

# Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

## NORMALITY ON THE HORIZON

Please note proposed dates for a return of real racing in the 2021 Enfield League. Please also note a new name for Allianz Park (formerly Copthall Stadium) in Hendon.

Ron Wallwork advises: **Enfield Race Walking League Fixtures July - December 2021**

The LICC have offered races on 31 July and 21 August which I have provisionally accepted. I have noted that the first race could clash with the Essex championships so once Essex and the LICC have confirmed their walk dates we may have some re-thinking to do to avoid a clash. If the relaxation of Covid restrictions continues as it is, on course, then by 31 July it should be safe to resume REAL racing and the provisional ERWL Fixture list will look like this:

31 July	TBC	5 km	LICC	StoneX Stadium (formerly known as Copthall/Allianz Stadium)
21 August	TBC	5 km	LICC	StoneX Stadium
11 September	12.30	5 miles	Moulton Open	Moulton, Suffolk
16 October	TBC	1 hour TBC		TBC
13 November	TBC	7 miles	Enfield Open	TBC
4 December	TBC	5 miles		TBC

## BUSINESS NEWS

The cost to Birmingham taxpayers in staging next year's Commonwealth Games (now a Mecca for **track** walkers) is estimated at £184 million. Organisers clearly want value for money, as in early May the business of supplying medals, ribbons and presentation boxes was put out to tender. Are any of our readers in this line of work?

### IN THE MONEY

May's lucky trio of prizewinners in your Race Walking Association [200 Club](#) draw are:

- 1st Lancashire Walking Club
- 2nd Bob Dobson
- 3rd Steve Wynn



## WHAT'S BEHIND A NAME?

A well-established athletics competition is the **Sir Sefton Brancker Trophy** meeting, a triangular representative match between The Civil Service, Middlesex County AA and Royal Air Force in which a 2 Miles Walk and then a 3,000 Metres walk has so often produced truly fast times. In May a new BBC series of Michael Portillo's "*Great Railway Journeys*" stopped off at Bedford, where its presenter then made a short 3 miles' trip to Cardington, where in vast hangars the ill-fated R101 airship was built. An interviewed historian mentioned the 2 main VIPs among 48 killed (of 54 on board) when it crashed in France during October 1930 in bad weather. Air Vice Marshall Sir Sefton Brancker KCB, AFC was Director of Civil Aviation and one of those 2 top names killed (the other Lord Thomson, Secretary of State for Air). The Sefton Brancker Trophy was soon on the scene, as it was put up in memory of the knighted gentleman and first competed for in 1931. That's the history behind a trophy for which many readers have raced/officiated.

## "AND THERE'S MORE"

The catchphrase of 'comedian' Jimmy Cricket could apply to our **80th** birthday tribute article about Ron Wallwork. We've had a few comments about what could have been added. A couple suggested we should have mentioned he'd served his community as a Magistrate and also his village as a prominent member of their Parish Council. In his village he was a leading light in pushing for a new Village Hall (old timers well remember that old hall in which we changed prior to the Moulton 5 Miles race in its earlier days). Readers also wish to see one of Ron's greatest promotions written-up. That being a memorable **2012 Olympic Friendship Walk** at Donkey Lane. Hardly any of our readers missed this event as, for the only time in decades, **a 3-figure finishers' list** was published at a UK mainland domestic walking meeting. Also an Enfield League event, it was staged in midweek during the London Olympics. There was something for all as a opening track event saw a race for visually impaired competitors. On our programme were races for both genders and all age groups. Main races (3 and 5 miles) started/concluded with a lap of the Queen Elizabeth II stadium track, which was "*big time*" (as that was once how Olympic races were organised) with most of our distance being covered on park paths in an adjacent King George V playing fields (where local resident and walker of note, John Hall, is Chairman of "The Friends of King George Playing Fields"). Another Olympic connection was the arrival of 1980 50K Olympian Ian Richards with a torch he'd carried in the relay. Folk queued to be photographed holding his Olympic torch. Hon Ed watched the Olympic torch relay leg in Hornchurch, in a crowd several deep, as smiling Chinese pianist Lang Lang sped past. Celebrities upset Paul Nihill, as his application to do a leg was rejected, so when American rapper "*Will i am*" got a run, Paul wrote to object.

