

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

OVER TO YOU - THE READERS

Just to let you know nobody as yet has volunteered to be Honorary Essex County Walking Secretary. If nobody does, there could be no County 10,000 metres next year, and nobody to argue the case for walks on Essex Committee if someone wants to stop the walks. At the moment it has backing, anything can happen in the future.

Regards, **Ray Pearce**

LOOKING BACK

Our last edition reported a reunion of the 45th anniversary of the first time Ilford AC closed-in a full team of 3 in a 100 miles' walk. This prompted the Centurions' Captain **Martin Fisher**, once a Southend resident, to recall his last team completion in such an event - which was in Essex!

"Think the last time I was in a team was Woodford 1986, Phil Carroll, Gordon Fisher and myself Yorkshire RWC, although I tried to get them to have another go it was solo from then on. Illness has robbed my father of memories of that day but I still laugh with Phil how he cut a pair of training bottoms down to just above the knee so he could wear them at night and still show his knees were straight, perhaps the first type of semi-longs that are much favoured now. My father washed his trainers hoping to keep them as a reminder of the race he hung them out overnight but his worn-out shoes were gone in the morning, stolen - it's rough up north. Phil is still on the road doing a park run once a week and just recently another competitor of that 1986 race shared memories at an Enfield League event, nice to think that athletes remember our race with such affection. I am competing in a 35 miles over the moors run, out of the 100+ competitors over half have no club just adventure/ultra athletes - will they remember this race 30 years on? I doubt it but they have been bitten by the distance bug and the adventure of distance races. Perhaps these are the Centurions and race walkers of the future?"

GET WELL SOON

Roger Buxton collapsed and was admitted to Southend General Hospital. Now retired, he was one of our biggest supporters when working in local radio (Essex Radio, then BBC Essex), and also attended our 2012 Olympians' Tribute Luncheon. Writes June Cork: "*Very sorry to hear of Roger's health set-back*". Roger has now been discharged and is back home, but needing a few more medical appointments. We all hope he's making strides towards better health. If you want to send "Get Well" cards, his address is 55 Marine Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2JD.

ROGER MICHELL HONOURED

Surrey Walking Club held a social function in Hayes to mark Roger's 50 years' unbroken membership. Roger became Centurion 724 at the 1982 Leicester Congerstone 100 Miles, clocking 21:13.26. It was some race as the winner, York Postal WC on the day and a former Southend-on-Sea AC man Mike Holmes (C717) recorded the 2nd fastest Centurion qualifying time to win in 17:21.52. This race was the launch pad of C735 Sandra Brown's most active span as a Centurion - as 22:18.24 secured membership. Much better times were to come her way - and often!

Writes Sandra Brown: "*Great that SWC honoured Roger Michell's long and successfully continuing walking career with a 50 years' membership supper. I could never keep up with him at the sprints! Long may his walking career and impressive speed continue.*"

LAIDE TO REST

Adelaide have pulled out of wanting to stage the 2026 Commonwealth Games, having been favourites. This after considering they might only get back a third of the £1.9 million it takes to stage such an event. Remaining candidates are Shah Alam (Malaysia) and Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea). Pity, as with Australia hosting, race walking would have been assured a place on the programme.

TIPS FOR ALL ATHLETES FROM A GREAT

1. It's important to enjoy what you do.
2. Listen to your body - don't carry on if you are injured.
3. Everyone's journey is different. Success might not happen straight away, so be patient.

So says **Katarina Johnson-Thompson**

OVER IN DOHA

No UK women this time, but a quartet of GB male race walkers were selected for Doha. Credit to all 4, as they started at an unfamiliar 12 midnight local time, and even then, in conditions of high heat. Pride-of-place went to Tom Bosworth who came 7th clocking 1:29.34 in high class company. In his 20K event, 40 finished, but some faced the dreaded "chop" and others failed to finish. Alas our other 3 representatives all saw red cards waved under their noses - in past days they'd have been halted after a loud call of the number they were wearing. With Japan 2020 ever nearer, we're sure they, and their coaches, will work flat out to produce performances worthy of an Olympic Games, and that our women walkers will also want to be involved in the action. In Doha we congratulate Noel Carmody on being part of the officiating team - another plum appointment for him! Looking ahead, it's noted temperatures in Japan could hit 104F/40C during next Summer's Games. Some have suggested long-distance events be moved out of Tokyo to be staged somewhere cooler! Organisers have already announced that "Olympic Volunteers" will only work short shifts, for safety reasons. It's approaching fast, indeed our first GB Olympic selections have already been announced - 12 sailors have been named.

AT THE TOP

Olympian Peter Marlow is now Chairman of our Race Walking Association Coaching & Development Sub-Committee. Please support Peter by passing on any helpful ideas, suggestions and initiatives you might have on this important matter. Noel Carmody is your RWA Honorary Championships Secretary - he also deserves support for our Championships, as he arranges National events for you and your Clubs.

