

CENTURION FOOTNOTES

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DATES...DATES...DATES

30 March, 2008	Coburg Harriers 6 Hour Run and Walk	Coburg, Victoria
19-20 April 2008	Coburg 24 Hour Carnival, incorporating the 2008 Australian Centurions Qualifying Event	Coburg, Victoria
31 May – 1 June 2008	Continental centurions Qualifying Event Contact Hans van der Knaap (Secretary RWV) - Hansvanderknaap@cs.com	Schiedam, Holland
1-2 Nov 2008	New Zealand Centurions Qualifying Event See http://www.srichinmoyraces.org/nz/races/auck/24hr	Auckland, NZ

Our 2008 Australian Centurions events at Coburg are generating big interest. We already have 22 walk entries (8 for the 24 Hour Walk, 3 for the 12 Hour walk and 11 for the 6 Hour walk) and there are some big names in the start lists.

VALE CHRIS CLEGG 1913 - 2007

I am saddened to report that Chris Clegg, Australian Centurion Number 11, died on 13th December, 2007. Chris had been living in retirement in Santa Monica in California and, at 94 years of age, was our oldest living Australian Centurion. Chris's family had moved him into a convalescent home about 3 months ago as he'd become very frail but, even with the more intensive care, his time had obviously come and he passed away peacefully shortly before Christmas.



Chris Clegg in England for his second British Centurion finish in 1979

Chris was born in England on 4th May 1913 and developed his love for racewalking during his early working days when he was a member of the Leicester Walking Club. He joined Leicester in 1941 and went on to help the club to many team victories. In June 1947 he became Leicester's first centurion in the London to Brighton and back, passing 100 miles in 21:39:42. (He returned to the Shoefayre 100 miler in England in 1992 and was the special guest starter.)

At the end of the second world war, Chris found that it was hard to find work in Britain and so migrated to Canada where he worked for a period of years. At one stage, he travelled to the USA for a racewalk and decided to stay. He lived there for the rest of his life. But it is fair to say that, even though he lived in America/Canada for over 50 years, he never lost his English accent and he remained a 'Brit' in manner and attitude.

He worked for many years as a postal worker and eventually retired to California where he lived in Santa Monica. In retirement, he no longer racewalked but kept fit with long strolls in the hills outside Santa Monica.

It was many years after his first Centurion walk that he decided to try again. The American Centurions had recently

formed and their first few walks saw few finishers. Chris joined the field for the 1971 scheduling and became American Centurion Number 7 with a time of 22:46:14. He was 54 years of age.

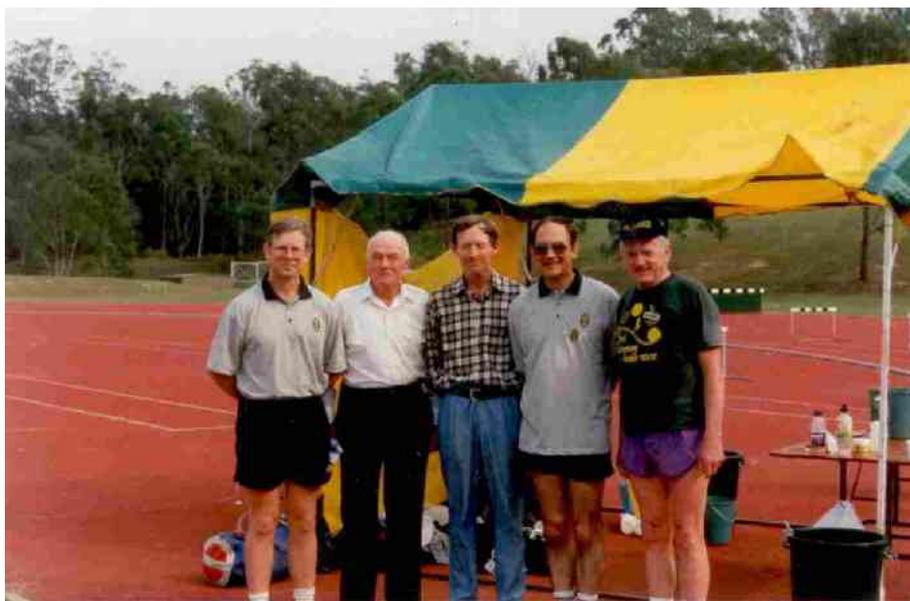
This seemed to rekindle his love affair with long distance walking. In 1975 he travelled to Australia where he recorded 22:34:14 to become Australian Centurion Number 11. Then in 1977, he travelled to Holland to become Continental Centurion Number 53 with a time of 23:18:55. With this performance he became the first walker in the world to capture all 4 Centurion badges – England, America, Australia and Continental.

Not content with that, he then travelled to England in 1979 and finished a second British Centurion walk, his time on this occasion being 23:07:51. He was aged 62 at that time.

