



The Journal

ST. STEPHENS HARRIERS ATHLETIC CLUB Inc.

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St. Stephens Harriers



Established 1908

In association with Wesley College Athletics

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CGA HONOURS GERALD BACKHOUSE ON ANZAC DAY

(Reprinted from Commonwealth Games Australia website. Thanks to Greg Nolan for passing this on.)

On ANZAC Day we honour the career of Commonwealth Games silver medallist and Olympian, Gerald Backhouse, who lost his life serving his country in World War II.

Gerald Backhouse was raised by his grandmother in Geelong, after he lost his mother when he was aged two. He attended Adwalton Preparatory School and later Geelong Grammar School.

He started to emerge as an athlete, at the 1929 Combined Public Schools athletics carnival.

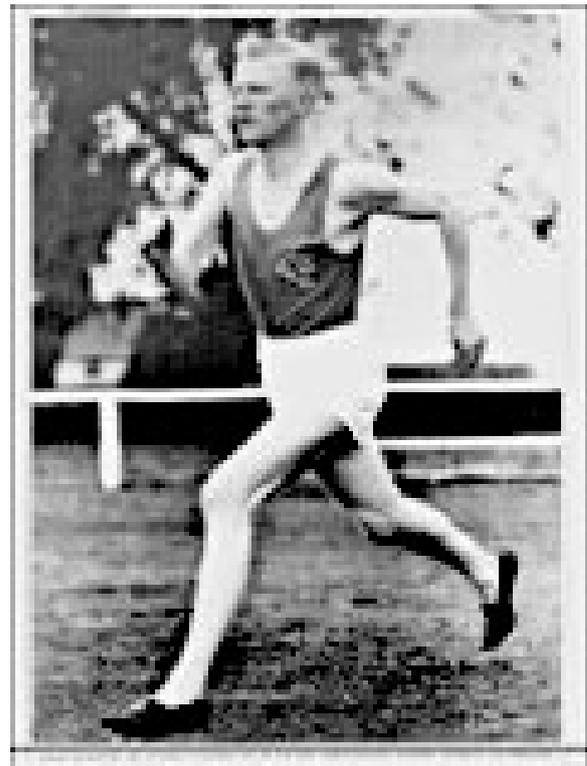
"It was only by accident that I became interesting in foot-running," said Backhouse in 1940.

"I was never considered good enough at sports to be included in anything higher than the third eleven in cricket or the seconds football team,"

"When the schools' first choice for the mile run at the public schools' sports became ill one month before the day of the race, the sportsmaster suggested I should train for the race. At first, I was indifferent about the suggestion, but his kind encourage decided the matter.

"When the race started, I jogged along at the back of the field, but the roar of the crowd created within me a mental condition which I cannot explain." He won in a time of 4:52.0 and was invited to join St Stephens' Harriers.

Still in his teens, in 1932 he made his first appearance in the national senior rankings



running a 2:01.0 880 yards, and by 1935 he was the leading middle-distance runner in Australia, including breaking the national record with an 880 yards time of 1:55.1.

The following year he won the national 880 yards/mile double and was selected for the Berlin Olympics, where he progressed through the heat and semi-final and into the 800m final. (cont'd)

He smashed national records, including becoming the first Australian to break four minutes for 1500m.

Ahead of the Sydney 1938 Commonwealth Games he defended his national 880 yards/mile national titles and won silver in the mile on the SCG.

He was given an unofficial time of 4:12.3 in the mile, but a week later in Melbourne he officially broke the national record running 4:16.8, a mark that would not be bettered by an Australian for 11 years.

