

# *Celebrating 21 Years of Giving*

## **The History of the Falmouth Walk**



The history of the Falmouth Walk dates back to 1991, the year that the infamous “Hurricane Bob” plowed through Falmouth. Two old friends, Tommy Leonard, a bartender at the Quarterdeck Restaurant in Falmouth, and Eddie Doyle, then a bartender at “Cheers” in Boston, came up the idea for the Falmouth Walk to benefit the Babe Ruth World Series. It was being held at Governor Fuller Field.

The signup was held at Lawrence’s Restaurant and attracted about 50 people. The next day, the first annual Falmouth Walk stepped off at the Heights by the Casino and followed the route of the Falmouth Road Race...in reverse. The group took the Bike Path at Surf Drive to avoid the roads and finished in Woods Hole at the Library. Tommy had arranged for a bus to take everyone back to Falmouth. Unfortunately, the bus arrived almost two hours late but a good time was had by all. Forty-eight hours later, “Bob” obliterated the Bike Path and Surf Drive, with widespread damage throughout the town..

TL & Eddie’s experience raising funds for charities goes back to their days working in Boston. One such event was called “The Bull to The Eliot.” Beneficiaries included the Jimmy Fund at Dana Farber Cancer Center, and Halcyon Place, a home for families of loved ones being treated at Shriners’s Burns Center at MGH. It was a one mile, bar to bar jaunt along the beautiful Commonwealth Avenue mall and featured about 150 runners and a celebrity guest of honor, riding in a limo, of course.

The last “Bull to the Eliot” was run to benefit a young man named “JP”, who worked at the Bull & Finch Pub. He had finished his evening shift and was riding home on his bike when he was struck head-on by a car. A star goalie for the Boston University Hockey team, JP had many friends and a caring family from Wisconsin that stayed by his bedside as he lay in a coma. In the meantime, TL and Eddie began to put their plan for a benefit run into action. Hundreds gathered at the Eliot Lounge that night...NHL players, Coach Parker and all of JP’s teammates, Harvard and BC coaches and players, media celebrities, City officials, Boston restaurant workers, and of course, JP’s family. This was a very, special night...indeed.

So, with positive experience to build on, TL and Eddie wanted to make the Falmouth Walk a special Cape Cod family event. As time went by, a strong group of friends solidified the committee. Many local businesses have generously donated items for the Post Walk Auction & Picnic, which has become the highlight of the program and a wonderful way to celebrate its conclusion.

We have also been blessed to have friends provide enormous support all these years...Reebok provided all the beautiful T-Shirts for the participants. Others include Smitty’s Ice Cream, Jack & The Beanstalk, Sam Adams Beer Co., SBLI, as well as Laureen’s and The Quarterdeck Restaurants. Saint Barnabas Church has graciously allowed our participants and volunteers enjoy a family picnic and raffle on their beautiful grounds. The Falmouth Track Club volunteers provided assistance on the roads to ensure a safe day for all.

Each year, several local charities have benefited from the event. Youth groups, senior citizens and medical support organizations received helping funds. Others include *The Haven for Healing...the Ellen T. Mitchell Scholarship Fund...Around The Table Meals kitchen...*and The Falmouth Military Support Group. These are all worthwhile organizations trying to make a difference in Falmouth.

The Falmouth Walk is now part of the town’s summer landscape. Neither rain or steam heat prevented over 650 folks from stepping off for a good cause over the past few years. The entire event, including the Friday Night Registration, the Walk and the Picnic, officially qualifies as an Annual Family Tradition...just like a Smitty’s Ice Cream Cone on a hot summer’s day. Karen Mahoney and her family have documented the event every year with an album of photos and 19 years of commemorative T-Shirts.

Following the Picnic, TL & Eddie can be found in the Quarterdeck, raising their pints of “Sam Adams” and toasting everyone who helped to make the Falmouth Walk another successful “Job Well Done.”