

July 2023



Welcome to the first newsletter under my new hat as club event coordinator, it certainly feels like a whirl wind start to the initiation, a lot that has been passed on and a lot still to learn since I started in January this year - 7 months already where has the time gone! We have also certainly had our challenges with our events to date for 2023!

Thank you to Kate for passing the baton on with all her knowledge and patience as I learnt the processes behind the scenes and for all the volunteers that have helped to date, your long-standing knowledge has also been wonderful.

Tammie

# CLUB NEWS

In March we farewelled Kate Southern as the presiding club event coordinator for the last 4+ years at the Cosie Club as she embarked on her engineering passion and stepping back into an office environment. We know she is loving her new role as we continue to catch up with Kate on the club meets and at events, we wish her all the best for her next journey.



On the 20th June our containers stored at Hockey Manawatu carpark and behind the fence were unfortunately broken into during daylight hours!

Electronic equipment was taken along with many various other items. The police were involved and at this stage nothing has been recovered and no further result to the person/s involved. The main committee is undertaking the process of replacing equipment in hope that it will be all sorted for our next event..



# Upcoming Events

## Mid winter function & Thank you to Phil Pirie - 29 July 7pm

Dress in orange and come and join us to thank Phil for all of his support and work over the years to the club, and enjoy catching up with other club members in a fun environment.

## Centre Road Champs - Manfield 27th August

Running & walking with full distances available for all ages - details out soon.

## Sunday 29th October - NEW EVENT (to replace A2E)

Unfortunately A2E course is unobtainable for 2023, our event committee is in the planning stages to run an alternative course on the same date - keep an eye out for upcoming details.

## NZ Road Champs Competition - Massey University - 10th September

Social distances available as well as competitive. Walking judged - this is a good local opportunity to be judged in the walking races. AMW is working on a discount for affiliate members entry fee will be very reasonable.



**Manawatu Striders Function**  
and thank you to Phil Pirie

BYO Drinks

Bring cash for raffles

SATURDAY, 29 JULY 2023 (7PM)  
\$20.00 per person  
Partners welcome

Dress orange optional

Supper provided

# CLUB NEWS

## Relay 4 Life

25-26th March 2023

Jackie Welsh

RFL this year returned to its new location down by the river walkway. (Covid disrupted it in 2022) Our team is a well-oiled machine, and we all turn up to walk, run, set up, take down where and when needed.

We welcomed new team members this year. It was great to have a few new faces in the team. Thanks Laura, Susan, and Guida, for your contribution on the track and your amazing fundraising. Great to also have Kelda, Cheryl, Ross and Nicole return this year. This year we got off to a rocky start, a mini tornado ripped through the site taking with it our tent and the gazebo. We rallied around, got another gazebo (thanks Kelda) and found another tent in my garage to use, so we said farewell to our much loved well used tent which originally was the Storrier's family tent. Thanks Allan Wells for your continued perseverance in getting our tent and gazebo up in time for the start of the event. A true scout.

We had sun, wind, and rain, we walked and ran for 24 hours. We laughed, and we also shared moments of special memories remembering why we are here, remembering those we have lost to cancer and celebrating with those who we are still able to hold close.

I couldn't do it without the support of so many people. Our family and friends for their generous time and donations, our club committee and club members who continue to support us each year. And our wonderful team, who give up their time to support this incredible event. You are all hugely appreciated.

And to top it off we received the acknowledgement (and gift basket) for the most funds raised by a community team. Go Manawatu Striders. Over \$4000. Raised.

Thank you all so very much.

From your Team Captain

Jackie



# ***Sky Tower Challenge***

May 20th 2023

Trevor Brill

Headed up to Auckland for the firefighters stair challenge up the skytower, picked up our race packs Friday night.

With an early start we were squad #2 ready for a 7.30am start, registered picked up our chain saws then waited for our call up in the basement and 20 minutes later on our way for a briefing.

Down to the depths of the skytower again waiting for our turn I was voted to go first 60 floors.. here I come!

Feeling good and setting a good pace [well so I thought] by the time I got to the water station I was running out of puff, a drink of water and a sit down for a minute I was off again feeling refreshed, 60 floors here I come!