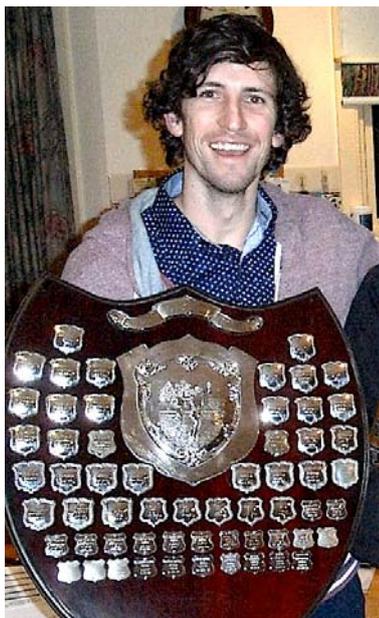
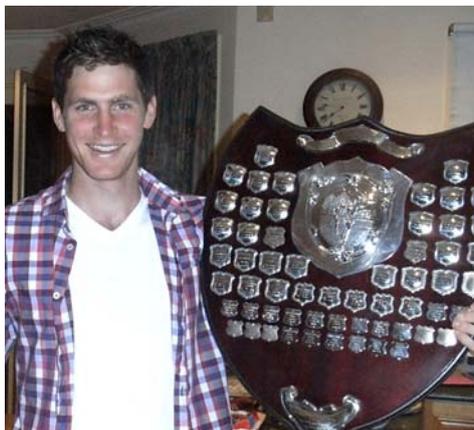
He again led the national mile rankings in 1939 and 1940, but with the outbreak of war, there were no national championships in 1940.

On 17 February 1940, he ran his last known race, winning a mile in Melbourne. Two months later he enlisted for the war.

In June 1941, he sailed to England with the Royal Australian Air Force.

Tragically, on 28 December 1941, aged just 29, Gerald Backhouse was killed in England when the plane he was on was involved in an accident.

Footnote: *At the time of his passing, Gerald Backhouse was the highest achieving and most celebrated SSH athlete in the Club's history. Winner of 6 consecutive Victorian mile titles, Berlin Olympics representative and Empire (Commonwealth) silver medallist, Backhouse was posthumously honoured last year by Athletics Victoria with the re-naming of the Victorian Mile championship as the 'Gerald Backhouse Mile.'* (See the March 2016 issue for a full report.)



*Gerald Backhouse, surrounded by three winners of the Mile/1500m Club Memorial trophy that bears his name:
(Clockwise from top) Kevin Craigie, Ben Buckingham and Lachie Aspinall*

THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS



SSH is at a critical point in its development!

At our last meeting your committee reviewed the recently completed 2016-17 Track and Field season and discussed some worrying trends.

Aspects of the season discussed were:

1. The disappointing scheduling and location of meetings.
2. The lack of numbers in attendance from SSH.
3. The continual difficulty faced by SSH (and other clubs) to meet its obligations and provide "club helpers" at most meetings over the summer.

None of these issues are new, but they came to a head last year, when, on a regular basis there were more club helpers from SSH than athletes. There are justifiable reasons for each of the above to be an issue, but they do cause us to stop and reflect on what we want to achieve as a club and as an individual.

We can't do much about the first point. We are in the hands of AV which has a goal to develop some of the outer suburban clubs and hence have meetings at Mount Evelyn and Casey. We just have to accept that.

But the other two points came under heavy discussion in an attempt to understand what was driving these trends and explore solutions.

In short, it was agreed that the current scheduling of the summer season, and the standard of competition does not attract the sort of athletes who were once in attendance every week. The focus has shifted to Milers club and other events outside AV meetings.

While this is understandable, and indeed admired, it creates difficulties for the club and means we have to re-examine our goals and potentially refocus resources.

Entering teams in the summer season means AV requires the regular attendance of "club helpers" to officiate and help with the running of events (time keeping, recording results, raking jumping pits etc). While this is necessary, and an inevitable result of being part of a community based event, it becomes difficult to manage when we do not have a critical number of athletes competing, and/or a very limited number of parents, friends and/or family who are prepared to make themselves available to assist.

While no decision was made, over the next few months the committee is going to be faced with making a very difficult decision.

Does the club maintain a presence at AV Track and Field meetings, or do we forego the competition for an indefinite period to allow us to build our numbers and support base before re-entering the competition with a solid foundation allowing us to compete at a level that reflects where we want to be as a club?

We thrive as a cross country club. The same enthusiasm and commitment needs to be translated to the summer season so we can once again compete with the best in the state.

This is not a new issue. Indeed, the same theme was addressed in the Journal posted in January of 2017.

In that article, I said something has to change if we are to move forward as a club. That still holds true today.

If you have any thoughts or ideas on how we should go forward, please do not hesitate to speak to a committee member before the next meeting to be held on 15/5/17.

