



Athletics Australia
ABN 72 006 447 294

**Minutes of 36th Annual General Meeting of Athletics Australia held on 30 October 2020 via
videoconference only**

Ordinary Business

1. Apologies and obituaries

The Company Secretary confirmed a quorum was present and the Chair opened the meeting at 10.33am and welcomed Directors, Delegates, Life Governors, Life Members and guests.

Present

Mark Arbib
Jan Swinhoe
Eugenie Buckley
Jeff Cook
Jane Flemming
Anne Lord
Geoff Nicholson
Chris Wardlaw

Position

President and Chair, Athletics Australia
Vice President, Athletics Australia
Director, Athletics Australia
Director, Athletics Australia
Director, Athletics Australia
Director, Athletics Australia
Director, Athletics Australia
Director, Athletics Australia

Darren Gocher
Darren Boyd

Chief Executive Officer
Company Secretary

Members, Delegates

Neil Boden
Matthew Whitbread
Shane Wylie
Desmond Johnston
Jane Russo
Allison Robison
Teresa Blackman

President, Athletics Australian Capital Territory
President, Athletics New South Wales
President, Athletics Northern Territory
President, Queensland Athletics
President, Athletics South Australia
President, Athletics Victoria
Chair, Athletics West

Members, Executives

Kirin Lindop
Leanne Chin
Shane Fuller
Glenn Turnor
Vince Del Prete

CEO, Athletics New South Wales
Executive Officer, Athletics Northern Territory
CEO, Athletics South Australia
CEO, Athletics Victoria and Athletics Tasmania
CEO, Athletics West

Other attendees

Tim Lyons
Roy Boyd OAM
Peter Hamilton
Paul Jenes OAM
Lorraine Morgan AM
Brian Roe OAM
Denis Wilson AM
Kirsteen Farrance
David Grace AM QC
Len Johnson

Deputy Chair, Athletics West
Life Governor
Life Governor
Life Governor
Life Governor
Life Governor
Life Governor
Life Member
Life Member
Life Member

Yvonne Mullins	Life Member
Joe Stevens	Life Member
Mark Stewart	Life Member
David Tarbotton	Life Member
Michael Thomson	Life Member
Lynne Anderson	Paralympics Australia
Peter Bromley	RunWest
Judy Farrell	Australian Masters Athletics
Ewan Horsburgh	Australian Ultra Runners Association
Michael Perry	NSWIS
Tracy Canham	University of Tasmania Athletics Club
Laura Johnston	People, Integrity and Culture Consulting
Thomas O'Shaughnessy	Oceania Athletics
Sean Whipp	Athletics Victoria
Di Huxley	Guest
Dallas O'Brien	Guest
Adam Bishop	Executive, Athletics Australia
Kirsty Delaney	Executive, Athletics Australia
Andrew Faichney	Executive, Athletics Australia
Anna Fitzgerald	Executive, Athletics Australia
Trent Taylor	Executive, Athletics Australia
Michael Angus	Staff, Athletics Australia
Matthew Beckenham	Staff, Athletics Australia
Steve Caddy	Staff, Athletics Australia
Emily Calwell	Staff, Athletics Australia
Carolina Diaz	Staff, Athletics Australia
Adam Didyk	Staff, Athletics Australia
Iryna Dvoskina	Staff, Athletics Australia
Ronald Hall	Staff, Athletics Australia
Jo Hyland	Staff, Athletics Australia
Sebastian Kuzminski	Staff, Athletics Australia
Michelle James	Staff, Athletics Australia
Morgan Jansson	Staff, Athletics Australia
Penny Johnson	Staff, Athletics Australia
Scott Martin	Staff, Athletics Australia
Laura McGrane	Staff, Athletics Australia
Craig Pickering	Staff, Athletics Australia
Melanie Purkiss	Staff, Athletics Australia
Sascha Ryner	Staff, Athletics Australia
Nathan Sims	Staff, Athletics Australia
Blair Taylor	Staff, Athletics Australia
Jill Taylor	Staff, Athletics Australia
Miles Thompson	Staff, Athletics Australia
Jon Turnbull	Staff, Athletics Australia
<u>External Auditors</u>	
Crystel Gangemi	Grant Thornton Audit
Hannah Hollingworth	Grant Thornton Audit

Apologies

Brenda LaPorte (Director, AA)
Damon Thomas (President, Athletics Tas)

Life Governors

Ian Boswell OAM
Pat Clohessy AM
Jill Huxley
Ronda Jenkins OAM
Clive Lee AM
Margaret Mahony OAM
Brenda Pearl OAM
David Prince OAM

Life Members

Bill Bailey
Rob Blackadder
Bob Cruise
Dave Cundy
Wayne Fletcher OAM
Carol Grant
Owen Heness
Craig Hilliard
Tony Keynes OAM
Peter Lawler OAM
Helen Lee
Diane Lowden
Glynis Nunn OAM
Peter Reynolds
Tony Rice
Pam Ryan AM MBE

Commencing the meeting and welcoming all members and guests, the Chair acknowledged the traditional owners of all lands on which Athletics Australia (**AA**) meets and does business, and confirmed that AA pays its respects to their elders, past and present. AA acknowledges the important contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make in creating a strong and vibrant Australian society.

