



GAZETTE



PP Bill Foster at the Celebratory Dinner, House of Commons proposing a toast to the various guests attending

A Club well worth backing

Thanks to our sponsors:

Biggin Hill Airport,
Jack Petchey Foundation,
So Clean
and to many other generous individuals
who offered backing and assistance.

CONTENTS

Club News

3. This year's President – Nick Corry
7. Your New Vice Presidents

Athletics Reports 2019/20

8. Senior Men's Winter Season
15. National Cross Country Championships
18. The U20s Men and Women
20. The young athletes in the Kent Cross Country League
24. Kent County AA Cross Country Championships
26. National Cross Country Relays
27. English Schools Cross Country Championships
28. South of England Championships
30. The Indoor Track Season
33. 150th Anniversary Leader Board Challenge
34. Masters Cross Country
36. The Bennett Cup Season
39. World Championships at Doha

Features

42. The Origins of Blackheath Harriers
46. Ian Wilson – My early experiences with Blackheath

Club News

49. 150th Anniversary Dinner at the House of Commons
60. Dina Re-opens Refurbished Track at Norman Park
62. The Club AGM
65. Norman Park Development Update
66. Letters to the editor

Obituaries

67. David Ralph Johnson
70. Joseph Anthony Clare
71. Derek Hogg
74. Club Officials

From the Editor



So the long awaited milestone year of our club's 150th Anniversary year continues as we cover part two of the story. We have more anniversary material in particular for those interested some items relating to the club's illustrious history from the multi-sported activities of its first incarnation as Peckham Hare and Hounds to the club we recognise today with its now long associations with the Hayes and Bromley area.

As far as competitive activity is concerned there has been plenty and despite the growing threat of the Coved 19 virus in the early months of this year it has been possible to stage nearly all of the fixtures in the winter calendar, and after the work done on the Norman Park track it has been possible to continue some of the Leader Board meetings although as we've come to the end of the anniversary year this competition is still in progress.

Before the pandemic had brought an end to athletic activity for the season we'd seen another busy and successful program of races from the Senior Men, some fine individual performances by the Junior Men along with strong turnouts in some key races, medals of all colours being won by young athletes of all age groups in the Kent League, and the emergence of a rising star in the High Jump by the name of Kelechi Aguocha at Indoor track and field Championships both at home and abroad. Finally another flagship performance by Dina Asher Smith as she continues her distinguished international career by becoming the first British athlete to win three medals in the World Championships.

The arrival of the Coved 19 (or Corona Virus) pandemic has effectively stalled any athletic activity for this summer and although the management have been able to allow the re-opening of the clubhouse grounds for Wednesday nights to function in a socially restricted manner, the onset of a second wave of a virus may see the cancellation of the winter cross country season.

The anniversary celebrations continued principally with the Anniversary Dinner at the House of Commons Dining Room on 7th November last autumn, an occasion for the club to put out its finest plumage to the outside world with so many posh frocks and different styles of dinner jackets, lounge suits and club ties in view. As the front over will show there were many faces present, past and present members and guests from many walks of life, and many tributes paid to the club. If you'd been there you would have felt a strong sense of togetherness and fraternity.

Equal thanks go yet again to my erstwhile layout editor Ozzie Adams who has once again been available to step in to assist in producing this issue, and maintaining the splendid standards of design which readers have appreciated over recent years.

Wilf Orton, December 2020

Before signing off I wish to offer grateful thanks to the following for willingly providing articles and reports for this issue: President Nick Corry, PP Julian Golding, Paul Austridge VP, Ross Braden, PP Nick Brooks, Steve Pairman VP, PP Chris Haines, PP Ian Wilson, Tim Ayres VP, PP Steve Hollingdale, Richard Johnson, Helen Johnson

The next issue covering the Summer 2020 is in preparation but due to the total suspension of competition for the season it is envisaged that this particular issue and the subsequent Winter 2020/21 issue will, if all competition is continued to be suspended, be amalgamated to form a Year 2020/21 Issue. Any copy or contributions to be in by the latter half of 2021.

This year's President

Profile on Nick Corry, President 2020/21



Most newly succeeding club presidents have come to that office following many years of membership and service to our club, and even if they may have spent time away from it prior to assuming the presidency, they have been long considered as integral to the club and it's continued success. By contrast however outgoing President Julian Golding had decided to choose as his successor someone whose association with the club is of a relatively recent one, having joined it only some seven years ago in the role of encouraging parent.

In that time Nick Corry has taken on the role of team manager for different age groups and in 2017 in recognition of his services he was awarded a vice presidency by PP Bill Foster. Of him the outgoing president said "Nick ... has, an underlying passion for Athlete Wellbeing and in particular mental health and is proud that the club is leading the way in club athletics, with its focus on Athlete Wellbeing".

Last year he also took on the responsibilities of Chairman of The Committee and has in a short period of time moved to become very much the heart and soul of the club, being more than just a runner, but a champion of the whole person and encourager of all aspects of club life. Given the impact of the corona virus on club activities he was introduced to the club as its

new president remotely since the AGM had to be cancelled. The following Interview with Gazette Editor Wilf Orton took place also remotely soon afterwards on 3rd April 2020.

NC: Hi Wilf, great to be able to catch up with you.

WO: Good evening Mr President, thank you for giving me your time (both laugh – time appears to be aplenty in the new lockdown).

WO: We like to introduce the incoming President to the club, and place a Q&A, if you like, in the Gazette. I have some questions for you. Is that OK?

NC: Of course Wilf fire away.

WO: Great, well my first question is how did you arrive at Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC?

Continued

NC: *Right Wilf, that's a great question, it's a long answer. Our family moved to the area in 2003 from Wapping in London, and knew very little about Bromley. In fact shortly after, we all relocated to Hong Kong in the summer of 2004. It was just after the SARS outbreak had subsided so Hong Kong was in recovery mode. We returned in 2008, and it wasn't until 5 years later that Coleman's mum Emma found the track at Norman Park, and from that BBHAC.*

By 2013, Coleman was doing well in sports at school, he was beating everyone at running by a country mile, and we wanted to try and take that further. I remember taking him to the track, and him having his first training session. He looked absolutely mediocre. It was really pleasing. Some real competition for him.

Within a few weeks cross country started and he started improving. Through this I renewed my love for running. While he trained I would do a few laps of Norman Park. Then at the end of September 2013 we found out about the Club 5 mile. I had been improving, so we both decided to enter.

We had intended to just enjoy racing together, and had no idea that there would also be a handicap. So it was really interesting for us. Looking back I realise we ran against each other Wilf!

WO: Crikey, I hadn't realised that! I was still running then!

NC: *Yes. I really enjoyed it. I spent most of the race running with John Fenwick, each of us politely allowing the other to go over stiles first, and through narrow gaps. It's funny the things that impress on you, but I really warmed to his gentlemanly sporting conduct. Afterwards in the club house bar, I got talking to Wednesday-Nighters, particularly Iain Swatton who gave me the encouragement to join.*

WO: So your start was in Cross Country? I tend to associate you with the track and team management.

NC: *Yes it was in Cross Country, and I re-found and renewed a love for that. It was something I was good at, at school, but I never had the opportunity of joining a club. I was one of 5 brothers and we were all good at running, my younger brother was also a very good high jumper. My eldest brothers represented Berkshire at English Schools.*

WO: So what took you in to team management?

NC: *Well it's Coleman's fault again! He was by now in the under 15s, and I saw that the club was asking for a team manager to help with the Kent Young Athletes League. I had coached youngsters rugby in Hong Kong, and had enjoyed volunteering so*



I thought I would just ask about it. I was pointed in the direction of PP Mike Davies, who when I enquired so forcefully pressed on me I realised as soon as I opened my mouth, I was the new team manager!

WO: I have heard he tends to be like that! Are you still a team manager?

NC: *Yes I am, although I have moved up to the Upper Age Group, looking after the U20 and U17 boys, while Tim Soutar looks after the girls. Rod Harrington who managed the boys with me, has taken over the British League from Pat Calnan, or I guess I should say National Athletics League. I think that we are in a really exciting place with Team Management on the track, as we also have Nick Swatton looking after the Southern League. In the Juniors, Paul Austridge, Karen Desborough, and I guess it's Paul Byfield, though I think there are some new parents coming through*

to help also. Dedicated to the Masters we have Maz and John Turner. The platform for athletes to succeed is really strong now. I don't know other clubs that enjoy that kind of dedication and coverage.

This year is also an Olympic Year, and I can't wait to see the uplift in excitement and interest in the club, should Adam and Dina do well in Tokyo.

WO: Yes that is lucky, being President in an Olympic year!

NC: *Yes, though I wonder when we will all be immortalised in the Club Photo! That should have taken place but of course couldn't. Though I'm not sure if I should be in the middle of that or Immediate Past President Julian Golding! I think technically it would have been taken before the AGM when I wasn't yet President, and still a secret!*

WO: Well as you've raised it, when did you get asked by Julian. How do you know him?

NC: *Before this year I didn't know Julian at all. I was really excited by the choice the then President, Paul Byfield made, in selecting Julian for our 150th year. When we went up to Manchester with the young athletes for the YDL finals, Julian gave the youngsters – and all the adult volunteers! – the most inspirational talk the night*

before. It was only the kind of talk you can give, when you have been all the way in the sport as he has. It was terrific and I sincerely hope, (and aim!) to keep Julian close to the club, particularly the youngsters as there is so much good experience to tap in to there.

Julian and I got to know each other through the Management Committee, and I realised that the club had a President that was really working hard. Julian was a track guy, and so wasn't even aware of the club house before becoming President. He certainly had no idea about cross country, and I remember on the morning of the Club 10 he arrived at the Club House at the race start time, wondering where he should start the race! He and I jumped in the car and sped to the Church at Layhams, arriving to a great cheer from the runners! We also both went to the mob match at Ranelagh, and it was great joining in the club chant with him. Something I'm certain he never encountered when on the track!

WO: Is the club history important to you Nic?

NC: *I think we are so blessed with our history, and this year, if do have to have a pause in competition, I hope to reignite and spread awareness of our history. You as editor know better than anyone, we have such a treasure trove tucked away between the pages of the gazette. I was also*

very touched, and touched is the right word, I'd say I was downright emotional at times, reading the biography of Sydney Wooderson. I was stirring to realise I had run on the same cross country courses that he and other runners from the time had used. I do want to explore ways of us managing to keep alive the traditional club courses. The club 10 mile is the best cross country course in the world. It has absolutely everything in it!

WO: I think it's hard though.

NC: *Yes, we do need to think of athletes' safety, and especially that of the marshals. But let's see. I know we are looking at ways to invigorate the Bennet Cup and Mob Matches, trying to encourage more runners. But I think if we build success from the top, then those races will fill up themselves. I see no reason why in 5 years time if we work at it, with the junior athletes we have, we can't be National Champions in cross country. Particularly the women. If we set out a strategy for that, then we will be unbeatable in the Kent League, and enjoy a resurgence in the Mob Matches. So, for me, it is not a question of holding on to history, the history is ours, it can be taken away. We have to look forward as a club, and then our present efforts and targets will marry up to the standards of our history. That is why I'm a big proponent of the development and move to Norman Park.*

Continued

WO: Are you sure you want to leave the Club House? Won't the move make you homeless? (both laugh)

NC: *Don't get me wrong Wilf. The Club House is very special to me. I love the social side of the club. My favourite club memories are from evenings we have had here. Top of that list is Burns night. The way you opened my eyes to the work of Burns through the talk you gave on his work last year. I was really hooked. That is some of the magic of BBHAC. We're a running club, a track club, a race walking club, but we are a really great social club, a wide community, that is special. But all these things come from people, not venues. If we are to take the club to the heights we aspire to, then we need the facilities to achieve that, and we need security over our home.*

I realise I haven't answered your earlier question! When did Julian ask me if I would take on the role? It was at the family xmas supper at the club house. I was just popping back to the flat, probably for some more money for the bar (laughs) when I realised Julian had sneaked out and followed me. So he asked me then, and I was shocked, but very pleased to accept.

WO: Now we have had the first facebook news from the President. Will that continue?

NC: *I certainly aim to continue that. It struck me that the President has so many more ways to communicate than through a weekly ten minute pitch in the bar. Which only really reached an audience of 20-30 club members. We are a club with nearly 1,000 members. I want to try and reach all of them. All of our media is important to me. Social Media, Print Media, Digital Media. That is an area I hope the club will notice as an area of growth and renaissance (for the print in particular) during my Presidency.*

WO: So will we lose the news in the bar?

NC: *I certainly hope not! I hope to be in there after lockdown, but also I would love it if I could present news from important historical places for the club: The Railway Hotel, Blackheath, the Chicken Run! I don't know? But you get the idea, and the members who are in the bar, watch that over facebook on the big TV, while others who live further afield can catch up wherever they are.*

WO: Well thank you Nic. I look forward to seeing you in the bar sometime soon, whether it is in person, or on the big screen!

NC: *Thanks Wilf.*

Nick Corry/Wilf Orton

Blackheath and Bromley AGM – Your New Vice Presidents 2020

Outgoing President Julian Golding has seen fit to create three new vice presidents, who in different ways have contributed to the club and have been proposed by some of its former presidents.



Peter Rogers
(Proposer PP Chris Haines)

Peter has contributed to the Gazette over many years.... and has been responsible for layout and many technical issues in that time... He assisted Gazette Editor Wilf Orton from 2010 to 2017, first as layout editor and then later having responsibility for selecting photos with great judgment. On one occasion having just stood down from the team he very helpfully stepped in at short notice and turned around production of an issue when there were delays caused by engaging a new layout editor

to replace the former ones. Said the editor of this “I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation and thanks for all he has done on the magazine and hope we can find a committed and talented a designer to take his place”.

Perhaps more importantly though he has designed and promoted the logos that we used last year... to celebrate our 150th anniversary. His expertise has been invaluable in producing our celebration materials... including the badges, menus and glasses seen and used at the House of Commons Dinner last year.



David King
(Proposer PP Dick Griffin)

Dave works tirelessly behind the scenes running the Clubs... Lottery Syndicate. He devotes much of his free time to do this... and has been doing this since 2013.

Dave has run over 316 full marathons... which is more

than anyone else in the club. He never promotes himself as he is such a modest individual.



Nigel Stickings
(Proposer PP Margaret Baldwin)

Nigel currently coaches a group of our young athletes. When they go away as a big group to competitions...(YDL final, National Cross Country etc.) he is always on hand to help and keep a watchful eye on their behaviour and often goes the extra mile.

This is all done in his own quiet way...whilst most others are fast asleep...he is up ensuring our athletes are safe and are doing the right thing; his contribution can be overlooked by most, but yet the role he plays is very significant. He is a very sociable member of the Club...and attends many of the non-athletic events.

IPP Julian Golding

Senior Men's Winter Season

2019/20

Preliminaries at Crystal Palace

After a brave effort by all involved, we failed to qualify a team for the National Road Relays after winding up 36th out of 74 complete teams at the SEAA 6 Stage Road Relays Crystal Palace on 22 September 2019 -.

This fixture has been fertile ground for us in recent years, but a combination of injuries, training commitments and European Club competition left us slightly depleted this time.

After a later promotion to the first leg of the A Team, Tom Desborough battled to

70th in the most competitive leg of the day to set the team up. Alex Gibbins promptly got the chase under way by elevating the team to 64th.

From one Alex to another as Alex Bruce-Littlewood ran a barnstorming leg to make up 19 places and bring us up to 45th and give the team hope in the second half of the race.

Joss Barber, on his way to full fitness after a summer in New Zealand, continued the chase with a further escalation to 39th. Dan Kennedy could only add another couple of places to this while carrying a niggle, leaving James

Habergham, in his road debut

for the club, too much to do, although he ultimately left us in 36th. A huge gain from the start, but not enough.

In addition a 2 man incomplete team of Jason Meers and Ifetobi Salako made the most of the occasion to place 85th and 83rd in the extremely competitive first 2 legs of the day. They were joined by a vets team consisting of L. Crowder, Dave Beadle, Adrian Stocks and Andy Lawes who began in 21st and rose to 20th out of 22 complete teams with committed runs from everyone.

Kicking off the season in the Kent League

The cross country season proper kicked off with the first Kent League on October 12th at Swanley Park. In stark contrast to previous years when the sun's been shining and the ground's been flat and firm, a traditional scene greeted the team as it was continuously raining and there were some actual hills involved in the race. It seemed that that's exactly what large sections of the club wanted as 15 men turned out in force.

After a mid-race wobble Joss Barber led the Heath home with a barnstorming final kilometre to place 14th on his



A trio of senior men posing for a possible podium finish

senior XC debut. At the other end of the scale, Alex Gibbins followed him home in 17th with a fast finish to claw back an extra place as the first vet. Gareth Evans was next to get in on the act with 33rd place after a typically well judged effort. Luca Ercolani completed the 4 to score in 54th with the sort of pacy finish on the inside that suggests he was paying close attention during the World Championships.

Jon Pairman grasped the nettle well on his Kent League debut to come 69th and lead home a glut of team mates: Fintan Parkinson in 75th after having just eaten several times his body weight in burgers while out in the States, Roger Beswick in 78th and 2nd V55, and Paul Sharpe in a battling 85th. Another debutante Greg Firth snuck into the top 100 in 96th, Chris Tuck began the long road back to full fitness in 116th, pipping Darren Corneille in 122nd, and the elder Pairman completed the scoring dozen in 167th. Nigel Haffenden and Jason Meers just missed out on the top 12 with finishes of 185th and 189th, Rich Byford bravely warmed up for his half-marathon the following day with a finish of 231st, and the oldest member of the team Andy Lawes completed

the team in 238th.

We were a comfortable 3rd in both the 4 and 12 to score categories, which will hopefully be an excellent springboard for future fixtures.

Tonbridge **26th October**

Well done to everyone who competed this weekend at the second instalment of the Kent League at Tonbridge. First home was Josh Schofield, who faced a course harder than anything he would have experienced up north. Untroubled he handled it with ease, displaying a strong final lap to close in 3rd place. Alex Gibbins was next home in 24th (to be confirmed as we believe he edged 23rd and a formal review will follow.)

Ross Braden threatened a top 5 finish but after a less than enjoyable last 800m finished in 27th. Completing the 4 to score was Dan Kennedy who had recovered from last weekends efforts to put the team firmly in 3rd place in the 4-to-score team standings.

Next home in another solid run was Luca Ercolani in 38.53. The next 4 in were separated by just 10 seconds in some very good packing, with Roger Beswick (85th) edging out Ian Firla (87th), who was closely followed by



Fintan Parkinson (91st) and Jon Vintner (93rd). The wait for the next man in was not long either with Greg Firth and Paul Sharpe finishing 103rd and 107th respectively. Chris Tuck was the 12th man in, continuing his comeback and ensuring we finished comfortable 3rd overall in the 12-to-score.

Darren Corneille was next in completing the testing course in 44.34, followed by formerly retired cross country runner Tim Ayres, who did his trademark of offering to run with someone and then using a sprint finish to gain the upper hand, his victim was Richard Byford who finished 6 places lower. However, Byford's official time is currently under review on the results, the reason is not clear, but the rumour is that he actually did an extra lap by accident.

Continued

London Cross-Country Championships 16 November 2019

Several Blackheath athletes were again on the charge at the weekend over Parliament Hill in a boggy, undulating affair that reminded us that winter had well and truly arrived; and that even the comparatively short 10km on Hampstead Heath is no mean feat.

Local resident Danny Brewer led the charge after his stint altitude training in Bolivia in an impressive 41st place despite a stitch on the last lap. Dan Kennedy followed him home in 59th after a well judged effort, Luca Ercolani snuck into the top 100 in 98th with a determined sprint to the line, and Fintan Parkinson completed the scoring quartet 158th after taking the brave decision to wear trail shoes in the ankle deep mud.

