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David McMillan – President 2006-2007



Photo by Alan Mead

Like most of us, Dave’s career in athletics started while he was still at school, and once the bug had bitten, he wanted more. One of his scouting friends, ‘Noddy’ Edwards, already a Belgrave Harrier himself, suggested that he came along to Battersea Park to join in the training there. Thus it was, on the 20th August 1962, that the young Dave McMillan joined Belgrave, little realising that it was to be a large part of his life.

In those early days his main interests were jumping and sprinting, which brought him under the beady coaching eye of Frank Simmons who proved to be a hard but very good taskmaster. He also met up with contemporaries, such as John Martin, George Flanagan, and Pat & Alan Mead, (who were not of course married at that time)

In those days during the winter season all the youngsters pitched in together making up the road running and cross-country teams. It was in one of these teams for the Surrey CC Championships, held on a bitterly cold and icy day over Epsom Downs, Dave has recalled coming last in the race but

securing Bel’s third team spot and thus winning his only ever County medal. Dave ignored the advice of one local journalist who reported – “Young McMillan should give up. It was not right that he should be awarded a County medal for coming last!” – how wrong that comment was to prove.

David absorbed himself in club life helping out and supporting socials, jumble sales and the dinner/dances.

As time went by he turned his attentions more to road running which he still continues to enjoy in spite of having an exacting job as a journalist and broadcaster with accompanying unsociable hours, and also having a young family to look after.

Dave first got into marathon running by competing in the old Windsor to Chiswick Poly Marathon. He then entered the first London Marathon, when he achieved another of his ‘claims to fame’ by passing Dave Bedford outside Buckingham Palace!

He went on to complete another 15 London Marathons until in 1996 tragedy struck when, while out training, he was struck by a speeding motorist and landed up in hospital with multiple injuries. These consisted of four fractures to his right leg, a fractured right arm, five broken ribs, severed nerves, a punctured lung and a fractured shoulder blade.

Such injuries would have finished most people – in fact it would have finished Dave but for the actions of a courageous paramedic who realised that this casualty would be dead before the ambulance reached hospital unless an operation was immediately carried out. Oxygen was failing to get to the blood and Dave’s right lung was collapsing. The ambulance pulled into a lay-by and a needle thoracotomy was carried out – the first time that this operation had ever been successful. His saviour was voted Paramedic of the Year.

Even while still in hospital Dave told visitors that he was determined to get back to running, and after series of operations and a lapse of two years, this he did, going on to complete another five “London’s”.

In addition he has now clocked up 125 half marathons and countless other races over distances from 5 to 10 km as well as road relays. His best times, all achieved in the year before his accident, are 3:03 for the Marathon; 1:21 for the half marathon and 38 minutes for 10 km.

For some years Dave was away from the normal Belgrave day to day activities, living at various times in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Warwickshire. However on his return to live in Ewell he casually mentioned to the late Bill Couzens that he would like to help out in Club affairs. To say this to Bill made him a “marked man”, and thus it was in 1999, that he became our Treasurer, a job he has carried out with such thoroughness and efficiency ever since.

He was made a Life Member in 2003 and, it must be noted, has been the Club’s Darts Champion for the last two years, a title he first won 30 years ago

Dave may not be the fastest road runner on our books but no one pulls on a Belgrave vest with more passion and pride than he does. He has made many friends and acquaintances in athletics outside of Belgrave, and has consequently become a great ambassador for this Club.

In overcoming adversity he is an inspiration to us all and we are honoured to have him as our President for the coming year.

Gordon Biscoe

Spencer Barden and Charlie Dickinson elected Life Members

Spencer Barden joined Belgrave Harriers in October 1998. He immediately became a regular in our British League teams and contributed to that huge run of team track successes that took us through the millennium and beyond. At the same time our distance running activities were waxing strong and he was the cornerstone of our successes in Southern and National Road Relays – both at 6 stages and 12, featured in our National Cross Country Relay win and also led our team home on that glorious day in February 2004 when we lifted the National Cross Country title at Leeds: he was 5th that day and was followed up by Belgravians in 6th, 16th, 22nd, 48th and 73rd; a 56 year drought had ended.

