

AUSTRALIAN CENTURION DETAILS

C10. Stan Jones (12/08/1925 – 11/01/2016)

18-19 October 1975

22:04:59

George Knott Athletic Field, Clifton Hill, Victoria

Stan Jones, who was born in England in 1925, was one of the many young men who had to grow up quickly in the final years of the Second World War and the aftermath that followed. It was perhaps not surprising that he joined the British Army as a young man and it was there that he made his 20 year career in the Parachute Regiment ("the Paras").

Some years ago, he sent me some details on the time he marched in the Nijmegen 3 day march in Holland in 1953. It illustrates Stan's enthusiastic approach to life.

As I said, I did it in an Army team. I was a Sergeant in the Parachute Regiment in those days and they billeted us in the Dutch Army Barracks at Nijmegen for one week.

On the first morning, we were starting at 7AM but many people had already started. There were people everywhere and this went on for 4 days. It was truly a wonderful experience. We found ourselves walking with an Israeli Team. They had 2 girls in the team and they were the fittest people I have ever seen. When we stopped for lunch, all the blokes collapsed in their packs and these 2 girls danced around playing guitars. It's hard to believe but after a 30 minute break, all those blokes would get up moaning but the girls would sling the guitars over their backs and away we would go. Remember that the army teams wore boots, gaiter webbing and rifles. It was hard but great.

If I remember correctly, there were 4000 walkers. We covered some beautiful countryside along the Rhine. The oldest walker was a Dutch man 91 YEARS OLD and he never misses one. And he did it in DUTCH CLOGS made out of wood - with no socks on. He was simply fantastic. We had the pleasure of meeting him - a lovely man.

Stan married Barbara in 1946, a marriage that lasted for some 60 years, until Barbara's death in the early 2000's.

Stan and Barbara migrated to Australia in the mid-sixties with their family and settled in Melbourne. As someone who had always kept fit, it was natural that he should look for an outlet for his enthusiasm. He joined St Stephen's Harriers soon afterwards and was a regular A Grader in Interclub in Melbourne. He was also a regular racewalking judge and mixed racewalking with running and officiating.

Stan completed his 100 mile walk in 1975 at 50 years of age at the George Knott Athletics Track in Clifton Hill. At that time, his son was ill and he drove across to WA, picked him up, drove him back to Melbourne and then did the 100 miler. This meant that he went for 5 days with literally no sleep - and the last 24 hours of this marathon was the worst of the lot (as we all know). So that makes Stan's 100 miler even more remarkable.

This period coincided with a golden period of walking in Victoria with a large number of active distance walkers. This led to the largest field yet seen for the Centurion event with 21 starters. The weather was cool to cold during the night hours of the Saturday night with light rain on the Sunday morning before clearing to fine weather for the finish. These ideal conditions helped all competitors and the race saw 4 finishers and a new Australian record over the intermediate distance of 50 miles.

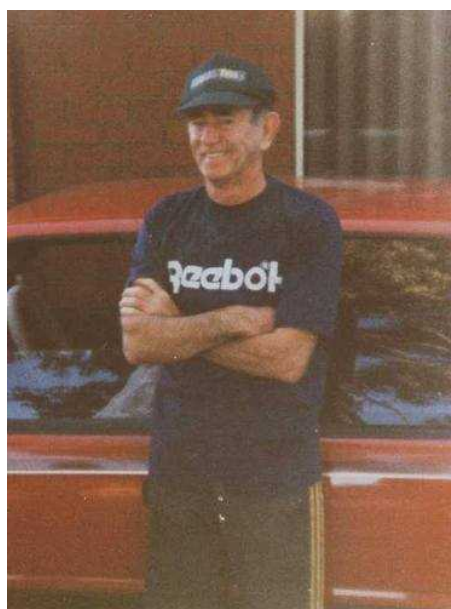
The race was started by Cr. George Knott of the Collingwood City Council on the radio time 'pips' at 6.00 p.m, on Saturday 18th October. Excellent facilities were provided by the Collingwood Harriers in their dressing rooms, shower and canteen facilities and the public address system was used extensively to acquaint competitors of their progressive times. Stan led for most of the race but had to lower his colours to Mike Porter in the closing stages, crossing the finish line second in 22:04:59 and becoming Australian Centurion number 10. The finishing list read as follows

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



Stan Jones in action at Clifton Hill in 1975

Upon retirement, Stan moved to Western Australia where he now took up coaching. Amongst his protégées was a young Graham Watt who would eventually move to Melbourne and become an Australian Centurion himself. It says a lot about the man that the youngsters he trained over there in the 80's and 90's held him in high regard and continued their contact with him long after their own athletics careers had finished.



Stan at Kewdale, Perth, in 1993 (photo Jonathan Phillips)

With the lure of Masters athletics, he resumed racing, competing for a number of years at State level and occasionally travelling interstate to Australian Masters competitions. He regularly won golds and silvers at both State and National level and still holds a large number of Western Australian Masters walk records which I have listed below. The best of them is definitely his M60 20km which stands at an impressive 1:55:43. Always fit, he was still capable of finishing 30km walk races in his 70's.

Current Western Australian Masters records – Stan Jones

M60 20km Walk	1:55:43
M75 10km Walk	1:08.18
M75 1500m Walk	9:28.1
M75 3000m Walk	19:25.5
M75 5000m Walk	33:31.8
M80 10km Walk	1:11:42
M80 1500m Walk	9:43.6
M80 3000m Walk	20:36.4
M80 5000m Walk	34:08.6
M85 1500m Walk	11:30.27
M85 3000m Walk	23:37.3
M85 5000m Walk	40:20.0

His last two major meets were in 2009 when he won two M80 golds in the Aust Masters T&F Champs in Adelaide (5000m 38:23 and 10km 1:18:28) and in 2010 when he won three M80 silvers in the Australian Masters T&F Champs in Perth (1500m 11:01, 5000m 38:18 and 10km 1:19:24).

It was then time to hang up the shoes.

We will remember Stan as a Centurion, as a racewalker and coach, but most of all we will remember the man.
Vale Stan Jones.

Tim Erickson
January 2016