Josh Dowling made a welcome return to racing in 172nd after some achilles trouble, Jon Vintner ensured it was a worthwhile trip up from Winchester in 218th, while Heath also made a return to racing in 238th. Chris Tuck continued his march back to full fitness in 263rd to just miss out on the top half, Darren Corneille built on an impressive few months worth of training to

come 295th, and Rich Byford completed the Blackheath contingent in 406th to give us 10 finishers: our best total in years.

All of this translated into 13th place out of 38 complete 4 to score teams. Naturally this was rewarded with a few well earned refreshments at some of Highgate's finest drinking establishments.

SEAA cross country Relays - Wormwood Scrubs 19th October 2019

Blackheath fielded a single team at Wormwood Scrubs on Saturday to run in the Southern XC Relay Championships, with everyone performing brilliantly apart from the loan team manager. James Habbergham ensured the trip down south was a productive one with 2nd place after the 1st leg and the 4th fastest time of the day. Alex Gibbins continued the good work with the 30th best time of the day to bring the team back in a very respectable 6th, before handing over to Dan Kennedy, who promptly took the team back 8 places to 14th with an awful run. Ian Firla was on hand to steady the ship, however, with a strong run to lead the team home in 15th in only his 2nd XC race for the club.

National Cross Country Relays at Mansfield 2nd November 2019

A strong team effort was on display again on Saturday as 1 complete and 1 incomplete Blackheath and Bromley side descended on a wet and muddy Berry Hill Park in Mansfield for the National Cross Country Relays.

Charlie Davis made his seasonal debut for Blackheath with a strong performance on the ultra competitive first leg to come home in 38th in 17:17, a time that would have been close to the top 10 on any other leg. Josh Schofield continued his impressive form from Tonbridge last weekend to charge through the field in the 8th fastest time of the 2nd leg, 16:53, to make up 20 places and take some impressive scalps in the process. James Habbergham, rapidly making himself indispensable to all our relay teams, continued the good work to snatch an extra place in 17:23 in a battling performance. Sadly, this momentum couldn't be maintained on the last leg as Dan Kennedy, a late change due to injury and illness, could only manage 19:42 and lost 10 places to lead the team home in 27th. Far from a disaster, but below expectations.



Simultaneously the incomplete B team made the most of the opportunity to compete on the national stage by all bringing their A athletes to the competition. Tom Desborough came home in 69th on the 1st leg in 18:38, suggesting he might have been better off in the A Team. Mark Cage made his long awaited debut for the club by holding his own in a solid 19:37 and Ian Firla got in a relatively speedy work out in his preparation for the Valencia Marathon by completing the team in 20:07 to leave them back in 69th but sadly without anyone to pass on to it.

A big shout out to former Heathen Phil Sessemann for defending the Cross Country Relay title with Leeds City

despite taking a heavy fall down hill on the first leg.

Liverpool Cross Challenge 23rd November 2019

This race incorporated the European XC champs trials held in Liverpool, 4 men took the long travel up north plus one supporter (shout out to Will Ruiz)

First home was Team Manager Ross Braden, who finally managed to put in a worthy performance in Blackheath colours, finishing in 42nd. He was closely tracked by Northerner Josh Schofield, who after a blistering start (briefly taking the lead) settled down and put in a fine performance finishing a very solid 53rd.

The next Blackheath vest to finish was '800m turned

cross country specialist' James Habergram. Despite being far from thrilled with the conditions, Habergram put in another superb performance over the cross for Blackheath, putting an end to any rumours that he would prefer to run indoors than at nationals.

Charlie Davis was also running however he seemed to have forgotten his B&B HAC vest, which meant he was forced to run in the colours of Birmingham University instead. This misstep can be forgiven as Charlie improved on already very good performances this winter to finish in 64th.

Continuing and concluding the Kent League

In spite of it being in the depths of winter and at peak

Continued

time for Christmas shopping, a hardy group of athletes turned out for the 4th Kent League fixture at a windswept Foots Cray Meadows on 14th December.

First over the line for the Heath was Dan Kennedy in a much improved performance on recent efforts in 18th. Backing him up in 39th and 41st was the redoubtable duo of Gareth Evans and Luca Ercolani, who both put in typically reliable performances to bolster the 4 to score category. Completing the quartet was Ian Firla in 53rd, hot on the heels of a marathon PB in Valencia a mere 2 weeks ago.

Josh Dowling added to his credentials as the most improved senior man by finishing 66th in his first Kent League outing of the season. Roger Beswick was

the next Blackheath finisher in 86th adding to his record of being ever present at the Kent League this season. Paul Sharpe backed him in 88th, also after having just run the Valencia Marathon. Chris Tuck placed 100th exactly in his best league finish so far as he continues to improve as the season goes on.

Darren Corneille also managed his best finish of the season in his third consecutive outing to come 111th. This effort was closely supported by Greg Firth in 116th, Simon Harris in 124th and Jason Meers in 136th to ensure the 12 to score packed well to come 3rd on the day and hold the same place overall. Last but by no means least for the Heath was Nigel Haffenden in 141st ensuring a healthy competition for places amongst the men just in front of him.

We were 4th in the 4 to score category on the day but remained 3rd in the overall standings, and with a home fixture to cap the league off in February we should be well placed to at least retain that position.

Sparrows Den 8th February 2020

The Kent League season concluded in style with a large turnout for the club on

our home turf and mercifully clear skies and wind before the following day's hurricane.

Said hurricane worked in our favour as it prompted the cancellation of the Worthing Half-Marathon, allowing team manager Ross Braden to run and storm home to 3rd after a brief flirtation with 2nd. There was quite the scrap on behind him between Danny Brewer, Dan Kennedy and Alex Gibbins in the race to complete the 4 to score. A mid-race surge from Brewer won the contest as he wound up 14th in a strong performance. It was closer between the latter two as Kennedy just out-sprinted Gibbins after they both successfully moved up the field to 18th and 19th respectively.

In his first race for Blackheath in 9 months, Rob Donohue ghosted past numerous opponents to place 37th; a fine effort after a long time out injured. Luca Ercolani enjoyed the notable distinction of running all 4 of the league fixtures and improved his position in each one to come 40th and 1st in his age category. Ian Firla sealed a fine first cross country season for Blackheath in 52nd; Roger Beswick again gave a strong performance in his age category in 83rd; Paul





Dan Brewer and Alex Gibbins after the race

Sharpe snuck into the top 100 in 96th; Ian Scott, in his Kent League debut, was just outside it in 101st; Greg Firth was just behind in 106th; and Tom Desborough rounded off the scoring 12 in 113th.

Ifetobi Salako made his senior Kent League debut in 124th after a crazy opening mile, and just behind him was Jason Meers and Darren Corneille, who fought out a good battle in 142nd and 144th respectively. Jon Pairman came home in 153rd, while Rich Byford and Rod Harrington made a welcome return to competition in 175th and 205th respectively.

We were rewarded with 3rd place in both the 4 to score and 12 to score categories for both the race and in the overall standings, which was

a deserved reward for some fine performances throughout the season and at least a dozen men being present at every single race. A special mention goes to Luca, Roger, Paul, Greg and Darren for turning out at every race and providing a strong backbone for everyone else. Thanks so much to everyone who turned out.

Building up to the Nationals in the KCAA Championships

As part of the build up to the National Blackheath returned to Brands Hatch on the first Saturday of the new year on 4th of January to contest the Kent XC Championships.

In an unusual piece of good fortune the usually freezing and wet course featured the rare sight of the sun during the afternoon strengthening

everyone's resolve and allowing us to concentrate on racing.

Despite an illness ruining his week, team manager Ross Braden stepped up to the plate with a controlled 11th place to lead the team home without putting undue pressure on himself. The next Heathens to finish were Danny Brewer and Tom Desborough in 26th and 27th respectively after a cat and mouse battle that drove them to higher finishes than they would have attained otherwise. Dan Kennedy was the fourth man in 32nd after another well judged race to move through the field as other competitors dropped off. The ever consistent Luca Ercolani strengthened the scoring sextet in 59th, and Oscar Hussey made a bold and welcome step up to the Senior ranks despite expecting to run the U20 race by coming 70th and ensuring we came 4th in the 6 to score category.

Paul Sharpe made good on his promise of making up for the gluttony of Christmas by finishing 106th, Chris Tuck was close behind in 115th as he continues to improve, and Greg Firth performed strongly once again to place 128th. Jason Meers continued the trend of the team packing well in 137th, and Tim Ayres completed the team in 153rd.

Continued



Blackbeath runners lining up at the least muddy part of the Nationals course

Sadly it was 1 short of a full 12 for the 2nd year in a row, but you can't have everything.

National Cross Country Championships

Huge congratulations to all who took part in what was the muddiest national in years. The conditions really were something to behold. It was great to have such a good turn out for a race outside the M25 and even with a few injuries, illnesses and no shows we still managed to field more than enough scorers with 16 runners turning out and also providing us with our highest team finish since 2013.

First home was Charlie Davis rather impressively in his senior national debut making light work of the mud in 29th

place Not far behind and continuing his strong form shown all season was team manager Ross Braden in 39th.

After much nagging and peer pressure James Habergham was convinced to run a few meters further than his usual 800 and showed this was a wise decision coming back in 120th. Tom Desborough then demonstrated that spending 7 days a week in the gym is paying dividends with a 262nd place.

Alex Gibbins then came round in what we are lead to believe was his 17th time of contributing to the 6 to score at the national in 306th. Team manager Dan Kennedy then rounded off the 6 to score with a 336th place.

Rob Donohue continued his comeback in 435th. Fintan Parkinson in 691st.

Josh Dowlings season keeps getting better with a 711th place completing the 9 to score. Greg Firth followed up in 787th. The mud took its toll on 1 Heathen as Richard Daniels lost his chip in the quagmire but estimation is that he came back in 810th. Jon Vintner didn't let the recently acquired jewellery on his left hand drag him down with an 894th place.

Chris Tuck came back in 1065th. Richard Byford managed to get one over his old rival Tim Ayres in 1317th and 1455th respectively. Last but by no means least Richard Hall crossed the line in 1495th to complete the Heathans big day out.

Final placings have us in 14th in the 6 to score and 16th in 9 to score. A Huge thanks to everyone who made the trip up.. It was also great to have a few beverages in the bright lights of Nottingham as well After the mud and slog of a challenging seasons, it was finally time for beer and skittles.

Ross Braden

National Cross Country Championships

Nottingham, 2020 – The Young Athletes

The National XC 2020 was another spectacle but this year in very challenging conditions under foot and over head with 40mph winds and muddy sections deep enough to swim in!

Wollaton Park, Nottingham, glorious in the summer but brutal in the winter, was this year's venue for the prestigious National and Blackheath and Bromley athletes were once again out in great numbers at what is the oldest Cross Country Championship in the world.



Race day started early and despite last minute changes to arrangements by the organisers (due to saturated grounds and high winds) the club tent was soon proudly flapping in a great location after a mammoth effort by Club President, Olympian Julian Golding, past presidents

Ken Daniel and Pat Calnan and all of the parents and athletes. Battling the wind all did a great job of pitching and securing our base for the day and at times it seem it may not have lasted the day as huge gusts battered the course.

First to brave the quagmire conditions were the U17 girls running 5k and their strong squad of nine combined superbly to win a fantastic team silver, sharing the same score as gold but just missing out on count back. Naomi Toft ran brilliantly finishing 14th, Ailbhe Barnes was an impressive 19th, Ava White a great 35th and completing the scoring four was Annie Thomas in 51st. Isabelle Stoneham was a strong 55th followed in by Zoe White in 84th, Amy Miller 92nd, Zakia Mossi 105th and Jess Neal 150th.

The U15 boys running over a 4k course finished as 13th scoring team and were led home by Alessio Tutt running a mature and controlled race placing a high 40th. Matt Smith running hard placed 79th and Miles Brown running his first National for the club was 139th. Ted Marston was 211th, George Shaw on his continued come back was 286th and Nathaniel Brunner in his first National was 348th.



The U13 girls had 3k of challenging terrain to negotiate and Megan Slattery coped well crossing the line in a high 26th with Francesca Middleton a great 51st, Amie Gould 54th and India Blakey 80th. These combined finishing positions saw the girls place a great 6th in the team competition. Megan Barlow was a good 101st and Luciana Smith, in her first year of three in this age group ran well in 104th. Emily Deveney, celebrating her 13th



Continued

birthday was 132nd. Charlotte Bloodworth, another young athlete with three years in this age group not only made her National debut but also her club and cross country debut and she handled the tough conditions well, placing a great 185th. Completing the squad was Yasmeen Islam Medeaux doing a few firsts: National, cross country race, club race and wearing spikes and coped very well, outside of her comfort zone, placing 308th.

The U17 boys had a gruelling 6k to run and schools international Oliver Bright produced the club's highest individual result with a superb 6th place finish, mixing it with the best guys in the country and beating most of them. Tom Brash, as all, found the going tough but ran well to secure 101st and Joel Rooney ran well finishing 134th. BBHAC then packed the field with seven boys all battling for places and Jake Leng led them home in 207th with Will Andrews in 212th, Freddy Georgiou 228th, Justin Stover 232nd Callum Horton on his National debut in 239th, Bailey Marks in 259th and Harvey Blanden in 273rd. These great numbers meant an 11th place finish for squad.

The pressure was on the U13 boys squad of four, as all were going to be needed to score



in the team competition. Alex Middleton went off with the leading pack and looked fairly effortless (although it clearly wasn't) as he powered to a top 10 finish, placing a superb 10th in his first National, very impressive. The English Cross Country Association rules state that athletes must be 11 to compete in this competition and primary school boy Lucas Elmqvist has waited all winter to race, missing all the Kent league, Kents and Southernns because he was only 10! Last Thursday Lucas had his 11th birthday and so was eligible to run and we thought a top half finish in a field of nearly 400 could be achievable if he worked hard. Lucas was having none of this as he went off with the leading 50 in the front pack. Lucas kept going, seemingly oblivious to the conditions and kept passing athletes as they tired. Coming down the last hill Lucas kept pushing and surprised everyone (except himself) with a top 20 finish placing an almost unbelievable 19th. Superb.

Lucas has two more years in this age group! Franco Hillier has had a good winter and kept our team hopes alive with a strong 148th and Harry Fage ran determinedly to complete the team result finishing 220th and more importantly helping the team to a 9th place finish out of 44th complete teams.

The next 4k challenge was for the U15 girls and the first of the big BB squad home was Lara Mannes having run superbly to finish a high 12th. Lily Meers was a fine 31st, her highest National finish. Carys





Firth continued her fine form and posted her best National finish with a great 51st followed by Hannah Clark bettering last year's position in 62nd. These results combined to win a brilliant team bronze. The squad strength in depth was shown by quality runs from Gabby Martin in 72nd, Kate Price in 91st, Olivia Magee Brown in 146th, Cara Gould in 208th, S.P. Maher in 287th and Isabella Louth in 300th. Amelia Willars finished in 316th and Emily De Backer crossed the line in 342nd despite losing and finding her timing chip and carrying it across the line! Amelia Middleton completed the large U15 contingent in 346th. Sofia Loader was making her debut on this tough course but sadly ended up with the paramedics after injuring her shoulder. However, a great experience and many more opportunities to come.

We were lucky enough to have “coach driver of the year” as he allowed the young athletes back on the warm, dry coach without having to struggle taking off foot-ware. The coach looked a little like the course but after a thorough clean up Dave had it all spic and span for the journey home the next day. Thank you Dave.

It was then back to the hotel to shower (we hope) before a swim and a table tennis tournament before double dinner (hotel food then McD's!) and Emily's birthday cake.

We are well supported club and that was evident by the President and nine past presidents in attendance scattered around the course giving much needed support to our athletes.



Thank you Julian Golding (President) and all the past presidents Chris Haines, Mike Peel, Tim Soutar, John Baldwin, Margaret Baldwin, Mike Mahoney, Bill Foster, Ken Daniel and Pat Calnan and partners Terri Shotton and Jan Mahoney for all your help and support during this big weekend. Many thanks to Nigel Stickings and Michele for their 50 hour solid stint ensuring our athletes were safe and best prepared to compete.

Paul Austridge



The U20s Men and Women

Winter Cross Country 2019/20

Always considered something of an intermediary age category between those formally classed as young athletes and the seniors, the under 20s Men and Women occupy a difficult ground which at times results in there being limited resources of manpower and availability to consistently field teams for competition. However talent is not limited and when fully available can produce outstanding results and of course a rich reservoir of potential for the flagship senior teams.

Kent League Winter 2019

Swanley Park 12th October

The U20 men also recorded a superb team victory led home by a storming Callum Myatt breaking the tape first, closely followed by Joseph Georgiadis in 3rd and Henry Fisher in 7th. Amy Leach had a strong run finishing 2nd in the U20 women's race but as our only runner, no team result was recorded.

Somerhill Park, Tonbridge 26th October

Amy Leach was 2nd in U20 women's 5k race with Millie Smith in 3rd but with three needed to score in the team result, no mark was recorded. Callum Myatt had another

great run, making it two wins from two races in the U20 men's 5k. Joe Georgiadis finished high up in 6th But with no third runner no team result was recorded.

Danson Park 9th November

Joe Georgiadis was our sole competitor in the U20 race but placed a high 5th and this secures him second spot in the individual table. Amy Leach made it three 2nd places from three in the U20 woman race and sits firmly at the top of the league table but unfortunately no BBHAC team score recorded.

Foots Cray Meadows 14th December

Matthew Francis was our only U20 running and he secured a great 3rd place finish over the 5k course.

We gallant few... band of brothers and sisters

Much of the time though it was down to the efforts of lone runners their sterling individual efforts had to compensate for the fact that no team score could be recorded or full team could finish their race. For the junior men in the National Cross Country Championships the daunting task of completing a 10km course in extremely tough



muddy conditions was challenge enough but three of our U20's put in good performances with Callum Myatt 113th, Theo wood 140th and Matthew Francis 143rd. We were looking good for a fourth finisher but unfortunately Ifetobi Salako had to pull out during the race, nothing too serious and he hopes to be back running again very soon.

For the junior women U20's having to wade through 6k of mud Yasmin Austridge ran well to finish in 23rd and Amy Leach continued her strong form with a 80th place finish. Four were need for the team score so unfortunately no U20's in the team result.

For Amy Leach there was just bad luck in the South of England XC championships. As our sole representative in the women U20 race but her performance was strong but was missed off the results due to a missing timing chip!

As has been mentioned athletes recorded fine performances as a team in the National Cross Country relays



where The U20 boys finished in 41st with Callum Myatt leading them out, handing to Ben Gardiner on two and Henry Fisher on three. And The U20 girls were led out by Yasmin Austridge, passing to Mille Smith and then to Amy Leach who crossed the line in a good 16th place.

As individuals several names do stand out: Callum Myatt, Josph Georgiadis, Matthew Francis and Henry Fisher for the young men and Amy Leach who finished in consistently high positions with Millie Smith and Yasmin Austridge. Amy and Joe showed this again in the Kent County Champs Brands Hatch 4th January 20 where with as the only U20 woman

and only U20 man running Amy finishing 8th and Joe in 15th in their respective races both competed well for the club.



University challenges

As this is the age dominated by university commitments it was great to report a healthy representation of Blackheath Under 20s at the BUCS Cross Country Championships – Holyrood Park 1 February 2020 -held in Edinburgh, at the famous Holyrood Park representing their respective universities.

Over 1600 motivated athletes, each sporting their University colours with face paint, ribbons and various other colourful forms make up what is arguable the best supported cross country races of the season, collegiate almost tribal!

