

STONE
MASTER
MARATHONERS

SAPIENTIA

August 2013



Introducing the Committee Members

Chairman



John Haine

I have been a member of SMM for 22 years. I joined in 1990 in order to run the London Marathon.

My memory of that event was that I was concerned that the coach would not wait for me as most runners were aiming for under 3 hours. (I was nearly last in for the club in 3.45!). Captain Monica made us all do a 3 mile warm down immediately after we all finished before we were allowed in the pub!

Perhaps 20,000 miles of training and racing later, injuries have made me pack up running. Since SMM has been such a key part of my life I am happy to assist, as much as possible, by taking on the role of Chairman as well as supporting my wife, Sue, who is coming back to running with the club.

I now cycle, walk with the Ramblers, work as a volunteer for Young Enterprise, the National Trust and the Churnet Valley Railway.

Secretary



Lisa Russell

For those of you that don't know me I'm Lisa and I'm Club Secretary although I wear a few hats as the year goes round! I joined the club about 7 years ago after I took up running. I had never run in my life until 4 months before joining SMM. I went through baby grows in a size 18 and just ballooned, so after my second child I decided I wanted to be a fit mum not a fat mum and joined

Weightwatchers. I started running to achieve an ambition of running the London Marathon so donned trainers after I had lost 7 stone (the doctor had said exercise would've killed me at the weight I was) and continued losing over 8 stone which is round about where I am now. SMM has been and continues to be fab. The encouragement and advice in the early days and leading up to my first Marathon was invaluable. I completed it 15 months to the day that I started running in 4hrs15mins. I've made friends that I would never have met and been and done things that I would never have done. I'm usually the one plodding along at the back gassing – although I have been known to make it through the pack towards the front but I do feel queasy when we muster and I'm at the front with no one to follow! I don't do many local races especially of recent years but choose to do LDWA events or travel a little further afield. This year I completed my 7th Great North Run (one of my favourite races) – the pic was taken after my 6th – and I'll be back there for more next year. If I had to pick favourite local races they would probably be the Staffs Knot which I have missed of late but it always reminds me how lucky we are to live close to such amazing places to run, and also the Christmas Cracker which is just such a hoot. If you have any q's about the club then email me on the secretary@stonemm.co.uk address and I will try and answer them for you. Anyway enough – see you soon and happy running.

Captain



Bill Clarke

I have been a member of SMM since 1988. I retired from work in 2002 giving me more time for running. I have been Vice-Captain & Captain for the last 10 years.

Hobbies- I like listening to music, I have been a fan of Burnley since 1958 and like to travel around the country collecting Football Memorabilia mainly to do with Burnley. I also like to go for rides on my bike in the summer months.

As Captain of the club I try to ensure that I attend the club most Wednesdays to ensure the runs are organised whether it be the main run or speed sessions and also to read out race results and talk to potential new members. I see a further component of my job as captain encouraging members to be involved in relays and cross country team events. I also work to make new members welcome. Not running as much as I used to I like to get to races where members are taking a part.



Vice-Captain

Phil Hateley

Phil Hateley ran the 2006 New York City Marathon in memory of his Uncle who had died of cancer earlier that year. Running as part of the Marie Curie Cancer Care Daffodil team Phil finished in a time of 4 hours 11 minutes and raised £3000 for the charity. It was here, in New York, that Phil caught the running bug. 7 years, 7 marathons, 18 half marathons, 1 Ultra marathon, countless other races, many injuries and one extremely bloody trip to Stoke A&E to glue his head back together Phil still very much enjoys his running.

His running highlights are the two London marathons (of which the 2011 race is Phil's marathon PB of 3 hours 19 minutes) and the 50 mile Ultra marathon which took him from Oxford to Henley in 8 hours 30 minutes.

Phil moved to Stone in 2009 with his wife, Verity, and his two daughters, Imogen and Clara. Since moving to the town Phil and the family have had three different addresses and have finally settled on Oulton Road. Phil joined the Stone Master Marathoners shortly after moving to the area and is thrilled to have been asked to take on the Vice Captain role.

Phil is owner and managing director of Launch Music International Ltd.

Treasurer

Tom Johnson

Chief Engineer for a small electronic company based in Blackpool, Tom started running again in his mid-40's after the onset of middle age laziness was noted by the medical profession. Preferring longer distances, since joining SMM Tom has now completed 9 marathons including London, Berlin, Chester, Florence, Venice (cold, very wet and very very windy), The Midnight Sun Marathon in Tromso, Norway and favourite from 2012, the Marathon du Beaujolais Nouveau near Lyon. Always carrying some kind of injury but hoping to complete a few more marathons before complete breakdown.

Membership secretary



Julie Boulton

I joined 'Stone Master Marathoners' in January 2009 after agreeing to enter the Stafford Half Marathon following a few glasses of wine over Christmas. My son and brother had a bet that I wouldn't get round. However, I completed the Stafford Half in 2:18 in 2009, and I've been running ever since. I've seen some amazing countryside

and made lots of wonderful friends, and in 2012 I completed the Stafford Half in less than 2 hours (1:58).

My favourite race last year was the 'Strawberry 5' All Saints School – Church Leigh, I got a PB and more importantly a Strawberry Cream Tea's at the finish.



Sapientia Editor

Rachel Neeld

When my husband Mark joined SMM, I began coming along to all the races to support the club and made many new friends. In 2011 Joyce and John Edwards asked if I would like to get more involved and for me to become editor of Sapientia magazine. I said I would give it a go. I

have done a few issues but I would like to apologise for the delay between the last two issues.