The Chair then moved to an acknowledgment that the pandemic had made it an extremely challenging year for everyone, so he thanked the members, staff and partners for their leadership and support of the entire athletics community.

The Chair noted that the Commonwealth Government has authorised companies to hold meetings remotely as virtual meetings, instead of in person, while public health restrictions are in place. In accordance with the Company's constitution, the Board determined that this approach was necessary and appropriate for the Meeting. The meeting was facilitated through a company named Azeus Convene and accessed at the following temporary website: <https://agm.conveneagm.com/athleticsaustraliaagm2020>

The Company Secretary performed a roll call of attendees for the benefit of all attendees as, whilst attendees could communicate with the Chair and Company Secretary through the videoconference platform, they were not able to see all participants.

The Chair introduced all Directors and noted that Athletics Australia's auditors were also present.

During the meeting, the Chair invited AA Life Governor, Brian Roe, to read out the names of the members of the athletics family who had passed away since 1 July 2019 (Attached). A moment of silence was observed in memory of those who had passed.

2. Minutes of the previous Annual General meeting

The minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting of Athletics Australia held on 25 October 2019 were adopted as a true and correct record of that meeting.

The Chair also confirmed that the minutes of this AGM will be made available to the athletics community within approximately three weeks of the meeting.

3. President's Report

The President's Report on the affairs of the Company was tabled. The Chair provided the meeting with the following highlights and acknowledgments.

- The President again noted his pride in the entire athletics community regarding how it has dealt with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. He provided a special acknowledgment to AA and RunWest staff, and those of the state member associations, who have borne a significant burden.
- As many in the community would be aware, the pandemic has led to cancellation or postponement of many major events within the sport, including the 2021 World Cross Country Championships, RunWest, Blackmores Sydney Running Festival, and numerous national championships. Regarding the 2021 World Cross Country Championships, the President noted that AA and the organising committee were working with World Athletics to reschedule and hoped to announce the details shortly.
- There have been some exceptional performances, headlined by some outstanding results at the 2019 World Athletics Championships and the 2019 World Para-Athletics Championships. Of particular note were:
 - Kelsey-Lee Barber's gold medal in women's javelin, Australia's first in that event; and
 - Australia's 7th place finish on the medal table at the World Para-Athletics Championships with 8 gold, 6 silver and 9 bronze medals. There were world records to celebrate among the gold medals won by Corey Anderson, Jarryd Clifford, Cam Crombie, Madison de Rozario, Vanessa Low and James Turner.
- Some Australian athletes competed in Europe in 2020 and performed exceptionally well, in particular:
 - Jessica Hull set new national records at 1500m, 3000m and 5000m on the track;
 - Stewart McSweyn set new national records in 1500m and 3000m; and
 - Nicola McDermott (high jump) was on the podium in all European events and recorded the second highest jump by an Australian.
- Unfortunately, the World U20 Championship team missed their opportunity to compete due to the postponement of the Championships, but the President acknowledged their superb effort in qualifying for the event and excitement at what they might produce in the future.
- The President thanked the AA High Performance team and all personal coaches aligned with the team and athletes.
- The President noted that the AA finances remain strong, and discussed the sale of Athletics Australia's St Kilda Road premises, which was a decision made prior to the pandemic. The funds from this sale have been preserved and there is a strategy to endow a Trust for the benefit of the sport in the future.
- The President also noted that work continues with Little Athletics Australia towards a merger of the national bodies. The consultation phase was extended due to COVID, which has delayed the process and the vote, but progress continues. The President acknowledged the efforts of his colleagues within AA, as well as Andrew Pryor and the leadership of Little Athletics Australia.
- The President noted that World Athletics has recently determined that major championships will rotate around the relevant confederations, and Oceania will be part of the rotation. This means that Oceania will host the World Athletics Championships in 2025 or 2027. Athletics Australia will continue discussions with World Athletics and State governments to see if it can secure the required support to confirm a bid for the Championships.
- The President thanked AA's chief commercial partners: coles, BLK, Rehydr8, and welcomed Puma as a new partner. He also noted the continuing support of the AIS, Sport Australia, Paralympics Australia, AOC and Commonwealth Games Australia. He particularly noted the work of John Wylie, outgoing chair of Sport Australia, for his support of Olympic sports and governance reforms.

The President then invited AA Director and Chair of AA's Audit, Finance and Risk Committee, Geoff Nicholson, to address the meeting regarding the sale of AA's St Kilda Road premises and the plans for the funds.

- The principal purpose is to maintain a 'Corpus' of funds flowing from the sale of Athletics Australia's (AA) St Kilda Road property (A\$1.9m) as the 'Establishment Corpus'. The likely vehicle will be a trust.
- The plan is to conservatively invest the Corpus to derive income for the sport of athletics.
- The income derived from the Athletics Australia Trust investments will be distributed to AA, to senior athletes, coaches or other individuals or bodies involved in the sport of athletics or to investments to promote AA's objectives.
- If AA faces severe financial difficulty in the future and the Trustees are satisfied all other funding avenues have been explored, the Trustees should loan or contribute some or all of the Corpus to assisting AA, however this must only be after a unanimous vote in favour by Trustees.