BACK IN '74

Race Walking Record (No 386 - Editor Alan Buchanan) reported Ray Middleton setting a World Record of 53 miles 352 yards in the Accolade 8 Hours on an excellent tartan track at the New River Stadium in North London's White Hart Lane - but a track somewhat exposed. Ken Harding and John Lees completed the frame (52-649 and 51-1353 respectively). Accolade was the performance-enhancing "in" drink of that time! Intermediate timing points were at 6 hours, 7 hours, 20 miles, 30 miles, 50 Kms, 40 miles and 50 miles. Ray Middleton was ahead at all bar one of them - John Lees leading by just over 2 minutes at 20 miles (2:50.59.2). The same edition of the Record reported Ray Middleton also winning the 49th London-to-Brighton Open Walk in 8:17.50, with Bels club mate Carl Lawton 2nd in 8:33.35 and Brighton man John Lees 3rd in 8.41.43. 48 started/45 finished. Despite a 1-2, Bels didn't win the team race, that honour going to Brighton as Dave Boxall 5th and J Crook 7th backed up John Lees to take it on the highest placed last scoring man rule. In '74 Essex hosted our RWA National Under 21 Championships at Springfield Cadet School. 41 started (6 teams) started the Junior 5 miles, won by Highgate's Jacky Lord in 37.13 after favourite Barry Lines was disqualified at 4 miles when leading by a considerable margin. Sheffield won the team race, with Met Police Cadets edging out Essex Cadets by having the highest placed last scoring man home. The Boys' 2 miles' race favourite also failed to win, as Shaun Maxwell missed the start! Steyning's Colin Pope won in 15.39. - 48 started (9 teams). A Youths' 3 Miles attracted 43 starters (8 teams) and were led home by popular local prospect Mike

Dunion in 22.05, the same time as Graham Morris who was edged out in a sprint finish. Essex Police won the team trophy. This was the first meeting held under new Laws, and National Coach Julian Hopkins was present to see how it worked out. Race Walking Record reported "several lads were lucky to finish". Other winners around that time were Carl Lawton (Southend 5 miles in 36.30) with Ken Carter just 5 seconds behind and Amos Seddon 3rd, as 49 passed the recorders - Mike Holmes won the Morecambe 12 miles in 1:32.58 and Peter Selby the SWC 4 Miles Gazette Cup at Monks Hill in 32.21.

For those wanting to part with money, the Record carried adverts for the 34th annual Met Police Open 7 Miles (20p individual entry) and the 2nd Phil Everard Memorial Walks at Chigwell Row for 15p a go! A real bargain was the Phil Embleton Memorial 15Kms at Battersea Park as entries came free - all welcome with entries taken on-the-day.

This year saw Ilford's Roger Mills work hard - extremely hard - to earn a bronze medal in the European Championship 20K walk at Rome in temperatures at the top end of the thermometer. In the stadium as Roger was finishing (92.33.8), Amos Seddon, 6th in 94.17.6, was on his final lap. We've already covered this great feat in a previous nostalgia article, and Roger gave a moving talk about his experiences at an "Athletes Reunited" luncheon last year at "The Cow" in Stratford. Soon after, Roger won a well-supported Highgate Hour 'A' Section at Cophall Stadium (now Allianz Park) covering 13,412metres, with Leicester's Brian Adams the only other passing 13K, when reaching 13,340m. Bob Dobson (then one of Southend-on-Sea AC's all-stars) made 12,923m to secure 3rd place. Other winners that day were Graham Morris/Steyning 12,110m 'B' Section, D Desplanque/Overseas 11,479m 'C' Section, T Moore/Essex Police 10,567m 'D' Section: note in this Section, Essex Police had a clean sweep of medals as joint 2nd were W Stephen and A Trebilcock with 10,414m - they also had 5th as A Masson notched 10,298m. Among **34** 'D' Section finishers were Matt Davitt (anybody know where he is nowadays?), Ken Roost, Reg Denny BEM, Laurence Dordoy, Harold Whitlock MBE, M Todd of Essex Police, Reg Youldon, Frank Drake, George Hallifax, Bill Pilgrim, Johnny Henderson, Hew Neilson and Southend's H Rogers. Supporting races, saw a Boys' 1 Mile (33 finished) and Youths' 1 Mile (20 finished). They were won, respectively by Shaun Maxwell/Leyland Motors in 7.28 and Graham Morris/Steyning in 6.50. In the Youths' race Essex Police duo Mike Dunion came 2nd (6.58) and Roy Sheppard 6th (7.52). Stuart Bennett, then Belgrave, was 10th in 8.23 and Newham's Nigel Stone 12th in 8.24. What a great turnout this entire meeting had!

