
The LONGFELLOW

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Wave those Homer Hankies!



Longfellow residents Maureen and Bill Milbrath cheer on runners in the Twin Cities Marathon October 11 as they head down West River Road. Longfellow finishers in the race included Jim Andre at 3:09; Gerry Betancourt, 3:47; Joseph Boucher, 5:15; Catherine Brown, 4:38; Robert Cleary, 3:50; Jay Doetkott, 4:10; Sue Anne Dubois, 4:35; Lea Fairbanks, 4:37; Edward Falk, 3:47; James Hansen, 4:10; Phil Hodge, 5:23; Kathy Jennissen, 4:10; Dixon Kaufman, 4:02; Wm. Laack, 5:01; Thomas Lundeen, 4:26; Jim McGinn, 3:59; Dan Morse, 2:41; David Myers, 4:34; James Nordin, 4:28; Gerald Peterson, 3:09; Sharon Proskin, 4:30; Jim Rantala, 2:54; Kathy Sampson, 4:31; Julie Simpson, 4:24; Mark Sonnen, 4:12; Beverly Vassner, 4:18; Terry Walters, 3:46. (Photo by Carola Bratt)

Longfellow Neig

By CAROLA BRATT

(Editor's note: Each fall since the first Twin Cities Marathon in 1982, Longfellow neighbors have come out to cheer the runners as they pass the 16, 17 and 18 mile points of the course along the West River Road. In 1987, 6,700 persons from every state except Maine and Hawaii, and from other countries around the globe, entered the race. There were 4,462 finishers and 27 were from the Longfellow area. This month we meet two of these neighbors—a man and a woman. Each has participated several times in the Twin Cities Marathon.)

Phil Hodge: True Grit Award

In the living room of Phil Hodge's home on the West River Road in Longfellow, professional and athletic awards are displayed on the two shelves of a small trophy case. The top shelf includes an "Almost Perfect 10K First Place (60-UP)," the "OLDEST FINISHER RUN FOR JUSTICE March 21, 1982," and a medal from the Los Angeles Marathon. The bottom shelf con-

tains the Theodore Von Karman Medal, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and the American Academy of Mechanics: Award for Distinguished Service to Theoretical and Applied Mechanics.

The awards reflect Phil's long academic career as an engineering professor, and his more recent involvement in long distance running.

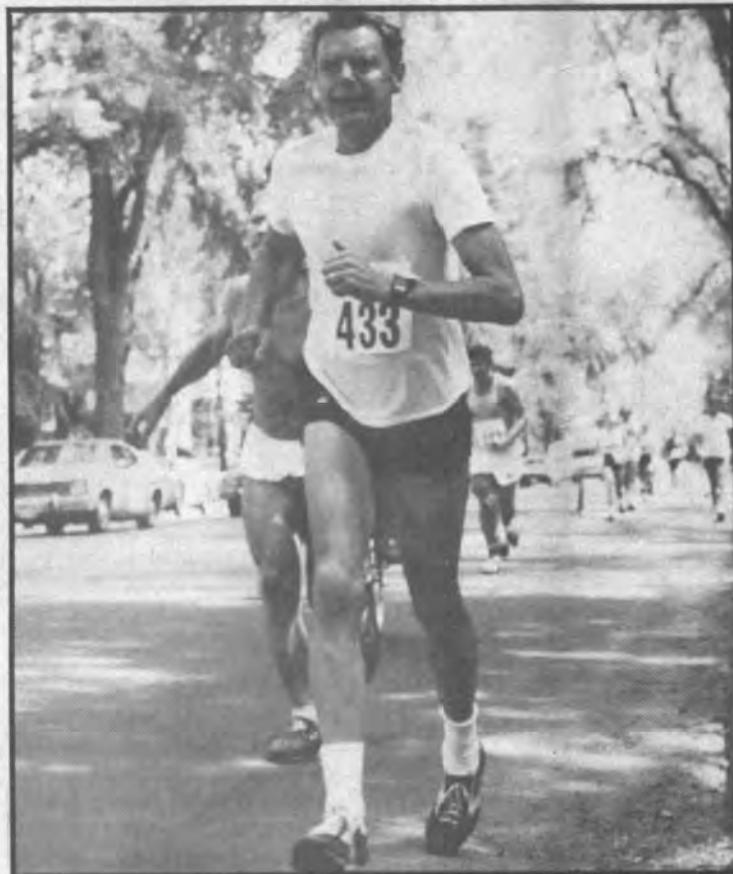
Phil Hodge was born in New England, attended high school on Long Island, graduated from Antioch College in Ohio, was in the Merchant Marine during World War II, received his Ph.D. from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, and has been on the faculty at UCLA and the Polytechnic in Brooklyn. He came to the University of Minnesota 16 years ago from a position at the Institute of Technology in Chicago. At the U of M, he teaches theoretical mechanics to engineering students in the Department of Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics.