In the women's long race Niamh Bridson Hubbard (Cambridge) ran superbly in a class filled field placing a very high 10th.

In the men's equivalent long race, Charlie Davis (Birmingham) was highest placed BBHAC athlete crossing the line in a quality 19th position. James Habergam (Leeds Beckett)

was 104th and Prince Reid (East Anglia) 275th.

In the woman's short race Yasmin Austridge (Birmingham) had her best run of the season placing an impressive 10th, with Jess Keene (Birmingham) and Maddie Mastrolonardo (Birmingham) 34th and 44th respectively. Amy Leach (St Mary's) was 79th and Jess Sellar (Oxford) 116th.

In the men's short race Josh Schofield (Loughborough) was a great 24th, Oscar Hussey (Warwick), Angus Harrington (Cambridge) 274th, Alex Leggatt (Durham) 300th and Marco Arcuri (Durham) 356th.

One again it showed what can be achieved when this age group can be assembled in good numbers.



Paul Austridge

The young athletes in the Kent Cross Country League 2019

Swanley Park 12 October 2019

The 2019 Kent league Cross Country returned to Swanley Park for the first of the four race series and Blackheath and Bromley HAC young athletes made a big impression winning four of the eight team races.

The U13 boys were 2nd overall with Alex Middleton having a great run finishing 2nd just one second behind the winner. Josh Healy in a strong 5th and Franco Hillier finishing well in 10th made the scoring trio. The U13 girls went one better winning the team race with Molly-May Mooney-Clarke in 4th just ahead of Francesca Middleton in 5th and Megan Slattery in 7th.

The U15 girls were equally impressive winning the team race with Carys Firth running a strong race and placing 3rd, with Hannah Clark a great 4th and Amarisa Sibley a solid 7th. The U15 boys did well placing 3rd team overall in tough competition. Alessio Tutt went off well but lost a bit of ground after a fall but recovered well to finish 14th. A strong run saw Arthur Starvis finish a good 18th and 800m specialist Jake Anthony completed the scoring three placing 25th.

The U17 boys combined well to finish second in their team race made up of the scoring three of Sam Reardon in 8th, Tom Brash 9th and Will Andrews in 10th. The U17 girls made it three wins in three for the girls and they powered to victory with great runs from Isabelle Stoneham in 2nd, Olivia Berry in 3rd and Zoe White in 4th.

Somerhill Park, Tonbridge 26 October 2019

Race two of the 2019 Kent League cross country series returned to the magnificent grounds of Somerhill School in Tonbridge. A well marked out and challenging course awaited the 46 Blackheath and Bromley young athletes. Once again BBHAC girls dominated the team races winning U13, U15 and U17 team races with the boys picking up 3rd in the U15 and U 17 and 4th in the U13.

The U13 girls had the biggest squad racing, with 11 toeing the line. Great runs from Molly-May Mooney-Clarke in 3rd, Megan Slattery in 4th and Amie Gould in 7th secured the team victory. A great debut run from Lara Tunali- Flynn placing 8th and a strong run from Tallulah Ndikanwu in 9th making 5 BBHAC in the top ten, impressive.

The U13 boys squad was made up of three boys, enough for the three to score team race. Franco Hillier ran a determined race placing a fine 6th with Jasper Brooks a solid 13th just in front of a strong finishing Jed Starvis in 15th.

The U15 girls had good numbers racing and were led home by Lara Mannes who looked comfortable all the way around the 4K course coming a fine 2nd. Hannah Clark was a strong 3rd and Carys Firth had another great run finishing 6th. Cara Gould, not wanting to be outdone by her sibling also made the top 10 with a fine 8th place finish. The U15 boys were led home by Matt Smith in 11th, Alessio Tutt in 22nd and Ted Marston in 23rd combining to claim 3rd team spot.

The U17 girls looked impressive again with 4 in the top 7 and easily won the team race. Annie Thomas was a strong 2nd, Ailbhe Barnes a great 3rd, Isabelle Stoneham just behind in 4th and Olivia Berry a solid 7th. The U17 boys had good numbers running and first home for BBHAC in 8th was Tom Brash on his winter opener, backed up by great runs from Will Andrews in 14th and Sam Reardon in 19th.



U15 boys Ted, Alessio and Arthur

Danson Park, Welling **9 November 2019**

Danson Park, Bexleyheath played host to match three in this winter's Kent league cross country series and despite a clash with the English Schools Cup, Blackheath and Bromley HAC girls once again dominated, winning all three U13, U15 and U17 team races. The fewer number of boys running, reflected in the overall team results with a 4th and two 3rds in the U13, U15 and U17 races.

The U13 girls led proceedings out and another solid run from Molly-May Mooney-Clarke finishing an impressive 2nd, a great run from Amie Gould in a superb 4th and year young Luciana Smith having a very strong run placing 6th, completed the scoring trio. The team were ably backed up by great runs from Marie Salamanca 10th, Lydia Witcombe 14th, Tallulah Ndikanwu 16th. Alyessa Firla, also a year young ran well finishing 23rd with sisters Maddie and Lydia Marston just 2 seconds apart in 35th and 36th. This was Lydia's debut

for the club and encouragingly she has two more years in this age group. Lola Bischoff did well to finish the 3.1k course after picking up a niggles on the first lap.

The U15 girls had the biggest squad of the day and Hannah Clark powered home to seal her first victory of the season, with Carys Firth having her highest placing to date with a fine run placing a solid 2nd. Lily Meers ran hard to secure 5th and ensure team victory in the three to score race. Two more in the top ten with Cara Gould a very good 8th and Cameron Kelly- Gordon an impressive 9th. Isabella Louth had another great run in 12th, with Olivia Wauters in 18th, SP Maher in 21st and Abi Smith 35th. Completing the squad over the 4.2k course were Libby Whyte in 41st and Amelie Willars in 46th.

In the U17 race Zoe White finished the strongest with a powerful performance over the 5.2k course scoring her first Kent League victory. Ailbhe Barnes ran hard from the gun and was rewarded with great second place and

completing the scoring trio was Ellie Osmond in 5th, recording her best run this winter. Isabelle Stoneham worked hard on the heavy grass course placing a great 7th and just outside the top ten was Olivia Berry in a good 12th place.

The U13 boys team were fourth on the day with impressive runs from Josh Healy in 7th, Jasper Brooks in 9th, year young Hendri Verster in 16th and Harry Fage in 18th.

Matt Smith left it late but made up a good few places in the last 100m placing a fine 4th in the U15 boys 4.2k race. Alessio Tutt went out hard from the start and committed well and should be pleased with his solid 7th, his first top ten finish. Arthur Starvis was a good 19th, Thomas Sugden 22nd, Ted Marston 25th and Nathaniel Brunner 41st. The team is currently third in the league.

Sam Reardon led the Blackheath charge in the U17 race and placed well in 7th, backed up by Jake Leng in 15th and Justin Strover in 19th, securing 3rd in the team race. Will Andrews finished 21st despite an uncomfortable stitch and Callum Horton continued his fine first season with a good 25th. With one fixture left the team are second in the table.

Continued

Foots Cray Meadows**14 December 2019**

Blackheath and Bromley young athletes signed off the Kent Cross Country League in some style at a windy Footscray, claiming three team titles and four individual winners on the day.

The fourth and final race in the series had all to play, for with individual and team titles to settle and the BBHAC club championships incorporated, was an added bonus.

Good numbers turned up for the later than normal league finale but BBHAC numbers were down due to winter illness and school Christmas trips abroad. The girls have dominated all winter and it was no surprise to see all three age groups U13, U15 and U17 secure team gold with such depth and quality.

The U13 girls were first off over the relatively level course and best represented, with 14 toeing the start line. Molly May Mooney - Clarke ran well placing 5th but having ran all four fixture well, found herself 2nd the individual overall table (IOT). Megan Slattery had a strong run in 7th and as did Lara Tunali Flynn in 11th. Tallulah Ndikanwu completed the series on the day in a fine 12th but a superb 5th in the IOT. India Blakey finished in



U13 boys Jed and Josh

15th with Marie Salamanca just behind in 16th but importantly 6th in the IOT and Alyessa Firla crossed the line in 27th. Next to finish for BBHAC was Isla Spink making a great club debut in 29th just in front of young Lydia Marston running well in 30th and Amber Cockburn in 34th.

The team were well backed up by great runs from Hannah Nott placing 36th, and Isla Griffin 41st, both making their club debuts. Completing the squad was ever present Maddie Marston doing the full house, placing 49th on the day but impressively 15th in the overall individual table. These superb runs ensured that the girls stayed at the top of the team table and were duly awarded the winners team trophy.

The U13 boys were most effected by seasonal health and holiday issues but that didn't stop Josh Healy running a great race finishing in 4th, neck to neck with the 3rd placed

athlete. Jed Starvis also had a fine run posting his highest finish of the season in an impressive 12th place.

The U15 girls were equally impressive as the U13 girls with twelve athletes putting in a shift for BBHAC. Lara Mannes ran with confidence comfortably beating the Tonbridge girl who had won the first two fixtures. Hannah Clarke continued her fine winter placing 3rd and this was good enough to for Hannah to claim gold in the individual overall table. Carys Firth ran hard to secured a well deserved 4th on the day and silver in the IOT. Lily Meers was a strong 5th and Cameron Kelly Gordon was a great 8th.

It was pleasing to see Olivia Magee Brown back to full strength and finishing well in 15th place and Cara Gould in 22nd, earning her an 8th in the IOT. Olivia Wauters finished in 23rd and Olivia was rewarded for her consistency with a 10th place slot in the IOT. SP Maher

also completed the set and was 26th on the day and 13th overall. Another to complete the series was race walker Abi Smith and she proved her fitness with a 29th on the day and 20th overall finish in IOT. Just behind Abi was Libby Whyte in 30th and Amelie Willars in 34th. The team unsurprisingly won the team title, comfortably.

The U15 boys race saw six black vests racing and four of them were completing the full race series. First home for BBHAC was Alessio Tutt who set of determinedly and finish well in 8th and 6th in the IOT. Arthur Starvis had his highest finish of the series, placing a great 13th and 10th in IOT. Ted Marston completed the set and made it a full family affair along side his two siblings, finish strongly in 18th and 11th in IOT. Thomas Sugden finished in 21st and great to see George Shaw running again after a lengthy break, finishing well in 32nd. Nathaniel Brunner had his

highest placing of the year with a strong 40th, placing him an impressive 20th in the individual overall table. BBHAC U15 boys were a solid second in the team contest behind a strong Tonbridge squad.

Ten U17 BB girls contested their 5k course and impressive runs from all, saw them finish with 6 girls in the top 9 and all 10 girls home in the top 20. Ailbhe Barnes had already claim a 3rd and 2nd spot during the season and her efforts at Footscray were rewarded with a fine victory. Ava White looked strong finishing 3rd as did Zoe White in 5th. Zakia Mossi was next home looking good in 6th and Isabelle Stoneham rounded off her great series with a 7th place finish but more importantly winning the individual title.

Amy Miller was a great 9th and Ellie Osmond a great 11th.

Olivia Berry completed the set in a good 15th and this was enough to claim bronze in the individual overall table. Heidi Forsyth was 17th and completing the strong squad was Sabrina Mannes finishing 20th. Blackheath and Bromley U17 girls were worthy team winners.

BBHAC only had one U17 boy racing but what we lacked in numbers we certainly made in quality as Oliver Bright glided over the course and cruised to victory. No team score on the day but a second place for the season behind a strong Tonbridge was still a good result.

Within this final Kent League race we incorporated our own "BBHAC Club Championships" and so all our athletes placing 1st, 2nd and 3rd were presented with club Gold, Silver and Bronze medals as in the table below.

Paul Austridge

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
U13 boys	Josh Healy	Jed Starvis	
U13 girls	Molly May Mooney	Clarke Megan Slattery	Lara Tunali Flynn
U15 boys	Alessio Tutt	Arthur Starvis	Ted Marston
U15 girls	Lara Mannes	Hannah Clarke	Carys Firth
U17 boys	Oliver Bright		
U17 girls	Ailbhe Barnes	Ava White	Zoe White

Kent County AA Cross Country Championships

Young athletes

Brands Hatch, 4 January 2020

2020 got under way in chilly but bright weather on the fields around the iconic Brands Hatch motor racing circuit with the 2020 Kent Cross Country Championships. BBHAC athletes have clearly continued their training over the festive period posting some fine performances, winning one individual gold, one silver, two bronzes and two team gold and 4 team silvers.

In a day dominated by our Kent neighbours Tonbridge AC it was good to see BBHAC young athletes mixing it up and our strength and depth was rewarded by winning many county medals.

The U13 girls got proceedings under way and the young squad of eight combined well to win team silver. Molly-May Mooney-Clarke had another strong run placing 6th,



Megan, Molly-May and Luciana

followed by an impressive run from Megan Barlow in 9th just in front of Luciana Smith, who has two more years in this age group, in a fine 10th. Marie Salamanca ran well crossing the line in 12th and two debutants performing very well on their first outing for the club were Kyla Dervish in 25th and Isla pink in 26th. Amber Cockburn was a good 30th and Maddie Marston continued her full season placing 40th.

Five U13 boys took to the 3k circuit determinedly and in a close battle won a great team silver. Josh Healy led them home in a strong 11th with young Jed Starvis running well in 20th backed up by Jasper Brooks in 23rd. Hendri Verster's run secured team silver as despite having the same team points as Medway and Maidstone Hendri finished 28th, one place in front of our rival, thus securing the silver. Harry Fage completed the squad crossing the line in 32nd.

BBHAC U15 girls have dominated the Kent league all winter so it was no surprise that they won the team gold but they had to work hard to achieve this. Hannah Clark ran hard and deserved her individual bronze medal placing a strong 3rd. Lily Meers pushed on well to finish 6th and year young Carys Firth was a strong 7th. Cameron Kelly-Gordon



Jasper, Jed, Josh and Hendri

impressed with her 12th place as did Olivia Wauters finishing in 16th place and Olivia Magee Brown looked strong in 18th. Cara Gould was 26th, SP Maher 30th and Amelie Willars 35th completing the strong squad.

The U15 boys once again had good numbers running and their depth won them a well deserved team silver. Matt Smith looked strong placing an impressive 4th as did Alessio Tutt in a great 8th. Thomas Sugden's efforts placed him 26th just a couple of places in front Miles Brown, making his BBHAC debut, in 28th. Ted Marston crossed the line in 33rd and George Shaw continues his comeback with a good 40th. Nathaniel Brunner finished in 52nd and Jonny Ellerton, making his cross country debut completed the squad in 58th.

Four girls made up the U17 team and they all ran well securing team gold. Ailbhe



Jake, Tom, Oliver and Callum.

Barnes looked very strong winning a fine silver in 2nd and Zoe White looked equally as impressive winning bronze in 3rd. Isabelle Stoneham placed a fine 5th just in front of Ellie Osmond placing a solid 6th.

With four to score in the U17 boys races we were fortunate enough to have four running and their collective efforts were good enough to win team silver. Oliver Bright looked strong and determined

throughout his 6k effort and was a worthy winner claiming the Kent County title. Tom Brash looked good placing 9th with Jake Leng putting in a good effort finishing 22nd. Callum Horton in his first Kent County Champs will be pleased with his strong run crossing the line in 28th but more importantly helping the team secure team silver.

Paul Austridge



Thomas, Miles and Matt

National Cross Country Relays

Young athletes

We were all very fortunate that the National Cross Country relays in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, went ahead as planned on 2nd November 2019, despite fears that this great venue may not have been available, due to bureaucracy!

The superb course at Berry Hill Park offers everything needed for a great Championships - tough hills, woodlands, mud, grass, bucket loads of rain and wind and all this easily accessed by the large numbers of spectators in attendance.

Forty three young BBHAC athletes made the three to five hour journey (depending on when they travelled) to Mansfield and were met by the "worst conditions for 30 years" as announced by the PA system! This meant that times were slightly down on last year but the effort and commitment was exactly the same as always. The U13 boys trio were led out by Alex Middleton, who had his spike ripped from his foot after about 400m, but carried on regardless before passing to Hendri Verster and then Harry Fage, both in their first National XC relay, bringing the team home in 43rd in a field of 79 complete teams.

The U13 girls had three strong teams racing and the

trio of Megan Barlow, Amie Gould and Fran Middleton combined well to finish a high 17th. India Blakey, Lara Tunali Flynn and Megan Slattery were just behind in 21st and only two places behind them in 23rd were Maria Salamanca, Alyessa Firla and Luciana Smith.

Matt Smith had a superb race coming home a solid 8th in the U15 boys handing to Ted Marston and Thomas Sugden who both ran well coming home 30th. Nathan Firla made his National debut running the first leg of an incomplete team but held his own well in tough conditions.

The U15 girls had three complete teams and the A team of Hannah Clark, Lara Mannes and Lily Meers all had strong runs, collectively finishing a fine 8th place with 98 teams racing. Imogen Hadley, Amelia Middleton and Carys Firth finished well in 43rd spot just in front of trio Isabella Louth, Olivia Wauters and Cara Gould in 47th.

The U17 boys also finished an impressive 8th with Oliver Bright running the sixth fastest leg of the day (270 racing) passing to Tom Brash and then Sam Reardon who both had typically committed runs. The incomplete B team was made up of Will Andrews and Freddy Georgiou and they

both handled the conditions well, just a shame there was no third leg runner to complete a team result.

The U17 girls had two great team running and the A team finished a high 10th with Tola Pearse running well on leg 1 passing to Ailbhe Barnes on two, producing the fastest leg 2 of the day, handing over to Zakia Mossi bringing the team home in 10th. The B team of Ava White, Zoe White and Jess Neal pushed hard and finished a fine 13th. In the incomplete C team Lucrezia Polloni showed she is in great form running a solid opening leg.

Challenging conditions all round but I'm sure everyone enjoyed getting warm and refuelling before the long journey home. A big thank you to PP Dave Cordell and VP Claire Austridge for taking the much needed tent to Mansfield and back to the club house afterwards, to hang up to dry! Many thanks again, go to all the parents, team managers and coaches who continue to support our young athletes enabling them to compete at this high level. Special thanks to Paul Brash who drove the testosterone filled minibus to Mansfield and back, not an easy undertaking.

Paul Austridge

English Schools Cross Country Championships

Liverpool

With many sporting events being postponed because of the currently growing Coronavirus pandemic, it was good to see the English Schools Cross Country Championships 2020 in Liverpool, go ahead on 14 March, following the latest guidance from the NHS.

Blackheath and Bromley HAC had eighteen athletes selected by their school county to represent them at these prestigious XC Champs. With only eight selected from each county in each age group, getting selected is a great achievement.

London

Lara Mannes (London IG) finished her winter season with the highest BBHAC placing of the day finishing a great 24th, helping team London to win silver. Ava White (London SG) was a strong 30th and part of the gold winning London team. Ailbhe Barnes (London IG) finished her great winter season in 61st place and helped London win team silver. Amy Miller (London SG) placed a good 131st helping London to win team gold. Megan Slattery (London JG) in her debut English Schools Athletics Association (ESAA) was a good 143rd.

Joel Rooney (London SB) finished 170th in his second ESAA champs. Oliver Bright (London SB) wrapped up the cross country season with a solid 32nd.

Kent

It was good to see Jess Neal (Kent SG) competing in her 5th consecutive ESAA XC and finishing in 161st. Zoe White (Kent SG) finished her best winter season with a very impressive 39th. Triathlete Isabelle Stoneham (Kent IG) made her ESAA debut placing 114th. Carys Firth (Kent JG) at her second ESAA XC placed a good 139th, 80 places higher than 2019. Molly-May Mooney-Clarke (Kent JG) completed her very successful first season of athletics with selection to the ESSA XC and despite ankle problem during the race, finished 325th. In her first year in the age group Hannah Clark (Kent IG) had an impressive run, crossing the line in 51st. Another athlete making her ESAA debut was Livvy Berry (Kent IG) and she crossed the line in 208th.

