



# Essex Walker

Editor: Dave  
Ainsworth

## FUNERAL SERVICE OF PETER "Pete" RYAN

Thursday 3 December 1.00 pm at Woking Crematorium

Details can be found through the following link <https://www.dignityfunerals.co.uk/funeral-notice/13-11-2020-charles-peter-ryan/>. Live streaming for watching the service can be accessed via this link: <https://boxcast.tv/view/charles-peter-ryan-n58zepojj8nsi8fryaes>

### PETER "Pete" RYAN RIP

This edition publishes many profound tributes to one of the most popular athletes ever to have graced our Essex race walking scene. Pete had already excelled at race walking in his native Sheffield before travelling south to commence a career with Essex Police, who also were prominent in race walking under the leadership of a late and much missed John Hedgethorpe. Pete travelled south - *and stayed* - which was to our advantage in a big way. In walking terms Pete was an all-rounder, who was willing to give his best at all distances on offer. He also coached. In race walking he was always a formidable competitor who competed for the British Police in representative matches. He easily fitted into the "iron man" category. One remembers the 1981 National 50K in the rural outpost of Sleaford - when the first ever road walking Championship to be staged in Lincolnshire was organised by George Towers. This saw **102** starters with all the 'big names' among them. In the closing stages Peter, having given his all, crashed out on a grass verge and was lying horizontal for a while. It looked like his race was over. But his Club (Sheffield United WC 'A') needed Pete for *both* a team title - and a Milan Trophy, which went to a Club with the best-placed 8th scoring man. In such times larger Clubs tried hard to win this trophy - nowadays no Clubs even finish a scoring National 50K scoring 3, as sometimes as few as 4 in total make an overall result sheet. Pete somehow rose and rejoined the action, finishing 8th in 4:32.10. This helped secure team honours with a scoring 4 (yes 4 in 1981) of Messrs Warhurst, Ryan, Hankin and Eddershaw. The Milan Trophy eluded Sheffield and was claimed by Leicester WC 'A'.



Enfield league  
action

Pete revisited a grass verge while on route to victory in a race that will be forever associated with him. At Newmarket's "Rowley Mile" racecourse he won our 2003 **British 100 Miles Championship** in 19:57.35, having led for most of the contest, before suffering fatigue in its closing stages. Just 200 yards into his final circuit he ground to a halt - then hit the ground! He lay for what seemed like ages as a 2nd positioned competitor dramatically closed the gap. Race Referee John Eddershaw was present to ensure no well-meaning bystanders or supporters assisted Pete to resume his progress (in a 1908 Olympic Marathon Italian Dorando Pietri collapsed within sight of the finish, then well-meaning officials helped him up and assisted him to get going. After a 2:54.46 "victory" the Referee expunged his name from the result sheet for "assistance", which incidentally he'd never asked for). Many readers who were at Newmarket are still amazed Pete ever finished that final lap with enough in hand to win (by less than a minute). He moved slowly with a pronounced lean and looked badly jaded - but he made that **extra effort** needed to break the tape. On finishing, John Eddershaw said, "You're the steel man from the City of Steel". To this day folk talk of this performance as one of the most gutsy ever seen anywhere - and one rewarded with a hard earned win. That day 72 started, 31 finished (1 d/q). Among 17 new Centurions as well as Pete (No 984), were Essex Walker readers Cath Duhig (C986) and Andrew Wilmot (C997) while LDWA member Wendy Watson claimed that much sought after Number 1,000.

While at Ilford AC Pete showed up for running races when available - and always gave a good account of himself. His last few years as an active athlete saw him in many runs. These included the highly popular East London 5's (known as the ELVIS series) in which he truly excelled. Peter sadly became a pancreatic cancer sufferer, his last days being spent in Woking Hospice for end-of-life care. On Thursday 12 November he sat up watching televised International football (he was a big football fan, and a loyal Sheffield Wednesday supporter who also enjoyed Non-League football). He retired for the night and failed to rise on Friday morning, having passed-away peacefully in his sleep. Our walking world showed how much they valued his presence among us, for Peter received numerous messages and cards in those final few days. Such was the volume, Pete's spirits were really lifted. **Pete Ryan - one never to be forgotten - Rest in Peace.** DA

The chosen charity for those wishing to mark Pete's passing with a donation is **Pancreatic Cancer UK**. [www.pancreaticcancer.org.uk](http://www.pancreaticcancer.org.uk) Cheques, made payable to this worthy cause, may be sent to Fiona Bishop at: 14 Grobars Avenue, WOKING. Surrey. GU21 4TP.

### **MEMORIES OF CHARLES PETER RYAN** by *Denis Sheppard*

Peter passed away peacefully during the early hours of Friday 13 November having watched England beat The Republic of Ireland on TV the previous evening. His passing will be mourned by thousands of friends throughout the world of athletics, football, travel, education, policing and the church. No one knows everything about the hectic and inspirational life that he lived but I suppose that I was involved in more aspects than most.

Pete had been a massive part of my life since we first met at a training weekend for promising Race Walkers at the National Sports Centre in Lilleshall back in 1973. He had just joined South Yorkshire Police and I had told him he would be better off coming to Essex because he would get support for his sporting activities from John Hedgethorpe. He gave up everything to move to Essex and "paintpot" as my mum called him, became an additional member of my family. He moved next door to my parents, lodging with Doris and when he bought his own place he shared it with my brother Roy. He was best man at my wedding to Heike in Germany and was idolised by my own children. Pete bought with him a loud voice with a Yorkshire accent and he ensured that we all knew he was a proud Yorkshire man with forthright views whenever he had the opportunity. As young men on our trips around Europe we took to singing "On Ilkley Moor Bahr Tat" translated into various languages at post-race receptions. Unfortunately, in Sonder Omme in Denmark we were unable to translate into Danish so they had to join us in English!

