

# Portsmouth Joggers Newsletter Edition 21 Winter 2023



Hi there Joggers – welcome to the Winter 2023 Newsletter. I hope it finds you all well. I know the weather has not been very encouraging to us joggers of late but well done to everyone who has managed to keep going. Personally, as an older Jogger who hates the rain I only come out when it's dry, well layered up when it's cold. However I do know that some people enjoy running whatever the weather. That is the wonderful thing about P.J.C., everyone is welcome. It's why we are called the 'friendly club'.

Anyway, do read on and see what we've all been up to recently and have a lovely Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

**Celia - Ed**

## Chair's message

Welcome to the winter edition of the club newsletter and I hope you are all managing to stay active during the dark winter months. It is good to see the numbers on club nights increasing and we hope this will continue over the coming months. When going out on club nights would you please wear bright colours or a running torch/head torch to ensure you are visible when out running.

We have moved back into the Atrium at Lakeside on club nights and all members are encouraged to congregate in the Atrium just in front of the roped off cafe area. Please ensure that we use the toilets between the cafe and security office as the toilets in the conference room area are out of bounds to us as they are cleaned earlier in the evening. There are additional toilet facilities on the outside of the retail block if needed.

There has been a really positive start to the Hampshire Road Race League (HRRL) races with good club representation at the races so far this season, you will hear more about this from the HRRL Team Captains. The Ryde 10 mile Road Race in February is a race where the club reimburses the entry fee of any club member who enters and completes the Ryde 10 mile race. This is to encourage club members to participate in the race and in recognition of the additional costs incurred with racing on the Isle of Wight. The HRRL captain reimburses participants on the day of the race. All other HRRL races are advertised on the club events page on the website so please have a look at what is coming up for the rest of the season.

The Southern Cross Country League (SCCL) has also got off to a good start with races at Benyons Inclosure in October and Alice Holt in November, more of this to come in this newsletter. These races are all around 5 miles in total and free to participate in. All you need is a blue PJC top, we have some spares that you can borrow if you do not have your own. The criteria for taking part in SCCL races is that you cannot be faster than 5:30 minute miles for male runners or 6:00 minute miles for female runners. All members taking part score points for the club and there's always cake at the end. The next race is Sunday 17th December at Lord Wandsworth College. As this is the closest race to Christmas, Debbie Pentland will be leading us with a 12 Days of Christmas warm up routine that is not to be missed and a collection of Christmas hats for the obligatory Christmas Team photo.

The current C25K group will have their graduation run at Lakeside Park Run on Saturday 16th December and it would be really good to see as many club members as possible attend to run the event or volunteer at Park Run to support them.

The annual mince pie run will take place on Thursday 21st December at Lakeside. We will meet as normal for our club run and all congregate back under the canopy for mince pies and mulled wine or squash. It would be lovely to see as many members as possible at the mince pie run, even if you're not currently running, please come and join us.

The club took part in the Food Bank Run in February this year and donated 7 baskets of food to our local Food Banks. This was part of a national initiative by the running community nationally which will be being repeated in February 2024. The exact date will be published on the website but the club will be participating in this again next year. February is the month that statistically has a higher demand on Food Banks and it will be good to support this again.

The club AGM will be held on 25th April 2024 at Broad Oak Social Club. This will incorporate the club awards ceremony and will be followed with a social quiz, so please save the date in your diary. At the AGM, we will formally vote the committee and club officers. There are some vacancies within the club committee and I will be standing down from my role as chair. Please speak to me or any of the other committee members if you are interested in getting involved and supporting the running of the club. We need an active committee in order to keep the club operating efficiently and supporting the members.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all who have helped at club over the past 12 months or representing the club at events, including club committee members and run leaders. I am particularly grateful to volunteers and Marshalls who have supported at Purbrook Ladies 5, Summer Cross Country, Great South Run, Remembrance Run and Pub to Pub. These events have supported the running community and helped raise funds for charities.

I hope that whatever you have planned for this festive season, you have a restful and peaceful break and look forward to seeing you at club in 2024.

