



It is my sad duty to report the passing of Australian racewalking identity Denis Strangman, aged 90.

Denis became involved in our sport during the 1980s when his children started with the Ginninderra Little Athletics Centre in Canberra (Denis was awarded life membership with Ginninderra in the 1998/99 season). He also joined ACTRWC around this time and he and his family remained active members of ACTRWC for many years, making significant contributions both to racewalking and to the wider community.

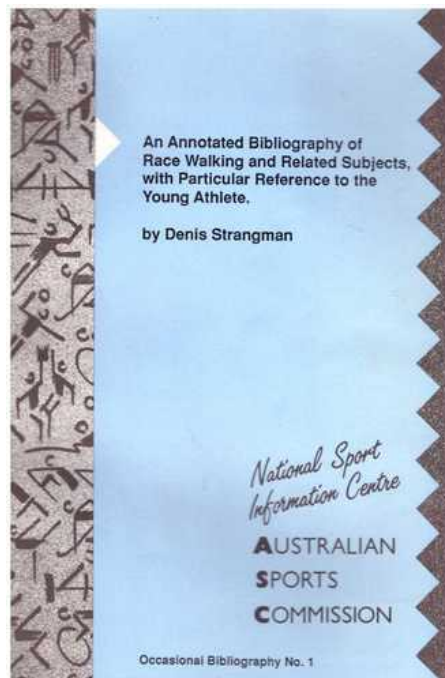
His daughter Josephine (Jo) was an extremely good young walker who medaled at various Australian underage championships in the early 1990's. Jo was unlucky to miss out on a spot in the 1995 Australian World Cup team but she did represent Australia in the 1995 World Student Games alongside Dion Russell. Both did well, Dion finishing 9th and Jo finishing 14th.

Denis quickly took on a coaching role and went on to become a dedicated official, with a passion and keen interest for the proper promotion and development of walking at all levels.

He was a very good junior development coach, and as part of his coaching would use video analysis, uploading the individual footage to the internet with comments for each athlete and parents to view and learn from.

Denis was a regular at interclub across the summer, at ACT Walkers Cclub during the winter and at the annual LBG Carnival, not only supporting his athletes but also as a judge. Denis encouraged parents and older athletes to become qualified as judges and many were those taken under his wing, gaining valuable experience at club events and LBG. Denis also co-ordinated the Judges for LBG up until 2009.

One of Denis's major contributions on the racewalking front was his tome *An Annotated Bibliography of Race Walking and Related Subjects, with Particular Reference to the Young Athlete*, published by the National Sport Information Centre in Canberra in 1990. This collected together in one place some 750 racewalking references (articles and books), with commentaries where possible. This was the first resource of this kind, providing an excellent aid for teachers, coaches, parents and aspiring athletes. All the books and articles referenced were available for loan via the NSIC and remain there to this day.



Denis eventually passed onto me all his walking archives, including the 2 full boxes which contained all these references in hard copy, along with a copy of the reference document itself.

Denis was a senior Federal public servant in his working life and an online search shows a number of articles and Govt submissions, penned under his name. But it was in one particular area that he received his greatest accolades, being awarded an AM in 2015 “*For significant service to community health through advocacy, public policy, and support organisations for people with brain tumours.*”¹

When his wife Margaret died from a malignant primary brain tumour in 2001, he gathered like minded people from around the world and formed the International Brain Tumour Alliance (IBTA), for which he was the Foundation Chair (2005-2014).

The Canberra Times obituary reads as follows²

*Beloved husband of Margaret (dec).
Loved and loving father of Josephine and Drago, Kieran and Kristy, Peter, Bryan and Kylie, and Gregory. Treasured Grandad to Abigail, Charlotte, Amelia, Caroline, Xavier and Laila. Friend, advocate and mentor to many.
Forever in our hearts.
The funeral service for Denis will be held in St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, Lhotsky Street, Charnwood on Tuesday, 9 May 2023, commencing at 11am.
Burial will follow at Gungahlin Cemetery.
In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Brain Tumour Alliance Australia.
Please contact William Cole Funerals for livestream details.*

I always enjoyed catching up with Denis at the annual LBG Carnival in Canberra. He will be sadly missed by us all at this year's event.

Tim Erickson
Monday 1st May 2023

1 See <http://www.vrwc.org.au/vrwc-australian-honours.shtml> and <https://btaa.org.au/news/latest-news/queens-birthday-honours-btaa-co-founder-denis-strangman-am>
2 See <https://tributes.canberratimes.com.au/obituaries/477900/denis-strangman/>