Mayor of Enfield Cllr Kate Anolue addressed a large start line gathering before acting as our Madam Starter - before joining in to truly earn her high-quality finisher's memento. Australian star and Centurion Tim Erickson made his way to Enfield Town Station on the stopping train from Liverpool Street Station. By coincidence Centurions then Hon Secretary Chris Flint was also a passenger and just 2 rows away. He overheard conversation and introduced himself, so Tim had an expert guide to walk from railway station to starting line! Tim was among a number of Olympic supporters who were "in town" for the Games. Some officials were attired in smart Olympic uniforms with men in eye-catching white trilby hats. This was a midweek event, so many had taken leave to be present and, one supposes, others throw "*sickies*". **But - hey - what a day to remember!** *Why can't it always be like this more often?* The atmosphere was so wonderful that several strolled a hundred yards or so to the "*Halfway House*" public house at the other end of Donkey Lane to continue the fellowship of this occasion. **Well done Ron and his team.** Incidentally one reader wants us to publish a photo of Ron celebrating his *octogenarian* status celebration. *We'll do our best!*

## THANK YOU READERS

Mick Barnbrook recently spent time as a hospital patient for a month; firstly at The Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother Hospital (Margate) before transfer to a specialist Heart Unit in the famous St Thomas Hospital (Westminster). We're all pleased to learn he's now back at his Ramsgate home, though will still need to attend a number of medical appointments. Mick expresses his profound gratitude at the number of 'phone calls, text messages and "*get well*" cards he received and warmly thanks all senders. "Receiving so many kind words certainly put me in a much better mood during my time of hospitalisation" said a grateful Mick. Centurion Mick recently retired after 49 years of continuous race walking participation. He'd love to make it 50 - as despite only 1 more year, it's a much more impressive figure. So he aims to make just 1 further short distance competitive appearance to cement his record at 50 years. We salute Mick Barnbrook - a man now recovering at home - but a man still with an athletics ambition!

## CASTLE PARK WOES

During May, National newspapers reported on a 23 year old Colchester lady who was the victim of a random attack by three thugs (quoting a newspaper's report) while jogging around the town's

Castle Park. The injured lady stated, in future, she'd only jog in busier areas. Essex Police are investigating and have promised more patrols in the park. Chief Inspector Jon Evans said, "No one should feel afraid for their safety when going out alone but we are working to identify those involved." Castle Park is well known in race walking as a venue for five 100 Miles' races (1996/2001/2004/2010/2012) plus other race walking events. It's isolated in parts - in our distance races we had a long unlit out-and-back stretch (to the middle of nowhere) which was worrying. However one remembers at the first such Castle Park event Stock Exchange AC duo Tony Perkins and the late Frank Butler plus another race walker who requested his name never again be mentioned in Essex Walker, were at the turn manning a refreshment station. To this day that trio are gratefully remembered by so many for cheering up competitors as they kept up support work for an entire 24 hours. A murder was committed in Castle Park (2014) for which a guilty person was sentenced to 27 years.

As for Castle Park hooligans/hobbledehoys/ne'er-do-wells, we recall several instances of unwanted behaviour. Chris Flint has memories of Castle Park, as in 2010 he recorded his 20th UK sub-24 hours 100 miles completion. Chris also has memories (at an earlier event) of Castle Park hobbledehoys when they gave him a hard time as he raced. He dealt with it by whacking a couple - who wisely never returned to the scene that day. Seriously folks, if training in such places as Castle Park, Basildon's Gloucester Park (where similar issues have arisen) and Victoria Park (where in 2003 a lone female jogger was murdered soon after our New Year's Day Walks - for which nobody was charged with a reward still offered) please follow advice given in every episode of "*Hill Street Blues*" by Sergeant Philip Freemason Esterhaus, known as Phil, who was played by the late Michael Conrad. His catchphrase was, "**Let's be careful out there**".

## CONDOLENCE

We're so sorry to learn that Chris Vesty (1992-2021), son on RWA General Secretary, Centurion and UK Champion walker Colin, has passed-on at such a young age. All our thoughts are with Colin and his family as this sad and trying time. On behalf of all readers, profound condolence is expressed.

## TOP TEN

In May, Athletics Weekly published their all-time list of the best ever athletics/running films. Their opinion was:



- |   |                  |    |  |
|---|------------------|----|--|
| 1 | Chariots of Fire | 6  | Fast Girls                                 |
| 2 | Gallipoli        | 7  | Jericho Mile                               |
| 3 | The Games        | 8  | Marathon Man                               |
| 4 | Geordie          | 9  | McFarland                                  |
| 5 | Without Limits   | 10 | The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner |

## MEETING TIME

Former Ilford AC President Bill Sutherland BEM has rubbed shoulders with the good and the great, as he bumped into Suranne Jones in Muswell Hill. Said Bill, "Had a good chat with Suranne Jones and her husband - star of Gentleman Jack and Coronation Street. Very pleasant to talk to and a wonderful actress too. When told of this meeting, Ilford AC's Press Officer Billy Green commented, "She's very pretty too". More recently Bill spoke with actor Damian Lewis of "Band of Brothers" fame when they met in Waitrose - where all the top people can be seen!