**Tony Q – Chair PJC**

## **Pub to Pub Charity Event**

The first Pub-to-Pub event was held in 1986 and was initially the fantasy of two joggers, life member Dave Byng and Mike Lunny, also a Jogger, and the then local Gales brewery rep. For those young'uns amongst you; Gales was a much loved local brewing company founded in 1847, with its main site at Horndean and taken over by Fullers of Chiswick in 2005 and the brewery closing down in 2006.

While out running one evening Dave and Mike were in conversation and Dave suggested that he would like to do organise some kind of run event.. The conversation evolved and it was suggested that a run from one Gales pub to another Gales pub seemed a good idea; with a drink in each pub and may be a trip around the brewery after? The idea was 'floated' to the then club chairman Bill Wright, also current life member and organiser of a Christmas Light spectacular at his house in Portchester which collects donations for local charities.

Bill thought it a good idea. With planning to be done – and with much beer to be involved – it was then suggested by Dave that it be done on his birthday in October. Further discussion and Bill suggested that it would be good to make it a charity event and so it was agreed that they should support the Queen Alexandra Hospital appeal for a scanner, being organised by Mick Lyons, whose mother was terminally ill with cancer.

Several routes were suggested and trialled, including going up the hill via the windmill and back via the A3, which proved too hazardous on an exploratory walk. The ladies, Wendy Byng and Margaret Wright suggested keeping to the back roads and making it a "there and back" run. And so the event started to take shape. After a lot of planning, the 'race' took place with entrants being given the choice of running just one way or both ways; with times being recorded at both points . Drink break being provided by the Gales wagon at The Red Lion before the scheduled pub opening time.

The event was a success for the competitors and also for the QAH scanner appeal as over £300 was raised. Alas, it proved a bit of a headache for the organisers. With several serious drinkers disappearing into The Red Lion at opening time for an hour or two! Some of the 'non drinkers' being sick or getting lost in the bushes? The combined times of the competitors proved very difficult for Dave Byng and Dave Yetton, also now a life member and still active, to be completed on the day. Most of the prize giving had to be held over to the next club weekly meeting. Ever more, the planned tour of the brewery could not be completed as the janitor was sick and the key was not available for the bar. As it was, Dave B was labelled as the person who could not organise a \*\*\*\* up in a brewery.

The second year also proved difficult as the planned date coincided with a hurricane and was cancelled; the third year the organisers had to placate the vicar and his congregation by not clashing with his Sunday service times. The organising of the event was taken on by Alan Marsh, another current life member, for several years and moving the event to a Christmas time run and still supporting the QA hospital Rocky Appeal for the scanner and subsequently the Da Vinci Robot. When Alan stepped aside from organising the event Mike Malliphant took on the responsibility. However after only two years, his job took him away from the area and he was unable to carry on with it. Somehow in 2011/12 I found myself accepting taking on the role of the Pub-to-Pub (P2P) organising. I talked with Bert and John Shepherd and told them that, and they immediately both offered to help and work together as a team.

We've worked together well as a team over the past ten years, with myself doing the general organising, with Bert taking on the role of organising volunteers and helpers needed for the day to make it a success and John organising the raffle and seeking the continued sponsorship of Fullers. Fullers themselves were a family run brewing business until they were taken over by Asahi, a Japanese company in 2019; and other local sponsors. The event could not take place in 2020 due to Covid restrictions but resumed the following year.

The event could not take place in 2020 due to Covid restrictions but resumed the following year. With the monies finally raised for the Da Vinci Robot, the Rocky Appeal was closed down. We then decided that our chosen charity should be The Rowans Hospice and funds raised would be donated to them. However last years' event almost never took place as I was not in the right frame of mind to do the organising, but with only a few weeks to go I decided that I would disappoint too many people and went ahead with the event. We didn't have as many entrants as previous but we still managed to raise £900 for The Rowans. With such short notice John had difficulty contacting Asahi but still managed to find local sponsors for another very successful raffle. Special thanks go to Nick, of Copnor Pharmacy for his support.