Committee Member

ALISON BRIND

MEMBER 6 YEARS I started as the bar maid and then got

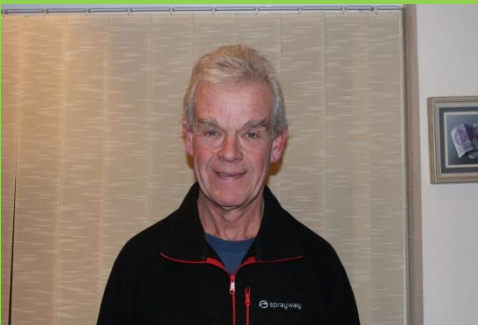


running having been long distance walker.

I JOINED THE CLUB for the pleasure of RUNNING WITH friend's and the motivation to keep on running.

I PREFER LONG RUNS AS YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO SO FAST – LONG BEING UNDER STATEMENT COMPLETED AS MANY ROAD MARATHON AS 100 MILE EVENTS – 17. PREFER MUD AND HILLS. Completed 50 events over 20 miles in my 50th year with the support of club for liver disease awareness. Favourite local races include the Christmas Cracker in fancy dress and the Trigs race on Cannock Chase. Aim to keep on running as long as possible.

Committee Member



Brian Hall

Now one of the older members of the club, I joined some 25 years ago and have spent a good proportion of this time on the committee, including a long spell as secretary. I have always enjoyed running even preferring cross-country to football at school. Whilst not competing myself much these days, my main

interest on the committee is in helping to stage the races which we promote each year, which I believe to be an important part of our interaction with other clubs and runners, but also give a significant contribution to our finances. You will often see my name linked to requests for marshals and general assistance at these events.

A retired engineer, my other hobbies and interests include classic cars and pretty much anything mechanical, I am a volunteer with the Churnet Valley Railway and serve on the management committee of the National Trust's Barlaston Downs Banks. I also enjoy sailing and most outdoor pursuits.

Committee Member

Bernie Priekulis

I've been a member of Stone Master Marathoners since 1995. I'd have joined before but thought that you had to be 40 years old to join (it was actually 35 in the good old days!).



My first race was the Potteries Marathon in 1989 when, with a work colleague, we pushed a wheelchair-bound child round the course. I was hooked and ran the 'Potts' every year until its demise in 2004.

I joined the NSRRA but it was always the longer runs that I enjoyed most, so I joined the Long Distance Walkers Association who welcome runners on their off-road events.

Over the last few years, I've been lucky enough to travel around Europe with other Club members to run Marathons. My favourite Marathon is frequently the last one I've run - and Pertuis in Provence falls into that category at present. My other interests are (in no particular order) cider /wine, Northern Soul and classic / fast cars

Our Races – why do we do it?

I'm sure that when you see the emails from me begging for assistance at our events, your instant reaction is to think "here we go again – I've got to take the dog out, or wash my hair this weekend", much more vital things to do than standing on a junction watching runners jog past without a word of thanks.

Please let me take a few minutes of your time to explain why our races are so important to the Club and you the members.

First, for the newer members, the events which we stage or participate in are:

- 1. Spring Treble Challenge – the brainchild of one of our more senior members David Upton. As the name suggests, this is a series of three races on consecutive Thursday evenings usually in April. These are tough, off-road events each 5 to 6 miles long and have become very popular with local runners. Venues this year were Hanchurch Hills, Milford Common and Barlaston Downs*
- 2. Westbridge 5 – usually in the first week of June and initially linked to Stone Festival, a flat, fast five mile loop along the canal to Aston and back categorised as multi terrain. This race is in the North Staffs Road Runners Association programme of races and is favoured by club runners and fun runners alike*
- 3. Also in June as part of the Stone Festival and to benefit the local community, we help to organise the Steeplechase and Dog Derby on the Monday evening of Festival week*
- 4. Flying Fox 10 – a ten – mile road race around the picturesque lanes of Standon, Chapel Chorlton and Maer. This is usually the last of the annual NSRRA races and attracts a field of between 200 and 300 runners*

So what is so important?

Primarily, income from the events, other than the Festival fun runs, is a vital supplement to the club's finances and

without this your annual subscriptions would at least double. The effect of this would, particularly in today's climate, no doubt deter members from joining or renewing their membership. It is also

possible, from this income, to donate to worthy charities and each year we give hundreds of pounds to charities usually nominated by the various Race Directors.

Organising races and similar events is also a good source of interaction between local clubs; we often exchange ideas and information at these venues which gives a useful insight into the world of running around us.

By no means least, the team spirit which is generated by all who take part in organising our events is excellent and spills over to the runners who all seem to enjoy themselves, no matter how tough the terrain! Your assistance is truly appreciated by the runners, the management committee of the club and particularly by me. The numbers helping, certainly over the past couple of years has grown, making my job easy. We strive to make the events as professional

as possible and this can only be done by working as a team, but it is vital that we have volunteer reserves for the future.

Please remember that it is a rule of the club that all members should help with at least one event each year, a couple of hours out of the whole year is surely not too much to ask!

If you have not yet assisted and wish to do so, there are not just races but also several social events; just ask any one of the organising committee who will be delighted to point you in the right direction.

Thank you all very much for your help in the past, and in the future. It is your club after all! And best wishes for the forthcoming year.