He was an insatiable traveller and in retirement he made many trips to various locations around the world. His regular postcards were always from a different overseas location. In 1996 he decided to make a trip to Australia to coincide with our Melbourne based Centurion event and it was great to see Chris once more after such a long absence. He was at that stage 79 years of age but showed with his enthusiastic approach that age is no barrier to someone so full of life. He stayed with me in Melbourne and saw more in his few days here than most of us see in a year!. Chris and I caught up with Mike Porter during his lunchbreak at the Melbourne Ports Historical Area and Mike was able to show him around the Port area in which he worked.

After the race, Chris ventured north to Sydney, then to Brisbane where he caught up with various old friends, then to Canberra and hence back to Melbourne. This was his third trip for the year, having travelled to Turkey and Greece in May and then to England and Scotland in July.

He returned to Australia a year later and turned up unannounced to watch our 1997 Centurion race in Brisbane. With the weather oppressively hot, he took over the sponging table and spent the day handing out water to the walkers. He was 84 years old at the time.



Chris in Brisbane in 1997 with fellow centurions Tim Erickson, John Harris, Tim Thompson and Stan Miskin

Chris was for many years our most decorated Centurion, having completed the 100 mile distance on 5 occasions as follows

June 1947	Age 30	London to Brighton and Back	21:39:42	British Centurion 135
Sept 1971	Age 54	Colombia, Missouri, USA	22:46:14	American Centurion 7
Oct 1975	Age 58	Melbourne, Australia	22:34:14	Australian Centurion 11
June 1977	Age 60	Sint-Oedenrode, Holland	23:18:55	Continental Centurion 53
June 1979	Age 62	Ewhurst, Surrey, England	23:07:51	

On top of this, he completed the Rouen 24 hour walk in France and came 22nd out of 50 starters with a distance of 157.47km (at the age of 63).

On a personal note, Chris was one of our most generous financial supporters and his regular large bequests helped us set up many of the things we now take for granted. His superb record shows that age is no barrier if you are keen. We shall all miss Chris who was truly our 'elder statesman'.

BOB LEE TACKLES BRUNY ISLAND

I was reading the latest issue of the Ultramag magazine when I came across a race result featuring **Bob Lee (C 47)**. Bob has been pretty quiet of late on the ultra run/walk front so it was good to see him back in action. Bob is of course both a NZ and an Australian Centurion and is one of those rare breed who has both run and walked the 100 mile distance within 24 hours. The occasion was the annual Bruny Island 64 km road run in Tasmania on 1st December 2007. This is Australia's southernmost ultra-marathon as Bruny Island is south of Hobart. The run goes from the northern tip of the island to the southernmost point, finishing by touching the lighthouse door. It passes through rural country with a couple of villages, has some gentle hills, some sealed road and some gravel. In fact, something for everyone! It is a different race to normal with everyone having to nominate their start time to ensure that everyone finishes between 12:30PM and 2:30PM. Bob's time was a brisk **6:19:21**. Here is what Bob had to say when I emailed him for more details

It was a 64km fun run for individuals and teams, the length of Bruny Island in southern Tasmania. I finished 4th in the individual section and won the solo handicap section. It was the most satisfying event I have ever been in as I put no pressure on myself and stuck to my pre-race strategy and really enjoyed the day.

I have been living and working in Hobart for 15 months now. I am happily engaged to a local lady and my daughter produced my first grandchild, a girl, two days ago. Beverley and I are going to NZ for two weeks in February to catch up with family and see the little one.

The knees are fine but I have had a few problems with the lower back over the last six weeks or so. A pity as I haven't been this fit for years. I have a few goals for the next few years and two of the big races will be as a walker.

Regards
Bob Lee

A WORLD WIDE LOOK AT THE VARIOUS CENTURION CLUBS

I have recently completed a review of the various Centurion clubs world wide and thought it worthwhile shedding some light on the various organizations. Here goes!

The British Centurions was formed in **1911** and have operated continuously since then. They hold one event per year and potential Centurions must complete the requisite 100 miles in this event to qualify for membership. In the qualifying 2007 race, which was held in Battersea Park in London in July, 28 of the 58 starters reached the 100 mile mark and there were 8 new centurion members.

Originally, membership was to be limited to 100, but this was rescinded in October 1930 as the numbers of members swelled well past the initial estimates. With this year's new members, the grand total now stands at an amazing **1062**.

At the inaugural meeting in 1911, James Edwin Fowler-Dixon was retrospectively accorded the number "1" for his performance in 1877 and was elected the first President and held that position until his death in 1943. The position has been deemed to be 'for life' and there have only 9 Presidents in the entire history of the club. Carl Lawton (C750) is the current President.

The London to Brighton and back (19 Centurion races) and the Leicester to Skegness (11 Centurion races) races were popular yearly qualifying opportunities until eventually motor traffic forced walkers off the roads. In recent years the annual event has been held at venues in London, Colchester, Newmarket and on the Isle of Man.

