

SPIRAL

A TRIBUTE TO KATH CRAVEN

It is with great sadness that the Club says goodbye to a favourite member. Our Patron, Kath Craven, passed away peacefully on November 29th, aged 89. Our patron for 15 years, Kath has had a significant influence on so many of our members - as a teacher, friend, helper, energiser but more than anything, as an inspiration. Kath was still skating at the age of 88 - possibly the oldest figure skater in NZ still on the ice at the time - so it was never an option for any of us to use advancing age as a reason not to be out there doing it. Of the many messages that have flooded in to the club this week, the recurring theme is what an inspiration Kath was to club members.

Kath has had a life time of ice figure skating. Taking up the sport at age 12 in Blackpool, she made quick progress in medal tests in dance, free skating and figures, perhaps helped by the years of ballet she studied earlier. In her teens she became a semi principal skater in the Blackpool Ice Parade Show at the Pleasure Beach. Her co-principal was Bert Craven and during the winter months they both toured with the show throughout England and to France. In 1948 Bert and Kath went to the newly opened Earl's Court Ice Rink in London where they taught under the direction of Jacques Gerschweiler. It was there that on hockey nights Bert and Kath gave figure skating demonstrations to crowds of 600-800 people.

In 1949 Bert and Kath were married. That year also took them to Sydney where they performed at the opening of a small ice rink at the beach front of Manly. Their next challenge was to open a new rink in Perth where it was hard work teaching students who had never seen ice before. Despite this by the time they left 16 months later they had produced a 2 hour show which ran for a week and was a great hit.

Back in the UK Kath performed in more ice shows that had long running seasons before touring. After another stint in Perth and with a growing family (Ann and Malcolm were born by this time) Kath and Bert settled in New Zealand where Ian was born. Their chosen home, Palmerston North, didn't boast an ice rink so Kath turned to teaching roller skating. But they couldn't stay away from the ice for long. The attraction of a rink was behind their next move which was to Christchurch. Here Kath started teaching on ice again and amongst her pupils was Jeanne Wyatt (known



today to us as Jeanne Begej). Anne Campbell (nee Brennock) was also a student of hers as were many others who went on to have distinguished skating careers. Kath continued to teach and put on shows in NZ and for a time back in Blackpool.

Kath certainly came to CMFSC with some impressive qualifications to be our patron. She brought with her the desire to see beginners make progress and to light up with the pleasure of learning to skate. Week after week she turned up to Coffee Club to voluntarily coach the learners to do just that. As an ambassador for the sport she had no equal, making as big a contribution off the ice as she did on it. She shared her expertise as a committee member, turned up faithfully to fundraisers and when not competing in a synchronised team, arrived at late night practices because she understood the importance of having an audience.

In 2013 Kath was awarded the NZIFSA Sportsperson of the Year trophy. Her glowing citation included these words "At our club champs Kath can be seen moving from marshalling competitors to caring for officials, replenishing soup cups, ferrying hot water bottles or staffing the club sales table. When presenting medals and trophies she always has a special word for the recipients. At the NZIFSA's 75th jubilee celebrations in

Tekapo, Kath was active in meeting, greeting and uniting. Before the event she worked promoting it to younger club members, recognising the importance of connecting newer members of the NZIFSA with older ones".

When Kath finally thought it wise to hang up her skates (only a year or so ago) she certainly didn't put her feet up as well. Keen to stay fit and active she joined the Westfield Walkers in their twice weekly marches through the early empty mall where she enjoyed the company of fellow walkers and the fact that you could window shop to your heart's content with no danger of spending any money.





At a personal level Kath was our good buddy; always there, always ready to tease, taunt, laugh with us, encourage us, wind us up or pull us into line. She is a club legend and a club hero. We are proud to have had such a patron and will miss her sorely.

It was Kath's wish that she should have no funeral but many club members want to mark her passing and remember her with a special occasion. A walk has been suggested. Kath was a regular organiser and good attendee of club walks and so this seems like an appropriate way to celebrate her life and contribution to our club. Jeanne will seek some feedback from members on when would be a good time and

we will then let you know where and when we can walk, share a picnic or coffee and our stories of Kath.