Brian Hall

LE JoG (3 May – 9 May 2012)



It was last year sometime that, a Lands End John O'Groats cycle ride cropped up in a conversation with John Clemens (JC), who most of you will know as a former Club Chairman and active running member, who recently hung up his running shoes, after accepting advice from his body that it was time to seek alternative methods of entertainment. John had had an illustrious running career, bought himself a road bike and proceeded to clock up the miles, locally around the UK on Audax endurance rides up to 600km's and in France and Spain. To him this would be another Endurance ride, to me it was a chance to do it "properly", having done it on mountain bikes, with my lad, many years ago when he was still in short trousers, we camped and it took us over 4 weeks. I was happy to leave the detail planning to JC, regretting being late answering my phone when he queried whether we should build in a rest day, by the time I got in touch he had made an executive decision not to have a rest day! In order to comply with Audax rules we were to cycle at least 200kms a day following a route submitted to Audax UK for approval and complete in 7 days, which was a fair bit quicker than the 10 days or so I had anticipated. At this stage I was slightly concerned as the most I had ridden in a day before was 180km. Never mind, we started doing some longer rides, my preparation culminating in a ride back to my roots in Wiltshire, including some laps of Chippenham ring road to clock up at least 200km, a few beers and a ride back the next day. My Brother in law thought, probably correctly, that I was well round the twist.

JC planned the route in great detail referring to Google earth for tricky junctions, booking trains and overnight accommodation. 2 May we met at Stafford station for the journey to pasty land. The journey down was pleasant enough, we did see a lot of flooded fields, from the 2012 early summer rains, but there was that uneasy feeling about what was to come. I resolved to treat myself to one pint of beer a night during our ride. A gentle ride, in great weather, from Penzance to St Just YHA, was followed by a pub tea, where after two pints, I realised my earlier resolve had weakened worryingly early, shades of our usual Pre Marathon preparation!

3 May; Day 1, Lands End to Crediton; 214km (3475m of climbing) You don't associate Cornwall and Devon to Alpe d'Huez, but it felt like it to me! A tough start, we took in the sites of Redruth, as a bit of an unplanned extra, the hills were not super long, just super steep, it is always disconcerting when you try to change down a gear only realise you are already in the lowest gear. Hill of the day goes to a nice little climb into Liskeard. Leaving Tavistock, I ran out of steam and it was only some of Linda Cooke's cake that got my legs going again. Through Okehampton, quicker than when we used to go through on our Annual holiday drive to Cornwall, we finally found our B&B in Crediton after over 12 hours in the saddle. A nearby pub, looked attractive until our hosts pointed out they were too late to get food, however there was a Weatherspoons in the town about a mile away. It would have been a long hobble, however our hosts provided a chauffeur service, which was well appreciated, fortified with filling food and two pints later we managed, the walk back to the B&B.

Day 2, Crediton to Hereford; 215km (2297m of climbing) This day worried me, it just seemed on paper to be a long way, plus when I did it with my lad following a similar route it had taken us nearer 4 days! Early stiffness in the legs was eased by some really sharp climbs on the way to Tiverton. A headwind was unhelpful approaching Bristol, route finding in Bristol was helped by JC's local knowledge, having lived in the area, some years back, he was moving well and a couple of times he nearly shook me off his tail, however, I

managed to slow him down a bit by dropping my bike on him as we crossed the locks on the River Avon and had to lift the bikes over a fence. JC's local knowledge got us through Avonmouth at some speed, a large lorry getting very close to my cycling buddy, a toll free crossing of the Severn Bridge followed with the fourth food stop of the day in Chepstow. A scenic, flat and fastish ride up the Wye Valley got us to Monmouth, a rather "lumpy" ride got us through to Hereford and our overnight stay in the Premier Inn next to the race course with our lights on. Hill of the day the tidy little drag out of Monmouth, or was it the grind up the Mendips? We were not sponsored by Premier Inns, but the three Premier Inns we used; Hereford, Wigan and Inverness provided great service at less than £15 per person, with overnight garaging of our bikes, at no extra cost, in our room.

Day 3, Hereford to Wigan; 229km (1994m of climbing). A steady day started gently in border country. We did enjoy one really good long descent; however the joy was short lived as our navigation was awry, never mind; left, left again and a right should sort things out. Two snags, the second left is a long, long straight up hill and the right, could be any one of half a dozen lanes not marked on JC's road atlas maps. Somewhat later than planned, we arrive at Harry Tuffins in Church Stoke for a real cyclists refuel. Many lanes lead us to Ellesmere, probably the nearest we get to home, where we have a chance encounter with an End to End signpost indicating quite a few miles to go. We enter JC's regular stamping grounds and the tempo is increasing as we realise there is a fair way to go and time is moving on, bypassing Chester we sped through Helsby of Half Marathon fame, on and on to Warrington over the Mersey and hammering up the A49 trying to get to Wigan and our Premier Inn/Taybarn watering hole before they stopped doing food. Fortunately JC's friends, Ros and Steve, (who were meeting up with us in Wigan with a change of kit) used their charm to keep the buffet open. We made a decent attempt at clearing the buffet and then settled into bed to try and sleep it off. Hill of the day; that long straight "extra hill"



Day 4, Wigan to Langolm:209km (1790m of climbing) A steady day that was quite steady; a flat start, escorted through Preston by a local out on his Sunday ride, the local cyclist, interestingly knew Gethin Butler who holds the LE JoG record of 44 hours 4 minutes! The weather was good and the cycling was easyish,

however the crossing of Shap was looming large, however the well-engineered gradients were negotiated without the need for bottom gear so things were going well, through Penrith, past the water, bananas and other goodies laid out for a supported LE JoG, that we managed to leave in our wake, on through the drizzle into Carlisle. Big decision; take the advantage of some well-known fast food establishments or plough onto to our

destination, risking pubs shutting up shop early on a Sunday. Despite some reservation, on my part, we headed over the border to a great welcome from Alison and Tom, E2E vets, hosting us in a great B&B. The local hostelry was still serving good food and beer that was a little too good; two pints were really not enough. Hill of the day, would have to be Shap for the fear it generated.