In most years, the qualifying event is held as a road event but approximately every 10 years, it is held as a track based event so that walkers can test themselves against the official British records.

The official Centurions website is found at <http://www.centurions1911.org.uk/index.html>

In 2011, the British Centurions will celebrate 100 years of existence and there are sure to be big celebrations on offer.

Centurion Vereniging Nederland (C.V.N.) is the second oldest Centurion club in the world. After L. Schol, Centurion 291, had become the first Dutch Centurion, more and more Dutch men and women travelled to Great Britain to obtain the Centurion title. Besides the British Centurions, the largest group of foreign Centurions are the Dutch. To stay in contact with each other and to represent the Dutch contingent of Centurions, the Dutch Centurion Association (Centurion Vereniging Nederland, C.V.N.) was founded on the 12th of February **1966**. The C.V.N. spreads news about past and future races amongst its members, organizes trips to the British races and has a Centurion reunion each year.

In other words, C.V.N. is a brotherhood of all the Continental European based walkers who are members of the Centurion League based in England. That means that they do not hold any event of their own - it is a club that exists simply to honour those Dutch walkers who qualify at British Centurions. It has over **300** members.

The Dutch Centurions have their own website at <http://members.lycos.nl/DutchCenturions/> and they put out their own regular club magazine.

The Centurions Club of America was formed by the Columbia Track Club in **1967** and held an annual 24 hour walking event each year for nearly 20 years. Nearly all the early events were held in Colombia in Missouri but as time went on, other venues were used in places such as San diago. Their last event was held in 1983 and the books stood closed at 48 Centurions.

It was with great excitement that the Centurion world greeted the news that this group had reformed in 2000 and, since then, a number of centurion events have been held. Ulli Kamm and his wife Traudl have been the mainstay of the Club since it reformed and his website remains the main source of information about future events. See <http://www.ultrawalk.com/>

In 2000, Ulli organised the qualifying opportunity in his home town of Golden in Colorado and 9 new members overcame snow and freezing conditions to reach the 100 mile mark and qualify as American Centurions. Since 2003, the yearly qualifying event has been held in conjunction with the Ultracentric 24/48 Hour Carnival and the event now advertises that those who complete 100 miles within 24 Hours will be awarded the Ultracentric (UC) Centurion Award. The 2007 event was held on November 17th in Grapevine in Texas and 6 new American Centurion members (including Australian Geoff Hain) qualified. The number of American Centurions now stands at **69**.

The Australian Centurions Walkers was formed in **1971** and has a current membership of **53**. The club holds one qualifying event each year and it is always in April at Coburg, a Melbourne suburb in the State of Victoria. The event is always track based and competitors must face the challenge of completing just over 402 laps of the 400m track to achieve the elusive 100 mile mark.

The club also grants centurion membership to walkers who achieve the 100 mile standard in either the Gold Coast 24/48 Hour event in August or the Sri Chinmoy Australian 24 Hour event in Adelaide in September. This is different to the other Centurion clubs who only accept performances done in their specific event.

The club has extended its mandate from the original 100 mile concept and now seeks to encourage ultra walking throughout Australia. As such, it recognises and oversees performances from 6 Hours to 6 Days and maintains and administers Open and Age Group Records over a wide variety of Distances and Times. The club also puts out a regular ultra walking newsletter and maintains a comprehensive website at <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~austcent/index.html>

The Continental Centurions was formed in **1973** and, in that same year, the first Continental Centurion number was allocated. Continental Centurion 1 is Jan Vos, who is still an active walker today. The rules to obtain this title are roughly the same as for Centurions. You have to walk 160.928 kilometres within 24 hours at a race on Dutch soil. Normally these races are organized by the O.L.A.T. one year, followed by the R.W.V. the next year (in Weert and Schiedam respectively). Just like a British Centurion, a Continental Centurion receives a number which he or she will keep for the rest of his or her life (and beyond).

There are currently **359** Continental Centurions, who are mainly Dutch, but there are also some German, Belgian, British and Danish Continental Centurions. In their 2007 event, held in May in Weert, 20 walkers reached the 100 mile standard and, of the 20, 10 were new members.

The New Zealand Centurions Club was formed in November **1998** and was enthusiastically run by Dudley Harris until his retirement from club administration. Recently Philip Sharp has sought to re-invigorate the club and now maintains a comprehensive website at <http://www.math.auckland.ac.nz/~sharp/nzcenturions/> Currently the club has **14** members.

As well as recognising centurion status, the New Zealand Centurions recognise the achievement of walking 100 kilometres in 14 hours 30 minutes.

Like many other national bodies in New Zealand representing minor sports, they are currently looking at ways to attract more people to centurionism and ultrawalking. One possibly being considered is to recognise other achievements such as walking 80 kilometres in 12 hours or 40 kilometres in six hours, two achievements recognised by the Australian Centurions.

They do not usually organise their own events. Instead, members enter events organised by other groups such as by the New Zealand Sri-Chinmoy marathon team.