While Kath was unwell a couple of weeks ago, between moments of seeing her family or enjoying a rare glass of Moët with Jeanne, she wrote a letter to club members. Kath knew that many of you were keen to visit her although her failing strength meant we had to limit numbers. She thanked you all for your kind thoughts. Kath's letter is printed below on the last page.



While most cameras were trained relentlessly on the competitors, CMFSC's reporter turned hers in the opposite direction this year. It was the club's 2018 championship and it was time the unsung heroes of the day took centre stage. Yes, we'll come to the skaters, but first let's celebrate the contribution of the judges, officials and volunteers.

Take Barbara Lindsay-Taylor for example. I'm sure she'd enjoy a few more weekends in her Auckland home but that's a rare event as she has judged at every club championship this year bar one. South Islands too and Nationals. So when Barbara might have been sipping a glass of wine at home on a balmy spring day, she was wrapped (indeed "trapped") in a full length down coat. We are glad to report that the zip that was causing the problem released her before the day was out. Jeanne Begej too had a full calendar this year, judging the Corrine Gilkinson Competition, DISC, CISC and CMFSC Champs, South and North Islands as well as Nationals.



The only movement Kendra Street can permit herself to warm up on the officials' stand is the vigorous waving of her stop/go baton.

CMFSC's 2018 Championships



Sadly the overuse of this cunning strategy can cause chaos in the music booth and on the ice. But Kendra mastered this skill years ago and can judge and wave simultaneously without even a near miss.



President Jeanne Begej has such an array of tasks on Champs day that it is necessary for her to do some of them simultaneously. Here she warms up for synchro while moving tubs of administrative gear about the rink.

Kim Gormack and Kim Lewis served as Technical Specialists during the weekend. Kim Lewis was just back from Canada and with an assignment due in a few short days, Kim's dedication is seen in that her "break"

from her studies brought her straight to the rink and the officials' stage.

Test and Competition Coordinator, Jeanette King, has many administrative roles on the day but added to these is remembering to be a mother to her two sons who are competitors. Also managing to compete herself, changing from her free skate to her synchro outfit in a few frantic seconds while ensuring the smooth running of the entire champs operation.

Out of sight in the officials' room Arnold has little time to enjoy the show as he totes up points to assign the skaters' places. As treasurer he is also keeping a sharp eye on any funds changing hands during the day and depositing them safely.

After Sunday's opening bracket of competitions there was a sudden panic as the video wasn't talking reliably to the judges' computers. To the rescue came Darren Dumble and Vanessa Anderson who took the system down and reconnected it during the first ice groom. We have been indebted to Allan Greenstreet for a long time for his management of the IJS mini system for judging. With his excellent training it's great that we now have others who can manage this role.

....continued on next page



VOLUNTEERS AT ARE THE CHAMPS



Meg was one of many club members who staffed the CMFSC table on the day - thanks to you all.



Evelyn and Trish graced the music booth as usual. Trish is just back on the ice after ACL surgery. It's healing well and her goal is to make it to Obertsdorf next year



Karen Kennedy signed up to provide food - this is possibly not what she had in mind



Robin Scanes helped out with videoing, as did Grant McIvor and Chris Hughes



Yoko, marshalling, has mastered the art of coordinating her hot water bottle with her outfit

CHAMPS continued

Our honoured Patron Kath, as always, was on hand to present the medals in the prize giving ceremony. This was before her illness



Kath at an earlier champs with her good friend and dance partner, Lesley Ward

really began to bite and we didn't know that this would be the last time Kath would undertake the task. President Jeanne was anxious to meet the deadline for when we had to be off the ice, so she rattled off the winners at breakneck speed. Kath did a valiant job of keeping up, but confessed later that she was tempted at times to swing the medals above her

head and lasoo the winners rodeo style as they stepped up onto the podium. Great job, Kath.

Earlier in the day Kath had to work hard to wrest her raffle prize away from a group of enterprising children who had invested more in raffle tickets than the prize was worth. They were eyeing up Kath's prize, won fair and square, with such envy that Kath thought it wise to make a furious dash up to the officials room with the prize clutched in her arms.