We lost touch when he married in the late 1980s but in 1990 I became the Police Chief in Brentwood and he was on my staff as a Beat Officer and then Schools Liaison Officer and even though he distrusted "white shirt" bosses he was one of the best community officers I ever worked with. My children and their partners knew and respected him from their encounters with him at school as a Schools Liaison Officer. We did, however, have to work around him in facilitating his trips to watch Sheffield Wednesday home and away. He would work for a few hours on a Saturday morning, then drive to Sheffield and back returning to work for the evening rush. Pete never did anything by half measures! For instance, we went on a trip to the Outer Hebrides by plane, train and ferry to walk from Castlebay at the south of the Isle of Barra to Lochmaddy in North Uist. On the second day of walking we covered over 40 miles in 10hrs across Barra, Eriskay, South Uist and Benbecula. By the time we got to Benbecula our feet were red raw, and our minds wandering. We thought we were lost and my phone was out of battery. I fell into a ditch and asked Pete to call the B and B to confirm where it was. When he told me he didn't know how to make a call on his phone because he only used it for texts I blew a gasket but that seemed to galvanise my brain into action and somehow, I got his phone to work. When I finally spoke to the woman at the B&B she showed concern that we were late and I had to admit that I had got lost and underestimated the distance involved. I then worked out that the house was in view about a hundred yards away. We spent the next few hours piercing our blisters with a safety pin provided by the puzzled landlady and Pete's body went stiff in the shower and he had to be helped out. Other than that, we had a great day! Still, we brushed ourselves down and hobbled out of the house the next morning to make our way to Lochmaddy in the heaviest rain I have ever experienced. However, we woke up the following morning to glorious sunshine to catch the ferry over to Skye and the world was

wonderful. The bigger the down the greater the wow when it comes. That trip had it all. He was the only person I knew who was prepared to join me on my mad country walking projects and, more importantly, understand why. We became like brothers as a result.

Pete was indeed a globe trotter and shared his experiences with a host of different people. There are very few countries he has not visited. He normally combines his trips with a race or in more recent times a Park Run the last of which he completed in March this year. Our last trip together was to the self-proclaimed republic of Artsakh on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan which is currently involved in a Civil War!

People might forget that Pete made it to number 3 in the National Race Walking rankings at 50k with a clocking of 4hrs 18mins in 1982 but he was to leave the sport for about 15 years before returning in the late 1990s and achieving some remarkable performances as a veteran on the UK and International stage. For instance, he was twice winner of the walking section of the Honolulu Marathon and broke 4hrs to win the walking section at the Berlin marathon. Yet his most memorable achievement has to be winning the 100 miles at Newmarket whilst pushing himself to the absolute limit and finally gaining international recognition with selection for the English team for the Roubaix 28 hr walk in France; thus following in the footsteps of his mentors, the two Johns; Eddershaw and Hedgethorpe.

Many won't know that Pete struggled with his health both physically and mentally throughout his life and had to show remarkable determination to defeat his demons and get on with his hectic life. His success in winning these battles were even more remarkable than his achievements in sport.

Pete ended his days in Woking with his devoted partner Fiona, whom he had got to know on his travels around the world where they both competed in veterans' athletics, by his side. He had packed more into his life than would seem humanly possible. Along the way he met people from throughout the world who will be mourning his passing as will the thousands of children, including my own, who were mesmerised by his charisma as a schools officer. His philosophy was that we should cherish the memories and move forward with our lives. As a man of faith he was content about his fate and in the words of our favourite song by Lynyrd Skynyrd (which we used to gyrate to at the Green Man Leytonstone in the 1970s and sing as we walked the byways of the world): "I'm a free as a bird now and this bird you'll never change"

### **RON WALLWORK REMEMBERS**

I'm proud that as a race organiser I was able to play a small part in some of Pete's many achievements; an Enfield Race Walking League victory and two Moulton wins, but crowning those and all his other successes was the Surrey WC & London Vidarians Hundred at Newmarket in 2003. Peter passed through 50 miles in 9.08.10 with a 23 minute lead ahead of Sandra Brown and RWV Holland's William Mutze. Sandra dropped away in the second half of the race leaving William as his nearest challenger, who was still 23 minutes in his wake at 90 miles. Over the last ten miles Peter took a "right packet" (a term used in those days equivalent to "hitting the wall") and was prostrated on the grass at one point. But he rallied and the iconic photograph of him finishing captures not only the strain and pain, but the dogged determination that enabled him to hold off his Dutch rival by just 55 seconds.

Whenever Joan and I were with Peter, the War of the Roses still raged in the form of seemingly vicious verbal exchanges, which was the absolute opposite of the friendship and respect we shared for each other and he will always have a special place in our memories.



**2003 100 Miles' finish**  
*Photo courtesy of Ron Wallwork*

## Some words from Reverend Roy Lodge

“Although I was not able to recall Peter in person I am sure I must have competed with him in the RAF. Have quietly remembered him in my thoughts and pleased to hear that he died so peacefully in his sleep. It is a salutary thought that we now have to come to terms with our generation of race walkers nearing the end of the race of life and crossing the finishing line into the unknown. Meanwhile may we stay positive and test negative.”

Numerous condolences and expressions of sadness have been received from readers including: Kathy Crilley, Gary Smith, Len Ruddock, Steve Till, Hilary McDermott, Oliver Flynn, Angus Browne, Nicola Hopkinson and Jacob Ranson (Ilford Recorder).

## Tributes and reflections from readers include:

- “How very sad indeed; this photo was taken only 3 years ago this very weekend. Pete travelled the country competing, this was the Forres Harriers 10k event from Brodie Castle and I was the lead cyclist. The previous year Pete turned up at the Glen Moray (distillery) 10k. I was timekeeping and looked up in time to see an ‘old school’ race walker finishing. Turned out to be Pete whom I had not seen for years. Great bloke.” **Alex Ross**
- “How much more awful news will it be your lot to share? I had no idea Peter was ill although I had wondered where he was having not heard from him for some time. My Centurion qualification will always be linked with Pete's. He finished with a phenomenal lilt to port, or starboard, I forgot which. But it was an amazing weekend.” **Cath Duhig**
- “Very sad. I met and had coffee with Peter afterwards at Littlehampton Parkrun last year having previously met and chatted with him at the International cross Country in Edinburgh's Hollyrood Park in 2017. A fine walker in his day and a really nice bloke.” **Alan Buchanan**
- “Sadly, another longstanding race-walker will be with us no longer. We are getting thin on the ground with few younger replacements.” **Richard Cole**
- “This is the saddest news. I have only fond memories of Peter, can't believe his passing away.” **Neringa Masilioniene**
- “Simply dreadful news. I didn't even know Pete was unwell.” **Steve Uttley**
- “Very sad news indeed. I only saw him at his twin brother's funeral last year.” **Helen Elleker**
- “Very sad news indeed to hear of Peter Ryan. He is one of our favourite race walking friends. A fierce competitor who always gave his all! We have some fond memories of him and Denis Sheppard on the Phil Collins coach trips for the annual Chippenham to Calne at this time of year. He was a true loyal supporter of 'real race walking' - not what we frequently witness at International level nowadays.” **Bill and Kath Sutherland**
- “It is so sad that he has been stricken with this dreadful illness. Pete was a great character and enjoyed race walk/sports chat.” **Peter Selby**
- “Very sad news. Peter, a sportsman and a gentleman, great sense of humour who says things as he sees it, great company and always a real pleasure to meet up with, a privilege to be able to call a friend. It was fantastic to see him achieve one of his goals at the National 100 mile Championship a few years ago with a typical brave performance.” **Mark Williams**
- “Very sad to hear of this tremendous endurance athlete, always a great support.” **Kevin Marshall**
- “I was on duty at Newmarket when Peter became Centurion No 984. It was a very gutsy performance, during the latter stages he developed a very severe lean to the right. He competed in many Police and masters' events, always very competitive. So many memories!” **Eric Horwill**
- “My thoughts and prayers are of and with him.” **Geoff Hunwicks**
- “So sorry to hear this. I last bumped into Pete during preparations for the 2017 World Athletics Championships walks. He was helping to set up one of the drinks stations and I would be live race commentating on The Mall later that day. It was while strolling by Buckingham Palace enjoying the sunshine that I was snapped out of my daydream by a loud friendly abusive shout from a familiar Yorkshire voice. I turned and spotted the toothy grin of Pete Ryan, clearly