Carpe Diem !

*Greg Nolan
President*

REGISTRATIONS FOR 2017-18

(1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018)

Membership packages offered by AV for 1017-18 are now available online. Go to www.athsvic.org.au

To register, click on **Members Portal** at top of Homepage, enter **Username** and **Password** and **Renew Membership**. New members will need to go to Members Portal and **Create a Profile**.

To start the payment process members must first pay the AV Base Membership Fee and the Club Fee.

Fees are as follows:

AV Base M/ship fee - SSH M/ship fee + XCR Package or T&F Package or Max Pack (XCR + T&F)

Open	\$100	\$85	\$125	\$125	\$200
Junior	80	65	100	100	150
Dual	55	65	55	55	75
Coach	0	0			
Official	0	0			
Social	40	65			
Rec Runner	40	65			

The Max Pack offers XCR and T&F at a reduced rate.

The XCR Pack covers all XCR events, including Relays.

If Members do not wish to take out the XCR package (Series Ticket) they can enter individual events at a cost of \$30 Open, \$25 Junior, providing they have paid the AV Base Membership Fee and SSH Club Fee, and to be eligible for XCR Relays they must take out the XCR Relay Package (no extra cost)..

The Track and Field package gives access to 12 rounds and a Final of AV Shield competition.

Entry to Championship events will be the same as last year.

Once the AV Base fee and Club fee have been paid Packages can be added at any time.

Categories for Registration are –

Open 20 years and older

Junior 13-19 years (as at 31 December 2017)

Dual 11-14 (must have current LAVic Registration)

Social (Non competing member)

Recreational Runner

Official 16 years and older

Coach 16 years and older (must be a financial member of Athletics Australia).

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me on 98061659.

Pat Robinson

Registrar

**** SSH Club Development Fund ****

This important financial resource assists athletes directly where necessary (trips, equipment, specialised coaching etc), and we need to keep building on it. Your donation (\$10-\$20+, or whatever you can afford) will be gratefully received, by cheque or direct debit transfer.

Bank transfer details - BSB: 033 526 Acc: 106 222



BIRTHDAYS



April - Luke Frazzetto, Sidonie Lowe, Andrew Nagle, Alice Craigie, Tasman Schofield, Carmel Moorhead, Ben Barry, Daniel Mitchell, Grace McConchie, Chris Williams, Ron Young, Liam Dixon, Nik Petersen

May - Stephanie Armstrong, Michael Moorhead, Thomas Thorpe, Alex Davis, Nick Tsiftelidis, Scott Clayton, Nick McGuire, Fraser Rosman, Peter Gerner ijersbo, Adam Tennant, Xavier Smith, Whitney Sharpe, Peter Cram, Cameron Clayton, Sam Spicer, Lachlan McLeod, Timothy Gibney, Sean Guiney

June - Georgia Kovats, Charlotte Anderson, Polly Schofield, Nathan Rodgers, Sarah Hall, David Kipp, Michael McGuire

July - Ben Kim, Paul Dunn, Sven Richter, Geoff Warner, Malcolm Neiwand



COMING EVENTS

Sat 13 May	XCR17 R2 – 8km CC (Club 8k CCC)	Wandin Park
Sun 14 May	AV 15km Walk C'ship	Albert Park
Sat 20 May	AV All Schools Road Relays	Albert Park
Sat 27 May	XCR R3 16km CC	Cruden Farm
Sun 11 Jun	Aust 100km C'ship + shorter races	Gold Coast QLD
Sat 17 June	XCR R4 10km CC AV All Schools CC C'ships	Bundoora Park
Sat 8 July	XCR R5 Road relays	Sandown
Sun 16 July	XCR R6 10km Road race	Albert Park
Sat 29 July	XCR R7 15km Road race	Lake Wendouree
Sat 12 Aug	XCR R8 Ekiden Relays	Anglesea
Sun 20 Aug	Aust Half-Marathon C'ship	Sunshine Coast QLD
Sun (Sat?) 26 Aug	Aust CC C'ships	Wollongong NSW
Sun 10 Sep	XCR R9 Half-Marathon	Burnley
Sat 16 Sep	XCR R10 Relays, Princes Park	Carlton North



