recent committee meeting of the club it was unanimously decided to accept the generous offer and arrangements were completed for its delivery. The first 'winner' of the newly presented trophy was M. A. Taylor.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE

The following runners have been awarded the **OBE (Order for Braving the Elements)** as they turned up at Oropi on a recent Saturday on a cold, very wet and windy, flu-inducing afternoon for a club run. To cap things off there was nowhere to change afterwards as the Oropi Hall was being prepared for a Ball that evening.

Fulcher			
Talbot Munro	Graham Bennett	Brian Dey	Ken Smith
John Turner	Ashley Dustow	Euan Ross	Vicki Furlan
Wayne Smith	Gordon Taylor	Richard Hall	John Caie
Ray Young	Vic Furlan	Rosemary Wright	John Gough

TAURANGA 50 kilometre GLUPOT ULTRA

In the early 1990s Wayne Smith organised a 50km ultra run, The Gluepot Challenge, on the roads inland from Tauranga. The race followed a tough course from Greerton up Ohauti Road past Mt Misery to Oropi, and returned via Gluepot and Pyes Pa Roads. It did not attract large entries and ultras were not everyone's cup-of-tea but for some it was a great challenge. For Club Captain Wayne, it was a time consuming effort to organise and several Ramblers and visitors gave the event their support – either as competitors or officials.

CLUB FUND RAISING

The club has undertaken many fund raising ventures over the years and one of the longest running has been the annual delivery of phone books. First instituted by Graham Bennett through his Post Office connections it has become a regular event ever since. To distribute our quota requires a whole club involvement and a lot of organising. Before the deliveries can commence the books must be individually inserted in to yellow plastic bags, a big effort on its own. Our thanks must go to those who allow their premises to be used as the base for the storage of thousands of books and plastic bags. In recent years we have appreciated the use of Gary and Tanya Garner's garage for this purpose and for co-ordinating their distribution.



Papamoa Phone Book Delivery Group June 1993.

You must remember one thing. In every little village in the world there are great potential champions who only need motivation, development and good exercise evaluation to succeed.

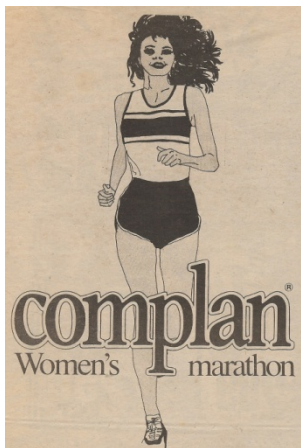
Arthur Lydiard.

COMPLAN WOMEN'S MARATHON

This women's only, two lap marathon along Cameron Road and back around Otumoetai and Matua was organized by the club, assisted by the Tauranga Roundtable, in 1982, 1983 and 1984. It was unique in New Zealand as being the only ever marathon solely for women and received wide publicity at the time in the Bay of Plenty Times and Radio BOP. Through generous sponsorship from G.W. Taylor industries it received very good support but was a mammoth task to put on. It was also a featured part of the 1982 Tauranga Centennial Celebrations and annual Citrus Festival.

There was an impressive prize list with the 1982 winner gaining an eight day trip to the Osaka Ladies' Marathon and the first Veteran a similar trip to the Round Rarotonga Road race, and with many more prizes in various categories.

All three marathons attracted over 100 runners and the pre race publicity put a lot of focus and pressure on the local entrants. All Ramblers and Round Table members were called upon to mark the course and act as officials. The first Complan was won by Judith Hine of New Plymouth in 2h 48m 08s but it was the meritorious effort of club member, Lynley Hills, to run a PB in 2h 57m 39s and gain fourth place which drew most of the attention.



