



# TMC

## Thomas More College

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*An Inspired Education*

## HISTORY OF THE EVENT

In 1962, President Kennedy challenged Americans to walk 50 miles (80 km.) in an attempt to improve the nation's health. Unfortunately they do not seem to have heeded this call!

But a teacher at a brand new school in South Africa **did** listen, decided it would be a good idea, and took up the challenge (1963). Mike Leffler, together with a couple of other teachers and a dozen or so boys, set out to walk from somewhere in the Greytown area to finish at Cato Ridge.

Only two people finished the full 50 miles, but a tradition had begun.

Numbers grew. Organisation (slowly!) improved. The course varied. One memorably **wet** year they slogged 3 times round Midmar Dam, in the mud! Various road options were tried and eventually a 'circular' course, beginning and ending at TMC was settled on. In recent years, increasing congestion on the roads, as well as increasing numbers, has made it necessary to avoid busy roads. Significant changes to the route were required in 2017 and again in 2018 and this year we will be starting and ending at TMC utilising the railway line and 5km loops around the campus, conservancy and immediate surrounding area.

When the Primary School opened in 1993, and rapid growth in the High School began, some changes were made. Shorter walks for the small children were introduced.

### WHY DO WE DO IT?

It began as a response to a challenge. It grew into a chance for everyone at Thomas More College to set themselves a **personal** challenge. It hurts but it also brings great satisfaction, pride, comradeship, and later a feeling of being part of the history of things. Now in its 57<sup>th</sup> year, it is the oldest tradition at Thomas More College.

The Long Walk plays a huge role at Thomas More College. It unifies the school like no other event could. Walkers who achieve even the 25km mark gain so much in confidence and self-esteem. After the walk, a difficult sports practice or match pales into significance. They learn how obstacles can be overcome and become less intimidated by challenges. This event gives our pupils a wonderful opportunity to show what they are capable of.

There are no 'winners', and yet **all who take part** are winners!

Updated by Rae Griesel / 3 December 2016/13 February 2018/27 November 2018