FIXTURES

*These event details are published for your information, and to the best of knowledge are accurate at the time of writing – you are advised, however, to check the status of any event directly with the organisers. Times marked * are provisional times.*

DEC	2	Essex County AA AGM	Melbourne Park	7.30 pm
	8	Christmas 10K + U/16 5K	Kirby Fleetham	12.00 noon
	14	Alf Palmer Memorial Meeting	Broadbridge Heath	11.00 am
	21	Open Track Races 1/2/3K	Lewes Track	12.00 noon
	26	Brighton Boxing Day Meeting: 5.5 Miles and 1.8 Miles	Preston Park	10.30 am
JAN	11	Race Walking Association AGM	Coventry*	1.00 pm
	18	Enfield League 5 Miles + 2019 Series Presentations	Donkey Lane	11.00 am
	25	Steyning Open 15K	Steyning	2.00 pm
	25	The Centurions AGM	Edgbaston (Tally Ho)	1.00 pm
FEB	2	SRWA 10K Championship + London Walks 10K + YAG	Hillingdon CC	1.00 pm
	8/9	Essex & Eastern Counties Indoor 1 Mile Championship	Lee Valley	TBC
	16	SCVAA Indoor 3,000m Championship	Lee Valley	TBC
	22	Enfield League 5 Miles	Donkey Lane	11.00 am
	22/23	UK Indoor Championships	Glasgow	TBC

* Venue is the Coventry Godiva Clubhouse, Kirby Corner Road, Coventry CV4 7AL. Deadline for advanced nominations and motions is Saturday 14 December - to be sent to the RWA Honorary General Secretary, Colin Vesty.

STILL AT THE RACES

Grade 1 judge Michael Croft is still active and has been helping out by officiating at Milton Keynes. Milton Keynes has been a major event venue in times past, hosting our 1977 RWA National 50K Championship, 1977 Lugano Cup Final and an Open & RWA National Championship 100 Miles Long Distance track walk in 2008 - all in the Stantonbury area.

I HEREBY DECLARE

In Doha, Olympian Seb Coe was re-elected unopposed by 203 delegates as IAAF President for a second term. It must be said he first took on this role at a time of turmoil!

WALKERS ON THE MOVE

Walking races and marathons in Tokyo 2020 are to be moved 500 miles' north to Sapporo, on Japan's northernmost island, where temperatures are expected to be 5-to-6 degrees centigrade cooler. "Athletes' health and well-being are at the heart of our concerns" stated IOC President Thomas Bach. Tom Bosworth has tweeted, "Great to see athletes/spectators are more of a priority in Tokyo over Doha". Now let's all hope we can get more of our GB race walkers onto those Sapporo start lines! We wish them all well.

ENFIELD LEAGUE 1 HOUR/ESSEX 10,000M IN CONJUNCTION

A miserable Sunday afternoon (29 September) saw 32 finishers (3 retired) contest this annual Lee Valley track walk. Six worthies reached 10,000 metres during their hour's action. We won't steal the thunder of "Enfield Walker" who'll publish a full result/report. So we'll give selected results, mentioning a star sextet for achieving 10,000m plus those with Essex connections (Club/residence/birth/work). Distance in metres/10k times in brackets.

1	George Wilkinson	Enfield & Haringey	12,667	(47:10:03)
2	Dave Annetts	North Herts	12,486	(47:44:06)
3	Jonathan Hobbs	Ashford	11,394	(52:59:07)
4	Francisco Reis	Surrey Walking Club	10,939	(54:48:00)
5	Jacqueline Benson	Ashford	10,106	(59:52:01)
6	Steve Uttley	Iford	10,027	(59:56:03)
8	Malcolm Martin	Surrey Walking Club	9,897	
14	Melanie Peddle	Loughton	9,624	
15	Stuart Bennett	Iford	9,400	
18	Simon Morgan	Iford	8,927	
19	Dave Kates	Iford	8,846	
21	Dave Hoben	Surrey Walking Club	8,651	
23	Rachael Lawless	Iford	8,619	
25	Amos Seddon	Enfield & Haringey	8,546	
30	Sue Clements	Cambridge & Coleridge	7,617	

It was a last Essex Championship organised by Ray Pearce, who'll step down in early December after decades of honorary and dedicated service. Your Essex 10,000 Metres Championship saw all medals awarded on classified finishes:

Men 1. S Bennett 2. S Morgan 3. D Kates
Women 1. M Peddle 2. R Lawless

Writes Organiser Ron Wallwork: "Thanks to everyone who braved the weather, especially the officials and particularly recorders."

RON'S DRAMATIC NEWS

The road course at Lee valley Athletics Centre is no longer viable, because the road from the Stadium has been blocked off.

RYAN CUP incl CIVIL SERVICE & BRITISH POLICE 10k CHAMPIONSHIPS - BIRMINGHAM

Selected results:

Civil Service: 1. Steve Uttley 61.20, 2. Mark Culshaw 61.46, 3. Jason Brewer 61.54, 8. Bob Dobson 76.39. (8 competed)

British Police: 1. Richard Mallinson 62.42, 2. Martin Slevin 63.49, 3. Dan Maskell 66.42, 4. Glyn Jones 67.43, 6. Chris Flint 73.00. (9 competed)

Women's 5K: 1. Maureen Noel 31.21, 2. Hillary Mann/guest 32.09, 3. Jane Hodge 34.10, 4. Geraldine Legon 35.27. (5 competed + 1 guest)

Ryan Cup (British Police v Civil Service) 4-scoring: 1st Civil Service 14 points/2nd British Police 22 points.