Ramblers who took part in and performed well in the first Complan were Lynley Hills 4th, Sue MacGregor 13th, Sharon Martin 22nd, Diane Christianson 28th, Nan Enright 61st, Gay Read-Smith 65th, Anne Kerewaro 102nd and Sherryle Sipson 104th

The second running clashed with the Hamilton marathon and attracted less entries but the local Marathon Clinic supported it in force. It was won by Gail Reese in 2h 50m 35s but Carol Kane of Ramblers ran a gutsy second marathon to come in 7th and with a PB of 3h 11m 24s. Sharon Martin finished 20th in 3h 32m 14s.

The third marathon was run in perfect weather conditions and a large number recorded P.B's. An interesting factor was that 50% of the competitors were veterans with Heather Mathews winning in an 'excellent time' of 2h 47m 17s. Rambler's entrants to have good results were Jill Cook 20th, Sue MacGregor 22nd, Gail Hansen 55th and Judy Spackman 65th.

The club received messages of support from far and wide and were congratulated on its splendid organisation but it was later confirmed that Complan had withdrawn their sponsorship and so ended the first women's marathons to be held in New Zealand.

HAWERA VISIT

Wayne Smith recalls memories of his first Hawera trip.

Way back in 1966 a small group of Hawera Harriers were visiting Tauranga and took part in our Oropi cross country races. Rising to the challenge of these people from the Naki, Gordon Taylor started off what was to become a bi-annual trip for Ramblers to the big city of Hawera.

Our first trip away was in 1967 and those venturing west were: Graham Bennett, Noel Bennett, Alan Julian, Gordon Taylor, Kelvin Steiner, Russell Nelson, Wayne Smith and Malcolm Taylor.

The races we took part in were known as the Hughes Memorial Cross Country races. Our own Russell Nelson won the Colt's race with Bryan Rose from the Naki winning the Senior race.

My own memories from that first trip include: Kelvin's Mini running out of gas on the trip down and having to be towed by Gordon. Marking the course on the morning with the Hawera guys, and placing a marker in the middle of a swamp and myself taking a face plant into that swamp later during the race. And lighting the furnace at the Showgrounds for hot showers after the races. And the 'relay' on the way home – from Kihikihi to Cambridge.

There were stories about how hard the Hawera guys were – they went training on weekdays in the frost, or in the dark over farmland with torches. We Tauranga guys didn't do that.

Lloyd Christie donated the 'Christie Shield' for inter club competition between us and this was shared fairly evenly over the years that the trips continued. Throughout the years, Mike Savage from Hawera was our main host and to him we express our sincere thanks – for a good time being had by many Ramblers.

BRIEF ITEMS FROM THE 1970s

1. **Sunday Run.** A great sight to see 55 athletes out together on a Sunday morning run.
2. **Bon Voyage.** In early July, 1978 John Killeen, Graeme Jukes, Ken Knott, Steve Adams, Ray Edwards and Scott Kersley flew to Los Angeles from where they travelled on to Edmonton for the Commonwealth Games.
3. **Rotorua Marathon.** The 11th Fletcher Marathon run in 1975 drew 376 entrants and was run in the opposite direction to that in which it is run today. Fourteen were members of Ramblers.
4. **Lloyd Christie** made his first appearance for a while and gained a good 3rd. (1975 Club Road champs). "This year he has had a bit of injury plus I believe a few weekends skiing."

NELSON MEMORIAL RACE RECALLED

As Iain Bibby Remembers.

My first Nelson Memorial race is a quite vivid memory and took place on a Saturday in July, 1976. Beryl and I had been shopping in Tauranga when Gordon Taylor spotted me and stopped his car in a big hurry and said I had a really good handicap in that afternoon's Nelson Memorial and that I should enter. We were going on to the Mount anyway so I borrowed the basketball boots my father had recently walked the Routeburn track in, plus his swim shorts and T shirt.

I was one near the front when the race started, but remember this as my first real race with Ramblers, and with Graham Bennett, Colin Clifton and Trevor Fulcher in hot pursuit I managed to hold on to win it.

