

# Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

## RWA SOUTHERN AREA AGM - MONDAY 9 NOVEMBER

This, for obvious reasons is being held on "Zoom". It's hoped as many Southern walkers as possible will be able to "attend". When the BMAF recently held their first ever "Zoom" AGM attendance went through the roof. There's no travelling to Central London, no fares/petrol money outlay and you can join in - or just observe - from the comfort of your own homes. This meeting will recognise **John Powell** who has served as your Southern Area Honorary Treasurer for **40 years** - as he steps down after such a long period of meritorious service to our sport. In addition to this publicity, all Club Honorary Walking Secretaries are to be written to, requesting they forward AGM details to all their members. **So let's have a maximum showing at this year's AGM.** Your AGM commences at **7.15 pm** - and you can all join in, comment on the agenda items, have your say and vote for those you wish to see in Office and take our sport forward in the South. Prior to the AGM, from 6.30 pm to 7.15 pm is a Southern Area Committee Meeting - which by tradition has always extended a welcome for AGM attenders to observe. This year is no exception. *We hope you can all make it.* Below is a notification from Chris - your Southern Area President & Honorary Secretary. The email address given is also the one you can use to submit your apologies for absence if you're not able to join in.

The committee will meet at 6.30 pm until 7.15 pm and observers are welcome. The AGM follows immediately afterwards. If people wish to join they should let me know by email at [bettychrisrf@hotmail.com](mailto:bettychrisrf@hotmail.com) and I will send them the link. I know Essex Walker has always encouraged attendance. The AGM will discuss the future role of the RWA Southern Area and its affiliation with the Southern England AA. Also recognise the huge contribution John Powell has made to race walking and its administration as treasurer.

**Chris Flint**

## CECIL GITTINS MEMORIAL WALKS

**Cyclopark, Gravesend, 17 October 2020 (Permit No: RWA20055-1 Category B)**

Report by Dave Hoben

Veterans AC were pleased to host the 5th running of this event on a dedicated cycle circuit much like a scaled down version of Brands Hatch course, on the first race walking road event in mainland Britain since lockdown was imposed, under the new regulations from the governing body RWA. In all there were 38 paid entries with 35 on the line, a slight increase from 2019, in good racing conditions on a mild cloudy day with wind speed 4 knots. The starter was **George Nibre, former GB international**. The ladies' 5k was won by Abby Hughes (Taunton AC) who achieved a new pb in 25:25, and a new course record, previously held by Olympian and Commonwealth Games medal winner Lisa Kehler (Wolverhampton & Bilston) since 2016 (26:26). The men's 5k was won by Christian Hopper (Cambridge H) who also achieved a new pb in 25:06, and a new course record, formerly held by Marshall Smith (Ashford AC) also since 2016 (27:22). The winner of the ladies' 10k was Millie Morris who had a significant new pb in 54:33, and took the course record from Emily Ghose (Tonbridge AC) held since 2017 (56:53). The winner of the men's 10k was Luc Legon with yet another new pb in 45:29, taking the course record from Jonathan Hobbs (Ashford AC) also held since 2017 (50:25). The winner of the ladies' 15k was Abigail Jennings (AFD) coming in at 1:24:36 in her first attempt at the distance, taking a new course record, previously held by Anne Jones (Steyning AC) since 2017 (1:43:16). VAC were pleased to welcome Dan and Dominic King, who have been GB internationals for over 20 years, in particular Dominic participating in the Rio 2016 and London 2012 Olympics. Dominic won the men's 15k in 1:06:18, closely followed by his brother, and took a new course record from Luc Legon who achieved 1:15:10 in 2017. In addition there were a number of pbs including those from participants in Barnet AC and Tonbridge AC.

## RESULTS

### 2.5 k F

1	Lola-Mae Billingham	U17W	Aldershot, Farnham & District AC	15:36
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### 5k F

1	Abby Hughes	U17W	Taunton AC	25:25
2	Hannah Hopper	U20W	Cambridge Harriers	28:53
3	Abigail Smith	U17W	Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC	29:13
4	Grace Whittingham	U17W	Ashford AC	31:06
5	Christina Bienek	W45	Swanley & District AC	34:01
6	Geraldine Legon	W60	Bexley AC	35:09
7	Amalia C Silva	W55	Barnet & District AC	36:17
	<i>Lois Carty</i>	<i>U17W</i>	<i>Aldershot, Farnham &amp; District AC</i>	<i>DNS</i>

### 5k M

1	Christian Hopper	U17M	Cambridge Harriers	25:06
2	Christopher Hobbs	M65	Ashford AC	31:31
3	Peter Watts	M65	Swanley & District AC	31:41
4	Jonathan Ellerton	U15B	Blackheath & Bromley Harriers AC	33:03
5	David Hoben	M65	Surrey Walking Club	35:14
	<i>Peter Hannell</i>	<i>M75</i>	<i>Surrey Walking Club</i>	<i>DNF</i>
	<i>Nicholas Hart</i>	<i>U20M</i>	<i>Aldershot, Farnham &amp; District AC</i>	<i>DNS</i>

### 10k F

1	Millie Morris	U20W	Ashford AC	54:33
2	Silvana Alves	W45	Barnet & District AC	58:13
3	Grazia Manzotti	W50	Tonbridge AC	58:21
4	Melanie Peddle	W50	Loughton AC	1:01:22
5	Rachel Harding	U20W	Ashford AC	1:10:24
6	Noel Blatchford	W70	Abingdon Athletics Club	1:11:12

### 10k M

1	Luc Legon	SM	Cambridge Harriers	45:29
2	Graham Chapman	M65	Headington RRC	1:01:10
3	Roger Michell	M70	Surrey Walking Club	1:01:52
	<i>Tom Casserley</i>	<i>M80</i>	<i>Enfield &amp; Haringey AC</i>	<i>DNS</i>

### 15k F

1	Abigail Jennings	U23W	Aldershot, Farnham & District AC	1:24:36
2	Jacqueline Benson	U23W	Ashford AC	1:30:29
3	Katherine Smith	W55	Aldershot, Farnham & District AC	1:52:48

