



OLYMPIANS CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

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AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIANS ALUMNI coming soon...

In this edition we bid farewell to the current format of the OCA Newsletter. Since 2001 this publication has been sent to you quarterly, however, we want to give you more.

The Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) has a strong desire to better engage and communicate with all Australian Olympians.

As an initiative of the AOC - and in consultation with many Olympians - we wish to introduce the new 'Australian Olympians Alumni'.

What does this mean?

Instead of receiving a quarterly publication, you will receive the following:

- Access to the 'Australian Olympians Alumni' on LinkedIn to network with your fellow Olympians.
- A monthly e-news broadcast to connect regularly with you (if you are not online you will continue to receive an abridged quarterly publication in the mail).
- The new 'Australian Olympians Annual' - a printed publication providing an overview of the year's events and a preview of the coming year; and
- A dedicated webpage with content for Olympians.

These new initiatives will help support the activities of Olympians Clubs in each State/Territory.

Please look out for the first Australian Olympians Annual in January 2014. The Alumni on LinkedIn and website will launch in the coming months - we will keep you updated.

As always, we value your feedback. For any comments please contact the AOC via email alumni@olympics.com.au or phone +61 2 9247 2000.



ONCE AN OLYMPIAN, ALWAYS AN OLYMPIAN



NEWS FROM ACT

Canberra's Olympic community has been celebrating the recent exploits of two of its well-known female athletes. Olympic silver and bronze medallist Kim Crow won the single sculls at the final rowing World Cup event in Lucerne, while Caroline Buchanan became the elite women's BMX world champion.

For Crow, the Lucerne win was the second in this year's World Cup series following her triumph in the first regatta, held in Sydney in April. She has since gone on to become the first Australian woman to win the single sculls World Championships title in Korea.

Revenge was also sweet for Caroline Buchanan, who in winning her title in Auckland defeated London Olympic champion Mariana Pajon of Colombia. Buchanan placed fifth in London and is also a two-time world champion in mountain biking. She credits a move to the Australian Institute of Sport and the work she has done with strength and conditioning coach Julian Jones as crucial in her improvement.

Meanwhile the son of another of Canberra's outstanding female Olympians has been selected to attend an International Olympic Youth Forum in Lillehammer, Norway. Reilly Shaw, whose mother is three-time athletics Olympian Susan Hobson, was nominated for the trip by the ACT Olympic Council as a result of his entry in the 2013 Pierre de Coubertin awards. Reilly, a dual national age group steeplechase champion, submitted a photographic collage of the gold and silver medallists in the 3000 metres steeplechase at the London Olympics. It depicted both their intense rivalry and firm friendship, thus demonstrating the true spirit of the Olympics. Kim Crow and Caroline Buchanan are also former de Coubertin award winners!



NEWS FROM NSW

Illawarra Olympic Tribute

On 6 June, Olympians from the Illawarra region attended the unveiling of London 2012 Olympians' names on the Illawarra Olympic Tribute Wall at Lang Park, Wollongong. David Smith (Canoe/Kayak - sprint gold medallist), David McKeon (swimming) and Jarrod Poort (swimming) joined Government officials and business leaders at the ceremony.

Pierre de Coubertin Awards

Matthew Mitcham, Nicola Zagame, Jo Brigden-Jones, Shaun Boyle and James Chapman attended the NSW presentation of the Pierre de Coubertin Awards on Friday 21 June at Sydney Olympic Park. Over 100 award recipients from across NSW were invited to attend the Academy Day. The students were recognised for their award, educated on the Olympic values and had the opportunity to meet and hear from London 2012 Olympians.



AGM

The AGM and Election of Officers for the NSW Olympians Club took place at the Australian Olympic Committee offices on Tuesday, 30 July. We are delighted to announce that Peter Hadfield was re-elected as President, joined on the executive committee by Ian Brown, Hannah Campbell-Pegg, Stephen Carr, Alexandra Croak, Amy Hetzel, Warren Parr, Russell Phegan, Jeremy Rolleston, Manny Santos, Rick Timperi, Mark Tonelli and Barclay Wade.

The NSW Olympians Club also announced Event Ambassadors for the next quadrennium who will help the Executive, guide the club's initiatives and increase participation. The ambassadors are Dianne Alagich, Joanne Carter, Nina Curtis, Scott Dumbrell, Chloe Esposito, Jessica Fox, Christopher Fydler, Rose Fydler, Russell Garnett, Karen Gojnich, Matthew Hayes, Kate Hollywood, Andrew Kerr, Gavin Lackey, Malcolm Page, Richard Paris, Deborah Watson, Stephen Wooldridge and Christopher Wybrow.