After that “National”, when the crowds had gone, just as is seen after the Lord Mayor’s Show, the Belgrave baggage handlers and tent dismantlers moved into action. Spencer stayed to do his part and when told by ecstatic supporters that he should be resting after his sterling efforts on the course, Spen replied: “I’ll not always be a runner but I will always be able to help carry the bags.”

Most road relay runners like to run early. But Spen is the sort of man who, having cast an eye over the running order, has said to his team manager: “You know, this could be tight. I’ll go last if you want me to.” And when we took that course of action he ended up holding off the attention of the hugely talented Mohammed Farah who closed to within six seconds but failed to snatch gold from the Bels.

Now 33 and with personal bests behind him ranging from 3:39.64 for 1500 metres and 3:58.5 for the mile, right through to 66:22 for a half marathon – having been 4th in the IAAF World Junior Championships at 5000 metres and a competitor in the World Cross Country Championships once as a junior and three times as a senior – having represented his country many other times on the track and at cross country, Spencer has recently retired from competition at international level. He has taken on a position with UK Athletics as Senior Co-ordinator for Endurance Running and is using his expertise and experience to put something back into our sport.

We’ve had the pleasure of knowing **Charlie Dickinson** now for approaching twenty years.

Having competed at cross country as a youth in the colours of Thames Valley Harriers and again during his first year at university, football then took over his sporting life.

Charlie’s next foray into athletics didn’t come until the ’80s when he was attracted to join over six thousand others and run the very first London Marathon. Thrice more during this decade he ran from Greenwich to The Mall as a jogger and he also won his age group in *The Sunday Times* “Fun Run”. Slowly, the running bug had taken hold. Charlie finally gave up football to become a runner and he joined Belgrave Harriers at the age of 39 in December 1987.

Within a few months of joining, Charlie became a veteran – and immediately began an assault on “vets” competition that has lasted to this day. Within a couple of months he had won the Surrey Veterans Cross Country title

Since then Charlie has raced at all levels of competition from VAC events on Wimbledon Common and Battersea track to British, European and World Veteran Championships, running all over the globe. In 1999 in the M50 age group he was 3rd at 10,000m in the World Championships at Gateshead and then the following year he took bronze at the same distance in the European event at Jyväskylä in Finland. But he had something special lined up in Finland, for four days later he returned to the track to win the 5,000m with a storming last

two laps that ground the challenge out of the opposition. In 2001 he medalled again in the World Championship in Brisbane, Australia with bronze over both 25 and 12½ laps.

As an M55, in 2003, Charlie dominated the British track scene with a 1,500m/5,000m championship double on the same day at Derby and set a British M55 best for 1500m of 4:26.5. In November he won the Home Countries International Cross County at Cardiff by over a minute. “Since then”, he tells us ruefully, “I’ve been injured!”

But veteran athletics is just one of the facets of Charlie’s life in athletics. He has served on the Committee of Belgrave Harriers, assisted in the management of senior teams in road running and cross country, worked on the production of *The Belgravian*, and above all else has advised a whole string of runners, men and women, on their training. Many of his ideas on training were developed while working with Arthur Bruce, his own mentor. As he gets older, and a little slower, his pace has fitted in nicely with that of our female middle-distance runners and a good bunch now train with Charlie from Battersea in the week and Belgrave Hall on a Saturday. Even daughter Rosie has got in on the act, encouraging and jogging with those who prefer their running to be a little less serious.

Alan Mead

Other A.G.M matters

Mostly it was a case of “as you were” as many of those who run our club continue in office. But we can’t let the retirement of Eric Hall from Committee life go unmentioned. For the last two years he has acted as Assistant Secretary, taking minutes at our Committee Meetings and AGM, and for the last four years he has been our Finance Secretary, running our Finance Committees and offering advice on many related matters. We’ll miss his expertise. Neither of these places were filled at the meeting.

Another position that remains unfilled is that of keeping track of some of our older members and those whose health is not so good – Welfare Secretary. Mavis Hall says she will continue to do this job as much as possible – as long as people can keep her informed of the situation of such people.