### 15k M

1	Dominic King	M35	Colchester Harriers AC	1:06:18
2	Daniel King	M35	Colchester Harriers AC	1:06:19
3	Ian Richards	M70	Steyning AC	1:22:50
4	David Kemp	M60	Arena 80 AC	1:30:37
5	Martin Fisher	M55	Redcar RWC	1:36:34
6	John Borgars	M70	Loughton AC	1:39:12
7	Stuart Bennett	M60	Ilford AC	1:43:26
8	George Wallace	M65	Aldershot, Farnham & District AC	1:48:35
9	Christopher Flint	M75	Surrey Walking Club	1:54:06

### Acknowledgements:

Referee/COVID-19 Officer: <b>Noel Carmody</b>	Time keeping: <b>David Harris/Maggie Statham</b>
Judges: <b>Peter Cassidy (Chief), Pauline Wilson, Andrew Garner, Steve Cartwright, Simon Benson</b>	Lap recording: <b>Pam Ficken/Carl Lawton</b>
	Lead cyclist/Judges' runner: <b>Eric Parker</b>
	Hospitality: Cyclopark, Gravesend
Starter: <b>George Nibre</b>	First Aid: Medical Despatch

### WALKING STUDY FINDINGS

The average adult walks almost 75,000 miles in their life - equivalent to circling the world 3 times - these being the findings of a study by the Ordnance Survey.

## LONDON MARATHON SPONSORS

Regulars have had many different "Goody Bags" over the years. Sponsors have been: Gillette 1981-83, Mars 1984-88, ADT 1989-92, Nutrasweet 1993-95, Flora 1996-2009 and Virgin Money ever since.

## WERE YOU THERE?

This year's Virgin London Marathon (its 39th) was staged only for elite/invited athletes. **The many were invited to participate in a virtual marathon.** It would have been even more difficult covering this distance on such a rotten day, without the benefits of other competitors, rivals and Club colleagues to spur you along - and encouraged by up to 1 million enthusiastic spectators lining the route. Over years many race walkers have appeared in this great event, and have showcased our event before crowds and often seen by television viewers. Sadly as our numbers have fallen, so has the number of those race walking London Marathons. **Did any race walkers complete a virtual London Marathon in October?** Please let us know how you got on, your time, where you did your distance, any charity you supported and finally tales of experiences on-the-day of your worthy effort? We'd be delighted to give your charities a "plug" and honour your efforts. "Virtual racing" has really caught on, and after a slowish start, is now "big time" with sizeable fields generating much interest. The enthusiasm of John Constandinou and Helen Elleker in promoting such events is being rewarded and appreciated.

- "I did the coldest, wettest, slowest and loneliest London Marathon ever!" **Kathy Crilley**

## STILL IN THE RUNNING

Barbara Ralph (Chiltern Harriers AC) began running when aged 28 and growing up in Doncaster. This year's virtual run marks her **30th** appearance in a London Marathon - the most by any woman competitor. The good lady is well known in our race walking as many times she's performed "Judges' Runner" tasks at Enfield League walking races. Barbara was subject to a National press feature, in which she stated, "I'm not worried about doing the running. I'm worried about the technology. I have never carried a phone or anything. I go as light as possible. I see all those people carrying things and think they are adding to the burden. Normally as long as you remember to put your tag on your shoe, you are fine". How long will Barbara's athletics' career continue? There's an answer as Barbara stated, "A friend asked when I was going to pack it in but I thought why should I?"

## ATHLETICS HONOURED

Brendan Foster CBE, aged 72, was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours' List. In his time he won a full set of Commonwealth Games medals (gold/silver/bronze), gold and bronze at European Games and was Britain's only track and field medallist at the 1976 Montreal Olympics when claiming bronze over 10,000 metres. He's well known at a leading light in promoting the highly popular Great North Run and recently retired as a BBC athletics commentator.



Photographer: Sue Clements

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW? - MICKY SUTTON

Micky, who qualified as a Centurion at rainy Newmarket in 2009 clocking 23:45.18, now has his own website since leaving his distinguished Royal Mail career. This impressively advertises his services as a model, actor and extra. In the year he qualified, Micky featured in one of top photographer **Rankin's** exhibitions - as a *nude model* - at London's Truman Brewery hall. This highly popular exhibition ran from July-to-September, so he was hung on Rankin's wall while Micky walked around-and-around the Rowley Mile course.

### [MICKY SUTTON \(Archie\): Actor, Extra and Model - London, UK](#)

The website features a number of sub-headings to "click" plus an option to hear a speech in which he talks about his talents.

Shortly after Rankin took down his photographs, Micky was on a BBC2 "Horizon" special covering sleep deprivation and memory loss - as a guinea pig for a scientific experiment. Micky was an Ilford AC regular, making his final appearance when achieving a "classified finish" at just over 40K - an RWA National 50K Championship at Northampton Racecourse. He worked at Mount Pleasant Sorting Office, who had a talented race-walking squad - which were successful for decades at many venues and often with Micky scoring. When the London Postal Region Series of Blackheath 9K yacht handicaps ended, then organiser Steve Wynn produced a list of those recording most finishes. Micky is in joint 64th position (with Noel Carmody, Gary Smith and Helen Sullivan) on 24 completions. Micky was Individual Series Champion in 2004, being the first serving Postman to top the table since much missed Bill King in 1977. In 2004 Nick Kavanagh and Alan O'Rawe completed the frame. Mick travelled the world to compete in some truly great major city marathons.

Dave Ainsworth drove him to Newmarket on the Saturday morning of his successful 100 Miles, picking him up at Fairlop Underground Station - Bill Sutherland C890 got him home on Sunday afternoon. At the time, Micky resided in Islington. His attendant was "character" Dave Sharpe C578. By coincidence Dave was the last Mount Pleasant postman to qualify as a Centurion and Micky's number was exactly 500 numbers more than Dave's, to wit C578 & C1078. It was third time lucky for Micky - he failed at a rain affected 2007 Battersea Park, when walking unaided as his attendant (a fellow Mount Pleasant race walker) worked Saturday morning and stopped for a pint after leaving work before making his way to Battersea Park. This attendant enjoyed a drink - and one led to another, and he never did show up. The day before the 2008 Milton Keynes track event, Micky was taken badly ill with a painful kidney stones' complaint and admitted to hospital - making him a DNS.