Yes you've spotted it. The only casualty of the Championships was Sabina at the end of her shift as marshal - there was no need to ask Sabina to hold still for the camera - frozen through, she was unable to move at all. Sabina tells us she's smiling on the inside.



Sabina - simply frozen

It's not possible in this short newsletter to describe all the contributions we had from volunteers. Those we have featured are just a few of the many hard workers on the day.

I haven't mentioned the rest of the club committee beavering away in the background. Also Hazel Miller and Kelly Brown of CISC who helped with music and announcing. We are especially grateful to Ina Paul who undertook the dual roles of IJS Accountant and Calc Operator.

Thanks to you all we had another great Champs day. Did we get to the competitors? Sadly not - there was so much to say about the officials and helpers. Congratulations to all of the competing skaters and special thanks to those skaters who came from other clubs. I hope your moments of glory were immortalised by other more focussed photographers. Ed.

Regional and National Champs

Congratulations to all of our 2018 South Island and National Champ competitors. After an 11 year stretch of taking the gold medal in the Adult Synchronised event Spectrum Synchronised Team met its match in Auckland this year when it had to settle for a silver when out skated by Allegro's Momentum. Spectrum scored better at South Islands earlier in the year. Great to see some competition in this grade.

South Islands

Interpretive Ladies Bronze II

Jeanette King 1
Linda White 3

Mens Bronze 11

John Gilmour 1

Interpretive Ladies Silver I

Emily Clearwater 1

Interpretive Ladies Silver II

Kirsty Cox 1

FS Ladies Bronze II

Jeanette King 2
Linda White 3
Anna Poole 4

FS Ladies Silver I

Emily Clearwater 1

Nationals

Interpretive Ladies Bronze II

Jeanette King 3
Linda White 4

Mens Bronze 11

John Gilmour 2

Interpretive Ladies Silver I

Emily Clearwater 2

Interpretive Ladies Silver II

Kirsty Cox 2

FS Ladies Bronze II

Anna Poole 3
Jeanette King 5
Linda White 7

FS Ladies Silver I

Emily Clearwater 4



A warm welcome to Anna Douglas-Bray and Glen Bray's new baby Hudson Mac



And welcome too to this wee poppet, Kira Mahuika Russell, coach Michelle and Buzz' second daughter, born in Sept.

2018 Sponsors

Our ability to subsidise skating sessions and to compete in regional and national championships as well as to stage our own club champs and development workshops is dependent on the generosity of our sponsors listed below. Our deeply



Southern Trust donated a substantial sum toward the cost of practice ice in 2018 helping our skaters prepare for tests and competitions



Pub Charity generously subsidized term one ice time this year ensuring a great start to the year and helping to increase membership



The Lion Foundation's donation helped with accommodation for NZ National Ice Figure Skating Champs this year

CERT

Your local Gaming Trust
committed to 100% local funding

CERT's donation again this year covered the cost of the officials' staging as well as setting it up and dismantling it.



NZRB donated a substantial sum to the club to cover ice time for members to practise for tests and competitions



MAINLAND FOUNDATION
Proud to Support Our Community



Mainland Foundation kindly contributed towards accommodation for our competitors at the South Island Champs

A letter from our Patron

Dear Club members

When Jeanne said she would like me to be Patron back in 2003, I said "no"

"Why not?" Jeanne asked.

"I'm just not a twin set and pearls lady".

"We don't want twin sets and pearls", Jeanne laughed. "We just want you in your skating skirt."

That was great with me so you got your patron.

My years of being Patron have been really wonderful. I have made many life time friends and have had a lot of fun. I have enjoyed seeing skaters starting out as beginners at Coffee Club teetering along the boards and then progressing to competing in the championships. It's been a real pleasure and an honour to be the patron of such a vibrant club - the perfect role after my own active career on ice. Thank you all.



Your Committee

President

Jeanne Begej

Vice President

Kirsty Cox

Secretary

Vanessa Anderson

Competition and Test Coordinator

Jeanette King

Treasurer

Arnold Schmidt

Patron

Kath Craven

Committee Members

Alastair Christie

Vera Domigan

Aleksandra Jarmolik

Kanako Johnson

David Ramm

SPIRAL

www.cmfsc.co.nz

Newsletter editor

June Laird