

HERBERT PATRICK (BERT) HEALY STORY
SPORTSMAN AND FAMILY MAN

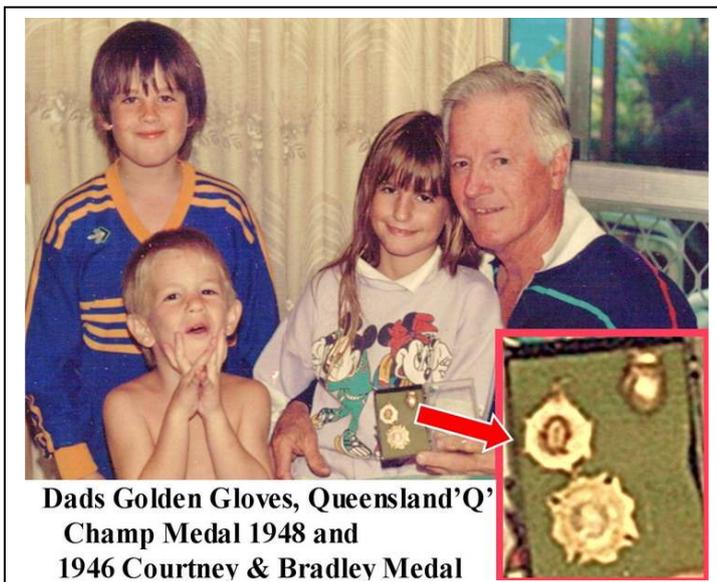
Born 28th March 1928 at Gordonvale and educated at the Gordonvale State School and left school after completing seventh grade. As a boy one would call me a loner with a passion to make money especially in the depression years. I came from a very poor family but rich in love especially from my mother Serbina Elizabeth Healy who stuck by her three

children through think and thin and I have nothing admiration for mum. We may have been the less wealthy family in town but were the best dressed as mum made our clothes, being a remarkable dressmaker - machinist with her old singer treadle machine. The earlier days saw mum selling dress fabrics from a manufacturer, she was then employed by Thomas Bryce & Sons Dept store Gordonvale in the Manchester department and Tom Bryce was a very good friend to our family. We lived hi various houses in Gordonvale which come to mind -Riverstone Rd - Swan St - Bells Lane and moved to Redlynch for two years as dad at that time worked on the intake road and we went to the Redlynch School which was situated right next to the Kuranda Range Railway line. Those days many children rode horses to school. Happy days were spent riding our bikes 6 miles to swim in Freshwater Creek north of Cairns.

My brother Alan lost a straw hat every week at the Redlynch School as after school Alan usually got into trouble fighting his mate Rosario Parisi who later in life became a doctor. From Redlynch we moved back to Gordonvale and those days there was no electricity or television only kerosene lamps and out early childhood was spent swimming in the Mulgrave River. Our family never owned a car but one year dad decided to take Frank and myself on a week's holiday (first time ever) to Russell Heads. The mode of transport was different those days as we harnessed our old racehorse "Bullion" into the old two wheel sulky with kerosene lantern attached, in case of darkness and travelled from Gordonvale to Deeral Landing a distance of approximately 30 miles. Upon arriving at Deeral Landing, dad called out from the Russell River Bank to his Chinese friend "R.U" over the other side to row the wooden flattie across the river for us to use on our holiday. Dad rowed this flattie approximately 10 miles up to Russell Heads that was the mouth to the sea. We camped on the beach no tent for the week and had a really happy holiday. Earning pocket money was difficult but I successfully sold vegetable seeds - fresh lettuce and fresh poultry with my brother Alan.

I was the main message boy for my mother and did chores at home like cleaning the

duchess - floors and other jobs. One message to the butcher Thomas Bros. Resulted in the job cleaning Mr. Reese's garden one Saturday which took 4 hours and was paid a pittance of 6 pence, which caused me to cry riding my bike 8 miles from Riverstone Road to home. Mum was so angry and told the butcher so. The local saddler Mr. Roy Lanskey who taught leather work weekly at school offered me a saddlery trade in 1941, being the fastest and neatest hand stitcher in his class, so I accepted his offer and became a saddler, after 5 years hand stitching saddles - back bands and re-lining horse collars - saddles - manufacturing gun shoulder holsters and knife sheaths. Roy Lanskey was deaf but could read my lips and we had no trouble communicating.



During this period the American 503rd parachute regiment arrived in Gordonvale and set up their training camp near Riverstone some 8-10 miles outside Gordonvale on the Riverstone Road. The Australian troops also set up camp around Tolga, Atherton Tablelands around 1941 - 1943 and a combined total of 100,000 troops were stationed in the area. The 503rd parachute regiment built parachute packing sheds in Norman Park Town Centre and the area near Bowens Hill near Aloomba was used for practice parachute jumps flying DC3 aircraft and static line jumps day and night in addition to free fall jumps using their rip cord and always had an emergency chute for safety.

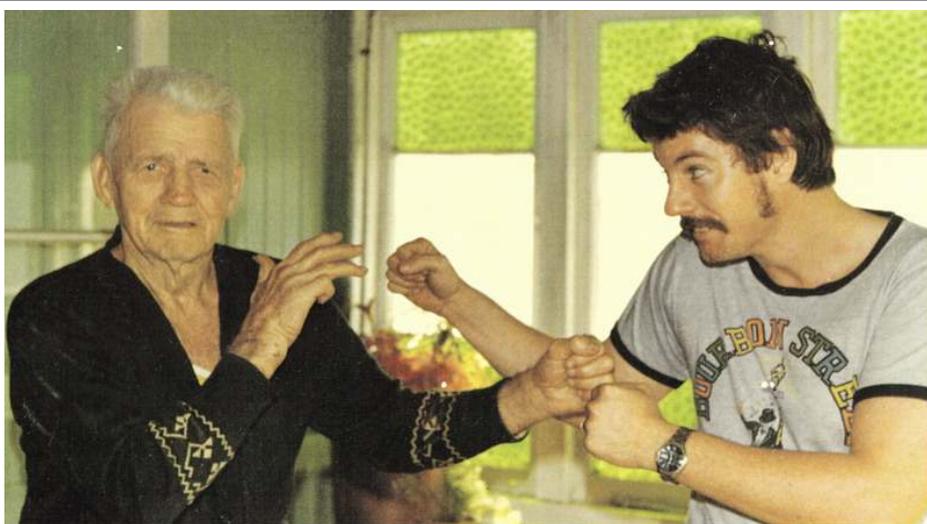
This elite regiment worked hard during their training and one remembers them parachuting a folding motorbike, fox terrier dog and also tried to push a small donkey out but were unsuccessful.

