

# Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

## DAVE STEVENS RIP

One of the south's leading lights, for many years, **Dave Stevens** has sadly left us. Born in 1936 he enjoyed a long and successful time in race walking and was adored by his 2 Clubs: Steyning AC and Stock Exchange AC. Always active, the factual website [www.racewalkuk.com](http://www.racewalkuk.com) records him only winding down around 2015. We can't do better when recording tributes, than to reproduce below an article in this edition which clearly showed what Steyning AC thought of their asset - as indeed he was.

Like many in the Stock Exchange, he became involved in their highly active race walking scene. Their flagship event was the London-to-Brighton which commenced in 1903 as 77 crossed the finish line before timekeepers put away watches at 12 hours and 58 minutes. Ten bettered 10 hours with a 1-2-3 of E F Broad, G D Nicolas and legendary Tommy Hammond, clocking 9:30.01, 9:33.52 and 9:35.07 respectively. Messrs Broad and Hammond became founder members of The Centurions when forming in 1911 - the latter achieved Olympian status in London's 1908 Games, coming 6th in the 10 Miles Walk *Heat 1* (1:23.44). Dave's debut in this event was as far back as 1957 - yes folks, in the '50s! He continued, so making Stock Exchange AC's list of those completing 10 or more such races. It was a good start as the '57 event saw newcomer Dave finish 3rd in 9:30.02 behind the great Dickie Green (8:54.36) and Bill Lawrence (9:21.01) as 34 started/29 finished. Over the years he twice made the frame with 3rd in 1971 (behind Essex/Southend duo Ken Tuson 1st/Jimmy Venn 2nd) and again in 1974 (behind sub-9 hours duo, John Nye and Ilford's Dave Neagle). Dave adhered to that old show business saying, "*Always Leave Them Wanting More*" as his last shot on the A23 in 1975 proved his best - as he won in his fastest time of 8:43.13, just ahead of Ilford's Peter Hepworth 8:44.13 and Enfield's Adrian James 9:11.06. Adrian dominated the following 3 years with 8:18.12, 8:36.06 and 8:05.24 victories.

Former RWA Southern Area President Dave was well known because he was so active. As well as supporting other Stock Exchange events he wore Steyning Club colours on countless occasions, as he showed up for local races, County Championships, Open races including our popular 7s, classic races and anything else that was going. Race Walking Record issue 709 (November 2001) has a wonderful photograph of a large field on the start line for Steyning AC's **50th** Anniversary race, starting/finishing in the Sussex village where their headquarters is situated. Dave is prominent on the front rank. 92 finished the main event (Senior 5 Miles) including 1970 Olympic 50K gold medallist Don Thompson MBE who was 58th in 56.08. The first 10 who all beat 41 minutes were in order: Darrell Stone, Don Bearman, Andrew Goudie, Matthew Hales, Gareth Brown, Noel Carmody, Steve Allen (Ilford version), Sophie Hales, Jo Hesketh and David Ratcliffe. Dave Stevens was 25th in 46.48. Two shorter supporting races saw another 17 over the line on a truly memorable occasion.

The Race Walking Association's Centenary publication "*A Hundred Years Afoot*" (excellently edited by Peter Cassidy with a foreword by Olympian - Her Majesty The Princess Royal) specifically acknowledges Dave's contribution to Veterans/Masters' Athletics Championships on the World and European stages where he was a much travelled and successful regular on the scene. Just some locations where he won individual and team medals included: Strasbourg, Brighton, Melbourne, Verona, Miyazaki, Durban, Gateshead and Auckland. Dave leaves behind so many hard-earned awards which truly reflect his impact on race walking. To his good lady Rose and all other family members we express our profound condolence on the loss of such a popular, well liked and always much respected competitor.

## [Steyping Athletic Club - Outstanding Contribution Award to Dave Stevens 2020](#)



The Steyping Athletic Club Annual Awards for 2020 featured a rarely given honour – the ‘Outstanding Contribution to Steyping AC’ award.

The winner, **Dave Stevens**, has given an immense amount of time, effort, racing and passion to SAC over the last 55 years.

Dave race walked for Twickenham AC before moving to Steyping in the mid-60s. From the earliest days of joining the club, Dave immersed himself into club life and was always involved in helping to run the club. This ranged from being on the Committee, to helping to organise events, getting the teas, getting Cups

engraved, driving the Race Walking Teams to races and Championships all over the country, to cleaning the Clubhouse.

Dave held the position of Club Secretary for a staggering 25 years, and was later made a life member by the membership.

Dave has also been a prolific racer and competitor and had a great deal of success during a period when race walking was fiercely competitive and a much more popular sport than it is now. When working at the Stock Exchange (who had quite a few good walkers) Dave won all distances of their championships ranging from 3 kilometres up to the London to Brighton. He also helped Steyping AC to many regional and national titles over many years while racing alongside some of the club’s international elite such as Graham Morris, Tony Geal, Peter Fox and others.