Adds Hon Ed: Steve Uttley started slightly behind the field as he was tying shoelaces when the Starter sounded his Klaxon horn – Mr Starter always used to ask "Are you ready?" Bob Dobson appeared in his 48th Ryan Cup representative meeting - so can more competitors support this long-established meeting, to keep it going for at least another 2 years, so Bob can attain his half-century? What a wonderful feat this would be.

Here are some readers' comments:

- "A long way for me to travel, and expensive, but if it keeps the event going for another 2 or 3 years it's worthwhile. I was the only Met man, and Lancashire the only Force to close in a team. The Police champion is a young man from Northants whose sport is cycling but his fitness saw him finish in a good time. Steve walked well to win the event. I expect Glyn will circulate the results for more detailed analysis – should take about 30 seconds as numbers were well down. Not helped by having a flooded course but Glyn and his helpers arranged an alternative route to bypass the flooded area and all was well." **Chris Flint**
- "Hasn't it all become rather pointless with low numbers attending and overall times being so slow?" **Bill Sutherland**

ALL HAIL THE KING

No, not Dan and Dom on this occasion. Former race walker Mike Brace CBE, DL is now the owner of a new guide dog - a labrador/retriever cross who answers to the name of "King". King replaced "Izzy" who's reached retirement age and now lives on as a pet dog in Mike's Elm Park house. Mike used to walk in Essex League events with Alex Ross as his guide - and ran a couple of London Marathons with former Ilford AC President Les Hislop (who has also race walked in our now defunct Essex League) guiding him through massed fields. Mike still holds one race walking record from his days as a blind athlete!

IN THE FOREST

The latest in a long line of successful Centurions' Socials Walks was held in mid-October, starting at outside Loughton Underground Station and ending at a tea room directly opposite Loughton "Nick". In perfect and even sunny weather, this walk was led by Richard Howard, a son of Kim - who herself was an enthusiastic participant. Our route, as mapped out by Richard, took us along paths and also off paths, around historic Epping Forest. Another walking Group met at Loughton Station at the same time as The Centurions, and some came over to mingle with us, before working it out that we weren't their Group. For one Centurion social walker - Chris Flint - it brought back memories, for as a young Police Constable way back in 1966, he was active in Epping Forest as part of a search party seeking "*man on-the-run*", infamous Harry Roberts. For Centurions' Captain Martin Fisher it was indeed a long day, as he travelled to-and-from Yorkshire to support the event. This picture shows some of our participants sitting outside a tea room, with Walk Leader Richard second from the left. In shot is Kim, who on the following morning completed the Chelmsford Marathon (her 107th), also in kind weather, clocking 6:00.20. Centurions' Social Walks Co-ordinator Steve Kemp is already considering where our next one is to be! This was well supported, though of course we could always welcome a few more. These activities are put on **for you!** Social Walks are open to all, whether or not Centurions - and also for family members and friends.



Caption:

Henry Howard,
Richard Howard
(Walk Leader),
John Borgars,
Martin Fisher
(Captain), Chris
Flint, Bob Dobson,
Pam Ficken
(President), Kim
Howard, Dave
Ainsworth and Ken
Livermore,

Others who walked
aren't in shot.

Photo from Kay Kemp - Photograph from Loughton

Praise: "Great day, thanks to all." (Kim Howard) "Great day's walk." (Chris Flint)

RIP JOHN STURGESS (Centurion 829)

Not one with any Essex qualification, as far as we know, but many of our readers will have competed against John - who has sadly taken his leave of us aged 77. A Leicester resident he competed with distinction for his home-City Club, who promoted the 1988 Congerstone 100 Miles, which he completed in 19:15.58 and repeated this feat twice more elsewhere. In that race 75 started/47 finished (good fields in the 80s - even for long ones). John was one of 19 new Centurions - but the only one from the UK mainland, so showing an emerging trend. It was the 5th (and last) time Leicester promoted a 100 Miles' event on their Congerstone course, as traffic levels had caused concerns. After that Leicester moved to the quiet village of Hungarton where 3 such bi-annual races were held before the curtain came down. That 1988 event was won by SWC's Richard Brown in the 4th fastest recorded time - just 35 seconds outside the magical 17 hours' barrier, followed by Manxman John Cannell less than 10 minutes behind. Condolence is expressed.