The Central Hotel near Bells Lane where we lived was taken over by the American Red Cross Service Club and used by the troops for their recreation. During this period an American friend of ours John Houstas suggested to me that money could be made shining the troop's shoes at the camp which I did for some time on week ends riding my push bike 8 miles up Riverstone Road with boot polishing cleaning rags. The charges were ankle boots 1 shilling and jump boots! Shilling and 6 pence and some weekends totaled one pound ten shillings that I gave to mum and three pence or six pence in my savings account. Dad trained 8 racehorses and had another 40 horses for rent to the elite paratroopers and also a 2-wheel sulky to rent, which kept us busy. I remember a paratrooper named Jacob Frederic's purchasing one of dad's racehorses named "slow tim" and Jacob riding slow tim from Bells Lane to their camp flat out on the bitumen Riverstone Road and considering Jacob was a poor rider, luckily stayed on the saddle. The 503rd parachute regiment moved out for combat in New Guinea in 1943 to prevent further Japanese invasion.

A plaque unveiled in Gordonvale 17th March 1979 by Captain (RET.) William Bossert, chairman of 503rd parachute regimental combat team assoc (USA) of WWJJ. During the war we built an air raid shelter in our back yard 2 meters deep x 1 1/2 wide and 3 m long and when the air raid siren sounded we all scrambled to the shelter and heard overhead one night was Japanese. Luckily for us but Townsville we believe had a bomb dropped outside there in the mangroves around Ross River. Slit trenches were dug at all schools and student were taught to escape to the trenches on command and told to bite on rubber to prevent concussion in case of a bomb₄ blast. During the war mum sent us 3 boys to Mareeba to live with mums relations believing that Mareeba was safer than Gordonvale and we attended school in the town, returning home after the war. Our neighbours Mrs. O'Neill lost her husband Gordon O'Neill who was an ambulance bearer in Gordonvale and was commissioned to serve on the hospital ship the "Centaur" but unfortunately he was one of many who drowned when the "Centaur" was bombed or torpedoed by the Japanese off the eastern coast of Australia.

My sporting journey commenced in 1943 firstly riding work early mornings for dad's race horse stables in Gordonvale as an 8 stone 8 lb, 5'7 1/2" tall lad with an ambition to win, I rode "painted peggy" a pie ball grass fed horse in the scurry (last) race on the race day programme at Gordonvale and won by 10 lengths and this urged me on to other sporting events then commenced when I rode a grass fed mare called "armablille" on the working track before her first start. I trotted her to the 4 furlongpost, then cantered her to the top of the straight and then spurred her flat out, "Annabelle" got such a fright she pig rooted some distance and as I was riding in an exercise pad with no knee pads my next three moves were one on the pommel to the saddle, then the neck and the ground "Annabelle" ran all over me skin off everywhere, nearly broke my arm as I saw "Annabelle" and dad looking as she passed the post less rider. Another bad experience with a 17 hands very tall horse called "War General" new in the Gordonvale stables and I happened to always ride the newly acquired horses, as dad being a racing man always wanted to keep the racing track times a secret, however I rode "War General" the usual trot, canter and let him go flat strap down the straight method always with dad keeping his eye on the winning post, but

when I tried to pull him up past the post nothing happened the big fellow " War General" kept galloping flat out twice 2 miles around the track. We found out through my experience that "War General" got his tongue over the bit and was unstoppable whatever I tried to do, consequently a tongue check was fitted and "War General" went on to win the major race Johnstone River handicap at Innisfail. One other not so nice experience was with my bay pony which dad caught at the green hills scrub with Franks Black Pony both brumbies and broken in by dad, was one day riding our ponies over the old wooden Mulgrave traffic bridge and we decided to dismount halfway across and on remounting I lost my footing and fell back with one foot caught in the stirrup. Both the horse and I didn't panic and my pony following Frank's pony slowly and both stopped on the other side of the bridge. The result was torn pants, some odd splinters in my back and behind. When we arrived home mum was shocked and spent days extracting splinters with tweezers and the journey continues. Dad was a professional boxer, racehorse trainer, gambler, heavy drinker, smoker and a rough and tough man who also was a chucker out at gambling dens those days. His mate and cousin Alan (Froggy) Muir who was a champion bike rider and a lovable character who loved us boys, and together they played merry hell around Gordonvale. The story goes that Alan (Froggy) Muir's family ran a garage in Norman Street Gordonvale and purchased the first motor vehicle (tourer with canvas hood) in Gordonvale, decided to travel to Alooomba Hotel with dad and his other mates, however they had a nasty accident crossing the railway line near Bowens Hill, when a front wheel left the vehicle and came to a sudden stop and had a to walk home, shocked but unscathed. Dad had only 3 professional 1 x 10 and 2 x 15 round contests after checking my records. Keith Sindell a professional boxer who was trained for some years in Melbourne called Tommy Uren. Keith Sindell travelled to Gordonvale after Tommy Uren's coaching and Keith a lightweight was well known for his boxing ability began to train dad who was a welter weight for his 15-2 minute round bout with a much heavier Pat Collins. For a side wager of fifty pounds, to be held on November 2nd 1934. Both men were cutting cane up to the fight. The newspaper write up said that the knowledge of ring craft which Keith Sindall will impact to Healy will stand him in good stead against his heavier opponent. Collins Healy should be the faster of the two, but Collins is rugged and in wonderful condition, and will stand up to all the punches Healy can land on him. Healy worked out at Walkers Theatre while Collins may be seen going through his preparation next door to the Lyric Theatre Gordonvale. Healy won the fight on a foul as Collins knocked Healy down in round 5 and Collins continued with a barrage of punches while Healy was still on one knee Dad fought and



