

**Chairmans' Report for the year from January 2014 – January 2015
Presented at the AGM on Monday 26 January 2015.**

Thanks to a lot of hard work from committee members and club members who joined them to work on sub-committees to organise our main events, our main events were a great success and gave a lot of pleasure to those who took part.

The 20 mile did its usual job as a lead up to the London Marathon. There were 15 starters and it was good to see Adam Russell take his first win in any race. Nigel Armstrong took a fine second place from Paul Curphey.

Our flagship event, the Isle of Man Marathon was won for the third year in succession by Ed Gumbley. Rob Sellors was second and Andy Durham third. There were 75 finishers. Terry Bates was the highest placed of our members. Nikki Boyde won the Ladies Championship for the third time in 5 years. Helen Taylor was second.

The Half marathon was again very well supported. There were 275 finishers. Philip Caine was a clear winner from Nick Coleburn and Kevin Deakes took the third spot. Bev Wright was the first lady in a new record time for a V50. Caroline Mayers was second and Zohra Armitage third.

We were lucky with the weather as it rained very hard through the night. It eased while both races took place and just after the prize giving it rained heavily again. Before the start of the races I led a period of spontaneous applause for Kate Burge, a very popular and talented athlete who lost her life in a road accident a week or so before.

We are indebted to the trio of Mandine Wilson, Tadhg O'Mahony and Phil Motley for their very valuable work as a sub-committee and MicroGaming for their continued support as our main sponsor and provider of very useful equipment. It takes a lot of people to marshal, man water-stations, put up and take down road signs etc. My grateful thanks to all who came forward to help.

The next of our larger events was the End-to-End Walk. This time the weather was very good, if anything perhaps a little on the hot side. 217 walkers left the Point of Ayre and 129 made it to The Sound. Richard Gerrard was an easy winner from David Mapp and David Walker a fine third. 4th finisher was the first lady, Michelle Turner, who broke the old record by 13 seconds in 7hrs06mins32secs. Once again a splendid job was performed by the organising sub-committee who put on such a great event for the main sponsor, Ramsey Bakery. Our thanks to Sean Hands, Enid Watson, Vinny Lynch, Angela Southern and no doubt many others including those who helped on the day as marshals etc.

This year could perhaps have given us a new quiz question. What do the following all have in common? The RWC Centurion Title, The Sarah Killely 50K event, the Parish Walk and the End-to-End. Answer: they were all won by Richard Gerrard. What a splendid year he has had and I am certain there is much more to come. The RWC Centurion Event must have been brutal both physically and mentally: 402 laps of a synthetic track. Seeing the big clock every three minutes informing you how far you had to go and how little you had done.

Last but not least we had the Syd Quirk Half-Marathon. Once again it was a very popular event and the day brought rather cold but rain free weather. Having previously allowed slower runners to start with the walkers and around six was the usual number, we let those who wanted, to start an hour before the more serious runners. More than forty turned up this year – some even changing on the day. This put a great strain on the electronic timing and proved a nightmare for Graham. Everybody had a printout with their time on, but sorting out the age related group positions needed more time. The athletes who attended the prize

presentation were very patient. Many took the time to tell me what a great event it is and how much they had enjoyed it.

Mark Dooley, a new runner on the Manx scene, set a blistering pace in the run and set the fastest time seen for 28 years. Jamie Newton took second place after a race long battle with Michael Garrett. The race also incorporated the Manx Half-Marathon Championship and the first three in this were Mark Dooley, Mike Garrett and Ben Corkill. 164 finished the run. The walk saw rising star Adam Cowin beat Michael George and Michelle Turner. Michelle was first lady ahead of Janette Morgan and Marie Jackson who continues to show a high level of fitness which puts her in her age group at World Class level. Our grateful thanks to Haldane Fisher, the builders merchants, for their continued support. Without them the event could not be run to the high standard we have come to expect. Before I forget there was a healthy 46 walkers who finished the Syd Quirk.

In conjunction with Manx Harriers we again had the Vets Mile and Mike Garrett was the winner for the fifth time. Moira Hall was the first lady in 9th position.

Marie Jackson was 1st lady in the open 10K. She also set a new Manx age group record.

Gail Griffiths was 4th overall and 1st O/45 in the Lancashire Cross Country Championships.

Last but not least we had our Spring and Autumn Handicaps. In the Spring there was 30 in the run with Kevin Deakes being in first position. There was 11 in the walk with Colin Moore taking the honours.

The Autumn Handicap saw 37 in the run and 9 in the walk. Sam Fletcher and Sandra Brkic were the victors.

There is a good nucleus of hard workers on the committee and with, I hope Terry to replace me, take the club to the next level. I feel it is the right time to hand over before failing memory and self doubt about health issues and the awareness that I could let others down as the years speed by. In the past 33 years as Chairman I have met and worked with some fantastic people. I enjoyed their company and work ethic but it would be unfair to single out individuals as they all had a part to play in the history of the club. I was in at the birth in 1980 and have seen it grow from just a few of us to what we have today. We are the only club to have affiliation for Veterans to compete in Masters Championships at British, European and World levels. We have in the past had medals in all those competitions and have in recent years put a sum of money aside each year to help with travel etc for championship events and many have benefitted. We tried to keep our membership fees as low as possible just about covering our affiliation costs which have risen steadily. We need to pay in order to have insurance cover, permits for events etc. We have managed our money wisely and in the present climate of finance, sponsorship for our events is not guaranteed and I would advocate keeping a healthy reserve to fall back on if times get harder.

My thanks to the past year's committee. They have all been a pleasure to work with and taken on tasks willingly and performed them well. In particular, the Secretary Mo Kelly and the Treasurer Neil Cushing have been outstanding. I would also like to place on record what a pleasure it has been for the past 23 years to have Dursley Stott as our President and to have worked with him. He has done so much in the background without seeking reward or publicity. Thank you for being such a good President - long may you continue.

Colin Watterson.