CROSS COUNTRY SEASON 2017



**** XCR17 R1: CC Relays - 22 April, Jells Park**

MD1 6X6km	Tom Thorpe	18.57	MD7(2)	Ben Kim	30.28
	Sean Guiney	18.56	4X6km	Team DNF	
	Sam Quirk	19.27			
	Peter Gerner ijersbo	19.22	WD3 4X6km	Alex MacCallum	30.12
	Lachlan Aspinall	19.25		Caroline MacCallum	27.21
	Ben Buckingham	<u>18.25</u>		Alex Nolan	31.30
	Team *2 nd	1.54.32		Whitney Sharpe	<u>22.33</u>
				Team 5 th /14	1.51.36

MD5 4X6km Tim Gibney 22.21
 Sam Spicer 21.17
 Sven Richter 20.01
 Dan Mitchell 22.27
 Team ****1st/8** 1.26.06

WD4 3X6km Carmel Moorhead 37.34
 Sidonie Lowe 39.40
 Team DNF

MD7(1) 4X6km Ben Sims 21.41
 Nick McGuire 22.15
 Luke Frazzetto 23.28
 Alex Davis 23.24
 Team ****1st/15** 1.30.48

MU20 3X6km Daniel Ballan 22.28
 Michael McGuire 21.00
 Xavier Smith 20.52
 Team ***3rd/8** 1.04.20

MU18 3X3km Nik Petersen 11.23
 Lakindu daSilva (inv) 11.10
 Jacob Arnheim (inv) 12.16
 34.49

Jells Park medallists: Michael, Xavier and Daniel



NICK BOWDEN reflects on Rd 1 of XCR17

SSH men, a sincere well done from me on a great start to the winter campaign.

A number of you have been directly involved, and most others are aware, that there has been considerable discussion in the past 12+ months, around what we want this club to 'be'; what we want to achieve in competition and how we might go about it. While much of this has happened at committee level, led very capably by Greg Nolan, it has also included some of our active members & potential members, who, let's be clear about it, are the ones out there actually doing the training and putting their performances up for scrutiny.



What we saw on Saturday (a reflection of what has been building steadily for some months) was, I believe, a really good example of what we want - a place where the camaraderie, support, competitiveness, friendliness and a willingness to work collaboratively, helps give energy and purpose to any organisation with ambition. This was evident from being around the various competing teams - junior & senior, men's & women's - and the club tent, watching our groups warm up, observing the cheering & interest in other SSH results and was highlighted to me in a number of conversations that emphasised that people were pleased with what went on, but far from satisfied at the outcome. This attitude will drive further improvement.

It was also highlighted by conversations with key people from other clubs, including Melb Uni and Box Hill, who are very aware of what we have and recognise what it takes to make it happen. It is pleasing to have productive and respectful conversations with those in the sport who value integrity, friendly rivalry and the pursuit of high standards, while recognising that these are not incompatible. It is also worth noting that at least two conversations have been had in the past week, with high-performing athletes who are very aware of what the club is aiming to do and have made clear their desire to be a part of it. Our 'brand' is visible, recognisable and appealing.

For those, other than Wal Robinson, who are familiar with the history of SSH (and if you are not, then I strongly suggest you buy a copy of Wal's book and have a good read), you will know that it is a club with a tremendous story to tell - one of enormous athletic success, but also, one with a genuine humanity and a

desire to make the running club an environment that is welcoming and inclusive to all, regardless of ability, ambition or background. Just yesterday, there was a tweet sent out by the Australian Commonwealth Games Association about one of the club's true legends, Gerald Backhouse, an Olympian & Comm. Games medallist, who lost his life serving in WW2. While we would hope to never repeat the last part of that, we can admire and be inspired by those who have come before us.