Perhaps Dave’s most successful period as an athlete, and one that meant he travelled even more extensively to race, came as he moved up into the Masters/veteran ranks. He won European and World Championship medals, breaking age group records along the way.

Dave earned a medal at either 3km and/or 5km at the British Masters championships in all but one year between 2005 and 2015, and competed at European and World championships in the USA, Finland, Italy, France, Hungary, Australia and Brazil among others. His proudest racing achievement are the two World Senior titles for 5km Gold in Melbourne, and 10km Gold in New Zealand, in 2004.

His recognition for outstanding contribution is truly deserved.

### **NOTICES ref DAVE STEVENS RIP**

- From **Ron Penfold**: “The family of Dave Stevens have decided not to Zoom Dave’s funeral but to have a day of celebration later when the situation allows.”
- From **Alison Buckley**: “Thank you everyone for all the lovely comments in Ron’s previous announcement of dad’s passing. As you all know, walking was a huge part of his life and he was lucky enough to continue walking for as long as he did. As Ron said, a celebration of his life will be organised when all the Covid craziness lets us have gatherings again. If anyone would like to donate in dad’s memory to Cancer Research UK, this can be done via Chalcraft Funeral Directors Ltd, 55 High Street, STEYNING, West Sussex. BN44 3RE. Many thanks. Alison, Rose, Paul and Mike

### **BIRTHDAY OCCASION**

South Ockendon-based **Alex Allen**, father of Ilford AC Centurion and former Essex County champion Steve, celebrated his **94th** birthday in early February. This sprightly veteran still enjoys a recreational walk. Alex race walked in many Post Office-in-Uniform events (London/York/Isle of

Man), Essex League events and open races. Alex is talented at running also - so much so, he was one of those who could both race walk - and then run - those two 10 kilometres races that formed part of now defunct New Year's Day road meetings, as could son Steve. On the programme a walk came first, then a short interval, then a run. Alex was also a first-class attendant when Steve did "long ones" as he could last an entire racing period without sleep. He helped at various venues including Newmarket's Rowley Mile Racecourse, Lingfield Park Racecourse and Colchester's Lower Castle Park - where Steve qualified as Centurion 1102 in 22:08.57. That was when racing was halted as a marshalling mishap saw competitors sent in the direction of Colchester's Inner By-Pass. A grumbling field was brought back for a restart - so all reaching 100 miles had in fact walked 102 in total. In that race an official appointed to ring the last lap "bell" stepped aside to let Alex ring it as Steve sped past into his final circuit. Yes, *sped* is the right word as Steve's final 2 circuits of this park were at some pace! Alex's birthday is always something special in the Allen household - when he was 90 he was treated to a family gathering at Butlins Bognor Regis Holiday Camp where Hon Ed once briefly worked in the early '70s, when it still operated as a "Hi-de-Hi/Ho-de-Ho" type establishment. We all wish Alex good health and many "Happy Birthday" celebrations to come

### PUTTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

A Surrey Walking Club official has made contact to pass comment on our previous edition article about Loughton 2nd claimer, Belgravian and Centurion Paul King - to point out Paul is **also** a 2nd claim SWC member. We are happy to make this clear.

### VIRTUAL RACING

We won't "steal the thunder" of *Race Walking Record* and *Enfield Walker*, both of which published a result, but let it be known January's inaugural *Virtual* Enfield League race, held over 5 Kilometres was a thumping success with many of our readers helping to make it so. An impressive **56** made the result sheet (39 men/17 ladies) ranging from 23.20-to-51.31. Dave Kates led home 13 Centurions. ([VERWL results January 2021](#)) Congratulations to protagonists Richard Emsley and Ron Wallwork on igniting this project. Please maintain your much appreciated support - and may more join in to *keep the ball rolling*.

### DAVE JONES CENTURION 458 - RIP

Popular Dave Jones, who has sadly passed on, helped establish a **record** in UK and Centurions race walking history, as in the 1974 Leicester to Skegness Walk, Leicester WC *equalled* a record of having **7 finishers** from the same Club - so matching a London Vidarians WC tally of **7** in the 1963 Brighton-to-London-and-Back. You read correctly - that '63 race was the only 100 miles race featuring London-and-Brighton which started in Brighton. Others commenced/ended in London. Ilford walkers and supporters remember 1974, as they also closed-in a team of 3 for a first time. Leicester closed in 'A and 'B' teams. Leicester 'A' **won** with 3 talented race walkers alas no longer with us - Peter Markham 3rd/Dave Jones 6th/Wilf Smith 10th - 72 had started/40 finished. The last finisher, a Dutchman, raced in clogs - race walking always had 'characters'. Dave made his 100 miles debut as an *unattached* competitor in the 1970 Leicester-to-Skegness clocking 23:03.25. Qualifying that day included Royal Air Force duo Paddy Rice (Royal Sutton Coldfield) and Larry Miles (Trowbridge) who sported a traditional RAF handlebar moustache as did attendant, Squadron Leader Mike Perkins (same club) - what an eye-catching sight they made when taking drinks/eats! Paddy quit the race at one time saying he was fed up (many readers know the feeling) - he sat with his attendant for a while, watching middle order walkers pass by, before deciding he'd do better than them - so sprang into action to rejoin the race, finishing in 19:52.51. Birmingham duo George Mitchell and Stokes, who'd walked together, were qualifiers. Both served race walking well - dedicated coach Alf was many times appointed Chief Judge at important races, including 100s. George was a great organiser of events including a now defunct traffic congested Birmingham Outer Circle 25 Miles + races in traffic-free Sutton Park. In 2013 he passed-on aged 99, so near to becoming the 2nd Centurion member reaching 100 years (after