Day 5, Langholm to Perth 206km (2393m of climbing) Tom was rather quizzical regarding our route for the day, but after a quick photo call we set off for Moffat. The initial kilometres were over some scenic lumpy lanes, to the first café stop in Moffat. Pushing on to Biggar good progress was made and we headed out of the Southern Uplands into the Glasgow/Edinburgh corridor and on toward Kincardine Bridge to cross the River Forth. The clouds were looking increasingly ominous as we headed up into the Ochil Hills the rain increasing in intensity the higher we went, in the couple of hours it took to get to Perth we got seriously wet and not particularly warm! The B&B gave some respite for us but after warm showers and a change into going out clothes (in my case my none gay shorts, flip flops and a t shirt) out we went; KFC was closed and the chip shop sit in was closed, but would do a takeaway. Which we had and sheltered as best we could from the persistent rain. Have to say that Perth didn't look at it's best that evening! During my recent visit to the nearby Crieff, some months previously, to participate in the 2011 OMM, I coincidentally experienced some similar weather, certainly on the first day. Hill of the day, a nasty little thing about 6k short of Perth.

Day 6, Perth to Inverness 210km (2784m of climbing) JC had spent a lot of time plotting the best route through the Grampian Mountains, but it still looked tough with two ski stations to go through. However first things first, needed to get my still wet, cycling gear dried with the aid of the B&B tumble dryer. The first 50km were pretty steady, in reasonable weather, up through Blairgowrie, then the long drag up to Spittal of Glenshee passing the bare ugly metalwork of the lifts in the skiing area, this was the "high" point of the trip at 2200 feet, followed by a zoom down into Braemar for some welcome lunch. After some sharp ups and downs, we approach a place called Cock Bridge where there was the Hill of the whole ride! We simultaneously agree this was a "push", for the only time in 1500kms. We found it hard to even push up! A pleasant stop off at Tomintoul, was followed by some undulating kms heading out of the Cairngorms. I don't know if it was brought on by the hard climbing, but my rear cassette (those cogs at the back), started to wobble rather disconcertingly, and we were some 40kms from our Inverness destination, a bike mechanic, I am not, I took the lead (for one of the very few times on the trip) and JC kept making reassuring noises, as we linked up with the A9 and headed into Inverness. It was difficult, to pedal gently, to avoid doing further damage, but still keep up a decent tempo, in order to get our Premier Inn, before it stopped serving food. We made it and had a great tea, I pressed some buttons, not all in the right order, on my phone trying to locate a bike shop in town, gave up and made a call to my lad, who knows more about the internet than me and a nearby bike shop was identified.

Day 7, Inverness to John O'Groats 200km (1842m of climbing) I decide not too risk heading on, so bid JC "bon voyage" and visit the bike shop, where the diagnosis was a new back wheel and rear cassette. The boys, stopped their other work and within 45 minutes I was texting JC to say I was on my way. I felt in high spirits crossing the Kessock Bridge, going out of town, even singing! Fortunately nobody could hear, and my spirits subsided somewhat when the sign identified about 120 miles to JoG. Through the Black Isle, and past the Cromarty Firth, heading, in steady drizzle, to Tain, the home of the sixteen men

responsible for producing Glenmorangie. In Tain there was much indecision on where to eat, it was all down to me! It was strange being on my own, I think I chose the crumbiest café in town! Out of Tain my spirits were lifted by some low flying fighter jets, they helped me get over Dornoch Bridge. To my next stop at Brora, by the seaside. A visit to the local Co op, to buy the usual reduced price sandwiches and a bottle of the also usual Pepsi Max; a word on the Co ops; throughout the trip they were always there with the essential fuel, once Linda C's cake had been finished. I don't know how we would have gone on without them. The miles were coming down, Hill of the Day, was a long grind out of Helmsdale, texts were exchanged with JC confirming we were both on for JoG. I decided to keep on the A9, a slightly more direct route, in order to close the gap a little, there was a bit of Scott and Amundsen, at this stage; although I hoped that JC Admundsen, would still be at the finish! I found it impossible to pass the Wetherspoons in Wick, without some more food and pint of Pepsi, which helped as the last 20 miles became quite a pull against consistent head wind, on the last mile I was pedalling quite hard hoping to catch up with, and ride in with JC, he was already there, actually looking quite lonely, with the souvenir shop shut and the day trippers and even the gulls long gone, it was about 8-15! I think we were both quite pleased, that all objectives had been met, we had done it with a combined age of 124 and no support! I always think a good handshake is appropriate for such occasions, followed by a picture as proof, a young lady charmingly took the pics. Formalities over last objective was to drink more than 2 pints! However here we failed, the pub was shut, so it was off to the B&B, JC on the coffee and me on the non alcoholic ginger beer (scrounged from the B&B), however there was time lay on the bed and reflect on the trip.