My Grandfather Bert Healy 50 years 'Master' Pro boxing trainer Awarded life member of Qld Boxing association

defeated Dick Walk in Gordonvale around 1930. The 15th round contests between Healy and G.Lloyd of Aloomba 26th May 1930 was held at the Beatles Theatre on a Friday Night was advertised as the chief event. An exhibition spar between Keith Sindall and Cliff Gordon was immensely popular. Gordon is Sindall's pupil who will shortly leave for Brisbane to take part in the Australian Amateur championships. The 3rd round exhibition finished with 1 round now the chief event between Healy and Lloyd.

Lloyd stepped into the ring showing 10 stone 4 pounds of sun burnt muscle and sinew. He looked the ideal cut of a fighter. Healy was 3 pounds heavier and was trained to the minute. After 9pm the fight was the reverse to what was expected. It was confidently thought that the fight would last the 10 rounds, but the result proved the different methods of training. Lloyd was in perfect condition, had plenty of roadwork but lacked sparring partners from whom to acquire further knowledge. Healy was trained by Sindell, who one can safely state, is one of the best exponents of the noble art in his class that Queensland has seen. The improvement of Healy under his tuition was marked and it was a very different man to face Lloyd than when he fought and defeated "Walk".

ROUND ONE: Lloyd led in with the right but a back step by Healy caused a Miss Clinch Healy pounded Lloyds ribs with the right at close range. Healy lead in and connected repeatedly with a straight left to the face followed by right staggering Lloyd.

ROUND TWO: Lloyd right swing to the body. His defence was weak and Healy connected repeatedly with the left to face, Lloyd connected with right to body. Lloyd rallied but came in for much punishment by a weak guard.

ROUND THREE: Healy had the fight his own way, and his fast and repeated attacks kept Lloyd on the defensive, in that he proved slow. Lloyd narrowly missed with a right swing. Healy landing left to jaw and hard right to ribs. Lloyd right upper cut, in fighting in Healy's favour.

ROUND FOUR: Early in the round Healy's left again connected sending Lloyd to the ropes in a dazed condition. Hard right to the jaw and lefts to head ended the fight, and Lloyd dropped heavily to the canvas for the count.

There was no dissatisfaction on the part of the onlookers. Lloyd had put up a good fight, but was outclassed.

Dad to my knowledge was successful in winning all three professional fights, but God knows how many other street fights he had, probably more that "I love youse all" Jeff Fenech. Dad appeared to be interested in keeping the tradition going and as my brother Frank and Alan were heavy for the age and I was only around 17-18 years old weighing just over 8 1/2 stone, dad saw a good prospect.

Frank did have one grudge fight in the ring at the open air stadium Parramatta Park Caims which was a preliminary to Carlo Prandolini V Chick Western professional 12 round bout. Frank was 12 lbs heavier than Geary's 9stone 41bs and Frank won on points over 6 rounds. Dad and myself trained Frank for two weeks in the gym, and as Frank had to set himself to punch and was a lot slower than me. I had to draw him in and let him throw punches, which was not my style of fighting but made him look good and build his confidence. Normally he could not lay a glove on me being so slow. By the way. I weighed 8 stone 81bs and Frank 10 stone 21bs and was not happy sparring with my brothers.

Alan, my other brother was educated at Marist Bros. College, Cairns and had two only amateur fights for the school against Louis Ballico 9 stone 41bs and Allan 9 stone 31bs. This was a good bout and points were even at the end of round 2 when both drew the claret but Alan Healy proved too good at close quarters and punched Ballico to a stand still in the final round to win completely.

The other fight at Edmondton with L. Hansen 9 stone ILb saw Alan win again on points.

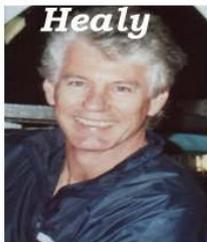
Bert Healy's Boxing record continued on page (below)

Boxing Tuition



Bert Healy Qld Champ 1948

Graham * Ladies welcome * Bert (Snr) 50 yrs



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HERBERT (BERT) PATRICK HEALY