Centurion No 12, Essex-based Olympian Bill Brown). *We express our condolences to Dave's family.*

## COMMENT/INFO FROM 2 CENTURIONS

- "Dave Jones C458 from Leicester, an assuming man who probably didn't get the limelight he deserved." *Colin Vesty*
- Centurions' Facebook page information, from Olympian Brian Adams:

Brian Adams

I think I need to correct my previous entry, at 100 miles Dave was a Leicester WC star..

1970 became a Centurion.. 23:03:25.. unattached .

1972 21st, 21:54:09 3rd scorer, 4th team.

1974 6th, 19:51:54, 2nd scorer, 1st team

1976 6th, 19:50:51, 1st LWC, 2nd team.

1978 30th, 23:18:04, 3rd scorer, 3rd team ... we all have an off day!

1980 4th, 18:56:41, 1st LWC, 1st team.

1982 2nd to Mick Holmes amazing 17:21... PB 18:45:55, 1st LWC, 1st team.

Also in 1978 he was was 6th in the Manchester to Blackpool, three of the five ahead of him were Leicester WC.. they won the team.

That is what I call a star, I guess I was too wrapped up in my own international career to be fully aware!



## DE MORTUIS NIL NISI BONUM

Our previous edition quoted these Latin words to explain why we'd not published a couple of readers' comments about a deceased race walker of note. Some have asked for an English version which is: "*Of the dead say nothing but good*".

## WALKER ON THE MOVE

Iford AC Centurion No 789 (he has this number proudly tattooed on an arm) Olly Browne has left Leigh-on-Sea after 35 years' residence. However, the removal van didn't travel far - just down the road to Hadleigh where he's settled in to a nice bungalow.

Olly qualified as a Centurion in Essex - at Colchester's Garrison Track in September 1985 when 31 started/18 finished with 15 reaching 100 miles, of which 8 were new qualifying Centurions. Olly clocked 23:05.49 and when 24 hours was up, had covered 100 miles and 1,242 yards. There was an Essex theme to those qualifiers as 5 had, or were to obtain, Essex links. Bob Dobson, Don Cox, Olly Browne and Alan O'Rawe represented Essex Clubs and Martin Fisher (now Centurions' captain) became a Southend-on-Sea resident later in his life. By the way, Alan also has his Centurion number (791) proudly tattooed on an arm. *It was an "eventful" race, to say the least.* With 3 events rolled into one came 3 winners: 100 Kilometres, 100 Miles and 24 hours. Ed Shillabeer won the 100K in a UK record time of 9:41.54, Centurion Charlie Weston the 100 Miles in 19:21.40 and Peter Worth led at 24 hours - all 3 were already established Centurions, Numbers 590, 584 and 491 respectively. Bob collected UK records on route, of particular note was his 12 hours' distance of 118.805 kilometres. Somehow as it was an intermediate distance Charlie's award for 100 miles was omitted, and not until the Watts brothers did research for the 1997 Centurions' Handbook (which they edited, produced and printed) was it realised Charlie has gone home from Colchester empty-handed. Matters were put right at a 1997 Centurions' Dinner in the Piccadilly Royal Air Force Club. As for Olly he became a 100 Miles/24 Hours regular and joined that exclusive Club of those who have walked 100 miles in under 24 hours - **on both road and track!** As well as many successful ultra-distance finishes, he was a key member of Iford AC teams for decades and also made a name for himself on the Isle-of-Man race walking scene where he became a popular visitor. He had a fast pace in shorter ones - for instance on a Wednesday after one track 100 miles race at the weekend he set a personal best for 3,000 metres in a Woodford Wednesday Walk at Ashtons! In our 2008 BBC televised 5 miles at Battersea Park, when Mike Bushell appeared (after being coached by Carl Lawton) Olly was 7th from an

impressive evening entry of 49 clocking 43.29. We wish Olly all happiness in his new surroundings. Olly requests his new address be made known to his race walking colleagues: **93 The Avenue, Hadleigh, BENFLEET. Essex. SS7 2HG.**

## EQUALITY

For some time we've followed a well-supported campaign to secure an Olympic Women's 50 Kilometres' Walk - a cause which saw success when seeking a place on the IAAF World Championship programme. Cross county running has similar issues - as The Chief Executive of UK Athletics (Joanna Coates) plans to challenge sexist attitudes in the sport by calling for male and female athletes to run the same distance. World Athletics ended inequality when setting the same distances for male and female athletes at the 2017 World Cross Country Championships. However in the UK there remains huge disparity, with plans for the 2022 National Cross Country Championships as announced by the English Cross Country Association - Senior men will race 12km, Senior women 8km. Even Junior men, aged between 17 and 19, will run 10km. As they say - "*watch this space*".

