

## ISLE OF MAN VETERAN ATHLETES' CLUB

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2012 (Presented at the AGM January 2013)

Thanks to the hard work of committee members, and the good response from members for help to run our events, they all lived up to expectations.

We started with the Spring Handicap run and walk which were open to all competitors in an effort to increase numbers, although only club members were eligible for the Bob Skillicorn and Anne Brough trophies. This move produced an excellent 45 runners and 14 walkers. The run was won by Richard Radcliffe, the fastest time going to Ed Gumbley with the fastest woman being new member Caroline Mayers. The fastest walker on the night was Richard Gerrard.

Fifteen runners turned out for the Leinster Management 20 Mile race which is put on to help those interested in running the London Marathon. Mike Garrett was the winner in a time of 2hrs1min24secs. The London Marathon was enjoyed by 13 of our members, Mike Garrett clocking 2.54.55 while Paul Curphey was just 12 seconds over the 3 hours.

Because of a clash with the Olympics we brought the Isle of Man Marathon forward into July and wondered how the entries might be effected. They were only slightly down with 94 finishers. Ed Gumbley being the winner in 2.45.08 and also the Manx Championship Victor. Elizabeth McGowan took the Manx Ladies title. The half marathon proved very popular with 281 finishers. Mike Garrett was runner up to Charlie Pass of Wesham Road Runners while Kevin Deakes was 4<sup>th</sup> and Paul Curphey 5<sup>th</sup>. Perhaps the numbers were boosted following an article in one of the national newspapers putting the Isle of Man Half-marathon at No 1 in the list of the top 10 best running events to do instead of the London Marathon. There was also a picture of our sponsor, Dave Salter, holding the Salclear banner at the start last year.

Once again we have to thank Jock Waddington and his team for an excellent job with the End to End walk:: some are club members, joined by others who are interested in working hard to keep up the high standard set in previous years. Around 400 walkers left the Point of Ayre and 168 made it to The Sound. Mike Readshaw won by a huge margin of 17mins23secs. The first clubman home was five times Parish Walk winner, Robbie Callister in 6<sup>th</sup> place.

The Dursley Stott sponsored Autumn Handicap run and walk was our next event, both producing exciting well supported races with both won by new boys. Raymond Harmer won the run and Andrew Dawson the walk.

The last of our 2012 events was the Haldane Fisher sponsored Syd Quirk Half marathon which was also the Manx Half Marathon Championship. For the second year in succession Mike Garrett took first place in the run while a fine young prospect for the future, Alex Eaton, took the honours after a great battle with Richard Gerrard in the walk. The winning margin was 14secs. Jock Waddington was 3<sup>rd</sup> and a PB for Jock as well as Alex and Richard. It was particularly good to see it so well supported with 108 finishers in the run and 56 in the walk. Bernard Masterson was presented with the merit award having run the half marathon after undergoing a kidney transplant operation.

There were many fine performances by our members this year:

Michael George was 1<sup>st</sup> in the 50K Sarah Killey Walk and 1<sup>st</sup> in the inaugural Northern 10 walk. He won the IOM 20KM Championship as well as a recent 5K club walk.

Marie Jackson set a new W50 UK record in the 20KM walk of 119mins54sec and was the 1<sup>st</sup> lady in the new Northern 10 Walk.

Gail Griffiths was 2<sup>nd</sup> W45 in the Brass Monkey Half Marathon in her 2<sup>nd</sup> best time for that distance. Robbie Lambie broke the M55 1500metre record with 5mins20.1secs.

Kevin Deakes ran a new M50 UK record in the Brass Monkey Half Marathon with a time of 1.18-15. He was also a member of the G8 team which won a bronze medal in the half marathon in the World Masters Indoor Championships in Finland.

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What a great advert for Manx walkers when a group went to South Africa to contest the Discovery Cape Times Big Walk over a 80Km course. They occupied five of the top 10 positions in the main race easily securing the team prize. Richard Gerrard took first place with Vinnie Lynch second and Robbie Callister who won it last year coming in third. Sue Biggart finished 5<sup>th</sup> overall and second woman.

Bethany de Legh Runciman, Stuart Lambie and Henry de Silva were all torch bearers in the Olympic Torch Relay. Henry also organised an alternative torch relay for those who hadn't the chance to see it the first time. Henry has also been awarded a gold medal for his services to fencing at the British Olympic Headquarters in London and even managed a brief appearance during the Queen's Speech on Christmas Day.

As we come to the end of this year it's a sad time for me as we are losing three of our long serving and very reliable hard working Committee members. All have good reasons for stepping down:- Gill Churcher has done an excellent job for 6 years as treasurer but with retirement in prospect much more time will be spent off island.

Mike Gellion has been a terrific club member giving at least 15 years of service on the committee and carrying out so many tasks willingly and efficiently.

Christine Bathgate has likewise given at least fifteen years service and has been our Marathon Organiser for the past 9 years and what a superb job she made of it. She along with husband Mike stored all our equipment at their home and delivered it for the marathon, erected tents etc with help from other club members and dismantled the equipment and stored it safely away again. As they also will be off island much more and for longer periods we have had to hire a garage to use as a store in Ramsey.

Thank you all for your valuable contribution to making our events and the club the success that it has been. We need new blood and enthusiastic people to come forward and take up the reins. If it was such a bad thing to join the committee then why would they have all stayed so long and put so much into it. They have successfully carried the baton and now wish to pass it on.

My thanks also to the other committee members for their work throughout the past year. Mo has done such a great job as Secretary. I couldn't fault anything that she has done. Caroline took on the job of Race Secretary and it's been a learning curve which she has coped with very well and is now much better prepared to carry on her good work. Mandine and Lesley have both worked hard for us and their experience is much needed in the coming year.

Finally grateful thanks to those who are not committee members who each play an important role:-

Alan Postlethwaite, Lisa Motley and Ian Callister for preparing the tables for the Vets Shield, The Race Walking League and the Fell Running League.

Adrian Cowin for keeping the website, Sarah Goldsmith for her excellent newsletters.

And those members who are now working together to replace Christine in organising the Marathon. It's worked very well for the End to End walk and looks the way forward for the Marathon. I am sure we wish them all well and will give them our support. My advice would be to make changes slowly as there is a formula in place which has worked very well in the past to bring it from an entry of less than twenty and no half marathon in its early days to what is today.

Colin Watterson  
28 January 2013