## NOTIFICATION

This probably won't affect walkers but just to be on the safe side please have a look. For any athletes contemplating racing on the track this season and planning on wearing their road racing shoes here is the latest comprehensive list of which are legal (up to 800m and over 800m) and not legal (eg Nike Vaporfly). [UKA World Athletics Shoe Rule FAQs April 2021](#)



## AN INTERVIEW WITH DOMINIC KING



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### VISION- EPISODE 107 W/ DOMINIC KING

VISION- EPISODE 107 W/ DOMINIC KING ... See More



A good half-hour's listening ... <https://fb.watch/5AOASczrMv/>

## VETERANS AC 5K WALK

Battersea Park  
18 May 2021



Place	Name	Age Group	Club	Time
1	David Annetts	M55-1	N Herts Road Runners/Veterans AC	24:07
2	David Kemp	M60-1	Arena 80/Veterans AC	26:36
3	Ian Torode	M60-2	South West Vets AC	26:41
4	Grazia Manzotti	W50-1	Tonbridge AC	28:44
5	Silvana Alves	W45-1	Barnet & District AC	30:17
6	Stuart Bennett	M60-3	Ilford AC/Veterans AC	32:19
7	Maureen Noel	W55-1	Belgrave Harriers/Veterans AC	33:01
8	Fiona Bishop	W60-1	Woking AC/Veterans AC	33:12
9	Lesley Morris	W60-2	Ilford AC/Veterans AC	34:11
10	Christopher Flint	M75-1	SyWC/Veterans AC	38:41
	Peter Hannell	M75	SyWC/Veterans AC	DNS
	Kathy Crilley	W70	SyWC/Veterans AC	DNS
	David Hoben	M65	SyWC/Veterans AC	DNS

The first of the regular Battersea Park races had a reasonable field with fickle spring weather, as torrential rain greeted the start. The rain fortunately abated within the first few minutes. This time the course was 5k, on a new route, and was staged in accordance with the present COVID-19 regulations applying to athletics, race walking, and the local park authorities. An in-form Dave Annetts (N Herts Road Runners) went into a clear lead followed by David Kemp (Arena 80), in addition a battle ensued between Maureen Noel (Belgrave Harriers) and Fiona Bishop (Woking AC) with Maureen edging out Fiona in the later stages. Ian Torode from SWVAC travelled a considerable distance from Somerset to take part and was rewarded with a good time, also Grazia Manzotti (Tonbridge AC) had a good result in her first attempt at 5k on the road, improving on her *Essex Walker* issue No 407 (June/July 2021)

track time for the distance. Shaun Lightman and Mark Culshaw acted as judges to ensure fair play.

#### **Officials:**

Race Director: Ben Noad

Clerk of Course: Dennis Williams

Starter: Ivor Wiggett

Timekeepers: David Harris, Camilla Allwood

Recorders: Carl Lawton, Maggie Statham-Berry

Registration: Maggie Statham-Berry, Ros Tabor, Andy Murray

Marshals: Joe Aspinall, Martin Berry, Gary Budinger, Stephanie Burchill, Jaran Finn, Andy Murray, Victor Ray, Ros Tabor

Results: Ben Noad, Photography: Cliff Hide and First Aid: Medical Despatch Event Services

#### **ENCOURAGING WORDS OF A TRIPLE OLYMPIAN**

Javelin thrower Steve Backley ended a spell of low profile by making a major speech on our 2021 athletics scene by declaring, "Athletics is ready to deliver those magic moments". He said our sport has been all but forgotten and added "Well now is the time to reinstate it to its former glory. Perhaps the Olympics is the shot in the arm the world needs". He said we can replace coping with thriving. Steve further said, "So when you next remove your mask and take a seat once again at your local pub, do please raise a glass to our athletes and wish them god speed as they try to run, jump, throw and entertain us; a new dawn possibly, in the land of the rising sun".

No mention of these athletes walking! It would help if we had more heading for Tokyo to walk. There should be sentiment in a big occasion like The Games. For instance it'll be a last ever Olympic 50 Kilometres' Walk - an event in which we've a proud history, as triple winners (1932/36/60). So we should be represented on the Tokyo start line as a reflection of our contribution to this event. Colchester's Dominic King should get his third shot at Olympic glory - as he's our fastest ever 50K walker in British athletics' history. Only a minute outside an Olympic qualifying time, he's still eligible for consideration as he's World ranked in this event. One wonders if Selection Committee members in their "smoke filled room" have any sentiment, or even have a genuine "feeling" for race walking? It's always better to be involved than not - and for years the Olympic spirit was about the honour of "taking part".