AMATEUR FIGHT RECORD

Tommy Uren
3 times Aust.
Champ

Bert Healy Sr.
50 years
pro trainer

Graham Healy
boxer & Trainer

Len Lynette v's Bert Healy
66 pro fights
Healy beat Len twice

Bert Healy
Old Champ
1948

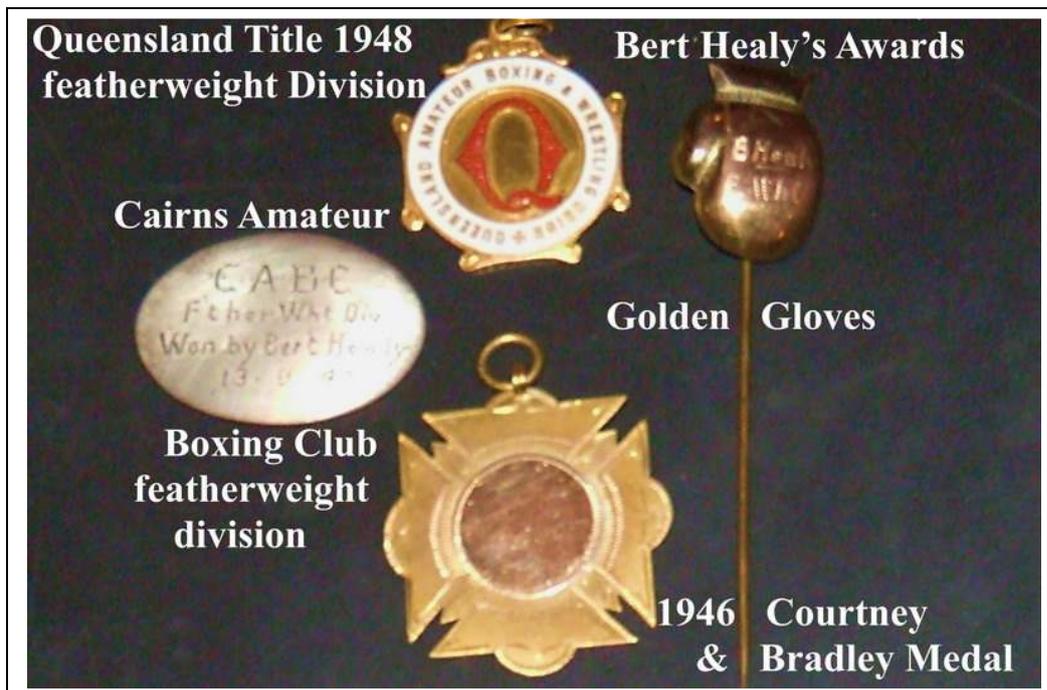
Healy's Boxing Academy
Hereby Certifies the following Student

Has Completed the Boxing Skills & Drills
Golden Glove Level of Competence

Australian National Boxing
HALL OF FAME

Australian National Boxing
HALL OF FAME

Total Bouts in ring ..14
won by KO.....3
Won by points7
Won by TKO.....1
Lost on points2
No contest 1



I trained for 2 years in the gym at Beatties Theatre Gordonvale before my first contest 1946 against Keith Lake at Edmondton who early in the night out pointed Norm Archer who was a previous Queensland title holder and later the night Keith Lake was matched against me for the final. Keith Lake came out with a flurry of punches in the first round but to no avail I used my vast gym experience and threw a heavy straight left which found the mark and dropped Lake for seven and followed with another left to the head, Lake was disqualified by the referee (Ralph Ross) when his second entered the ring at the count of eight.

Second contest Cairns 1946 with Andy Ah Wong from Mossman. N O over 4 x 2 minute rounds. I was leading on points up to the middle of the final round when Ah Wong got lucky and clipped me on the chin and felled me on one knee and as I looked over to dad in my corner he indicated for me to stay down for the count of five and thus giving Ah Wong the necessary points to claim the decision. We were never matched again.

Third contest 1946 at the Ronalds Golden Gloves tournament at the Hibernian Hall Cairns with Eddie Ah Wong former Queensland amateur champion and elder brother of Andy Ah Wong and who fought in the light weight division and was right on the feather weight limit. Resulted in a disputed decision and the newspapers wrote "crowd criticises golden gloves fight decision", the four rounder of 2 minutes each, finished in a draw according to the judges. When the referee ordered another round, the crowd noisily refused to accept it, saying that Healy had won. Dad then disputed the decision and advised the referee that in amateur rules there can be no draw decision and that the referee must make a decision. After a break of about 10 minutes and both fighters sitting in their corners waiting the referee asked both of us are we prepared to fight another round and I said yes, then the judges were again asked if they could give a definite decision. This was given to me who was considered to have done most of the fighting.

Our fight plan worked as we knew Ah Wong had a knock out punch and always set himself to throw the big one, so I used my footwork and moved around him all through the fight throwing punches and forcing the fight to upset his style of fighting and my speed

shocked him when he could not believe that the fight was over and victory was mine. The story is having a good fight plan and stay with it and the muscle memory will click in. Fifth contest 1946 Mareeba school of Arts Hall with Les Cifuentes 9 stone from Millaa Millaa and this was my first appearance in Mareeba. we travelled to Mareeba from Gordonvale by my B.S.A ex. Army side valve motorcycle and dad as pillion rider through Cairns - Smithfield - Kuranda Range - Kuranda then Mareeba. as dad had never owned a car those days. On arriving to Mareeba and a packed school of

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Arts Hall the fight over 3 rounds began and I found Cifuentes hard to catch between crouching very low, bobbing and weaving and hardly throwing punches, he made a professional ballet dancer look like a novice. Naturally I showed myself as a classy boxer, and the local area boy Cifuentes was congratulated on a very game display and the referee gave me the nod. After this fight I remembered dad's old saying " he who fights and runs away lives to fight another day".

Sixth contest 1946 with Charlie Atherton an aboriginal fighter from Cairns area and held in the Bobbie Crane Stadium, Parramatta Park Cairns. I found it very hard to get an opponent this night, until this guy came up waving his arms claiming that he would fight Bert Healy, but what a disaster. The referee invited us to the centre ring, shook hands, then on turning back to my corner to wait for the commencement Bell my opponent sent a barrage of punches while my back was turned, and my immediate reaction was to return the favour with a straight left then a hard right to the chin to fine him on the canvas. The referee had no option but to call it no fight. My opponent after dragging himself off the canvas said he would be back later to finish the bout, but somehow he never showed up.

Seventh contest 1947 with Hedley Thompson at the Babinda Show Grounds with a packed house the box from Mossman rated almost as high as Eddie Ah Wong. Round one: Saw Thompson come straight out throwing leather like a whirlwind hoping to finish the fight early. I thought to myself what have I struck here, but the muscle memory clicked in and did my usual smart boxing trick and sealed the points on the first round.

