

Essex Walker

Seasons Greetings

With very best wishes from
the Editor, **Dave Ainsworth**,
and the Essex Walker publishing/distribution team,
Christine and **Tony Perkins**

ESSEX COUNTY ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION AGM

The County AGM will be held at **7:30 pm** on Monday **6 December 2021** at the Chelmsford AC Clubhouse. This is at Melbourne Stadium, in Salerno Way, CHELMSFORD. Essex. CM1 2EH. There is a large free car park. This is an important as among Officers up for election is your **Essex County AA Walking Officer**. In recent times Melanie Peddle has represented our interests. Melanie is stepping down - and she is warmly thanked for her efforts on your behalf. At this late stage, no persons have stepped forward to take on this role. It's only a very few Committee meetings a year, but is important. Due to our participants staying away, race walking events have been removed from our Essex County Championship programme, and in some cases relegated to lesser days (to be staged along with heats and junior races). We need a voice in the Committee Room to put our case for retention. **Is there a reader out there, who perhaps doesn't currently fill any athletics positions and could find the time to help out?**

YOUR RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION AGM



Glyn Jones (RWA Chairman) writes: "I can confirm that the RWA AGM will be held 'virtually' on Sunday 23 January 2022. The meeting will commence at 2pm and the required notices will be sent out shortly. In the forthcoming election of 'officers', our current Hon General Secretary is standing down. Hence there is urgent need for someone to come forward and to be nominated to fill the vacancy. Also there is needed a nomination for Championship Secretary as this post is currently vacant."

[RWA Notice of AGM : Facebook](#)

Adds Hon Ed: Club Walking Secretaries are to be sent access details nearer the day, which they can forward to all their members. It's hoped many will "zoom in" for this important meeting. **It's your sport!**

OVER TO YOU

Our previous edition featured an article with details of our England Athletics Hall-of-Fame, in which were mentioned 5 esteemed race walkers who've been inducted. Standards are high, as all 5 were Olympic medallists. **To ignite discussion** Essex Walker suggested two more worthies for consideration: 1908 double Olympic gold medallist, Brighton policeman **George Larnar** and pioneer of UK women's race walking **Judy Farr** (once of Trowbridge & District AC - nowadays with Avon Valley Runners). **We asked who else should be nominated?** Readers have come up with names - two of which stand out. They were, in alphabetical order, **Sandra Brown** and **Chris Maddocks**. Sandra has dominated our ultra-distance walking scene for decades, in the UK and further afield, and would grace the Hall-of-Fame for her many great achievements. Chris had an Olympic span crossing 3 decades as he competed in 5 successive Olympic Games from 1984 to 2000. Many think it should have been 6 as 1980 saw only one 50K walker (leaving 2 blank places) competing in a race British walkers had fought hard to see re-introduced onto an Olympic programme. That year, despite not being selected, Chris was voted "*UK Walker-of-the-Year*" in a Race Walking Record readers' poll. Both fully deserve this honour.

ON SONG

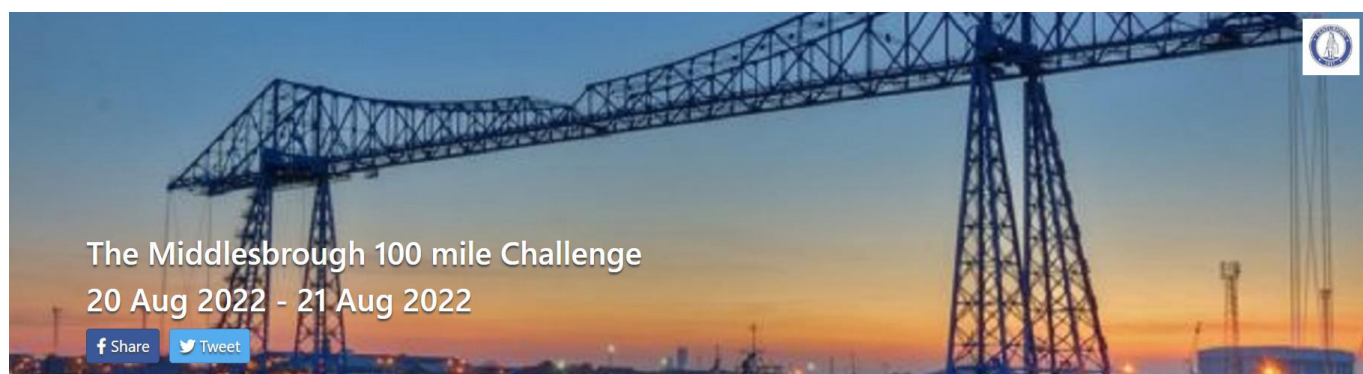
Loughton AC staged a well-attended cross county on their "patch" a day before Pauline Wilson's 80th milestone birthday. As 115 lined-up for the "off" they burst into a loud and enthusiastic rendition of the traditional "*Happy Birthday*" song. A bystander remarked, "They hold a good note".

INVITED GUEST

Southend-on-Sea AC life member **Peter Marlow** has received an invitation to be an official guest at the 2022 European Athletics Championships in Munich from 11 - 21 August. This is to be held in the same stadium as was the 1972 Olympics, in which a 20K Walk on 31 August started and finished. In that race Peter was in a trio of GB competitors - sadly his 2 team colleagues on that occasion are no longer with us. Phil Embleton departed in May 1974 and Paul Nihill MBE in December 2020. It'll be 50 years since Peter's Olympic appearance.