#### **ANOTHER MILESTONE BIRTHDAY ARRIVES**

Obviously when writing about a lady's age, permission is sought beforehand - which has been freely given. On **Sunday 25 July Pam Ficken** is to celebrate her **80th** birthday. Race walking is a big part of Pam's life and many will have seen pictures of her enthusiastically supporting her father - the late great Hew Neilson (Woodford Green AC) on numerous epic walks. Hew served as both Hon Secretary and Captain of The Centurions. His name and initials H D M H Neilson appeared in many race programmes - though not all programme compilers got his initials in a correct order! Essex Walker, along with other publications, frequently chronicled this worthy's achievements. Hew became a Centurion at a 1948 Motspur Park track event earning Badge No 145. This number lives on as an award (*The 145 Trophy*) goes to the 1st newcomer in UK 100 miles' races. Newer race walking participants may ask about Motspur Park Track? - well it was grassed over in 1996! Hew himself completed 20 UK 100s in sub-24 hours time, with his best being a wonderful 17:18.51 (100 miles) and 133 miles 21 yards in 24 hours on a cinder track at Walton-on-Thames in 1960. Pam's attendant role continued as late husband Brian also relished the challenge of a good long race, including London-to-Brightons (15 completions) with Pam always on hand to assist and encourage. Pam's a loyal long-serving member of the famous Surrey Walking Cub, having joined in 1992. That 1986 Woodford Green AC 100 Miles/24 Hours at Ashtons Track was named in Hew's memory as he'd sadly passed away 4 months' beforehand. On the programme was Pam, who covered 25 miles in just over 6 hours as a tribute to her father.

Pam herself enjoyed competing and appeared in all our long distance classic Opens. These included 100 miles events, including in August 1995 at Battersea Park when Surrey Walking Club promoted such an event. A hot weekend attracted many folk into this popular park, who continually crossed the Queen's Carriageway, with its steep camber in places. Also present were skateboarders and roller skaters, plus kids at a basketball event sponsored by a London commercial radio station. In this park were many joggers, among whom was National Theatre actor and ex-professional wrestler Brian Glover - best known as overbearing PE teacher Mr Sugden in Ken Loach's "Kes". Up front Richard and Sandra Brown were again first man and woman, both having set best times on the Land's End-to-John O'Groats' route earlier that year. Richard's 19:23.16 saw him equal a then record of 6 UK 100 wins held by the great Dave Boxall (Brighton & Hove AC). Pam finished in 23:09.53 to join The Centurions with number 934. As reported in a number of publications, Pam received greater applause, cheers and acclaim than the winner - such was the emotion of that occasion. 65 started, 1 was disqualified and 32 finished (of whom 13 were new Centurions). Among new Centurion members were late legendary fell-runner Boyd Millen, SWC colleague Kathy Crilley, Bernard Yates who was a surprise and long-time member of the leading group (sadly Bernard since had a leg amputated, but still recently finished a 10k event with a prosthetic leg), Ilford AC stalwart Dave Kates, popular visitor to Essex Hans van der Knapp who is now a respected International judge, Southend's Ray Platt who sadly suffered serious injuries in a ladder fall and recently departed Enfield & Stock Exchange athlete Ken Cardozo, who was excellently attended to by Ilford Centurion Dave Neagle. Pam's time was only 6 minutes longer than recorded by her father in his qualification (23:03.50). The event was used as a selection race for a forthcoming Roubaix 28 Hours classic - it was 5 men and 5 women to travel. Pam's International status was secured!

Over the years Pam put in countless hours on Committee duties, for the Race Walking Association, Southern Area, Centurions, Surrey Walking Club and as a key figure on a long build-up to 2007's European Cup of Race Walking at Royal Leamington Spa. Pam's worn a number of Presidents' chains, and at present holds that position with The Centurions. She's a most diligent Trophies Steward for both the Race Walking Association and Centurions as well as other organisations - that task is much more difficult than you'd think. Currently the good lady is Chair of the RWA's influential International Committee. For many years all these tasks were fitted in around a most time-consuming commitment to the Girl Guides' movement. At races and meetings, Pam so often turns up with the catering, including providing refreshments for a long succession of RWA AGM's. On a dismal note, Pam travels far and wide to represent your RWA, Southern Area, SWC and Centurions at race walkers' funeral services - *distance no object!* As few race walkers remain in our sport after hanging up their racing shoes, Pam fills so many officiating appointments, far and wide, to offset our serious shortage. How many times have you finished a race, and Pam's been on the finish line - in all weathers - to record your efforts?