Twenty four minutes fifty seconds I was at the top.

Our team raised over \$26,000 from raffles and donations, well over 1 million dollars was raised this year an in the 19 year history of the fighters skytower stair challenge close to 20 million dollars has been raised for leukemia an blood cancer.



# ***Anderson Rally, Dannevirke***

Saturday 24th June, 2023

Kate Southern

Anderson Rally (first known as Dannevirke Rally) began in 1934 and was one of the largest cross country events in NZ for many years with over 700 runners participating. It was held most years up until the 1990s, then took a break, returning a few years ago as a joint venture between Feilding Moa and Napier Harriers.

This year 126 runners and walkers took part - numbers well down on recent years, due to Wellington Marathon the next day, and some Hawkes Bay athletes unable to travel due to flooding conditions.



The course had been modified from last year due to some work in the farmland - a slightly shorter loop and due to the rain, with all obstacles removed. Wise decision - it was hazardous enough in the slippery mud, without trying to negotiate hurdles, tyres & creek jumps.

A small-but-perfectly-formed team of four Manawatu Striders made the trip over: Kate & Terry Southern, Richard Smith, and Kelda Robinson. We were all in the masters categories, with Kelda and Kate completing two laps to Terry and Richard's three (is typically four for the men; but the call was made to shorten the event).

The first section of the lap is pretty sweet. Just a lap of the race course. Nice easy running on grass. Then you drop down a long and fairly steep hill into the farmland - you either take it easy here to watch your step or you let it rip and hope for the best.

# Anderson Rally cont...

The farm section was so wet that it was a struggle to even run in a straight line on the flat. Feet were sliding in every direction and arms flailing just to try and keep some semblance of balance!

Kate showed off her gymnastics skills by taking a tumble and slide down one of the hills - one of those overconfident "she'll be right, I'll just hoon past her down this hill" moments!! Not the only one to be covered in mud by the end of the day though!

"That hill" back up to the showgrounds is still there - though it had been shortened this year, it was even tougher in the slippery mud. A good mix of tactics in this section - some opting to run, and some opting to fast hike. There wasn't much difference in speed that I saw (although a little further back in the pack than all the super-fast runners, bet they just flew up there).

It was good to finish this one, get some obligatory photos of the muddy legs and then enjoy a hose down afterwards (literally). Afternoon tea is always good at cross country events - this one even includes venison sausages and burger patties in bread (best thing ever after a cold wet run). All washed down with three cups of tea and a peppermint chocolate biccie.

Prizegiving is a pretty cool affair. Every single grade has a trophy, medals, and the older grades cash prizes too (sweet!). They have some great sponsors of this event who make it all possible.

Our team came home with a bit of bling - Richard nabbing third in the mens 35-49 race (Terry in fourth place, too strong Richard!) and Kate second in the womens 35-59 race (Kelda in 8th).

This is my favourite event on the calendar - with Halcombe Relay being a close second - make sure you sign up and come along next year. I can't promise it won't be muddy like it was this year but I can promise it will be fun.

# ***Samoa International Rally***

July, 2023

Viv Storrier



It was meant to be! Grant and I had planned a trip to Samoa in 2020 and then COVID came along and blew that off the calendar. With Samoa's borders open again and life returning to a new normal we rebooked our trip for the July school holidays. Then, a couple of weeks before we were due to go, I learned that the Samoa International Marathon was on while we were over there and it would be happening on Savaii Island when we were there. Even more timely, it was finishing right where we were staying on the north coast. It was meant to be! Given that we were on holiday and the temperatures were a lot warmer than our NZ winter, we entered the 10 km event instead of doing the regular half marathon. I dragged Grant into doing it too.

The Samoa International Marathon is organised by Seti Afoa, a Samoan living in Auckland, who organises not only the Marathon event but also a number of long distance swim events in Samoa. This was the first time the event had been run since 2019 and the field was largely international participants with distances being the marathon, half marathon, 10 km, 6 km and 3 km events. The marathon event started at 4.30am with an option of an earlier start of 2.30 and every marathoner required a support vehicle. Having a support vehicle for each participant was achievable as the entire field across all events was only 65 participants!