Tom Brash (Kent IB) had been selected for these Champs for the last two years but on both occasions was unable to compete, so it was good to see him finally put on the blue Kent schools vest and make a great debut

placing a respectable 46th. Kent also won the IB team title. Arthur Starvis (Kent JB) making his ESAA debut ran well in 89th completing a great winter

Other counties

800m specialist Zakia Mossi (Middlesex IG) finished her winter with a good 139th. Ellie Osmond (Surrey SG) hard training ethics were rewarded with selection to the Surrey team, who won team silver, and Ellie finished a good 171st.

Paul Austridge

Key to age categories

JG Junior girl
IG Intermediate girl
SG Senior girl
JB Junior boy
IB Intermediate boy
SB Senior boy

South of England Championships

Parliament Hill, 2020 – The Young Athletes

The 2020 South of England Cross Country Championship 25 January - at Parliament Hill, Hampstead Heath were once again run in challenging conditions underfoot with plenty of wet mud!

Similar to last year, Blackheath and Bromley HAC numbers were down for various reasons: injury / illness, indoor champs or clash of sports and this reflected in the results with the U17 and U20 age groups unable to field enough athletes to score in the team competition. However, we did have many fine performance throughout the age groups.

The biggest squad of the day was the U13 girls and strong runs from Megan Slattery 17th, Francesca Middleton 20th, Megan Barlow 58th and Luciana Smith 61st combined well to secure a solid 5th team place finish. Amie Gould ran well to finish 64th, as did Maria Salamanca in 90th just in front of Tallulah Ndikanwu in 92nd. Lydia Witcombe crossed the line in 184th followed by sisters Maddie and Lydia Marston in 252 and 267 respectively. Lola Bischoff completed the big squad finishing 282nd in her first Southern XC championship race. Alyssa Firla warmed up and was raring to go but was hindered by a recent injury meaning a reluctant withdrawal.

The U15 girls went two better than last year also placing 5th team on the day. Lily Meers led the girls home a great 22nd, with fast finishing Carys Firth 27th just in front of Hannah Clark in 28th. Cara Gould completed the scoring four, placing 84th. Olivia Magee Brown was 147th, Olivia Wauters 158th, Amelia Middleton 168th, SP Maher 195th and rounding the squad off was Amelie Willars crossing the line in 238th. Libby Whyte, sporting a damaged wrist,

was disappointed to miss the race but still managed to get around part of the course giving the girls support.

Ailbhe Barnes and Zoe White made up the U17 girl contingent and both had great runs with Ailbhe placing a fine 15th and Zoe 30th, 26 places higher than last year. Unfortunately no team result.

The U13 boys had six BB athletes making up their squad and a fabulous run from Alex Middleton saw him coming home in an impressive 12th place. Only eight seconds behind, Josh Healy had probably his best run of the season placing a very good 20th. Jed Starvis continued his great winter finishing 103rd with Harry Fage running well in 143rd. Hendri Verster looked strong in the run in and placed 157th and Mark Constable, on his BBHAC and XC Championship race debut, gained many places in the final half kilometre and crossed the line in 181st. The team were 10th overall.

The U15 boys had a great turnout and were led home by a strong running Matt Smith placing in the mid twenties. Unfortunately Matt's chip wasn't automatically recorded at the finish and so Matt's performance was missing

from the official results. This is currently being investigated! Arthur Starvis backed up his strong Kent schools XC run with a top 100 finish, placing 96th. Alessio Tutt went off hard and finished 106th before dashing off to swimming in the afternoon. Miles Brown, making his full BBHAC debut ran well placing 126th and Thomas Sugden bettered last years position by 58 places placing 137th. Ted Marston also made a great improvement on last year, finishing 140th, 69 places higher than in 2019. Consistent Nathaniel Brunner completed the squad in 305th. The team were 14th without Matt's results but this will probably be bettered when Matt's result is added.

Oliver Bright raced hard at this event in 2019 to secured a fine 7th place, and this year again went off with the leading pack, in the U17 boys 6k race but unfortunately had to pull out at the start of the second lap. Hopefully no lasting damaged was done and we will see Oliver flying again very soon. Joel Rooney looked good all the way around securing 65th place and Freddy Georgiou completed the tough two lap course but fell foul of the

automatic timing system and so at present is not showing on the official results. More investigation!

Paul Austridge

The Indoor Track Season 2020

This would be a shortened season prematurely closed down due to the onset of the Covid 19 (Corona virus) which caused a wholesale lockdown by late March and yet it saw much achievement especially from our younger athletes, most notably Kelechi Agocha, whose exploits particularly in the British Athletics League last summer marked him out as a rising star in track events nationwide.

The SEAA Southern Indoor Champs (Under 13,15 and 17) at Lee Valley 3rd February 2020

This meeting saw many club athletes in action with 6 fantastic medals brought home. Sam Reardon won the under 17 mens 800m in 1.58.87, Barnaby Corry took the Under 17 pole vault with a leap of 4.30m and Jacob Byfield took bronze in the triple jump with 12.86m. Oscar Whitcombe won the under 15 boy pole vault with 2.90m, and Faith Akinbileje took 2 great silvers on the 60m and 200m with 7.83 and 25.68 respectively. All of these athletes should have fine season ahead of them.

It was the turn of the senior athletes and under 20s to compete at the SEAA Indoor

Champs at Lee Valley and the athletes in action were outstanding as 13 medals were won, including 4 gold, 5 silver and 4 bronze as well as numerous top 6 finishes. Highlight of the day was Sarah Abrams winning the senior women's long jump with a massive leap of 6.39m, while Marcia Sey won both the 60m sprint and 60m hurdles in the under 20 ladies with 7.47 and 8.36 respectively, while Nana Gyedu won the under 20 shot in a pb of 13.90m. There were silvers for Mallory Cluley in the 60m hurdles, Holly Mpassy in the 400m and Amarisa Sibley on the 800m in the under 20 ladies, and silvers for Ben Sutton in the long jump, Benjamin Gardiner in the 800m in the under 20 men's events, and bronze medals for Darcey Kuypers in both the 60m sprint and 200m for senior women, Josh Watson in the 60m hurdles and Theo Adesina in the long jump for under 20 men.

British Universities and Colleges Sports 15th February 2020

Sheffield's impressive indoor arena welcomed the best of the academic crop from throughout the country, for

the 2020 BUCS indoors track and field champs.

BBHAC had over a dozen students eagerly representing their respective Universities in what is a fiercely competitive environment.

Kelechi Aguocha (Loughborough) followed up last weeks 2.22m club record jump, with a comfortable victory winning the high jump.

Annie Davies (Kingston) recently back from International duty, claimed a fine bronze in a very competitive 60m hurdles. Prince Reid (UEA) had a busy weekend winning a long jump bronze, coming 4th in the 60m and running in both 800m and 1500m heats. Mary Adeniji (Cambridge) was 4th in the triple jump and made the long jump final. Sophie Dowson (Brunel) was 5th in strong pole vault competition. Darcey Kuypers (Brunel) had a great weekend coming 6th in both the 60m and 200m finals after going through tough heats and semis. Louise Evans (Brunel) was a strong 6th in the fast 400m final. Yasmin Austridge (Birmingham) ran a 25 second personal best of 10.06.70 to qualify for the 15 lap 3K final



Krystal Galley wins her first national (bronze) 400m medal at the British Indoor Championship in Glasgow

and was only slightly slower in the final.

Michael Damoah (Sheffield) ran well on his home turf making the semi final of the 60m. James Habergham (Leeds Beckett) made the semi final of the 1500m. Chizute Ogbedeh (Cambridge) ran in both the 200m heats and the 4 x 200m relay. Ben Sutton competed in the long jump and the 4 x 200m relay. Good to see Leah Everson (Cambridge) back and racing in the 800m.

Past President Bill Foster was seen darting all over the arena, there supporting his athletes, as ladies athletics coach at Loughborough. Also spotted was VP Costas Karageorghis, in his role as coach and team manager to the Brunel team. On the other

side of the fence, running the show, was husband and wife duo of Mark Purser (Chief Starter - University of life) and Sam Purser track judge.

National Indoors on Glasgow 20-23 February 2020

The club picked up individual medals with Phil Sesemann 2nd in the men's 3000m in 8.08.96, Marcia Sey 3rd in the ladies 60m hurdles in 8.34, Sarah Abrams 3rd in the ladies long jump with 6.40m, (Sarah also went to to win the Welsh indoor title) and Krystal Galley 3rd in the ladies 400m. Other notable performances saw Dan Putnam and Jonathan Ilori take 4th in the 400m and triple jump respectively, Jahisha Thomas took 4th in the ladies long jump and Zara Asante 5th in the ladies' triple

jump, with Annie Davies also making the final of the 60m hurdles but failing to finish.

Even more medals for the youngsters who bagged 10 at the England Indoor Champs for under 15s, 17s and 20s in Sheffield

Golds were won by Kelechi Aguocha with 2.17m in the under 20 men's high jump, Ben Sutton finally broke the 7m barrier to win the men's under 20 long jump with a fantastic leap of 7.10m, and Sam Reardon won the under 17 men's 800m and also took 4th in the 1500m. There were silver medals for Faith Akinbileje in the under 15 ladies 200m in 25.02, also for Holly Mpassy who ran 55.71 in the under 20 ladies 400m, Barnaby Corry 4.20m in the U17 men's pole vault and Nana Gyedu 13.38m in the U20 ladies shot. Three bronze medals were also won by Jeriel Quainoo in the U20 men's 60m in 6.79, also for Zac Nwogwugwu in the U17 men's 60m in 7.01 and for Oscar Whitcombe in the under 15 boys pole vault with 2.91m.

A new high jump star in the making

Elsewhere at the Loughborough Students AC Open on 1st of February 2020 Kelechi Aguocha now



Holly Mpassy won a 400m silver medal at the national indoor championships in Sheffield as a first year under 20

studying at Loughborough leapt to 2.15m in the high jump to equal the club under 20 mens high jump record, tying Trevor Llewellyn from 1978. This is a jump in excess of 7 feet!

Over the following weekend 8 February 2020 in Hustopece in the Czech Republic, Kelechi Aguocha was representing England in an international meeting and smashed his recently set under 20 mens club high jump of 2.15m with an amazing leap of 2.22m. This also broke the club senior high jump record of 2.20m dating back 40 years by Trevor Llewellyn and Warren Caswell. A remarkable improvement for a young athlete whose pb last season stood at 2.10m.

He would as mentioned above follow this up with other comfortable wins at the indoor championships in Sheffield (BUCS and England Athletics) with jumps 2.17m on both occasions.

Blackheath athletes make top rankings

Even with the indoor season only lasting a few weeks before the COVID 19 close down, the club had around 20 athletes registering good enough performances both in Europe and the US to make the top 25 in the UK rankings.

Kelechi Aguocha's high jump club record of 2.22m was good enough for 4th ranked while Ethan Brown now at University in the US ranked

6th over 400m with his 47.40 performance, Jonathan Ilori ranked 4th in the triple jump again over 16 metres, and Phil Sesemann again broke 8 minutes over 3000m for 7th spot. Among the ladies events both Maya Bruney and Katy Ann McDonald ran in the US to register 8th over 400m and 7th over 800m, while Sarah Abrams continued her fine form with a 6.42m long jump and a new pb with Jahisha Thomas 7th with her 6.36m effort.

Nick Brooks

Blackheath & Bromley 150th Anniversary Leader Board Mile Challenge

Not quite over yet

In total the races saw 129 club members take part with many coming back on numerous occasions, we also saw 29 guests take part including parents, siblings and friends. Phil Sesemann recorded the men's fastest mile with 4.04.33 with Josh Schofield second in 4.20.55 and Sam Reardon third with 4.31.0. In the ladies' section Niamh Bridson Hubbard was a runaway winner, not only winning the race on the day by a huge margin but also leading the times by an even bigger margin with her 4.57.1 performance. Teenagers Hannah Clark and Amarisa Sibley were second and third respectively with 5.21.0 and 5.21.5.

Fifteen Past presidents took part with Ken Daniel the fastest with 5.58.18, leading lady Ann Cilia 8.17.5. President Julian Golding a 20.18 200m runner in his prime and Commonwealth 200m Champion in 1998 ran a respectable 7.09 mile and his wife Samantha and son Justin (aged 8) also took part. Also great to see 2 race walkers take part with Shaun Lightman achieving 10.39.2 and teenager Abigail Smith clocking 8.42.7.

26 January 2020

The 150 Leaderboard mile races resumed today after an absence of 5 months due to the refurbishment at the track and 7 runners took to the track in warm and sunny conditions. With Joshua and Bernard recording seasons bests and

As we lost much of the season to the track closure it is hoped that we will be able to hold one more series of races once the COVID-19 lockdown eases. This will give athletes a final opportunity to come and prove their fitness, reduce their times a little as most people will be a year older which is great for the youngsters, but might not be so good for the oldies like the Past Presidents. The performances to beat are all detailed above.

Thanks to everybody who competed this season, we are still hoping to have logged 150 different club members so 21 short at this time, so come and give it a go. Also a big thanks to may partners Steve Hollingdale and Tim Ayres, and officials John and Margaret Baldwin and John Hubbard who gave up their time to enable these races to take place.

Nick Brooks

	Name	Performance
1	Joshua Dowling	5.12.2
2	Ted Marston	5.34.2
3	Ian Scott	5.45.3
4	Lee Marston	7.00.8
5	Faye Scott	7.33.5
6	Bernard Wilson	8.53.5
7	David Carton	8.55.4

Masters Cross Country

2019/20

A season that started well, and included a successful Kent Masters, ended up in disappointment for all with the Covid pandemic meaning an early curtailment to the season.

Bennet Cup

As usual the Vets dominated the Bennet Cup. Congratulations to John Leeson, who picked up the winners cup. The last event (the closing 5) may have had to be cancelled but John was pretty much in an unassailable position being 39 points clear at the end of event 8. John had an impressive and consistent season. Starting with a win at the relay he continually led the field (or at least equal first), picking up good scores throughout and claiming a second place at the SLH mob match. Clearly Chris Haines was being out thought on the scoring! John was also the only person who



Steve Pairman

ran all 8 events – well done John!

Second place was also a Vet, Mark Ellison, who finished just 3 points ahead of Adrian Stocks (another Vet). Probably deserved as Mark ran one less event, but it would have been an interesting head to head in the closing 5, seeing as 30 seconds separated them at the Ranelagh mob match! Sally Haffenden had a good season, and was the leading lady in the Bennet Cup, which included a 3rd place in the Xmas handicap event.



Rod Harrington

Kent League

The Kent League is covered in detail elsewhere in the Gazette, but Vets did their bit in contributing to good turns outs in a number of the

events, with many featuring well in the scoring. In the overall Vet performances, covering the 4 Kent Leagues, Luca Ercolani finished an impressive 6th for the season (4th in M40) with Roger Beswick in 11th (4th in M50 category) and Greg Firth on 19th (12th in M40). Alex Gibbins had a very successful Kent League finishing 1st, 2nd and 1st in the 3 events he ran. Also running 3 events was Ian Firla with an impressive first season in 4th position of those who ran 3 races.

Kent Masters

The Kent Masters was again held at Central Park, Dartford



Luca Ercolani



Roger Beswick

at the end of November. BBHAC fielded a number of athletes in various of the races. In the M40 category the team finished 5th, led home by Luca Ercolani who finished in a strong 15th, with Tony Crowder, Gareth Evans and Steve Evenden making up the team of 4. Also running were Paul Keregyrato and Nick Corry. The M50 team also finished 5th, with Anthony Heath finishing in the top 10 in 9th position. Ably assisted by Roger Beswick (16th) and Clayton Aves (34th), the team of 3 were only 4 points off of a 3rd position! The club were well represented in the M50 category – a “B team” of Dave Beadle, Steve Pairman and Nick Barber would have

finished 8th on the day, with all 3 finishing within 10 places of each other! Indeed, we would have had a C team with 3 other runners representing the club in the race; James Unwin, Mark Ellison and Sheridan Morris. Unfortunately, the M60 team was unable to match previous years winning ways, but the team did finish 10th with Luigi Arcuri leading home John Turner and Dave Leal. Well done also to our 2 runners in the M70 category, with Peter Hamilton finishing 3rd and Jim Phelan 10th.

In the women’s events, Jane Bradshaw did well in the M45 category finishing in 13th closely followed by Sally Haffenden in 19th. Maz Turner ran a strong race in the M70 category, taking 3rd place.

Nick Swatton

The Bennett Cup Season 2019/20

2019

This season's Bennett Cup was won in unusual circumstances. The growing threat posed by the oncoming spread of the Covid 19 virus meant that the competition was concluded after 8 of the 9 scheduled events with the last one being postponed as Britain went into lockdown.

The trophy went in the end to John Leeson the leader of the field after 8 events, his second winning of the handicap competition.

The road to victory taken by John was probably one of the easiest in ten years in fact the last time that John won this trophy and there were striking similarities to it. Not once during the entire series was he not on top of the overall leader-board, having won the handicap in the first race, the Will Boulton Memorial Relays.

He was temporarily joint leader after two races with Adrian Stocks but very quickly established a comfortable lead over the other challengers which by the fourth event, the home Mob Match against South London Harriers in late October had increased to 25 points and held steady after two more events.

At this time he was followed steadily by Adrian Stocks who might still have closed the gap, but in the Club 10 Championships was he not present to do so, and in his absence Mark Ellison moved into second spot, whilst another impressive points haul in the handicap (despite finishing 11th out of 13 in the race) saw John's lead shoot up to 47 points, and with it effectively clinching the competition.

Such a strong lead would be very hard now to overhaul,

and in the eighth and as it would turn out last race of the season, John, although gaining his smallest number of handicap points for an event, had done enough to secure his second Bennett Cup victory.

It was as said won in similar fashion and by a similar margin to that of 2010, although on that occasion a very emphatic lead had been established earlier in the season, which then narrowed towards the end, whilst this time round the lead grew larger as the season progressed.

The most noticeable change to this year's competition was that the number maximum number of points to be gained in the handicap was reduced to thirty but still allowing for anyone competing whether finishing or not to pick up at least one point per event. This may well have reflected the sadly diminishing numbers of athletes competing in each event.

John Leeson's total of 178 points was made up of a consistent range of scores ranging from 30 points to 9 and included two awards, a first and second place. As a bonus he even picked up a vets championships in the mens' vets 60s category.



The 2018/19 final result was: 1st Luca & 3rd Jason - after the Closing 5 - 10 March 2019

Second place overall went to Mark Ellison and third place, went to Adrian Stocks. Luca Ercolani in the defence of the cup which he won last year, whilst finishing 8th and being behind the front runners in the handicap competition, did gain two awards, a first and third and took the Ponsford Pewter for finishing as first veteran in the SLH mob match.

One of the worrying features of this season was the noticeably small fields competing in events. In the second two mob matches (SLH and Ranelagh) the numbers running for Blackheath were 14 and 15 respectively. Not surprisingly all three of the traditional mob matches were lost.

Two very heavily; Orion by enormous margin of 67 to 434, Ranelagh by a far more

overwhelming 230 to 744 with SLH being more of a competition 290 to 309.

In the more recently instigated mob match against Croydon Striders and Beckenham Road Runners Blackheath were at least successful against the former by 271 to 324 but were not so against the latter (364 to 401). In this field Blackheath scored well in the upper quartile positions, but were heavily outnumbered by the Beckenham Athletes.