## COMMONWEALTH SPORT ANNOUNCES ...



David Grevenberg leaves his role as Chief Executive Officer at the Commonwealth Games Federation on 5 March. David has served in this position since November 2014 following his tenure at the helm of the successful Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. During this time, David worked to help transform the Federation's focus from quadrennial oversight of its major Games to a dynamic, strategic Movement focused on legacy, impact and community benefit. Leading a dedicated team, he has successfully supported the Host Cities and Organising Committees of the Samoa 2015 and Bahamas 2017 Commonwealth Youth Games, and Australia's 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast. The Federation will now begin the process of recruiting for a new CEO.

**David Grevenberg** said: "I have had the privilege of working in the Commonwealth Sport Movement for over a decade; including six years as CEO of the Federation. I am enormously proud of the work that we have achieved and continue to drive through our strategy, Transformation 2022, which has always been delivered in ambitious partnership with our team, our leadership and our passionate global network of members and Commonwealth athletes. Together we have transformed the vision, mission and impact of our Movement, and it has been an honour to play my small part in building peaceful, sustainable and prosperous communities across the Commonwealth through sport. The upcoming Commonwealth Games in Birmingham are tracking positively and I am confident will be another milestone event for the movement. After much reflection, I feel that now is the right moment to pass the baton. This will give a successor time to support and experience next year's Games in Birmingham and plan and oversee the next significant phase of the Federation's history, post-Transformation 2022."

*Adds Hon Ed:* This guy denied race walkers their events in the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games. Over 100 protests were received from UK athletes (including many Essex Walker readers) to no effect. *He'll not be missed in our circles.*

## GIFT OF THE JAB

We hope vaccination programmes are going well in areas where our readers reside, so - sooner than later - virtual races will be replaced by the real thing!

*Essex Walker issue No 404 (March/April 2021)*

## TOKYO OLYMPIC CHIEF RESIGNS

Former Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, aged 83, has resigned as Tokyo Olympic Games Chief after an uproar caused by him making a sexist remark last month. We won't repeat it as we've no wish to offend our lady readers. Mr Mori stated, "My inappropriate comments caused a big trouble. I am sorry". He said the most important thing was for the Tokyo Olympics to be a success. These Games are now close (*or are they?*) and candidates have already been suggested to take over at short notice.

## SAD NOTIFICATION

I write to you, as the oldest son of the late Peter Worth (former Race Walking Association President), to inform you of the recent death of his widow, Mary Worth (born Mary Rogers 08-Aug-1921; died 20-Jan-2021). Mary died in the Sussex nursing home where she has lived for the past few years. No memorial service is being planned while current Covid restrictions are in place. The RWA will know better than I do of Mary's own achievements as a competitive race walker, including numerous medals at the Veteran Olympics. Because race walking played such a major role in the lives of both Peter and Mary, perhaps some of your members would like to be informed. Kind regards.

**David Worth** [davidworth@icloud.com](mailto:davidworth@icloud.com)

## MARY WORTH RIP

Readers will be saddened to hear that Mary Worth, an Enfield Walking League founder participant, has passed away aged 99. In a prominent racing career she turned out for London Olympiads, Steyning AC and in Essex, for Loughton AC. Her span was long, as Athletics master statistician John Powell (a member of NUTS/National Union of Track Statisticians) has records showing Mary appearing for her first Club in the National Track 1 Miles Walk in 1954/55/56/57 finishing 5th, 4th, 6th and 6th respectively. In the Southern 1 Mile Championship of 1955 and 57 she was 2nd both times. In 1955 Mary was 2nd in the Southern Road Championship. The 1984 Enfield Open 7 Miles saw Mary, by now of Steyning AC, 3rd lady in 66.56 in a race won by Helen Elleker (58.40). 1993 saw Mary 2nd lady in an Enfield Open 7 Miles with 71.26 on the stopwatch and a year later was 4th lady in our RWA 10 Miles. As well as John, Essex Walker is grateful to other record keepers who've added to this account of Mary's ability. Elsewhere in this Newsletter Ron Wallwork provides further facts of Mary's Enfield 7 and Enfield League contributions, and John Constandinou submitted a UK all-time Women's 20K ranking table in which Mary features. *Thanks to all 3 readers.*

Mary was a regular on our World, European Veterans/Masters scene. Among medals won were in the W55 European 5,000m (28:18.1) and 10K (57:28.2) at Verona (1988) and at the World W60 5,000m 28.29 (1989) in Eugene, USA.