Although not seen at race walking for a good while, he attended The Centurions' Centenary AGM at Toynbee Hall and memorable House of Commons Centenary Dinner. Micky often takes the trouble to submit an apology for AGM absences and his name is seen from time-to-time in running results lists.

Adds **Bill Sutherland**: "Great to hear news of Micky Sutton. Just can't believe where all the time has gone! It was a pleasure to give him a lift after his great 100 success."

## DOOM AND GLOOM

A reliable source predicts that the 50K walk is to be replaced by a cross country event at the Paris Olympics, leaving 20K as the only race walking distance to be contested in 2024. This info, as so often, is from the authoritative "*Heel and Toe*" online. From another source we hear a decision on the delayed 2021 Tokyo Olympics may be made as early as December.

## BBC REPAIR SHOP MENTION

A few readers have made contact to report that race walking got a mention on the BBC1 show The Repair Shop (Series 5: Episode 40: [www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000n20h](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000n20h) via @bbciplayer). An athlete, James Searles, described as a Victorian Sporting hero had won a leather belt with silver tokens attached, as an award for being "**1851 Pedestrian Champion of England for Speed Walking**". Fabric was fading and its silver was damaged. Silversmith Brenton West and leather expert Suzie Fletcher restored this belt to a spick-and-span condition. The belt was brought to this programme's attention by Gil Lee and had been won by her great, great, great Grandfather.

**RWA Press & Publicity Officer, *John Constandinou***, writes:

"On the Repair Shop, his great great granddaughter stated that he won £250 for this event and that she thought this was worth £10,000 today. According to the Bank of England historical convertor, it is actually worth £36,000 in today's money. An average house cost £75 in 1851, so he could have bought three houses and had lots of money left over. He actually bought a pub instead, so was set for life, for the money he earned in just over ten weeks. Here are images from the BBC program of his silver belt that was restored.





Adds Hon Ed: His public house was "*The Pedestrians' Retreat*" in Sheffield.

## CENTURIONS IN THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The list is impressive, and perhaps will be added to. Members of our British Centurions 1911 to have achieved Commonwealth Games status are (in order of achieving Commonwealth Games status) along with their Centurion numbers. *I think I've got them all.*

**Ron Wallwork** MBE C893, **Don Thompson** MBE C631, **Bill Sutherland** BEM C890, **Bob Dobson** C786, **John Moullin** C462, **John Cannell** C388, **Nolan Simmons** C817, **Roy Thorpe** C381, **Carl Lawton** C750, **Brian Adams** C778, **Graham Young** C383, **Dominic King** C1098, **Dan King** C1100 and **Charles Arosanyan** C979.

## OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO BILL WRIGHT

Former Southend-on-Sea AC protagonist and Welsh International Bill celebrated his **80th birthday** in October. Bill is an esteemed Race Walking Association *Life Member* and a *Past President* who wore our Chain-of-Office in 1995/96. He was our longest serving Race Walking Association Honorary Treasurer (**29 years**), taking over in 1984 from Reg Wells before handing the ledgers over to Mark Easton, who'd just completed his President's term of office in 2013. In 2013 it was some AGM as Peter Cassidy stepped down as General Secretary after taking over from Beryl Randle in 1991 and serving for 21 years - a record for that position - before handing over his files to International judge Catherine Telling. That AGM then saw Olympian Peter Marlow presented with an award marking 40 years as an RWA General Committee member - *the Great Train Robbers only got 30 years!*

Bill was often placed in Welsh Championship races and judged on the International scene, being put forward for such appointments by the Athletics Association of Wales. When at Southend-on-Sea AC the Club's squad read like a "*Who's Who?*" of British walkers. It was hard to make any scoring 4 (always 4 in those days) at National Championships, but Bill's talents saw him a scorer when Southend won Nationals. He was employed in education and moved to Nuneaton and linked up with Nuneaton Harriers, using his "know how" to good effect as a coach - seeing race walkers such as Andy Penn make Olympics and Commonwealth Games status.

Website [Racewalk UK - Walking Events and Races](http://RacewalkUK.com) records Bill's last competitive race walk as happening in September 2013.

Apart from athletics Bill's a committed supporter of Nuneaton Borough FC, who were once in our top Non-League Division - the Alliance Premier (now the National League) but have slipped down to the 7th tier Southern League Premier Division Central. Bill and his wife Janice have supported them with loyalty through good times and bad.

Bill's been one of British race walking's greatest stalwarts for decades as his impressive record as competitor, official and office holder proves beyond doubt. On behalf of all readers we wish Bill the very best on the occasion of his **80th birthday** and thank him for all he's done to support our sport.

## CHELSEA'S FUNERAL

There was a large turnout for Chelsea's funeral, which was held at Pitsea Crematorium. Government restrictions limited the number who could be admitted to this Chapel, but thanks to the family's initiative her service was screened "live" on the Crematorium's website. This, as far as we know, was the first time this had occurred in our walking community - and it was appreciated. We've heard reports of race walkers, past and present, viewing Chelsea's moving service from such places as Sheffield, Wales and many other locations. We thank the family for arranging this. Some race walkers came to show their respects as a long procession set off from Canvey Island and headed towards Pitsea. The local "Evening Echo" published an account:

[Bikers pay tribute to Canvey nurse Chelsea O'Rawe-Hobbs | Echo](#)

### Further tributes to Chelsea O'Rawe-Hobbs:

- "So Sorry to hear of the passing of Chelsea. Please pass my condolences to her family. I will make a donation to Essex Air Ambulance in her memory. They do such important work." **John Hall**
- "How terrible for the O'Rawe family. I well remember Alan bringing her to the LPR 9k events on a Sunday, and her regular outings at Enfield League races. I guess she was about 16/17 then and showed a lot of promise, for the future, a shame she packed it in. It's upsetting when you hear of the death of someone so young with a lifetime still ahead of her. **Mike Hinton**
- "Such sad news to hear of Chelsea's passing in such awful circumstances with her life still before her. She was a truly delightful person and always had such an infectious and bubbly manner. A pioneering young athlete for young female Race Walking. My sympathies for all her family and friends at this very difficult time. Rest in peace Chelsea. **Oliver T Flynn**
- "This is terribly tragic awful news. Deepest condolences to all the family." **Andy Catton** (Essex County AA Chairman)
- "I was sorry to hear of Chelsea's passing. I used to race walk with Margaret and Liz O'Rawe, very sad indeed." **Catherine Lilley** (daughter of George Beecham)

## A QUALIFIED OPINION

"Behind every female 50K walker should be a bunch of male race walkers supporting her and her colleagues" writes Paul F DeMeester, a US Attorney at Law. The 2017 IAAF World Championship in London saw an official women's 50K on the programme. The campaign to stage more such races, up to Olympic level, goes on at some pace.