Round two: the same flurry of loose punches came heavy and fast but of no avail, as the old straight left, right cross and left hook, plus a rip to the body saw Thompson hit the canvas halfway through this round and another victory to Healy, which goes to show that a swinging punch is easily countered by straight punches. Eighth contest 1947 with Harold Thomas a promising Cairns featherweight who was no match for Healy who pressed the fight from the outset and resulted in a K.O in the first round.

Nineth contest 1947 The Northern zone amateur boxing championships held in Cairns before the Queensland State Championships this 4 x 2 minute round contest against A. Mullenhagen (Tully) although he put up a game effort while the contest lasted Mullenhagen just didn't have enough armoury to match it with me and I proved to good on the night and got the referees pat with a points decision. Tenth contest 1947 Innisfail Shire Hall with Len Lynette weighing 9 stone and I weighed 8 stone 11 Ibs lighter but to my advantage I was taller in height and reach. After four gruelling rounds I found Lynette easy to find the mark with my straight punching and heavy right hand and out pointed him every round. Lynette was not very happy about loosing and immediately challenged me for another match, which I accepted.

Eleventh contest 1947 Innisfail Shire Hall with Len Lynette on our return match 6 weeks later. Lynette showed no improvement from his first attempt but tried hard to upset my fight plan but was again unsuccessful. After the second fight it was revealed that Lynette had 66 professional fights when serving with the navy and may have been a ring - in.

Twelfth contest 1948 Townsviile showgrounds with Gordon Meredith 9stone 1 Ib local boy of Home Hill and Townsviile with a record twenty one fights and wins with nineteen knock outs.

This was definitely my hardest fight of my short career and probably the most memorable one, which was like a bad dream.

Dad and I travelled from Gordonvale to Townsville nearly 6 hours by steam train and booked a room at the railway Hotel that afternoon to rest up for the north Queensland championships contest and selection for the Queensland amateur titles to be held in Brisbane. Weigh-in time was 7pm and dad left me rest while he went to the city where he met his Gordonvale mate Jim Gammie in one of the Townsville Hotels, and after a few hours returned together well under the weather by six thirty pm and by this I had an early meal of steak and salad as I usually have before a fight. Called a taxi and travelled to the weigh-in by 7pm. Disappointed as my second let me down for the first time on a very hard 2-3 years to get an opportunity for the big one.

However I decided that I would have to work this fight out on my own as I could not trust dad on this one and after the dramas and politics I still felt that I won by more points than there are in a packet of pins.

Round One: Merideth came out with all guns blazing, the hardest puncher of my career as I could feel the power of his punches behind my neck as I slipped his punches left, right and centre, soon after this burst of punches I caught him on the eye brow with a heavy left hook which sent him reeling and bleeding profusely halfway through the first round, and I led in my estimation on points in the first.

I felt that I was ahead on points after the hard fought 4 round when his seconds carried him out through the ropes exhausted and still bleeding, and being the local hero from his previous fight record I felt robbed as the decision went Merideths way. I then felt that the only way I could have won was a clear K.O. "Cheated in Townsville."

The referee took points off me for dad and his mate being under the weather calling out loudly from my corner together with a fan who came down from Cairns who also stood up holding the ropes yelling from my corner which I had no control on this mismanagement, and did not help any decision going my way.

Thirteenth Contest 1948: at Wynnum outside Brisbane semi finals feather weight division with Berne Hogan was an express ride for me, when Hogan smothered his gloves to his face after my initial barrage of lefts and rights to the head I finished the fight early in the first round with additional heavy lefts and rights again to the head and victory by K.O.

Brisbane telegraph newspaper sports editor Harry Jefferies wrote "Eight feather weights will battle for the state title vacated by Laurie Birks at the Queensland amateur boxing and wrestling championships which starts at the old Brisbane stadium tonight at 7.30". Entries in 11 boxing divisions total 75 and 24 in seven wrestling divisions. They include seven of this year Golden Glove winners. Three club mates of Laurie Birks - Jackie Green, Bernie Hogan and Cec Burchill - will try and bring the featherweight crown back to the East Brisbane Club.

Northerners Bert Healy (Gordonvale) and Gordon Merideth (Townsville) are equally as keen to take the title with them.

Fireworks are expected from Bert Healy and Gordon Merideth. who meet in the featherweight final. Both boys won their semi finals by knockouts.

After the doctor inspected a large boil on the inside of my left forearm the powers to be gave me a bye in the first contest and still fought Burnie Hogan. boil and all in the second bout.

The northern boxing team made up of Bert Healy - Lex Piouman (Mareeba) Cyril Johnson (MillaaMillaa) George Archer (Cairns).

We all trained at Charlie Smith's Gym Brisbane. To keep sharp for the finals I sparred with my mate Lex Plowman lightweight champion who gave me quite a work out, as Lex is a non stop hard puncher and perfect conditioned fighter but not the best boxer. Lex Plowman is the type of fighter who takes two punches to hand out one but survives because of his stamina, persistence, aggression and perfect physical condition. Lex won the 1947 lightweight Queensland championship and narrowly escaped elimination in a semi-final state amateur boxing championships 1948 tourney last night.

Opponent Les Parker staged a grandstand finish and just failed to snatch the decision. Jack Hassen professional lightweight Australian champion trained at Charlie Smith's gym and asked if any northern boys would like a spar. I accepted and learnt the as an amateur there was a long road to step up the professional ranks. Jacks Hassen was a gentlemen and a great guy to spar with.

Jack Hassen later campaign in the welter ranks and for many decades, the welterweights were considered the "glamour boys" of the leather throwing trade in Australia.