Bert himself found it difficult to get enough volunteers to marshal the key points on the course. We then decided to amend the route for safety reasons and take away South Road and its traffic and change the usual 7.4 mile route (12K) to a 10k route- or as close to a 10k as we could. We decided to trial a new route running up to the windmill and maybe change the name of the event from the Pub-to-Pub (P2P) to The Blendworth 10k challenge. It actually proved successful with the entrants liking the new course and no bad comment received.

Alas, with my present unexpected health problem I have decided to step down with immediate effect from organising the event this year and have cancelled it. I will be accepting my sister's invitation to go and spend some quality time over Christmas with her and family. Bert and John have had some domestic pressures lately and will also be stepping aside from their roles. We, on behalf of the club PJC, are therefore seeking another person, or persons, to take on running the club's only all charity event, from next year. Bert, John and myself will be available and happy to give any help necessary to the next organiser/s.

Bert is now saying that he is open to staying on to help any new organiser(s).

**Brian Rees**

### **DIARY DATE**

Cancer UK Ltd are holding their annual Pretty Muddy and Race for Life events on June 29<sup>th</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup> 2024. We are hoping to promote Portsmouth Joggers Club at the events and are looking for volunteers to help at either or both.

As well as taking part in either event.

We are starting to negotiate to have a club marquee on site and for on site parking for volunteers.

Please add date to your diary / calendar.

Further details to follow.

## **Hampshire Road Race League (HRRL) update – December '23**

The 23/24 HRRL season is well and truly in full swing now. Since the last newsletter we have had four more races; Solent half, Hayling 10, Gosport half, and Victory 5. I'm sure you will find race reports for those four elsewhere in the newsletter, so I won't go into too much detail about each of them here. What I will say is that we have had a fantastic turn out for every single one of them, and we've been averaging over 20 runners representing #teamPJC at each race. We have had complete men's and ladies' A and B teams (i.e. at least 7 of each sex) at almost every race, which means we've been getting plenty of points on the board. The tables have not been updated since Victory 5 as yet, but as of Gosport half I can tell you that the ladies A team are sitting at the top(!) of division A2, whilst the men's A team are 9<sup>th</sup> in their A2 division. Both B teams are also flying high in second place in their respective divisions. Well done everyone who has contributed towards these amazing positions!

Although it's amazing to see our teams placing so highly, we don't just enter these races for the winning or the glory. We enter them because they are great fun! Oh, and because there are PRIZES to be won, of course. As many of you now know, if you enter a total of four HRRL races over the season you win a specially-designed pin badge to thank you for your efforts. We've already had a number of Joggers earn their badges (yes, already!) so congratulations Anjella Coote, Ollie Hill, Kate Lewis, Gina Ledger, Pete Birch, Pete Coote and Pete Arnold. There are also lots of runners sitting on two or three races, who I'm sure will be getting their pin badges after Christmas. If anyone is feeling super keen and decides to enter eight or more races, then you will receive a piece of HRRL team kit at the end of the season.

Looking ahead, the next three races are the Stubbington 10k on 7th Jan (which is already sold out), Ryde 10 on 4th Feb, and Salisbury 10 on 17<sup>th</sup> March. We usually make a day of it for Ryde, getting the Fast Cat over together in the morning, grabbing a pub lunch post-race, followed by a slightly wobbly Fast Cat home again. Both HRRL captains' birthdays are within days of Ryde 10, so I'm pretty sure there will be birthday cake knocking about too. And if all that wasn't enough, the club will reimburse your entry fee for the race! Looking forward to seeing lots of you there, and to all the birthday drinks you buy us.

Cont.next page



As ever, if you have any questions about the HRRL, or just want to know more, please come and chat with me (Kate Lewis) or Pete Coote.

Thanks to everyone who has run a race with us so far.