Former President, David Grace QC, was thanked for his contribution in conceptualising the Trust and the process for managing the funds.

4. CEO's Report

The CEO's Report on the affairs of the Company was tabled. The CEO provided the meeting with the following highlights and acknowledgments.

- The CEO acknowledged that he was extremely proud of the achievements of Athletics Australia during the last 12 months through what had been an extremely difficult time.
 - Managing the sport through COVID has been tough, and the journey is not yet complete, but the hard decisions that were made paved the way for recovery.
 - AA has arrived at this point without losing one job and with very strong financials.
 - The AA staff were extremely resilient and the CEO acknowledged his enormous gratitude towards them.
- Commercially, AA continues to post strong results, as the recent extension of the coles relationship and signing of Puma attest. The CEO looks forward to making further announcements in the near future.
- The CEO confirmed that AA's high performance funding has been secured for the next two years, plus AA has received additional funding for infrastructure, coach development, and athlete wellbeing and pathways. This is critical for the sport, and he considers it is a testament to management team's capability and persistence, and the relationships they have built.
- The CEO considers that AA is building a high performance team that will continue to add value to athletes and coaches. As an example, Sally Pearson has been welcomed into the HP coaching and advisory team.
- The CEO also acknowledged the world class performances of Kelsey-Lee Barber at the 2019 World Athletics Championships, and the entire team at the 2019 World Para-Athletics Championships. The focus is now firmly on assisting athletes and coaches to be at their best in Tokyo in 2021.
- Like the President, the CEO noted the cancelled events and the enormous effort that staff and others had contributed to their planning. Major disappointments, in particular, were the shift to a virtual event for the Blackmores Sydney Running Festival (after the 2019 event had over 40,000 participants) and RunWest (which management continues to believe will grow into a hallmark event).
- The CEO also noted the following:
 - AA is committed to driving an AA Foundation – the structure and strategy is being set under the leadership of Andrew Salter;
 - AA continues to see improvement and growth in audience sizes on all digital channels;
 - Sporting Schools programs continue to grow, despite the COVID challenges;

- Coach education programs are also growing and coaches are being well supported.
- AA's next Strategic Plan cycle is being developed, the key focal points over the next 12 months are:
 - The Tokyo campaigns, and then setting the foundations for the next, shorter, Olympic cycle;
 - Deliver the coaching framework;
 - Operating an innovative and vibrant domestic season by capitalising on the opportunities presented by COVID;
 - Achieving the One Athletics goals and realising the vision of a united and cohesive sport for all; and
 - Continuing to improve communication and engagement with all stakeholders.
- The CEO closed by thanking:
 - The Member Associations for all the work and the experience they deliver to the community;
 - Coaches and officials who drive the sport;
 - The AA Board; and
 - AA Staff who, again, endured a lot but delivered great outcomes.

5. Financial Statements and Reports

The financial statements of the Company and its controlled entities and the reports of the directors and auditor for the financial year ended 30 June 2020 were tabled. No questions were received.

6. Election/Ratification of Directors

The term of director Anne Lord ends at the conclusion of this AGM. The Chair outlined the details of, and thanked, Anne for her service to the Board and the sport of athletics.

Anne Lord addressed the meeting.

Regarding the election of Directors, the proposed resolutions were set out in the notice of meeting. Following the endorsement of the Athletics Australia Nominations Committee, the Members were asked to consider re-electing Brenda LaPorte and Jan Swinhoe as Directors of the Company in accordance with Clause 28.3 of the Constitution.

By signed written resolutions completed by all Members prior to the Meeting, the Members did re-elect Brenda LaPorte and Jan Swinhoe as Directors. The Chair declared the resolutions carried unanimously and congratulated the Directors on their appointment.

However, the Chair noted that between the completion of those resolutions and today's meeting, Brenda LaPorte had advised the Board that she will not complete her term and will resign as a Director. The Chair noted that this resignation had been accepted and so the Board will establish a process, through its Nominations Committee, to appoint a new director. The Chair outlined details of Brenda LaPorte's service and thanked her for her contribution over the last six years.

Director, Jan Swinhoe, addressed the meeting.

7. Election of Auditors

The Chair reported that, under clause 60 of the Constitution, the voting members had unanimously agreed that Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd be reappointed as auditor of the Company.

8. Other Business

Prior to the meeting, Life Governor, Peter Hamilton submitted a question requesting that all future AGMs allow for members and other interested people to join online. The Chair noted that this is something that Athletics Australia will commit to deliver in an appropriate format.

The Chair also noted that, in recent years, the AA Board had invited one of the Member association Presidents as an observer at all meetings. In the previous 12 months this role had been filled by Neil Boden of ACT Athletics. The Chair thanked Neil for his contribution in that role.

No further business was raised by Members, Life Governors or Life Members, so the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 11.44am.