Unfortunately the 2007 qualifier, to be held in conjunction with the New Zealand Self-Transcendence 24 Hour Track race in Auckland in October, was cancelled at short notice by the Sri Chinmoy group when their founder Guru Sri Chinmoy died suddenly.

The Malaysia Centurion Club was formed in Malaysia in **2001** and held their first 24 hour walk in August of that year. The inaugural race saw 11 new members. The next event was held in August 2003 and saw 12 centurion finishers and hence 12 new members to make 23 Malaysian centurions in total - from 15 countries. Interestingly, organiser Khoo Chong Beng had decided that each finisher would be awarded a Malaysian Centurion number even if it was a second finish. This is the only Centurion Club which operates in this fashion. The other clubs only award a centurion number on the occasion of the first finish.

In the 2005 event, 12 finishers meant a further 12 centurion numbers were added to the list with the 12 representing CZE, ESP, BEL, FRA, RUS, GER, NED, AUS, MAS and BLR. No race can claim to be more world-inclusive than the Malaysian event.

While the first 3 events had been held in the relative coolness of the Genting Highlands resort, their most recent event, in August 2007, was staged in central Kuala Lumpur. The tough conditions ensured that only 5 walkers reached the 100 mile target. Of the 5 successful walkers, 3 were Malaysian, indicating the increasing standard of local ultra walking within that country. The other interesting note is that Kenyan women finished 1st, 2nd and 4th in the women's division, definitely another first in the world of ultra walking. Is this perhaps the first sign of an African interest in the ultra running and ultra walking disciplines.

Overall, the number of Malaysian Centurions stands at **40**. The club has grown quickly and is one of the real success stories in ultra walking.

This event is unique in a number of ways

- it has a great mass participation and is a much bigger event numerically than other centurion events around the world
- it has firm Government support and offers cash prizes and subsidises overseas participants
- it regularly attracts large numbers of entrants from around the world

- any judging infringement incurs a 1 lap penalty, yet another innovation unique to this event.

As well as the 24 Hour event, Malaysia plays host to the very successful Penang International 12 Hour event which is also held every 2 years.

Full results of all Malaysian Centurion events can be viewed on <http://www.championchip.com.my/>

MOST PROLIFIC CENTURIONS

Following on from the above information, the next question is: Which centurions have achieved the largest number of centurion badges from the 6 clubs which regularly hold qualifying events? Going back to the 1970's when there were only 4 such clubs, it was easy. The first person to earn all available badges was **Chris Clegg** who got there in 1977. His 4 badges were earned as follows

June 1947	Age 30	London to Brighton and Back	21:39:42	British Centurion 135
Sept 1971	Age 54	Colombia, Missouri, USA	22:46:14	American Centurion 7
Oct 1975	Age 58	Melbourne, Australia	22:34:14	Australian Centurion 11
June 1977	Age 60	Sint-Oedenrode, Holland	23:18:55	Continental Centurion 53

With the New Zealand Centurions forming in 1998 and the Malaysia Centurions forming in 2001, it is now possible to earn up to 6 badges and two people have done so – **Sandra Brown** and **Jill Green**. Their qualifying performances are as follows

Sandra Brown:	1-2 July 1983	Leicester, England	22:18:24	British Centurion 735
	May 1984	St Oedenrode, Holland	21:05:07	Continental Centurion 131
	10-11 July 1999	Auckland, NZ	19:00:47	New Zealand Centurion 4
	18-19 Sept 1999	Melbourne, Australia	19:14:56	Australian Centurion 36
	19-20 Sept 2000	Golden, Colorado	22:35:45	American Centurion 50
	25-26 Aug 2001	Genting Highlands, Malaysia	182.032 km	Malaysian Centurion 7
Jill Green	20-21 July 1992	Leicester, England	23:13:59	British Centurion 898
	15-16 May 1999	Weert, Holland	22:13:52	Continental Centurion 282
	18-19 Sept 1999	Melbourne, Australia	21:15:35	Australian Centurion 38
	19-20 Sept 2000	Golden, Colorado	23:35:07	American Centurion 53
	07-08 July 2001	Auckland, NZ	22:18:08	New Zealand Centurion 8
	4-5 Aug 2003	Genting Highlands, Malaysia	164.350 km	Malaysian Centurion 20

Going down the list, **Herbert Neubacher** has qualified in 5 of the 6 countries. His performances are as follows:

May 1989	Holland	21:21:57	Continental Centurion 203
13-14 Aug 1999	Battersea Park, London	21:40:38	British Centurion 959
18-19 Sept 1999	Melbourne, Australia	21:03:07	Australian Centurion 37
19-20 Sept 2000	Golden, Colorado	23:36:38	American Centurion 54
07-08 July 2001	Auckland, NZ	22:18:08	New Zealand Centurion 9



Sandra Brown, Herbert Neubacher and Jill Green in January 2004 – 17 centurion badges between them