100 MILE CHALLENGE

Entries are now open for the 2022 Centurions 100 mile challenge to be held at Middlesbrough [The Middlesbrough 100 mile Challenge - EntryCentral.com](#)



Organiser's Description

The Middlesbrough 100 mile Challenge

The Centurions are proud to announce they are organising the 2022 Centurion - qualifying race walk on the Cycle Circuit at Middlesbrough Sports Village (Alan Peacock Way, Marton Road, Middlesbrough TS4 3AE). The course is a wide flat tarmac cycle track of just under 1 km. It will have 24 hour lighting, space for support tents, power supply for chip timing, parking, and many other facilities.

The race starts at 12 noon and will be held under Category 'B' race walking rules. The rules stipulate walkers must maintain contact with the ground and satisfy the judges they are walking.

Walkers who complete 100 miles within 24 hours will be eligible to become Centurions, a unique athletic body open only to those who have achieved this remarkable feat. The Centurions were formed in 1911 and to date 1209 have qualified and joined this unique group of athletes. We look forward to welcoming walkers from the UK and overseas.

The race will incorporate the RWA National Long Distance Championship. UKA-affiliated walkers will be eligible to enter.

Prices

Until	Price
06 Aug 2022	£65.00

For each sign-up, the organiser pays the Service Fee of 4% (min 50p). You pay no surcharge

Dates and Status

Date: 21/08/2022	Total Places: 100
Status: Open	Places Available: 90

[List](#)

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

South Woodham Ferrers-based **Kevin Carley** was a prominent member of a defunct Anglia Striders Walking Club in their heyday. He raced for Ford Sports & Social Club in events organised by the London Business Houses Association and The British Industries Association. Nowadays he's a septuagenarian, but age fails to dent his impact as a competitor as he continues giving good accounts of himself, often at the expense of younger competitors. Kevin's a leading light on the triathlon scene, representing Blackwater Triathlon Club. He's appeared worldwide, having had success in many places including Cologne, Holten (Netherlands), Honolulu and Lausanne. Kevin hopes to make a Moulton race on a future occasion - when we'll be able to see him giving it his all in pedestrianism. In its day, our Essex League used to state a popular event in Kevin's home town of South Woodham Ferrers. We wish Kevin well.



Dr PHILIP PRASHNER RIP

Sad to say Philip Prashner (Loughton AC) has passed on. He was a GP at Loughton Health Centre until retirement. He's listed on the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Roll-of-Honour. Philip was a regular competitor for Loughton AC over many years, particularly in the Woodford series of 3,000 metres walks at Ashtons Track. He announced his retirement from race walking in 2015. Herewith a few words on Philip Prashner penned by Loughton AC colleague **Peter Cassidy**:

"The death occurred recently of Philip Prashner, formerly of Loughton AC. Philip, once a General Practitioner in the town, was for several years an enthusiastic walker for the Club, especially in the Woodford Wednesday (and then Tuesday) Walks and some other Essex League races over the shorter distances. Ever cheerful and ever willing to turn out to complete the team, he was an absolutely reliable finisher until ill health unfortunately forced his retirement. While he was an active member he donated a number of trophies to the Club, including one for the Ladies' Club Walking Championship."

A MEETING WITH 258 WALKERS - BUT NOT IN BLIGHTY

A report from **Cath Duhig**

The weekend of 6/7 November saw the return of the Espada Toledana, a long-established and very popular event on the Spanish athletics calendar. After a few disrupted years, when the programme and venues had to be adapted, firstly due to road works on the traditional walks course, then due to Covid, there was great excitement and enthusiasm, among organisers and athletes alike, when almost normal service was resumed. I say "almost normal" as the organisers had taken the opportunity to tweak the walks course making the 1km lap more user friendly and, I suspect, potentially faster, though my days of exploiting such things are something best forgotten.

The popularity of this event is immediately evident when you see the numbers in the fields: in a 3-hour period a total of 258 walkers finished their competitions, from U10s doing 1 lap of the 1km circuit, to the majority covering 5. And the distances travelled to take part are quite eye-watering: my own journey, fortunately on the club bus, was the best part of 1000 kms round trip.

Anyway, for anyone interested in numbers, here's a breakdown of the finishers (bear in mind category designations are a bit different here):

U10 = 6 U12 = 27 U14 = 44 U16 = 56 U18 = 29 U20 = 18 U23 = 14
Senior/ Masters = 64

The senior line-up included 3 athletes who had represented Spain at the Tokyo Olympics, two of the 50K men and one of the 20k women.

For my own part, I finished 36th out of 46th in the combined women's U20/U23/Sen/ Masters race, the only W65 so therefore the category winner, in 31:42, a second quicker than I managed in another high key event in Nerja a month previously.

At this event, which also includes a big series of cross country runs by the side of the Tajo river the next day, the awards take the form of specially forged Toledo swords. Unfortunately, the awards list does not extend to the Masters categories, although our team bus was rattling on the way home as several of our Juniors had won them, and, yes, they were nearly as big as them!

YOUR RWA SOUTHERN AREA AGM

On 8 November this AGM was held on "Zoom". In advance **all** Club Walking Secretaries were advised of the date/time + an agenda + minutes of our previous year's AGM + details of a direct/easy link to access this meeting. This was accompanied with a request for this package to be distributed to **all** their walkers and walking officials/helpers. Also sent was an invitation for all to view the Committee meeting, held for 45 minutes prior to the AGM. Hmmm! The AGM commenced with only 6 persons present from outside of the Officers and Committee. Only 4 apologies for absence were received.