Day 8; *Visited Durness Head, the northern most point in the Scottish mainland, then wander around Thurso waiting for the afternoon train to Inverness, looking out for landmarks we had last seen from the bikes. Then the overnight sleeper to Crewe; I think the overnight sleeper, is an acquired taste, especially without a bed!*

Where next? Possibly Ireland



Thanks to JC for allowing me to use his original journal article as the basis for this narrative.

Runnin' and Rock Hoppin'

South African Style:

Lynne Shepley

Hi there everyone and a special hello to all those new SMM members who have joined the club this year – you made a great choice! For those of you who don't know us, Frank and I are SMM club members who left the UK for The Western Cape in January of this year. We are living in a place called Hout Bay which is about a 20 minute drive south of Cape Town and in the Table Mountain National Park. Hout Bay is on the Atlantic Coast surrounded by the mountains of The Cape Peninsula which stretches from Cape Town in the north for around 50 miles to Cape Point (The Cape of Good Hope to you and me) in the South.

South Africans love running and we had intended to do loads of running out here but, as usual, the best laid plans of mice and men intervened and I have been struggling with injury for months. We did a couple races early in the year but nothing for a while. However I am finally improving and back into training so hoping to get back soon. In the meantime we have been to watch three fantastic races whilst out here – Comrades, Two Oceans and The Puffer so will try to give you a flavour of what these races are all about and wet your appetites for a visit out to SA next year!

The Comrades Marathon



Running through Camperdown

The Winner Comes into the Stadium in Durban

The Comrades Marathon (www.comrades.com) has been run every year since 1921 and next takes place on June 2nd 2013. First of all it is not a marathon; it is actually 89k or 56 miles long and is a road race which takes place between Durban and Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal province. It is a massive event, this year attracting just over 19,500 runners and just over 11,00 finishers, and each year it runs in a different direction. This year it started in Pietermaritzburg at the foot of the Drakensburg mountains and finished in Durban on the coast, next year the direction will be reversed. Various SMM club members

have done this race – most recently Tony Moore and Mick Statham. It starts in the early morning dark at around 5.30am and importantly has a cut off time of 17.30 – any later than this and they pull you out of the race! The Comrades is a cherished national treasure and attracts thousands of spectators and television viewers every year. We watched the race as it wound through Camperdown and finally saw all the finishers come into the stadium in Durban including a legend of The Comrades, Bruce Fordyce and Zola Budd (remember her of the bare feet?) The winning time was set by a South African runner Mambolobo at 5h 31 mins 03 secs.

The Two Oceans comes through Hout Bay – on a wet and windy day!!!



Pakololo's; Our Local in Hout Bay

Linda Doke of Hout Bay harriers

The Two Oceans Marathon (www.twooceansmarathon.org.za) is another non marathon – it is in fact 56k or around 34.8 miles long and will next take place on March 30th 2013. Unlike the Comrades it is in the Western Cape province starting and finishing at Cape Town University campus. It is a very scenic course, all on road taking in views of beautiful coastal villages, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, Table Mountain National Park and the Indian and Atlantic Oceans on either side of The Cape Peninsula. Most importantly it runs through Hout Bay so we can give you a shout! It is very challenging and includes the beautiful but notorious Chapmans Peak Drive and a hellish steep mountain pass about 3 miles long towards the end of the race from Hout Bay up to Constantia Nek. SMM club member Lew Badger has done this race. It has been going since 1970 and in 2012 there were around 9,000 runners. There is also a half marathon which attracts around 16,000 runners. The Marathon was won this year in a time of 3h 08 min by Stephen Muzhingi of Zimbabwe.

The Puffer



Rock Hoppin' and Trail Runnin' up the Cape Peninsula

The Puffer (www.puffer.fishhoekac.com) is 80k or around 48 miles long and is definitely not for the faint hearted; it is very scenic but entirely off road and it is exceedingly tough. The 2013 date has not yet been finalised but this year it took place August 26th and there were 106 runners. The race starts at Cape Point and runs all the way up the Cape Peninsula, up and down mountain tracks, trails and rocks, finishing at Cape Town Victoria Waterfront. I do not know of any SMM members who have done this race but this year the ladies race was won by our friend Linda Doke in 8h 29 mins 54 secs. The mens' winning time was 6h 59 mins 36 secs.

A few certified nutters do The Tuffer Puffer which involves running from Cape Town Victoria Waterfront to Cape Point the day before The Puffer and then returning with the main race. This year the weather was dreadful – rainstorms and high winds – and all the men in The Tuffer Puffer (5) pulled out en route leaving the women (2) to take the glory. The Tuffer Puffer was won by Janette Terblanche in a time of 24 hours and 32 minutes. (Anyone remember The Penkhull Puffer?)

So if you call yourself a runner get your entry sorted for one of these now. You may be wondering what else there is to do in The Western Cape after you have finished your race and what the weather will be like? Well, the Winter months (June to August) have temperatures averaging around 16 degrees with some sunny days and some very rainy, windy days. Summer (January to March) is warmer and drier, typically 24 degrees, but there is always a cooling wind due to the location of The Western Cape Peninsula at the meeting of the Atlantic and Indian oceans. Should you opt for Comrades beware that Durban tends to be very hot all year round though with more rain in the Summer than in the Winter.