What I recall most about the race were the sore legs afterwards!! (I knew nothing about lactic acid in those days). An article in the paper amused me with its heading, "Bibby Scores In Road Race!" and mentioned athlete Iain Bibby of Te Puna. So much for being an athlete while wearing my father's togs and basketball boots!

ROUND RAROTONGA ROAD RACE

This event has attracted Rambler's runners over the years and still does. In 1982 we won the men's teams' prize and for the following few years the organizers sought us out for the publicity and even promoted it as the "South Pacific Teams' Road Race." The course encircles the whole of the island and is 32 kilometres in length. As expected conditions are always very warm and it is an ideal location for a great holiday.

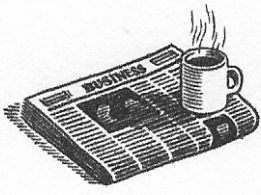
The members of that 1982 winning relay team were Nick Helms (4th overall), Roy Macgregor 5th, Malcolm Taylor 7th and Duncan Reid 9th. Lynley Hills won the women's section of the race and John Killeen 31st and Stu Willoughby 60th also competed. Stu won his trip as a prize in the 'Bay Sun' Beach Run earlier in the year.

WIRI MARATHON, MANUKAU CITY

On his way home from Rarotonga Nick Helms was a surprise entrant in the Winstone Peoples Marathon at Wiri and was up with the leaders for much of the race and eventually finished in 13th place. He had previously not established himself as a distance runner and his time of 2h 29m 59s was a fine achievement. Trevor Wright (Ramblers) who finished second, forced Dick Quax to run hard all the way for his victory.

The Wiri course consisted of four relatively flat laps and drew large entries while it was being held, with runners registering very good times. One entrant would complete the course carrying a sack of coal on his shoulder.

CLUB NEWSLETTERS



“A newsletter has many functions. One of its functions is to bring members closer together as a club – to become acquainted with other members’ names, their achievements and their possible aspirations.”

Rob McGregor *Newsletter Editor 1984 – 1986.*

Ramblers runners have always been well served by its monthly newsletters. These have been continuously published and distributed to members since the late 1960s. In those days it was called “The Roadrunner” but in following years this name dropped away and it became known as just the ‘Newsletter’. In 1986 members were invited to put forward their suggestions for names for the Ramblers newsletters. One name which came forward was ‘The Rambler’ and Rob McGregor, the editor at the time, built upon this and from that date it has been known as “Ramblings”.

In reading through the newsletters over the years they are certainly a mine of information, running data, history and interesting personal contributions. The 1980s would have been the heyday era in the club with large membership, big turnouts for events and good involvement in social activities. The club must have been in good heart judging from the humorous articles and leg pulling, and the outstanding achievements and successes gained in competition. It must also have been a decade which kept the stork busy judging by the new arrivals frequently mentioned in newsletters. Club members ventured overseas to compete or to gain experience and there were two organized tours to participate in marathons. It was the time when large numbers were attracted to the marathon and the Fletcher drew huge entries throughout the 1980s.

It has also been a demanding and often difficult task that the newsletter editors have had to make each month in meeting their deadlines, but these were almost always met and each issue eagerly looked forward to. Printing and publishing have come a long way and past editors must envy the ease and versatility that the computer age has brought to the job.

People known of and deserving of recognition as editors over the years are: Ken Knott, Ray Young, Denny Enright, Rob McGregor, Mike Powell, Wayne Smith, Sue Graham, Karen Smith, Rod Taylor, Barbara Allen, Jill Wilson, April Taylor, Teresa Coston, Tim Masters, Malcolm Taylor, and lastly, Fay Smith who has very capably carried on the tradition since 2001.