From your captains, Kate and Pete :)

## Reports from 1 of the HRRL Races

### Hayling 10

This was the 3rd race in the HRRL series after the cancellation of New Forest the week before. PJC continued to have good numbers in attendance with 10 men and women representing the club. Conditions on the day were bright blue skies and strong winds blowing in from the west, this was going to make the new course with over 2.5 miles from mile 7 into a headwind a challenging day out. The route started by winding north heading for West Lane, before a sharp slippery turn of mud and puddles lead us to the Billy Line, this year we headed south straight away, with a 1.5mile section of compacted paths and puddles to navigate, or plough straight through (Anjella). Coming off the Billy trail we headed east for our first taste of the westerly winds, gusting up to 30 mph we all knew we were in for a tough day out. We soon turned to run towards the Inn on the Beach and the first chance to run with the wind behind us as we headed for the funfair and a much needed water station on what was an out of character warm day after the storms and rain leading up to the day. 2 miles with the wind behind us along the promenade, before we turned off to run along a new section for the race, replacing the extended billy trail section was a footpath along the shore line, the race team had been out Friday morning to clear the path after storm had dumped half the pebble beach on it, but the weather had other ideas and had managed to dump some more pebbles on the path, about 20 meters of pebbles greeted us as we joined the coastal path, followed by puddles that couldn't be avoided. When we got to the end of the coastal path section, it was the bit we had all been dreading 2.5 miles back to the Inn on the Beach against the leftovers of the storm winds. This section allowed for some crossover of runners with the chance for shout outs to team mates, I know this helped me push through to the end, I also got lucky as I quickly slotted into a group of 4 runners from all different clubs that took it in turns to be the wind break. Back at the Inn on the Beach and half a mile to go, head north quick right passed all the cars and vans with kite surfers desperate to get to the wind we all hated, being well marshalled by the great team out on course, sharp left then right and follow the path back to the finish for that last big push. There were some great performances on the day, shout out to Gina, Glenda and Jenny, who all managed to get 10m PBs, then myself and Kate getting Hayling 10 PBs. It was also great to see some people doing their first league race of the season, and seeing some club members making a return to racing with us, good to have Paul, Pauline, and Ainsley back racing for us. Congratulations to the ladies A and B teams who both finished top of their leagues for Hayling 10, with the men's A team 4th and B team 3rd at Hayling. Full results can be found here <https://hrrl.co.uk/results/> With 3 races completed we have 3 ladies and 2 men one race away from securing this year's pin badge, who will be claiming theirs at Gosport Half on the 19th November. I'm going to have to wait for Victory 5 on 3rd December, as I am away for Gosport Half. **(See the Chairman's Report for an update on this!)**

**Peter Birch**



**The PJC Team at Hayling 10k**

# SCCL- Southern Cross Country League

With a strong start to the season from team PJC at Benyon's Enclosure, the SCCL is in motion with two races now completed.

Thank you to all those that supported team PJC and participated on Sunday 29th October at Benyon's Enclosure and Sunday 26th November at Alice Holt.

The season runs between October and March and there is normally one race per month.

The next race is at Lord Wandsworth College on the 17th December. The race starts at 11am and a lift share will be organised from lakeside in the morning. Let's get a strong team back again just before Christmas and see what we can do! ...Festive spirit and cake included! These races are free of charge, with just a small fee (normally £5 per car) for parking. They are open for all abilities and are great for beginners so please let us know if you fancy trying them out. They are very rewarding with mud, puddles and scenic trails galore. And what better way to keep you motivated through the cold season.

There are so many benefits to getting out there in the cold too. Check out these short podcast episodes 'Cold Therapy - with Michael Mosley' part of the 'Just One Thing' series. I have recently been listening to them on the BBC Sounds app.

Hope as many of you can join us and make this next SCCL race memorable.

Ed – All you need to have to enter is a club top!