pleased with his witty comment. It was a pleasure to see him, as it always was over the previous 40 odd years." **Chris Maddocks**

- "Very sad. Hopefully the messages will have brought him some comfort." **Irene & Mike Bateman**
- "His presence will be sorely missed by the race walking community, at home and abroad." **Tony Taylor**
- "Sorry to hear this. Pretty young age to lose his life, condolences to his Pete's family and all at Ilford AC, sounds like a very talented race walker and a nice guy." **Tom Goldsmith** (Time FM Radio)
- "So sorry to hear the news. I remember he was the only winner of the Steve Gower 20 mile Memorial Race." **Jeanette Street**
- "Pete arrived on the Ilford AC running scene with us a few years' ago and he did several East London 5s (ELVIS) events and indeed pushed me very close." **Andy Catton**
- "Another great loss to our diminishing band of walkers. We remember good trips we had with him." **Ron Penfold**
- "He packed an amazing palmary into a relatively short life. An example in many ways for us to aspire. Ciao." **Roger Mills**
- "Sad news indeed. RIP, never to be forgotten." **Sandra Brown**
- "In recent times, one of my journalistic gigs was following Woking FC. Peter was a latter day supporter, and we conversed by mail etc about the Cards, as they were known. He was an affable, friendly and a tough competitor, and therefore sadly missed." **Paul Warburton**
- "Very sad news indeed. Pete was proud and passionate about his Yorkshire heritage but very much at home with his Essex friends who will miss his forthright opinions yet jovial companionship. We shared many laughs, banter, and difference of opinions but above all else he was a very genuine man, who, I believe had a heart of gold. An "old school" walker who, to my mind and knowledge, was so fair that he was never disqualified. His determination and courage were truly shown when winning the National 100 miles in 2003. He travelled the world watching and encouraging others. Alas when the race walking rules changed so did Pete's enthusiasm for the sport. He appreciated fairness and effort as he himself exemplified. Thanks for supporting me Pete. Your days were short-lived but happy memories will last for ever. RIP. **Bob Dobson**
- "So sad to hear this news of Pete Ryan who has now passed away. A great competitor in race walking and he had many friends far and wide and we shall fondly miss him. We all have happy memories of Pete from his race walking exploits and especially myself from his participation in police race walking championships and the Ryan Cup Matches. Rest in Peace Peter." Glyn Jones
- "I am so sad that Pete has left us so young. A tragic loss of life. I will remember him with fondness especially his great sense of humour and gentle manner." **Sue Clements**
- "A lovely guy, such sad news. I will always remember his courage when he became a Centurion at Newmarket in 2003." **Pam Ficken**
- "Sounds like a peaceful way to go. Will be sorely missed at races." **Mark Culshaw**



#### GET WELL SOON

Race walking stalwart of many decades, octogenarian Dave Stevens (Steyning AC and Stock Exchange AC) has been a hospital in-patient for 10 days. We all wish this popular participant's path to recovery goes well.

**WHO'S WHO - BOB DOBSON** (<https://ilfordathleticclub.co.uk/2020/10/05/robert-dobson/>)

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**Name:** Robert (Bob) Dobson

**Born:** 04/11/1942

**Date Joined Ilford AC:** 1979

#### Personal Bests:

3k 12m 40.4s

5k 21m 50.4s

10k 44m 16s

20k 1h 30m 2s



30k	2h 27m 28s
50k	4h 07m 22.4s
100k	9h 56m 34s
12 hours	118.805 km (world best) = 73.822 miles
24 hours	204.330 km = 126 miles 1709 yds

**First Club Race:** 21 May 1963 (with Essex Beagles)

**Favourite Race:** Hastings to Brighton (38 miles) 6 times winner

**Notable Performances:**

- I completed 125 races of 50k – 29 of which were UK Championships and all finished in first 9 positions.
- 49 years in the top 10 UK All-time list at 50kms.
- 1974 I set UK National and British Commonwealth 30 miles and 50kms records (4.02.29.2 and 4.11.22 respectively)
- When winning Invitation 50kms Track Race in Paris (7th on All Time World Lists). I subsequently broke UK record on 4 other occasions.
- 2 European Championships (1971 and 1974)
- 4 Race Walk World Cup Finals (1970, 1973, 1977, 1981)
- 1 World Championship (1976)
- 1 Commonwealth Games (1970)
- Winning UK Nation 50kms (1970), at only my second attempt at 50k.
- 23 International representations in the 25-year period from 1970 to 1995 – GB x 19, England x 2, Wales x 2

**Biggest disappointments:** Missing out on 1972 Olympics (controversial non-selection) and 1976 Olympics (the 50 kms event was dropped and rescheduled as World Championships in Sweden – I set a new UK Record 4.10.20). Missing out on 1974 Commonwealth Games after winning UK National 20 miles but not exempted from trial (finished 4th) 2 weeks after 50Kms in Switzerland (World Cup Final).

**Typical week's training at your peak:**

Weekdays: 6 am 7 miles; lunchtime Gym; 7 pm 7 miles.

Weekend Sat/Sun 2 x 15 miles (completed whilst working full time. Once during holidays I covered 165 miles in one week.

**Favourite sessions:** The ones when I felt I was going well – I hated interval sessions so rarely did them.

**Favourite race distance:** 50 kms

**What advice would you give our current crop of youngsters?**

“Take up football as there is no money in racewalking!!!!” But seriously – don't expect immediate success - it took me 7 years to reach International Standard.