With men the calibre of Kevin Delaney, Mickey Tollis, Ken Bailey, Bobby Greville and George Kapeen among the top men of the division in the early 1950's, there was plenty of power and skill to be found. Kevin Delaney, defeated Tommy Burns in 1949 for the welterweight championship, had a record in common with lightweight champion Jack Hassen that in after winning the title he had another seven fights to conclude his career, but could only manage to win one, although he did pick up a draw against Andre Famechon. Jack Hassen lightweight fought Mickey Tollis welterweight champion 19th March 1951 in a thrilling hard punching affair in which both men took heavy punishment, before Tollis ended the contest by a K.O in the 12th (last) round. They met twice, both hard fights taking their toll on both men. Jack Hassen fought Ken Bailey at Sydney Stadium on 15th January 1951. Hassen who was still the lightweight champion of Australia won the contest by knockout in round 10, gaining the only win of the last seven fights of his career, after the tragic bout with Archie Kemp in 1949.

In contrast of the 1940's when this lightweight division was dominated first by the great Vil Patrick and the Trip- Hammer punching Jack Hassen, the decade of the 1950's saw several class fighters rise to the top. At the start of that period Hassen still held pride of place until 1951 when he defended his title against the fierce aggressive bundle of muscle called Frankie Flannery, He left Hassen sprawled on the canvas of Melbourne, minus his crown.

Jack Hassen fought the ace American lightweight Freddy Dawson at Sydney Stadium on 19th June 1950. This was the first contest of Dawson's second visit here and he showed he had lost none of his brilliance by knocking out the Aussie champion in round 7.

FOURTEENTH CONTEST: 1948 Old Brisbane Stadium Brisbane Telegraph sports editor highlighted six golden glove winners in fight finals which conclude tonight. Bert Healy V Gordon Meredith over 4 x 3 minute rounds for the Queensland State Featherweight title. The fight started at a furious pace and my fight plan was to take the lead with hard straight lefts to the head and slip, bob and weave away from his heavy swinging hooks and punches. I really thought I could win by a clear points

margin over the 4 rounds this time, as we had experienced independent judges and referee. I boxed at my best that night and did not get hurt but could not knock Meredith out as he was a tough ragged gamester who would never give up and his previous record proved that he always had a knock out punch and was a cool dude in the ring. However after the final bell the referee awarded me the points decision. Charlie Smith and dad were in my corner and after the second round Charlie Smith wanted me to go in and mix it with him but dad said no as that was not our fight plan as this would have suited Meredith, so we upset his plan by my clever footwork and boxing tactics which proved successful, and now have the Queensland state championship medal. Gordon Meredith turned professional after losing the state title and in my estimation he was the best amateur featherweight in Australia at that time. He did well in Sydney had four fights and won them all, two on points and K.O. first round and the other on a K.O in the second round.

After winning the state title I was automatically selected for the team to travel to Perth, W.A to compete for the Australian titles. However as dad and I could not afford to travel to Perth I decided to decline the offer. When Bronco Johnson returned from Perth after watching the titles, he told me that I would have won the featherweight division. By that time I felt that I was not interested in competing in amateur boxing or turning professional, but felt the need to conduct my own gym and pass on my experience to others, both adults and children just for their own self defence. 1947 saw Jimmy Caruthers win the Queensland amateur state bantam weight championship.

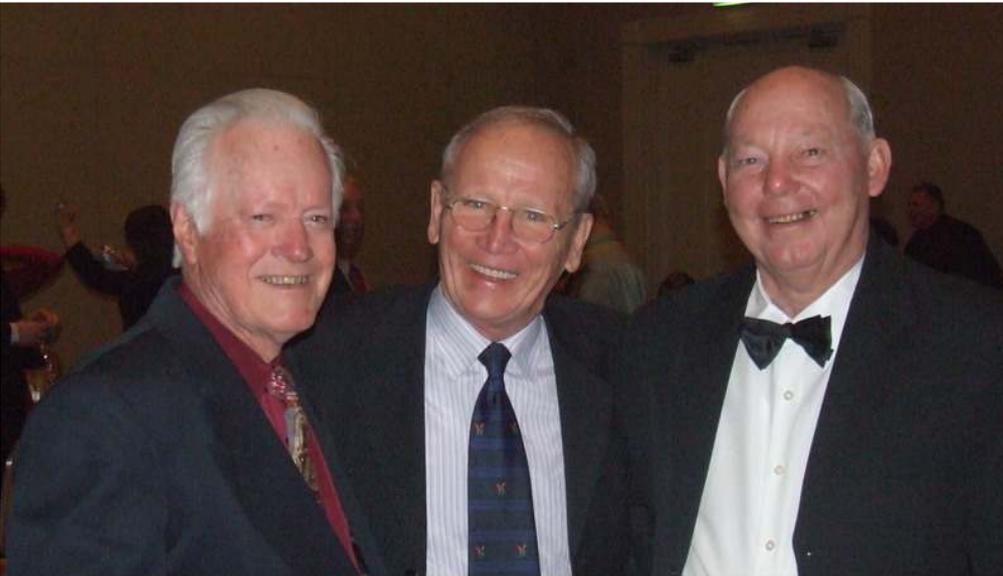
Gordon Meredith fought Jackie Ryan the Australian professional lightweight championship after turning professional. Meredith came out blazing with his usual heavy punching plan and knocked Ryan down in the first round, however Jackie Ryan used his brilliant boxing and ring craft to take the final round points from Gordon Meredith 1953. Jackie Ryan after a hard fought several rounds Pat Ford scored a K.O in round 10 to retain the Australian lightweight crown.

Pat Ford took out the Australian lightweight title from Frankie Flannery and the British Empire crown from Frankie Johnson, but Pat Ford retired after 27 professional contests and had 13 K.O wins, showing Ford to be a class boxer with savage punching ability.