**Gina Ledger**



**PJC SCCL Team**

**Race One -**

**Benyon's Enclosure**



**PJC SCCL Team**

**Race Two -**

**Alice Holt**

**Well done to all who ran in either of these events!**



## The Great South 5k

I would like to first start by thanking Sue and Steve Hyson and Tony Q who, after being beaten by the weather on the Friday, turned up at silly o'clock on the Saturday morning to put the tent up in time for the 5 kers to use it as a bag drop. They stayed around all morning to cheer us on as well!! On the day, 5 joggers turned up at the PJC tent on Saturday morning. I believe there were one or two others who went straight to the start. After the usual pre-event photos we walked to the start for the warm-up. The atmosphere is always great, just as good as the 10 mile. It was pretty ideal conditions too. We were cheered along by people watching all round the course, and by the Batalla Drums near the Sealife Centre. I started well, but slower than the other PJC members and kept going. It was great to be cheered on by Sue and Steve H towards the end when I was flagging. I didn't manage a sprint finish but did the 5k in 36:08, my fastest 5k in a long time. We then re-convened at the tent for the after photo, with medal!

The 5k is perfect for people like me who are not able to do a long distance run but want to get the feel of a big event. You get all the essentials of the big event; just have to run less distance. I love it

**Celia Oxley – Ed.**



5 of the 5k Team before the race



4 of the team after the race

## Great South 2023 10 mile Run Report

I don't do many races due to childcare reasons, but always make sure I can do The Great South. I go into the run hoping to do a good time, but as I get older, come to an agreement with myself to be happy with my time no matter what.

I left my home in Purbrook and drove down to Southsea and took my normal mile walk towards the seafront and headed for the joggers tent. Its always nice to see old faces as well as new ones.

I sat off in a decent pace with 3 finish times in my mind to finish in. I felt good with my pace and having people say 'well done jogger' does make you feel better inside. Going through water station 1 and 2, which was followed by another round of 'well done jogger'.

Coming round the bend by the new Southsea Parkrun start at Eastney Toilets expecting the wind but there wasn't anything. Just kept thinking to myself it's only half a Parkrun to go.

Coming towards the finish line and all tactics go out the window and just put my foot down. Crossed the line and was happy with my run.

Last year I just wanted to stop, take my shoes off and go home. This year, I managed to get a personal best of 1.05.24, which beat my previous best of 1.06.42

The day before, my boy ran the mini great south in a good time for him in approximately 12 minutes. It was his first one. Thank you to all the joggers who volunteer and well done to the other joggers who ran.

**Alexander Radice-Gomm**

**Well done both of you!**

**See next page for photos**





**Alexander (L)  
running the  
Great  
South 10 mile  
Run.**



**Alexander's  
son (R)  
running the  
Mini South  
Run.**



**The Great South 10 Milers!! Well done all!!**



**10<sup>th</sup> Hole Water Station Volunteers! Huge thank you to them and the Winston Churchill Avenue Crew!!!**



## GSR volunteering

The Great South Run is a mainstay on the racing calendar, and although I've participated in several other events I have never actually taken part in the biggest run that is closest to my home. This year was no different! However, when the call for water station volunteers came out I thought it would be a great opportunity to give something back to the running community - after all I've taken a fair few water bottles from a fair few water stations in the past, so it would only be right to offer my services in return. I was also intrigued at how a large scale event would look from the other side.

So on a chilly Sunday morning, my daughter and I headed down to Winston Churchill Avenue on the bus wearing far more layers than we thought necessary, particularly considering most people would be attending the event in little more than shorts and a vest!

We were greeted by a mix of volunteers from different organisations and many friendly PJC faces, several of whom hadn't volunteered before either.

After a quick briefing from Davina, and the closure of the road, the water and tables were delivered and we got to work setting everything up. Then the wait began. There was a real sense of anticipation in the air, mingled with some music to keep us, and the runners going. When the first elite runners came through they didn't even break stride and certainly weren't interested in any water, but finally a bottle was taken and the cheer that went out from the volunteers indicated that we were off!

I don't think I knew what to expect but it was quite a sight to see so many runners streaming by for so long. Wave after wave of colourful vests, that progressively got slower, more cheery, and more talkative.

It was great to see people from PJC going past with big smiles and waves, and it was amazing how many I managed to spot amongst the crowds.

Eventually the runners got fewer and further apart until the tail cyclist indicated that all had gone through and we could start packing away.