- "Leicester Walking Club are saddened by the news of the death of John Sturgess after a very short illness. John was a life member of the club and being a stalwart of long-distance walking will be remembered by lots of people up and down the country for his long striding and determined style." **Colin Vesty**
- "Sad news about John. He was a very strong walker, and did an amazing time on a difficult course." **Chris Flint**
- "We too remember the challenging Leicester WC courses, and have strong memories of John in the blue and white vest of LWC of which he was a committed member. John knew how to dig deep, but also had a warm smile. We shall remember him as an honoured and much valued Centurion." **Sandra (C735) and Richard (C760) Brown**
- "Sad to pass on news of the death of John Sturgess C829, qualifying at Congerstone, Leicester, with a fast time. He was well known for strong distance walking and he returned again at the Hungarton course, again with a quick time. I remember both courses as being tough tests which reflected John's determination." **Martin Fisher, Centurions' Captain**
- "John was clearly an active and respected race walker." **Sue Clements, Centurions' Hon Secretary**

MAJOR AWARD

Cath Duhig has been elected as "**Female Master-of-the-Year**" in the Mercia Region. Her award was to be received at a Gala Presentation in Cieza. One wonders where this talented, enthusiastic and committed athlete keeps all her many medals, cups, plaques certificates and prizes, as they just keep on coming! Cath won similar sporting awards in East Anglia, and now they're being presented on mainland Europe! Cath qualified as Centurion 986 at Newmarket's Rowley Mile course in 2003, clocking 21:27.43 when finishing in 8th position (3rd lady) wearing the colours of Ryston Runners. It was some race that day with an "Essex Walker readers' theme - for Peter Ryan (C984) won with a wonderful performance. His victory was under threat right to the closing stages as he crossed the line in 19:57.35, with 2nd placer Willen Mutze of RWV Rotterdam just 55 seconds behind. Sandra Brown was 3rd. Last finisher was West County entrant Wendy Watson (Long Distance Walkers' Association) who clocked 23:50.11 so gaining her Centurion No 1,000! In 2005 Cath was a prominent Organising Committee member when our 100 miles Championship was staged at King's Lynn. **Congratulations** to Cath, who has also raced for Loughton AC, on this latest award - they'll be more coming we're sure.

- "Very interesting and well-earned too!" **Bill Sutherland**
- "Good old Cath ... a very well-deserved award as she often travels up to 7 hours on a bus to compete (and 7 hours back!). **Kathy Crilley**
- "Cath deserves the success she has achieved for the dedication and hard work she puts in we walked together when she qualified for her 100 and well remember the 100 Peter organised at King's Lynn. It's good to see our athletes and Centurions achieving at top level." **Martin Fisher**

DON THOMPSON WAS POINTLESS

In the latest BBC1 "Pointless" series a question asked the final pair of contestants to name any of the first 3 in BBC Sports Personality-of-the-Year Awards during the 1960s. Olympic 50K gold medallist (Rome 1960) Don Thompson was a pointless answer. The final pair didn't win money - only "Pointless" trophies. That year Welsh showjumper David Broome won and another 1960 Olympic gold medallist, Yorkshire breaststroke swimmer Anita Londesborough was 3rd - both pointless answers.

AT WEST NORWOOD CREMATORIUM

Our last edition reported the death of James Neil Allen RIP, one of race walking's best ever friends. Here's more info, gained at a packed funeral.

The coffin entered to "Chariots of Fire" and we filed out to the strains of "My Way". Neil was born in Upminster and commenced journalism at the Stratford Express (this disappeared in 2011). He was a young crime reporter, but interest dwindled as a result of having to attend long-winded court sessions. Neil wasn't bad at athletics, as a 2.02 half-mile confirms. He switched to sports reporting and had several notable moments early on. He was the youngest journalist present when Roger Bannister was first to beat the 4 minutes' mile at Oxford's Iffley Road track. He was the youngest full-time journalist on the staff of The Times when aged 22 and when 23 was the youngest accredited journalist at the 1956 Melbourne Olympics.

One of the late Neil Allen's greatest moments was when covering "The Rumble in the Jungle" for The Times. He couldn't sleep as he was worried about leaving his first wife at home (she died in her 40s with cancer) so went out for a run around 2 am in a deserted Kinshasa. Who should also be out for a run on his own, but the great Muhammad Ali himself. Two runners in the middle of the night - both stopped and chatted to each other for ages. Little more running was done that night! So many great tales were told today at the service and afterwards. This is similar to Bill Sutherland's great tale of his own chance/unscheduled meeting with "The Greatest", while out training.

His family spoke at the service, including his 2nd wife. We were told that many of Neil's greatest stories were typed on an old-fashioned typewriter with a bottle of whiskey by the side. It was

stated Neil's favourite Olympics were the Tokyo Games of 1964 (the last on a cinder track). Neil's last years saw the onset of dementia - however while this meant a memory loss, it didn't seem to affect an ability to recall past athletes' names, events, times, locations and related news of his favourite sport. He loved doing what he did for a living. For many of us, we last saw Neil at an Athletics Reunited luncheon in The Mudlark close to London Bridge. After his Times career, he moved to the London Evening Standard - which he also served with distinction. His greatest moment in journalism came at a major, but tragic event. Neil was reporting the 1972 Munich Olympics as a sports journalist. Then a "Great Festival of Peace" turned to one of violence, so his bosses needed a news reporter on the scene - Neil was told to drop his sports coverage to get involved in the big story of that day. Neil did, and his report was on the front page of The Times as it's leading article.