More worrying as of last season though was the apparent lack of depth in the top of the field against the traditional opposition. There was some consolation in the SLH mob match that there was near parity between the two clubs in the top 20 places and a strong Blackheath block in the middle third of the

field although SLH took key places to have the edge on Blackheath.

By comparison in the match away to Orion only 2 of the top 30 places were taken by Blackheath runners and huge blocks of the home team permeating the field. The breakdown for the away Ranelagh match was even more heart-breaking; three or four large blocks of opposition with Blackheath's best occupying but 11 of the top 50 places.

And all the time a serious dearth of youth.

During the course of the season the fastest times for various distances were for 10 miles 1 hour 1'31" for the men, run by Luca Ercolani, and 1 hour 4'19" for the women by Amy Leach; for 7 ½ miles 46.06 Dan Kennedy (men) 56.44 Jane Bradshaw

Continued

(women); 10km 39.05 Alex Gibbins (men) 44.22 Jennie Butler (women); 5 miles 25.01 Dan Marks, and 32.55 Jennie Butler.

The season included the major cross country club championships which for the men were won by Callum Myatt in the 5 miles (both senior and Junior Men), as he did last season. The handicapper stated that "Callum Myatt had a triple victory in winning the Club 5, the Club 5 Junior Championship and the Handicap. Although the courses might change a little from year to year, Callum's time has not been bettered since 2009 when Alex Bruce-Littlewood won in 28:15."

Alex Gibbins won the 10km title, Luca Ercolani achieved an impressive double in the 7 ½ miles and in the 10 miles (the title of which he was also successfully defending).

In the ladies' championships the winners were Donna Mewis in the 10km Jennie Butler in the 7½ miles, and in the 10 miles Elaine Raynor who won by default as the only lady competitor. This was at least an improvement on the 5 mile championships where there were no lady competitors.

There were vets championships within the 10km race which were won by Alex Gibbins (mv 40s), Roger Beswick (mv 50s) and John Leeson mv60s).

The winners of the handicap races were John Leeson (relays), Callum Myatt (club 5), Luca Ercolani (Orion mob match), Mark Ellison (SLH Mob Match), Andrew Smith (Xmas Yacht), Steve Pairman (10km Champs), Ian Scott (10 mile champs) and Richard Byford (Ranelagh Mob Match).

As to the statistics of the competition, 79 athletes took part (61 men and boys and 18 women and girls with 167 total performances. The ages of the runners ranged from the oldest 71 (Jim Phelan) to the youngest 15 (Matthew Smith, Ellie Dalby, Daniella Harper, Ella Deighton and Heidi Forsyth). The biggest turnout of Blackheath Harriers of any event was 43 for the Will Bolton Relays with the smallest being 10 for the Orion Mob Match.

Of those 79 taking part in One surprising statistic was that the age group with the most runners as the youngest (10-19) with 21 athletes more than the 40-49s which had always seemed to be the

most common age group for serious cross country runners.

In all only 1 of those 79 competitors did all 8 events and 56¼ miles over six months, with only two others completing 7 events. Only 13 completed 4 events or more and nearly 70% of all runners completed no more than 2.

Clearly this was a dramatic fall in numbers from the previous year and demonstrates a steady and seemingly inevitable decline in cross country as an activity attractive to many club runners. Will there be an unlikely revival? Given the interest in the club's program shown by other clubs in certain events there is always hope. But for now the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic has brought a temporary cancellation of all athletic activity at club and other levels level, and what with the entire summer track and field program under threat and forecasts that the pandemic will revive in the winter, the cross country season for 2020/2021 may well also be abandoned.

Therefore speculation of the increased decline or surprise revival of cross country will be somewhat delayed.

Willy Orton

Triumph and Frustration at The World Athletics Championships at Doha

October 2019

Dina Asher Smith's athletic career has already been distinguished with past achievement but is still full of promise for future fulfillment. At the World Championships at Doha on the 2nd of October 2019 on a balmy desert night she broke new ground with a performance of shock and awe she became the first British female sprinter to win a world championship title. Having won gold medals in the Olympics in 2016, Golds in the Commonwealth Games and European Championships two years later, she continues to achieve and is still maturing into the athlete that Britain has dreamed of ...and the prospect of another Olympics in the near future looms if though not in the present year.

Dina – A world champion

As a prelude to winning a ground-breaking world championship title Dina Asher-Smith won the 100m silver medal, in a series of ever improving performances, but always finishing like a winner. In the heats she came first in 10.96, .3 of a second over English Gardner and Jonielle Smith; in the Semi-Final she again came first in a faster time of 10.87 again by a slim margin over Jonielle Smith to set up a head to head with other Jamaicans Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and Elaine Thompson and also long standing rival Dafne Shippers. However the injured Shippers did not start the final, and with that advantage Dina though beaten very narrowly by Fraser-Pryce held on to second place beating Elaine Thompson, and with it came the silver medal.

It was however but a stepping stone to greater things for she would surpass that in the 200m later that week on the following Wednesday.

It looked increasingly like only an unexpected turn of events would deny Dina the 200m gold, following her 100m silver by cruising through the heats of the longer sprint on Monday while her rivals fell by the wayside, and Marie-Josée Ta Lou, 100m gold and

bronze medallists respectively, opted not to contest the event having pulled out before the heats began with fatigue, whilst her perennial rival double world 200m champion Dafne Schippers withdrew with an adductor injury and Blessing Okagbare, second fastest in the world this year, was disqualified from heat five.

And then there remained Dina Asher-Smith, with a first place in her heat over Dezera Bryant of the USA, smashing out the fastest time of the heats (22.32') and with minimal effort. Dina advanced with graceful ease into the final of the 200 metres taking her semi final in first place, again from Dezera Bryant with a slightly faster time of 22.16'. The prospect of a final against Jamaica's Elaine Thompson, the reigning Olympic champion, Bahamian Shaunae Miller-Uibo and US silver medallist Brittany Brown as well as Swiss athlete Mujinga Kambundji awaited her.

There was an even greater break for her when the withdrawal Elaine Thompson made her a clear favourite for the gold medal. Thompson looked to be a world away from the athlete who won the Olympic title in 2016, blaming a lack of sleep for

Continued

only finishing second in her heat after missing out on a 100m medal the night before.

Then when even bigger break came with the decision by Miller-Uibo to prioritise the 400m, “Asher-Smith was gifted a golden opportunity to seize the first ever global gold medal by a British female sprinter.” It was now hers to lose and that she was the favourite, so everyone was telling her but Dina knew that she would still have to go and perform and must be focused on that.

In a systematic destruction of her nearest rivals, Brittany Brown, who ran 22.22’, and the Swiss athlete Mujinga Kambundji, who claimed bronze in 22.51’, were barely in her slipstream and were left trailing in the wake of her ‘supersonic spikes’. What was displayed proved to be an exhibition of Dina’s most extraordinary talents.

There was the usual rocketing start. Then a bend so geometrically perfect ‘it could have been drawn by a compass’. “Asher-Smith came off the bend with her nose in front before powering away from the rest of the pack in the final 60m. And, to complete the performance a combination of grace and power right to the finish.” The race itself was a formality



Dina Asher Smith... a world champion!

and the gold medal was in the bag long before she crossed the line in a time of 21.88’ one that lowered her own national record.

The joy of winning could have induced such a life changing experience; “Normally I am so chatty and full of energy, but I am lost for words,” she said. “Everybody keeps saying world champion, world title, but it hasn’t sunk in and honestly I don’t think it ever will. I have dreamed of this and now it’s real.”

After the winning performance she paid tribute to her coach, John Blackie, who has known her since she was eight – and saw in her some special potential. “That we’re champions together means so much to me.” At a time when the reputation of athletics is has been justifiably tarnished for its drugs cheats and falling popularity, here was a champion to be proud of in the post Usain Bolt era.

The champagne, however, would be put on ice until after the Womens’ 4x100m relay final on the following

Saturday. The Team GB quarter made that final, qualifying from their heat comfortably just behind the Jamaica team although, Dina was not participating in this but returned for the final along with Asha Philip, Ashleigh Nelson and Daryll Nieta. Unfortunately it did not bring for Dina and the team a coveted gold medal but they still ran in impressively behind the Jamaican quartet to claim silver in 41.85. This meant that Dina became the first British athlete to win three medals in the World Championships.

After this latest campaign of glory what next? Dina knows that the coming Olympics will be tougher and she will have Shaunae Miller-Uibo, to contend with assuming that she concentrates on the 200m. Obviously she said that she would have wanted to run in front of a stacked field but added “at the same time a world title is a world title”

Anyway Dina’s achievements in Doha ought to give her something of an early

advantage and act as a major factor in her favour. Her 200m time was so fast it would have won 13 of the 17 world championships.

Adam frustratingly close again

Meanwhile Adam Gemili came agonisingly close to his maiden major medal in 200m final missing out on a podium place by five hundredths of a second just as Dina Asher-Smith eased into the women's 200m final. It was as with the Olympic bronze which he missed by just three thousandths of a second. But in the desert of Doha, he again fell agonisingly short, as American Noah Lyles took gold.

As ever, it will be no easy task. Having won his heat on the previous Sunday, Gemili replicated the feat in his semi-final the following night, triumphing in 20.03'. That was marginally the fourth fastest time behind Noah Lyles, Alex Quinonez and Zhenye Xie. He wanted to win his semi, in order to get a good lane for the final and yet still did not feel he was firing 100 per cent but reckoned there would more to come. Saying that he felt confident, he just wanted to go out and put in a bit more effort and once there anything could happen.



The starting lanes for the finalists in the women's 200m

However the final would be a case of experiencing that sickening phenomenon, the narrow margin between the ecstasy of victory and the agony of missing out. He was in tears as he made his way through the interview area, needing to be consoled by his mother, Sacha. Gemili could hardly be faulted in how he judged his race, matching his season's best of 20.03', but in the shape of Lyles, Canada's Andre Grasse, and fast-rising Ecuadorean Alex Quinonez –the competition was simply too fierce.

Gemili was stinging in his self-reproach, after being overhauled by Quinonez only a few strides from the line. He stated that he had run like an amateur. "I had it but lost my balance. I had nothing left at the end, but all my form went out of the window. It's the same, if not worse, than the feeling in Rio." Not to break 20 seconds is disappointing, heart-breaking. I had the medal and it slipped out of my hands".

However on reflection he tried to identify some positive aspects. Often considered a relay runner rather than an all-out sprinter, he had been written off. Of course there was consolation for Adam running in the final of the men's 4x100m relay when as lead-off man he contributed to a solid team performance which saw them secure silver medal place in a time of 37.36' behind the USA.

Whilst it hadn't brought him his hoped for individual medal, this would have rekindled the desire for it and he still regarded the upcoming Tokyo Olympics, as a winnable prospect. Maybe the form-book might be against him as his personal best doesn't come up to Noah Lyle's for the 200m, and he has struggled over the years through injury and misfortune, yet he has made European and Commonwealth podiums and time is still on his side.

Wilf Orton

The Origins of Blackheath Harriers

This is taken from the appendix in the Club History 1869 to 1988, which we hope to update up to the 150th Anniversary Year. This looked at the origins of the club around the time of the time of its formation and first race in October 1869 and the various sources from which the fabric of the club came together in those distant past days.

Whilst there does not exist extensive records of the inception of the Peckham Hare and Hounds which was the forerunner of Blackheath Harriers it has been possible to restore much of the background in order to provide an overview of the state of organised amateur athletics at the time of the formation of the club.

Looking at that state it is commonly accepted that the sport had reached an advanced state of development during the 1850s. There was a wide and diverse range of activity with major competitions taking place in venues all over the country. In London for instance there was competition for the Surrey

County Cup with meetings organised by the L.A.C and A.A.C; as well as athletic clubs there were cricket clubs such as the South Norwood C.C and Lewisham C.C, football clubs (Red Rovers and West Kent) and rowing clubs, as well as the German Gymnastic Society who all promoted big events.

In the provinces for example a major promotion was organised by local cricket clubs on Merseyside at which leading athletes especially cross country runners were invited. In other areas such as Swansea and Stamford promotions attracted local runners of high quality, often meetings being gala social events often held in the close season winter months when cricket clubs would not be competing. These meetings pre-dated the specialised athletic clubs and influenced their format, the London Athletics Club having derived its rules and culture from the West London Rowing Club. By 1860 non specialised clubs were habitually holding meetings throughout the winter.

But what was going on in society in general to foster this growth of activity? There were indeed forces of

change galvanising in society at that time, particularly a desire for improvement, modernisation and moral reform; and what was the spark igniting this change? Well one of its sources came as often in more recent times from a war; Certainly the effects of war has been instrumental in many far reaching social and cultural changes. An ironic bi-product of these changes has been the promotion of such phenomena as good health and athleticism.

It is accepted that the more recent major conflicts in British History have effected society in more ways than just politics. In the past hundred and thirty years attitudes to public health in Britain, and the role of the state in improving the health of the population, have changed dramatically. Much of this came out of the effects of the three major wars in which Britain fought in the Twentieth Century.

The Boar War 1899-1902 was won eventually in 1902 but it revealed wide ranging inadequacies in British Society, and caused wide ranging social reforms, health, education and welfare.

The demands placed upon Britain were vastly increased by the pressures of the First World War that lasted from 1914 to 1918. By 1916 a policy of conscription had been introduced, but. In 1918 a quarter of all men were graded II or III, (Men were graded I,II or III for fitness) a statistic Prime Minister David Lloyd George described as 'appalling'. He said in 1919 that 'you cannot conduct an A1 empire with a C3 population'.

In the immediate aftermath of the war a Ministry of Health was set up under Dr Christopher Addison who was instrumental in creating the Ministry and directly related it to the problems of public health that were identified during the war.

By the time the Second World War began in 1939, the Ministry of Health had improved public health in Britain considerably. In 1942 a senior civil servant, Sir William Beveridge created a report that laid the foundation for Britain after the end of the war. In the Beveridge Report five 'giant evils' were identified that blighted the lives of British people - 'Want, Disease,

Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness'.

However the social inadequacies uncovered by these wars had long been in evidence when uncovered by Britain's hollow victory in the Crimean War of 1854-56. The military blunders of that conflict brought to the attention of the public the many flaws of a society in desperate need of reform.

Of course the big difference in the changes wrought by Britain's shortcomings in 'Twentieth Century wars was that by and large these were made due to the need for social reform and the maturing of democracy in society, whilst in the Nineteenth Century change occurred in reaction to moves to promote morality and values, to erode and diminish the anomalies of tradition and privilege, and stimulate the rise of meritocracy and social mobility and lastly to address the threat posed by rival nations of invasion of the homeland and its colonies.

Following the Crimean War, it was painfully clear to the War Office that, with half of the British Army dispositioned around the

Empire on garrison duty, it had insufficient forces available to quickly compose and despatch an effective expeditionary force to a new area of conflict, unless it was to reduce the British Isles' own defences.

Even in a period of its history, the long peace of the continent between 1815 and 1870 when Britain and her Empire appeared to be undisputed master of the world there still remained underlying threats to its safety. Whilst the threat posed by the pervasive presence of the Russian Empire was in temporary abeyance, there was ironically mounting friction with the rival empire of France, under Napoleon III a recent ally in the Crimean War which was the most advanced military power on the continent of Europe and spreading its imperial influence worldwide. The perceived threat of invasion by the much larger French Army was such that, even without sending a third of the army to another Crimea style war, Britain's military defences had already been stretched invitingly thin.

Anxieties arising out of the Crimean War were

Continued

also reflected by the chaos and anarchy of the Indian Mutiny, growing tensions between Great Britain and France and lastly the outbreak of a war between France and the Austrian Empire in 1859 for the establishment of Italian independence generated fears that Britain might be caught up in a wider European conflict.

If France had the military and even naval potential to threaten Britain, then British military strategy had to be concentrated on improving domestic defences by way of coastal forts, inland fortifications such as a ring of forts around outer London, and building up an effective military reserve through stimulating virile activity. Starting in the early 1850s a volunteer force was built up with a strong emphasis on infantry units. The national mood was stoked up by eminent literary figures such as Alfred Tennyson who captured the spirit of the time by publishing his poem *Riflemen Form* in The Times in May 1859, and the popular press so much that by illustration there is the instance of “the Times “ reporting a field day

above Brighton involving 20,000 troops.

In 1859, the Secretary of State for War, Jonathan Peel issued a circular letter to lieutenants of counties in England, Wales and Scotland, authorising the formation of volunteer rifle corps to be raised under the provisions of the Volunteer Act 1804 which had been used to form local defence forces during the Napoleonic Wars. From its formal inception in the 1850s the numbers of the volunteers grew from 160,000 in 1862 of which 134,000 were rifleman, to over 260,000 by the mid 1890s. A Royal Commission in 1862 which made recommendations as to the funding and composition of the Volunteer Force led to the Volunteer Act in 1863 which placed it under the jurisdiction of the lieutenants of the counties. Then in 1872, under the provisions of the Regulation of the Forces Act 1871, volunteer units became increasingly integrated with the Regular Army.

As a basis for the units, many communities had rifle clubs for the enjoyment of the sport of shooting but already in the public schools and the

Universities military training played an influential part in the educational curriculum and this regimental interest in athletics and gymnastics was being passed on to the civilian population via the volunteer army which was expanding in numbers. From 1859 most of the volunteer units were light infantry formations, which meant rifle regiments but which started out as civilian clubs. One example of this was The Gloucester Docks Rifle Volunteers, founded in July 1859, who saw themselves as a club, as their manifesto states:-

“This Club is formed on Patriotic principles for the purpose of acquiring skill in the use of the Rifle, which, we consider, should be National and habitual, that we may be prepared in the event of an Invasion to defend our Country, and to obey the Commands of the Authorities, taking an oath of allegiance to the Queen if required.”

The Rifle Volunteer Companies of Gloucestershire were later organized into two battalions, the 1st Gloucestershire (City of Bristol) Rifle Volunteers and the 2nd Gloucestershire Rifle Volunteers.

An earlier example one of which founded in 1849 was the 1st Surrey Foot Artillery which started out as a rifle club which in turn was organised as a voluntary unit, but one encouraging athletic activity not far from the ethos of the burgeoning athletic clubs.

In time this became the 1st Surrey Rifles and together with the Hanover Park Rifles continued to organise athletic meetings from the 1860s onward. One club to have close links with the 1st Surreys would be a newly formed running group called Peckham Hare and Hounds and its successor, Blackheath Harriers would have long standing connections with the successor to the Volunteers, the territorials.

So in this mature and established state the athletic world became the gestating umbrella for new clubs, the senior amateur clubs nurturing the newcomers. In October 1869 a notice appeared in "Bells Life in London" reporting the first official run of the Peckham Hounds recording the presence of certain gentlemen. These were Messrs C. Black, Cornell, A. Johnson, W.H Williamson,

S. Collins, A. Darnell, J.H Easthie, W.H Hawke, W. Henman, and F.H Reed. Led off by two hares and following a course measuring some nine to ten miles through Denmark Hill, Lordship Lane, Dulwich, Sydenham, Forest Hill and Peckham Rye, with a running time of 97 minutes.

Organised in two groups (List A and List B) they included members of running clubs, cricket clubs and rowing clubs as well as the German Gymnastic Society. As such they formed a diverse mix of different sorts of sportsmen to whom paper-chasing over the country was for them a side-line from their habitual activity. For Blackheath founding father F.H Reed his origins lay in being a regular member of rowing teams for Thames Rowing Club.