P.S. An editor’s comment introducing the July, 1980 newsletter. “**Registered at P.O.H.Q. Wellington for wrapping around fish and chips.**”

PAEROA TO THAMES

After nearly 30 years this race still continues today and although it does not receive the large entries of earlier years it is still popular among distance runners. Commencing at Paeroa it covers 32 kilometres of undulating, sealed country roads before the finish is reached in the centre of Thames. At its height it attracted around 700 individual athletes and there would be a mass of green singlets at the front of the line of starters. Nowadays there are relays and opportunities for school children to participate. It is a major achievement for a runner to break two hours.

Ramblers have had successes over the years with the most outstanding being Trevor Wright's win in 1984. His record of 1 hour 45 mins. 18 sec. still stands today. One other Rambler has also won the men's event but was disqualified for using another runner's number. (A women's). Club runners' performances to stand out over the years are: Colin Boocock, Mike Powell, David McGregor, Robin Connor, Carol Kane, Bev Windeatt, Bob Mangan, Sue McGregor, Ken Smith, Ann Forward, Talbot Munro, Kirk Stickles, S. Thomson and Ashley Dustow.

McLAREN FALLS PARK RUNS

These club relays were commenced in the mid 1980s and have always been a relaxed early season outing in an ideal setting. They started as social pack runs to introduce new members to Ramblers but in later years they have progressed to demanding short course team relays. There is always a barbecue and the opportunity for members to meet and catch up on happenings if they have had a summer lay off. An invitation was always extended to the Te Puke Harrier Club until its amalgamation with Ramblers in the 1990s.

TREE TO SEA ULTRA

This 80km event from Putaruru to Mount Maunganui was on the running calendar for several years. It was one of the first 'ultras' and would attract up to 50 runners at its peak. Ramblers runners who were regular participants were Ken Kerewaro, Colin Clifton, and Bob Laws. Starting conditions in the early hours were often cold, dark and damp and the struggle would really commence on the run up the Kaimais, with the half way point only being reached well past the summit. Specialist runners could cover the distance in under six hours but for the majority it would take eight hours or more. A four person relay was introduced in 1986 and in that first year the Rambler's team of Anne Forward, Mike Powell, Talbot Munro and Ruth MacLoughlan placed third in 5 hours 33 mins 15 sec.

NELSON MEMORIAL ROAD RACE

Back in the 1960s the Nelson family were a significant part of the Ramblers Harrier Club. Brothers, Murray, Russell and Les were all very competitive and talented runners and mother, Gladys, was always there supporting her sons and the club. Gladys was a regular timekeeper as well as a maker of afternoon teas, which were a regular feature of all Saturday/Sunday runs. Back in the 60s the standard road race distance was 10 miles (16km) and this was set for the distance for the men's event with the start being at Blake Park, Mt Maunganui, and travelling via the rail bridge to finish at Yatton Park, Greerton. The women would commence at Matapihi School which was the half way point, while the younger runners started at various lesser points in between.

While we do not have accurate records it is believed that a couple of the fastest times put up were by Noel Prosser and Trevor Wright in around 51 minutes. Murray lives and works in Auckland now but has for the last several seasons been a member of Ramblers. He is a super fast veteran, who has been a member of our successful 50 plus National Road relay winning teams.

In 2004 a change was made to the course due to the danger to runners through the big increase in traffic on the roads. The route now follows the entire circuit of the Waikareao estuary walkway and begins and ends at Coach Drive reserve. The seniors and masters run 9 kilometres, with the women and other age groups covering lesser distances if they choose to. The race continues to be a handicap event.

The trophies for the Nelson Memorial Road races were donated to the club by the Nelson family in memory of their mother, Gladys. Following her passing in 1970 the club president paid her the following tribute: "It was a sad blow to the club when Mrs Nelson passed away. We will all miss her as a supporter, a worker and a friend. She was always there when wanted and took a lot of worry off our shoulders."

Husband, Alan, also made his contribution to the club. "It was due to his brain child that the 'Pig in a Barrow' raffle was organised so successfully and that we were able to assist our junior athletes to travel to the Nationals. We are also grateful to Mr Gordon Taylor for donating the wheelbarrow and to Mrs Nelson for two beautiful turkeys which brought in quite a bit for the club."

