ALBERT EDWARD HEFFORD

5.8.1927 - 18.5.2022

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Ted Hefford, until then our oldest and longest serving member. As a former pupil of Sir George Monoux Grammar School, Walthamstow, he joined fellow old boys such as Howard Shipway, Jack Sharp, and David Routledge, in serving our club so well.

Ted began his long and distinguished athletic career as a member of Woodford Green Athletic Club who had one of the strongest marathon and ultra distance squads in the early fifties. He made his debut as a marathon runner in 1950 in Polytechnic Harriers' classic Windsor to Chiswick race in 2:48:22, thus enabling his club to win the team race as they had done previously that year in the Finchley Harriers' 20. The following year Woodford Green repeated their success in the Finchley 20 and finished second in the Essex 20 and the inaugural London to Brighton 52M. race in which Ted was fourth just behind Orion's Harold Lee. In 1952 Ted was second in the London to Brighton, as was his team, and fourth in the South London Harriers' 30 in 3:12:55. A year later, he was third in the Southern Counties 20 and Essex 20.

Ted was Woodford Green's Cross Country Captain and won the club's 10M Cross Country Championship during the 1953-1954 season as well as Orion's inaugural Invitation 15M Cross Country Race in 1954, leading his team to victory as well. While on the road he recorded his fastest marathon time of 2:39:07 in the Sheffield Telegraph's race. In 1955 Ted, Jack Jenn and John Legge decided to resign from Woodford Green, not an easy decision for active athletes as they had a lengthy qualification period to serve before they became eligible to represent their new club. Ted and Jack joined Orion Harriers in July and John followed in September. Strengthened by these new members, the Club finished second in the Isle of Wight Marathon and the London to Brighton in 1957, and third in the Isle of Wight and Peterborough Marathons and Belgrave Harriers' 20 the following year.

He was a member of the Committee, 1955-1957, Deputy Captain, 1957-1960; and Captain, 1960-1964, during when the Club's Golden Jubilee was celebrated in style with a dinner in the Harcourt Room at the House of Commons in 1961. As a result

of the increasing participation by its members in road races during the summer months, the Club decided to add the office of Road Running Secretary to its Executive in 1971. Ted held the post until 1977 and each spring produced a programme of some 20-25 races and Orion was represented in most of them in the ensuing months. The Club gained publicity by its participation and a reputation for solid team running, rather than brilliant individual performances, whilst members themselves gained year-round fitness and, more importantly, unbroken friendship. In that period, Orion colours were seen in road races from 10 to 53 miles, not only in this country, but in France, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Germany, Canada and the U.S.A. In 1973 Ted, Laurie Durrant, and Tommy Tucker finished third in the American Athletic Union Masters' Marathon Championship at San Diego.

In 1978 Ted moved with his job to Henbury, near Macclesfield, and many of his later marathon performances occurred over the tough northern circuit, with annual respites on gentler courses of the Harlow Unigate Marathon and the London Marathon, competing in the latter from 1981 until 1983 and again from 1987 until 1991. His 100th marathon was achieved in the Macclesfield Silk Marathon in 1986 in 3:31:47, and seven days later he recorded 3:27 at Harlow. The Club's Honours Badge was awarded to him the following year. His 128th and final marathon at Harlow in 1991 was run in 3:39.

In 1992 he was one of the party of Orion members and others who walked the 190 Miles Coast-to-Coast Path from St. Bees in Cumbria to the North Sea at Robin Hood's Bay in North Yorkshire. The following year Ted and his wife Beryl organised a memorable walking tour in the Peak District. His last visit to Chingford was in 2011 at Orion's Centenary Dinner. Throughout his life and particularly during his athletic career Ted acknowledged the unfailing support of his late wife Beryl and their family. Both his son Andrew, and son-in-law Alan, were once members of the Club, and Ted's father had been an Honorary Member. To his daughter Lesley, Andrew, Alan, and their families, we extend our sympathy.

Ronald Bond