Tributes to Neil Allen:

- "Neil Allen, what an amazing life he had, his funeral deserved to get a full house. The life he had and achieved will not be seen by today's journalists. More so with the digital media encroaching so much into mainstream news coverage and the seemingly disposable nature of modern digital journalism. The depth that the likes of Neil gave us is so sadly missing and which gave us the depth needed to get a true understanding of the subject matter. At the funeral Neil Wilson even recalled all the great work you (DA) and Bill Sutherland etc did to get the 50km reintroduced to the Olympics." **Olly Flynn**
- "Great man - sorry to hear the news." **Roger Buxton**

PETER CHAPLIN RIP

Peter Chaplin, a stalwart founder member of Cambridge & Coleridge AC (who have a Walking Section) and once a long-serving member of Eastern Veterans AC (now Eastern Masters AC) has sadly passed on aged 89. Peter last completed a parkrun 5K in 2014 - indeed in 2011 he ran 45 of them as a V80. He was a quality marathon and middle-distance runner - excelling in marathons in those days before they became highly popular. Peter was a long-term Honorary Secretary at C&C and was ahead of his times, being one of the first Club officials to create an electronic database. He was an excellent race organiser, as many can testify. He had much going on in his life as he'd spent time as a local Councillor and also a classical music lover. Peter's wife Anne predeceased him. He'll be truly much missed.

Tributes to Peter Chaplin:

- "Peter was one of the stalwarts of the Club." **Sue Clements** (C&C member)
- "He always pinned his number to the front of his shorts, never his vest! One of the old guard. Often maligned but the sport wouldn't be what it was without them." **Cath Duhig**

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

This year the RWA Southern Area didn't hold a single Championship race. Hopefully support will be show for their RWA Southern Area 10K Championship on **Sunday 2 February** (Hillingdon) in conjunction with your London 10K. At this event, the ladies' 5 Championship distance will be upped to 10k, in line with the men's race. *Entries will only be taken online.*

Pednor 5 Miles, traditionally on the Early May Day Bank Holiday Monday is to be put back to the May Late Spring Bank Holiday **Monday** Public Holiday (**25 May**). This because 2020's early May Day Public Holiday is being put back to Friday 8 May.

Cecil Gittings Memorial Races (Enfield League in conjunction - 4 races 1.5/5/10/15K) is being put back from a previously announced 21 March to **Saturday 4 April** at well-appointed/easily accessible Gravesend Cyclopark.

After some years, the RWA National 20K is returning to your fixture list. It's on Sunday 17 May at Coventry. In recent years England Athletics staged a poorly supported 20K Championship at Leeds (which had started at 9.00 am).

Saturday 14 November is to be the Centenary Celebration of the Enfield Open 7 Miles. The first such race was in **1920**. We hope this celebration of 100 years will see another large turnout and reunion theme to the day, as seen at the highly successful 90th Enfield Open 7 Miles 3 years' ago. The sequence missed 5 races due to World War II and others when it was decided not to race over speed humps in King George V Playing Fields - a decision since rescinded.

At your RWA Southern Area AGM all Officers and Committee members were re-elected, with an exception of Mark Culshaw who stood down. He's replaced by new Committee member Graham Chapman of Headington Road Runners. Hard-working Chris Flint remains both President and Honorary Secretary, Noel Carmody keeps hold of the gavel and octogenarian John Powell has now completed **39 years** as Honorary Treasurer. There's not a full Committee (10 persons) if any wish to be involved? Only 4 persons, from outside of the Officers and Committee, turned up for the AGM. *That's an improvement!*

Next year's AGM is to debate the future of race walking in the South, what can be done to reverse a worrying downward trend and the future role of the RWA Southern Area General Committee? Ideas/suggestions to Chris Flint flintc@scr-ltd.co.uk or see him at meetings. 2020 AGM is on **Monday 9 November**.

ABOUT TURN!

Our previous edition announced **Zara Hyde's** appointment as our next Chief Executive of UK Athletics. Sensationally, the chosen good lady has withdrawn before even starting work on Day One! Zara stated her decision was "For the good of the sport" and added it was "one of the most painful experiences I have ever had to face". This follows revelations in "The Times" about family issues - which won't be repeated here, as Essex Walker is a family newsletter. However they're in The Times and on numerous websites - but not repeated here! We now speculate on who the next one is to be?

APPEAL

Your Essex County Indoor 1 Mile Championship is part of an Essex & Eastern Counties Championship meeting at Lee Valley's indoor arena over the weekend of 8/9 February. This is a well-supported meeting with a good-sized crowd, giving an opportunity to showcase race walking before so many, as part of a general athletics meeting. Our race is also on proverbially borrowed time if those eligible continue staying away. Only the enthusiasm of Essex County AA Committee members such as dedicated duo Peter Cassidy and Ray Pearce have kept us in this main meeting - after embarrassingly small turnouts have seen us as candidates for the chop. So please all get yourselves entered and turnout on-the-day. Walking's been ditched from other Essex County AA Championship meetings - surely we must do something to remain "on-the-card" and even be reinstated following occasions when we've been dropped. We also need one of you to step forward as your Essex County AA Honorary Race Walking Secretary (replacing long-serving Ray Pearce). Without representation on your Essex County Committee things could get bleaker. *There must be somebody out there?* Your Essex County AA AGM is on **Monday 2 December** at Chelmsford's Melbourne Stadium with the gavel coming down at **7.30 pm** to commence business!