We thank you both.

Awards – 2006

Each year we present the *Tommy Green Cup* to the male Belgravian whose performance during the year is judged by the Committee to be the “most meritorious”. The *Centenary Cup* is awarded for the best female performance.

For 2006 the *Tommy Green Cup* goes to Phillips Idowu for his gold medal winning performance of 17.45m in the triple jump at the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne.

The Centenary Cup will be engraved with the name of Michelle Carey for her winning performance of 56.31 seconds in the 400 metre hurdles at the Loughborough European Athletics Permit Meeting.

The Bill Merryman Cup for the Young Belgravian of the Year goes to Ryan Thomas for his great improvement over 400 metres and his consistent support of our British Athletics League and Golden Jubilee Cup teams.

Social Diary Dates

Saturday, November 18th – Belgrave Annual Dinner, this year at Belgrave Hall – tickets and further information from Brian Pritchard –01737 858344.

Saturday, December 2nd – *The Denmark Pot* for the Belgrave Darts Championship, Belgrave Hall, 7pm.

Saturday, 13 January – Quiz Night, Belgrave Hall.

Hon. Secretary's Report to AGM 2006

It has been another fascinating and fulfilling year for our beloved club, in which we continue to make our presence felt in a major way on the British athletic scene. Each year we record and report on over 2,000 athletic feats from our members, ranging from someone hopping over a 1-metre pole-vault height to gain a valuable point for the club, to someone being crowned a Commonwealth champion as has also been the case this year. But let there be no doubt that the pole-vaulter is just as important to the framework of our club as the winners of major championships. All our members are deeply prized assets, and rest assured that whatever you contribute to the club, however minor, is greatly appreciated.

We lost two valued members in the past year. Back in February 1995, George Piddington had collapsed of a major heart attack and we summarised his life and achievements in the *Belgravian*, whilst ending our piece with the rallying cry of "Come on George, pull through, we're all thinking of you." Perhaps he heard our plea as he did pull through for another 11 years. He finally left us on December 22, 2005. George was the archetypal Chirpy cockney who lived life to the full. He was our Press Secretary for many years, and he completed 50 marathons (the last one in a wheelchair). I see from our report of 11 years ago, that on Monday evenings he used to make a round trip of 160 miles in order to compete in our veterans' Track and Field League matches.

Geoff Davis died on 29 November 2005. He was our President during 1982-83 when his old club Surrey AC amalgamated with Belgrave Harriers. He was a Life Vice-President of Surrey County AA and when he moved to Cambridgeshire in later life became Chairman of both Peterborough AC and Cambridgeshire AA.

The road and cross-country season of 2005-6 was book-ended by two memorable road-relays. In October we grimly set out to win the National 6-stage title for the fifth year in succession in the face of fierce opposition. Bingley are the other club with 5 wins to their name, but theirs came over a 16-year period. In the race we didn't feature strongly on the leaderboard until the final two legs when Stephen Sharp and Spencer Barden calmly and incisively stole the race away from our rivals. A month earlier we had won the Southern six-stage in a race we bossed from the gun, and last March in a rather drab day, our rivals 'forgot to turn up', so to speak, as won the Southern 12-stage by 7 minutes.

At the National 12-stage we were confident of our 4th win in 5 years but on a haywire day we had to relinquish our crown. Our normally precise team manager had a slip up he tends to make about once every 15 years and left one of our key men off our list of 72 entered runners. Paul Freary handled the disappointment of his execution with grace and charm and still gave his all for the B's. Another man to shine on the day was David Anderson whose calf muscle went with just a mile gone of his crucial long stage. Far from shutting off power, DA gritted his teeth through the pain and still operated at 5-minutes-per-mile pace, to return one of the most courageous performances ever in a Belgrave vest. We ended up 3rd, but our team, which is full of young pucks, has an average age of just 25, and we like to believe is just getting warmed up.