If wanting to send birthday cards her address is: Owl Cottage, 109 The Causeway, Bassingbourn, ROYSTON. Hertfordshire.SG8 5JB.

### **SUPPORT IMplored**

The 2021 series of athletics meetings which are in the Southern Counties Veterans Athletic Club Series are with us again. They're around the Capital and Home Counties as different Clubs appear in different Leagues at various locations. Not all such meetings feature walking events, but usually there are 2 such races - over 2,000 metres - during a 4-programme series. All Clubs with Race Walking Sections are implored to field accomplished race walkers, as it shows us in a good light. More important, a number of

new recruits have entered race walking after "making up numbers" as "points scorers" in Clubs without regular race walkers in their ranks. They've had a go, liked it, and turned up for more race walking. So let's ensure we're fully represented to showcase how it should be done with style.





## A SPORTING TRADITION NOBLY UPHELD

"Essex Walker" issues going back decades contain impressive past results of recently departed Lew Mockett RIP. Nowadays his daughter, Dr Hilary McDermott makes result sheets as a triathlon competitor. The good lady completed such an event in Nottinghamshire during late May - the well supported East Leake Triathlon - in the colours of her Club, *4Life Tri*. On offer was 400 metres swimming, 22 kilometres cycling and a 5k run to finish with. Hilary race walked her last leg. Hilary was a commendable 17th in her age group. **Congratulations to Hilary.** Writes Hilary, "It was fabulous - a great event and all the training paid off. I now have the Half Ironman OUTLAW event in 4 weeks".

## PARKRUN RETURN?

A number of our readers also line-up in parkruns, with some doing both an early 9.00 am morning parkrun, then an afternoon Enfield League event at 1.00 pm the same day. *That's commitment!* Plan 'A' was to see these popular runs reappear in early June. *Not so* - as a resumption is now put back to Saturday 26 June. We wish our best to all readers who are part of this scene. Parkrun organisers plan a "*Thank You ParkRun*" on the weekend of 3/4 July, with those attending being urged to give thanks to all who've helped during the pandemic. Weekly 5k events were suspended in March 2020.



## OUR PROMISE

British Athletics Olympic Programme Head Coach Christian Malcolm said, "With the British Athletics Championships just under 6 weeks' away, and the Olympics on the horizon, we are supporting all athletes to achieve what they feel is the best preparation possible". So athletes were given an option to opt-in or opt-out of the domestic event.

## NORMALITY RETURNS

Back in March 2020 Christine and Tony Perkins (who respectively perform our layout and distribution tasks) suggested switching publication from 2-monthly to monthly, in order to try and keep everybody in touch with goings-on while we were unable to meet on race days.

It's been well received, and recently we've even had more subscribers asking to go on our list - some being those who dropped out when a European Union directive (General Data Protection Regulation) ruled that only those who'd "opted-in" (to us holding their email addresses for the sole purpose of receiving Essex Walker) could actually receive our email editions. The last easing of "lockdown" was short-lived. But we're trying again, and if this current phase doesn't go well, we can always reassess our situation. So, in principle, we will now be resuming our normal 2-monthly publication with **our next issue scheduled for early August.** Watch this space!

August 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**Sunday, Aug 1st 2021**



Dear Dave ...

## JACK CLIFTON RIP - FURTHER TRIBUTE

I do remember Jack Clifton as a very jovial and friendly individual who always turned out for the Metropolitan Police team. He had an unusual walking gait which some of the judges didn't like but he always accepted their decisions with grace and good humour and turned up at the next race to compete again. A true character from a bygone age of policing and sport. They don't make them like Jack anymore.

**Denis Sheppard**

## WRITES MIKE PARKER

I hope this email finds you keeping well. These days I very infrequently check online to see what's going on in our old sport of race walking. So it was only the day before yesterday that I read the very sad news about the death of Paul Nihill. Although it's all a long time ago this news hit me hard as it brought back so many memories. I have written a few lines below and would like them added, although belatedly, to the list of testimonies on Paul and people's memories of him and the impact he made on their lives.

### *PAUL NIHILL*

"The day before yesterday while on one of my infrequent visits to those rare few race walking sites that retain my interest I read the news of the very sad death of Paul Nihill. I add my name to the very long list of people who have passed on their condolences already to Paul's family and also to the wider race walking fraternity particularly in the UK, but also to others around the world who knew Paul and have been impacted by his passing."