Mary is pictured (right) with a medal as presented when winning the Women's section of the Romford Brewery "Round the Town" 3-and-half Miles in May 1988, clocking 33.08 in Loughton AC's colours - 2nd/3rd that day were Hylda Nyman (Ilford) and Pauline Wilson (Loughton). More than medals were on offer that day as Romford Brewery (now demolished and a Shopping Centre) provided free beer for all competitors, officials and helpers plus a buckshee post-race buffet for all and their families.

Mary was the widow of one of our all-time greats - International walker Peter Worth RIP, who served as Race Walking Association President, as both RWA Treasurer and RWA Southern Area Treasurer, as Centurions Captain and also a Vice President. Peter was Centurion No 491 who won



Photo courtesy of Romford Recorder

the 1985 British Telecom 24 Hours' event at Colchester Garrison Track. Peter raced, at times, for both the Borough of Enfield Harriers (as then called) and Verlea AC (there was a fair bit of to-and-fro between those 2 Clubs during Peter's heyday). For good measure he also served as a

## STATS FROM JOHN CONSTANDINOU

I've looked Mary Worth up on Power of 10. She is ranked 78th on the British All-Time list for 20km, with Steyning listed as her club. [www.thepowerof10.info/rankinglist/MARYWORTH](http://www.thepowerof10.info/rankinglist/MARYWORTH)

*John Constandinou*

## TRIBUTES TO MARY WORTH RIP

- **Ron Wallwork:** "I didn't appear on the Enfield Scene until the turn of the century so didn't know Mary all that well, but whenever she came along to Enfield Race Walking League fixtures, she was so pleasant and insisted on helping in some capacity. Wearing Steyning AC colours she competed in half a dozen Enfield Open 7's, winning it in 1981 and finishing in the first three twice."
- **Edmund H Shillabeer C590:** "I remember Peter and his wife well from our Masters Championships last century. A class act both athletically and as good people. Peter was also an inspiration for me in the field of distance walking races such as our local Plymouth to Dawlish 42 miler. RIP both."
- **Karen Ratcliffe:** "My mum always kept in touch with her. Very sad."
- **Cath Duhig:** "I knew she must have been advanced in years but hadn't realised she was just shy of a century. She was one of those people who was a tenacious sports person but then managed to emerge from a post race changing room elegantly dressed and coiffed as if ready for a coffee morning at the golf club. Always very friendly and encouraging, she was one of those who was around when I took my first steps (literally) onto the race walking scene and her times became my targets. I last saw her when she was helping with refreshments at an Enfield event, must be some years ago now."
- **Chris Flint C849 President and Hon Secretary, RWA (Southern Area):** "The Race Walking Association (Southern Area) committee is saddened to hear of Mary's passing. She was a wonderful lady, a graceful race walker, and totally committed member of the race walking community. We send (the family) our deep condolences and recall with affection and thanks that we have been privileged to know your dear parents. They were a great team. With our condolences."
- **Sandra Brown:** "We were sorry to hear about Mary. As I've come up through the age groups, I have regularly thought of her as we were in the same races in past years. It was almost always Mary's records that I was going for in each age group (at the shorter distances) and she was a hard act to follow! Peter and Mary were a lovely and very talented couple."
- **Richard Cole:** "I supported York Postal at the Colchester track 24 hour in 1985. Peter Worth was an excellent Walker that day. His wife lived to a very good age. And a top Walker in her own right."
- **Alex Ross:** "Sorry to hear of Mary Worth's passing. They (Peter and Mary) were a wonderful, friendly, couple who did so much for our sport."
- **Ken Roost:** "I knew both Peter and Mary Worth well. I'm so sorry to hear that Mary has died. I always got on well with her."

## BELGRAVE HARRIERS LOSE A BENEFACTOR

We're saddened to hear one of athletics' greatest financial backers has passed on aged 88 - London-born **Sir Eddie Kulukundis OBE**. Born into a wealthy family he made his money in shipping and was an athletics fan from the 70s. He was inextricably linked with **Belgrave Harriers**. He paid for triple Welsh Olympian steeplechaser Justin Chaston to travel from the USA for British League matches and return to the States in time for work on Monday mornings. Said Belgrave President John Gladwin, "It is with great sadness that we have heard the news about Sir Eddie. He was patron of Belgrave Harriers and couldn't have been more supportive of us". Sir Eddie was awarded an OBE for his contribution to British theatre, charity and sport. He bankrolled the "*Athletics Today*" magazine of the late '70s/'80s. He'd served as a UK Athletics Vice President. His death was announced last August on social media - however this was found to be

untrue. Sadly news of his death this time is correct. He'll long be remembered as a generous benefactor who helped fund athletes and coaches long before National Lottery cash came along.