THE CENTURIONS' 2020 AGM

Doors open 12 noon on Saturday 25 January with the gavel coming down to commence business at 1.00 pm. Venue: Tally Ho Conference & Banqueting Centre, Pershore Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. B5 7RN. On public transport, Birmingham New Street or Moor Street railway stations are where you should head for. From Birmingham Centre, bus routes 45 and 47 stop outside. Bus timetables are easily "Googled" - as are details of parking facilities at this venue plus an area map. <https://www.tallyhouk.com/>

CORRECTION

A reader's letter (last issue) titled "THANK YOU FOR THE PLUG" from Chris, was in fact from Chris Foster - not Chris Flint. Matter now righted.



Dear Dave ...

READER'S REPORT

I raced twice at the Euro Masters in Venice and went well in the 20k finishing 10th in a big field. I had not intended doing that race and had not trained sufficiently but felt that I had to do it to back up our bare team of 3 who would otherwise have been vulnerable and forced to race conservatively. Anyway the temperature was about 28C, the 20k course was well over distance and the surface was in places frankly unacceptable for a championship race. At the end my feet were in a state and the fatigue factor was such that I reckon I'll probably take a good 4 weeks to recover fully.

Dave Kates

Adds Hon Ed: Dave is a frequent supporter of major Veterans/Masters International events, being very much part of the scene.

DOREEN SPARROW RIP TRIBUTE

I have good memories of recording with Doreen at many track, cross country and road relay events, for both Ilford AC and Essex County and, of course, Doreen was a family friend.

Heather Croft

ATHLETES REUNITED (ESSEX)

It is with some regret that I write to you all now announcing my retirement as convener of Athletes Reunited (Essex). We've had some great times over the years and I would like to thank you all for your support. I suppose the main reason for this decision was the double booking of the main room upstairs at The Cow when I put on a Happy 80th for Mel Watman. I have tried to find another venue suitable for everyone but I have failed miserably. On the positive side I am aware that many of you continue to meet outside the framework of Athletes Reunited.

Tony Maxwell

Adds Hon Ed: Former Woodford Green AC President Tony has received so many words of thanks and praise, we've not the space to even publish a fraction of them. Not a single attender blamed Tony for the double-booking, after all, it wasn't Tony who ran an appointments' book at The Cow! This project ran for years, supported by County, National and International athletes, officials and journalists. So many attended, that a full-house was your usual response. So much pleasure was enjoyed by so many. To those who never booked, well, you really missed something truly special!

TONY MAXWELL'S THANKS

Sincere thanks to all those of you who have emailed or telephoned me to express their appreciation of the "old gits get together" that I organised between 2007 and 2019. I really valued these sentiments. Like you I enjoyed them immensely and I particularly liked the comment of one respondent who suggested there might be life in an Athletes Re-Re United in perhaps a year's time. We'll see. The venue is the issue. Best wishes for a healthy continued AR life.

Tony Maxwell

DOHA COMMENT FROM A FORMER NATIONAL CHAMPION

It's unfortunate that the aspect of "disqualification" continues to bedevil and undermine the credibility of this event. Has any research been undertaken to measure at what stage in a race competitors are being disqualified? Also has the rate of disqualifications gone up in major events, since the turn of the century? I would like to have seen the 20k and made some comments on style and technique but alas was not able to do so. Pleased for Tom Bosworth – given his record of disqualifications he has obviously made some adjustments and will increase his confidence for a medal in Japan 2020.

Roy Lodge

1979 WORLD CUP WHO?

I expect you have had the answers but there is Colin Young, 2 blazered guys must have been team members?? Ronnie Wallwork?? - sorry print not over clear. I and my then girlfriend, now wife

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of 47 years, were present in a green MGB (my late sister's) and after persuaded to go to the Airolò Chiasso relay and walked the 3rd stage in Church's open toe and heel rubber soled sandals to the horror of all, for the Stock Exchange team - man short. All my old papers from 1958 European Stockholm, Stan Vickers Gold-to-1971, were entrusted to Michael Long President etc of Birmingham Walking club and is in a large tea chest presented to the new - then - Athletics Library at the new Birmingham University - anonymously - now no trace at the University Library who were overwhelmed by the receipt of Guy Butler's athlete and photographers records on death. If not Guy B papers then the Marquis of Exeter Burghley, IAAF head in London for years. After his death the IAAF went for tax reasons to Monaco. This move to Monaco was disliked by many as the only air routing was by Air France and it was costly but I believe is still there. Hope some of this is of interest and others can fill in.

John Northcott

ESCHBORN 50KMS WORLD CUP 1979

The walkers are Messrs NIBRE, JAMES, SEDDON, HARVEY, FLYNN, YOUNG, MILLS, HOPKINS, MADDOCKS and LEES. Memories all our yesterdays.