"I always loved running.... It was something you could do by yourself and under your own power. You could go in any direction you wanted, fighting the wind if you felt like it, seeking out new sights just on the strength of your own feet and the courage of your lungs."

Jesse Owens

KAIMAI RELAY VETERAN'S WIN REMEMBERED

The 1980 Kaimai Relay from Morrinsville to Tauranga is remembered for a meritorious win by the Ramblers men's veteran's team. It was an exciting struggle all the way with our ten man team just edging out Matamata A in a very close finish by just 50 metres.

Ramblers had an actual running time of 5h 57m 37s which was 16 mins 13 secs faster than their estimate. There was a great team spirit and the win thoroughly deserved. Every member picked up time on their individual estimates to give the final runner, Colin Clifton, the lead in to the final lap from Tauriko school which he held gallantly to the finish.



BACK: Euan Ross, Tom Manley, Ross Cashmore, Colin Hawes, Bob Barclay, Graham Bennett (Res.)

FRONT: John Nicholson, Colin Clifton, Jack Potaka, Trevor Fulcher, Ken Evans.

TAUWHARE CUP

This is a long running event over a dairy farm near Morrinsville with courses which have not changed and which retains all the old challenges and obstacles of the past. If you want an old style, typical cross country course then this is it. Ramblers have always given this event good support with full bus loads on many occasions. The surface will be muddy and heavy going, and to which the cows have made their contribution.

In 2006 the highlight has been the achieving of the first three placings in the Men's Open race with Ben Ruthe, Iain MacDonald and Kyle MacDonald finishing in that order. Other Ramblers to achieve highly were Clive Reynolds, Terry Furmage and Gavin Smith among the Masters. Jamie Regan (Boys U15), and sisters Kelly, Abby and Jody Furmage featured highly in the Midget Girls.

When you win say nothing – when you lose say less.

THE JOGGER'S LAMENT

Written by Geoff Willacy (Jnr.) in October, 1982.

For some, jogging is a painful experience, to be avoided at all cost. Just walking a couple of blocks to the corner shop for that bottle of milk is exercise enough. Surely our bodies were never intended for more stress than that – or were they?

I enjoy jogging, I probably enjoy it too much. I often find myself planning my day around going for a two or three hour run, worse than that, when conditions are perfect for orchard work, they are also perfect for running. Sometimes my weeds get very high. Then I start worrying about the work I haven't done. Worry is bad for you. Maybe tomorrow conditions will be perfect long enough for a run **and** some orchard work.

Last year at this time, encouraged by other jog-a-holics, I entered the Hamilton Manning's marathon, and with seventeen hundred other running fanatics of all possible shapes, sizes, ages and sexes, proceeded through 42 kilometres of agony. In the early stages there was plenty of chatter and smiles, but as the race proceeded the talking stopped, and we just concentrated on which part of us hurt the most. At 32km I vowed to give up jogging forever. I just wanted to get to the finish line, go home and take up draughts or stamp collecting as a sport. The finish line did finally appear after almost three hours, and I gladly accepted the warm blanket offered, and then the cold drink, and the even colder shower.

By that night my legs were on strike and I found I couldn't walk. The next day was worse. "If this is what running does for you," I thought, "I would leave it to the horses." A couple of days later, walking was still an effort but I found I could run without too much pain. So I ran everywhere; in the house, around the orchard and before I realized it, down the road. That was fatal.

After six more months of having the most untidy orchard on our road, I found myself standing with two and a half thousand other runners on the start line of the 1982 Fletcher marathon. When the gun went off away we went, to complete an exact replica of my first marathon. All the chatter, then the silence, then the pain, then the finish line, then the cold showers etc. Then I couldn't walk again. Of course I immediately gave up running for good, like any wise person would. But, one day about a week later, I found myself way over at the back of the Minden in shorts and running shoes, running like crazy...