From then on, it is down to 4 qualifiers and there are a few of those around, including Australia's **Geoff Hain** and England's **Sue Clements**. Geoff's 4 badges were earned as follows

16-17 Oct 2004	Adelaide, SA	23:30:38	Australian Centurion 49
1-2 Oct 2005	New Zealand	162.474 km	New Zealand Centurion 14
19-20 Aug 2006	Isle of Man, UK	23:31:43	English Centurion 1051
17-18 Nov 2007	Grapevine, Texas	23:25:14	American Centurion 68

NEW ZEALAND LONG DISTANCE WALKING

The 1800s saw the craze of pedestrianism sweep the world. Like other British colonies, New Zealand had its share of exploits, recorded in the newspapers of the time and probably, in modern terms, falling somewhere between running and walking. As an example, the following newspaper snippet, from 1886, talks of new Zealand Champion pedestrian Edwards.

THURSDAY 22 APRIL 1886 - CHAMPION WALKING MATCH

A large section of the 6000-strong crowd rushed onto the track to congratulate both New Zealand champion Edwards and the Australian champion Scott after their six day walking match ended at the Exhibition Building in Melbourne today. The track was 12 laps to the mile and Scott, the winner, covered 424 miles and 8 additional laps while Edwards covered 406 miles and 4 additional laps. The two athletes appeared on the stage to rapturous applause from the crowd. The organizer, Mr Spofforth, congratulated Scott but said he would have liked to have seen him pushed further so the public might have a better idea of his speed and quality. However, it must be said that a six day contest is more a matter of endurance than one of speed.

Although these early colonial exploits were certainly valid feats of endurance, they cannot be verified as true walking performances. They form part of what is called the Age of Pedestrianism.

By around 1890, amateur athletics clubs had been formed in New Zealand and Australia and amateur sport had become a valid alternative to this world of professional athletics. Within a few short years, the amateur clubs were holding their own State Championships and, by 1893, the Amateur Athletic Associations had entered into a memorandum of understanding to hold Australasian Championships every 2 years. The first such event was held in Melbourne in November 1893. The second carnival was held in Christchurch in New Zealand in January 1896.

These early amateur walking events were traditionally held over short distances such as 1 Mile or 3 Miles and the opportunities for ultra distance walks were few and far between. In fact, it was Australia rather than New Zealand which regularly staged long distance walks (normally over the 50 Miles distance) for its amateur walkers and any budding New Zealand ultra walk competitors had to make the trip across the Tasman to test themselves.

It was Harry Tetlow in the 1950's who led a lone charge on the home front. He travelled to Australia in October 1954 and won the Victorian Amateur Walkers Club 50 Mile championship in 9:48:58. He returned in 1956 for a second win, his time of 8:25:37 setting a new Australasian best. When fellow Lower Hutt Athletic Club team mate Norm Read won the 1956 Olympic 50 km walk the following month, the profile of long distance walking was raised in New Zealand. An annual New Zealand 50 km championship was held from 1956 onwards and walkers were more in the public eye.



Harry Tetlow and Norm Read in action – New Zealand's first ultra walkers of note in the modern era

Through the Taranaki Race Walking Club, Tetlow and Read organized a series of annual 50 mile walks, from Hawara to New Plymouth, from 1964 until 1970. One further 50 mile walking event was held in 1976 and then a further one in 1992. On that occasion, four walkers started – Norm Morriss, Robert Keighly, Dudley Harris and Sonja Rowe – and all finished. Norm Read was the dominant walker in these early events and, in 1965, he reduced Tetlow's New Zealand Best on Record time to 7:49:52. This time still stands today as an Australasian Best.

The winners of these 50 mile events were as follows

1964	Norm Read	8:15:58
1965	Norm Read	7:49:52 (Australasian Best on Record)
1967	Norm Read	8:41:05
1968	Norm Read	8:24:35
1969	L. Diack	8:32:58
1970	D. Warner	8:55:29
1976	Norm Read	8:34:14
1992	Norm Morriss	9:34:46

From this modest background, New Zealand's first centurion emerged in Ross Pilkington, who qualified on Saturday 20th April 1968 on Auckland's Alexandra Park Raceway in 23:23:40. Dudley Harris published the following race report in his New Zealand Centurions Newsletter Issue 2, dated April 1999

Let's begin with the dates – Fri 19 to Sat 20 April 1968 – so that you can gasp at how long ago that seems, and wonder why the New Zealand Centurions weren't born for another 31½ years.

Perhaps it was a Catch-22 situation: there weren't 100-mile races for walkers because there wasn't a demand ... and there weren't any aspiring Centurions because there weren't any opportunities.

To be frank, it wasn't an event arranged for would-be Centurions. According to some Auckland newspaper cuttings kindly loaned by Ross, it was a 24-hour run organised by the Marathon Runners' Club with apparently two main aims: to raise money for charity, and to provide Bill Baillie, a world class runner, with an opportunity to better the world running record for 24 hours.