In his opening remarks your President (also Honorary Secretary and Minutes Secretary) Chris Flint stated *"I feel aggrieved when I consider the amount of work involved in preparing for this meeting and despite it being well publicised that so very few have time to send their apologies. We should all be working together to ensure that the sport continues and that means involvement"*. After reports, business moved to an Election of Officers/Committee. There wasn't a queue of walkers wishing to help out by offering their services. Chris Flint was re-elected President and also Honorary Secretary, with Pam Ficken as Honorary Assistant Secretary. Our Chairman's position was vacant, so Mark Easton (already Honorary Treasurer) stepped forward to take on that as well. Mike Fox was elected Vice Chairman and Graham Chapman is your Social Media Officer. Social media is the way to encourage younger participants as that's our modern way of spreading the word. More traditional methods saw Dave Ainsworth re-elected as Hon Press Officer. A position of Hon Championships Secretary remained unfilled - are they any takers out there? There are still unfilled positions on the Committee if there are any out there who feel they can come and contribute and assist in taking our way forward in these testing times for race walking in general. On a positive note, Noel Blatchford agreed to join the Committee together with the vastly experienced Peter Selby and George Wilkinson is also involved acting as a communicator between his young race walking colleagues and the committee.

CHANGES TO WORLD ATHLETICS RULES for RACE WALKING

TR54	Race Walking
The standard distances shall be: indoor: 3000m, 5000m; outdoor: 5000m, 10km, 10,000m, 20km, 20,000m, 35km, 35,000m , 50km, 50,000m.	
A Penalty Zone shall be used for any race where the applicable regulations for the competition so provide and may be used for other races as determined by the relevant governing body or Organisers. In such cases, an athlete will be required to enter the Penalty Zone and remain there for the applicable period once they have received three Red Cards and are so advised by the Chief Judge or someone delegated by them.	
The applicable period in the Penalty Zone shall be as follows:	
Races up to and including	Time
5000m/5km	0.5 min
10,000m/10km	1 min
20,000m/20km	2 min
30,000m/30km	3 min
35,000m/35km	3.5 min
40,000m/40km	4 min
50,000m/50km	5 min
An athlete who fails to enter the Penalty Zone when required to do so, or remain there for the applicable period, shall be disqualified by the Referee.	

Readers may be interested to learn of the latest updates to the World Athletics rule book in relation to race walking:

The 35km and 35,000m are to be added to the World Records, for both men and women, to be recognised from 1 January 2023.

30,000m record will be removed once a 35,000m record is set.

50km and 50,000m records will be retained.

PETER CASSIDY'S FACEBOOK PAGE

A notification on Facebook gave an impression that Loughton's Peter Cassidy had got married - recently. It ignited much interest in the athletics world! It turned out to be a mis-representation of the truth and the resultant hubbub has now died down.

Writes Peter:

"Yes, well, thanks to you all for your good wishes. We married in 1971; I was merely correcting an error in the data on my Facebook page. Can I just confirm that we remain married, that Pauline remains, as she always has been, Miss Wilson (you don't get something as valuable as an Irish surname just by marrying one), that my surname remains, as it always has been, Cassidy, that we've been married for so long that we tend to forget until my sister sends an anniversary card every year, that, despite the constant attempts by the electronic communications world to move us north, we still live in Shenfield and not Sheffield, and that, despite rumours to the contrary, I am not a candidate for the Papacy when the post falls vacant and we did not have to get married in a hurry last week because of the impending patter of tiny feet? (Yes, that long rant did start out as a question.) I include the last two points because the system is capable of anything! A warning; do not send a message to your nearest and dearest asking them to pick up a pint of milk on the way home or some quirk of the electronic world will have a herd of dairy cows on your doorstep before nightfall. I feel a

Peter James Cassidy
October 31 · 🌐 📷



Got Married
October 31

bit better now and, once again, thanks and apologies to everyone. By the way, does anyone know how to "resign" from Facebook?"

A YARN TO AMUSE OUR READERS *courtesy of **Olly Caviglioli***

"I was reminded of an incident, regarding a pile of Adidas Gazelle trainers, that my coach, John Webb, told me in 1968. After competing in the Mexico Olympic Games, he decided to have a holiday after years of training. He wanted to walk the south coast but didn't want to carry a rucksack, nor a hold-all. Instead, he found an old pram and filled it with his belongings and tent.

One day, a policeman stopped him, as it was quite an unusual sight in the country to see a man with a pram full of goods. Upon looking into the pram, he saw a bunch of new Adidas Gazelle shoes. At that point, he suspected he had caught a thief. Asked to explain himself, John calmly explained that he has been part of the GB team at the just-finished Mexico Olympic Games where competitors were given a great many 'hand-outs' by sports firms. Thus the pile of trainers. A likely tale the policeman must have thought. But, back at the station - despite there being no internet - the officers were able to confirm his participation in the Olympics and John was released, free to continue his walking holiday.

When he recounted this episode to me, he could hardly complete it for his huge guffaws of laughter. Dear John Webb: what a character (and wise counsel and influence on me)".

NB: Although an article from Olly, it was submitted by former Essex-based walker of note, Trevor McDermot. Said John Webb, when told this was to be published, stated, "*It made me laugh*".

GET WELL - AND SOON!

Readers will be sorry to learn that popular Dr Lisa Kehler, who normally works in a hospital, has now been an in-patient in one. The good lady's bicycle was struck by a car, leaving its rider with multiple injuries. Lisa, a double Olympian (1992/2000) and 3 times Commonwealth Games medallist (1 x silver/2 x bronze) plus many other International appearances, is a resident of Tettenhall who belongs to Wolverhampton & Bilston AC. All readers will be wishing her a swift recovery.