## GET WELL SOON

Your hard-working Race Walking General Secretary Colin Vesty has recently spent a week as a Leicester General Hospital in-patient with a back complaint. When discharged he required a walking stick to assist his progress. Leicester Walking Club and Centurion member Colin is a talented athlete - and one with National Champion status - so we all hope his return to full health and fitness will come soon.

## COMMONWEALTH GAMES GOLD MEDALLIST's MILESTONE

*Tempus fugit* - as October saw a milestone birthday for Steve Barry who, in a Welsh vest, won Gold at the 1982 Commonwealth Games 30 kilometres' Walk in 2:10.16 at Brisbane. Steve celebrated his **70th** birthday. In 1982 he had another big win - *BBC Wales Sports Personality-of-the-Year*. During his heyday we saw a number of his appearances in our part of the world - including a few at Victoria Park (where we no longer race).

## SAD NEWS - NOTIFICATION FROM OUR RWA CHAIRMAN

"It is with deep heartfelt sadness that during the night our dear friend Ann Smith passed away. Ann was admitted to hospital on Monday (19 October) diagnosed with 2 blood clots to the lung. Karen her daughter contacted me to say that her condition worsened overnight and she peacefully passed away. Ann was a dear friend to us all and will be sadly missed but not forgotten. Please pass this sad message onwards to anyone who knew Ann." **Glyn Jones**

Ann's daughter, Karen Ratcliffe, invites those who wish to donate in memory of her mother to click on this [link](#)



Karen Ratcliffe

## In Memory of Ann Smith, my mum

To celebrate my mum's life, I am raising money for SPORTABILITY because she had so much fun at their events



### SPORTABILITY

We organise sport and challenging pursuits to enrich the life of people with paralysis

Charity Registration No. 328325



"We sadly lost my mum Ann unexpectedly on 22nd October, due to blood clots on her lungs."

"She battled through her mobility issues, not letting anything stop her."

"One of her greatest joys in recent years, was taking part in Sportability events, such as archery, shooting, quad biking, blokarting, sailing, and her favourites, gliding and canoeing."

"Take a look through the gallery to see some of the events she took part in."

"Sportability brings sport and challenging pursuits to people with paralysis. Their aim is to take the 'dis' out of disability and focus on ability."

### Tributes to Ann Smith:

- "Ann was a most generous supporter of race walking. She often encouraged me during racing days, as well as dozens of others - and sometimes all in the same race while officiating in some capacity. Both Mike and Karen must be proud of their parents and their characterful contributions to our sport." **Paul Warburton**
- "Very sad news indeed. They were a lovely family and wonderful supporters of our great sport of Race Walking. I believe Ken started active walking after seeing the 1970 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. Many vivid memories will always be with us. May she Rest in peace. With sincere condolences." **Bill and Kath Sutherland**
- "Certainly very sad. Condolences to Mike and Karen. Looked poorly last time I saw her (the race at Coventry - I was there as a spectator only to meet folk). A life dedicated to our sport of race walking." **Edmund Shillabeer**
- "Ann and her late husband Ken were a remarkable couple; seemingly devoted to each other and supportive parents to Karen and Mike. Equally helpful at many races over several decades. Together with lots of encouragement, simply fun to be around and always ready for a laugh. Remembered with fondness. RIP Ann." **Chris Maddocks**
- "My heartfelt condolences to her family." **Len Ruddock**

### BE FIRST

You can sign up on [www.birmingham2022.com](http://www.birmingham2022.com) for details of volunteering opportunities and ticket sales for the Commonwealth Games, as soon as they're released.



### ENGLAND ATHLETICS AGM (10 October 2020)

Chair of the Board of Directors is **Myra Nimmo** (votes **197 for**, 101 against 46 abstentions). **Leshia Hawkins** joins the Board as a Non-Executive Director (voting **185/90/69**). Your Elected Director to Represent the Membership is **Lorna Boothe** who received **181** votes - the 2 unsuccessful candidates were Jon Clarke (99) and Abdul Buhari (25). All other business and motions were carried (details as per pre-AGM notifications on their website). This is published for those who like reading about the politics of the sport - or as the late John Hedgethorpe used to say, "The Sport of Politics".



## GOING AROUND IN CIRCLES

Apparently, because of the Earth's rotation, an athlete running anti-clockwise will have a slight advantage. But in the first modern Olympics in Athens and in Paris, athletes ran in a clockwise direction. Later, rules were changed to anti-clockwise. *When experts pontificate, many are confused.*

## FRANK BOUGH RIP

Frank has died in a care home aged 87. He was a BBC sports broadcasting stalwart for decades (until his media career hit the buffers in spectacular fashion after a Sunday newspaper exposure). However, be in no doubt, he was one in that Organisation who was no friend of race walking. During his RWA Press & Publicity Officer spell, Hon Ed sent him a few letters criticising unhelpful and unwanted comments about our chosen athletic event.

