

<p>Allan Lawrence - one of the RBH greatest</p>

<p>ALAN LAWRENCE 1930 ♦ 2017</p>

<p>Alan grew up in Matraville a stone ♦s throw from Botany Bay and the Bunnerong power station. The young blokes in Alan ♦s area all swam and fished in the hot water that came from the power station cooling plant. There were no heated pools in those days and our top swimmers also trained in this water during the winter. These young people were naturally fit because of their life style and the simple diet which was the mainstay of the working class people.</p>

<p> Alan ♦s family was quite disfunctional as his mother tended to come and go during his early years. He learned to be very self-reliant due to the limited amount of parental support he received during those early years. Education was not a priority for working class people in those times and Alan left school with a limited amount of study behind him</p>

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<p>
He obtained a job through family connections at the Botany paper mill which was just a short walk from where he lived. At the paper mill there were already a number of young athletes working including John Russell who was also a member of the 1956 Olympic team. Through these fellow workers he came into contact with Botany Harriers and Chick Hensley who would be his coach and mentor throughout his athletic carrier.</p>

<p>He was selected for the 1954 Commonwealth Games in Canada. In those days athletes had to raise their own funds before they could compete. In 1956 he was selected for the Melbourne Olympics. By now he had matured as an athlete and was placed third in the 10,000 metres ♦ but had to pull out of the 5000 metres due to injury.</p>

<p>He failed to gain selection for the Commonwealth games in Cardiff in 1958 and ♦ this spurred his decision to accept a university scholarship in Houston, Texas. He was later joined in Houston by Pat Clohessy, a fellow Botany Harrier and friend. Pat not only supported Alan on the track but also provided him with tutoring which enabled him to overcome the educational gap of his early years. In those early years in Houston Alan became a star in both college and American Athletics events. He had a great season in the US in 1960 and was selected in the Australian Olympic team in Rome for that year. Unfortunately by the time he got to Rome in late 1960 his form was in decline and he was unable to produce the type of performances he had demonstrated earlier that year.</p>

<p>After Rome he completed his studies in the US then returned to Australia ♦ but was unable to obtain the type of work he was trained for. He went back to Houston in the late 60 ♦s and stayed there for the rest of his life. He resumed running in the 70 ♦s winning many veterans ♦ championships. He took up coaching and ran a very successful coaching group up until a few months before his death.</p>

<p> Alan had many talents. As a young athlete he was a good pole vaulter and javelin thrower. In the early 1950s he taught dancing at Bells Ballroom which was located on the current site of Souths

Juniors. In more recent years he wrote numerous books and articles about athletics, training techniques and his own experiences.

He will be missed by his former club and team mates.

Ron Crawford