Table Mountain and The V&A Waterfront, Cape Town



The Western Cape has lots of outdoor activities – running, hiking, sailing, rock climbing, golfing, swimming, surfing, paragliding, whale watching – take your pick. There are lots of restaurants and bars and the food and drink is excellent quality with good service and very cheap compared to the UK. Cape Town itself is enchanting; you have the backdrop of Table Mountain and its eye wateringly high cable car, the V&A Waterfront with its chic shops, bars and restaurants, the beautiful Company Gardens and the World Cup football stadium to name but a few attractions. The Cape is also famous for its wines and there are numerous vineyards to visit and wines to taste as well as a colony of penguins to walk amongst and the breath taking Cape Point with its historic lighthouse and jaw dropping views of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. The Western Cape is very safe as is The Garden Route which runs from the Western to the Eastern Cape alongside the Indian Ocean – another area to explore and enjoy.

We are keeping in touch with SMM and members through Facebook, the SMM website, email, skype and of course Bryan Dale's race photo website. Its lovely to hear all about the Wednesday night runs, the Sunday morning runs, the social evenings and the very successful Thursday beginners group. We just want to wish you all the very, very best running – we love our new life but we miss our running mates! Take care and keep truckin'!



Lynne & Frank Shepley

The Dave Clarke 5K

Steve Alder



I wasn't planning to run this race however as it had replaced the Leek half marathon in the north staffs road runners calendar and I was riding high in group E, I had no choice but to run. 5K to me is a horrid distance. Too short to get into a rhythm, yet too far to go full out from the start.

As this was a Thursday night race it meant an early finish in the office, so the made up Doctors appointment was given to the boss (I used the dentist excuse for the staffs knot). Therefore with plenty of time on my hands, I made my way to the race which was held at Longton rugby club. I made such good time that I arrived before any other runner. In fact I was there before any organisers. As I pinned my number to my vest I noticed the accompanying letter showed the race is held at Trentham Rugby club and not Longton. A mad dash to the correct venue meant I still had time for a warm up and a chat to fellow runners.

A quick scout around revealed all my fellow Group E rivals were in attendance, also the newest member of the stone master marathoners Tom Wilson, a young ginger lad who looked 9 stone wet through had been

running with Joyce Edwards Thursday night beginners group. He proudly told me and Pam Davies he was hoping for a time under 20 minutes. I tried to keep a straight face and wished him good luck.

I had brought a new pair of trainers 4 weeks previous however due to our wonderful climate I hadn't had the chance to wear them just in case they got dirty on one of our wonderful off piste club runs. However this being a road runner's race meant roads and tarmac, I was confident I would finish the race in still white and new looking trainers. How wrong could I be? As I looked at the map of the course it appeared there wasn't a single road in sight, only fields and a few dirt tracks.

As we congregated on the start line I pushed myself as close to the start line as I could. The normal announcements were made and then a hearty round of applause for Dave Clarke who's memory this race was being run. A founder member and a hard working member of Trentham running club.

The starting whistle was blown and we were off. A lap of the rugby pitches then onto what

seemed like a ploughed field. As my feet sunk into the mud and the brown cold wet liquid sunk through my socks I knew I would never see my new white trainers again. We came off the rugby club onto a single tracked foot path which climbed for about a quarter of a mile. The pace was high and I was already breathing heavy. A slight downhill followed and we then turned right onto a farm track which continued downhill. This meant I could open my legs and try to get a bit of a rhythm. Just as I was feeling comfortable not only did 1 of my fellow group E members pass me, but 4 of them, which included 61 year old Melvyn Cole, who only has the 24 years on me and our own Steve Brooks who glides and floats rather than runs. I tried to keep close to them as we came to the canal. We were all slightly held up as we had to get through a small gate single file and up several steps on the canal path. Once on the path I had lost ground on my fellow group members. A quick mental calculation and I knew if no other group E members passed me I would finish with 46 points which would still improve my season's average.

As we came to the end of the canal path I suddenly felt terribly sick. As I looked up to my right I realised it was nothing to worry about. It was only the sight of the Britannia stadium. What a horrible place it looks! We turned left onto another footpath, feeling good I decided to try and close the gap on 2 fellow group E's who had increased their distance too far. As the course was basically a large circle the early long downhill meant a long climb and as I looked up my fears were confirmed as up very high in the distance were little dots, which in fact were fellow yet faster runners. The head went down, the stride was shortened and with a bigger push

of the arms, I managed to get to the top of the hill and in turn moved up several positions. As we returned to the farm track with only about half a mile to go another bloody group E member passed me. It was Phil from Trentham with a cheery hello and keep it going he speed out of sight. As I got to the highest point of the course I looked down onto the rugby club and knew the finish was close. As we dropped down onto the rugby club a quick lap around the pitches which included the ploughed field just to ensure the trainers were totally mudded it was a race to the finish. With Adrian from Cheadle running club only a few meters in front of me and a fellow group E it was a chance to obtain an extra point. Unfortunately he glanced over his shoulder saw me and opened his legs and also the distance between us.

I tripped over the finish line into a knackered heap unable to catch my breath in a time of 22.30 and 45 north staffs road runners points. As I got to my feet I was met by the little ginger chap, Tom Wilson, who happily told me he had flown around in a time of 19.39. When he goes on to be club champion I can proudly say I was there with him on the start line of his first race.

As I spoke to fellow club runners, not that there were many of us, then again there never is these days and checked times and stories of the race then with a few well done and a couple of never mind, better luck next time, it was off home for a shower, a well-deserved pint and to look forward to my next race which was the Ipstones 5 miler. I have never run it before. Sounds like a nice flat pb race to me.

Chairman's Ramblings

Firstly welcome back to Rachel our editor.