One of my personal ambitions, is to be witness to more than one of the 'original' club track/ road records broken and to know that through the encouragement and support of the club and its members, that we have individuals representing Australia in international competition. When you consider that these records are held by the likes of Mike Hillardt (Aust rec holder, world indoor champion), Derek Clayton (world record holder), Rick Mitchell (Aust record holder, Olympic silver medallist), Andrew Garnham (Aust champs medallist), Ian Blackwood (Comm Games rep), Bruce Field (Olympian & Comm Games Medallist) and Don Hanly (Olympian) who followed in the footsteps of athletes the calibre of Backhouse and Ron Blackney (Olympian & Comm games medallist) you quickly realise that to surpass their marks will be no easy feat, but unquestionably a worthwhile pursuit. I don't know if we have those in the club right now who will achieve this - I do know we have the potential - but I'm absolutely certain we can cultivate the environment where the athletes who will achieve those targets can be recruited, developed, nurtured and supported. That is what we are striving for. That and to stay ahead of Glenhuntly in the all-time Vic 10mile (16k) XC team championship victories!

Another ambition of mine, is to ensure that the club remains accessible and welcoming to anyone wanting to be involved in athletics and allows them the opportunity to achieve their personal goals and provides a platform for them to improve. If we can facilitate that directly, then we will do our very best.

What are your goals? Personal or team/club? Wherever possible, we want to help you reach them.

The club's history tells us that there are many paths to athletic and personal success. Your training/ coaching arrangements and choice of events, are ultimately yours (in consultation with your coach/ advisors) but what I do know for sure is, that if you are not directly connected to a training group or mentoring opportunity, then it is IMPOSSIBLE to reach your potential in the sport. So, make every effort to find the best training environment for you and stick at it. Persistence and consistency is required.

AND..... tell us what you need. While the club is limited in it's capacity to provide direct financial support, there are things that we, or through our networks, can do. If your study, work or travel arrangements are a limiting factor in getting to training or comps, then please be brave enough to initiate the conversation with Greg N/S, Jamie or myself so we can look at how we might assist and negotiate a fair and sustainable arrangement.

*Training is offered on Mon (Glen Iris), Tuesday (Tan), Thursday (Deakin Uni) or Mon & Wed (Ferndale Park) as well as Sat am (Valley Reserve, Mt Waverley). THESE ARE CLUB SESSIONS. While there is a training fee for regular attendees, you are encouraged to speak to myself, Wal or Greg to negotiate what is reasonable and possible for you. Financial limitations should NEVER be a reason to not get to group training if your intent and purpose is clear and you can/ have demonstrated your bona fides in relation to contributing to the club. This also applies to attendance at interstate championships that will allow you to further develop your athletics & proudly represent your club and state.

When we look at the practicalities of what happened on Saturday - a hard-fought 2nd for premier; comprehensive victories to D5 & D7 which would both have won the higher grade - there are positive signs. When we look at 'the bench' as well as those who were not quite, or are not yet at their best, we can be optimistic. While we are aiming for no less than premierships, it is not an 'all or nothing focus' for 2017. Rather, it is the relentless pursuit of sustained high-level performances that will produce long-term success and the greatest chance of multiple premierships, across multiple grades, over multiple years.

No club had five athletes - Jamie, Lachie C, Cam C, Caellum, Nathan R - who were medallists in XCR relays last year NOT even competing and a sixth, Ben S, not in their top team. That, along with Matt H & Matt N still to have a run, is an example of potential improvement, along with some new recruits, BUT, you don't win anything with blokes sitting on the sidelines. It's the doing that counts.

Go Saints!
Nick



AV Track & Field Titles 2016-17

**** AV T&F C'ships - 24 February & 3 March, Lakeside Stadium**

With all our eggs currently in the middle distance basket, we were heartened to see such fine performances from a small but committed SSH contingent at the State championships. Ben Buckingham won the Club's first senior Victorian T&F title for many years, taking out the 3000m Steeplechase and achieving the sub-9min result he's been after in emphatic fashion. Whitney Sharpe, after many relay podiums and consistent appearances in 800/1500m finals, claimed her long-awaited individual medals over both distances, with Club records in each. Fraser Rosman also stepped up with a fine silver medal run.