## CENTURION DAVE KATES ANSWERS READERS' QUESTIONS

Dave's recent feature article certainly attracted many favourable comments - and further questions. So here, in Part 2 of his in-depth feature, Dave answers your questions:

- *For most, completing a 100 miles race leaves them "slowish" for many months as they get over it. You had an immediate post 100 "bad week", then started winning several "1st Centurion" awards. How did you regain your speed so quickly?*

"Correct about the bad week. I was on crutches for 4 days. Appearances are also deceptive, my body was not where it should be for several months afterwards. Just how do you prepare for a 100 mile race, particularly a first ever 100? If you think about it, preparing for the distance is not a practical proposition. 'Today we are going to do 8 x 100 mile with 7 minutes recovery ... Say what Coach. What's that!!!' That said there are those athletes that have a 'love affair' with ultra events and indeed those that excel and specialise in them. If you complete enough of them then the races themselves effectively become your training and you will adapt better to the distance. The risk in doing that however is that your adaption to the 100 mile Event will then be just that and it might compromise your ability to race effectively over much shorter distances, for example 5k or 10k. Bags of endurance, but can't run for a bus. There are obvious exceptions to this and I would describe all of them as 'not just your average athlete'. For my part being in the best of health and getting myself into the best general physical condition was essential. Be in no doubt that if you're not, a race like that can kill you. On the Entry Form there was a Death Disclaimer. What was also crucial was to prepare my mind. I spoke with a number of athletes who had experience of 100 mile events and all warned me about the 'night'. Huge temperature drop, accelerated exhaustion due to being cold, the need for No 1 or No 2, pitch darkness - so dark you can't work out where you are, the need for sleep, isolation, your mind playing tricks as you slip between reality and something akin to dreaming and worst of all NO COCOA. I practised many weeks before on one Friday night by leaving work in East London around 6.30 pm with a rucksack full of drink and goodies, following a route through the City, Holloway Rd, Highgate Hill and Village, before picking up the A41. I thought the drunken idiots turning out of the bars in Dodge City, I mean Watford, in the early hours of the morning would be my worst encounter, but then in a state of exhaustion I came upon the start of the Chiltern Hills. In my armchair around 4.30 am (with cocoa) having walked less than half a '100' I was reviewing the situation rather unfavourably. I decided I would train for the 100 by not training. If I'd attempted another of those overnight adventures beforehand I would have destroyed myself. In the race itself, as night fell I found myself walking for a couple of hours with a Dutch walker. Forgive me but I cannot remember his name, but he was in his middle 60's and one of the oldest in the race. He wore the type of hat favoured by the Dutch Boers, and to record the 40 laps of 2.5 miles of Battersea Park London, he carried with him a knife and tally stick. At the end of each lap he made a notch. He always knew where he was. He told me that everyone will face a crisis. When it happens, go inside yourself. You will find something."

- *You coached and mentored Ilford AC star Scott Davies when he equalled the late Olympian Don Thomson's impressive record of winning 7 consecutive National 50 Kilometres' titles. What do you recall of the highs and lows from such a successful partnership?*

"If you look at a Painting by any of the Classic Masters, you will within it, see many different features, different colours, different use of light and shade, different perspectives and so on. If you focus too intently on just one or two of those, do you not lose a sense of the complete work? Personally I would much rather people look back on what Scott achieved (because it was a lot more than those 7 National 50k titles) in the context of a journey that led to him laying down a



complete piece of work which I hope will now be seen as a triumph. It was a privilege to work with Scott and I will always be grateful that he gave me that opportunity.”

- *It's well known you're a Watford FC season ticket holder. How much have you missed not being at the matches?*

“Well football is a game for the people, a tribal game of heroes and villains, a game of passion and excitement, a game to allow us to escape to the terraces to give life to our raw emotions. It draws people and communities together. Those of you that have experienced that electric atmosphere generated by a tense, tight game in a packed stadium will know what I'm talking about. Did anyone see the Spurs v West Ham game? West Ham coming back from 3-0 down and Lanzini hitting that rocket equaliser with 30 secs remaining. Even in an empty stadium you could sense the emotion, imagine that in front of 60,000 spectators. TV doesn't quite cut it, does it.”

- *What made you pick race walking over running?*

“Once upon a time it was winter. I came inside from the cold, sat by the fire and put my slippers on. I was immediately comfortable. The race walking community is a very welcoming family.”

- *Have you ever done any running races? If so, which?*

“I came into athletics from football, having done some running at school. In those days at Ilford the calendar was, cross-country over the winter, road runs and road relays in the spring and then track and field during the summer months. For a couple of years I did all of those but my track races were mostly limited to graded races over 800/1500. I was a decent runner at school but after that I continued growing, got heavier and was no longer suited to middle distance running. I switched to walking after a prolonged period of running injuries.”

- *Some of your answers are very philosophical? Why is that?*

“I've been around the block. Will it help if I worry about things I can't change, things I can't undo or control. People are who they are and some things in life are what they are. What matters is what you see in the mirror. A couple of years ago a street beggar in Madrid told me that to be great in this World, all that is needed is a humble heart. I think about that.”

- *Ever done Park Run?*

“No but I think that they are an excellent idea. Grass root and mass participation sport and recreation at its best. There is little formality and anyone, whatever their fitness level, can simply turn up and give it a try. The thing with mass participation sport is that the cream always rises to the top, so Park Run may be a good fishing ground for talent too. In any event the essence of it is that people are brought together to simply enjoy themselves without performance level pressure.”

- *Happiest moment in your race walking life?*

“There isn't one, because it's a journey of many happy moments. I don't want to focus on this bit or that bit. I would rather look at it as a 'Painting' or a complete piece. It's been extraordinary in the making. It has taken me to countries all over the World where I have met some extraordinary people, made friendships and had some fantastic experiences. You realise after a while that it's not any particularly medal or performance that's enriched your life. It's the 'Painting' when you see it as a whole.”

- *What are your thoughts of International Race Walker Tom Bosworth and how do you feel he will perform in next year's Olympics?*

“He's a World Class athlete and his performances place him amongst the greatest of British Race Walkers. He has also been very successful in raising the profile of our sport through TV and other media and his exploits have had people here in Britain actually talking about race walking. He is an example of what commitment, dedication and many years of hard work can achieve and a great role model for our sport. Part of his legacy will be that 'somewhere out there' are young British kids that will be drawn into race walking because of Tom Bosworth. Does he have the credentials for a great performance in Tokyo? Absolutely. I hope the stars align for him.”

- *Do you keep in touch with any people you used to compete/train with at the club or from other clubs?*

“Yes. All of us at Ilford stay in contact with each other. The race walking community as a whole is also very close knit. Everyone knows everyone, so you will develop a wide circle of friends, perhaps even extending internationally.”