'I've never laughed so much!' a comment made by Anne-Marie summing up the Coast to Coast relay. This was a tremendous effort by many not least of which was the superb organisation by Phil Hateley. I understand he is already looking into wicked challenges for 2014.

The club continues to thrive in all aspects of road running from beginners to serious road and endurance racing. More of the members are now competing as beginners gain skills and confidence to enter races.

Our Spring Treble race series has once again been a great success with positive feedback from competitors. Thanks to Dave Upton and all the helpers.

Bernie's plans for the 2014 Flying Fox marathon appear to be well on track.

Your new committee has met following the AGM and we were joined by John Finney, chair of the Staffs Athletics network and England Athletics Midlands member, and also Cath Pendleberry who has helped the beginners group in training the trainers.

The committee has decided to review the strategy for the beginners group and will be looking for contributions from interested parties.

Some concern has been expressed about 'Breakaway groups'. The club provides a structure including premises, insurance, affiliation, trained trainers, rules, 'brand' etc.

A little reminder all members that the use of the tennis club outside the times agreed, training by unqualified members, the use of other facilities in the clubs' name etc. must have prior approval of the committee. No member may claim to represent the club or comment to the press unless expressly authorised.

Membership

The Club has become extremely successful in introducing beginners to running. Stone MM membership has grown by around 40 new members in the year! Credit must go to the excellent efforts of not only club members but also new qualified trainers from within the Thursday team.

Our races

Once again the club has had an excellent year of race organisation culminating in the Flying Fox 10 with over 200 finishers. Many thanks to all those who helped organise and assist in these events. Please remember these races ensure not only the excellent reputation of the club but also enable us to hold our subscriptions at a sensible level.

Half of the runners entering our races (99 in the Flying Fox) run as part of the NSRRA (North Staffs Road Runners Association) league.

NSRRA

It has been a tradition of the club to support the NSRRA. This organisation encourages individuals, teams and clubs to compete. There is no better way of improving performance than by setting targets and measuring your success through competition.

At the present time there are about 20 of our members competing in the NSRRA league. Whilst some of these are achieving excellent placing, the club has slipped in general due to the lack of numbers.

We think that not many newcomers are aware of the NSRRA and the great opportunities it offers to race, compete and improve!

Details are on their website www.nsrta.org.uk and to quote:

'North Staffordshire Road Runners Association was set up in July 1974 to promote road running in the North Staffordshire region. Members are organised into groups based on ability. There are six mens and two ladies groups. There are also leagues for different age groups 40 to 44, 45 to 50 etc.

Each year 20 races are chosen to go into the NSRRA programme and the best 12 performances in these races count towards the league competition. In each of the events the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th etc in each group receives 50, 49, 48, 47 etc points.

Membership costs £10.00 per annum.'

At the time of writing (March 2013 sorry for delay again from Rachel) Gerald Davis, Terence Murphy, Mac McCoig, Kevin Uzzell, Philip Cooke, Rita Banks, Pam Davis (group winner), Joyce Edwards, Anne-Marie Mountford, Rachel Yates and Claire Valentine all feature in the top ten of their age groups!

Our team performance currently has our ladies in 4th place and our men team in 8th.

Well done to all the competitors in achieving results in your own terms.

My wish for 2013 would be to see many more club members competing now that we have a significant number of new (and younger!) members.

News from the Committee

The club has contributed £500 towards the cost of a new and improved boiler at the Tennis Club.

A revived 'C to C' weekend is proposed for over a long week end next year. More details to follow in a Batflash.

We are without a social secretary. Although several members are covering this role we would welcome a volunteer to come forward.

The club has become affiliated to the Staffordshire Athletics Network which provides support from England Athletics.

Date for your diary... 25 May 2014 Flying Fox Marathon. Better start training now!

The committee is aware of proposals for Westbridge Park. The details are unclear but we will endeavour to keep ourselves informed of the proposals and consultations.

Captain Bill's Mamouth report

As this is the first report for a while (Partly my fault) I am doing a summary of events since January 2013 in which Alison Brind won runner of the month award for her runs at the Hardmoors 30 miles 1st LV50 in a time of 6hrs 15mins and the following week 2hrs 38 mins at the Cannock Chase Trig Point. Phil Hatley also ran a long distance in January called Country to Capital, which was from Wendover to Paddington he finished in 7hrs 26 mins. Into the month of February Alison was again busy running the Rumbold Stide 24 miles at Leeds and The South Shropshire Circular also 24 miles. In the popular Alsager 5 Tim Hulse was 1st SMM in 34mins 4 secs, Pam Davies 1st Lady SMM lady and 2nd LV60. There were quite a few new members who ran the race with Richard Fain 2nd for the club with 36 mins 4 secs and a PB. At the Katherine

House Hospice Endurance Challenge 5 miles Tom Wilson again one of our newer recruits finished a creditable 8th overall in 41mins 4secs. Phil Cooke was runner of the month for February. At the start of March Tom Wilson again ran well at the Cheadle 5 with a time of 30mins 59secs and Lisa Cooke achieved a PB of 7mins with 44mins 26secs. Following on from the Cheadle 5 came the Stafford 20 Tim Hulse was 1st SMM member for the club in 2hrs 17mins. Andy Osgothorpe ran a PB of 2hrs 51mins. Hannah Beeley and Julie Ebrey ran the there first longer distance for the club Hannah in 3hrs 13mins Julie 3hrs 55mins. Joyce Edwards received the over 65 award with a time of 3hrs 55mins. The same day Phil Hatley ran a PB at the Fradley 10k in a time of 40mins 47secs. There were also PB's for Claire Valentine and Paul

