

AUSTRALIAN CENTURION DETAILS

9. **Michael Porter (06/06/1925)**
18-19 October 1975
21:45:47
George Knott Athletic Field, Clifton Hill, Victoria

Mike Porter was a regular race walker for Mentone Harriers and the Victorian Amateur Walkers Club but it was not until 1975, when a Centurion walk was scheduled at the George Knott Athletics Track in Clifton Hill, that his thoughts turned to the longer distances.

This period coincided with a golden period of walking in Victoria with a large number of active distance walkers. This led to the largest field yet seen for the Centurion event with 21 starters. The weather was cool to cold during the night hours of the Saturday night with light rain on the Sunday morning before clearing to fine weather for the finish. These ideal conditions helped all competitors and the race saw the 5 finishers and a new Australian record over the intermediate distance of 50 miles.

The race was started by Cr. George Knott of the Collingwood City Council on the radio time 'pips' at 6.00 p.m, on Saturday 18th October. Excellent facilities were provided by the Collingwood Harriers in their dressing rooms, shower and canteen facilities and the public address system was used extensively to acquaint competitors of their progressive times.

Mike was some laps behind Stan Jones and in second place at the halfway mark but was confident as, some weeks previously, he had walked a particularly fine 50 miles at the Mentone Athletics Track. Thus prepared, he was able to overhaul a slightly tiring Stan in the closing stages to cross the finish line first in 21:45:47 and become Australian Centurion number 9. The finishing list read as follows

C9.	Mike Porter	50	Frankston A. A. Club.	21:45:47
C10.	Stan Jones	50	St. Stephens Harriers.	22:04:59
C11	Chris Clegg	58	USA	22:34:14
C12.	John Harris	25	Queensland	23:18:15

The photo of Mike finishing the race says it all. His arms are held outstretched above his head in victory. Rarely does a photo show a more pleased competitor celebrating the ultimate achievement.



Mike subsequently became heavily involved in the Centurions Club as Treasurer and the producer of our first regular newsletters. He had many other interests and I saw him at the Murray River Canoe Marathon one year. He was a regular competitor with his sons in the double kayak division. I also used to see him at the Corporate Cup running events where he had a regular team.

Mike continued on enthusiastically long past the normal retirement age, working as a volunteer on weekdays at the 'Polly Woodside' in Melbourne where he manned the office of the Melbourne Historical Society. Into his seventies, he continued to participate as part of our team in the annual Ekiden Relay in Ballarat and talked

enthusiastically about his new sport - golfing.

Mike has now shifted to Echuca and recently celebrated his 86th birthday. Although we do not see as much of him as we used to, he did come down for one of our lunches in 2009 and still looked fit and well.



May 2009 - centurions Ken Walters, Ian Jack, Mike Porter, Terry O'Neill, Karyn O'Neill, Stan Miskin, Clarrie Jack and Tim Erickson