- *Your two events at the World Masters are very impressive, both in terms of achievement and distance. With only 4 days break between the 2 can you remember how you recovered? Was it complete rest between the 2 events?*

"You can't recover in 4 days. No one can, so you have to prepare on that basis. The World Masters Road Championships in Auckland, New Zealand were a little unique in that the Walks programme included events over 10k, 30k and 50k. To my knowledge the 50k Event had not been tried before in Masters Championships and it has not been included on the programme again since 2004. The World Masters presently have their longer Walking Event as 20k although the European Masters do still retain the 30k Event. In Auckland very few walkers competed in all three events and most either did a 10/30k or a 30/50k combination. My approach to the 30/50k double was to accept that it was impossible to recover in between and therefore treat the two as if they were one event that had two stages. In training I put emphasis on endurance against external resistance with many long duration sessions on a specific heart rate. Out here the Chiltern Hills are best described as 'brutal' and perfect for that. Too much of that type of work however will compromise both your cadence and stride length if it's done to the exclusion of everything else. I therefore sought flatter terrain for sessions where I was seeking to improve power. To illustrate this, if for example you are working through a fartlek session over an undulating course with many steep hills than you introduce the factor of external resistance which will break up your rhythm. Your fartlek session will take on the nature of endurance rather than intervals and you won't be getting from it what you think you are. Another consideration was logistics. It's pointless training hard for 6 months or more, only to have everything go 'pear shaped' on the eve of your race because of poor logistics. I took nearly a week getting out to New Zealand, stopping off for a few days in Bangkok and we also had a short stop in Sydney where I slept. I did not train on the way out. We arrived in Auckland I think about 4/5 days beforehand and I think 2 days prior, I did one training session of about 20 minutes with Laurie Dordoy. This 'decompression' approach if you will, was to overcome the effect of travelling through several time zones and to try and arrive fresh. Others went straight out in one hop with just a few hours stop-over in Sydney Airport, arriving barely one or two days beforehand and even trained the same night they arrived. The night before the 30k I happened to find myself in the hotel elevator with one of my European rivals. I looked at his face and he looked like crap through jet lag. I knew he had 'no chance'. In the 30k I finished 2nd to Andrew Jamieson of Australia who had already won the 10k. What an athlete, he was simply just different class and deservedly won the Athlete of the Championships Award. In his late 50s he was still walking something around 94minutes for 20k and in New Zealand he finished the 30k in 2hrs38m. I could not live with that and he was a distance ahead but I count it as a privilege to have been in that race with him and to have shared the podium. In the closing stages of that race I suffered sudden cramp but just about got over the line. The following day my left hamstring tightened severely and despite treatment I had doubts about the 50k. Then I heard that Andrew had had to return suddenly to Australia. The reason I'm not sure of but I felt for him because it seemed a cruel twist. Bar a mishap befalling him I could not have beaten him in that 50k. The stars it seemed might be aligning for me and I had to start that race. I spent the time until then getting treatment and just resting. I'd discussed strategy for that 50k with Colin Young before leaving for New Zealand. He suggested that I should sit back for 25/30k and let the others push it if they want. A 50k race so soon after the 30k is a big ask. He thought that there was going to be drama, with the wheels coming off of them all in the later stages. He was right. They just fell away in front of me as I came through. I was not the quickest, but it turned out that I was the strongest. No one finished in front of me."

- *Favourite Watford player?*

"John Barnes. More recently Gerard Deulofeu. We have a young kid just broken into the 1st Team - Joao Pedro. Look out for him, I think he is going to be great."

- *Ever been disqualified in a race walk? The rules seem incredibly complex to me.*

"Yes. What's it like? Well as Mike Tyson would say. 'Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth'. More seriously I'd like to address this question from the perspective of a young, new or novice race walker who might be nervous and need reassurance about how the seemingly strict rules of race walking are applied and the role of judges in that. The judges are there to ensure fair competition and help each walker to finish the race with good technique. They will do that if you take notice of what they are indicating to you by way of caution through the 'paddle system'. Take heart if you do suffer the unfortunate experience of disqualification. You will be indicated the reason why and certainly most of our judges are approachable after the event and will readily advise what you can do to improve. You should also know that just because you get disqualified in

one race, it does not mean that you are certain to suffer the same fate in the next race or the one after that. Most disqualifications are caused through fatigue issues. In any sport, not just race walking, when you are tired the first thing that goes is your technique. Most DQs come about because of (a) Injury or physical impairment. You may not be completely rehabilitated from injury. (b) It may be early in the season and the walker may not have reached peak fitness and condition but tries to race as if they have. (c) The walker is placed in a level of competition that is beyond their present development or capability. They simply get dragged along too fast. I think that the last one highlights how important it is for young or novice walkers to be protected and given time to perfect their technique and develop without being hurried too early into the pressure of high-level competition.

• *You obviously enjoy football. Did you play much when you were younger?*

"Yes, I played at youth or junior level but did not progress into pro football. I secured a good position with an International Bank in London (the same Bank that Olympic Champion Jared Tallent and a number of Australian Cricketers including Dennis Lillee worked for) so I did not try to follow a pathway into semi-pro football. I remember playing in different School sides with both Roger Cross and Bob Glozier both of whom went on to play for the West Ham Youth Team. Bob Glozier was the best I ever played with. A brilliant defender who was Captain of England School Boys. He was seen by West Ham as the natural successor to Bobby Moore and, yes, he was that good. Sadly as he was about to break into the first team his career was cut down and finished suddenly by a dreadful injury. If my memory serves me correctly he is mentioned by Trevor Brooking in his autobiography. A great pity and devastating to all of us that knew him. Roger Cross I think was eventually transferred to Brentford. Back in those days most of the London Districts and the London Pro Clubs entered their Youth Teams in a Competition called the London Senior Cup. I remember playing for an East Ham Youth Team and losing 3-0 against Millwall FC. I also remember playing in the same competition in a mid-week game against Silvertown under floodlights at The Terence McMillan Stadium, Newham. The then Chelsea Manager, Dave Sexton was in attendance with his Coaching Staff to 'scout' the match. I scored our 2nd goal but it did not buy me a contract. At least I had the honour of scoring in front of Dave Sexton."