Tamworth Honour Wall

On Friday 2 August the city of Tamworth unveiled the Tamworth Regional Olympians Honour Wall. Tamworth paid tribute to 11 Olympians including hockey players Mike Moroney, Michael York, Kim Small, Mathew Smith and Kate Jenner, shooters Clive Barton and George Barton, bobsledder Duncan Harvey, water polo players Craig Miller and Nathan Thomas and softball player Stacey Porter.

NEWS FROM QLD

Five Queensland Olympians visited Longreach from 15 - 18 August. Natalie Cook (beach volleyball), Julie McDonald (swimming), Jesse Ross (boxing), Andrew Grant (volleyball) and Chantelle Newbery (diving) visited four local schools – Longreach School of Distance Education, Our Ladys School, Longreach State High School and Longreach State School.

They spoke to students about their journey to the Olympics, believing in their dreams and inspiring students to achieve their very best. Jesse, Natalie and Julie visited the Youth Club for a training Session with 22 keen junior boxers who were excited to run through a few drills with Jesse.

At the end of the visit, Natalie, Jesse, Chantelle and Andrew attended the local athletics carnival where they presented medals and participated in a 50m sprint with the athletes.

The Olympians also attended a fundraising event, the 'City to the Bush' which started with a sunset cruise on the Thomson River, followed by a Camp Oven Dinner under the stars. They enjoyed breakfast the next day at Strathmore Station, a working property, where they visited the Australian's Stockman Hall of Fame and saw "The Outback Stockman's Show".



NEWS FROM TAS

The Tasmanian Olympic Council held an event on 27 June 2013 to announce its new President, new look board and bold ambitions for the next Olympic cycle.

Taking over the Presidency is five-time Olympian Anthony Edward who competed in rowing and boasts an Olympic trophy cabinet of two silver and one bronze medal.

"Having been involved with the Olympic Games for 20 years of my life its given me a lot and I feel this role is a good way that I can give back to what the Olympics has given me," Edwards said.

As the Development Officer of Rowing Tasmania and heavily involved in the TIS rowing program, Edwards understands the pathways required for athletes to make it to the top of the sporting world.

"I'm fortunate that I can bring two perspectives to elite sport, both as an athlete and an administrator employed in sport. So for a long time I've been able to look at what it takes for the next generation to progress through the pathways of sport and hopefully now I can assist to support that amongst all Olympic sports," Edwards added.

The State Government through the Tasmanian Olympic Council will continue to work on their fundraising activities through corporate functions and community activities, to meet fundraising targets for assisting athletes preparations in attending Rio 2016. For last year's campaign, the Tasmanian Olympic Council supported all 17 Tasmanian Olympians with a financial contribution towards their preparations.

In addition to that in the coming years, they will also roll out education programs such as the Pierre de Coubertin and Talk to a Champ, both aimed to inspire the next generation of Olympic dreamers. The Tasmanian Olympic Council also works with the Tasmanian community to give the Olympic movement relevance locally. The function was represented by 13 Olympic sports, and the speakers included Olympians Luke Jackson, Sam Beltz and Anthony Edwards, along with Paralympic sailor Matt Bugg.

NEWS FROM VIC

OCV Gala Dinner

Friday 22 November 2013
Sofitel Melbourne on Collins
All Olympians \$60

The Committee of the Olympians Club of Victoria is delighted that for the first time ever we can offer all Olympians the opportunity to attend for the wonderful and very affordable price of \$60.00 per person (including drinks and a fine three-course dinner).

Several corporate members of the Olympic Family have provided the financial support enabling this initiative and the Committee is thrilled by their generosity which may, it hopes, encourage you to be a part of this night of nights. The 2013 dinner will celebrate our Olympic Winter greats and what is to come at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games in February. Special guest Steven Bradbury OAM will also present.

We look forward to seeing you on Friday 22 November 2013 – 57 years to the day since the Opening Ceremony of the 1956 Olympic Games at Melbourne.

OCV Committee

We welcome new member Stephanie Moorhouse (2004 Gymnastics) who joined the Committee last month.

NEWS FROM WA

Hockey 9's International Super Series

OCWA will be holding a function in conjunction with the International Super Series on Thursday 17 October at the Perth Hockey Stadium in Bentley. A limited number of VIP tickets will be available to Olympians and 1 guest for \$25/head. More details will be distributed shortly.