Saturday 15 July dawned, another beautiful Samoan morning. We caught a taxi out 10 km to the village of Magua where our 10 km walk was to start. Grant and I waited with 4 others - 3 kiwis and an Aussie - with another Kiwi dad and son arriving just before our start, both of whom were wearing crocs!! They proceeded to do their 10 km run in their crocs. Having learnt of runners being bitten by dogs and with a week already spent in Samoa and seeing how many roaming dogs there are, both Grant and I quickly found a stick to carry along as a bit of protection. We were lucky that we didn't need to use it but one of the 10 km runners did get nipped by a dog during the event!

# ***Samoa International Rally cont..***



Seti started us off about 7.50 am and quickly the runners disappeared into the distance. We were walking along the main coastal road with the first 4 km downhill towards the village of Saleaula where the lava fields are. It was hot, about 28 degrees. A mobile water van regularly passed by offering water and sponges to us and several marathon runners that passed by. While we didn't take up the offer, it was very well received by all the runners. The walk was great. After the lava fields we were soon back on the coast and the scenery was fabulous. How often can you do an event where you see pigs and piglets roaming on the road, people waving the flies away from the fish they are selling on the roadside, the open windows of the many roadside shops, the colourful houses and palm trees and clear aqua water to your right. Being on the main island road several cars and the blingy Samoan buses passed us by, beeping their horns and calling their friendly 'Talofas'. Likewise, many of the locals called out from the front of their houses.



Before long and with wet t-shirts - I was very pleased I had my cooling towel round my neck - the finish line was in sight in the village of Manase with the flag flying outside the Tanu Beach

# ***Samoa International Rally cont..***

Fales. We ditched our sticks and turned in to cross the finish line in just over 1 hour 22 minutes. We were happy and enjoyed sitting down and receiving a cool coconut drink at the finish line. The atmosphere was wonderful and soon the presentations of medals were made - it was about 9.30 am by this time!! I was asked to make the presentations to the winning marathon runners. A Polish man won the men's marathon in a time of 3:53.57 and a secondary teacher from Auckland won the women's marathon in a time of 4:19.50. I presented each of them with their wooden medals and a carved ava bowl. Grant and I also received our hand-carved medals.



We were done and dusted by 9.45 am - just in time to wander back next door to our hotel and have the complimentary breakfast! After all, being on holiday we had sightseeing and swimming to get on with for the rest of the day which we did! Later in the afternoon we joined some participants for drinks and learnt about a whole new category of marathoners - those who are bagging as many international marathons as they can in as many different countries! For them, the time doesn't seem to be important but it is all about doing a marathon in every country. These were the attendees who had started at 2.30 am and taken over 7 ½ hours to complete running their marathon. One guy had completed 825 marathons over 50 years - I'm not sure how many countries were on his count but he was still adding to them! A number of them had completed a marathon 2 days previously in American Samoa.

# ***Samoa International Rally cont..***

We finished the evening with a wonderful Fiafia night eating local cuisine and being entertained by the locals with their singing, dancing and fire dance. It was a great night beneath the Samoan skies and it began to spit with rain just as we were walking back to our hotel. The next day it bucketed down all day.

My first international event and so much fun! I wonder what will be next? I can thoroughly recommend this event to others if you want to experience a hot international event vastly different to what you do in New Zealand - it is going to be in the July school holidays every year



# Halcombe Relay

22nd July, 2023

David Cushing

The annual trek out to the wilds of Halcombe for Darryl's Mob (formerly or usually known as Al's Mob) took place Saturday 22 July 2023. The intrepid team were well prepared and in tip top race condition to take on the mighty six legs of around 5 k's each than make up this popular and low key relay organised by our friends at Moa Harriers.

A cloudy, but warm and blessedly no wind afternoon greeted us as we set off at 11.45 in pursuit of all the other walking teams who (under the handicap start rules) commenced racing from 11am onwards. This is the first time in my memory that we were alone on the start line.