We were significantly quieter than we'd like over the country this winter, although there were still some fine individual performances from the likes of Phil Wicks, and we started more runners than on any occasion in our history at the National cross at Parliament Hill. But for now ownership of any of the Surrey League, County champs, South of the Thames, Southern, National and 4-stage Relay remain out of our hands... something we are very keen to address in the coming months.

The Belgrave women's team had another solid winter as they look to build their squad around runners of the pedigree of Birhan Dagne, Catherine Bryson and Sarah Murphy. Not too much gold this winter but plenty of podium finishes, until suddenly, just when one was looking the other way, the Belles were crowned National 10 kilometre champions for the road, with manager Catherine Eastham closing in the team. Other highlights included 2nd in the Surrey League behind the Ranelagh juggernaut, 15th in the National Cross, 8th in the Southern 6-stage, a praiseworthy 17th in the National 6-stage, and a terrific bronze in the London Marathon. Birhan Dagne continues to shine in half-marathons up and down the country. In the space of a week she won Hastings and was crowned National champion at Liverpool.

Onto the summer's activities, and in a brilliant piece of reverse psychology, I all but pensioned off our legendary British League team manager Bill Laws in last year's report, which had just the desired effect of him roaring back into action for this year's competition, bigger, badder and better than ever. The first three matches were extremely hard fought before we eased away to take the League in seemingly comfortable fashion - which let me assure you it was anything but, as Woodford Green fought us all the way. One of the highlights came in the last match when a retired Justin Chaston, vacationing over in England, pinged an impeccable 8:50 for the 'chase.

In the UK Women's League - we again won promotion - to Division Two where the competition will be immensely stronger in 2007. Our young athletes in partnership with Sutton AC performed well in the SE Division 2 of the National League and won two of their 3 matches. Our Junior athletes placed second in the National League's Brent Division.

In the individual stakes, at the Commonwealth Games - Phillips Idowu went some way to avenging his garish hiccup at the Athens Olympics by winning the triple jump. A total of 12 Belgravians competed at the Games.

At the European Championships - we boasted the likes of Benjamin, Idowu, Sayers, Carey, Gillick, Chambers, Kapek, Dinham and Sharman. Other outstanding individual performances over the year include: Wade Bennett-Jackson - finalist in World Junior Championships at 100m - and we have an interest in the world champion - Harry Aikines-Ayretey. Tim Benjamin was the finalist at the European Championships, Kris Gauson qualified for Junior World Cross and ran 3:43 for 1500m. Greg Billington - U17 Inter-Counties Champion at cross-country. And we are delighted to welcome back to the fold Mark Miles, one of our most gifted runners who took himself out of competition for a while. But the boy wonder is back and was the leading British finisher at last weekend's Bristol Half-marathon, clocking in at 65:48.

Due to the fact that we have, perhaps, a dozen members who compete at Triathlon and that there is a large amount of crossover between that sport and athletics, we have formed a triathlon section and have affiliated to the British Triathlon Association. Already some of our members have competed in triathlon events under the name of Belgrave Harriers. Greg Billington has become the World Junior Aquathlon Champion. We have organised regular, coached swimming sessions - hopefully bike rides and runs from Belgrave Hall will follow.

Our influence continues to stretch far and wide in the world of officialdom and administration. Gordon Biscoe has been elected Vice-President of South of England AA (and is

therefore President elect); he has also been elected to sit on the English Road Running Association Committee where he will be joined by the new ERRA men's team manager - Gerry North and the UKA Senior Co-ordinator for Endurance - Spencer Barden.

On the local athletic scene, Belgrave are putting something back by stepping in to provide a well-attended 5k road race, which doubles as the county championship – and which we hope won't always be staged in a monsoon; and organising the popular Surrey Road Relays when it seemed that the event might fall by the wayside.

In summary my thanks to everyone who helps with the day-to-day running of the club, and of course to the athletes who compete so well for us. There is no question that the Belgrave brand name has strengthened in the past year. But now we start again and need your help, of most importance by driving your bodies to new and dramatic feats of athleticism; but otherwise in supporting, coaching, time-keeping, pit-raking, officiating, marshalling, socialising, ah yes, the list is endless...