## NEWS FROM THE ESTUARY

Southend-on-Sea AC report that they have agreed to stage a 100 Miles track walk at Garon Park on the weekend of 7/8 August. Please all note these dates in your diaries. The Club hosted a highly successful track 100 miles in 2014. Obviously this is subject to Government restrictions being lifted. The Club have announced that long-serving Walking Secretary John Brock has stepped down. We await news of his replacement and will publish the new name when announced. We thank John for his always enthusiastic time spent while holding this position.



Dear Dave ...

## APPRECIATION for ESSEX WALKER

- What a wonderful edition and reminds of what a wonderful band of brothers, and sisters, we Race Walkers belong to and grateful to have made such wonderful friends past and present. Thank you all. **Oliver T Flynn**
- Congratulations. The latest edition of the Essex Newsletter was fantastic. Your best ever. **Peter Marlow**
- Great Essex Walker and thanks for my inclusions too. **Bill Sutherland**
- Marvellous read. **Jack Rossiter**
- Another good and interesting read that is very much greatly appreciated. **Tony Malone**
- The February Newsletter looks as though it will take some time to digest. It's always a pleasure to receive the Essex Walker. **Ron Penfold**

## THE WAY FORWARD

We need ACTION not WORDS and PROMISES. More money is NOT the solution entirely, although it would be welcomed. As I repeat, where are the race walkers to see our sport move forward for many years to come, also many new races for them to do if attracted to our great Sport and a simpler explanation of what Race Walking is through publicity with increased numbers of younger Judges and Officials needed. Could you please HIGHLIGHT what I have said in your great Essex Walker?

**Bill Sutherland**

## NEWS FROM AN EAST MIDLANDS READER

Thanks for sending Essex Walker to me. It's always a good read (even though there seem far too many obituaries). I send it on to my training partner, Paul. He is 65 now but was age group for GBR in Triathlon up to 4 years ago. He has lost his mojo for training but has enjoyed race walking with me. If I am successful in race walking a half marathon in the Triathlon I have entered, I will write you a blog piece for the Essex Walker (from a Leicestershire new walker). I managed 10km yesterday which is a best for me. All good up here. I heard your interview on The Last Word and I wondered at your knowledge of detail. It reminded me that when Dad (*Lew Mockett - Ed*) died, you remembered little details that I had long forgotten. I am also all geared up to write to Lord Coe and protest about the 50km walk. He is the Chancellor here at Loughborough.

**Hilary McDermott**

## MIKE SCAMELL RECALLS THAT PICTURE IN OUR LAST EDITION

I remember so clearly the day that photograph was taken! There can't have been many families where three generations competed simultaneously in race walking events. I know that my grandfather's brother George also flirted with walking for a short while, but he didn't stick with it! We used to meet up every Sunday morning at Terence McMillan Stadium, Victoria Park or Cricklefields. My grandfather was particularly fond of Victoria Park and told me that HIS grandfather was involved in the design of the gardens there, so we have a long family



connection. It worked out that my 100th race was my father's first for over 20 years and, sadly, my grandfather's last - a two mile track event at Carshalton. This photo was published all around the world - I have seen it in a Russian newspaper of the time, for example!

**Mike Scamell**

### SCOTTISH VICTORY

It was great to see Scotland play 6 Nations Rugby with such pride and passion and real composure throughout and defeat the Auld Enemy England so positively. It reminded me of how I felt representing Scotland when I ignored the feeding station at the 10 miles stage in the Commonwealth Games 20 Miles Walk in 1970 in Edinburgh and the determination I felt to be on the winning rostrum! If there's a WILL there's always a WAY!

**Bill Sutherland**

### WRITES A BIG NAME FROM THE PAST

Thank you - another wonderful edition. Delighted, as a new reader of the Australian "Heel and Toe" newsletter, that there was the background of Tim Erickson's race walking career. I assume he is on the mailing list. (*He is - Ed*). Stay safe and well - and vaccinated.

**John Northcott**

### FROM AN EXCELLENT PHOTOGRAPHER/CHELMSFORD-TO-SOUTHEND

Thanks again for your excellent Essex Walker publication. I wasn't sure from your article of the actual number of editions of this point-to-point version of the Champs. I attach photos which I took during the 1971 edition and I was wondering how many of your readers could identify those in the line-up.



I do remember that, as a spectator and a soigneur for the Ilford boys, the route was quite 'hairy' at times, so maybe the 'Hedgethorne-sense' prevailed correctly on this one.

**Len Ruddock**

### APPRECIATION

Gosh Dave ... what a wonderful issue - it must be your largest ever. I was chuffed to see my name so many times and to revisit my 1980 walks in England. Happy memories. Lois and I were there with our oldest son David, who was a little baby at that stage (he was born Feb 1980). Lois had lived in Parsons Green for 3 years in the early 1970s so had lots of friends and knew England really well. It made it much easier for me!