**Who is the most famous athlete you trained with:**

Enrique Vera (Mexico) at the time he was 50kms World Record Holder and he stayed with us for 6 months in 1977.

**How would you improve the sport?** More sponsorship and publicity

**Favourite athlete or sportsman;** David Hemery – great athlete, great captain and a true Gentleman.

**What other sports do you follow?** Football (West Ham), Speedway

**Best country visited:** Austria

**Favourite food and drink:** Fillet Steak and Merlot Wine – Cider as a long drink and most desserts.

**Favourite TV shows:** The old ones are the best – ‘Only Fools and Horses’ and ‘Till death us do part’

**Last film seen:** Bobby (The Bobby Moore Story)

**Last book read:** Money Walks (by Chris Maddocks, 5 times UK Olympic Racewalker).

**Favourite band/singer:** Sadly, Whitney Houston

**Last album bought or downloaded:** Alphaville, Pet Shop Boys

**Last concert attended:** John Bon Jovi tribute concert.

**Any pets:** Cat

**What are your aims for next season?** To resume training after long layoff in 2020

**Tell us a joke:**

Pat and Mick are taking a lunch break. The conversation goes as follows:

Pat: "What have you got there, Mick?"

Mick: "It's a Thermos Flask".

Pat: "What does it do?"

Mick: "It keeps hot things hot, and cold things cold"

Pat: "Well, what have you got in it?"

Mick: "Two cups of tea and an ice cream"



Hastings to Brighton



Lugano Cup  
Milton Keynes 1977



Enfield League

Bob Dobson and  
Enrique Vera 1977

**CENTURION NO 11 J R BARNES-MOSS - Early Administrator**

This article is written by David Phillips (trackstats@free.fr) of the National Union of Track Statisticians (NUTS) and is to be featured in a future edition of "Track Stats" magazine.

J R Barnes-Moss was a founder member of the Race Walking Association and also of The Centurions - being present at their inaugural meeting in "The Ship and Turtle" in Leadenhall Street, London. EC3 in 1911. He holds Centurion No 11 - from the 1907 London-to-Brighton-and-Back. On that occasion he raced in the colours of Middlesex Walking Club - he also had membership of Surrey Walking Club. This informative and interesting article is reproduced by kind permission of Mr Phillips.

**A record for the founding father along the martyr's walk - *The life of J R Barnes Moss***

Recent coverage in "Track Stats" of British athletes who won French national titles or set French records in the late 1890s and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century has led on to the discovery that one of the stalwart pioneering officials of British race-walking is himself credited with at least one French record, and his local newspaper in 1906 even claimed on his behalf that he was "the holder of several records on French soil".

He is J R Barnes Moss, whose surname is hyphenated in some press reports, and the references to his alleged exploits in France are tantalisingly vague. The one performance which was noted by the "Middlesex and Surrey Express" newspaper in April 1906 is 4min 24sec for 1000 metres, which was most likely achieved in 1897 when the "Sporting Life" had referred to him as the "1km walking champion of France". The French Athletics Federation (FFA) had been founded in 1888, but Barnes Moss's title would have been won under the auspices of either of the two other legislative bodies in France which recognised walking records on the track and road for all conceivable events from 500 metres to 36 hours in the years up to 1914 and 1920 respectively. The FFA's official list of records covers only events at one hour and two hours and at 20, 30 and 50 kilometres.

The detail of what John Reynolds Barnes Moss achieved in France is actually not of great importance because his time for the kilometre distance is by no means exceptional. Even allowing for what may be varying degrees of surveillance by judges, a time of 3min 51sec achieved by Hermann Müller, of Germany, in Berlin, on 17 October 1909, puts Barnes Moss's into perspective.

The Yorkshire-born Canadian Olympic champion for the 10,000 metres track walk in 1912, George Goulding, had recorded 2min 59sec for the 880 yards walk in Winnipeg on 17 July 1909, which works out at much the same pace as Müller's.

Barnes Moss's later achievements were rather more impressive the longer they lasted. His most notable performance was probably to break the London-to-Oxford record on Good Friday 13 April 1906 with a time of 9 hours 59 minutes 16 seconds from Marble Arch to Oxford's Martyrs Memorial, which beat the previous best by almost two hours – but not without potentially serious incident. The "Middlesex and Surrey Express" laconically told the story: "About a dozen miles before reaching Oxford Barnes-Moss was run into by a motor-cyclist, but beyond having the heel of his shoe nearly torn off and getting a stone in it, and having his arm grazed bit near his elbow, he suffered no damage".

The same newspaper reporter usefully told his readers that Barnes Moss was 35 years old (and so was born in 1870 or 1871) and that he stood 6ft (1.83m) tall and weighed 11st 6lb (72kg), which is the sort of physique one would expect of such an ardent ultra-distance walker. The article must have been written by someone who was familiar with race-walking or sought advice from an expert because it was particularly noted of Barnes Moss that "his mode of progression is scrupulously fair, and although he has competed for several years past in many races and won numerous prizes he has never been known to receive a caution".

By now Barnes Moss was already involved in administrative duties as honorary secretary of the Middlesex Walking Club, and in July of 1907 he was one of seven representatives of various London area clubs who came together to form the Southern Counties Road Walking Association, with Barnes Moss as its first secretary. This body very soon became the Road Walking Association and continues 113 years later as the Race Walking Association. Barnes Moss was also a member of Surrey Walking Club, founded in 1899 and reckoned to be the first club in Britain (and maybe the World) specialising in walking. A fellow founder of the RWA was Ernest Neville, who would be a member of Surrey WC for 70 years.

One of the other RWA founders was Tommy Hammond, the outstanding ultra-walker of that era whose record of 131 miles 580 yards in 24 hours to be set in 1908 would still be in existence when Hammond died 37 years later. Hammond had beaten Barnes Moss's London-to-Oxford record in 1907 and the London-to-Brighton-and-back record the same year, with Barnes Moss also inside the previous best time, though more than an hour behind in 2nd place.

Another initiative taken by Barnes Moss in November of 1907 after the route for the next year's London Olympic marathon had been published was to write a letter to the "Sporting Life", as follows; "My club have, in order to enable probable competitors to become accustomed to the same, arranged to hold one of several strolls over the course. Those who do not care to cover the whole journey can find a tram at either Uxbridge or Wembley which will bring them back to London". Whether or not his considerate offer was taken up was not reported, but as Britain's competitors in the Olympic marathon all failed to live up to expectations maybe a tram-ride might have proved tempting to them.