If you have ever considered volunteering for the GSR I highly recommend it. Overall it was an amazing experience, and I thoroughly enjoyed being part of such a great event, and cheering all the runners from the first to the last.

**Here are a few hints and tips for those of you who may be interested:**

However many layers of clothes you think you need you probably need at least one more.

Eat beforehand because there isn't much time during the race.

The tables down route get significantly fewer people stopping than those at the front. The faster runners will nearly take your hands off when they take the water bottles.

Be prepared for lots of cheering, clapping and generally great positive vibes!

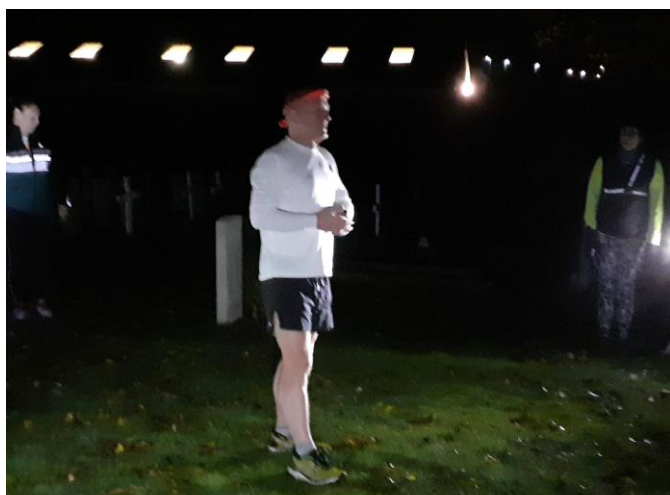
Get public transport there and back to save getting caught in traffic.

Do head down to the finish afterwards, as although it's a bit of a walk it's great to soak up some of the post run atmosphere and congratulate those you saw run past.

Don't worry! It really is a fun event and you get lots of support.

Emma Boakes

## Annual Act of Remembrance



On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November Tony Conway led PJC's Annual Act of Remembrance in the cemetery at Christchurch, on Portsdown Hill.

It was, as always, a very moving event. Thank you to Tony, for leading it.



After the ceremony we all ran round Purbrook in our groups, before meeting up for drinks and a chat in the George Inn.

Ed.



## Spartathlon

SPARTATHLON is a historic ultra-distance foot race that takes place in September of every year in Greece. It is one of the most difficult and satisfying ultra-distance races in the world because of its unique history and background.

The Spartathlon revives the footsteps of Pheidippides, an ancient Athenian long distance runner, who in 490 BC, before the battle of Marathon, was sent to Sparta to seek help in the war between the Greeks and the Persians. According to the ancient Greek historian Herodotus, Pheidippides arrived in Sparta the day after his departure from Athens.

From 1984 the International Association "Spartathlon" was founded, which since then has continuously organised the race each September.

It is described as the world's most gruelling race and is run over rough tracks and muddy paths, crossing vineyards and olive groves, steep hillside climbs and takes all runners on a 1,200 metre ascent and descent of Mount Parthenio in the dead of night.

There are 76 checkpoints to successfully navigate within the 36 hours allowed to complete the race, failure to reach any of the check points within the allowed time means the participant is withdrawn from the race.

All participants rely on their support team to help them before and during the race. Mich had amazing support from his wife Amy and good friends and club members Russ and Sandra Tullett who were all on hand during the day and night to provide food, drink, changes of kit and encouragement, to help Mich get to the finish line in Sparta.

There were 255 finishers and 100 athletes who did not finish within the allotted time. Mich finished in 160th place with a time of 34:10:56. Mich is no stranger to endurance running having completed a range of distances including, five 145 mile races, six 100 mile races and three 85 mile non-stop races. Some of these were qualifying races to be eligible just to get to the start line for Spartathlon.

The race finishes at the statue of King Leonidas, where athletes who have completed the race are invited to kiss the feet of the statue. All finishers are presented with an olive wreath and offered a goblet of water from the Evrotas River, much as Olympian winners would have been honoured in ancient times.

