



### **Heather Carr (W67), AUS – Women’s #1 Race Walks**

It was indeed an honour and a privilege to be awarded the ‘Walks category for the 2017 WMA Awards.

I will attempt to illuminate what this award means to me by firstly recognising the abilities and strengths of all walkers from Australia and every other country that is involved with WMA.

We, in Australia, are extremely fortunate to have top quality and high calibre racewalking athletes, from Juniors through Seniors then to Masters. Our racewalking fraternity is very cohesive, supportive and collaborative with strong networking. Exceptional coaches are available to assist athletes and give their time willingly, training athletes with advice and knowledge gained from years of experience. Of course we wouldn’t be able to achieve

anything without all the officials who spend so much of their time assisting and contributing to racewalking.

Secondly, this award is one that I am particularly proud of. I worked extremely hard with a particular goal in mind. I was particularly focused; it paid off with my success in breaking the W65 3km indoor world record that had stood for many years. That indeed was my highlight for 2017!

My ‘other’ life? I am now retired, but for many decades was a Kindergarten Teacher, teaching children from 3 years to 5 years. A most enjoyable occupation.

My hobbies include reading, watching new release movies and caring for my 7 grandchildren. I also relish travelling, and of course with WMA, this opportunity comes around regularly, even more so now, with so many competitions available both in Australia and overseas.

I was born in Warragul, a rural town in Victoria, Australia. Always loved being outdoors, being active, enjoying clean, pristine air and fresh food. We were very lucky indeed to grow up in the era we did.

Our family moved then to another rural town, Avoca, where I spent my primary years at school. I finished off my secondary education at Castlemaine High School, in the centre of Victoria's gold mining region. Then I moved to Melbourne where I completed my training as a kindergarten or pre-school teacher. After marriage followed 4 children, living on a farm where beef cattle were raised. Then I discovered racewalking through my children's involvement in Little Athletics. Well, that started off a whole new interest, and I've been smitten now for over 30 years! I began my international competition in 1987 when the World Veterans Athletic Championships were held in Melbourne. How fortunate was I to find my niche at the ripe old age of 38! Previously I had played a lot of team sports, e.g. hockey, softball prior to athletics, but racewalking was the one that really 'got' me!

My husband, Bill, is an athlete; a sprinter, so our training is vastly different from one another's, but athletics is the 'glue' that binds us together. We love travelling to new and exciting places, being able to experience different cultures and languages. Lastly, but most importantly is our group of close and connected friends who hold similar values and attitudes to life as we do. We are indeed very fortunate to be a part of WMA and all the benefits it brings.