Barnes Moss knew the area well because he had lived in Acton and then Ealing and by 1917 he was an active member of Uxbridge Urban District Council and then helped to re-form and took on the secretary's job for the Uxbridge and West Middlesex AC in 1919. His business life as an agent for knitted goods may have suffered because of his spare-time pursuits as bankruptcy proceedings were taken against him in 1921, but he clearly prospered again because he was president and secretary of the RWA and a judge and time-keeper throughout the 1920s until pressure of work curtailed his activities.

He was elected a vice-president of the RWA in 1932, and the last reference we have in the press is in August 1945 when Flying Officer J D Barnes-Moss was married and was described as a former professional golfer who was "the only son of Mrs J R Barnes-Moss, of 79 High Street, Langley, Bucks". It can be assumed, therefore, that Mr Barnes-Moss had by then taken his last vigorous step along life's road.

**Footnote:** acknowledgments to John Powell and to the excellent Surrey Walking Club website for historical data.

## PAUL RAY RIP

We're sorry to report that Enfield resident Paul has died aged 88. He was an enthusiastic member of his hometown Club, now competing as Enfield & Harringey AC and was a respected coach with achievements in that area of his activities. Paul was a keen competitor and a founder participant of the popular Enfield League when Martin Oliver launched his project, before clocking up many League appearances. In 2004 when aged 71 he was selected to participate in the Olympic Torch Relay and enthusiastically said "*It's the icing on the cake*" before undertaking extra training so he could give a good account of himself on the big day. Come that "Big Day" and disappointment came his way as the distance to be covered was only 200 metres - if that. Apparently how long you got with the torch rather depended on how much of a big-name you were! Nevertheless, he was delighted at being involved and said, "*Having carried the Olympic Torch I'll die a happy man*". Paul represented Middlesex in the Counties Athletic Union Inter-Counties' 10 Miles. He finished 4 London Marathons and one in Athens as well as becoming a Nijmegen walker - the last two events in conjunction with club colleague Ken Livermore. At the 87th Enfield Open 7 Miles in 2013 he announced his athletics' retirement. Among those he coached was Essex Marathon superstar Colin Moxom of Woodford Green AC (as then called) who once clocked 2.16.29 in the London. Our profound condolence is expressed.

- **Cath Duhig** writes "Another sadness, though I hadn't realised how old he was. A very warm and positive man."
- **Bill Sutherland** writes "We remember Paul Ray very well as a leading light of Enfield Walking and such a likeable athlete always encouraging others and full of competitive spirit. May he Rest in Peace. With sincere condolences."
- **Dave Hoben** writes "Very sorry to hear this sad news about Paul Ray, another personality who will be missed. I did know about the Athens Marathon, but had forgotten the torch relay. A full and successful life."

## FAREWELLS

1. November saw one of race walking's greats leave us at the age of 68, after a heart attack. Spanish legend and *triple* Olympian (1980/84/88) **Jorge "Jordi" Llopert** won a 50K European gold medal in 1978 clocking 3:53.29.9 - in that event a still active Ian Richards was our only GB finisher. Come Moscow's Olympic 50K Ian was still our only GB finisher (11th in 4.22.57) while up front Jorge claimed silver in 3.51.25 behind East German Hartwig Gauder (3.49.24) with Yergeniy Ivchenko 3rd in 3:56.32. Sadly, Hartwig died earlier this year (April). That race, overall, wasn't that successful as of 27 starters 12 failed to finish - 4 disqualified and 8 "*dnf's*" who included star Mexican trio of Messrs Bautista, Gonzalez and Bermudez. Jorge Llopert - May he Rest in Peace.
2. Sadly after an illness, Barkingside resident **Mrs Jill Pells** has passed-on. Jill was the wife of Ilford AC stalwart and Past President Gerry. Gerry became well-known on our Essex walking scene when having a long spell as a freelance photographer. His fine work was often published in both Race Walking Record and Athletes Weekly as well as in local newspapers. Jill attended a number of our functions and events with Gerry. Jill Pells, may she Rest in Peace.

## RWA SOUTHERN AREA AGM - AS IT AFFECTS YOU

Held on Monday 9 November, for a first time on "Zoom", it was made easier to attract a much larger "*attendance*". An agenda plus last year's minutes were circulated to Club Walking Section Secretaries requesting they be distributed to all race walkers and officials on their books. AGM attenders (which commenced 7.15 pm), were invited to view a Southern Area Committee meeting beforehand (having commenced at 6.30 pm). From the whole of the South, **17** tuned-in (which included your Officers and Committee). It's generally accepted in many organisations that low turnouts indicate those eligible to attend are generally happy with things.

After routine reports and business came elections of those you want to take our sport forward. Folks expressed content with our current situation in the South as all Officers (bar one) were re-elected (*unopposed*) into their roles, as were Committee members. Change came as former RWA Southern Area President John Powell (Highgate Harriers) stepped down after 40 years' meritorious service as your Honorary Treasurer. Appreciative words were spoken in respect of his work on our behalf, with a profound Vote of Thanks offered.

#### **Your line-up:**

President & Honorary Secretary: **Chris Flint**

Chairman & Honorary Championships Secretary: **Noel Carmody**

Vice Chairman: **Mike Fox**

Honorary Treasurer: **Mark Easton** (also RWA Hon Treasurer)

Honorary Assistant Secretary: **Pam Ficken**

Honorary Auditors: **Trevor Jones** and **Ian Richards**

*The meeting ended with an agenda item expected to pull in many additional attenders - a discussion on the state of race walking in the South and what needs doing. Again, it appears "out there" was a level of contentment as few extra names "booked-in" on "zoom". Some of race walking's biggest critics are seldom seen at race walking meetings and functions - and we really wanted to hear from them, as their views would have been valuable to such a discussion. Many left our race walking scene in recent years, without ever considering returning to help out by officiating. Again, we **wanted** to hear their relevant reasons why this is so? It was a pity that opinions, that would have been listened to - and respected - weren't advanced.*

In summing up, President Chris Flint stated, "Next year is **make-or-break**. We're so short of Officials, we need to attract ex-race walkers back to assist". As regards to possibly winding-up your RWA Southern Area Committee next year, he asked "zoomers" if it was better to go out with heads held high after a glorious past (examples were quoted to strongly back up this statement) or sink into obscurity?

Since the AGM Chris has written as follows: "Those who attended the meeting contributed to a lively discussion required on the future of the RWA (Southern Area) and identified specific issues that required immediate attention over the next 12 months. These include a clear idea of the number of officials who are available for Area and club events, and to examine the constraints that currently impact adversely on holding events, such as venue costs and availability. The overriding aim is to provide a stronger support system to clubs. All this will be reviewed at the next AGM."