**Tim Erickson**

## THESE BOOTS WERE MADE FOR WALKING

Walking from Romford to Southend on the cycle path by the A127 was the first long distance walk I ever did. Organised by the local Venture Scouts and Rangers I was a member of, we were advised to wear 'sensible' footwear such as boots so that is what I wore ... ladies fashion boots with a heel. Boy, was I pleased to reach the promenade and pull them off except two enormous blisters came off with the boots. I was as pleased as punch to reach the end though and it whetted my appetite to do more. The rest is history.

**Sue Clements**

## OCTOGENARIAN NOEL MOONEY IN SHOT

One from the archive. The legend on the back of the photo reads: '**Metropolitan Police Open 7 Miles at Imber Court on 13.1.73.** Middle order walkers approaching final lap. Extreme left - Noel Mooney - Ilford AC'. I'm not sure why I didn't mention John Evans as well. All good fun.

**Len Ruddock**



Adds Hon Ed: John F Evans (then Highgate 'B') is indeed that other competitor heading this group of race walkers - he finished 125th in 63.54, Noel finished 119th in 62.39. Noel Mooney is a proud Bolton Wanderers supporter, and one who attends their matches. Our previous edition contained Noel's "thank you" message to readers who'd sent 80th birthday greetings. *Question time: can any readers identify those 4 walkers in their wake?* In 117th spot clocking 62.34 was Dave Ainsworth (London Vidarians). This race illustrates how far race walking has declined since 1973. This race has had **204 starters/188 finishers** (9 DQ'd) - **29 teams of 4** started of which **26** closed in. Times ranged from 50.07 (Basildon's Olly Flynn) to 81.40 (Dave Young of London Vidarians). Shaun Lightman and Roy Court with 50.24 and 50.59 respectively ensured a sub-51 minutes' frame. Other top 10 finishers (in order) were: Malcolm Tolley, Carl Lawton, Amos Seddon, Brian Adams, Ken Carter, Peter Selby and Bob Dobson. One we've lost touch with was Ray Blount, who raced for Enfield that day (Verlea AC later), coming 19th in 54.08 - *anyone know where got to?* Ilford AC Junior International Tom Lee was 59th in 57.55 and this mention will remind readers of a great talent sadly lost so early. An impressive **86** beat the hour - Dickie Green (SWC) in 59.56 being the last of those, with recently departed Dave Browning (Trowbridge AC/RAF) just missing that target with 60.02. John Lees of Brighton & Hove AC (featured in our previous issue) **won** the handicap with a 10 minutes' allowance - in scratch terms he was 22nd in 54.22. It's interesting to look down the field, as some listed were to progress towards notable achievements: 148 Steve Holliday (Medway) 66.28, 149 Olly Cavigioli (Bas) 66.32, 150 Tony Perkins (Ilf) 66.51, 164 Dave Sharpe (SWC 'C') 69.23, 177 Mick Barnbrook (Met Pol) 71.09 and George Woods (Southend 'B') 76.25. *A full result is in Race Walking Record issue 365 (February 1973).*

## IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION

Nijmegen cancelled for 2<sup>nd</sup> year running now, very sad. **Dave Hoben**

- Chris Flint wrote: "*Sad news indeed but somehow inevitable. Third time lucky in '22?*"

## ED SHILLABEER - ACTION MAN

This morning early I did a different course to last week. This is a hilly one mile and I measured a further 400m around it to make 2k (2,009 I suppose!). 12:58 + 3:10 gave me 16:08. Three hours later I did last week's course, 1km down and 1km back, 8:05 plus 8:19, so a total of 16:24. Wind and rain but some shelter from trees beside cycle path. Happy with that! **Ed Shillabeer C590**

## WRITES DAVE SHARPE

I recently found out that the big man in the sport, Vincent Paul Nihill, died. He was the best person I ever met in the sport - he was more like a clubman than an International. I went to watch the '76 Olympic Games in Canada where Paul met a mate of mine in the boxing team - Charlie Magri who

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was at the same school as me. He used to train with me: as I race walked Charlie jogged alongside. Paul was my drinking partner. I remember him doing the presentation at a Belgrave Open 7. Afterwards we were in the *King of Denmark* having a good drink as other walkers and judges came to join us.