SAD DEATH OF FORMER ESSEX BEAGLE OLYMPIAN

Rudy Haluza was a United States Air Force pilot who belonged to **Essex Beagles AC** for 3 years in the 1960s, while stationed in England, during which time he flew Douglas C-47s to many European destinations. With Ron Selmes, Mike Desmond and Colin Young he was part of a talented quartet who achieved many high placings in team events. A resident of Orange County (California) he was born in New York State in 1931 and has sadly passed on aged 90. In the '60s he was a double Olympian appearing in 20 kilometres walks at 1960 (Rome) and 1968 (Mexico). In 1960 he was 24th clocking 1:45.11.0. In the rarefied air of 1968 he was 4th in 1:35.00.2 and unlucky not to gain a bronze medal as serious questions were raised about the mode of progress employed by that race's silver medallist. On leaving the USAF he joined United Airlines as a pilot, retiring in 1998. His wife Elizabeth predeceased him in 2015. He is survived by his brother Theodore R Haluza, 3 children, 6 grandchildren and 1 great grandson. He features prominently in Essex Beagles history.

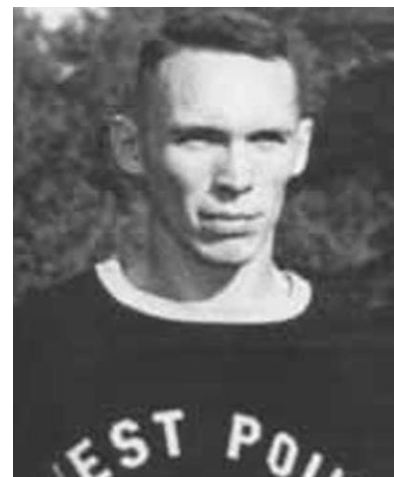


Essex Beagles were formed as Beaumont Harriers in 1887, changing their name to Essex Beagles in July 1891. They amalgamated with Newham AC in July 1981 to become Newham & Essex Beagles. For many decades Essex Beagles operated out of a large hut in Chigwell Row, just a proverbial stone's throw from Ilford AC's winter headquarters. Essex Beagles AC, as then known were "*big time*" in the '60s. Condolence is expressed to Rudy's family.

<https://www.shannonfamilymortuary.com/obituary/Rudolph-Haluza>

ON PARADE

Since news of United States Officer and 1960s double Olympian Rudy Haluza's recent death became known (his appearance for Essex Beagles in a past Enfield Open 7 was recorded in a booklet issued at November's race) some stated they thought he'd died in the 60s. An easy mistake to make as another United States Officer was also 1960s double Olympian - that was Ron Zinn who, like Rudy, appeared in two 20 Kilometres Walks. Ron, an Infantry Officer, was 19th in 1:42.47 (Rome 1960, when our Stan Vickers won bronze) and was 6th in 1:34.56 (Tokyo 1964, when our Ken Matthews won gold). Alas in Vietnam during July 1965 while serving as a Platoon Leader in the vaguely named "War Zone D" near Ho Chi Minh City, Ron was killed in an exchange of fire. For the remainder of the Vietnam War, the base from which Ron had operated was renamed "Camp Zinn" in his memory.



MEMBERS FOR LIFE

The Metropolitan Police Athletic Association held their annual Life Members Christmas luncheon on 19 November in the Union Jack Club opposite Waterloo Station. For many years it was held in New Scotland Yard's banqueting suite. That Police building is now demolished - the Police having downsized to new Office accommodation overlooking the Thames, which lacks banqueting facilities. So this function made a short hop to Waterloo. A number of walkers have distinguished themselves in the world of Metropolitan Police sport, so becoming esteemed Honorary Life Members. Included on a "walkers table" were Andy Bignold and Chris Flint (both long-serving Metropolitan Police Walking Club Chairmen), double Olympian Paul Blagg and International Peter Hodgkinson. Andy performed the toastmaster's duties with aplomb - as always. A trio of walking life members sent apologies, which were read out. A speech of welcome was made by Sir Brian Hayes, CBE, QPM, a former Association Chairman and a loyal toast proposed by Mr Derek Alldridge MBE - their Life Member with the longest membership (elected in 1985). This most successful and enjoyable occasion was appreciated by all present.

IF THE 'GRIM REAPER' CALLS

Sadly, our athletics world has seen too many departures in recent years. In future, if those left behind wish to engage the services of one with race walking connections to officiate at funeral services, then Andy Bignold is a qualified celebrant and available for such duties. The former Met Police Walking Club Chairman is known as a recorder at our 100 miles events and has often been engaged as toastmaster for our functions - including The Centurions memorable 2011 Centenary Dinner at the House of Commons. Contact details are: 07950-022400 - andrewbiggerz@aol.com Needless to say, we hope your loved ones won't need to consider his services for a long time to come!

FRED BAKER RIP

One of our all-time ultra-distance walking greats has passed-on, aged 88. Legendary Fred of Highgate Harriers completed **19** UK sub-24 hours' 100 miles races, commencing with a 22:30.13 timing in the testing 1956 Sheffield-to-Harrogate-and-back (staged over Yorkshire's hills-and-dales), which saw 38 start and 21 finish (8 becoming new Centurions). Fred earned Centurion number **266**. Fred served as The Centurions' Honorary Secretary from 1986 to 1995. When stepping down he passed this position on to fellow Highgate Harrier Bill Sutherland BEM. In 1982 Fred was elected as a Centurions' Vice-President. He resided in Carlisle, in a care home during his last days. For decades life was split between the UK and Australia, where he owned property. Needless to say he was in Carlisle for our spring and summer and, when weather turned for the worse, he was off "down under" for 6 months. He was one never to be forgotten. Our condolences to his family members.



