

# Athletics became a



## In focus

With Carmel Meyer

I was born in Melbourne, lived in Ballarat until Grade 5, then back to Melbourne for high school. I was always running and participating in sport, especially Hockey, which I continued to play until I was 35, even representing the Army. I joined the Army straight after school. Every day started with PT (Physical Training). We regularly ran for 5-10 km and I became very fit. The Army was not so much about sprinting; more the distance runs for endurance. I met my husband in Queenscliff, Victoria. Ian is from Perth and also joined the Army. We had three kids and had postings to Canberra, Perth and Brisbane. In 1999, I was deployed to Timor for seven months. On return, I discharged from the Regular Army after serving 17 years. The family settled in Perth and I have worked at Thales as a Systems Engineer for more than 18 years. I never stopped running after leaving the Army and even did a few triathlons. At lunch break, I go to the local parks to practise my runs or throws.

Our children were always active, and our daughter Rachael became a State high jumper. At WAAS we first saw “old” people doing athletics – it was a revelation! Where do we sign up? Not long after, in 2012 when I had just turned 45, Ian and I joined Masters. After a career in the military, we thought we would do pretty good at “old people’s”

athletics – but we were quickly humbled. I ran a 200m against a lady who was 20 years my senior and got beaten (this couldn’t be right). Little did I know I was running against the legendary Peggy Macliver. Even Ian was shocked when he sprinted 100m and couldn’t shake another older lady who finished neck and neck with him (legend, Lynne Choate). Being surrounded by such athletes certainly motivated us.

I tried all the events and I also put Ian in everything as well – we had a lot of fun competing against each other (loser would cook dinner). At times our eldest daughter would come down to join us. That year, all three of us were the high jump state champions in our age groups.

After the States in 2012, I joined Dave Wyatt’s Saturday training group. I love my Saturday mornings. Dave has taught me a lot and the training group always pushes and encourages me. Although we lose a few with injury, they eventually come back.

I couldn’t have achieved what I have without Dave’s coaching and everyone’s support.

The high jump is my favourite event, followed closely by the javelin. I give most events a try, which is probably why I like Multi’s so much.

**CONTINUED – next page**

# family affair for Sue



## FROM – previous page

The Heptathlon and Pentathlon are a lot of fun because you can go around with a group of girls and have many laughs. A great memory was the Pentathlon at my first AMA championship in Melbourne (2012) with my family watching on. The competition was so close that we didn't know who won until the end. (Sue won W45 gold with 2376 points) Another highlight was competing with Vicki Townsend in the Mackay Oceania Games (2019). We did most of the same events and had an absolute ball. I did way above expected and enjoyed every moment, especially finishing without injuries.

In 2019/20 my targets were to get over 4000 Heptathlon points and over 30 metres in Javelin. I did that in Mackay (Hep. 4412 Javelin 31.65m) and also PB's in Long Jump, High Jump, 100m, 200m, hurdles, and Pentathlon. (Sue won six gold and broke four state records)

So my new goal is to help some of my competition get their targets. I love competing with the girls and when you have helped them reach their potential you don't even mind when they beat you. I would still like to try Pole Vault; it is one for the bucket list.

In 2012 I did my back and was out for a couple of years. I am still a bit wary with my back and do a

lot of stretching. I also tore my calf whilst competing in a Heptathlon last year, which kept me sidelined for three months. I worked on my javelin instead which really paid off. Always good to have a few injuries so you can swap war stories with the other athletes!

Two athletes who inspire me are Peggy and Lynne. Despite all their injuries and issues, they keep going no matter what. They have a sense of humour yet are still very competitive. I feel proud when I out-sprint them, but when I look at the times they were doing at my age - I am not even in their league. I do hope to give their present records a challenge eventually. I compete for fun and to keep fit. I don't take it too seriously but I do love the competition – it brings out the best in me. I plan to keep going until my body falls apart (and then some).

Ian and I love creating children's stories about Australia. We created Mythic Australia, to encourage both kids and adults to fall further in love with this magnificent country. One of the benefits is travelling around Australia for inspiration and story ideas. Plus it gives me an excuse to compete around Australia in Master's Athletics.