The world record had been set in London in 1963 by South African W. Hayward, with 159 miles 62 yards (almost 256 km); while the New Zealand record at 152 miles 790 yards (almost 245 km) belonged to D. Stephenson from a run along the Auckland waterfront in 1964.

Presumably 24-hour races didn't come around too often, so Ross decided to have a go, being joined at the start line by Kevin Henwood, L. C. Barker (65 years) and Ross's 15 year old son, Ross Junior.

Among the runners, though not necessarily intending to go the full distance (it was a charity fund raiser), there were such names as Murray Halberg, Jeff Julian, Harry Magee, Millie Sampson and Peter Snell. Mrs Sampson (W35) covered 55 miles, and Christine Larson (W17) pulled out 440 yards before – neither knowing that the women's world record was believed to be 53 miles. Had they known, they said they would have planned their races differently.

However, let us concentrate on the walkers ... not that that is easy when the only accounts seem to be in two Auckland newspapers where, although the label was 'sports news', it was not in the detailed style that we expect today.

At 7pm on the Friday evening, the Governor General and erstwhile Olympic athlete, Sir Arthur Porritt, fired a rocket up into a starry sky over the shell track of Alexandra Park Raceway.

After 2½ hours, the weather was described as “ideal, with very little wind, a chill in the air, and sporadic, icy showers”. But by 2am on Saturday morning, it was “very cold, miserably wet and very depressing; and the numbers circling the track under the glare of the floodlights could be counted on almost the fingers of two hands. Most were stretched out in sleeping bags all over and under the grandstands ...”

“Only the hardy were running and, of these, five were to run 100 miles and one was to walk that far .. By 2:31am, Baillie had passed 50 miles and Pilkington 39 miles ...”

“In the real chill of 4am, Baillie passed 60 miles ... Pilkington was approaching 40 miles, and another walker, Hendood, was not far behind. A sprinkling of icy rain did not worry the 65-year-old veteran walker, L. C. Barker, protected by a yellow parka and encouraging himself by reciting poetry and limericks ... a small transistor radio was slung around his neck ... “

“At 9:45am, the sun came out briefly ... but did not last. Icy rain showers lashed down with repeated ferocity ...”

“Baillie completed 70 miles running in 10 hours, then, reduced to a walk, walked undauntedly for another 9 hours to bring up his century.”

“At 3:40pm, a fierce hailstorm flayed the field. So much rain fell on the already saturated dished circuit that, pounded down to a fine sand by hundreds of feet, it became a 3-ft wide moat.”

Bill Baillie, with 102 miles, had gone the furthest with four others reaching 100 miles.

“Pilkington had established a national walking record of 100 miles in 23 hours, 23 mins 40 secs ... K. Henwood walked 70 miles and the veteran Barker 65 miles.”

To which list must be added the 15 year old Ross Pilkington, who completed 60 miles.

What was it really like, I asked Ross Senior recently?

Ross doesn't remember much of the race-detail, though the rain is still a vivid memory. Sometime in the wee, small hours, he found himself leaning on the rail (this was a horse trotting track, remember), with cold rain streaming down.

With the main (as publicised) objective gone down the drain, Ross thinks that it was only his persistent circling of the track that nudged some runners back into action ... imagine if a walker had won!

Perhaps the Auckland Sheltered Workshops and the Deaf Olympic Fund didn't do too badly out of the pledges to charity. Though Ross Pilkington Senior had to wait thirty years to be accorded the title of 'NZ C1'.

In the 1990s, a number of New Zealand ultra distance walkers regularly participated in the various ultra runs on offer throughout the country (New Zealand has a proud history as a running nation) and, in 1998, four of them - Gerald Manderson, Norm Morriss, Robert Radley and Dudley Harris - decided to travel to Australia to test themselves in the Australian Centurions 24 Hour event, to be held on 19-20 September in Clifton Hill, a suburb of Melbourne.

Gerald won the event outright and thus became the second New Zealander to walk 100 miles within 24 hours in proper competition. He passed the 100 mile mark in 21:37:31 and continued on to achieve a final distance of 177.665 km for the 24 hours. Gerald's feat was, however, eclipsed by the performance of Norm Morriss. Norm was the second walker overall to reach the 100 mile mark, in 22:32:47, and he then retired – but he had a pretty good excuse – he had endured a quadruple heart by-pass operation only 5 months previously! Gerald and Norm became Australian Centurions Number 31 and 32 respectively.