*William Cockerell, Hon General Secretary
Wednesday 20 September, 2006*

Results Roundup

Road & Country

January 2006

- 8 **Tadworth Ten, Epsom.** 1 I Boneham (Notts AC) 56:43; 4 C McMillan 59:36; 97 R St.Clair M40 1:13:35; 105 P Cross M50 1:14:00; 163 J Pritchard 1:17:01; 291 D McMillan M55 1:23:24; 467 D Davies M65 1:33:36; 639 finished.

May 2006

- 28 **Canterbury Half Marathon.** Men. 1 A Mahiaddine (Invicta) 1:10:34; 55 P Cross M50 1:35:55.

August 2006

- 20 **Burnham Beeches Half Marathon.** Men. T Lambert (Alton) 1:06:43; 113 P Cross M50 1:32:58.
27 **Arundel Castle 10 km.** Men. 1 J Baker (Chichester) 34:22; 61 P Cross M50 44:07.

September 2006

- 3 **Kent Coastal Half Marathon.** Men. 1 P Kasler (Paddock Wood) 1:13:59; 41 P Cross M50 1:37:00.
10 **Canvey Island 10 km.** Men. 1 C Bloomfield (Billericay) 35:05; 32 P Cross M50 42:11.
17 **Faversham 10 km.** Men. 1 L McMeekin (?) 34:32; 29 P Cross M50 41:18.
23 **Roy Griak Cross Invitation, University of Minnesota.** Men. 1 R Cheseret (Arizona/Kenya) 24:22; 115 D Gauson 26:26.
24 **Bexhill Seaford 10 km.** Men. 1 C Illman (Cirencester) 35:17; 21 P Cross 41:28.
30 **Bill Dellinger Cross Invitation, "Pre's Trail" 8 km.** Men. 1 J Rohatinaky (Byu) 22:58.37; 55 D Gauson 24:28.96.
30 **George Cummings Relays, Houston.** Women. 3x2.7 miles: C Bertram 16:56.

October 2006

- 8 **Southend Classic 10 km.** Men. 1 C Bloomfield (Billericay) 31:32; 156 P Cross M50 40:41.
8 **Woburn Abbey 10 km.** Men. 1 P Freary 31:23.
14 **Bushy Park 5 km.** Men. 1 W Cockerell 16:18.
14 **Surrey County Veterans CC Champs, Petersham.** M40. 1 P Doyles (Ranelagh) 33:33; 12 S Zealey 38:14; 26 H Corbett M45 43:04; 30 R Walsh 47:54. Teams: 1 Ranelagh 13; 2 South London 21; 3 Hercules Wimbledon 29; 6 Belgrave 68. M50. 1 B Attwell (South London) 36:18; 12 T O'Neill 40:02; 14 M Nouch 41:02; 19 P Cross 42:29; 24 D Anderson 44:01. Teams: 1 South London 13; 2 Hercules Wimb. 23; 3 Ranelagh 23; 4 Belgrave 45. M60. 1 G Newton (Tadworth) 40:46; 10 F Gander M70 48:56; 99 G Collins M65 52:02; 16 C Henn M75 55:05; 18 A Lane M70 59:04. Women. 1 C Diss (Herne Hill) 22:22; 43 J Moore W45 34:22.
15 **SIS Sandhurst Poppy Hill Trail 10 km.** Men. 1 T Lambert (Alton) 34:53; 11 P Cross 1st-M50 43:47.
15 **Cumbria Half Marathon.** Men. 1 T Abyu (Salford) 1:09:48; 3 J Kimaiyo 1:10:03.
15 **Cabbage Patch 10 miles, Twickenham.** Men. 1 S Kasimili (Kenya) 48:37; 9 M Byansi 53:24. Women. 1 O Kimaiyo (Kenya) 55:46; 2 B Dagne 56:06.

- 22 **Amphill CC Trophy, Amphill, Beds.** Men. 1 H Lobb (Bedford & C) 28:19; 10 M Whiting 32:55.
22 **Croydon 10 km.** Men. 1 J Kimaiyo 32:18.
22 **Waddington 10 km, Clitheroe.** 1 P Freary 31:51.