Before Pat Ford's retirement, Ivor Germaine came to Australia in 1952 and was a clever top class boxer with dynamite punches beating Phil Warren. Alfie Clay, Walter Haines, Pran Mikus, George Barnes and later won both the Australian and British empire lightweight titles from Pat Ford. "What could have been" I believe if Gordon Meredith approached his professional career plan more conservatively and slowly work up the ladder gaining more experience with less top line fighters than Jackie Ryan, he too could have been one of the mentioned champion lightweights in Australia as he had a punch like a horse kicking and if handled by a clever coach would have made it to the top.

During the Queensland state boxing championships 1948 at the Old Brisbane Stadium other great fighters to win titles apart from Lex Plowman from Mareeba was the Monto cowboy Charlie Seeney who deserves a special mention who fought Nev Poppleton from East Brisbane in the 10 stone 7 lb division. Although handicapped by a badly cut right eye the Monto welterweight, Charlie Seeney fought courageously to win the state amateur title in his final against Nev Poppleton. Seeney's eye was first opened in the

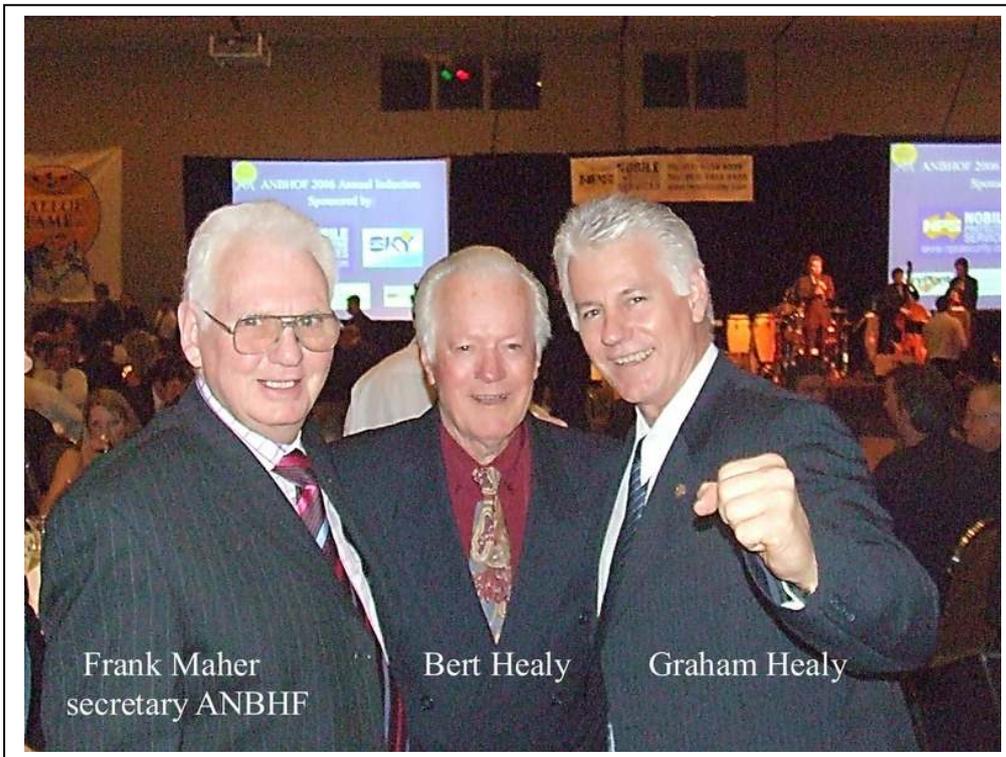
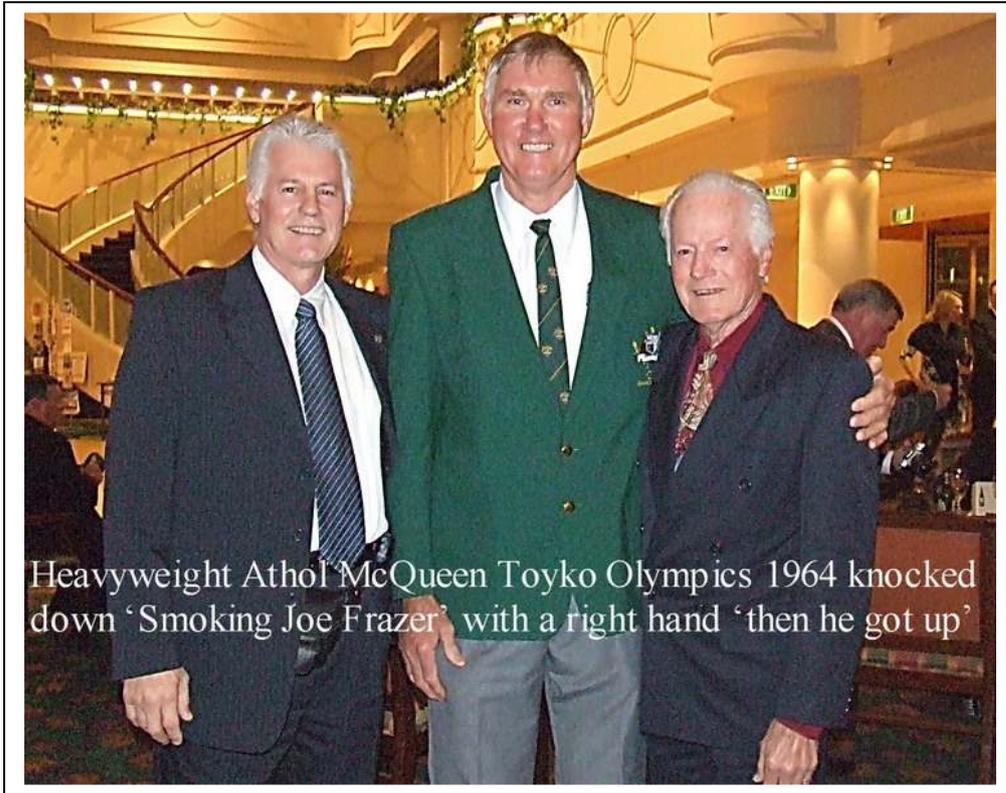
second round, and was gashed again in the next session. Despite the disability Seeney carried the fight to Poppleton in the closing stages. Many thought him lucky to win, though Poppleton lost points for holding.