Adds Hon Ed: This is set for Monday 8 November 2021 at 7.15 pm - put this date in your 2021 diaries and keep it free for a truly important discussion.

#### **HAPPY 90th BIRTHDAY**

**Ken Roost**, for many years, was an Enfield League pointsman/helper who attended the 90th Enfield Open 7 Miles and Reunion with near neighbour and former Enfield member the late Bill Pilgrim, and was one of 30 Centurions present on that memorable day. **He's to celebrate his 90th birthday on Boxing Day.** Ken qualified as a Centurion at the 1975 Ewhurst 100 Miles clocking 22:03.26. In 1979 he returned to that course (10 x 10 miles) hitting top form (10th) when recording **19:52.53** and leading the Borough of Enfield Harriers to a *famous team victory* - in a race which saw 107 start, 78 finish with 37 newcomers joining The Centurions. Enfield's 2 other *scorers* were Jack Rossiter (13th) and the late Peter Worth (15th) who recorded 20:12.01 & 20:20.44 respectively. In the '70s there was a fair bit of "*to-and-fro*" between Verlea AC & Borough of Enfield Harriers - Ken was a 1st claimer at both Clubs during this decade. He loved the challenges of long distance walks, and has decent times on his record for such great *classic* events as the London-to-Brighton & Birmingham Outer Circle - both now sadly defunct. Ken and his late wife Lily (who sadly departed in 2018) were in attendance when The Centurions celebrated their Centenary at a House of Commons Dinner in 2011.

Race walking was Ken's 4th great love as his sports interests commenced as a successful water-polo player in the Royal Air Force reaching Command Representative standard. At Khartoum in

the early '50s he served with recently deceased Trowbridge & RAF walker Dave Browning in a unit which tested how aircraft components performed in extreme high temperatures. The RAF Station had a water polo team called "*The Walrusus*" in which all members, including Ken, grew RAF handlebar moustaches. Ken's next great sporting love was snooker, in which exhibited talent on the green baize, proudly boasting a 52 maximum break. At most RAF stations Ken served on, he was their snooker team Player/Manager. In "*Civvy Street*" he ran a team ("*British Aerospace Codgers*") in the Stevenage Snooker League. Ken worked for British Aerospace in Stevenage after his demob as a Flight Sergeant in 1975 - the team being retired employees. Another former RAF employee at British Aerospace was ex-Flight Lieutenant Brian Curd, who took over managing the RAF walking team when legendary Dickie Bird finally stepped down. Ken became Chairman of the Snooker League, which disbanded in 2015. Meanwhile returning to his RAF career, he was an active runner before commencing pedestrianism. When British Aerospace ceased its Stevenage operations, he worked at North Hertfordshire District Council - where among duties was issuing old folks' free bus passes. At RAF Coltishall in Norfolk during the late 60s a number of other race walkers were stationed there including Dave Gulliver, Dave Ainsworth, Dave Browning & ex-Beagle Wally Waldron. Until his health suffered a setback in recent times, Ken was a regular attender at Royal Air Force reunions.

If you want to send a birthday card, Ken resides at: 45 Downlands, Chells Manor Village, STEVENAGE. Hertfordshire. SG2 7BH.

### HERE'S WHAT TO AIM FOR

On November 14th in Japan (Inzai) Eiki Takahashi set a new 10,000m World Record of 37:25.21 which was well inside the previous 37:53.09 set in 2008 by Spaniard Francisco Javier Fernandez. In this race, both 2nd and 3rd placed men were inside the previous record : Koki Ikeda 27:25.90 & Yuta Kuga 37:35.00. Kumiko Okada won the Women's race in 44:11.56.

### IN SHOT

Top photographer Rankin was on both BBC and ITV in November - talking about the opening of his new exhibition entitled, "**Lost for Words**". Both television stations showed examples of his work - but no repeat showing of his former nude model *Micky Sutton* - Ilford AC, Post Office and Centurion. If Micky had appeared then perhaps Rankin's audience would have been "**Lost for Words**".

### FILM CRITICS

A 10 minute Youtube film clip of the popular 2015 Moulton 5 Miles Walk - a traditional Saturday afternoon road walk though delightful Suffolk countryside - has been doing the rounds and drawing favourable comments: <https://youtu.be/7KR0AFP9EkcW> Writes Organiser-in-Chief **Ron Wallwork**, "It's brilliant! It's a who's who of so many of the stalwarts who've kept the sport going in recent years." Writes **Martin Clarke**: "Very enjoyable 10 minutes of my time spent analysing the divergent styles of the noble art of 'hey ho sailing'. The good guys/gals just seem to float along. Nice to see Pete Ryan in action and a cameo mince from Amos Seddon I spotted towards the end." **Colin Vesty** also noted "A nice little bit of Peter Ryan in the middle of it", and **Greg Smith writes** "It does a great job at promoting the race. I'll be looking out for an opportunity to get down and do it."

Adds Hon Ed: Credit to Linda McDermot for her excellent filming and editing.

### RAISE A GLASS

Essex Walker's readership contains a high percentage of Centurion members, and we hope all will raise fully charged glasses on Christmas Day at 2.00 pm - for The Centurions' Worldwide Christmas Toast. This tradition has been going for many decades - indeed the Watts' brothers have a copy of their Christmas 1931 Newsletter in which this toast is mentioned. So, it's certainly well established - and long may it continue.

**Cheers!**



## ALL ACTION

Benfleet-based **Kim Howard**, who earned Centurion number 1020 in The Norfolk 100 Miles Challenge at King's Lynn in July 2005 clocking 22:23.39, has her sights set on a considerably longer distance. With so many (well nearly all) fixtures now "off" her aim is to complete the "**Virtual Route 66 Challenge**". This is set at 2,285 miles - however entrants have 18 months to do it in stages. Kim, who we all rightly praised when 100 marathons were completed, is doing this event along with her 4 sons. Who's got the furthest so far you ask? *Of course (at the time of writing) - it's Kim who's now on 400 miles.* Looking further afield Route 66 means something in Test cricket, for when the 2019 Ashes Series became the first in this long-running contest to feature players numbers and names on players' shirts, England Captain Joe Root insisted he be allocated Number 66! Good luck to Kim and her sons as they make progress in this testing task.