Signed as a true and correct record.

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Chair

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Date

ATHLETICS AUSTRALIA
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019-2020

OBITUARIES

DURING 2019 – 2020 REPORT YEAR

Joan Atkins (SA) – Athletics SA Life Member

Jim Bailey (NSW) – Olympian, National Champion

Alex Brown (WA) – National Champion

Kylie Coombe (Vic) – National Champion

Norma Croker Fleming (Qld) – Olympic Gold Medallist

Graham Crouch (Vic) – Olympic Finalist, National Champion

Jennifer Darvall (NSW) – Official and Club Administrator

Brian Dibben (NSW) – Athletics NSW Life Member and National Technical Official

Pat Gartside (Vic) – Club Administrator and Technical Official

Ronald Gray (NSW) - Olympian

Geoff Hook (Vic) - Road Race Course Measurer

Keith Knox (NSW) – National Race Walking Representative and Champion

Ray Land (NSW) – Olympian, National Technical Official

Barry McLeod (Vic) - Stawell Gift Winner, Coach

Elaine (Frawley) McLeod (Vic) – National Champion, National Technical Official

Kieran Modra AM (SA) - Paralympian

John Higham (Vic) – AV President, Commonwealth Games Medallist

Jim McGrath (NSW) – National Technical Official

Charles Nolan (Vic) – AV Life Member

Maurie Plant (Vic) – AA Life Member, Athlete Representative, Meeting Organiser

John Plummer (NSW) – Commonwealth Games Representative

Stuart Robley (Vic) – Club Administrator and National Technical Official

Bob Ryan (NSW) - Club Administrator and National Technical Official

Graham Taylor (NSW) – Athlete and Club Administrator

Bruce Wallrodt OAM (WA) – Para World Champion, Four times Paralympic champion

Tony Williamson (SA) – National Team Official

Barrie Wise (Tas) – AT Merit Award Holder; Technical Official Melbourne Olympic Games

SINCE 1 JULY 2020

Matt Barber (WA) – Commonwealth Games Representative, National Champion, Coach

Tony Blue (Qld) – Dual Olympian, Commonwealth bronze medallist at 880yards

Peter Bowman (ACT) – AA Life Member, AIS/AA high Performance Manager

Don Bursill (NSW) – National Champion

Bill Halley (TAS) – AT Merit Award Holder

Charles "Chilla" Porter – Olympic and Commonwealth Games silver medallist, AA Hall of Famer, AWA CEO and President

William Prosser (TAS) – AT Merit Award Holder

Bev (Wilkins) Hayman (NSW) – Commonwealth Games Representative, National Champion

Bruce Wallrodt OAM**(26 Sep 1951 – 2 Jul 2019)**

Bruce passed away at 67 after a distinguished career in athletics which included participation in five Paralympic Games. A fitter and turner by trade he was left paraplegic after a spinal haemorrhage when 29 years of age. In Paralympic competition Bruce won gold on four occasions – twice in the shot put (1988 in Seoul and 1996 in Atlanta) and twice in javelin (1988 in Seoul and 1992 in Barcelona). He was a three time silver medallist – twice in the shot (1992 and 2000) and once in discus (1992) and also won two bronze medals – in discus in 1988 and javelin in 1996). His Paralympic Games career concluded in Athens in 2004 where he was fifth in both the shot and javelin. Two years earlier at his only WPA world championships in Lille (FRA) Bruce took gold in the shot and was fifth in the javelin. Bruce became a Member of the Order of Australia in 1993 and was presented with the Australian Sports Medal in 2000.

Victor John Plummer**(6 Aug 1928 – 14 Aug 2019)**

John passed away at age 91 after a successful careers in both athletics and business. He represented Australia at the 1950 British Empire (Commonwealth) Games in Auckland. He finished fifth in his heat of the mile in 4:21.8 but did not advance to the final. John was twice runner up in the mile at the Nationals – in 1949 and 1955). He was third in 1950 and was second over 3 miles in 1955. Through his business John was a keen supporter of meets, development and high performance programs and encouraged others to do likewise. He had personal bests of – 880yds - 1:54.6 (1954), 1500m - 3:47.8 (1956), mile - 4:08.2 (1956), 3000m - 8:23.0 (1955), 2miles - 8:56.6 (1956), 3miles - 13:56.6 (1956), 5000m - 14:08.2 (1956) and 6miles - 30:20.0 (1954).

Ronald Gray**(4 Aug 1932 – 17 Aug 2019)**

Ron represented Australia in the triple jump at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics where he jumped 14.46m in the qualifying round – unfortunately insufficient to advance him to the final. He finished third in both the long and triple jumps at the 1954 Nationals. He was five times NSW champion in long jump (1953) and triple jump (1953, 1956, 1957 and 1960). He had personal bests in long jump of 7.27m (1955) and triple jump of 14.99m (1956).