That's why I'm entered in the Hamilton Manning's marathon next weekend. I hope the showers are hot this time.

Geoff finished third Tauranga runner in a time of 2hrs 43 mins. Once again the showers were cold!!!

"The marathon can humble you."

Bill Rodgers

THOSE BUS TRIPS

An undoubted highlight of the club scene has been the bus trips away to various events and functions. These buses would often be filled to capacity and were a great social occasion with lots of back and forth chatter, ribbing and challenges. The passengers would be in a high state of anxiety as they pondered on the races ahead and how they would perform. A convenience stop was always compulsory. These trips would be subsidised by the club and often the drivers would offer their services free of charge. Three of recent note have been Jack Potaka, Ian Newlove and Ken Kerewaro.

To pass the time a quiz sheet would sometimes be passed around and once marked there would be heaps of mouth-watering prizes freely available to be shared among everyone on board. The bus would also be a convenient changing room on arrival at our destination but of late we have had a tent available for this purpose. A runner who was a passenger on the bus and whose performance on the day was judged to be outstanding, would be awarded the “duck hat” and be obliged to wear it for the remainder of the journey. A highlight on every return would be the mandatory stop for refreshments, both of the food and liquid kind.



WAIKATO VETERAN'S CROSS COUNTRY

When the Waikato Veteran's Association asked Ken Smith to organise their annual Cross Country event in Tauranga in 1986 little did they know he would take their suggestion so much to heart. Not content with choosing and marking out the Otumoetai College course, Ken decided as he hadn't had time to draw a map, that he had better show the visitors the way around the four laps. Brian Dey led early, but in the race to the finish Ken had put ten seconds of 'Dey Light' between them. Ken Evans, Rob McGregor, Colin Clifton and Graham Bennett followed among the 19 finishers.

In the two lap women's event, first year 'vet' Robyn Winter never gave the others a look in, winning by over a minute. Ann Forward, Jill Cook, Dawn McIntyre, Ruth MacLoughlan, Jos Evans, Bev Windeatt, Marge Shallcross and Shirley Faull all showed up well and finished in that order.

THE OROPI EXPERIENCE

A newsletter tribute by Editor, April Taylor, 1992.

This big THANK YOU is definitely in order to Lloyd and Cath Christie. I am unsure as to whether all Ramblers are aware of how fortunate we are to have a farm such as Oropi to run on during our Harrier winter months. It is sure a toughy!!! But that's what makes us such a great bunch of harrier runners.

Lloyd and Cath Christie originally owned the whole farm and on which our first course was set up, but it has now been sub-divided in to several blocks. The other property we now run through belongs to Eric and Heather Lowe, who very, very generously allow us to traipse through their farm. Richard and Muriel Brown graze some of Lloyd's land and have fenced off part of the farm to suit our harrier course. Richard frequently has to move his stock back over the road to his own farm on our race days.

Lloyd Christie was once a running Rambler, and he has been a member of our club for approximately 26 years. He was recently presented with a long service award by Athletics New Zealand. We are very privileged to have Lloyd Christie as a Life Member of our club.

Not only do these farmers allow Ramblers to run on their farms, but some Secondary School races are also held on this demanding course. What a great experience for them.

Thank you again and a special thank you to Lloyd and Cath. It is a great sport, and we can only say how much your support, consideration and generosity is appreciated by Tauranga Ramblers and many other runners who can try the**OROPI EXPERIENCE.**



George Windeatt and Murray Bint

FINISH LINE OFFICIALS OROPI 9TH JULY, 1988.

A TRIBUTE TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The club has never been short of followers who would regularly be in attendance offering encouragement to our runners and urging them on. These could be parents, the injured, the aged or just interested people with running in their hearts and wanting to be involved. Although they may not have been actively participating in competitions they played an important role in every fixture – (and still do).