Race Walking

July 2006

- 8-9 **BMAF T&F Champs, Birmingham.** M55. 5000m: b 1 J Hall 25:39.11. 3000m: a 1 J Hall 14:52.72. M75. 3000m: 1 D Fotheringham 18:48.80. W40. 3000m: 1 M Noel 17:46.42. 5000m: 1 M Noel 29:59.38.

August 2006

- 13 **SEAA Champs, Bedford.** Men. 5000m: 2 A Goudie 24:25.96.
13 **Southern Inter-Counties Match, Crawley.** Men. 3000m: 4 T Watt (Surrey) 14:40.17; 5 J Hall (Middx M55) 14:40.2; n/s C Lawton M55 16:27.61.
15 **VAC 5 miles, Battersea Park.** Men. 1 M Easton (Surrey WC) 39:45; 5 P King M55 47:56.
27 **VAC Champs, Kingsmeadow.** M55. 3000mW: 1 C Lawton 16:42.4.

September 2006

- 16 **Enfield League 5 miles.** 1 T Jones (Hillingdon) 50:51; 5 J Hall 53:41.
6 **Civil Service Champs, Enfield.** Men. 10 km: 1 D Turner (PONE) 51:42; 3 J Hall M55 54:32. Women. 5 km: 1 M Noel W40 30:41.

October 2006

- 7 **Surrey Walking Club 4 Miles Monks Hill.** 1 M Easton (SWC) 31:43; 2 T Watt 34:33; 3 C Lawton 37:01; 5 P King 37:47.
7 **Enfield League 5 km inc. VAC & SCVAC Champs.** Men. 1 N Silvester (Aldershot F&D) 25:08; 4 J Hall M55 26:17. Women. 1 M Noel W40 30:41.
21 **Cambridge H Winter League 5 km, Bexley.** 1 N Silvester (Aldershot F&D) 24:19; 7 C Lawton M55 28:28.

Triathlon

July 2006

- 6 **Thames Turbo Aquathlon, Hampton.** 5k run, 426m swim. Women. 4 C Eastham 34:13 - 23:00, 11:13.
16 **Bananaman Triathlon, Dorney Lake.** 800m swim, 30k bike, 7.5k run. Men. 54 L Greatorex 1:46:39 - 17:27, 1:01:43, 27:29.
16 **Welsh National Pool Swansea Triathlon.** 750m swim, 18k bike, 5k run. Men. 1 G Billington 59:58 - 10:36, 33:42, 15:40.
16 **Hillingdon Triathlon Series Race 3.** 600m swim, 6k run, 25k bike. Men. 1 G Stewart (Hillingdon) 1:13:55; 81 S Baxendale - 17:10, 34:22, 58:36.
30 **World Duathlon Champs, Corner Brook, Canada.** 10k run, 40k bike, 5k run. 25-29 Men. 6 J Browne 1:58:05 - 33:14, 1:05:30, 19:22.

August 2006

- 5 **USA Triathlon Championships, Connecticut.** Elite U20M - 750m swim, 19k bike, and 5k run. 1 W Pickhardt 55:41; 2 G Billington 56:10 - 9:08, 28:41; 17:11.
19 **Greenwich Tritons' Aquathlon.** 500m swim, 5k run. Men. 23 S Baxendale 34:25 - 10:45, 23:25. Women. 1 A Hegvold 27:42 - 7:02, 20:40.
29 **ITU Lausanne World Triathlon Champs.** Elite Senior Men's Aquathlon. 1 R Stannard 27:59; 4 G Billington 28:12 (1st Junior).

Welcome

... to the following new members

Giles Favell, 15, interested in middle distance, road running and cross country.

Hugh Huntingdon, 18, interested in middle distance, road running and cross country.

Matthew Richards, joining second-claim, 20, interested in throws – in particular the hammer.

Richard Stannard, 32, the World Aquathlon Champion 2006, interested in road running, cross country and long distance.

Chrissie Wellington, 29, the World "all-age group" triathlon Champion 2006, interested in cross country.