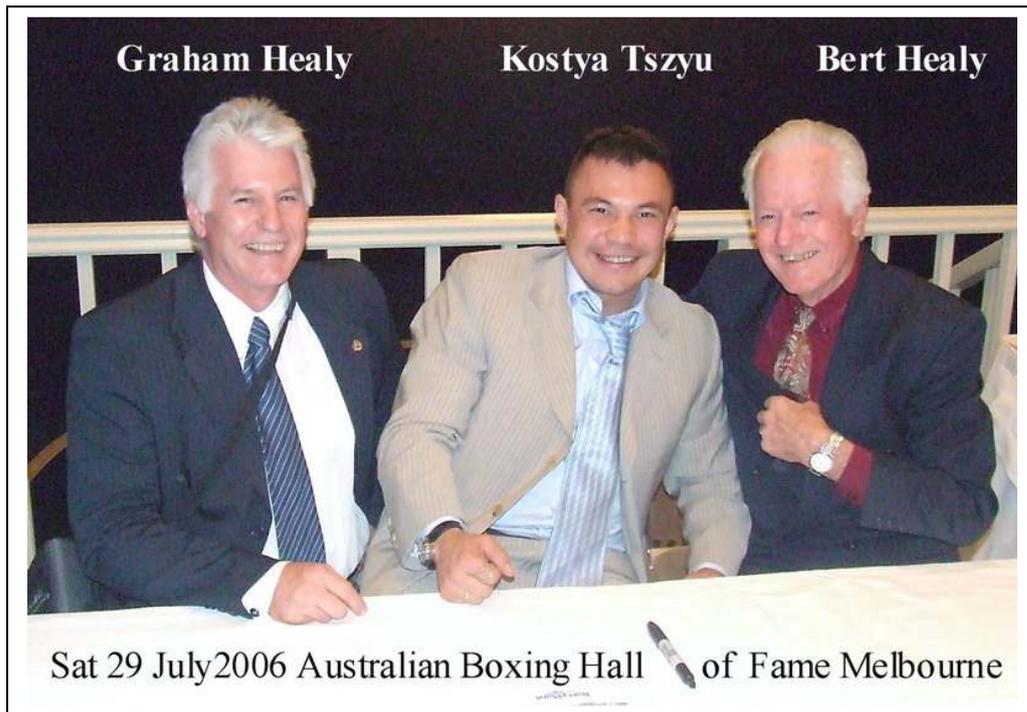
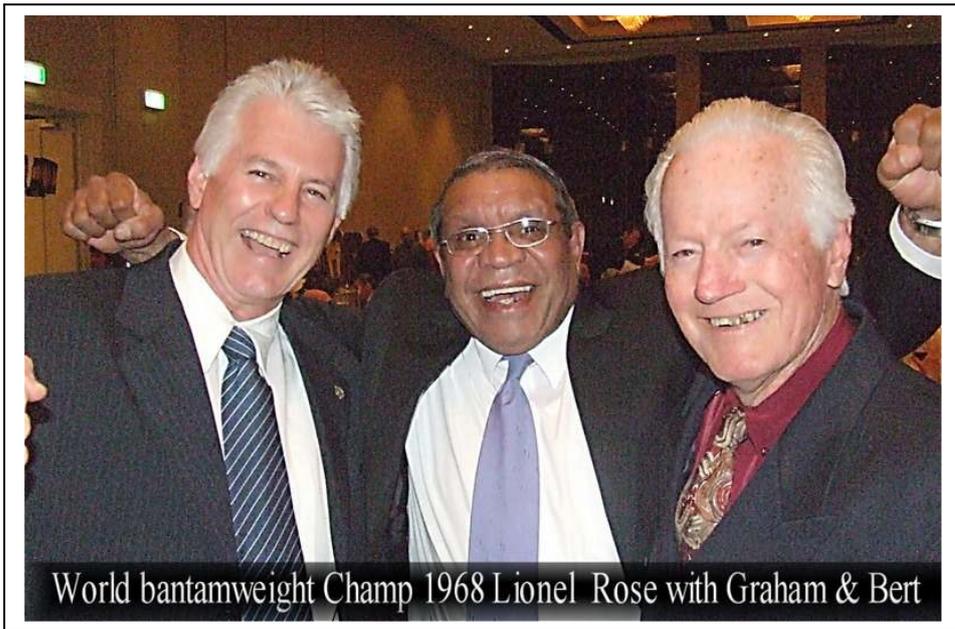


Bert Healy Qld. Featherweight Champ, Trevor King Aust. Featherweight Champ & Pat Ford Aust. Lightweight champ



Boxing Legends Trevor King(former Australian Featherweight Champ) and Pat Ford (Australian Lightweight champ) 'Ham it up'





SPECIAL AWARDS: Stopford memorial medal for most outstanding boxer in the tournament: Jackie Bourke (flyweight) Redcliffe, the Hodgens and Ryan trophy for second best" Charlie Seeney (Monto) and the Dr. Selwood memorial trophy for gamest loser: Nev. Poppleton, a boxer of great ability and tremendous punching power and one of the best welterweights around.

My personal feelings after this journey " think of the other person" and "education is more important than aggression" and most important "have the right attitude". When I look at the Gordonvale surrounding area today, over 100 years after the first settlement, we realise the debt of gratitude we own to those early pioneers.

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Bert Healy

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To GRAHAM
Good Luck
Bert Healy (DAD) XX

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