They would position themselves around the course and shout encouragement to help us through the difficult parts. One of these supporters whose name comes to mind was April Taylor. April made it her business to know everyone by their first name and was extremely vocal as you passed her viewing point. No matter what your age group, as long as you were wearing **the** green singlet she would help you finish a few places further up the field. April was particularly encouraging of our midgets and younger runners. It was always good to see the Club spirit coming through too when young and old called out support for each other on first name terms.

CAMERON CUP

1982 Newsletter Report. “Some of you may be aware of the existence of this event which was originally founded by Club Captain, Gordon Taylor in 1980, together with Errol Christianson and Jack Potaka. It involves a jog from the Domain gates along Cameron Road to a special spot at Greerton, then a 5km speed stage back as far as the St John’s Hall, followed by a 500m recovery jog which returns you to the Domain gates.”

“Whilst the intention was for the event to be nothing more than a weekly training time trial it soon developed a competitive flavour. Gordon became restrictive as to who he would allow to compete. A trophy was presented which Gordon seems reluctant to part with despite his loss of the title some time ago.”

“Notable members who have gained entry recently include Geoff Mathews, Mike Savage, Bernie Hermans, Gary Shields and one other? Fastest time of 14m. 48s is credited to Colin Boocock. Conditions of entry are somewhat strict, depending on the calibre of the runner.”

The conditions of entry to this prestigious event are:

That at all times you run behind our regular members.

That you show clear signs of distress during the event and express difficulty in keeping up with the pace. Crawling on all fours or walking will suffice.

That you expound upon the superior running ability of the regular members.

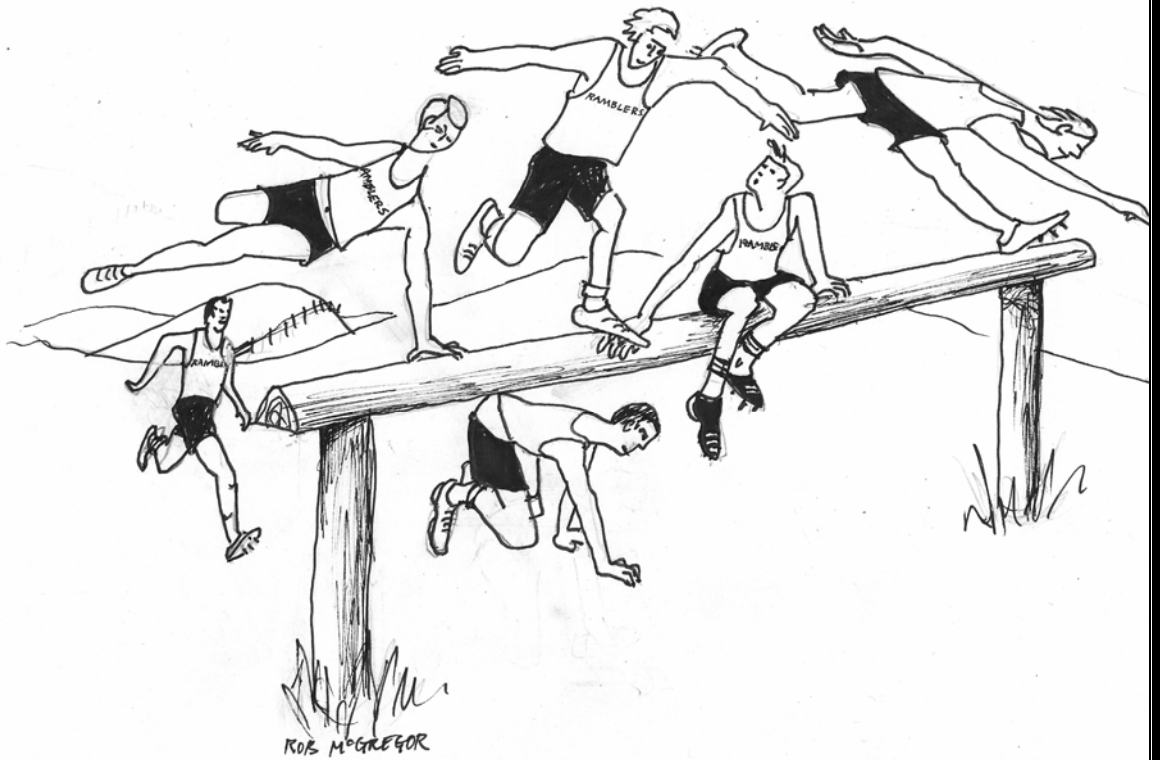
That you openly declare that you were outclassed.