**Kathy Crilley** writes "Just to let you know that **Suzanne Beardsmore** and myself are also "competing" in the Route 66 virtual race. I've completed 703.5 miles to date (well yesterday- Monday) not sure what distance Suzanne is on. Suzanne, **Richard McChesney** and myself also "competed" in the Great Virtual Race across Tennessee (and back). I am also competing in its successor - the Circumpolar Race Around the World. 45,000 + miles. Teams of 10 and the race is broken down into regions. Great fun and lots of motivation to get out there and do some training. So, loads of virtual ultra-distance races going ahead if you know where to look! Plus shorter races, the Dutch RWV club are organising virtual races every couple of weeks with races up to 10km distances. Several UK race walkers taking part."

**John Constandinou** informs us that "Centurion **Colin Vesty** is also doing the Route 66 Challenge and recently passed 456 miles - 20% of the distance."

## ADVERTISER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

A collection of Athletic Weekly magazines dating from 1963 is looking for a new home. If interested please contact [Bonitathomson1@gmail.com](mailto:Bonitathomson1@gmail.com)



## HAPPY RETIREMENT

**Haley Mattinson**, former Chair of the Metropolitan Police Walking Club, has retired after 30 years' service and moved to The Netherlands with her wife Judit, who is Dutch. Haley had a longish spell as Inspector of Response Policing at Ilford Police Station, and for many years was prominent in organising the annual Metropolitan Police Walking Club Dinner & Reunion, which a number of readers were regular attenders at. We wish Haley a long and enjoyable retirement.

**Dave Hoben** writes: "I am sure she will have a long and happy retirement", and **Alex Ross** writes: "Please pass on my best wishes for the future to Haley."

## SAD DEATH OF ESSEX CENTURION

Romford resident Keith Wilson, 90, clocked **23:47.00** at the Arthur Eddlestone BEM 100 Miles Memorial Walk at Hendon Police Training School in 1989 to become Centurion C865. He was a keen L.D.W.A. Member, and in many rambles around the Romford area of Essex he was a "Walk Leader". His last recorded race walk was in the 2001 John Hedgethorpe Memorial Walk at Springfield (Chelmsford) on 28 January 2001, where over 3 Miles he clocked 37.59 for 130th position from 183 finishers. During that race a couple of over enthusiastic Police cadets passed him on a rural stretch of the course and Keith wasn't happy about their mode of progression. He shouted out to them that he was a stool pigeon judge in disguise. They fell for it, started walking properly - and he overtook both! A stroke 3 years' ago saw him in hospital after which he then needed a zimmer frame to get about - but get about he did! Keith also needed treatment to improve his speech. To his widow Maureen and other family members we express our deepest condolence.

**Peter Addison** writes "Very sad to hear that. He finished just behind me."

## ON COURSE

Our official 2021 Toyko Marathon GB Trial is to be held on a flat and fast traffic-free course inside the grounds of **Kew Gardens**. Those selected after the 2020 Trial have had their qualifications annulled as selectors want *current form* to determine those who'll do best for Team GB (as it seems to be now known as). Where does race walking come in? Well, if it's a suitable venue, it might be a possible new "big name" venue for important race walking events in Greater London?

## IN AND NOW OUT OF HOSPITAL

We're sorry to report that former Loughton AC 2nd claimer Bob Watts was in hospital as an in-patient for 4 days in mid-November. We're pleased to report he's been discharged and we all wish him well as he gets better at his Dulwich home.

## BATTERSEA PARK SETBACK

Over decades we've staged many walking races in Battersea Park, so readers may have noted a court case recently reported in national newspapers and websites. In this park a lady walking past a cricket match was hit in the eye and badly injured by a hard cricket ball. In a County Court she successfully sued Wandsworth Council (who run this site) and was awarded £17,000 + an identical amount in costs. However, the Council appealed in the High Court and won their case there.

## CARRY ON SIR!

Surrey Walking Club's esteemed President - Centurion **Roger Michelle** - is to continue his term of office into a 2nd year. We congratulate Roger on this news and wish him well while he wears the Chain of Office.



Dear Dave ...

## NOTIFICATION

Your Scottish qualified readers will be interested in visiting [www.scotstats.net](http://www.scotstats.net) the Scottish Athletics website where they will find their annual progression at ranking distances. In downsizing I rid myself of all my running and walking records and was amazed to find my annual progression, results and championships listed in this amazing concise website covering all events although the 50k walk isn't included.

**Alan Buchanan**

Adds Hon Ed: There are a number of current and former Essex-based race walkers with Scottish connections, who'll find this of interest.

## DAVE KATES FOLLOW-UP ARTICLE – READERS' REVIEWS

- **Ed Shillabeer** writes "Some shared philosophies; Kates's detailed memories of his preparations impressed me too! His approach was more professional than mine. For example, I was one of the few who did all three races in NZ and the Rotorua marathon to end up with! It was also a holiday trip for Barbara and granddaughter Stephanie so we were doing the tourist stuff as well! Happy days. Day off today - should have been doing the 10k in Madeira 😊 - but kept my locum for Tuesday as well so I could get some walking in!"
- **Ron Wallwork** writes "A really interesting read - thanks for sharing."
- **Chris Foster** writes "Excellent piece, and some well thought out comments."
- **Chris Hobbs** writes "Just read part 2 of Dave Kates. Very interesting."

## APPRECIATION FROM CHRIS FOSTER

Thank you for your kind words in your latest fanzine. Much appreciated. I led a couple of my Alternative Kings Cross walks as part of the latest Bloomsbury Festival which appeared to go down well. Now that we are under lock and key I have created a PowerPoint presentation to run online via Zoom, especially for people in care homes and who have mobility issues. All my walks are free, apart from when I have been asked to help with fundraising for a charity. The Gooner magazine has a new editor and I was asked to pen a Covid-related piece last September.

**Chris Foster**

## MICK EMMS - ESSEX COUNTY AA COMMITTEE MEMBER - RIP

I have just been informed that Mick Emms, Woodford's second fastest marathon runner ever (2:23:02), behind Colin Moxsom's 2:18:12, passed away yesterday. Mick had been ill for many years and sadly he joins the list of Essex athletes who have died in the past few months. Only a few weeks ago Alex Bird, Ray Selwyn, Roy Suffield and Mick and I went out for a very pleasant lunch in Kelvedon Hatch.