**Dave Sharpe (C578)**

Adds Hon Ed: Despite Belgrave's famous Drill Hall having an upstairs bar, several took a few steps towards No 83 The Ridgway to discuss the race in *The King of Denmark*. This was built in 1866, demolished/rebuilt in 1933, closed in 2007 and demolished in 2011. As well as Dave Sharpe, other famous people visiting this establishment were a real King of Denmark, Frederick IX in 1960 and a Miss Denmark during the '70s. You can still get a drink on this site as it reopened in 2017 as a Co-op Convenience store. Another South London pub well known to race walkers (as a London-to-Brighton timing point) became a convenience store - *The Swan and Sugar Loaf* reopened in 2012 as Tesco Express despite protests. At least its new owner kept most of its exterior appearance. Readers still ask where Dave Sharpe is, following an announcement he was *going-to-ground* in November 2012 and would only keep touch with his named 4 "big mates", one of whom (Paul Nihill) recently passed on. Dave was last heard in Leeds, a city where leading race walkers are coached. Alas an envelope containing his letter wasn't franked, so we're no wiser, but at least Hon Ed is 66p better off. In a letter to Essex Walker Dave's other 3 big mates were named as Bob Dobson, Bill Sutherland and Barry Ingarfield. This is where you readers come in - for the latter hasn't been seen or heard of for over 2 years, since a patient in Ealing Hospital and not at all well. Barry was a regular communicator with many views about race walking and where it had gone wrong - and why! Barry had firm ideas on how to improve British race walking's fortunes and launched a strong campaign to become our National race walking coach. Do any readers reader know where he's got to and, more importantly, how he now is?

## "ATHLETICS TODAY"

The editor was a chap called Randall Northam who spent Eddie's money with a will. After one extensive liquid lunch, he paid for me to go to the Isle of Man and report on what turned out to be the 20km selection race for the 1992 Olympics. Heady days! We fell out when Eddie got hit by the Lloyds crash, and Randall wanted me to report for nothing. I shifted to Athletics Weekly, deemed disloyal by Mr Northam. You might recall he wrote to you after Essex Walker reckoned decent future race walk coverage would be in AW? Eddie also handed grants to Belgrave athletes, including John Regis. It was known that if you needed a bit of cash, Eddie would provide. He was married to actress Susan Hampshire, as you may know.

**Paul Warburton**

Adds Hon Ed: I recall that letter written to both myself and the late John Hedgethorpe, which we both published. Both John and I published said letter as, if we hadn't, "action" was promised as it also referred to a letter from Paul as previously published. Incidentally Sir Eddie also provided sponsorship for Canvey Island's Dean Macey.

## THANKS

We have been very touched by the number of people in RWA circles who have responded to the news of Mary's passing. Kind regards, **David Worth**

## VIRTUAL ENFIELD RACE WALKING LEAGUE (VERWL)

What a wonderful response to the opening two races. Whether it was better conditions or the results of training, a number of performances showed an improvement in the second fixture. ***The next VERWL Fixture will be on 13/14 March and to assist those wishing to progress a little further there will be a choice of three distances: 5km, 8km and 10km.*** It's also been nice to receive the comments that some of you have made:

- "Did my race on a beautiful Hastings Promenade" **Dave Crane**
- "Spring-like conditions today, temperature-wise anyway" **Glyn Jones**
- "Lovely morning in Guernsey. Hard going though ... still a lack of training" **Rob Elliott**

- “Completed at a very windy Don Thompson mile on Hyde sea-front” Jacqueline Benson
- “Included opening a gate with a coded lock twice” **Richard Emsley**
- “Used a measured 8km loop around Stow-cum-Quy and Bottisham (Cambridge)” **Diana Braverman**
- “Rough conditions again, rain and wind; same hilly one mile lap I used last time” **Ed Shillabeer**
- “My effort was slightly wind assisted” **John Borgars**

Keep at it! Better times are coming in the Covid-19 struggle and hopefully in our performances, at whatever distance we decide to test ourselves against. **Richard Emsley and Ron Wallwork**

### MICK ELLIOTT 1937-2021 RIP



Sad news from Guernsey. My dad Mick passed away yesterday. He raced in England maybe 6 or 7 times but may be remembered by some of the walkers from the 1970s. Also raced against visiting teams to Guernsey and watched the Church walk on occasions after he had retired and returned to Guernsey on holidays.

It saddens me to report that my dad and race walker **Mick Elliott** passed away peacefully after a short illness this weekend at the age of 83 years. A race walker at his best in the 1970s he was my training companion, amongst others in my early years. He supported me in my race walking from when I started as an 11-year old. He was also a competitor in my races and then a supporter as I hit my best, feeding me in races and holding me when I needed it at the end of races and always ready with the stopwatch for split times. Rest in Peace Dad.

**Rob Elliott**

Adds Hon Ed: So many of our readers have links with Guernsey's race walking scene and will all be so sorry to hear this news. We all express our condolence to Mick's family at this sad time.

### JIM ELLIS RIP

Hope you're well? And thanks so much for all you do for the walking community. The older I get the more I realise how very meaningful and important it is. I was mates with Jim Ellis of Yorkshire WC in the 60's and he did the Manchester-to-Blackpool a few times among other things. It is his funeral on **15 March** and the family are very keen we feature his walking achievements. Do you recall anything much about him please? Hope you don't mind my asking. Many thanks.

**Ian McCombie**

Adds Hon Ed: If readers can assist, **please send your contributions to Essex Walker** and we'll pass them on to Ian pronto.

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