Phil and his wife Thea have three children and two grandchildren. Daughter Susan is a professor of statistical genetics in the medical

school at UCLA, and lives with her husband and two children in the Los Angeles area. Son Philip is a consultant civil engineer in Pittsburgh, and daughter Lisa is a computer programmer in California.

"We have always liked the out-

shock to me. I went over to the track and tried to jog for 12 minutes and about halfway through I had to switch to a walk. So then I started regular jogging and keeping a log of it the way Cooper recommended."



Phil Hodge at Grandma's Marathon back in 1979.

The First Column

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doors type of thing, and did a lot of family camping with our children when they were growing up—hiking in the California mountains when we were on vacation," Phil says. "I thought of myself as being in real good condition."

Then, in the late 60s, Kenneth Cooper's book on aerobics came out. Phil says, "That came as a

"I did this," Phil continues, "primarily to keep in good condition for hiking in the mountains. I did all of my jogging wearing mountain boots. I tried to accumulate at least 30 aerobic points a week, usually 2, 3 or 4 miles two or three times a week."

This pattern continued until the fall of 1978, shortly before Phil's

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58th birthday. "Tom Johnson had his first Run for Justice as a gimmick to attract some attention when he was running for County Attorney. I entered that as my first race and I was hooked! It was just such fun running with a group of people and finding I did not come in last—in fact, I finished ahead of Phyllis Kahn, among others."

Phil seriously trained through the next winter, and in the spring ran his first marathon—Grandma's in Duluth. "I finished in under four hours with a smile. It felt fantastic. One of the high points of that first Grandma's was when, at about mile 21, I passed Alan Page who was also running his first marathon."

Grandma's was the first of 14 marathons Phil has completed. "The memorable one," he explains, "was two years later when I was 60 and ran the Manitoba Marathon in a time—3:29—when I needed 3:30 to qualify for Boston. That race finished in a stadium; I felt like my feet were not touching the ground that last stretch because I knew I was going to make the 3:30."

"So the following spring I went to Boston and had the worst marathon I have ever run. It turned out I was running with a stress fracture. That was the race Beardsley and Salazar duelled out, with Salazar winning. I was at about the 17th mile when we heard from the spectators that the winner had come in."

"What was important to me," Phil says, "is that not only did Thea come, but two of my children—Philip and Lisa—came and at a couple of checkpoints ran a hundred yards or so with me; so even though I ran a miserable race, it was an exhilarating experience because of the support I got and the noise of the crowd."

That fall Phil completely recovered in time for the first Twin Cities Marathon. "I was in perfect condition, and ran it in a 3:16, which gave me first place in the 60 and over age group. Not only that, they had a lottery among the age group winners and I won the lottery which gave me a free trip to Boston the next year; that time I ran a respectable 3:29."

Phil adds that another payoff of the first Twin Cities Marathon came when, in connection with the Scandinavian festival that fall, the King of Norway came and appeared at a wellness clinic at the Minneapolis YMCA. "All of the age group winners from the marathon were invited; we got to meet the king and give a 30-second talk on our running!"

The following year, Phil says, "I developed some knee trouble diagnosed as cartilage disintegration caused by the jarring motion of the running. In a way, that is the worst type of injury because the body does not replace cartilage. When you lose it, it is gone and after a year or so of trying to do some running and feeling it was a little better, it would start to hurt again. The doctor told me, 'I cannot make you stop running, but if you keep running another five years, you may not be able to walk.'

"It was hard to accept," Phil continues. "From then on I have just walked. It is not the motion, it is the jar (that does the damage). Walking, you do not come down with that pounding at every step. I went to several races and walked them instead of running. Frequently, I was not only the last finisher, but the next to last was out of sight when I got to the finish line. It was fun, and I still had the goal of trying to improve on my own time. In fact, I went to one race up in Cold Spring, Minnesota, two years ago.

It was a small race, 100 people, 14 miles. I was way behind the next to last, but race officials made up a special medal, the 'True Grit Award,' and sent it to me a couple of weeks later.

Phil's current hobby is genealogy. He says that most of his ancestors came to New England from England before 1700, and that he is a descendant of Rebecca Nurse who was hung as a witch in Salem, Massachusetts. In England, he has traced back and "hooked into one line that goes 10 generations before Charlemagne, 54 generations back from me. Another line goes back to one of the first Saxon kings, King Cedric, around 400 A.D."

Phil still tries to exercise regularly. "The last three years I have walked the Twin Cities Marathon with times of 5:18, 5:08 and 5:24. This year I was 14th from last out of more than 4,000 finishers, and 12th out of 12 in my age group (65-70). The way I look at it, there were 11 people my age who finished ahead of me, and thousands my age who did not participate."

Reflecting on his positive attitude toward being last, Phil sees a life-time pattern: "As a kid in suburban Long Island I was always on the fringes of things; I disproved the theory that you only like things you are good at, because in college I enjoyed intramural sports, which I was never very good at. I think the important thing is to find out what, of the many things that are good for you, you like doing for your own sake, because then you will do them."

Sharon Proskin: Happy Birthday!

Sharon Proskin celebrated her 40th birthday by running in the