Kylie Coombe**(22 Dec 1967 – 29 Aug 2019)**

Kylie passed away at 51 after battling illness for some time. A talented junior Kylie was third in the National under 18 heptathlon in 1982 at 15 years of age before taking gold in the under 20 championship in 1987. She became national champion in 1992 senior title and won silver in both 1989 and 1994. Kylie was selected to compete in the heptathlon at the 1990 Auckland Commonwealth Games but withdrew from the team due to injury. Her personal best heptathlon was 5,895pts in 1989.

John Kenneth Higham OAM**(28 Oct 1951 – 20 Oct 2019)**

John passed away after a long battle with leukaemia. He represented Australia at the 1978 Edmonton Commonwealth Games where he won a bronze medal in the 4x400m. He was a quarter finalist in the 400m and seventh in the 800m. In 1977 John took silver in the 800m at the Pacific Conference Games in Canberra, was sixth in the World Cup in Dusseldorf and a semi-finalist at the Universiade in Bulgaria. He gain represented Oceania at the World Cup in Montreal in 1979 where he was seventh in both the 800m and 4x400m. John was selected for the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games but withdrew from the team prior to departure. He was three times national champion over 800m and once over 400m - achieving the elusive 400/800m double in 1978. His personal bests were 45.7h and 46.22 for 400m in 1978 and 1:45.6 for 800m in 1977. Off the track John had an outstanding legal career and was also President of Athletics Victoria from 1997 to 2003. He married former national junior 800m champion Janine McFadzean. John was recognised in 2014 for his services to the law and sport with the Medal of the Order of Australia.

Kieran Modra AM**(27 Mar 1972 – 13 Nov 2019)**

Kieran died the result of a traffic accident whilst riding his bicycle – aged 47. Born visually impaired due to juvenile optic nerve damage Kieran never allowed his impairment to deter him from involvement in sport. He took up pole vaulting in 1987 and two years later won gold with a jump of 4.45m in the under 19 event at the Australian All Schools in his home town of Adelaide. His athletics skills were diverse demonstrated by Kieran already having competed at a Paralympic Games in Seoul in 1988 finishing

ninth in the 1500m and sixth in the javelin. Four years later he improved to fourth in the javelin in Barcelona – where he also competed in swimming winning two bronze medals. He then switch to cycling and eventually competed in a further six Paralympic Games – for a total of eight. Kieran received the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1997, the Australian Sports Medal in 2000 before being elevated to a Member of the Order of Australia in 2014.

Graham Crouch

(11 Jan 1948 – 28 Nov 2019)

Graham passed away in Germany after battling cancer maintaining an avid interest in his beloved sport to the very end. He represented Australia at the 1976 Montreal Olympics and finished eighth in the 1500m. He finished fifth at the same distance at the 1974 Christchurch Commonwealth Games. Graham also represented Australia at three Pacific Conference Games finishing seventh in Tokyo 1969, fourth in Toronto 1973 and second in Canberra 1977 in the 1500m. Graham was twice National 1500m champion (1969 & 1978) and once over 5000m in 1976. He finished second on four occasions and third twice over distances from 800m to 5000m. Graham's personal bests were 800m. - 1:48.8 (1974), 1,000m - 2:18.4 (1975), 1,500m - 3:34.22 (1974), 1 mile - 3:55.59 (1974), 2000m - 5:09.0 (1975), 3000m - 7:55.8 (1973) and 5000m. 13:32.4 (1976).

Alex Brown

(9 Nov 1951 – 14 Jan 2020)

The Western Australian shot putter passed away at 68 years of age. He trained with Len Vlahov under the watchful eye of coach/journalist/statistician - Bernie Cecins. He also excelled in powerlifting. Alex was three times national junior champion between 1967 and 1970 and was national senior champion in 1976. He took silver on four occasions and was third twice between 1970 and 1979 for a total of seven senior podium finishes. His personal best was 17.18m in 1972.

Jim Bailey

(21 Jul 1929 – 31 Mar 2020)

Jim died at age 92 in Bellingham, USA. He represented Australia at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics where he finished seventh in his 800m semi-final in 1:51.40. He withdrew from the 1500m due to hay fever. He had also represented Australia at the 1954 British Empire Games in Vancouver where he injured his foot during the 880 yards heats and did not finish. He was unable to take part in the mile as a result. Bailey's most famous success was in Los Angeles in May 1956 when he defeated both John Landy and future Olympic champion Ron Delany of Ireland in 3:58.6 over one mile - the second fastest in history at that time. He was also National 880yds champion in 1951 and 1954 and was second in the mile in 1954. His personal bests were 880yds – 1:49.4 in 1957, 1500m – 3:43.3 in 1956 and 1 mile – 3:58.6 in 1956.

Elaine (Frawley) McLeod

(15 Apr 1943 – 17 Apr 2020)

Elaine passed away after battling Parkinson's Disease. During the 1960s Tasmanian Elaine was amongst the top female sprinters in Australia but narrowly missed selection for the few teams that were selected to travel internationally in those years. Elaine won the Australian 400m title in 1969, was second in 1970 and third in 1965. She was also third in the 220yds in 1962 and fourth in 1964, 1967, 1969 and 1971. Elaine also qualified as a technical official and was appointed as a jumps official at the 1982 Commonwealth Games and 1985 World Cup. Elaine also coached and was deputy president of Athletics Tasmania during the 1980s. She was married to 1969 Stawell Gift winner Barry McLeod. Her personal bests were 100yds – 10.7 (1966), 100m – 11.6 (1971), 200m – 23.9 (1967) and 400m – 54.2 (1972).