"Well that concludes my trip down memory lane. Hope you enjoyed the ride." *Dave Kates*

## **WHEN NOEL MOONEY HITS 80**

In March Essex Walker enjoyed a most successful moment as an article imploring readers to send 80th birthday cards to Terry Riley generated a large number - including many from Terry's own 2 Clubs (Ilford AC and the Post Office). Popular and talented Terry was one of 3 Ilford AC walkers in the '70s who worked at Ilford GPO Sorting Office - as well as featuring prominently in Club and Post Office events, he also gained selections for a then strong Civil Service team in representative matches. Making up this trio were Brian Barnard and Noel Mooney. Brian, who excelled on the oche, once threw arrows on "Bullseye". We've lost touch but know some old workmates still get Christmas cards from him. Genial Noel Mooney is still about and enjoying Guinness - he resides in Collier Row (North Romford) and is seen from time-to-time. After retiring from competitive race walking he would make Chigwell Row to cheer on participants in Ilford's much missed Christmas 10K. On **Sunday 3 January 2021** Noel is to become an octogenarian and we congratulate him on reaching this revered status. If you'd like to send Noel **80th** birthday cards his address is: 229 Highfield Road, Collier Row, ROMFORD. Essex. RM5 3AW.

Noel was quick at all distances from 3,000 metres to 20 miles and easily gained a coveted Race Walking Association 7 miles-in-an-hour badge. For instance 90 finished our RWA Southern Area 10K at Battersea Park in March '73. The top 3 were Len Duquemin, Carl Lawton and Jacky Lord (Jnr) - all under 45 minutes, the top 10 being completed in order by Bill Sutherland, Tom Lee (Jnr), Peter Hodgkinson, Ray Middleton, Lew Mockett, P Le Bas (Jnr) and Charlie Fogg - all under 47 minutes. Three of those top 10 were promising juniors! Noel Mooney was 43rd in an excellent 52.54, a position behind Barry Daymond - one ahead of Dave Ainsworth. In the April 1974 Essex 20K at Chelmsford 36 finished - the top 3 being: Amos Seddon, Lew Mockett and Peter Hodgkinson - all sub-99 minutes (Peter raced for 2nd claim Club Southend). Making up a top 10 in order were: Brian Armstrong, Roger Mills, Len Ruddock, Geoff Robinson/guest, Dave Neagle, A King and



Terry Riley. Noel was 13th in 109.54, a position behind Steve King and one ahead of John Webb.

Also in April 74 Noel turned in his finest performance in our always popular Chelmsford-to-Southend Essex 20 Miles' Championship. A field of 34 were led home by 3 leading lights, Roger Mills, Amos Seddon and Bob Dobson all sub-2:43 with the top 10 completed by, in order: Alex Banyard, Lew Mockett, John Webb, John Sales, Dave Neagle, Geoff Hunwicks and Phil Husband - all under 3 hours. Terry Riley was 16th in 3:09.38 a place behind Mike Bateman and 20 seconds ahead of Denis Sheppard. On form guest Mick Barnbrook clocked 3:11.27 for 20th position - later in a long race walking career he switched County allegiance to Essex as he was born in Romford's now demolished Oldchurch Hospital (as was SWC/VAC man Dave Hoben). Noel was 22nd in a personal best 3:17.01 a place behind L Berry of Essex Police with Dave Ainsworth next home 63 seconds behind Noel - another PB. The field were closed-in by recently departed Southend stalwart Frank Drake who relished a good distance challenge. There was something special about that course (accurately measured by the late Reg Wells) as so many recorded personal bests on it. Noel was delighted with his efforts. Despite 2nd,3rd and 4th scorers Southend were pipped by Ilford for team honours (4-to-score). Thanks to an imaginative and well researched team declaration by Ilford team manager Tony Perkins, Ilford's 'B' team secured bronze medals. Racing commenced near Essex Police HQ at Springfield ending at their Southend-on-Sea Police Station, where an upstairs canteen served a traditional complimentary post-race treat of much appreciated peaches and ice cream all round! John Hedgethorpe was an excellent organiser who thought of everything - so a somewhat basic Essex Police coach was always waiting to take us back to Chelmsford. Important that - just ask any who completed a Chippenham-to-Calne, then wondered how to get back to their cars and Chippenham railway station! Dr Beeching removed the Chippenham-to-Calne branch line in '65, the bus service was infrequent and cab drivers didn't go to Chippenham as they said it was "miles' away". John Hedgethorpe ended the Chelmsford-to-Southend owing to increased traffic levels. When some grumbled he stated, "It's better to stop this race the year before the accident rather than the year afterwards". Of course he was right - he always was! As for Noel just 4 days' later he sped around testing Blackheath Park in 48 minutes' dead (his actual time) which saw him 23rd over the finish line in a London Postal Region 9 Kilometres' yacht handicap. That race was a great Police triumph as in handicap finishing order, 8 of the top 10 were in that profession to wit: M Dunion, A Trebilcock, M Faulkner, L Berry, W Sutherland, V Moore, F Moule (LPR), M Barnbrook, J Laing (LPR) and P Blois. In other parts of a 32 strong field were also Police athletes: W Parsons, R Simmons, W Stephen, A Masson, A King, A Armstrong, W Symes, E Leach, L Mockett, R Youldon and D Sheppard. In those early days of Blackheath Handicaps it was Police walkers (Essex and Met) who kept things going in midweek.



Dear Dave ...

#### **GEORGE BEECHAM MBE - Further Tribute**

It was very sad to hear of George Beecham MBE's passing. Another great loss who gave so much to our sport of race Walking as a competitor and official who included spotting and helping to develop early the talent of Dean Macey in the Pentathlon which he went on to achieve a Silver and Bronze in the World Championships. His selfless fund-raising marked him out as somebody truly special too. George may you Rest in peace.

**Oliver T Flynn**

#### **WRITES A NOTED LONG-DISTANCE WALKER**

Shocking news about the Olympic 50K and disgraceful that Coe is even contemplating it. I agree wholeheartedly about lack of support and interest in women doing longer races.