Phillips. The weekend of March 17th we had 51 members taking part in races Barcelona Marathon, Liverpool Half and Stafford Half. Six club members ran the Barcelona Marathon Jim Holland leading them home in 3hrs 24mins. Phil Hateley was the sole member who ran the Liverpool half in 1hr 29mins 35secs a PB of ten seconds and the Stafford Half Roger Taylor first SMM in 1hr 24mins with a PB, Linda Cooke first lady member to finish in 1hr 35mins 51secs and 1st LV50. Pam Davies and Joyce Edwards were 1st in their age groups John Cooke 2nd MV60. Of the PB's on the day two that caught my eye were Fabien Carbonell with an 8min PB and Julie Ebrey a 9min PB. The runner of the month for March was Phil Hately. Moving into April I had noticed there were quite a few longer distance races of which Alison ran the Coventry way 40 miles she was 3rd Lady overall, the Caverdale Hike 37miles the Dorset Giant 100k and the Fellsman 100k that by my reckoning is just over 200miles. Other club runners ran longer races Fabien Carbonell in the French Marathon is first in 3hrs 41mins. Phil Cooke Three Shires 29 miles when I asked him for his time he said it seemed forever(8hrs 59mins) Phil Hateley Worcester Marathon 3hrs 30mins, The London Marathon Steve Fenney 2 hrs 51mins, Gemma Butterfield first SMM lady 4hrs 7mins and Julie Ebrey 4hrs 45mins her first marathon. Roger Taylor Fellsman 100k in 16hrs. Cracovia Marthon in Poland Jim Holland 3hrs 25mins. Phil Hately 2 weeks after Worcester the Manchester in 3hrs 22mins and Hannah Beeley the Shakespeare

marathon in 4hrs 28mins her first one. The shorter races in April Roger Taylor took part in all 3 Spring Treble Races finishing in the top 10 at each one and at the Newcastle 10k Kevin Uzzell showed the younger members the way home finishing 1st SMM club runner in 44mins 36secs and 2nd MV65, Rachel Yates was 1st Lady member in 48mins 55sec, Joyce Edwards 1st LV65. The runner of the month for April was Steve Fenney. The month of May started off with the Coast to Coast which was organised by Phil Hately going from St Bees to Robin Hood Bay. The rest of May there were again a variety of distances Chester half Paul Phillips ran a PB of 1hr 47mins 10secs. The popular Market Drayton 10k22 club members ran. Tom Wilson 1st for the club 36mins 16secs Gemma Butterfield 1st Lady member 47mins 16secs PB. There were also PB's for Simon Mansell 6mins Katie Connor and Lacey Walker. Pam Davies was once again 1st LV60. 3 days after Market Drayton again another 10k Clayton and another great turnout. Tony Wilkes came in 1st for the club in 41 mins 10secs with Rachel Yates 1st Lady 46mins 38secs and Pam Davies 1st LV60. Over the longer distances Roger Taylor ran the Scafell Pike Trail Marathon with a time of 5hrs 20mins the long distance walkers 100k Camel- Teign Ivors Dream Alison Brind & Kevin Uzzell came home in 29hrs 51mins and 34hrs 29mins. The Lerder Marathon in the Netherlands Steve Parker finished in 3hrs 20mins. The runner of the month in May was Paul Phillips. In June we had 25 members ran the Westbridge 5 Tom Wilson came 1st for the club in 30mins 12secs, Rachel

Yates 38mins 32secs 1st SMM lady and Pam Davies 1st LV60. Clair Broach had a with a PB of 41mins 55secs. The following night Tom Wilson came 1st with his dog in the festival Dog Derby. At the Potters Arf on a warm bright day Tom Wilkes came home 1st for the club 1hr 32mins again Rachel Yates 1st Lady member in 1hr 45mins. Pam Davies and Joyce Edwards were 1st in there age groups, Alison Brind finished in 1hr 47mins in the Potters Arf having run the Baslow Boot Bash 27 miles the day before in 5hrs 12mins. Roger Taylor who also ran the Boot Bash came 2nd overall in 4hrs 19mins. Russell Cox who had only joined the club three weeks before tackled the British Middle Distance Triathlon at Nottingham which incorporated a 1.9 swim, 50 mile bike ride and a half marathon came home in 5hrs 22mins. The middle of June at the member in 44mins 33secs and John Cooke 2nd MV60 there were at least 14 PB's for club members. Well done. At the end of the month Alison Brind finished off where she started at the beginning of January by running the Ring of Shap 100k and 1st lady in 15hrs 25mins. Rachel

really good run and finished

Shugborough relays on a lovely evening we entered 13 teams the most I can remember in my time and from the looks on your faces , 50 mile bike ride and a half marathon came home in 5hrs 22mins. The middle of June at the Shugborough relays on a lovely evening we entered 13 teams the most I can remember in my time and from the looks on your faces ou all enjoyed it. At the St Michaels 10k four days after the relays we had another big turnout 38 members and also many other members helping out. It was a lousy wet cold day but that didn't stop so many of you running well. Mark Neeld 1st SMM member in 35mins 19secs and 1st MV45. Rachel Yates yet again 1st lady

Yates was runner of the month for June. Just to finish I would like to thank Rachel Neeld for her patience waiting for this report.

Bill