Undeterred, Merrin (our visitor from Otaki but sister to the no show team manager) set off to make inroads on those further up the road. Setting a cracking pace, Merrin was disappointed to be racing alone. But the team rallied around and gave her all the encouragement we could. Just under 5 k's later Merrin handed over to our secret weapon, the ever young Evan who is not slowing down, totally belying his age. However, maybe his memory is fading as he seemed to forget there were two hills on his leg. Not to be defeated he kept those strong legs turning over. In no time it was time for the handover to Andrew. Identified as a strong walker, Andrew was given the task of completing the longest leg, a punishing 5.167 k's over undulating roads (maybe a bit of exaggeration but it is the longest leg!) Happily for Andrew, we had closed the gap on a Levin walking team, and before you could tell Merrin's joke (which is censored for this article) we were no longer in last place. We were also now being caught by the first of the running teams so no longer were we alone. The usual banter took place as happens on relay events as we passed and also were passed by other teams. The excitement was too much, and fruitless searches were made for a toilet for a nameless female member of the team. Andrew passed the batten (yep we carry an aluminium tube as our race batten) on to stand in (make that voluntold) manager Rachelle. Past the church, round the corner, round another corner and before she knew it, Rachelle had been deserted by her support team with 1500 metres of racing to go. But we knew she was more than capable of handling the loneliness (not really as by now there were running and walking teams galore around us on the course).



# ***Halcombe Relay cont...***

Around the final bend and a small straight to where the second gold card holder of the team was waiting. David took the batten and commenced his attack on the mainly gravel leg with the steepest hill of the whole course included. This is where things went a little awry. Coming up the hill with just under 2 k's to go, David noticed our support vehicle on the left of the road but on the right another teams support van had bogged down (a reminder to keep at least one of your driving wheels on the road surface). Being the type of supportive team Striders are known for, David's support crew had all changed priorities to assist the stranded team. Sharon, who was to walk the final leg, had commenced running ahead of David to get to the hand over before David arrived. That gave David someone to chase but to no avail (Sharon was running after all). She got to the hand over but of course our chief timer was still back up at the top. Not to worry, David had started his stop watch when the gun went off for Merrin so stopping it when he finished leg five gave us the running time for legs one through to five. Simple maths calculation would give us David's leg time. Sharon was able to use her own stop watch to record her leg time. All organised on the fly with a rushed conversation as we exchanged the batten. Then it was a simple matter of finding the balance of the team. Andrew had left the vehicle rescue attempts to bring the support vehicle down to David. We then went back up the hill to find the team. A van passed us which we thought was the bogged vehicle so a quick five point turn (narrow country roads) and back down the hill chasing said vehicle. Passed Sharon, so commenced our support role and in due course caught the other vehicle up. Nope, wrong vehicle. Where was our team?? Never mind Andrew and David supported Sharon and then a black 4x4 pulled up with the other three members of our team. All reunited in time to head down to Halcombe and welcome Sharon as she finished.



# ***Halcombe Relay cont...***

A superb event, great road conditions and atmosphere with an afternoon tea to die for (well put weight on). We did have the fastest walking team time of 3 hours 27 minutes and 23 seconds.

The three males all recorded the fastest walk time of all walking teams on their individual legs.

Merrin 34.09 leg one 4.817

Evan 34.44 leg two 4.964

Andrew 38.26 leg three 5.167

Rachelle 34.56 leg four 4.542

David 32.55 leg five 4.739

Sharon 34.13 leg six 4.964 (Sharon's actual watch time was 34.02 but with the mix up at transition to balance the running time we used the difference between David's elapsed time at the end of leg five and the total elapsed time on a separate watch that had been running also from the gun.

## ***Current Committee Members***

Updated Main & Events Committee:

We wish those that have stepped down all the best.

Club President: Ross Campbell

Treasurer: Charles Hunt

Secretary: Cath Staines

Committee: Viv Storrier, Evan Davies, Christine Wicks, Erin Wheeler, Matt Duxfield

Events Committee: Tammie Boyden, Neil Ward, Christine Wicks, Bob Hartnell, Susan Bannister, Laura Cobbett, Marek Tomecki.