**Sue Clements**

#### **READER's EMAIL**

Peter's (Marlow) comment in the last Essex Walker about the crowded program being the reason we have only a 10km Race Walk in the Commonwealth Championships in 2022 doesn't withstand

serious scrutiny. There will also be a full Marathon, and not a half marathon, at all those championships he mentions. Add the long list of major "City" marathons such as London, New York, and the countless other major cities who hold them, further undermines this proposition.

**Oliver T Flynn**

### WHERE ARE THE WALKERS?

Enjoyed watching the Diamond League athletics but once again no Race Walking, even on the track.

**Roy Lodge**

### BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

I appreciate that people tuned in to the BBC eagerly awaiting coverage but remember it was outside the broadcast time frame. Walks are not the only event that gets short shrift, the throws are highly embittered. However, if one wanted a viewing fix, the BA website had extended clips of the race (still are) and had interviews with both winners.

Let us not forget in this time of pandemic, we need to be grateful there was an event at all. All competitors and officials had to undertake extended health precautions in the days leading up to and at the event. Secure bubbles were created, such that all officials had their own designated seat, social distanced from one another. Coaches had limited access to their athletes and athletes and coaches were asked to leave the venue at the first available opportunity. Athletes collected medals not on the dais but physically picked up their own medals from a table trackside. The Isle of Man competitors were unable to race so this removed at least two contenders for medals, in Erika Kelly and Tom Partington. This was true of other invitees.

To gain entry to the race is by invitation alone and this is quite right. Standards need to be kept high and the field of a suitable age (at each end of the age spectrum). It is worth noting the walk tends to be the only event where the requirement that one must be at least an under 20 is waived with any regularity ('permitted in exceptional circumstances', I think is the phrase used).

Turning to the comments on the judging, a perusal of the men's result (Pdf version), would have revealed that one competitor was disqualified under rules pertaining to the last 100 metres of the event. In addition, a competitor need not have spent time in the penalty area if they were to receive four 'red cards' before the opportunity arose to call them into the area.

I hope this adds further clarification.

**Mark Wall**

### READER's CONTRIBUTION

Ken Jones, who we used to call *Bonesy Jonesy* when he ran with great prowess for the Met Police many years ago is attempting his 40th marathon as he has taken part in them all so far and is now the ripe old age of 87! He worked at Bow Traffic Garage and often used to pop into Bow Gymnasium where the Late Great Phil Embleton and myself used to train under ironman the Late Fred Duff BEM. He had a real soft spot for race walkers and always encouraged us all.

**Bill Sutherland**

Adds Hon Ed: Ken Jones, aged 87, was the 2019 Virgin Money London Marathon's oldest competitor, which he completed in 7:40.5. In the 1981 Gillette-sponsored inaugural event he ran 3:18.37 in the colours of North Chingford-based **Orion Harriers**. As Bill writes, he was a keen race walking supporter. In 1995 an "**Ever Present Club**" was founded with **42** members, one being respected athletics journalist Alistair Aitken who ran 2:53.01 in 1981 and continued his sequence until 1999 (inclusive). Both Bill and Alistair are regular *Essex Athletes Reunited Luncheon* attenders, as organised by Woodford Green's Tony Maxwell. Ever presents are few as just **10** have now gone the distance from 1981-to-2019 (inclusive).

## NO SHOW

Trust that you remain fit and well during these hugely challenging times. Alas, no Panto this year. Our theatre/hall just isn't large enough for our audience to sit comfortably and remain socially distanced. We are looking at ways to maintain our presence online via Zoom or recorded audio. Talking of Zoom, now that I am a qualified (very slow) walking tour guide [Chris Foster - Camden Guides](#)



**Chris Foster**

✉ EMAIL [chrisfoster2@outlook.com](mailto:chrisfoster2@outlook.com)

☎ PHONE 07889 804726



Chris was persuaded to become a tour guide in 2018 and has recently qualified as a Camden Guide.

He has a love of the Kings Cross, Holborn, Bloomsbury and Hatton Garden areas where he was a Bobby on the Beat way back some 40-50 years ago.

He has developed his own unique "Alternative Kings Cross" walk and he will lead you through the back streets south of Euston Road, where he will not only entertain you with many historical facts, he will also add plenty of personal memories from his policing days, starting off with the immortal words "You will never believe what happened on this street corner.....".

He is in the process of developing similar alternative walks in the areas mentioned above, so make contact if you would like further information.

We have been using Zoom to keep our walk/talks ongoing to selected audiences. **Chris Foster**

- "Congratulations Chris" writes **Dr Kitty Hung**, and **Bill Sutherland** writes "Nice to hear about Chris Foster. He looks younger than when he was in the Met Police at Holborn - perhaps he's had a facelift!"

## FIXTURE NEWS

Many thanks to all those who participated in the first Midland Winter League Series at Stourport on Sunday 25 October. Also a big thank you to you all for complying with the current Covid Risk Assessment Plans out on the cycle circuit course and inside the Sports Club itself. I will keep everyone posted as regards the venue and date (at the moment 15 November next) of the second series but as I informed most of you, the likelihood is **that it won't take place at Coventry due to Covid restrictions**. I am awaiting confirmation as to availability again at Stourport.

**Glyn Jones**

## APPRECIATION FROM A FORMER ESSEX RESIDENT

Thanks for your generous words. You can't be far from my age because I think you have been the scribe of race walking from my first race in South Wales in 1957. I look forward to reading your excellent words for some future years. Jan says you are much younger than me, so apologies for any offence given. Looking forward to meeting up at a future race. Carry on the good work.

**Bill Wright**

## APPRECIATION

- "Thank you, as ever fascinating." **John Northcott**
- "Congratulations on another brilliant, but sad edition. How do you keep it up?". **Geoff Hunwicks**



- “Thank you for yet another great edition of **Essex Walker**. As the BBC Head of Sport commented many years ago - 'if you had been connected to a more notable sport you would have been a leading national sports journalist.' Keep going as you and your team are very much appreciated by all! Thank you for my inclusions.” **Bill Sutherland**
- “I have just about done justice to the latest edition - a riveting read.” **John Hall**

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