WO 1500m	Whitney Sharpe	4.31.18	H
	Whitney Sharpe	4.18.83	*3 rd PB,CR
	Sally Naylor	4.47.72	H
WO 800m	Whitney Sharpe	2.11.9	H
	Whitney Sharpe	2.06.13	s/f PB, CR
	Whitney Sharpe	2.08.07	*3 rd
	Sally Naylor	2.17.53	H
MU16 1500m	Fraser Rosman	4.22.45	H, PB
	Fraser Rosman	4.23.36	11 th
MU18 1500m	Seamus Graham	4.19.25	H, PB
MU20 1500m	Thomas Webster	4.16.72	H
MO 1500m	Mitchell Cashion	3.57.56	H
MO 3000mStp	Ben Buckingham	8.54.14	**1 st PB,CR
MU16 800m	Fraser Rosman	2.06.00	H
	Fraser Rosman	2.01.23	*2 nd PB
MU20 800m	Thomas Webster	2.02.9	H
MO 800m	Mitchell Cashion	1.59.85	H, PB
	Mitchell Cashion	1.55.96	s/f PB
MU18 3000m	Seamus Graham	9.17.21	9 th



Ben took the Steeplechase title and smashed 9mins in the process



Two individual AV bronzes for Whitney



AA Track & Field Titles 2017

Ben backed up his AV title result with a strong bronze medal run in the Steeple, once again breaking 9 mins. Well done to Whitney also, who placed 6th out of 11 finalists in the 1500m final.

**** Aust T&F C'ships - 26 March/2 April, Sydney Olympic Park Centre NSW**

WO 1500m	Whitney Sharpe	4.26.90	<i>H</i>
	Whitney Sharpe	4.28.56	<i>6th</i>
	Sally Naylor	4.42.75	<i>H</i>
MO 1500m	Lachlan Aspinall	3.54.07	
	Mitchell Cashion	3.57.07	
	Tom Thorpe	3.59.59	
MO 3000mSt	Ben Buckingham	8.59.22	<i>*3rd</i>
MU18 3000m	Seamus Graham	9.27.61	<i>F</i>



Tom contests the 1500m in Sydney

**** NEW MEMBERS ****

Welcome to our newest Saints - **Sean Guiney, Peter Gerner ijersbo** and **Timothy Gibney**. We wish you all success and enjoyment in the red, white and blue!

***OTHER MEETINGS ***

**** Box Hill Classic**

7 February, Box Hill	W800m	Whitney Sharpe	2.06.8	PB, CR
		Sally Naylor	2.15.7	
	M800m	Daniel Ballan	2.01.2	PB
		Tom Webster	2.02.8	
		Fraser Rosman	2.06.3	
		Ben Sims	2.07.2	
		Tom Thorpe	8.18.7	PB
	M3000m	Jamie Wagstaff	8.38.2	PB
		Sam Quirk	8.40.1	PB
		Seamus Graham	9.15.1	PB

**** AV Pre-Nationals Departure Meet**

18 March, Doncaster	W1500m	Sally Naylor	4.41.2	
	M800m	Daniel Ballan	2.00.4	PB

**** Milers Club**

16 February, Melb Uni	M800m	Ben Sims	2.05.4	
Mt 4	W800m	Sally Naylor	2.16.5	
16 March, Lakeside St	W1500m	Whitney Sharpe	4.26.47	
Mt 5		Sally Naylor	4.36.13	
	M1500m	Ben Buckingham	3.49.29	
		Mitchell Cashion	3.56.87	
		Ben Sims	4.16.01	

**** NEW SSH T-SHIRTS ****

Have **you** ordered one? If so, have you **PAID** for it?
If not, please make payment (\$60) to the following account:

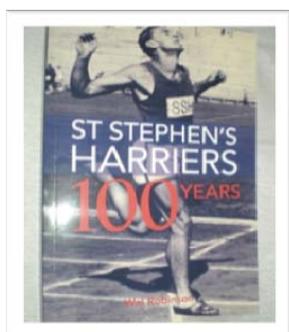
BSB – 033-526
Account No. – 106222

Please make sure that you put your name in the description!

CORRECT UNIFORM !!

Members are reminded that all competitors are expected by AV to wear their correct Club uniforms – no exceptions!

Note that royal blue or black shorts are now permissible for our club.



If anyone you know would like the book,
St. Stephen's Harriers – 100 Years
I will be happy to post them a copy.

Cost: \$30 (*reduced*) plus \$6 postage.

Contact: Wal Robinson

wal.robinson@bigpond.com

Mobile: 0417 338 035

Tel: (03) 9585 5545

Cheques should be made payable to St. Stephen's Harriers.