That you not enquire as to the whereabouts of the trophy.

That you buy the first round at the pub.



RUNNING REALITIES



THE HURDLE



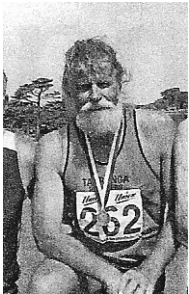
AFTERNOON TEA

By Rob McGregor

Ch-ch-ch-changes...

Artist, chess master, traveller, musician, runner and versatile track and field athlete-
ROB McGREGOR

I think I joined the Ramblers Harrier Club in 1978, primarily as I needed club registration to run my first marathon. At that time, harrier running meant running up (and down) steep hills, clambering over hurdles that consisted of bracing on the farm fences and perhaps a sack or two rolled over the barbed wire. They were carefully placed in regard to cow pats so that on landing, you filled the spaces between your toes if running barefoot, or filled your shoes if not. You then ran, or rather waded through a bog comprising a high percentage of the raw material already mentioned, often leaving a shoe behind to retrieve later or occasionally lose permanently. After the run, you made your way to the local hall for afternoon tea. There was always a wide range of **sandwiches, cakes, fudge, pikelets, scones, tarts, kisses, lamingtons, louse cake, Chelsea buns, peanut brownies, shortbread, yo-yos, afghans, a fruit and nut loaf and sponge cakes.** I missed something – those ginger flavoured things baked in specially shaped iron trays. (Remember Taupo!) This was accompanied of course, by an endless stream of tea made from real loose tea-leaves, poured from brown teapots. Children tended to wait politely for the adults to start – or that is the way I recall it.



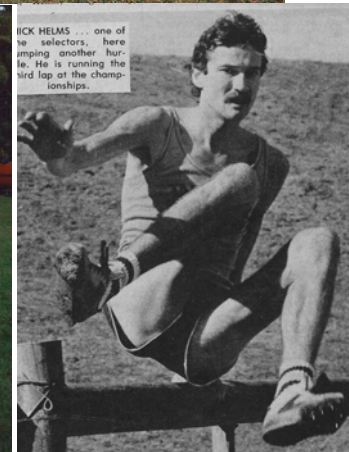
There have been many changes over the years: we now run with racing spikes on flat, or nearly flat, mown grass; then clear, step or climb over purpose-built sturdy hurdles (not too many, mind). Afternoon tea is often a muffin wrapped in plastic film and a polystyrene cup of weak tea-bag tea. If it is a spread on trestle top tables, the adults wait patiently while children clean up the sweet things.

Despite the many changes, vestiges of these two great harrier traditions have remained over the last 50 years: **Hurdles and Afternoon Tea.**

WILDERNESS RUNS

Clive Reynolds is an experienced Rambler at finding *way out places* to run and although not all of these are competitive events he often travels in to the back blocks to run and tramp or to enjoy the isolation and splendid scenery. The upper South Island has attracted him on occasions and he can number the Queen Charlotte Walkway and Molesworth Station events among his conquests. He organised a monthly Wilderness Run during the 1990s for club members, that took them to interesting and often very challenging places throughout the Bay of Plenty, and to areas where they would not normally venture or in conditions not usually experienced. Clive is also a successful runner over distances and trails.





RANDOM SHOTS OF RAMBLERS