Ray Land

(14 Nov 1930 – 14 May 2020)

Ray passed away at 89 years of age – still keenly interested in his sport. He represented Australia at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics – finishing sixth in his quarter-final of the 100m. He was a member of the 4x100m relay team that finished fourth in their semi final. Ray took the silver medal in 220yds at the 1957 Nationals in 21.9 and was fourth in the 100yds in 9.8. He served on the Board of Athletics NSW, was track referee at the 1977 Pacific Conference Games in Canberra and chief lap scorer for the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane. Ray's personal bests were 100yds – 9.8 (1957) [9.6wa (1957)], 100m – 10.5 (1956) [10.3wa (1956)] and 200m – 21.7 (1956).

Vale Norma (Croker) Fleming (11 September 1934 to 21 August 2019)

Athletics Australia acknowledged the passing on 21 August 2019 of one of this country's "Golden Girls" - its Hall of Famer and Olympic gold medallist Norma (Croker) Fleming.

Norma's career was at its peak in 1956 – most particularly at the Melbourne Olympic Games where she was part of Australia's gold medal winning 4x100 metres relay team and was fourth in the individual 200 metres final. It had begun at Brisbane State High School but it was not really until the Games year that she really emerged on the national scene.

Representing Queensland at the 1956 National women's championships on the Brisbane Cricket Ground she finished fourth in the 100 yards in a blanket finish won by Wendy Hayes. Norma had won her heat in 10.8 against one of the favourites Marlene Mathews.

Norma's boyfriend Lloyd Fleming had said if she won her heat they could get engaged and Norma was therefore doubly elated with her heat win. Norma also contested the 220 yards in which she finished in the bronze medal position in 25.3 seconds. It was the beginning of a very special nine months

In June of that year Norma ran 10.6 for the 100 yards and by October she was rounding into top form - running world class times 11.6 for 100 metres and 23.5 for 200 metres in Brisbane. She was in the right shape at the right time. The golden era of Australian women's sprinting was building to its crescendo and Norma was very much a part of it.

The Olympic selection trials were held in Melbourne a week later and Norma finished third in both the 100 and 200 metres. She was selected for both the 200 metres and 4x100 metres relay.

The Melbourne Olympics began a month later and Norma finished a comfortable second in her heat of the 200 metres in 25.10 behind Germany's 100 metres silver medallist, Christa Stubnick.

The really serious running began in the afternoon semis where Norma finished third in the first semi behind team mate Betty Cuthbert and Stubnick but inches ahead of one of the favourites - Maria Itkina of the USSR. Norma's time was 24.41. The final was held the following day and again into a headwind Norma improved to 24.22 to finish fourth closely behind third placegetter Marlene Mathews with winner Betty Cuthbert running 23.55 – three Aussie girls in the first four.

The heat and final of the 4x100 metres relay was held on the last day of athletics at the Games. Norma ran the second leg for Australia in the team with Shirley Strickland, Fleur Mellor and Betty Cuthbert. They won the first heat in 44.9 (45.00) in a new world record. In the afternoon the team broke their then own world mark with 44.5 (44.65) to win. Together they had lopped over half a second off the pre-Games world record.

Norma was the first Queenslander to win an Olympic gold medal in athletics.

Norma married Lloyd in 1957 and they had their first child in 1958 thereby missing the 1958 Commonwealth Games. However she made a comeback and at the 1960 Women's National Championships on the North Hobart oval. Competing as Norma Fleming she finished sixth in the 100 yards in 11.1 and third in the 220 yards in 23.4. There was also a silver medal when she contested the long jump with a best of 5.99m. She was selected for her second Olympics in three events.

The Rome Olympics were not a happy hunting ground for our sprinters generally but Norma turned out to be the best of them. She was second in her heat of the 200 metres in 24.35. The semis were held two days later but unfortunately for Norma she was drawn in the tougher of the two heats, finishing fourth in 24.44 to miss a place in the final. The winner of the second semi ran 24.69.

On the opening day of athletics in Rome, Norma qualified for the final of the long jump with 5.80m - the exact qualifying distance needed. In the final that afternoon she improved to 5.82m to finish 15th.

A week later in Cardiff in Wales, Norma jumped 6.06m for a PB. On her return she retired from athletics.

Alongside her Olympic gold, when Norma retired she had played her part in four world records – all achieved within five days of each other in late 1956. To back up those two superb Olympic performances, the Golden Girls headed to Sydney on 5 December to attack the imperial distance world marks for 4 x 110yards and 4 x 220yards, securing both.

Norma ran the second leg on all four occasions. She was inducted into the Athletics Australia Hall of Fame in 2017 and is recognised by Queensland Athletics through an annual shield competition named in her honour.