Because of the inference in the athletic world that this motley collection of individuals resembled more of a hare chasing pack than a fully formed athletics club, there remained some dispute as to the actual date at which the club was duly constituted. Reed himself would attempt to put things straight by in May

1872 writing a letter to the Camberwell and Peckham Times.

"Sir, I beg to state that in October 1869, a Hare and Hounds Club was started under the title of the 'Peckham Hare and Hounds' (the rendezvous being at the Kings's Arms) by the gentlemen who were the originators of the present Peckham Athletic Club".

Over the coming years there would be doubts in athletic circles that this club was a fully constituted organisation as opposed to a loose knit hare and hound group meeting sporadically with no form or constitution but by 1882 it had grown and become what for many years was to be known in the athletic world as a whole as Blackheath Harriers. As the club history would state *"the existence or otherwise of a continuing entity at Peckham from 1869 onward does not seem to have been the real issue in the controversy"*.

Reed did however mention that by then a relatively new breakaway club had been formed by former members of Peckham Amateur Athletic Club...the South London Harriers.

Wilf Orton

Ian Wilson

My early experiences with Blackheath

Past President Ian Wilson reflects. "These strange times have caused me to reflect on various things including my first years with Blackheath. More thoughts were revived when I saw the recent notice of the death of VP Derek Hogg and made me realise what a debt I owe Blackheath and how fortunate I was to join them in the first place. In my 60+ years membership I have been a second claim member of a few other clubs around the country none of which was as good as Blackheath. Also, things have changed in many ways during that time".

The recent notice of the death of VP Derek Hogg caused me to reflect on my first experience on becoming a member of our great Club.

I was 15 almost 16 when I joined in June 1959. How different things were then. I was introduced to the Club by Peter Kingdom, who was a 440 yards runner about 2 years older than me and who went to Alleyn's School. He lived opposite me in Forest Hill and my Mum thought it would be a good activity to get me off the streets!

I had little knowledge of athletics having run only the 100 yards and 1 mile at my school sports that summer. I went to Samuel Pepys in Brockley, a training ground for BH Presidents. Dave White was a year or two ahead of me.

The center of my Blackheath world was Ladywell Park track. On my first Sunday there I was put in the sprint group coached by Roy Rudd. I was not a sprinter and did not really enjoy the training, but kept going.

I had a break while I went on my summer holidays. When I returned, I found another, very friendly group who went out of the track for a run on the roads for 5 miles or so. This I really enjoyed. The

group was made up from members of various clubs. Kent AC, Cambridge H, Deptford Park and, of course Blackheath. All were very friendly particularly Alan Naggs, John Oliver (Kent AC) and Dave Dellar (Cambridge Harriers). Also, I found out that the Club had a Club House in Hayes which was open on Saturday afternoons in the winter and Wednesday nights year-round. I could not do Wednesday nights as I was still at school and lived in Forest Hill, so getting there was a problem. We did not have a car and I only had a bike. Saturday afternoons were OK and I used to cycle to Hayes from Forest Hill. It was Derek Hogg who led the group in true, traditional Blackheath "pack running" tradition. Now, I would not call what Derek did coaching but he did introduce us to the enjoyment of endurance running and provided great encouragement.

Our group comprised about 15 or so of our younger members, of very varied ability and I think I was one of the youngest. My age group was "Boys" i.e. under 16 years, and there were very few races for Boys that Blackheath entered. The age groups were deferent then than today. The following

year I would become a “Youth”, 16 to 18 I think, and you then moved to “Juniors” 19 to 21. After this you became a Senior. There was not even very much “Masters” running. So, I really only started running when I was just 16 unlike today when athletes, starting at under 11’s could have done 10 years before they become seniors.

In my first winter season with Blackheath my Training diary, really it is a record of races only at this point and it records just 4 races as a “Boy”.

5th December 1959, Match v Poly H. at Ruislip, 4 miles I was 8th. Only 1 Poly H turned up so it turned into a training run.

19th December 1959, Match v Hawes Down School at Hayes, 3.5 miles I was 8th in 24:30. This race is recorded in the Gazette.

27th February 1960 Match v Watford H at Hayes, 3.5 miles I was 8th in 23:53 and I recorded that our team won.

26th March 1960, Road Relay at Brighton, 4x1 mile Team were 22nd I did 5:15. Not sure which leg, but the report in the Gazette left me out of the result!

Looking through the Gazettes I am reminded who some of the people in Derek Hogg’s

Saturday group may have been. These included Frank and Harold Rogers, Roger Pinder, Brian Heaver, Dave Prangnell, Dave Moore, Grant Demar and Tony Carlton.

I was aware of a senior runner from New Zealand who joined the Club at the start of the 1959/60 cross country season. His name was Alan Stevens, and he was much older than me and I did not really get to know him until the 1989 World Cross Country in Aix Le Ban when I was Great Britain Men’s Team Manager for the first time.

In the summer of 1960, I did 10 races on the track as a “Youth” for Club and School. I managed a pb for 1 mile of 5:05 on 5th May/1960 when I was 5th. Also, I managed a pb for 880yds of 2:15.1 in the Kent Championships at Erith 7th May/1960. My highlight was on 20th June 1960 at Lower Sydenham when I won the ¾ mile handicap in 3:04 and won my first Club Handicap Spoon.

I do remember watching the final of the men’s 1,500m in the Rome Olympics on black and white TV. It was a masterful win by Herb Elliot in a World Record time. In 2003 I went to the International Olympic Committee museum

in Lausanne and in the basement, they had a video library and that was the race that was the most viewed of all. The other day I found it on YouTube. Worth a look if you have not seen it.

In the following winter season, 1960/61, I was a “Youth” and did 9 races for the Club, 7 races for my school plus a Road Relay at Brockley County School, plus the Club Paper Chase.

The Paper Chase was an experience. I was “looked after” by Alan Brent and Roy Morley among others. We were out for about 1 hour 50 minutes, the longest I had ever run for and I was very, very tired. When I got home, I did not want to eat anything and my Mum thought I was going to die! I recovered and enjoyed the rest of the season.

I was selected for the Club in Kent Cross Country Championships in Sparrows Den on the 7th January 1961. It was 3.5 miles and I was 10th of 60 in 20:49 and our team was 1st. The next big race was the Southern Counties XC Champs on 18th February 1961, I think at Ewell. It was 3 miles and I was 89th of some 300 to 400!!!!

The highlight of the Club season was the English National Cross Country

Continued

Championships at Parliament Hill Fields, Hampstead Heath, on the 11th of March 1961. Although this was really a “home” race for us, none of the Youth team knew where it was. We arranged with our Team Manager to meet him under the clock at Charing Cross Station, which the team all did. The Team Manager did not turn up and we never did find out what went wrong. After a while we looked at to the underground map, found Hampstead Heath tube station and went there. We could not find one called Parliament Hill! Time to the start was running out! When we surfaced, we asked directions to the start and realised we were on the wrong side of the Heath. We jogged to the starting area, found some more BH members, got changed and were given numbers. We got to the start with about 5 mins to spare not knowing anything about the course. How far, how many laps or how the race was started.

The race was about 3½ miles, and a lap and a bit. It was started by dust bin(!), where the races do now but to finish you had to go up the start hill for a second time, at the top turn left, up another hill and finish at the top of another hill. I was so tired and

disheartened when we started going up the Start hill for a second time that I decided to walk. I felt worse so I stared running again. I finished 200th of some 600 or 700 in about 22 minutes. A very big shock to run in field of that size. I do remember watching the finish of the senior men’s race which Basil Healey won. He made it look very easy.

For my school I ran in the London Schools Champs at Sedgemoor School representing South London Schools. It was over 3.66 miles in Beckenham Place Park, I was 6th of 61 in 20:11. The first 5 were all from Wandsworth and most of them went on to become GB internationals. The Holt twins, Bob and Dave, Sandford, Hailday etc. This was probably my best run of the season and got me selected to represent London Schools in the All England Schools XC Champs at Peterborough on the 18th March 1961. That was 3.5 miles and I was 96th of about 300. Our team was 4th and I was 6th counter. An experience I will never forget. The pace was so fast and people were falling over all over the place.

The things I learnt from my first two winters with the Club were to find out how to get to races, when at the race sort out the start,

sort out the finish and, if have time find out as much about the course as you can. Perhaps this started me off on Team Management? I did not foresee where all this running would lead to. For example GB team manager for cross country for 7 World Championships, 1989 to 1995. Making lots of friends. Things are so different today; I hope today’s young runners get as much out of it as I did.

PP Ian Wilson

The 150th Anniversary Dinner at the House of Commons Members Dining Room

7th November 2019

The Blackbeath and Bromley AC 150th Anniversary dinner, which took place at the House of Commons Members Dining Room on the 7th of November 2019 was one of a number of events intended to mark the club's anniversary year 2019-2020, but perhaps was the apex of the year of celebrations marking that anniversary.



Whereas some of the events originally intended to take place by the organising committee back in 2015 were to be the undertaking of individuals or specialist groups, or to involve athletic activity by those fit enough or willing to take part, this was truly an all inclusive event, which could be attended by all with an interest in the club including partners, social members, administrators, and for that reason could be said to be the main event of the anniversary year.

The function was held in the place of the normal the club dinner normally held later in November most years and 168 members attended, more than any other social event in recent decades, including even those recent club dinners held away from the cramped confines of the present clubhouse. However it is worth remembering that at one time club dinners were held in a variety of venues, and had in fact taken place at the Members Dining Room a number of times from 1959 to 1962.

Amongst the special guests invited were our local MP (for Beckenham) Colonel Bob Stewart DSO. M.P Planning for the dinner began in May 2018 by courtesy of Colonel Stewart and formal invitations

carried his name. However the dissolution of parliament on 5th November and the calling of a general election meant that Colonel Stewart could no longer be our host and our 150th Anniversary Dinner had to be restyled as a private function. Fortunately Colonel Stewart was able to attend as a private individual with restrictions placed on his contributions to the proceedings.

Other guests also invited were Professor Myra Nimmo,



Mike Macfarlane

Continued



Chair of England Athletics, and former Commonwealth Games 200 metre winner Mike McFarlane. the Presidents of four Clubs with whom our own club has had a long standing rivalry:

Michael Farmery Thames Hare & Hounds, Richard Carter South London Harriers

Rebecca Curtis-Hall Ranelagh Harriers, Robert Jousiffe Orion Harriers; Claire Capon President Kent County AA; Allan Finn Biggin Hill Airport sponsor to the



The tables were laid out after the manner of top-class restaurants

club and Denise Finn; Ade Sofolarin, club member and major benefactor and Ailee Macadam

In addition there were present along with the current President Julian Golding 17 past presidents and 34 Vice Presidents, and also 6 of the 8 Trustees.

The evening was built around a time slot allowed by the House of Commons starting with a drinks reception due to commence at 6.30pm. Leading up to this members and guests had started to



congregate in Westminster Hall, familiar faces merging with faces from the past and former members who for some of us were just names read out from an honours board on the walls of the club house or mentioned in hushed tones of reverence for their past achievements.





*Anniversary year President
Julian Golding*

After a while the growing number of invitees started making their way up the stairs of the Hall and down the corridors to the octagonal hub of the parliament buildings, the Central Lobby, past statues of eminent parliamentarians, and overlooked by carved statuettes of monarchs from past centuries of British history. Here there was a further wait as more guests turned up and conversations ensued whilst the dining facilities set aside for the event were being made available. Some of the more

observant members had noticed that the lobby floor tiling displayed a large device which bore an uncanny resemblance to the club badge (from 1878 to 2003) which seemed to make the occasion more relevant to the surroundings.

Finally, as the time approached, it was possible to move down to the dining room suite and members and guests were shown in and, ascertaining their places in the seating plan provided, processed into the Strangers' Dining Room and the lovely adjoining Pugin Room for the drinks reception. This entitled everyone to a free drink (prosecco, beer or a soft drink) and access to a makeshift bar for any further (if rather pricy) drinks. At this point perhaps in order to appreciate the value of the occasion against its price, one



needed to take into account the magnificent splendour of the decor, brilliant red flock wallpaper, the proliferation of paintings, and an altogether arcane but still splendid aura of pre-war grandeur of a long vanished age.

After a further wait as more drinks were bought at the bar and then we were summoned to dinner just after 7.15 to make our way into the dining room which was



*after the dinner.... Drinks at the St Stephen's tavern to reflect on the evening
and perform the club cry*



impressively adorned with beautiful flock wallpaper, wooden relief sculptures and plenteous portraits of parliamentarians down the ages. High painted ceilings, huge windows that look out over the Commons Terrace and carved oak panelled walls give these dining rooms

Continued



Past President Paul Byfield proposing a toast to his successor Julian Golding

a sense of grandeur and political intrigue unlike any other location.

The tables had been laid out in the manner of top class restaurants with the usual pristine white tablecloths and napkins but not too many pieces of cutlery as there were only three courses at this meal. A top table along most of the Thames-side was designated the President's table as it is in most club dinners, and surrounding it were thirteen smaller



salmon, main course of baked corn fed chicken with some vegetables and potatoes and a combination dessert of sponge, meringue and ice cream entitled Lemon baked alaska. Various described by some as bland and anodyne it looked small on the plate but proved to be surprisingly filling.

Coffee and petit fours followed and by 8.45pm the noise of diners was dinned for the customary toasts to the Queen and senior as well as junior members of the Royal Family, made with glasses of Quinta de la Rosa vintage port which was at this time still being hastily being distributed by the enthusiastic but overworked waiting staff. If wine was something they discerningly served, then

tables (two of them round) and arranged along the full length of the dining area.

Everyone quickly made their way to their designated table and, grace having been pronounced in the simplest fashion with no reference to the club's athletic activities, the dinner commenced.

What followed was perhaps a matter of how one felt about what constituted a good meal. Wine was provided with the meal, one bottle of red and of white for each table but further wine such as Colombar Saugnon Blanc and House of Commons Merlot could be ordered for the price of £26 per bottle, which needless to say did not deter some people. The food was of modest portions consisting of a starter of treacle glazed



The main course





water was doled out liberally. However It would have been highly disrespectful to toast the Queen with just water.

There followed a brief interval before the speeches commenced with four main speakers representing the House, the Club, the Guests and the President. Although forgetting to propose Colonel Bob Stewart PP (1992-3) Alan Pickering's dry wit provided the perfect warm up act. In the seat of parliamentary government, he made an appropriate remark about politics and athletics as both



Colonel Bob Stewart, Mike McFarlane and President Julian Golding

having the capacity to unite and also divide. He remarked that the club was part of a wider community and that as a club we were promoting that



Another past president, Mike Maboney and his first lady

sense of community through the many bonds of friendship within its membership.

In politics and athletics we could equally have tribalism or community. Hopefully the new clubhouse would foster a sense of unity and he paid tribute to those grandees of the club who were setting aside their differences to embrace this hopeful future. He then turned to Bob Stewart with whom he had worked in Bosnia in the early 1990s when the Colonel had been Commander of the UN forces there (Operation Grapple) except he joked



Past President Alan Pickering proposing Colonel Bob Stewart



Grace having been pronounced in the simplest fashion

Continued



conversation in the Strangers' Dining Room

"I still have a job, but you don't!" referring to the fact that with parliament dissolved for the forthcoming General Election, the Colonel was now attending as a private individual and with restrictions placed on his proceedings he was introduced as 'Bob with no name'!

Bob with no name had promised not to make a speech, and what he had to say was brief. He mentioned that he had some links to the club through his 16 year old son who trained sometimes at Norman Park and was hoping to get into the Royal Marines or the Army. He expressed. He added that "you are terribly special and



Colonel Bob Stewart MP

I am proud that Blackheath harriers is in the constituency which I've represented and hope to do so again after December the 12th."

Next to speak was Professor Myra Nimmo, the Chair of England Athletics, herself an International athlete in the 1970s who gave an interesting insight into athletic history referring to the foundation in 1866 of the Amateur Athletics Club which opened up athletics to those from lower social classes and allowed them to participate in athletics. This progressiveness and inclusiveness she said was embedded in the club's mission statement.

How had we lasted 150 years? she asked; by inclusiveness in all our activities from International competition to the mob matches and in





institutions such as the Bees Academy. Every person she added should take pride in the club's success, as one of the largest and oldest athletic clubs in the country. She then proposed the toast to Blackheath and Bromley Harriers AC.

Paul Austridge (momentarily elevated to the status of a Past President!) responded and mentioned some notable names in the club's history including the performances of Olympian H.B Stallard in 1924 (bronze in the

1500 meters), and after the inclusion of women in 1992, the achievements of Dina Asher-Smith, Holly Arnold, Helen Godsell, ("we have three women world champions") as well as having world class officer (such as John Baldwin) world class coaches (such as John Blackie) and officials such as Mark Purser who has recently represented the club in Stockholm in the capacity of a starter and the Diamond League in Birmingham as Chief Starter, and whose greatest achievement was



Tommo and partner

not disqualifying a single Blackheath Harrier this last summer!

The club had produced world class performers on the track and what they did at the World Championships in Doha in terms of what was achieved by their country was akin to 'West Ham winning the World Cup for England in 1966'. With Blackheath Harriers having been founder members of the British Athletic League in 1969, the Young Athletes winning the National League nine times in a row in the 1980s,



Jo Clare in the Strangers dining room

Continued



and the promise shown by the present generation of international athletes, the club had, concluded Paul “a Long and celebrated past, a hugely successful present and a bright and exciting future”. PP (2016-17) Bill Foster now rose to propose a toast to the various guests attending from sponsors, supporters and the other rival clubs and of which Mike MacFarlane was one and who responded on behalf of the guests. He did this by giving a stirring talk about the concept of success in which he stated that people’s perception of success is all graded differently, and is not about record times or medals but about the influence they have and the foundation they have laid.

He remembered 1982 when he won the Commonwealth Games 200 meters gold and with some amusement referred to it as the medal



Some Wednesday Nighters in evening attire



he won (having supposedly only shared the victory with Alan Wells) but recalled the disappointment of the 1983 World Championships (“those who can’t hear must feel”) and his promise that he would make good this setback by reaching the final of the Olympic 200 meters in 1984. With intense training he did that and finished an impressive fifth. He also spoke in cherished tomes about Julian Golding and how he had coached and nurtured him and other famous athletes from that era who he’d watched mature



IPP (2018-19) Paul Byfield now proposed a toast to his successor the present President Julian Golding, likening this task to being the best man at a wedding. He talked of what Julian brought to the role of president and his capacity to speak at key events such as a talk he gave to the Young Athletes League where he drew on his own success as an athlete and asked the young people to visualise that success. He ended by recalling a story where Julian had raced against Michael Johnson and beat him- by crossing the start-line before Michael Johnson!



When the President responded he gave a short reminiscence of the time when he was asked by Paul to be the club president. After having said no initially, he had discussed the matter with his wife and decided that he was ‘going to do this’ after all. He praised Blackheath Harriers as being a great club and would encourage young people to join Blackheath Harriers particularly as it had the best youth policy of any club in the country. He praised everyone who played a pivotal role and thanked Mike MacFarlane who had encouraged him to achieve much from relatively unpromising



Continued

beginnings. Because of him he was a qualified teacher and he owed so much to the Commonwealth Champion. Athletics he said 'gives you the building blocks for success'. He likened the club to a family and he encouraged all in the club to do what they could to make young people become great members of his society.

During the course of the speeches each of Colonel Stewart, Professor Nimmo and Michael Macfarlane were presented with an engraved



More scenes from the Strangers' Dining Room (more photo apps!)

commemorative glass. PP Paul Byfield presented a gold brooch to Samantha Golding in recognition of the support she has given and continues to give to the president.

If there was any wine or water or other drinks left, then toasts were drunk to each speaker as they were named

by their respective proposers. The speeches finally ended at about 5 to 10, which left enough time in the allocated window for members and guests to mingle and make a final effort to talk and socialise. There was still wine left to drink and people to talk to.