"My own particular memories of Paul Nihill go back to the earliest days of my own athletic career. The Olympic Games of Tokyo 1964 was a great Games for New Zealanders - Peter Snell (who also died in 2020) was receiving blanket coverage in the media on account of his two gold medals. As a very young lad of 11, it was not Snell who inspired me though, it was watching Ken Mathews on television win the 20 km walk in such a dominant style that piqued my interest. A month or so later my parents took me to the cinema to watch "Tokyo 1964" and there I viewed the tussle between Abdon Pamich and Paul Nihill in the 50 kms. These guys along with Vladimir Golubnichy and Dieter Linder became my heroes. Before that year's end, after pestering my poor mother witless, she had contacted the local athletic club and enrolled me. I was the club's third race walker. Training for me was never a problem, I had the company of my heroes we would be fighting out some imaginary race at the Olympic Games, somewhere or other and I was usually the winner!"

"So in a way, Paul Nihill was a very real part of my career as a racewalker. When I first arrived in the UK in early 1977 I had several goals I wanted to achieve. Some I attained others I didn't. One that I feel very sad about was not having the opportunity to race just once against "The Great Paul Nihill". Paul retired at the end of 1976 so I missed out by a few months. I still feel regret, not being able to say I raced against one of the two greatest British race walkers of all time. At least I got to meet him a few times and I always found him to be inspirational. To be honest, I can't decide between Paul and Ken Matthews as to who was the best, I feel they were the equal of one another. Nihill's long list of achievements and his wonderful range of distances, as John Lees alluded to, isn't quite enough to nudge him past Ken Matthews's mighty 1964 Tokyo Olympic performance. So in my opinion these two great champions are both the Greatest of the UK's race walkers."

"Paul Nihill will always remain a hero to me a great race walker and a man who believed that race walking should be walking and not the sham that race walking has become in the modern era. RIP Paul Nihill."

*Mike Parker*

## SERVICE NOTIFICATION

Dear friends of Mary Worth,

I promised to let you know when I know about funeral arrangements. It has now been confirmed that Mary's ashes will be interred at St Nicholas Church in Harpenden on **3 July at 12 noon**. This will be a simple service – probably lasting about 10 minutes or so - taking place in the garden of remembrance there. Please could you pass this along to any walking club members who might like to attend.

*David Worth*

Adds Hon Ed: St Nicholas Church is in Church Green, Harpenden. Hertfordshire. AL5 2TP.



## A READER RECOLLECTS

A wonderful write up on Ron Wallwork. I remember well when I was entrusted with Ronnie and one other - forgot his name - to go to East Berlin in May 1971 as my first of two team manager experiences.

*John Northcott*

## THEY ENJOYED HERNE HILL

I did hear 'Last Word'. Without wishing to embarrass I take my hat off to you; your commentary was clear, concise,



informative and, most important, very enjoyable. It is a

shame you did not take that road – forgive the pun – as a full-time profession. Quite seriously, that was a really good interview. I enjoyed listening to it. By the way, my family on my father's side were race walkers many, many decades ago. That and cycling. Herne Hill track was one of their favourites. There were nine brothers (my grandparents had 13 children in total). Most were walkers and or cyclists. We have inherited some of their silver prizes including a magnificent two handed lidded cup and large rose bowl. My step-dad was a lovely man and very good at both cycling and walking.

*Dick Murray*

## EMAILS MIKE SCAMELL

I always read through the Essex Walker. It is amazing to think that George Eastwood is 97 now. I remember his friendly rivalry with my Dad - they were VERY keen to beat each other, but they got on really well. Dad always hinted to George that he had a secret formula for getting the edge, which he called "the three Bs". He let slip that one of the Bs was bananas, but would never reveal the other two, much to George's frustration. I can now come clean - there were no other Bs, it was a magnificent con! Jack Clifton was a great character and I enjoyed many chats with him, so I'm sad to hear that he is no longer with us. Thanks for always keeping me in the loop, Dave. It is good to hear news of old friends - indeed most of my friends are now getting old. I'll be 67 in a few months, so I'm no spring chicken myself!

*Mike Scamell*

## QUESTION TIME?

Thanks for the Essex Walker, really good read each issue. Further to the article from team-mate Chris Maddocks regarding the oddly distanced Picton House 4.25 miles, the Dawlish club also entered the Picton House Relay in 1976 with 3 walkers each completing 1.734 yards! There was also a Picton House 7.25 miles Walk around that time. I also competed in a Half Hour Walk at Weymouth in 1975. Perhaps there are more odd distances your readers might know about! While I'm at it, can anyone help me complete my racing record with just a few missing pieces of info? I have incomplete details of the following races (P = position, T = time): Basingstoke 10 miles (1975) South West 10 miles 1975 (P), National 10 miles 1987 (T+P) and Southern Track Finals 1987 10k (P+T). Any help would be much appreciated.