READERS' TRIBUTES TO FRED BAKER RIP

- Very sad indeed. Fred was one of the greats - a great walker and a very kind person. It was Fred who gave the Centurions the Scorers' salver to record those who completed 20 C1911 100 miles. We have very happy memories of Fred at C1911 events, as our Hon Secretary for many years, as part of England's historic Roubaix squads, and from his time in Australia. Never to be forgotten, as you say. **Sandra and Richard Brown**
- Didn't really know Fred but always looked up to his status. **Ed Shillabeer**
- Very sorry to hear about Fred Baker. From Cape Town if I remembered, returned there, probably about 1995, coinciding with him relinquishing his Centurions' role. We discussed South Africa several times after I told him I lived there for a number of years. A wonderful, calm and sensible man. Excellent company. **John Hall**
- Fred came out (to Australia) each summer for quite a number of years, always basing himself in the warmer climes of Brisbane and normally walking with John Harris, one of our Brisbane-based Australian Centurions. He walked in 4 of our Australian Centurion qualifiers but he was really just a few years too late and never quite made it as an Australian Centurion, to go with his English and Continental badges. I remember him fondly as a wonderful man. As you say, not one to ever be forgotten. **Tim Erickson**
- Fred Baker is very special to me. Very sad to hear of his passing. He watched the 1994 100 at Hungarton, the last of the very hilly courses. A very hot day, 34 started, only 12 finished. Mainly experienced walkers. 3 qualifiers. I qualified as well. (A few records). He wrote me a lovely positive letter which I still treasure. I had never met him before. He said that he trained in Australia for the 100 by doing 30 miles in one walk a week. He was getting on then. His longevity is to be admired. **Richard Cole**
- Didn't know Fred well, but he came across as a cheerful man and entertaining after-dinner speaker. Sorry to hear of his loss. **Jack Rossiter**

FRED BAKER RIP - FUNERAL DETAILS

This is to be held on Monday 13 December at 12.15pm in the Main Chapel of the Kent & Sussex Crematorium, Benhall Mill Road, ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Kent. TN2 5JJ. The Crematorium's telephone number is 01892 523894.

INVITATION TO WALK THE PLANKS

Southend-on-Sea have staged their annual **Boxing Day 2 Miles' Pier Race** since 1954, apart from 2020 when Covid-19 restricted halted racing. It commences at 10am when slower entrants stir themselves into action. It's a yacht handicap as the World's longest pier is open to ambling members of our general public, who might be at risk if a large group of runners went flat out from the start - so they set off in ones-and-twos. *It's also more fun.* Yes, you read correctly, it's a **run** - which is well supported and is for Southend Club members only.

So where do we come in? For decades race walkers have been invited and made welcome - and have often showed up to compete. Sadly in 2019 not one appeared.

In recent times few have appeared with Prittlewell-based Centurion Steve Allen being the last to complete this event - which is a mile out-and-back along the pier's planks. Come ready changed. Your entry fee, by tradition, is a small wrapped gift (confectionery/toiletries/drinks etc) which is placed on a table. As each competitor finishes they pass this gifts' table and pick up something - so everybody gets a mystery prize - which is all part of the enjoyment. Afterwards there are several places open for a warming coffee or something stronger. All entrants have to do is advise Southend-on-Sea Secretary (and former Essex

Boxing Day Pier Race



Photo courtesy of [Southend-on-sea AC website](#):

John Tyler who is seen in the photo above was the founder and also first winner of the annual Boxing Day Southend Pier race.

County President) June Cork - a former race walker - of your intention to appear and give an anticipated 2 miles' time, so your yacht handicap mark can be assessed. June's contact details are: tel 01702 472195 email southendac@hotmail.co.uk. Let's see a few walkers on the pier burning off those Christmas calories. Caution: if Covid-19 cases rise alarmingly it could be 'off' but you'll get plenty of notice of that - so assume it'll be 'on', be optimistic and put the date in your diaries.

THREE-LINE WHIP

Your 2021 [Enfield League](#) series reaches a conclusion on Saturday 4 December at Donkey Lane (11am) with a 5 miles' walk around 5 laps of an adjacent traffic-free King George V Playing Fields. Opt-outs are permitted after each mile, with times recorded and League points gained. A recent Enfield Open 7 miles was properly and safely conducted with social distancing - **so all come along and give this a shot.**

ESSEX AND EASTERN INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS 2022

Can we get more entries for our Essex County & Eastern Counties' Indoor 1 Mile Walk

Championship? This is a 1 Mile Walk, with Championship status plus medals, before a large crowd (yes, crowd) with informed commentary and a presentation. Despite this, our Indoor Championship has seen the walk slide into a situation where its future on the programme has been in serious doubt. *Can we turn it around this year?* Don't leave it for others to keep the event going - *enter yourselves!* Your date is **Saturday 12 February** at Lee Valley Indoor Arena. There are races for Senior men/Junior men/U-17 men/U-15 Boys/U-13 Boys + Senior women/Junior women/U-17 women/U-15 Girls/U-13 Girls. Entries close on 15 January (paper entries) and at 8pm on 21 January (online entries). **No late entries!** It would be great to see athletics has recovered from Covid 19 with a record number of athletes attending. Details of charges for spectators at the championships will be sent out in early February 2022. Easy to reach venue with plenty of free parking and good public transport.