Dudley Harris, Robert Radley, Gerald Manderson and Norm Morriss in 1998 in Melbourne

The overall results were as follow

24 Hour / 100 Mile Walk

1.	Gerald Manderson	NZ	177.665 Km	24:00:00
2.	Yiannis Kouros	VIC	168.406 Km	24:00:00
3.	Norm Morriss	NZ	100 Miles	22:32:47
4.	Roger LeMoine	UK	100 Miles	23:04:51
5.	John Harris	QLD	100 Miles	23:10:36
6.	Sue Clements	UK	100 Miles	23:58:40
7.	Frank Overton	NSW	134.400 Km	23:31:04
8.	Robert Radley	NZ	133.604 Km	24:00:00
9.	Steel Beveridge	NSW	132.000 Km	23:15:17
10.	Peter Waddell	ACT	120.000 Km	22:22:57
11.	Fred Baker	QLD	110.400 Km	20:01:36
12.	Peter Gray	VIC	101.933 Km	24:00:00
13.	Paul Thompson	NSW	100.479 Km	24:00:00
14.	Brian Glover	VIC	100.400 Km	13:52:21
15.	Graham Watt	VIC	54.800 Km	08:31:40

100 Km Walk

1.	Carol Baird	ACT	100 Km	16:16:10
2.	Robin Whyte	ACT	24.4 Km	03:01:36

50 Km Walk

1.	Dudley Harris	NZ	50 Km	06:56:47
2.	Merv Lockyer	VIC	50 Km	07:07:04

Once back in New Zealand, thoughts turned to Centurionism and whether a New Zealand Centurion club was a possibility. It did not take long for the momentum to gather.

On Sunday 29th November 1998, Dudley Harris, Gerald Manderson, Norm Morris, Tom Stratton and Jack Tregurtha met at Debrett Thermal Hotel in Taupo and established the New Zealand Centurions Club (full name New Zealand Centurions Endurance Walking Club). The following officers were duly elected

President	Ross Pilkington Senior
Vice Presidents	Gerald Manderson and Norm Morris
Secretary	Dudley Harris
Treasurer	Tom Stratton
Technical/Standards	Kevin Taylor
Publicity/Newsletter	Dudley Harris

Cognisant of the small competitor base in New Zealand, it was decided that any New Zealand residents who qualified in approved Centurion events overseas could apply to have their achievement recognised and hence could be eligible for an NZ Centurion Number. Once this was decided, the first three New Zealand Centurions were retrospectively acknowledged

C1	Ross Pilkington	1968
C2	Gerald Manderson	1998
C3	Norm Morris	1998

The meeting also setup two types of membership: full and associate (also known as supporter). Full members are those who have qualified as a New Zealand centurion. Associate members are those who have joined the organization but have not qualified as a centurion. Most associate members participate in long distance walks, but this is not a requirement and anybody can join.

The young club was shocked when, on 23rd April 1999, Norm Morriss collapsed and died suddenly while out training. It was only 7 months since he had become a centurion and only 12 months since his quadruple by-pass heart operation.

From 1999 onwards, the New Zealand Centurions have held an annual qualifying event and, as of January 2008, fourteen people have qualified as New Zealand centurions.

Number	Name	Country	Time	Venue	Date
C1	Ross Pilkington	New Zealand	23:23:40	Auckland, NZ	19-20 Apr 1968
C2	Gerald Manderson	New Zealand	21:37:31	Melbourne, AUS	19-20 Sept 1998
C3	Norm Morriss	New Zealand	22:32:47	Melbourne, AUS	19-20 Sept 1998
C4	Sandra Brown	England	19:00:47	Auckland, NZ	10-11 July 1999
C5	Bob Lee	New Zealand	22:06:26	Auckland, NZ	08-09 July 2000
C6	Carol Baird	Australia	20:55:46	Auckland, NZ	07-08 July 2001
C7	Parminder Bhatti	England	21:18:58	Auckland, NZ	07-08 July 2001
C8	Jill Green	England	22:18:08	Auckland, NZ	07-08 July 2001
C9	Herbert Neubacher	Germany	22:18:08	Auckland, NZ	07-08 July 2001
C10	Susan Clements	England	23:00:05	Auckland, NZ	07-08 July 2001
C11	Geoff Tranter	England	23:04:37	Auckland, NZ	07-08 July 2001
C12	Maureen Metcalfe	New Zealand	23:47:08	Auckland, NZ	07-08 July 2001
C13	Peter Baillie	New Zealand	22:15:32	Auckland, NZ	18-19 Sept 2004
C14	Geoff Hain	Australia	23:37:33	Auckland, NZ	01-02 Oct 2005

GORDON SMITH MEMORIAL AWARD

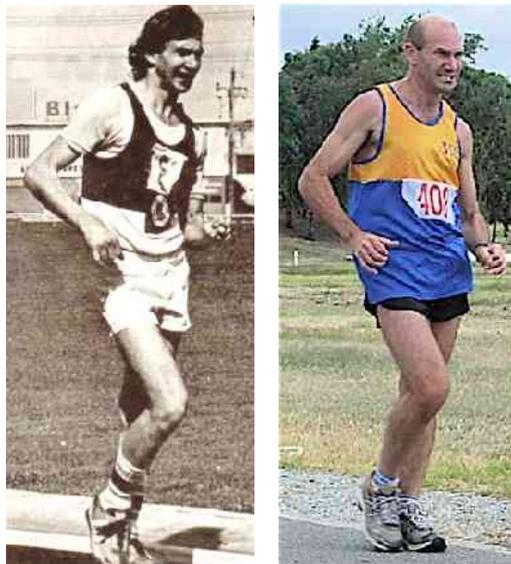
Voting has now been completed for the **2007 Gordon Smith Memorial Award**. This annual award, named after Australian Centurion Number 1, is awarded for the **Best Australian Ultra Distance Walking Performance of the Year**. Award criteria are as follows

- It is restricted to performances done in Australia.
- It is awarded for the best SINGLE performance.
- All Australian Centurions will vote on a short list of performances, as proposed by the Executive.