*Andy Bainborough*  
([aabain567@gmail.com](mailto:aabain567@gmail.com))

Adds Hon Ed: Odd distance races springing to mind include Guernsey Church-to-Church 19.4 Miles, Met Police v North London Clubs 7.25 miles, the Belgrave Harriers Open 7 Miles-and-a-bit and that well-supported Woodford Green Open 8,450 metres ("around the houses" from Woodford Green Working Men's Club).

## MAJOR EVENT

For your diary. **Saturday 2 October 2021 at 3.30 pm.** Cecil Gittins Memorial Walks (incorporating Enfield League) at Cyclopark, Gravesend. Four distances: **2k/5k/10k/15k** (road) Ages: all. Veterans AC event. Category 'B'. Contact: [walks@vetsac.org.uk](mailto:walks@vetsac.org.uk)

*Dave Hoben*

## HERE WE ARE AGAIN!

We're happy to announce that Woodford Green AC with Essex Ladies are intending to restart their Open Graded Meetings, in which we embed the Woodford Tuesday Walks. Event information is:

- Venue: Ashton Playing Fields, 598, Chigwell Road, WOODFORD GREEN, IG8 8AA.
- Dates in 2021: 15 June, 27 July, 10 August



We have created a **Centurion 1911 group** on the popular Strava app which records athletes' training and performance - a number of Centurions have joined up and we're looking to grow members. A note in *Essex Walker* would be helpful - the link to the group is [strava.com/clubs/centurions1911](https://strava.com/clubs/centurions1911).



At the recent meeting we agreed a date for 2022 as 6 August on Southend track were waiting confirmation from Southend before we confirm the date. Going forward we hope to arrange a number of distance training events of around 50 miles in the Autumn for Centurion hopefuls to train with qualified Centurions Richmond Park, Southend are possible courses and Redcar RWC have stated interest in organising around the old 50km National course at Ropner Park will give you details later in the year and again helpful if you could put in *Essex Walker*. Ian Richards spoke at our recent meeting about organising a 35km-50km under the BMA banner possibly in the North which also would provide valuable training if it happened.

**Martin Fisher**

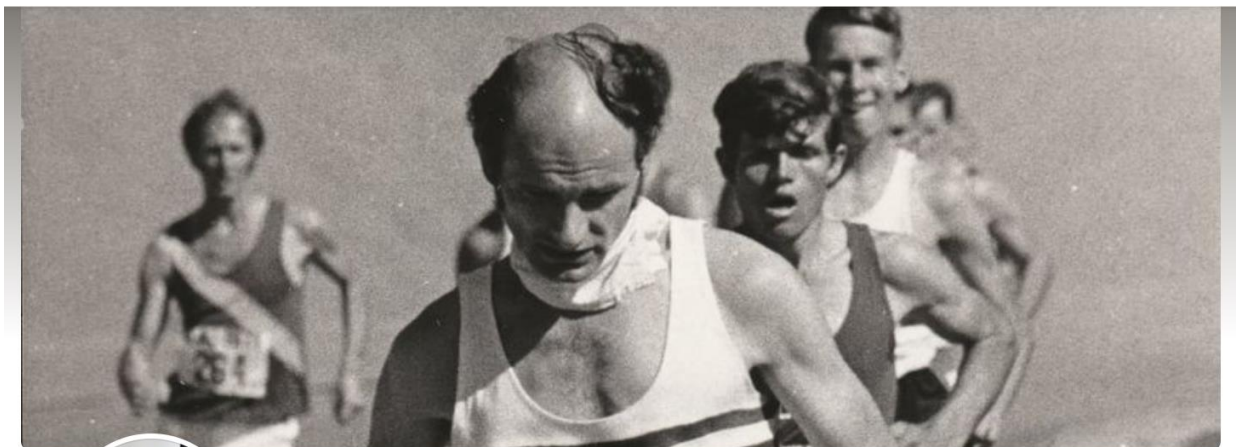
### MICK'S POSSIBLE 1 RACE RETURN

That's good news. Let me know when he might toe the line again as I might join him. 😊

**Len Ruddock**

### WRITES CLARE DENNESS (Paul Nihill's daughter)

I heard dad mentioned on Radio 2 the other week. That was a nice surprise. I am still adding to dad's Facebook page: [facebook.com/PaulNihillMBE](https://facebook.com/PaulNihillMBE)



**Paul Nihill MBE**

@PaulNihillMBE · Athlete

Send Message

I actually saw a lovely story on the internet of a lady that had discovered slides from an Enfield race that belonged to her father. She had uploaded the old slides and mentioned dad. I was able to get in touch with her and use them on dad's page. Using dad's records of his race I could trace it to being Enfield Invitation 20km Race Walk 1971. Her dad was a race walker as well as her grandfather. It's amazing the little things that turn up on the internet. I hope you are well and enjoying more freedom. I have been busy as I do volunteer work for a watersports club and now cats protection. Well, I do hope you can view dad's page. I hope to add more all the time. I was a bit slack last week. But the watersports club just opened and I do all their social media. Not decided on dad's memorial day yet. Obviously need to see how things go now everything is opening up.