Further details on the [Essex County Athletic Association](#) website, or from your Club Secretary.

YOUR SUPPORT REQUESTED

"Real" racing is gradually returning, so please consider giving support. The annual "Alf Palmer Memorial Races" (2K/3K/5K) are to be held on Saturday 11 December at Broadbridge Heath, near Horsham RM12 3YS commencing at 2pm. Details from Ron Penfold ron.penfold@btinternet.com 01293 520506 or Ian Richards 01903 504463.

Now you're all getting 2022 diaries, the Enfield League (now very much a mainstay of Southern race walking) have announced their opening 3 dates - Saturdays 15 January, 12 February and 12 March - all 11am starts at Donkey Lane.

As for other fixtures, few and uncertain as they are, readers are recommended to check the [Race Walking Record](#). We will resume our regular **FIXTURES** notice in this newsletter once more reliable information can be confirmed.



CENTURIONS' AGM

This is to be held on Saturday 22 January at 1pm on "Zoom". A year ago, "Zoom" proved popular with an increased turnout of members. Members will be advised of access details/code/password soon.

ALL THINGS BRIGHTON AND BEAUTIFUL

There's often been a long-established Boxing Day race at Brighton's Preston Park. This park is well known as a location which London-to-Brighton walkers sped past as they headed for a Brighton seafront finish, which by then was soon reached. A last ever London-to-Brighton Walk in 2003 was a little shorter - having its finish line in this very park. Action commences at 10.30am. The race is 4 x 2.2 kilometres, but you can do fewer laps if you want (just like Enfield road races). However, it'll have to be billed as "to be confirmed" as its organiser is currently abroad and - to the best of our knowledge - a substitute stand-in

hasn't yet been announced. So, it's suggested that potential entrants should get the status of this race checked before setting out.

WAIT FOR IT

The Centurions' Social Walk along the Kent coast, scheduled for Sunday 28 November was postponed - and is now to be staged in spring. So, it's something for you all to look forward to. *Details to be published nearer the revised date.*

ESSEX COUNTY AA 10,000 METRES CHAMPIONSHIP

We're remiss in not earlier promulgating our Championship walk, which took place on the Queen Elizabeth II Stadium track in Donkey Lane (Enfield) during October. It was held in conjunction with the Enfield League 1 Hour Walk, by kind permission of Enfield & Harringey AC.

Your Essex County medallists are:

Men: 1. John Arthur (unattached), 2. Stuart Bennett (Ilford AC) and 3. Nico Strydom (Loughton AC).

Ladies: 1. Melanie Peddle (Loughton AC), 2. Ann Marie Strydom (Loughton AC) and 3. Shahed Arthur (unattached).

We warmly congratulate the "super six" - who all gave their best in terrible weather - and thank them for supporting our County Championship.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"I always think that if you live life without any regrets, you haven't really lived life".

Paul Whitehouse (actor and comedian)



Dear Dave ...

WRITES A KEEN READER

[Looking back: Great memories of St Paul's Harriers race walk star Ron Jones](#)

With Geoff Hunwicks added to these boys, Weymouth did very well at National and Area level. Denys Jones was a very good speed walker whilst Kevin Baker was unlucky not to get a senior GB vest at 20km. Ron Jones home village was Briantspuddle, which became a regular venue for races and organised training sessions for anyone in the south-west. I believe Harry Callow retired from Bradford on Avon to Weymouth leaving Trowbridge AC to form a walking team in Weymouth. He was ever present as organiser, judge and timekeeper. He was also very keen to strengthen his team and would have liked to have had Chris Maddocks and Stuart Maidment join the Harriers. For many years, my dad and I trained with the Weymouth team on the cinder track at The Marsh when we were on holiday in the area. So many good memories including travelling to national 20k champs at York and Southport with them.



Weymouth St Paul's Harriers race-walking team of 1978. Back from left: Kevin Baker and Den Jones; front from left: Charlie Dunn, Ron Jones, Brian Copp and coach Harry Callow

Jim Ball

AN ORGANISER'S LOT

Reading your comments in EW about the double booking by Cyclopark recently reminded me to tell you that the same thing happened the following week for Surrey AC, which was to have been in Morden Park. So someone thought they would do an early warm-up the weekend before to find the park - er - gone. Bulldozers and JCBs had invaded to prepare the site for a "Tough Mudder" event, and the council, of

course, had said nothing. But that was 7 days before the event, so Surrey County AA had to look for another venue altogether, which took a number of days, and so runners weren't notified until the Thursday, 2 days before the race. Which incidentally was a park run by a different council altogether. It does make you lose faith sometimes - keeping a diary isn't that hard.