Christmas Lunch and AGM

This is the major social event of 2013 and will be held on Sunday November 24th at the Seaview Golf Club in Cottlesoe. It's a great opportunity to catch up and reminisce with fellow teammates as well as meeting Olympians from other eras. Further details will be sent to members closer to the date but please diarise this day now!

Farewell to Amanda Gohr

We bid farewell and wish good luck to Amanda Gohr. After over 2 years in the WAOC office managing the fundraising and marketing operations, Amanda recently moved on to a new position with Netball WA.

OLYMPIAN NEWS

Congratulations to

- **Steve Hooker** (Athletics - 2004 Athens, 2008 Beijing, 2012 London) and his wife on the birth of their son Maxim in July
- **Ken Wallace** (Canoe/Kayak - 2008 Beijing, 2012 London) and his partner Naomi on the birth of their son Nixon in July
- **Loudy Wiggins** (Diving - 1996 Atlanta, 2000 Sydney, 2004 Athens, 2012 London) and her husband Simon on the birth of their son Alexander in August
- **Ryan Bayley** (Cycling - 2004 Athens, 2008 Beijing) and his wife Kristin on the birth of their son Lincoln in August
- **Michelle Steele** (Skeleton - 2006 Torino) on her marriage to Tom Mosey in July 2013

Obituaries

The OCA was sorry to hear of the passing of

- **Robert Bignell** (Football - 1956 Melbourne) in August 2013
- **Peter McDermott** (Cycling - 1968 Mexico) in July 2013
- **Robert Clark** (Wrestling - 1960 Rome) in June 2013
- **Billy Ward** (Boxing - 2012 London) in August 2013

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Val Norris-Buffham

GYMNASTICS - Tokyo 1964, Mexico 1968

Are you ever curious as to what happens to an Olympian after the many years of sacrifice, hard work and un-wavering determination to reach their goals? Did they swear off early mornings for life? Did they get a completely different job that has nothing to do with sport? Or did they fall in love with an international athlete in the village and run off to live happily ever after? Well let's take a look into the post Olympic life of two-time Olympian Val Norris-Buffham.

Val began gymnastics at the age of 15 and represented Australia at the 1964 Tokyo and 1968 Mexico Olympics. She was a four time National Champion and a City of Cockburn Sports Hall of Fame inaugural inductee.

Fifty-five years after her gymnastics debut, Val is still very much involved in the sport as a coach, judge, mentor and a lifetime member of Gymnastics WA.

Five years after her second Olympics, Val founded the Olympic Fun & Fitness club, which has undergone several name changes over the years. Its original name was the 'Val Norris Christian College of Gymnastics,' which affiliated with Gymnastics WA in 1978 and was later, renamed 'Olympic Gymnastic Academy' in 1989. 'Olympic Fun & Fitness' was formed in 2001 to cater for all sports at recreational level.

"The gym is located in our front yard," Val said. "My husband and I moved there because it was five acres and we were able to build and run the gym on the property."

From the beginning, Val knew she would be bound to gymnastics for a lifetime of commitment.

"It's my passion, I enjoy when the little ones come in and I get to nurture them," Val said. "I felt like gymnastics was my path and I still love it even after 55 years."

And it's this kind of dedication driven by love that has helped develop and produce highly successful outcomes in the sport today, such as Junior National Head coach Jo Richards. Coached by Val since she was six, Jo became a coach at WAIS and is now the Junior National coach working under Australian Head Coach Peggy Liddick. Jo was also personal coach to the famous WA gymnast Allana Slater and many other gymnasts who reached Olympic level.

"It's fantastic seeing Jo's success in the sport of gymnastics because it's another generation coming through the sport," explained Val. "It's nice knowing I've had an influence on the up and coming gymnasts and coaches in the sport today."

Val is always on the lookout for standout talent for possible future Olympic hopefuls. She recently discovered Lilly Gresele was the International Development Program Level 6 state champion just last year and is currently training with the WAIS program.

In a sport that is always changing and advancing, Val has managed to stay up to date with all the upgrades and rule changes but when questioned what her goals would be if she was beginning the sport today, she had this to say:

"They have it easy in today's era, we had to compete on straw mats," she mused. "I think it would be a ball with today's equipment."

Following Val in her successful gymnastics career has been her son named Damien, 41, who won four national titles at junior level.

As Damien now lives in Melbourne, Val is looking for someone to take over Olympic fun & Fitness.

"My husband and I have lived on this property running the gym for 31 years and we are now looking for someone to carry on the program so we can sit back and enjoy," she said. "This time next year, we want to be on a cruise while other people carry on the legacy we have built."

Written by Olivia Vivian - 2008 Olympian in Gymnastics