**Clare Denness**

### MICK'S 50TH ACTIVE YEAR

Great to hear Mick Barnbrook is home, even more so to hear of his ambition! Got me thinking - my first WALKING race was in 1972 so I am closing in on that significant milestone too!

**Ed Shillabeer C590**



## TRIPLE OLYMPIAN Dr RON HILL MBE - RIP

Very sad day for British athletics as Great Britain's greatest marathon runner passed away aged 82. Memories of his wonderful win in the 1970 Edinburgh Commonwealth Games will never fade with all of his other memorable achievements. He was a real inspiration to so many fellow athletes in the golden era of British athletics. Sincere condolences to his family and countless number of friends. May he Rest in Peace.

**Bill Sutherland**

Adds Hon Ed: Following Bill's notification many readers sent tributes - too many for inclusion. However while this publication isn't a running newsletter, we've a strong connection with the late Ron, for as a successful businessman he headed a Company which sold racing shoes, shorts, vests etc, which so many of us bought, either at races or by his booming mail order trading methods. Many such products were ahead of their time!

## THANKS FROM RON WALLWORK

Just a line or two to thank all the people who sent me greetings and good wishes on the occasion of my 80th birthday. To have such a huge horde of friends is tremendously overwhelming and that coupled with the love and support of my family make me realise how fortunate I am. In line with the Lancashire Walking Club motto "Health the first Wealth" over the years I have always tried to fit in some activity on my birthday. This year it was to walk up nearby Primrose Hill and the picture shows that in spite of drizzly conditions I made it with my family. Thanks again.

**Ron Wallwork**



## JOHN MARSHALL RIP - NOTIFICATION

With sadness I have to report that John Marshall of Worcester AC passed away last Wednesday 26 May 2021. The funeral service will be held at Worcester Crematorium, Astwood Road, on Wednesday 23 June next (2021) at 10.00 am. John won several golds at various age groups in the Masters Events and in later years he supported other athletes in Masters Competitions. We believe he was coming up to 90 years of age. He attempted several times to finish the 100mls distance but just failed in his attempt to get a Centurions award particularly in the Blackpool where he competed about 95 miles when he was forced to stop. Most of John's awards in the Masters were in road events at European and World 5km and 10km. I am informed that all are welcome to the funeral service and there will be a live feed on the web for those interested. Please pass this information on of John Marshall's sad passing to anyone whom might know or remember him during his Master's involvement over the years.

**Glyn Jones**

Adds Hon Ed: Alas - sad news about a wonderful friendly man who was involved in race walking since the 1960s. After hanging up his racing shoes, he still turned up at meetings to support and encourage. He always liked the atmosphere at Moulton. John attended The Centurions 95th Anniversary Dinner at the Royal Air Force Club in Piccadilly and, as he'd arrived in London during the afternoon, sat-in on their AGM even though not a member. Nobody questioned his presence in the room and afterwards, said he'd found it most interesting (which that year, it most certainly was). He was aged 86 and his last recorded racing appearance was in 2009.

**Ron Wallwork** writes: "I well remember John and his clubmate Les Scrivens who made the long trip to Moulton regularly. I can't say that I knew him all that well, but always enjoyed a chat with him and Les, appreciated their support and missed them when in 2015 john wrote to me to say that it was no longer practical to make the journey to Suffolk. John's last Moulton Five was in 2009, the Barclay Bi-Centennial year when the Moulton Five was staged at the Rowley Mile



Racecourse on the weekend that Richard Dunwoody successfully completed and emulated Barclay's 42 day challenge and Sandra Brown won the Barclay 100 miles race in 19.57.24."

**Bill Sutherland** writes: "I remember John Marshall of Worcester AC well and his remarkable achievements in many Masters Walks. It is a great shame that he was not a Centurion, as he was so tenacious in his many attempts. Rest assured that will never be forgotten by so many of his admirers. May he Rest in Peace. Sincere condolences."

**ESSEX WALKER**

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