Dave Hoben

APPRECIATION

- Thanks to all the editorial team on another masterpiece! I doubt that there is anything else to match your Essex Newsletter within Athletics nowadays, as it is always full of interesting content from so many race walking contributors and beyond. I am sure like us it is greatly appreciated when it is received in our in boxes every one or 2 months. Thank you for including our personal contributions. Keep up the good work! **Bill and Kath Sutherland**
- What a lovely, informative newsletter/magazine you produce, congratulations. Thank you for sending it to me again, I really appreciate it, and enjoy seeing all the news. It's good to see plans being made for various events to take place again after so long, and sincerely hope there will be no more covid hiccups. Although I never knew Phil Nihill, I found it very moving and feel very happy that his dream is finally a reality, and I feel so pleased for all his family, they must be feeling so proud. **Sheila Appleton**
- Thank you. Interesting to read about Paul Nihill too. I remember having to do a research project on a sportsman once and I chose him. I was very pleased with what I created, though I can't remember more than that. **Cathy Towers**

ADVANCE NOTICE OF WHAT TO EXPECT

I have finally had time to sit and read Essex Walker tonight and such great detail and variety goes into your newsletter - a great read. I do love my Centurion 1006 badge that sits in my trophy cabinet that is only reserved for things I am proud of (the rest fill the garage!). I hate to say it but there might be another one of those treadmill runs in the pipeline, they are so much easier to organise than other events. I have run around the course that is planned for the 100, a great course with smooth tarmac, no sharp corners and a small gradient that I am sure will feel like a mountain towards the end. If I am around I would certainly like to be involved in some way and be there to support if not taking part. My plans for 2022 are not yet finalised, so please do stay in contact and will update you nearer the time. Thanks also for the recent link to the event.

Sharon Gayter

Adds Hon Ed: International athlete Sharon qualified as a Centurion in Essex (2004) - at Colchester's Lower Castle Park in the colours of Redcar RWC clocking 22:41.08 - in an event which saw 58 entered/48 starters/24 finishers(1DQ). Of 13 new Centurions only 3 were home-based, the other 2 being Kevin Marshall (Ilford AC) 21:01.27 and Ray Pitts (Isle of Man Vets) 21:53.20. Kevin and Ray are still involved on our ultra-distance walking scene, in fact Ray was a photographer at Castletown for the 2019 Tower Insurance Isle-of-Man 100 Miles' event. In 2011 Sharon set a world 7 days' treadmill record (for both men and women) at Teeside University, where she's a lecturer, reaching 517.3 miles/832.5km. Sharon's the only woman to have held the 822 miles' Land's End-to-John O'Groats records on foot, in **both** directions! In 2006 (south-to-north) the stopwatch recorded 12 days 16 hours 22 seconds: in 2019 (north-to-south) it was 12 days 11 hours 6 minutes 7 seconds. Guisborough-based Sharon likes racing every weekend and most years is a 100-events-a-year athlete.

GEORGE TOWERS REMEMBERED

I first met George at RAF Scampton in 1960 when I arrived at my first posting after RAF Halton. He took me under his wing and together we were able to build quite a formidable team. We enjoyed two full seasons together before I was posted to RAF Bruggen, whereupon I met Dave Gulliver for the first time. My exercise has been put on hold following the placement of a stent, I may have more to follow in December. Too many line-hut bacon sarnies, I think.

Wally Waldron

- Adds Cathy Towers (George's daughter): That's so lovely to hear. I can just about remember Scampton too.
- Adds Hon Ed: I served with Wally at RAF Coltishall from 1966-to-1970. Wally, who still runs and now resides in Cirencester, belonged to Essex Beagles in the '60s when their squad was brimming with

talent, including USAF pilot Rudy Haluza (4th in the 1968 Mexico Olympic 20K), who was stationed in the UK. Sadly Rudy died late September aged 90.

SAD DEPARTURES - A READER's PROFOUND WORDS

It's a sad reality that, as time passes, so do more and more of the people who were important and resonated with us. It's left to us writers and chroniclers to break the news.

Stuart Cooper

Australian Centurion 5 (Hon Editor of "Heel and Toe")

WALT (Wally) EMERY (Belgrave Harriers & Trowbridge AC) RIP

Had an "out-of-the-blue" phone call yesterday from Belinda. Let me give you some background which you can share. Wally was a race-walker - originally Trowbridge I believe - and was an avid supporter of Chippenham-to-Calne walk (Wiltshire). Wally lived in Swindon. Wally's first wife was in charge of about 20 women in typing pool at Oxford Head Office of John Lewis. She, I believe, died of heart attack and his daughter died of similar. Wally married a second time - a Welsh lady Vee - who had been widowed. Vee's daughter Belinda was married with children but her husband went to live in USA on his own and had been very successful in life there. Trish and I only met Belinda once but we do remember her and she obviously had come across our phone number hence the phone call yesterday. We of course know Wally as a Belgravian and I believe he contributed to the club monthly draw. He was also a respected RWA Grade One Walking Judge and we in later years travelled together to judge or spectate at race walking events. In later years, Wally's second wife Vee suffered dementia and was put in a home but when I had offered to visit her, Wally said "NO" because she wouldn't recognise us. As time passed, Wally suffered ill health and severe deafness and calling in at his home on the off-chance of seeing him, we were told he is now in a home. We had no details and hence lost touch. I believe Wally was in his late eighties so would know of athletes of 1950s onwards - whereas I am more familiar with 1960s onwards. Please share any of the above. I have no other details to pass on.

Bob Picton

LETTER to the ESSEX WALKER from an Endurance guru

With the TOKYO Olympic 50KMS non-selection fiasco AND the European Cup Probrady non-selection of our walkers, a real serious debate for our followers is a must. I would ask that an RWA delegate or another be nominated for future selections to ENGLAND/GB Teams. This would give the association a voice. Obviously, selection is based on merit, fitness, qualifications, standards, recovery time periods and the like. Dom KING in March broke the long-standing 50kms record, was overlooked for future important International races, World rankings/selections. Would our other UK GB record holders in track and field, if a UK record was broken, not be nominated for the next championships? With respect, I don't think so. The panel of selectors must have the relevant skills, experience, knowledge and understanding of the event ... to select an athlete. This is fundamental. Endurance is a very complex event to master and understand, so please in future on selection, consider the coaches, mentors and advisors when selecting walkers for International events. Remember it is athlete focussed; they are the ones who need to be motivated, guided and developed, not hindered by bureaucracy and bad policy decisions.

