

Welcome to THE ALAN NEWTON WAY

Early years

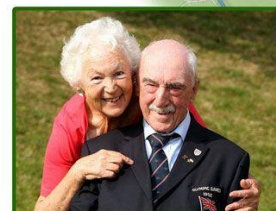
Alan Newton is the first person born and bred in Stockport to ever win an Olympic medal. Born in 1931, Alan spent most of his early years living in Adswood. He left school at 14 to become an apprentice electrician at WA Shaw's, using travel expenses to buy his first ever bike. He would travel all over the borough on his bike with his toolbox on the crossbar and electrical cable hanging around his neck. When Alan was 15, he joined Stockport Road Club having enjoyed a trip to Fallowfield to watch the track cycling. In 1947, he started cycling for them and became club track champion in 1949 and again in 1950. In 1952, Alan was elected onto the Olympic 'possibles' list and started riding trials internationally against France, Germany, Holland and Belgium. Alan was the fastest and strongest of the team at that time, eventually having to buy himself a specialist track bike.

Olympic Experience 1952

Alan was selected for the Olympics in 1952 and had a deferral for his National Service until after the Olympics were over. His Olympic experience began in London when many of the commonwealth (then Empire) competitors came to Buckingham Palace to meet the Queen and the Royal family. In July 1952 the team flew out to Helsinki in a converted troop carrier without a pressurised cabin. They were using their own bikes with silk tyres loaned from Dunlop that they then had to return. Alan (then 21) along with George Newberry (36), Don Burgess (18) and Ron Stretton (19) formed the 4000m Team Pursuit team and competed successfully to the semi-finals winning the Bronze Medal for Great Britain – the only cycling medal of the games. They were also successful in breaking the British Team Pursuit record with a time of 4 minutes and 49 seconds. Media coverage of the games was almost non-existent with friends and family having to find out the news by radio and more often the grapevine. Only weeks later Alan represented his country at the World Championships in Paris, competing in the Individual Pursuit and coming 4th in the World!



Alan proudly displaying his medals from the 1952 Olympics



Alan and his wife Barbara celebrating their diamond wedding anniversary

London 2012 and beyond

Little had been celebrated of this tremendous achievement until the Olympics reached London in 2012 and the search for torch bearers uncovered Alan Newton - Stockport's very own Olympic Medalist. Alan and his wife Barbara were invited to a number of events during the games that summer including a gathering of 300 Olympians at the Mansion House in London.

Alan was also invited to open the new bridge across the River Goyt which formed part of a Connect2 project developed by Stockport Council and Sustrans. He has been invited to be involved in many other local events since this time, in both Stockport and further afield.



Alan attending the opening of a new bridge at Chadkirk which is part of the Connect2 project, developed by Stockport Council and Sustrans. Photograph Arthur Procter

The pinnacle was being able to attend the new Olympians section of the BUPA Westminster Mile, which he completed - against the odds. Alan went with the starting pistol but was so far behind everyone else that as Alan came into sight at the finish line all the elite runners - including Steve Cram and Denise Lewis and her fellow athletes ran down to clap him over the line, with the hockey players and fencers (with foam swords) forming an arch for him to pass through.



Alan attending the BUPA Westminster Mile and meeting fellow Olympians

Being an Olympian carries a great sense of pride for Alan, but to win a medal is a real plus. Of the 75 Olympians who took part in that first BUPA Westminster section there were only 4 medallists - Steve Cram, Denise Lewis, Joslyn Hoyte-Smith and Alan Newton.