This is without doubt an incredibly challenging race just to get to the start line. Having got to the start line, there are 36 hours to complete the race having navigated all of the checkpoints along the way. As well as the phenomenal physical requirements to participate in this race, Mich has had to exercise mental toughness to complete the race running through the day and night.

In special recognition of this amazing achievement, Portsmouth Joggers have presented Mich with a framed award commemorating his achievement.



**Mich at the finish line!**



**Mich's Presentation**

**See next page for one more**



## Mich's Presentation

### How I got into Running

Many people ask me how I got the bug for running as previously I had never been a sporty person. Well, it's all because I had to seriously change my lifestyle....

For many years, I worked away from home, I knew the menus in all the well knowing eating houses inside and out. Exercise was not something I had much time for due to work commitments and I was either driving a car, or stuck behind a desk.

In 2016, I semi-retired after 38 years, started a bit of jogging, even had a go at the great South Run but under trained so picked up an injury 2 miles in and had to hobble the rest of the course in pain. After that, I fell out of love with running until January 2022, when I had phone call from my GP on 4<sup>th</sup> January, that was a turning point in my life.

What changed my life in that call, well my GP had rung me with test results from blood tests I had the previous day, to tell me I had been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. It frightened the life out of me. I was just coming up to my 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday, I could accept the diagnosis, live on medication for the rest of my life (as my Dad had done), or do something, this is my story of what I did about it, running has changed my life...

Following the call, I knew I had to do something, I had a HbA1c (test used to measure average blood sugar levels) of 107 (type 2 diabetes starts with an HbA1c of 48, between 42-47, that's pre diabetes and anything under 42 is classed as the normal range), so that was bad. I was scared to eat anything and didn't know what to do. I downloaded all the diabetes recipe books on my kindle (haven't use one of them) and did lots of research. I knew if I didn't set myself a goal to get fitter and eat heather, things wouldn't change. I started the C25K program again using the NHS app, but unlike before I actually finished the program (never got past week 5 before, always found an excuse to not complete it, even during lockdown).

Doing this was all well and good, but I needed a bigger challenge, so I entered the Great North Run (I know, no running experience and I want to do a half marathon at the age of 60). Oh dear, what have I let myself in for, seeing my record with the previous Great South Run in 2016 hadn't finished well, but as I went under a charity place for Diabetes UK I just had to finish and raise £360.

This is when I came across you wonderful people of the Portsmouth Joggers. I had known about the club for years, but always put off joining due to work commitments etc (and any other excuse), but this time I was serious' Being part of this club has helped me not only with my physical health (at one point a few years ago I was 104kg, now I tip the scales at 90kg ish), but doing runs with the Social Group (and sometimes the Inbetweeners) it has helped me with my mental health, plus running is no longer a chore as I am enjoying myself with likeminded people.

So where am I now nearly 2 years after being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, well I am now in remission (my last blood test had an HbA1C of 38, I did complete the Great North Run in 2022 in just over 3 hours 30 min (an old injury played up at 8 miles so by 10 miles I had to walk), I raised £580 for Diabetes UK and this year I also completed the Great South Run in 2 hours 8 minutes with no sign of the injury that did me back in 2016 or the GNR last year.

Who says running isn't fun, I love it. As I sit here writing this, I'm just about to get ready for club night (it finally stopped raining) and I am planning to do a Parkrun in Berlin in a few weeks' time (most Saturdays I do a Parkrun, not just locally, but wherever we are when out in our Caravan)

Happy running one and all; and thank you for reading my story.

**Garry Batten**



## Joggers at Christmas!



A Jogger's Christmas Tree  
Who needs flashy decs!  
Sent in by Debbie Pentland



Couch to 5k – Christmas Lights



Pacers and Racers – Christmas Lights



Social Group  
Christmas Postbox Topper



Social Group & Couch to 5k,  
Christmas Lights at Bill Wright's.

He and his wife were delighted to see us, especially Phil and Bert.

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS JOGGERS ALL!**