Norma battled with cancer in recent years and passed away on 21 August 2019. A celebration of Norma's life was held at St Barnabas Anglican Church, Lister Street, Sunnybank on 30 August 2019.

Vale Maurice Stephen (Maurie) Plant (12 February 1953 – 19 January 2020)

Maurie Plant's connection with athletics was inextricable and unique. When he passed away the sport – from the school and club scene in Australia to the very top of the sport internationally - lost a key component of its engine.

There is no replacement part available.

Unlike many of his level of impact and influence might be described, Maurie was not a towering figure in the sport. For he was neither physically tall nor did he seek to impose himself in the public eye.

Although he was known to quip that – "if you stand next to the winner there's a fair chance you'll be in a photo". And when in that regard he practised what he preached it was inevitably totally justified – in myriad instances Maurie Plant had made a positive difference to that athlete's journey to success. Stewart McSweyn will have the honour of being the last.

Long-time sports promoter, mentor and mate John Toleman says that Maurie was the outstanding schoolboy sprinter and hurdler of his day and for much of the period since. He was referring to Maurie's achievements as a teenage athlete for Xavier College in Melbourne's then thriving APS athletics competition and for Victoria in the then only under age interstate competition in the nation – the Shell East Coast Under 17 Match.

Maurie dominated his APS years in his own age group and sometimes the one above. The 200 metres record he set in 1967 was not bettered for forty years. He made the Victorian Team for the under 17 match a rare three times – at 14 he was second on the 200m hurdles, an event he then won the following year. At 16 he won the 110m hurdles. He stood on the dais every year from 1966 to 1970 at the Victorian All Schools.

Fellow Athletics Australia Life Member Gary Bourne recalled – absolutely correctly that Maurie remains the reigning Victorian junior champion for the hurdles treble with his victories at 120, 220 and 440 yards at the 1970 State Championships. The following year when the VAAA finally converted to metric Maurie was the inaugural junior champion at the 400m hurdles – leaving the 110s to his life-long mate Peter Fitzgerald. The 1976 Olympian noted that until around that time his sole goal in athletics was to beat Maurie Plant at something.

During the same period Maurie was often a training partner for Raelene Boyle during the prime of her career. A serious bout of glandular fever and the ever-increasing heights of the hurdles as time marched on towards senior ranks ended Maurie's on-track career but paved the way for an extraordinary journey off it. His known personal bests are 10.7 for 100m, 14.5 for the 110m hurdles (.91m) and 54.4 for the 400m hurdles.

He had a technical education as a draftsman but soon began working with adidas alongside AFL legend Ted Whitten and international hurdler and later on AA president David Prince. It was through this role that Maurie developed the extraordinary knack of knowing just about everybody who needed to be known – in sport, the media and the retail trade in particular.

The chance to head to Europe and exposure to the European athletics circuit opened new doors especially through an enduring friendship with British meet promoter Andy Norman. Maurie's capacity to understand what was needed to make a meet great and what an athlete needed to do to be a great part of it grew rapidly. He quickly grasped the complex logistics of what it took to get each athlete to the starting line as well as the motivations that might lead a spectator to turn up or a television viewer to tune in.

Maurie came to know the rules and procedures for every event but always left those matters to the technical officials – the volunteers he knew were critical for a successful meet and for whom he always had massive respect. Those he would say were not of his concern – for they were "matters technical".

From assisting Andy securing athletes a start and then getting them to and from meets all over Europe, Maurie soon became an athletes' representative (the sport's term for an agent) in his own right – no better exemplified than by his work from day one with a young Darren Clark. This was a crucial moment

for Australia's athletes. The country's best had often made it in some way onto the European circuit but Maurie's emergence in the role opened the floodgates for a great many others.

It was a boom time in Europe. At the height of the season there was a meet of reasonable significance on just about every day – on the more popular days two or more. But it was well before the days of mobile phones, email and online ticketing and it took special skills and connections to seize the moment – to take up a spare lane and then get an athlete on a plane and to another city for a meet at almost no notice at all.

Maurie was supreme at doing all of that. Always attuned to or ahead of the game he mastered the use of the telex machine – and was more than ready for the arrival of the ground breaking technology of the facsimile. He was quick to conquer the use of email but his predilection for bizarre choices of font often left recipients wondering what he was actually communicating about.

Concurrently Maurie moved into meet organisation roles beyond assisting Andy. In Europe he developed career long involvements and wonderful personal relationships in particular with Wilfried Meert and Svein Arne Hansen and their teams which each year deliver the Van Damme in Brussels and the Bislett Games in Oslo respectively. And in different ways with many other meets as well.

At home in Australia Maurie took on from 1984 the acquisition of international runners for the emerging Australian Marathon in Sydney and impressive cast lists for meets such as those that were part of the America's Cup Festival of Sport in Perth in 1987.

He was the assistant mayor of the Village for the IAAF World Cup in Canberra in 1985 and instrumental in putting together an extraordinary "warm-up" meet at ES Marks Field in Sydney the weekend before. The two hour spectacle began at 9.00am because Maurie knew that would best suit the European athletes who had arrived in the previous 24 hours. The world top lists for that year were turned on their head.