After the speeches there was still wine left to drink and time to socialize but the host started to drift away as ten thirty approached. However, for some the evening was not over and a crowd of revelers was slowly gathering for further refreshments. The moving spirit behind this was club chairman Nick Corry whose verbal contributions during the evening had provided a high class form of heckling. Now like some Texas rancher he was herding willing or not so willing souls for a post dinner drink at the St Stephen's Tavern nearby. A fair number did follow on to that pub and in fact packed the place out to reflect on the evening and, to the amazement of the other



Members and guests at the dining tables



drinkers in the tavern, gave a spirited rendition of the club cry conducted by who else but Nick Corry! What the onlookers thought of a crowd of dinner jacketed revelers is anyone's guess. Even after time was called a hard core of heathern staggered across Westminster Bridge in search of further refreshment with a few hardy souls staging a sortie on a nearby hotel. But by 12.30am the celebrations had petered out.

The evening had presented the club in its most attractive image but although the most recent two presidents, Julian Golding and PP Paul Byfield and the main guest speaker Mike McFarlane are from an ethnic minority racial background, there were few other ethnic guests present at the dinner, and concern was expressed by some about a lack of representation of minorities, in what still appears to be a white middle class dominated club. But to answer that positively, Blackheath and Bromley is a community club, which has often embraced new ways

experienced rejuvenations as it did in the 1920s when Secretary H.J Dyball transformed it from its Victorian character to being more inclusive of younger elements, and also in the 1980s as the running boom attracted aspiring marathon runners into the club's ranks.

Alan Pickering in his speech, which actually recalled his mission statement given by him upon being appointed president in 1992, mentioned the importance of the club in the community, looking beyond itself to outsiders, not cliquish or secretive, but able to move beyond the narrow confines of the fitness culture to embrace all walks of life, even to the seat of power...to the House of Commons itself.

Wilf Orton



Dina Re-opens Refurbished Track at Norman Park

13th November 2019

The Norman Park track was opened in the summer of 1981 as just a 6-lane all weather track with 8 lanes in the home straight and over the last 40 years has seen many improvements such as the original synthetic track being upgraded and resurfaced in order to bring it up to UK Athletics standards.

Further developments saw the addition of two further lanes added in 2006. Then in 2010 there was further improvement with an additional javelin runway, whilst the long/ triple jump facilities now had run-ways at both ends. These improvements were spearheaded by Norman Park track Management with significant financial support from London Marathon Trust and sterling work from individuals such as PP Alan Brent and track manager Ken Daniel.

Before this year the most significant modernization had taken place in 2010 with improved field facilities and drew much praise from UK Athletics assessors Dave Holder and Keith Bundock who awarded the track a class 1A UK grading and pronounced the track superior to many in the country as a whole.

However what with the onward progress of track construction and the changing requirements of UK Athletics and IAAF, any further improvements had to comply with current BSEN913.2008, CDM 2015 regulations, to say nothing of the growing forum of opinion in favour of a move of club headquarters to Norman Park, so there would always be a need for the track to meet these changing requirements in anticipation of the venue being ever more used for the growing athletic activities of the wider club. In a contract award notice issued by the London Borough of Bromley in June 2019 it was stated that

"The Council is seeking to undertake the replacement of specialist running track and field surfaces using polymeric sandwich surfaces system and to carry out specialist remedial repairs to bespoke track and field surfaces including structural spraying. All works undertaken must comply with UKA and IAAF requirements and relevant codes of practice"

On completion of works on site the specialist SAPCA approved contractor must obtain Full UKA Track-Man certification from UKA and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The Scope

of Works for refurbishment would therefore need to consist primarily of removing and laying new polymeric sandwich system in all areas of standard 400m track. Here would also be some additional works including the application of a new structural spray to the events areas and making adaptations to the throw cage to meet all new UKA requirements.

The works must be undertaken by a specialist firm who are member of SAPCA, who are classified as track builder members under their scheme. It would mean of course the closure of the track premises for several weeks during the summer track season of 2019, and a halt to the Leaders Mile competition.

Work finally commenced in August 2019 and took place over a two month period in several phases. The work progressed steadily despite some wet weather in the first week, after which there were a couple of weeks of dry weather until into September when the conditions started to deteriorate.

The laying of the black underlay was completed on 21st September after which the spraying began with two coats applied by the 7th of October. Then bad weather

with heavy rain prevented the spraying of a third coat causing further delay whilst the team waited for the track to dry. Finally the top coat was applied and by 22nd October that phase of the refurbishment had been completed.

Premier Line Markings now arrived and spent the next week line marking and painting in the white lane lines. There was more delay due to persistent wet weather but by October 30th the task was close to completion. By the following month the track was ready for re-opening.

A simple ceremony took place on the 13th November. New World 200m Champion, Dina Asher-Smith, was welcomed back to her home track at Bromley's Norman Park yesterday evening, following her multi-medal winning performances at the recently held World Athletics Championships in Doha.

Dina, who has just returned to training after a well-deserved end-of-season break, arrived at the track for a session with her coach, John Blackie and the rest of his training group, to be greeted by a large crowd of her fellow Blackheath & Bromley Club members, as well as youngsters from the



Dina Asher-Smith cuts the ceremonial ribbon to celebrate the re-opening of the track

BEES Academy, who had all gathered to congratulate her on her success in the World Championships and to see her officially re-open the track after its recent refurbishment. Dina was very surprised to see such a magnificent turnout.

After navigating her way down the home straight through the crowd to the finish line and following a brief official welcome from the Club President, Julian Golding, and Club Chairman Nick Corry and to much applause, Dina cut the ceremonial ribbon to celebrate the completion of the refurbishment of the track. She then joined her training group to continue her preparations for next year's Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Club President, Julian Golding said: *"The Club is tremendously proud of Dina's achievements and of the role her coach, John Blackie, who has*

played a significant role in her success. It was great that we could celebrate these successes, and the Club's 150th Anniversary, with the reopening of the track by Dina, surrounded by so many of our members, young and old."

Outgoing Chair of Norman Park Track Management, Chris Hilditch, commented *"The reopening of the newly re-furbished track this evening marked completion of the first stage of the Club's plans to secure a sustainable future for the track. We look forward to asking Dina to open a new community sports and recreation centre here in the months to come."*

It also means that the club can now resume its 150 Leaderboard Mile race series aiming to have 150 different club members each run a mile over the course of the season with already over 125 having taken part.

Nick Brooks, (ed Wilf Orton)

The Club AGM 24th March 2019

Passing of resolutions for the proposed Development of Norman Park Community Sports Facility

A meeting having been held by the Directors on Thursday 15 March 2018 at which the architect and building contractor had presented the plans for the development of the Norman Park proposal, for club members to discuss those plans, several resolutions were presented at the club AGM on the 24th March. If such Resolutions were approved the plans would be presented to the Council the following week and it was hoped that approval of these would be forthcoming by July when an order would be placed for the steel required for the building which will be acquired by the company. It would then be necessary to enter into an agreement to sell the club house to release the funds to acquire the steel and begin the construction work.

It was anticipated that building work at Norman Park will begin in August with completion in Spring 2019. The fit out will be a major operation and all members of the club were encouraged to offer their help in terms of time and expertise. the company had applied to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) for the construction work to be

zero rated but HMRC might require some of the building costs to be VATable

The company was also considering raising some funds from members by way of debentures along similar lines to the debentures issued in the 1970s when the original 1920s club house was extended. David Appleton speaking on the business plan said the major costs were going to be around £3,100,000 of which the build costs would be about £2,400,000. To meet the overall costs there was an agreement for the contractor to buy the Bourne Way site for £2 million. To make up the total there are cash reserves in the club of about £150,000 and funds in the Jack Sims Trust which were £350,000 but are now somewhat less in the light of recent falls in the Stock Exchange. The company has also got the offer of a £250,000 loan facility from the Charity Bank.

The Business Plan has been put to Bromley Council and independently verified by them and approved. A pessimistic assessment of the annual surplus is £70,000 and over a 25 years cycle the company will have to provide for the renewal of the track

at a current cost of £600,000 and building maintenance costs, over the same period, of £250,000. An annual surplus of £70,000 leaves a significant margin compared with those costs and even if the surplus were to be no more than £35,000 that would still provide the necessary funds for track renewal and building maintenance costs.

These resolutions were then discussed from the floor. There was now greater support for the Resolutions and the move but there should be provision for a community sports and recreation facility at Norman Park. Most of the questions were met with answers relating to the resolutions:

Denis Lawrie asked about the staffing arrangements at the new facility at Norman Park and was told that the club would use some volunteers if that proved possible but had budgeted for a number of full time employees. As in resolution C, this would be covered by the ability to employ staff on the premises

Chris Haines asked about the confidence of the Director/ Trustees that the contractor would honour his word and

pay the promised £2 million for the Bourne Way site. It was noted that we had spoken with a number of the very substantial sporting organisations which the contractor had worked with in the past and with some of which the contractor had continuing relations. That was a very clear indication of his bona fides and if he let down Blackheath Harriers he would suffer considerable damage to his, currently, very high reputation.

Roger Beswick raised the possible threat of compulsory purchase by the Council of the Norman Park site as had happened to a local football club. In response it was noted that the company would be granted a 125 year lease by Bromley Council at a peppercorn rent and we would take legal advice to ensure that the position of the club was appropriately safeguarded against compulsory purchase or any other potential threat.

Derek Gregory asked what security would be required by Charity Bank if it made the company a loan. He was told that no security would be required as the Charity Bank was set up to make loans to charities that did not generally have assets to offer

as security for such loans. There would be no potential liability for members of club members.

Chris Haines asked about plans for encouraging cross country running and the arrangements for that section when the club moved to Norman Park. The club has had meetings with the manager at the Warren who is very keen to accommodate the club for its fixtures at no direct cost and the Old Beccehamians, at Spring Park, will allow their facility to be used on Wednesday evenings.

In support of the move Julie Asher-Smith noted that the Directors/Trustees of whom she is one were very excited by the prospect of the future development which will create a sustainable future for the club and it needed the enthusiasm and trust of the club members as well if this crucial development was going to go ahead and achieve all its potential. Paul Patten, one of the Director/Trustees, said that he had consulted informally with the young athletes, some of whom he has helped to coach over the past 17 years, and he has gathered signatures from 97 of the young athletes in favour of the current

proposals and the move to Norman Park.

Ian Young introduced Resolution 6.1 and said that it had been put forward to make it absolutely clear that a major disposal of property required to be approved by way of special resolution of the members in general meeting. The advice from the company lawyers, Muckle, was that the terms of the existing Articles have exactly the same effect but the Director/Trustees wanted the wording to be absolutely clear on this point.

Once the Directors were satisfied that (i) adequate funding is available or committed to enable completion of the project in accordance with the current budget (including the designated contingency amount and the amount of any VAT payable on the construction); and, (ii) planning permission has been granted for the new facility. The matter was put to the vote. The Resolution was approved 107 in favour and 7 against. This included 50 proxies in favour and 4 proxies against. Resolutions 6.2 A to 6.2F were then taken on a single vote with 109 in favour and 8 against. There were 49 proxies in favour and 5 against.

The resolutions put at the AGM were as follows:

Resolution 6.1

The wording of Article 21.3 in the Company's Articles of Association should be amended to read: "The Trustees may not dispose of any asset(s) of the Club, which has or have, as at the proposed date of disposal, an aggregate market value which exceeds that defined in the Finance Policy, without obtaining the approval by way of special resolution of the Members in general meeting." *

Resolution 6.2

That the Directors be, and are hereby, authorised to do the following in relation to the proposed development and completion of a new Community Sports and Recreation Facility at Norman Park, substantially in accordance with the plans and designs presented to the meeting, all documentation relating to these matters to be in such form, including any conditions and undertakings, as the Directors consider to be appropriate, having taken such professional advice as they consider fit:

Resolution 6.2 (A)

To enter into (a) an agreement for lease and (b) a lease, each with the London Borough of

Bromley, for a period of 125 years in relation to the track and new facility at Norman Park.

Resolution 6.2 (B)

To sell the Company's land and clubhouse at 56, Bourne Way to The Construction Project Limited, or its nominee, for an amount not less than £1,750,000 and to apply the sale proceeds towards funding the new facility at Norman Park.*

Resolution 6.2 (C)

To acquire Norman Park Track Management Limited ('NPTM') as a wholly-owned subsidiary and to delegate to NPTM the day-to-day operation and maintenance on behalf of the Company of both the track and the new facility at Norman Park (including the ability to employ and remove staff and enter into licences for use of parts of the premises) and permit the appointment to the Board of NPTM of one or more 'independent' directors.

Resolution 6.2 (D)

To enter into such agreements as may be necessary with The Construction Project Limited and others for

the construction and all related works (including fit-out) required for the completion of the new facility at Norman Park, substantially in accordance with the plans and designs presented.

Resolution 6.2 (E)

To apply such amounts from the Club's capital reserves, to enter into credit facilities or otherwise agree to borrowings (such borrowings not to exceed £250,000) and to raise such additional funding as may be required through the issue of debentures, in each case towards funding the construction and completion of the new facility at Norman Park.

Resolution 6.2 (F)

To do such other acts and things, including agreement to reasonable amendments to the plans and designs for the new facility to meet planning and funding conditions, the execution of such other documents and the taking out of such insurances, as the Directors shall consider necessary or advisable in relation to the conduct and completion of the project and the operation and maintenance of the track and new facility.

Norman Park Development Update

27th November 2019

We are delighted to inform you that our plans for a redeveloped community multi-sports facility at Norman Park were approved unanimously by Bromley Council Development Committee last night (Tuesday 26th November). The application was well supported by the Bees Academy, local athletic clubs, schools, Parkrun, England Athletics, Sport England etc.

The application provides for the demolition of the existing pavilion and construction of a part single and part two storey multi-sports centre within the Norman Park Track site. The new building would be situated in the same location as the existing pavilion.

The proposed facilities include changing rooms, showers, an indoor multi-sports hall, physio and first aid rooms, multi-function rooms (for example various keep fit classes), together with a café/bar, kitchen and function areas. These facilities will support a wide variety of community usage as well as providing the club with new headquarters.

Moving forward, the next hurdle is to gain approval from the Greater London Authority (GLA). This usually takes about 6 weeks. In the meantime updated building plans are being developed. These will be used to tender the construction contract. Based on the results of this tender we will be seeking additional funding, on top of the sale of Bourne Way and our reserves, in order to deliver all the facilities as approved. We will be turning to members as well as applying for funding from Sport England, London

Marathon etc. We would welcome suggestions from members who have good ideas on how we might close the funding gap.

Whilst we cannot provide a detailed timetable at the moment, it is anticipated that if all goes well with the GLA and funding, it is unlikely that construction will commence before the end of the 2020 track and field season.

We will keep you updated as matters progress.

*The Trustees. Blackheath &
Bromley Harriers AC*

Letters to the editor



Wilf

On reading your latest Gazette issues and particularly your account of the Burns Summer 2019 I must say Well done, In a hundred years time folk will look at the Gazettes and what went on in 2019 and they'll say the best is... this bloke... Wilf Orton.

Though not a great Scots lover We are lucky... we have nine grand-daughters. One of them in Scotland shares a birthday with 'Rabbie' Burns.

I read your piece on obituaries and noted the names of departed heathern in it. I knew Paul Betts... smashing bloke. He was a teacher. "Mike" he once said. "have you done the Steeplechase before?" When I replied no he continued... "Paul... well this is what you do... accelerate into the barrier... and he demonstrated how to straddle it. I got over, but did not hurdle like Paul... I had to put one foot on the barrier.

You expressed fine words for Tony (Bounds) and John (Britain). I have good memories of walking the Seven Sisters with them. Quiet but genuine men with strong faiths.

I played in the Club football team with Gordon (Hickey). Gordon was good at encouraging us on... you could hear him!! The world needs more people who are encouragers.

Well Wilf, keep well and safe and keep in mind what Graham Greene said.. "Writing is a form of therapy"; sometimes I wonder how all those who do not write, compose or paint can manage to escape the madness, the melancholia, the panic fear which is inherent in the human situation.

Best wishes... Mike (Cronin)

Hi Wilf,

I'm flattered that you would want to include my notes of my early experience of Blackheath in the "Gazette". I may have explained that I wrote very fully as my Dad, Alf Stevens was not only a champion harrier and Captain of the New Zealand Team in Australia in 1935, but was a long time kiwi administrator as well as Wellington Province & Scottish Club.

To answer your questions:

Graeme was my brother – 4 years older, New Zealand Universities track champion; Cambridge University cross country & track blues. He was he who recommended I join Blackheath after competing at Hayes with the CU team. When he came down in 1960 he spent 6 months with me whilst he did research at the Geological Museum, also joined and ran with me at Blackheath and became a Life Member.

"OE" was the term used by we Kiwis for our "Overseas Experience". It was very common in the 1950s/60s to head off by sea to the UK, where we had right of entry. Certainly a springboard for much "experience"!!

The OVC was the Overseas Visitors Club in Earls Court that became the home base for many "colonials" : NZ, AUS, SA, Rhodesia etc. I lived there between touring for the 3 years I was there, also latterly on the staff. It was huge in those days – became known as "Kangaroo Valley"!

I told President Nic that when his weekly addresses from outside at Hayes were interrupted by the train rattling past, it brought back vivid memories. On Saturdays at Hayes I was often inveigled into staying late.....! At the sound of the incoming train passing, I had to down my beer, grab my gear bag and sprint around to the station to catch the last train back to Charing Cross. I could safely doze most of the way then catch the District line to Earls Court!

Happy Days!

Thank you for your Gazette, much appreciated and I look forward to the next publication.

Regards to All,
Alan (Stevens)

David Ralph Johnson

1930-2019



Having first encountered David Johnson at a communion service at Christchurch Beckenham, I little realised that I'd bump into him again as a fellow Blackheath Harrier who had many personas. I came to realise what kind of person he really was and so eventually came to understand what kind of a life he would lead.

That life came to an end in November 2019, and a few weeks later at a memorial service at Christchurch Beckenham on the 27th November I joined a number of Blackheath Harriers to pay our respects on his passing and to hear what family, friends and academic colleagues had to say about him.

But my understanding of him has been limited to meeting him through church and club activities, so perhaps the family should have the final word on his life. David

Johnson was more than just the sum of his various parts. In a long and culturally rich life he had various roles: environmentalist, local historian, runner, race official, author, artist, serviceman, single father.

In in a feature article "The true significance of obituaries" (Summer Gazette 2019) I wrote on how the lives of many club members had positively spent. Had that piece been written just a short time later it would have included the life of David Ralph Johnson born in the 7th June 1930. Said his daughter Helen Johnson "He did not waste a day of his life as if the gift of life were so precious that every moment had to be made to count". He would have certainly been able to satisfy most of the aspects stipulated in it.

Firstly taking one of those aspects, he had the desire and ambition to rise above any early limitations experienced in formative years. He went to Alexandra infant school in Penge and on his performance there he did get into Penge and Beckenham Grammar but couldn't go because his family couldn't afford the uniform amongst other impediments. The war really disrupted his education but he was a life long learner.

In 1949 he commenced his National service in the Royal

Artillery. After basic training he specialised in signals and communications. During a period of 18 months service he gained promotion to Bombardier.

As a pensioner he did his GCSE's and A'levels at Charles Darwin school. He then went to Ruskin College Oxford to attain a history diploma.

He went into the civil service and worked his way up to an Auditor for British Telecom. He also did lots of work for the pensioners organisation- trying to protect all of our futures.

