

## LAVINIA PETRIE

Born in England in 1943 Lavinia's competitive athletic career started in England at 16, when she joined Houghton Harriers. Through the local competition she met and later married Bob Petrie of Sunderland AC in 1963 and athletics has been an integral part of their lifestyle since.

Lavinia arrived in Australia in 1966 with husband Bob and daughter June (2). Not long after Lavinia quickly became a part of the Australian running scene. Lavinia has made an outstanding contribution to athletics in Australia making her mark in both Open and Masters Athletics.

In 1966 Lavinia joined Ringwood Athletic Club and continues to compete for them today 48 years on. She is also one of the original members of Masters Athletics in Australia.

In the English tradition, Lavinia starred at Cross Country and became Australian Cross Country Champion in 1973. She represented her State of Victoria at the National cross Country Championships for over 10 years placing regularly and missing only the years when her second daughter Julie and son Rob were born. Running has been a family affair for the Petrie's and when Lavinia and Bob went away for a competition the children would go and they would often camp with other athletic families.

Lavinia was National Cross Country Champion in 1993 and was women's captain of the first Australian team to compete in a World Cross Country Championships in Morocco in 1975. Never one for avoiding a challenge she again represented her country 18 years later in the 100km World Challenge.

But that was of course far from it for this amazing athlete. She is now one of the most successful masters' athletes in the World. Lavinia was a trailblazer for women's distance running – among the first women in the world to run as far as ten miles and then the marathon. Lavinia has a long history of setting records from 1500m to 100 kilometres over the 48 years of competition in Australia. She was a member and captain of the first Australian team to the World Cross Country Championships (1975) and after stepping up to ultramarathon distances of 50km, 50 miles and 100km in 1991 was a member of the first Australian team to the World 100km Road Championships (1993). In another history making moment Lavinia won the inaugural Victorian Women's Marathon Championships first held in 1981 and recalls a condition of entry was that all competitors had to undergo a medical examination before the start of the race.

At a Masters International level Lavinia has been a regular competitor and Gold Medal winner in her age Group at Oceania Masters Regional Championships and at the World Masters Championships in Gateshead, England (1999) and Sacramento, USA (2011).

Lavinia Petrie is a household name in Australian running circles and since turning 70 Lavinia has been on a record breaking run. Over the last year Lavinia has been rewriting the record books locally, nationally and internationally setting multiple world records for her age group across middle and long distances and in some cases 'twice in a year'.

In January 2014 at the Oceania Masters Regional Championships Lavinia set world records for the 3,000m and 10,000m on the same day, and also set a world best time for the half marathon in the same competition.

Two months later she lowered her World Record for the 10,000m time by another 45.46 seconds. As with the 10,000m she has also broken her World Record for the 5,000m twice in the past year. In recent times she has rewritten the masters' world record book in the 70-74 age group, adding to the three records she holds in younger age groups.

Lavinia is not only a formidable competitor, she is a dedicated and well respected official and administrator across all platforms of the Australian athletics scene from her local Ringwood Athletics Club to Victorian Masters, Australian Masters, Athletics Victoria and Athletics Australia. She is a qualified coach and a qualified official. Her services to athletics have been recognised 'off the field' with Lavinia being awarded Life Memberships of the Ringwood Athletic Club and Victorian Masters Athletics. Lavinia also successfully juggled her sporting commitments with full time employment, retiring from the workforce in 2008 at 65.

Daughters June and Julie (Norney) have followed in mum's footsteps, successful athletes in their own right whilst Rob has settled on golf. Husband and coach Bob passed away in 2000.

From starting her competitive athletic career in England in 1959, and then Australia in 1966 Lavinia is still competing and setting records over 50 years later!

Lavinia is passionate about athletics and the people involved in the sport. Not only has she been an outstanding competitor for over fifty years, she has also been an active and much respected mentor, coach, official manager and administrator for Ringwood AC, Athletics Victoria and Victorian Masters.

In 2014 Lavinia was recognised by the IAAF as the World's best Female Masters Athlete, receiving her Award at the IAAF Gala Dinner in Monaco on Friday 21 November 2014.

## **Testimonial/Personal Qualities**

Lavinia, a founding member of Victorian Masters, is an extraordinary athlete who has truly excelled in the masters athletics scene claiming multiple world titles and setting multiple world records on the track, road and in cross country.

2014 was arguably Lavinia's stellar year as she set world records over the mile, 3000m, 5000m, 10000m and half marathon distances. This culminated in Lavinia winning the International Association of Athletic Federations (IAAF) Female Masters Athlete of the Year – the highest of accolades.

In 2015 fittingly, Lavinia was the recipient of the Athletics Australia Edwin Flack Award for an athlete who has rendered distinguished service in athletics, joining an elite honour role. Awarded annually to just one athlete the award is in honour of Edwin Flack Australia's first Olympian and Gold Medallist.

Recently, in search of a challenge and definitely something different, Lavinia added three World Masters Indoor Titles to her name - 800m, 1500m and 3000m, setting a new world record for the 3000m.

A pioneer of women's distance running, Lavinia is passionate about athletics and its people. Lavinia won the Australian National Cross Country Championship (OPEN) in 1973; and went on to captain and compete in the first Australian Women's team to the IAAF World Cross Country Championships in Rabat, Morocco in 1975.

Since then she has continued to concurrently compete in Open and Masters competitions, representing Ringwood Athletic Club, Athletics Victoria, Athletics Australia, Victorian Masters and Australian Masters. She has also continued to undertake administrative and official duties for all organisations, and furthermore was heavily involved with the Professional Athletic Associations as a competitor and through administratively helping her (late) husband Bob.

Not only has she been an outstanding competitor for over 50 years, Lavinia has also been an active and much respected mentor, coach, official, manager and administrator at club, state and national levels through track and field, cross country and road. Just mention 'Lavinia' in athletic circles and EVERYONE knows of her!

Lavinia's contribution to the the sport of athletics stands out not just because of her continuous length of service to all levels and aspects of the sport but because of the quality of Lavinia's service. From the early days as a pioneer for women's running to now, Lavinia has continued to work hard to both nurture and grow the sport and inspire others.

Anne Lord, OAM  
IAAF Committee Member  
Athletics Australia Board Member  
Athletics Victoria Past President  
Ringwood Athletic Club Life Member

Australian and Victorian representative, Track, Cross Country, and Road Racing