In 2005, it was awarded to **Deryck Skinner (C 51)** and in 2006 it was awarded to **Stan Miskin (C 23)**. The 3 nominees for the 2007 award this year were Andrew Ludwig (C 25), Terry O'Neill (C 18) and Robin Whyte (C 29). Voting was spread between the three but the final tally saw **Terry O'Neill (C 18)** win by a narrow margin.

Terry won the 2007 award with his great walk in the 2007 Centurions event at Coburg. His 100 mile time of 21:48:35 compared well with his 1979 time of 21:13:08, done 28 years previously. Terry also won the Australian 100 km walking championship en-route with a time of 13:08:08 making it two in a row (he won it in 2006 in his first ultra walk since 1979, in 13:19:08). Terry, aged 51, showed that you can come back after what can only be described as a very long break and can whip yourself back into top ultra walking shape if you have the determination and courage to do so. He won the Jack Webber Trophy for his courageous walk this year at Coburg.

Terry competed in the Victorian Race Walking Club 20 km a week ago at Albert Park and Stuart Cooper (C 5) caught him in action with the camera. His style has certainly not changed since his heyday in the 1970's.



Terry O'Neill (C 18) in action – then and now!

NEWS ON OUR MEMBERS

I received a letter recently from the son-in-law of **Dudley Pilkington(C 7)**. He advised that Dudley, who is now our oldest member at 88 years of age, has moved into a retirement home in Devonport. For those who correspond with Dudley, his new postal address is P.O. Box 388, Devonport, Tasmania, 7310. Dudley had been living on his own at home so we hope that this move is a good one for him. Hello Dudley!

Jill Green (C 38) and **Sandra Brown (C 36)** are not ones to let grass grow under their feet. Jill recently wrote to say that in 2007, she had participated in 9 ultra walks in Holland or Belgium and that the Plombieres Haufhalize was her 10th. One of the races, in December, was even done in the snow!. And Sandra emailed me to say that she and husband Richard have also been doing some unusual walking themselves

Over Christmas and New Year we have been walking a footpath trail published by a local micro-brewery (Butcombe Brewery) which has 6 lovely country pubs in villages around our Mendip Hill area. The trail links the pubs in a rambling circuit. The circuit is 50 miles long - but, of course, to complete it in sections, you have to park somewhere (usually at a pub) and make a circuit to the next pub and back, so you complete around 100 miles, just to do 50 (twice the distance, and twice the pints!) Now we have our sheets fully signed by the bar-people at each pub, and have qualified for the T shirts. It will be good to have a T shirt which says ... we came, we saw, we drank! The beer is really excellent.

Hmm..a few people I know might have got a bit sidetracked at the the first pub!

Terry O'Neill (C 18) and **Karyn Bollen (C 45)** are getting closer to the big day – their wedding is planned for February 16th. It is sure to be a big event.

Seen in action in Melbourne Shield competition this week racing over 2000m at different venues – **Bill Dyer (C 15)** - 10:22, **Tim Erickson (C 13)** – 10:31 and **Clarrie Jack (C 4)** – 10:43. I think that times must be fairly proportional to our ages!

FINANCIAL NEWS

Thanks to everyone for their continuing support. We are well placed to cope with the many demands of the new year.

Incoming	Bank Interest	0.67
	Pat Fisher – donation	50.00

	Jim Gleeson – 2008/2009 newsletter subscription	24.00
	Jim Gleeson – donation	16.00
	Clarrie and Ian Jack – 2008 newsletter subscription	12.00
	Clarrie and Ian Jack – donation	28.00
	Dudley Pilkington – 2008 newsletter subscription	12.00
	Dudley Pilkington – donation	12.00
	Jim Turnbull – donation	50.00
	Bill Dillon – 2008 newsletter subscription	12.00
	Peter Bennett – donation	40.00
Outgoing	Postage and Photocopying	40.20
	Balance as at 10/01/2008	\$913.71

UNTIL OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

The new year is now underway and I am excited by the many things in store for us during 2008. I wish everyone a wonderful year of walking and I look forward to reporting on the many and varied activities in which ultra distance walkers will participate.

Yours in Centurion walking

Tim Erickson (C 13)
 Secretary, Australian Centurion Walkers Inc.
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