**Tony Maxwell**

- "This is awful news. I was in touch with Mick just last month as he was hoping to be well enough to carry on his Essex AA duties for another term. So this is a shock, albeit we know he has been ill for quite a while. I have known Mick for 50+ years since starting running as a teenager. In the last couple of years as County President and Chair I have had the pleasure of working with Mick at all the championship presentations as he conducted his highly efficient role as Essex County AA trophies and medals officer. Will be greatly missed." **Andy Catton**
- "Very sad news indeed. Another 'Mr Nice Guy', always a pleasure to meet up with, taken from us." **John Bachelor**

## RECOMMENDED READING

When I saw this link (I thought) this has to be one for you: <http://bmaf.org.uk/magazines/Veteris-Vol%201.2-1973-September.pdf>. Jack Fitzgerald had written an article about the origins of Veterans Athletic Club, on p19-21. There's a walking section too, picture of Colin Young, also Ken Easlea gets a mention, p42 & 43.

**Dave Hoben**

Adds Hon Ed: More recent VAC history is their latest AGM - which for your info saw "business as usual" as all Officers and Committee members were re-elected.

## RACE WALKING by A Contributor

By all means go ahead and use the Barnes-Moss article. I knew the late Colin Young very well and have followed race walking as part of my interest in athletics for very many years. I still recall as a youthful fan seeing Don Thompson come through the tunnel into the Rome Olympic Stadium in 1960, and 17 years as a member of the BBC Radio athletics commentary team left me with a number of impressions, not least the talent of Robert Korzeniowski. Incidentally, though Thunderbird insists on identifying me as "David Phillips" on the internet, I'm actually known by the name Bob Phillips.

**Bob Phillips**

## IN OFF THE POST

You're right about the increasing age issue. It's a concern from top to bottom, not just administrators but officials & competitors too. It's only **not** a concern at international level. I think most countries have similar issues so how long before the various international bodies twig that walking consists mainly of a handful of professionals (funded by governments mostly) with almost zero grass roots and boot us out of the major games? We have already been booted out of the Commonwealth, though no one noticed until that chicken came home to roost 8 years ago. They thought that being a discretionary event was a technical point. It isn't. It means in effect that the default position is that you're out and have to argue your case for inclusion again every time (against the fact that organisers are desperate to keep the budget down). How many times can we successfully argue for the inclusion of a relatively unpopular event with few grassroots before we arrive at the position where the walk is out in every Commonwealth Games celebration? My view is that the next Commonwealth Games walk is probably the last and that the other major games will begin to topple for us like a house of cards. Especially since we take the dinosaur approach that things must go on unchanged with a 20kms and 50kms as we have had since 1956 (except 1976 when only the shorter race was staged), plus a new 50kms for women. All suggestions for change are rejected imperiously and out of hand as if we were in a strong position to lay down our own terms. How can it not end in tears?

**Steve Uttley**

Adds Hon Ed: Steve's right to highlight shortcomings. The 50K future looks shaky - as we don't seem to have enough "friends in high places" as they say. The 2022 Commonwealth Games

"stitch-up" was in a proverbial "smoke-filled room" when, after a decision was taken, we weren't even notified and only found out by reading an informative **Australian** newsletter ("Heel and Toe".)

### **PRAISE FOR LONG-SERVING HONORARY TREASURER**

I would like to tender my sincere congratulations to fellow Highgate Harrier John Powell on completing 40 years of very commendable service to the Southern Area of the Race Walking Association.

**Bill Sutherland**

### **DOWN MEMORY LANE**

Here's a direct link to an interesting Sarnia website where you can click onto a newsy report of a European Friendship Walk. <https://walkguernsey.wordpress.com/1st-european-friendship-20kms-chelmsford-1977/gives>

Here's a short story on my memories. Sarnia had invite to race after Mike Scamell and Denis Sheppard had raced in Guernsey in late 76. Denis met us and accompanied us on underground to Chelmsford. I assume we stayed at the Essex Police training centres? Peter Ryan was introduced to us there. I remember going to watch some of the 100 miles relay in the afternoon or evening. I remember an evening of entertainment. Our singer and songwriter Len Bretel played the guitar for some time. We met John Hedgethorpe for the first time. I can remember Michael Croft. Tony Perkins, we must have met him for first time that weekend. We did the 5 Kms track then quick tour of few of London sights then dropped off at Waterloo for our train back to Southampton Airport. There was a 3 Kms track I believe during the week leading to those races. Golden Wonder(?) Meeting. There was talk of me getting invite to it but nothing came of that. Not sure why, possibly travel issues from Guernsey.

**Rob Elliott**

### **NICE TO HEAR FROM CENTURION JACK ROSSITER**

Seems we've reached that time when much news will be about those who've passed on. Very sad to hear about the loss of **Paul Ray**. As someone who doesn't think much about the past, I realise, too late, I owe a debt of gratitude to people who've helped me on my way, and so missed the chance to thank them properly. Such a person is Paul. In my early years of race-walking I'd be glad to finish 10 miles inside 100 minutes, and that seemed to be the extent of what I could achieve. Then at an Enfield "ten", Paul got me and Ken Chapman to stay with him, and we got round in 95 minutes. It hurt so much I didn't want to speak for the rest of the day, but a bystander pointed out that, as a man capable of 84 minutes, Paul had generously given up his own chances to help us two along. What it did for me was to break through a barrier - I did eventually get another ten minutes off my time, and improved at all other distances as a result. It's only now, on hearing about Paul, that I can see the significance of that day in my own little history.

**Jack Rossiter**

### **READER WRITES**

Some years ago I had a near death experience with a cricket ball when working at Derbyshire Cricket Club indoor cricket centre. I was some distance from the nets when a county batsman hit a ball that flew a great speed outside the netted area and missed my right eye by 3 inches and imbedded in the plaster wall behind. My colleagues nearby were very shocked as were the batsman and staff and I have often said 'there but by the grace of God go I!' I have spoken to Christchurch Commonwealth Games Silver Medallist Roy Thorpe recently and he sends his good wishes even though his health has not been too good.

**Bill Sutherland**

Adds Hon Ed: Three years' ago John Eddershaw was admitted to hospital when hit by a cricket ball while umpiring. He returned to the wicket, but recently hung up his white coat and panama hat on reaching the compulsory retirement age for cricket umpires.

### **RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION AGM**

The plan is to hold a "virtual" AGM on 30 January 2021. The RWA is aware that some people either cannot, or find it difficult to, take part in online meetings. We are therefore working on a

slightly revised procedure and timescale that will enable people to send in comments on reports and motions ahead of the actual meeting. Also, there will be a facility to vote by post or email ahead of the meeting should people wish. Full details will be circulated later this week in the usual preliminary notice of AGM.

**Colin Vesty**



**Seasons Greetings ... Seasons Greetings ... Seasons Greetings ... Seasons Greetings**

**ESSEX WALKER**

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