Like Wilfried and Svein Arne, AA's second general manager Neil King was one of those who "got" Maurie's skills and connections – and the extent of the difference he could make for Australian athletics. A domestic season was emerging through the Mobil Grand Prix Series and the NEC Classic in Melbourne. By the time in 1993 Sydney was awarded the Olympic Games AA was ready to take full advantage.

A different set of floodgates opened. This time it was athletes from all over the world coming to Australia for training camps and a chance to compete in a vibrant and expanding domestic circuit with a meet in every state and the ACT. Maurie's influence was enormous. What he was able to deliver – often with tiny budgets compared to European Meets - was extraordinary. Australian athletes blossomed – relishing the new competition opportunities and quality international opposition - all available on their own doorstep.

Maurie then found competitions all over the world for this rapidly growing list of top level Australian athletes. During the 1990s it was not unusual for more than 100 Australians to be in Europe at the one time – accessing both one-day circuit meets and international matches that Maurie had set-up with other countries.

Maurie's own international standing was growing. He was appointed as a member of the IAAF Grand Prix Commission and as an announcer at world youth championships and IAAF grand prix finals – including his pride and joy edition in Melbourne in 2001.

His understanding of what made athletics look good on the screen and his exceptional connection with the top athletes of the world led to a long involvement with BBC Sport. His legendary spot at the entrance to the TV zone as athletes exited the arena at all the major meets must have terrified those keen to make a quick getaway - for they had no chance of making it past the very first stop.

At home Maurie had a special passion for the annual Melbourne Meet – and worked hard to ensure it remained for so long on the IAAF World Challenge Calendar. He was devastated when it was no longer. But his interest in the other meets on the Australian circuit never waned. There were quality international athletes at all of them.

With Maurie's encouragement Australia's best turned up whenever their event was on the schedule – sometimes, even when it was not, so keen were they not to miss out on a special time in Australian athletics. He got the athletes to the meet hotels, made sure the ground transport schedule from there to the track was correct and then morphed into the role of meet announcer – usually handing over to someone else for the last event so he could take charge of the transport once again.

As recounted by many – his race and field event calling was the stuff of legend. His spooky ability to detect an exceptional performance might be in the wind was a competition director or television producer's nightmare but the usually spot-on outcome was inevitably what made a meet or a telecast so memorable – as was the volume of his call of the moment.

Maurie's penchant for making out-of-the-blue insistence on just about anything was very hard to resist. It was unwise to do so for his intuition was rarely misplaced.

His behind-the-scenes roles in ensuring the quality of the entry lists at the 2001 Goodwill Games in Brisbane and IAAF Grand Prix Final in Melbourne and the 2006 and 2018 editions of the Commonwealth Games were little known beyond the inner sanctum of each organising committee - but were vital in growing public interest in international athletics competition in Australia.

Few teams had come to Sydney for the Olympics in 2000 without Maurie Plant's hand on the training camp or pre-competition arrangements. He was always looking for opportunities for athletes from the island federations of Oceania and warmly embraced their participation in competitions in Australia.

Maurie was immensely proud of the Australian Sports Medal he received in 2000 in recognition of his service to athletics. His life membership of Athletics Australia came in in 2006. He served on numerous AA committees and commissions and was assistant manager of the athletics section of 1986 Commonwealth Games Team.

For all of his considerable generosity Maurie really only expected commitment or loyalty in return. Either sufficient – both preferred. His long term loyalty to others was beyond measure. No better exemplified when with zero interest in political activity he headed north to be an integral part of Ron Clarke's successful campaign to become mayor of the Gold Coast.

There was a wonderful life away from athletics for Maurie. After marrying Kate in 1990 they raised three sons – Ben, Toby and Rory. Their home was always open to friends and family. Maurie loved nothing more than to be stationed at the barbeque – cooking up a range of exotically marinated nibbles always followed by something more substantial. He was a fine host. He was an aficionado of many sports – and could hold court on most of them. Sports trivia was his daily bread.

Maurie had a few health battles over the past decade – most notably restricting how far and easily he could walk. He had open heart surgery in July 2019. But nothing could slow him down. He had become particularly passionate about ensuring Australia's hosting of the 2021 world athletics cross country championship would be a success – travelling in November to Portugal with LOC chair Brenda LaPorte to Lisbon to observe the European equivalent and working with Home Affairs on a visa strategy.

To the end he was busy mapping out the qualifying and preparation paths that the athletes he advised should take in order to make it to Tokyo in 2020 - just as he had done in the past for countless others including in more recent times Olympic champions Catherine Freeman, Steve Hooker, Valerie Adams and Sally Pearson.

Maurie contracted septicaemia soon after Christmas. He was in a coma for three weeks but did not wake before his passing. He is survived by Ben, Toby and Rory and his siblings – Commonwealth Games hurdles finalist Vin, Cecily, Michael and Elaine.

Maurie's funeral service was held on 29 January 2020 at St Ignatius Church, Church Street, Richmond after which the athletics community, among many, attended at the Olympic Room at the Melbourne Cricket Ground for a celebration of his life and service.