George Nibre

RESULT DUTCH 50KMS, TILBURG, 6 OCTOBER

Dom King finished 4th in Tilburg Dutch 50kms, 4 hrs 03 mins 02 secs. 1st Chiesa Italy 3:48.25, 2nd Ojala Finland 3:53.23, 3rd Cocioran Romania. Weather was windy and wet. Dom reached half way 25kms in 1.57. For the final 10kms he struggled, however having travelled from Doha the days before, and expecting a sub-under 4 hrs would have been a tall order. The performance was generally good in the circumstances. The next training/technical period will be vital for aspirations of Tokyo 2020. Dan King reached half way in 2.01 but dropped-out at around 32kms, generally excellent pace for 25kms, then mental and physical blow out.

George Nibre

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO RACE WALKING CHARACTERS?

Many of the familiar old faces in Race Walking and the Characters seem to be disappearing rapidly. What a shame! The current Race Walking Record seems no longer to value the Greats of past years, but seems to feature only on the few that have joined our sport in recent years. Thank heaven we have the Essex Walker, edited by your good self, to recall so many from the past.

Thank you, David and all your staff, for your hard work.

Bill Sutherland

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

I've had an enquiry from a relative of Colin Fisher an Enfield H who competed in the mid-to-late 70's and was a member of their World record 100 miles' relay team. If you have any information about what happened to him, kindly let me know and I'll pass it on?

Ron Wallwork

METROPOLITAN POLICE AA LIFE MEMBERS' DINNER

- It was a great occasion, with chief guest being the Commissioner, Cressida Dick, and the Toast Master being Andy Bignold, who introduced the Master of Ceremonies Sir Brian Hayes, former Deputy Commissioner, who introduced everyone to this milestone of 100 years of athletic endeavour. Walking was well supported with Paul Blagg, Peter Hodkinson, Bill Sutherland, myself, and Amos Seddon all dressed up in black ties. The commissioner gave a good speech and received a standing ovation. Andy excelled as Toast Master with a humorous Grace, and all present had a good evening of reminiscence.
- The MPAA Centenary Celebration Dinner at the Union Jack Club on Tuesday 5 November was a truly memorable and outstanding success. 106 attended covering all sports sections of the MPAA including around three quarters of the Life Members. 12 full tables were on view with the pride of place being the current Commissioner Dame Cressida Dick and many other former Senior Officers. The multi course meal was excellent with a Special Menu on display for all. Every attendee was given a specially engraved Whisky or Wine Glass with an attractive stand. Present from Race Walking were Amos SEDDON, Peter and Jackie HODKINSON, Paul BLAGG, Chris FLINT, Andy BIGNOLD as Toast Master and myself. Kath was not there as we

Chris Flint

had a very busy week of multiple appointments, but nevertheless as a very regular attendee was given a Wine Glass as were all the 15 or so Ladies present. The venue as you know well was much appreciated by all present. It would be a good idea to speak also perhaps to some others who attended from Race Walking as I personally had to leave early due to a busy week of engagements. I did not hear any speeches or whether anything was particularly said about Race Walking as we were one of the most successful Sports Sections over countless years. I hope this brief report will help Essex Walker. All in all a great night!

Bill Sutherland

ENFIELD LEAGUE THANKS

Well, the **22nd** Series of the Enfield Race Walking league has come to a close and I'd like to thank not only the walkers, officials and supporters who turned out to ensure a successful staging of the 93rd Enfield Open 7, but all those who took part at some time during the year. The **23rd** Series gets underway on 18 January next year with a five-miler followed by the 2019 Awards presentations and you'll get fixture confirmation via the Enfield Walker in due course. Once again, thanks.

Ron Wallwork

TWO CONTRIBUTIONS FROM STEPHEN CARTWRIGHT

Chelmsford Marathon

For those that like to race walk round a marathon can I recommend the Chelmsford marathon in October. It seems to be one of the last English marathons of the year and provides something like £60,000 for cancer sufferers. Although a little chilly initially, I found it well marshalled with fantastic town and country scenery and it took me back to my time in the area as a boy. Quite by coincidence my number was 528 and I got round in approximately 5:28!

Race Walking Categories as a Judge – Just as a laugh

A+	Overzealous judging at major competitions and other
A	General agreement at major competitions and other.
A-	Where A rules are relaxed for whatever reason. On the Continent, for Masters, or judges' laxity.
B+	Races under B rules but judges note a discrepancy. Athletes can ask how they would have got on in an A race.
B	Walking - Upright with a reasonably straight leg. No springing from a bent leg, shuffling or jogging.
B-	Anything goes provided at least one foot is down.
B- -	Little or no judging.
B- - -	The athletes don't care either ...

🎪 THE PANTO FUN STARTS 🎪

Hello, Oh yes it is! [T.E.O. Theatre Productions – teotheatreproductions@gmail.com](mailto:teotheatreproductions@gmail.com) has once again squeezed another year out of me and I am treading the boards again, possibly for the last time, playing the part that I have forever set my heart on, but never given the opportunity, until now, I am the wicked Abanazar in Aladdin, running for five performances in Winchmore Hill in January.

Chris Foster

ESSEX WALKER

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