Then it should be remembered that he was a loyal and committed member of his club Blackheath Harriers of which he was a constant member of for many years having joined the club in the mid 1980s. Although not recorded as a distinguished front line runner he was a keen participant taking part in 24 hour runs and 50 mile walks. He started running marathons in his fifties and completed 4 marathons all in under 4 hours. He also helped organise and took part in a waterpolo match between blackheath harriers in 1988 vs Ranalagh Harriers at Crystal palace in the diving pool. BHH won. It was organised to commemorate similar matches held between Blackheath and other clubs at the end of

Continued

19th Century He was a race steward and marshal in club events such as the Ted Pepper 10km and often attended social events such punch bowl Night and from its inaugural event in 2011 the Burns Night Supper.

Also he was a devoted family man even when his marriage ran into difficulties in the 1970s when his two children, Helen and Richard were left to his sole care. He would prove to be a real tower of strength and an influence on his children. David was always supportive of his family and would strive to be as good a dad as he could be and be loving as he was loved not only as a dad but as a grand father, and father in law. As daughter Helen remarked in the aftermath of his passing "We think of him everyday, and he is deeply missed.



David as artillery bombardier

Furthermore he was endowed with a wide variety of qualities, virtues and abilities. His son Richard remarked that as a father. "Dad never dictated to us, was never judgemental, or meted out condemnation". He was not type caste or conventional and avoided predictability, willing to step out of the box.

Most particularly he was an all rounder, or multi faceted man. This was of course displayed by his academic achievements especially later in life. He was especially keen on local history particularly the rich store of material in the Beckenham and Bromley area. He was a long standing member of the Beckenham Historical Associations and the Bromley and Beckenham Local History Society.

As an acknowledged local Historian and author David wrote 4 local books on the local history of Beckenham, Penge and Crystal Palace. These were, 'Bromley, a century'. (1999), 'Bromley past and present. (2001), 'Around Crystal Palace and Penge' (2004) and 'Beckenham through time' (2014). Each were a mine of historical information, amply illustrated by old photos and facsimiles of drawings. Over the years he developed into a well known author and key contributor to publications.

As well as writing books he also gave local history walking tours for Embro- mainly at Elmers End Cemetery and in Penge. He also gave talks at local schools and often returned to his primary school to do these, including giving an assembly on the Great Exhibition at his grandson's school.

As well as the written medium he took interest in photography one and was also a member of the Beckenham photographic society. In this group he produced in 2000 a recording of the Millennium taking photos all over Beckenham and was involved in placing photos on a CD rom.

The interest in photography went hand in hand with a passion for painting He had a passion for art and history and did talks at schools in the borough of Bromley His evaluation of history was "to learn from the past and use it for the future" Because of his love in history his son was influenced to choose a career as a history teacher.

He was also keenly involved in the Scouting movement participating in its activities and going on camping trips and in 1959 whilst attending a scout leaders training camp and got to know a Major in the Finnish Army. As a result of this he went to Finland and went on ski patrols in the

arctic. This was one example of how he travelled extensively including the USSR before the fall of communism and the Rockies where he had close encounters with grizzly bears. To family and friends he was described as the 'Original back packer.'

On a wider level he once appeared on television in the quiz show *15 to 1* at Pebble-Mill and finished second. At one talking about being a single Dad

Finally he expressed strong commitments to his beliefs and values. He was very progressive politically and became identified with the environmental lobby. He did sometimes drive but cycled constantly even in his more advanced years.

As an artillery bombardier he even punished squaddies for stoning squirrels on the grounds of cruelty to animals!

He made the most of what he had and had a lifelong devotion to the healthy life; He also swam his whole life, an activity he would do whenever and wherever he could. He even swam at Cape Agulhas, the tip of Africa, in the freezing winter with a "danger- Sharks" sign near by and he did learn how to scuba drive at one stage.

His concern for the handicapped led him to also do aided running for



In his fifties David completed four marathons

the visually impaired), particularly for a man on Hayes Hill Road.

For many years he was a regular attender at Christchurch Beckenham, usually for the early morning Communion Service, and was in the guise of a Black heath Harrier he attended functions organised by Christians In Sport. Said Rev Bob Hilton (CC Beckenham) of him "he was one of few who left a lasting memorial"....

From a club point of view he may not have won prizes for running, become a vice president, managed an age category team, or held any

office in an administrative capacity but his own contribution to the spirit of the club, helping to sustain its multi-faceted nature cannot be underestimated.

David died on the 2nd of November 2019. At his service of thanksgiving his daughter in paying her tribute to him commented that "I'm not surprised that it was his heart which wore out in the end- he had used it so much to love the life he was given "....His final remark was "It is how we love that we are remembered".

*Richard Johnson, Helen Johnson
ed. Wilf Orton*

Joseph Anthony Clare

9 October 1939 – 28 January 2020

Ave atque vale

On Sunday 27th September 1970, Joe Clare spent 5 hours 41 minutes and 8 seconds on the Brighton Road winning the London to Brighton road race by 14 minutes. The following year he ran faster, 5:39:55 but troubled by blisters he finished in 5th place. Joe joined previous club winners Lewis Piper (1951) and Derek Reynolds (1952) with his 1970 performance, deservedly earning his Honours Award noted on the board at Hayes.

Joe was one of several Royal Navy members who were the mainstay of club senior teams at that time, others included decathlete Trevor Wahlen and middle distance man Peter Horwood. Joe was educated at Colfe's in Lewisham leaving to join the Royal Navy at the age of 16, serving for 22 years and rising to the rank of Chief Petty Officer in the Fleet Air Arm. He was an electronics

technician and served on HMS Ark Royal where he had responsibilities for Fairey Gannets and Blackburn Buccaneers; the captain is said to have altered course and speed to help with Joe's training runs on the flight deck when at sea.

Joe was a quiet and unassuming man but determined in his athletic endeavour, a distinguished and dependable member of our cross country and road teams for many years, in the scoring six for Southern and National Championships, helping the team to three third places in the Southern between 1970 and 1977. A notable marathon runner, Joe won the RN championship with 2:23:39 in the 1970 Polytechnic marathon, second home for the club and simultaneously helping Blackheath to victory in the



Joe Clare finishing at Chiswick in the 1970 Poly marathon

Open and Southern team races. He featured in the 1971 Maxol marathon with 2:24:31, with Blackheath second in the team race. 1970 and 1971 were blue riband years for Joe not just for the performances already mentioned but he also twice won the Isle of Wight marathon, an extremely tough course run on hot summer's days, his winning times inside the grade one standards on each occasion.

As a Blackheath Harrier, Joe ran 16 marathons, the fastest in the 1970 Poly and the slowest at Huntingdon in 1981, 2:50:53. However, before joining he ran in the 1968 Inverness to Forres marathon, winning the race and recording 2:18:43 running in a pair of RN issue plimsolls. Although he is ranked 14th on the Blackheath all-time list, his Inverness to Forres would place him 7th, just behind Bob Richardson.

Amongst all these performances, Joe featured in the full range of road races,



Joe Clare (right) at the 150th Anniversary Dinner at the House of Commons in 2019 with Trevor Wahlen and Chris Haines

Derek Hogg

1928-2020

relays, cross country including mob matches and with the occasional track run in trophy matches and in the National league. On one such occasion paired with Chris Woodcock for the 5000m in the 1971 Ryder Trophy the two had a narrow escape when a javelin landed on the track between them. Joe was also a dependable member and well-organised member of the 24 hour relay teams of 1973 and 1974.

Joe represented the Royal Navy with distinction and ran for Hampshire in the Inter-Counties. In later years he took a full part in masters and veterans events an invaluable member of the teams that included Ian Wilson, Chris Woodcock and Les Roberts. He was often supported by his father who accompanied the team for the Le Quesnoy marathon in 1980 as Chef d'Equipe de Cadre Noir, Grande Bretagne'.

On 28th February 2020, as the pandemic was taking hold, there was a celebration of Joe's life at Garston, Herts. The club was represented by PP John Baldwin and PP Chris Haines and in remembering our friend in athletics they were able to offer sympathy and condolences to his son Anthony and to Rosalind.

*Chris Haines, John Baldwin,
Chris Woodcock*

Derek Frank Ernest Hogg was born on 28th March 1928 in south west London Born in Balham south London. His early life was spent in south west London close to Balham and Tooting Bec.

He was educated at the newly established then flagship Bec Grammar school Where he was House Captain & Head Boy where he achieved respectable marks across the board, but particularly enjoyed and excelled in Art & English. Whilst he was Evacuated during World War to Lewes he even earned money with his art master painting pub signs around the town..

Here he developed his love of Sussex which had been kindled by many childhood family holidays at Pagham.

Whilst evacuated (as he recalled) one Saturday morning the children (including him) leaving the cinema were strafed by a German ME109 flying low up the river Ouse. It missed – a near death experience in war evoking shades of Fergus Ancorn.

At the age of 18, on leaving school, rather than go to university, he was conscripted into the Army and was trained in readiness to go to the far east, where hostilities were still incomplete. But with final peace he was stood

down and was instead posted to Northern Ireland. He was attached to the Education Corps overseeing the demob of soldiers returning home to Ulster. Called up under the emergency period following WW2 and served with the Army Education Corps, with postings in England, Wales, Scotland & Northern Ireland

On his own demobilisation he joined the Civil Service (having sat the Entrance Exam at his father's advice), in the Department of Health and Social Security - or Stealth and Total Obscurity as he always referred to it. He was based at several offices in London, but spent the most time at Alexander Fleming House at the Elephant and Castle. He had a successful career – rising to Assistant Secretary. In a career lasting nearly 35 years amongst various key roles his responsibilities included: Drafting early food and drugs legislation, preparing the legal base to successfully challenge drug company supply costs to the NHS, being Part of the team advising on food and drug aspects in preparation to join the European Common Market in 1973 and being the Civil Service manager for the secure mental hospitals (Broadmoor etc).

Towards the end of his time at school he became more interested in running,

Continued

particularly the mile and cross country. He was introduced to Blackheath Harriers in 1946 when he was just about to turn 18 by Rev Alan Daniels who was (if it is not a contradiction in terms) - both a "Heathen" and the vicar at Holy Trinity.

He joined Blackheath Harriers on 4th February 1946. Through Sydney Wooderson who he often ran with and against and his brother Stanley who was coaching him during the war, he was talent spotted, whist practising at the cinder track on Tooting Bec common he was encouraged to join the club shortly after peace broke out. With many members away on war service he rapidly moved from the junior to the senior team and he won his first trophy within a week of joining. He was winner of the King Morrison Cup in 1946 and 1947.

As well as competing for Blackheath Harriers he was as a Civil Servant, a member of the Service Athletics club. Some highlights of his athletic career included being actually present Iffley Road during the afternoon of 6th May 1954 when Roger Bannister broke the four minute mile. He was one of Britain's top milers of his day, recording a pb of 4 minutes 10 seconds and represented Great Britain in a

match against the USA at the White City.

Derek was both a cross-country runner and a "miler" - representing the club for a number of years until he suffered a bad knee injury in the late 1950s jumping a fence/style and had to give up competing. However he still ran over the country (helping out with the juniors),

PP Ian Wilson recalled

"I remember you used to check the laces on the BH team member's shoes before the start. " It was Derek Hogg who lead the group in true, traditional Blackheath "pack running" tradition. Now, I would not call what Derek did coaching but he did introduce us to the enjoyment of endurance running and provided great encouragement".

He was club secretary for some six years in the late '50s and early '60s and became a club vice president in 1964. He would become one of the club's oldest surviving club vice-presidents. He was the second longest serving VP for 56 years!!!

Whilst stationed in Northern Ireland he met Margaret, a civilian instructress in the Army Education Centre at Firmount. They married in 1950 and settled in London. Michael to start a family.

Three surviving children two sons and a daughter were born to them between 1954 and 1963, although they had to endure the tragedy of the still birth of another son Nicholas an apparently healthy boy. Such experience proved to be a great grief.

In 1974 they separated and Derek moved to Hendon Central but In 1979 he married Shirley, a work colleague, a marriage which proved a happy one and lasted 37 years until her death in 2016.

In his later career, he was increasingly aware that The Civil Service was changing, becoming more politicised and this frustrated him since he believed that his job was supposed to be serving the public by giving impartial advice to whichever party was in power. He took early retirement from the Civil Service to move to California in 1982 to see what opportunities were there. Alongside building a house in virgin woodland near Santa Rosa, he worked in the forestry and wine-making industries.

He returned to England in 1986, partly because he was disenchanted with the narrow mindedness of many Americans, and he said because he wanted to see more of his children and, by now, grandchildren. He and

his second wife Shirley chose to settle in Sussex. Where they took much pleasure in spending some time with his seven grandchildren.

Although retired from his main career he initially found work as an administration officer with Sussex Police and then went on to work as a legal executive with Rapers, a firm of solicitors in Chichester, becoming legally qualified at an age when many are about to retire.

Having been raised, as an Anglican, he converted to Catholicism whilst in California. He also became deeply involved in the Knights of St Columbus – rising to be one of 30 State Deputies who together managed the Knights throughout the State of California.

Throughout his life he had a strong work ethic and a very strong Christian belief, and part of that ethic/belief was that if you had god given gifts it was your god given duty to use those gifts to help others - whether they realised they needed it or not! His particular gifts were: Organising others & Giving advice. He continued to practice these ethics for the rest of his life and on returning to England in 1986 he became deeply involved with the Catholic Church and Knights of St Columba

in Sussex and beyond – becoming Provincial Grand Knight for Sussex. After this he became Member Services Secretary of the International Alliance of Catholic Knights assisting with the creation of the Knights of St. Gabriel for Foreign Embassy staffs and the Knights of Thomas More in Belgium. In this work, also became closely involved with many Catholic clergy and laity – including Cormack Murphy O'Connor.

He died on 19th March 2020. Of him PP Ian Wilson said of hearing of his death “made me realise what a debt I owe Blackheath and how fortunate I was to join them in the first place...”.

So a full and rich 90 years – with many significant achievements – and still with the energy, enthusiasm, ability and time for more!

Finally in the words of his son “Dad had a marked combination of physical and mental strengths & talents” – which he continued to apply to the end of his full and rich life.

Robin Hogg

Executive Committee 2019/20**President:**

Julian Golding

Immediate Past President:

Paul Byfield PP

Chairman of Committee:

Nick Corry VP

Hon Secretary:

Vacant

Hon Treasurer:

David Appleton VP

Chairmen of Active Athletics:

Summer – Tim Soutar PP

Winter – Robert Cliff PP

Chair of Finance:

Stephen Hollingdale PP

Chair of Communications:

Tim Ayres VP

Three Ordinary Members:

Adrian Stocks VP

Paul Austridge VP

Maz Turner VP

Chair of Development:

Paul Byfield

Sponsorship/Fund Raising:

Vacant

House and Social:

David Cordell PP

Membership Secretary:

Rob Brown VP

Track & Field Secretary:

Vacant

Cross Country Secretary:

Vacant

Editor:

Wilf Orton – 020 8771 1128

wilfred.orton@justice.gov.uk

Assistant Editor:

Vacant

Layout and Production:

Ozzie Adams – 07788 728708

ozzie@flamingocreative.co.uk

Club Headquarters

Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC
The Sydney Wooderson Centre
56 Bourne Way, Hayes
Bromley, Kent BR2 7EY

Past Presidents**Existing Past Presidents of Blackheath Harriers AC:**

John R Baldwin (1975/76), Colin M Brand (1978/79), Brian G Stone (1979/80), Ian C Wilson (1981/82), Derek L Gregory (1986/87), Alan M Pickering (1992/93), Steve H Cluney (1993/94), David White (1994/96), Mike Martineau (1996/97), Mike J Mahoney (1997/98), Chris R Haines (1998/99), Richard J Coles (1999/2000), Mike Davies (2000/01), Mike Peel (2001/02), Pat Calnan (2002/03).

Existing Past Presidents of Bromley AC: (to 2003)

Daphne Reed, Joyce Hefher, Junior Field, Paul Jearum, Maureen Miller.

Past Presidents of Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC:

John Robinson (2003/04), Margaret Baldwin (2004/05), Anne Cilia (2005/06), Ken Daniel (2006/07), Les Roberts (2007/08), Tim Soutar (2008/09), Alison Brand (2009/10), Richard Coe (2010/11), Denis Lawrie (2011/12), Steve Hollingdale (2012/13), Robert Cliff (2013/14), Dick Griffin (2014/15), David Cordell (2015/16), Bill Foster (2016/17), Nick Brooks (2017/18), Paul Byfield (2018/19).

Vice Presidents**Existing Vice Presidents of Blackheath Harriers AC:**

George H Smith (1960), John E Lindblom (1962), Derek F E Hogg (1964), Tony V Hayday (1968), Richard J Edmonds (1969), Robert Richardson (1969), John Lissaman (1972), Barry M Shapcott (1973), Geoff R Last (1974), Frank C Rogers (1976), Frank J Dyter (1977), Jerry C W Friend (1977), Andy W Frankish (1979), Peter E Shephard (1979), Peter C Hannell (1980), Mike A Winch (1981), Ian K Young (1982), Gordon Brooks (1986), Simon Parsons (1990), Jim Phelan (1990), Nigel Keogh (1991), Trevor Llewelyn (1991), Mark I L Watling (1993), Steve J Freemantle (1995), R Colin Poole (1995), Alan R Stevens (1995), Nick Nuttall (1997), John E Turner (1997), Peter Lester (1998), Garry F P Spencer (1998), Bill Clapham (1999-2013), Mike J Cronin (1999), David Liston (2000), Roger A Michell (2000), Roger Counter (2002), Len Dalmon (2002), Roy Smith (2002).

Existing Vice President of Bromley AC: David Green.**Vice Presidents of Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC:**

John Blackie (2003 ex BAC), Willem Buttinger (2003 ex BH), Ian Dibbens (2003 ex BAC), Hilary Gibbs (2003 ex BAC), David Taylor (2003 ex BH), Simon Tolson (2003 ex BH), Myrtle Augee (2004), Helen Godsell (2004), Simon Lloyd (2004), Anthony Pontifex (2004), Brian Power (2004), Nick Gasson (2005), Brendan McShane (2005), Brian Hartley (2006), Paul Patten (2006), Kate Pratten (2006), Michael Skinner (2006), Ray Gibson (2007), Richard Holt (2007), Mark Purser (2007), Rob Brown (2007), Bob Minting (2007), Costas Karageorghis (2008), Tom Phillips (2008), Terri Shotton (2008), Andy Tucker (2009), Roy Watkins (2009), Allan Williams (2009), David Appleton (2010), Peter Lovell (2010), Steve Pairman (2010), Colin Rowe (2010), Paul Austridge (2011), Con Griffin (2011), Deniz Mehmed (2011), Wilf Orton (2012), Mick Jones (2013), Mike Sheppard (2013), Dave McKinlay (2014), Alex Gibbins (2014), Richard Hall (2014), Jane Bradshaw (2014), Julie Asher-Smith (2014), Marion (Maz) Turner (2015), Sheila Griffin (2015), Jackie Montgomery (2015), Adrian Stocks (2015), Tim Ayres (2015), Claire Austridge (2016), Shaughnagh Brown (2016), Andy Rayner (2016), Steve Timmins (2016), Karen Desborough (2017), Chris Hilditch (2017), Mark Steinle (2017), Nick Corry (2017), Clem Leon (2018), Jay Galley (2018) Nick Swatton (2019), Rod Harrington (2019).

Photographs

The editing team wish to express their thanks for all those who contributed articles and photographs for this issue. We have made every effort to correctly identify all the photographers but sometimes this is not possible. If you took a photograph but haven't been credited please let us know and we will publish the details in the next Gazette.

Thanks for photographs to all who took them.

150
YEARS