George Nibre

WALKERS TAKE HEED

I am so thankful and just wanted to share my experience so that it might help someone else. My hard and intense training regime for someone in their 70s may have contributed to the condition but it has certainly helped me bounce back from the operation. It might even have unlocked some flexibility in my hamstrings to enable me to straighten my legs more easily!

Ian Richards

Ian's story (19 November 2021) ... courtesy of Race Walking Group Facebook

[Race Walking Group :\) | Take low back pain seriously, get it checked it may be more than just a niggle | Facebook](#)

Take low back pain seriously, get it checked it may be more than just a niggle. This is the story of my blue light dash to a specialist neurology hospital for major back surgery to avert the real possibility of lifelong disability and even death.

I had been having lower back pain for about a month but put it down to normal injury niggles. It was not preventing me from training or even racing. My physio wasn't able to find anything wrong but was starting to suggest I ought to get a scan. On Monday of last week the pain started to intensify and

started to go down my legs. I went to see my chiro (Mel Davis a member of the BMAF medical team who regular supports the GB masters team at masters international championships) on Tuesday who agreed with the physio but felt there was perhaps a bit more urgency to get a scan. On Wednesday she phoned me to ask how I was and when I told her that I was starting to feel some numbness in my legs it was "stop, get to A&E (accident and emergency) right now" - a potential life-saving phone call and I will be eternally grateful to her. I duly went where they confirmed that I was in danger of permanent paralysis of my lower body, blindness and even death because the cause was likely to be a bulge in my spine that was compressing my spinal cord. Apparently the majority who get this condition spend the rest of their life in a wheel chair. They arranged a scan but I had to wait until Thursday afternoon such is the chaos currently in A&E. As soon as they saw it, I was blue light transferred to the specialist neurological unit in Brighton who organised an operation for first thing Friday morning. Fortunately I had a brilliant surgeon who knew my background and that I was still a competing elite masters athlete and he wanted to help me. He decided not to do the normal operation which is to remove the disc completely and fuse the spine back together but to just take part away so that he would not have to remove any of the attachments, such as ligaments, which would have severely restricted my mobility. He put holes in the remainder to reduce any pressure and stitched me back up. Soon after I came round he had me walking up and down the recovery room for an hour. I had no after-effects from the anaesthetic or pain. I was told to just take it easy so that I did not open up the incision and not to put pressure on my back by bending or lifting. I was discharged on Sunday night two days after the operation. I am in no pain and am able to walk about and after tomorrow can start to build up how far I walk. Normal walking but no race walking. No instructions just take care and respond to what your body tells you. I will be seeing him in January when he said we can sit down and devise a plan to start training to get me to the World championships in Tampere. He sees no reason why I shouldn't be able to get back to my best. There is risk of a recurrence but I now know what to look out for. *Ian Richards*

FROM A RESPECTED READER

Nine years' ago I was suffering from lower back pain ... "just joint pain I decided" but went to clinic in Shepherds Bush, recommended by John Hall. They lightened my wallet - but that did not help but they knew there was something serious but did not elucidate and referred me to a doctor, then hospital, clinic and diagnosed as [myeloma](#). Fortunately it was caught in time and treated. Not an enjoyable experience but still going 9 years later. *Carl Lawton*

MEMORY LANE

Thank you for kindly sending me Essex Walker electronically. It is one of the joys or burdens of senior age, the loss of good mates/competitors and trips around the countryside to say goodbye. I am sorry but have lost contact with Highgate Harriers but see sometimes things from Bill Sutherland --- but not John Powell who seems to have become a statistician. I will look out in the next edition. As you may know, through Michael Long, President of Birmingham WC - competitor 1946-1952 – judge, broadcaster and good friend, all my walking programmes and athletic programmes from 1958 to 1971 when I got married and went to Australia for 7 years, went through to the fledgling library at the then new Birmingham University in a large tea chest. The last time an enquiry was made of the now larger Birmingham University the response was no trace - but I can understand that, as Guy Butler's photo library would have overwhelmed the library. I will try to find the note I took when I entrusted everything to Michael Long who would have delivered the large tea chest with my things. Michael, it should be remembered, was one of the Arnhem Parachutists who came home -- not many did. Michael has a sister who worked in a converted church in the City of London off Leadenhall Street. *John Northcott*

THANKS FROM AN OLD LADY

Many thanks to all my friends in the world of race walking for sending me greetings on my eightieth birthday recently, whether by post or by e-mail. The only sensible way to mark the day - it being a Sunday - was to spend even longer in the pub than usual, this time having lunch; the staff presented me with a bunch of flowers, which was a nice surprise. (Peter says that after living here for thirty-something years, the only places where we're known by name are the pub and the chemists, which is probably true.) I've had to

remove my cards from the mantelpiece now to make way for Peter's on the 28th; the flowers have also turned brown and fallen over; tempus fugit!

Pauline Wilson

A NICE GENERAL VIEWPOINT OF OUR SCENE

It really is amazing what a real Community the running/race walking world is. Stay healthy. Hope to see you soon.

Ernie Forsyth

RICHARD DUNWOODY MBE LOOKS BACK ON HIS GREAT 2009 FEAT

All is well here, we live in the mountains near Madrid, our daughter is now 6 and is really enjoying the local school. I still have amazing memories of our little challenge. What an incredible event and I still can't thank you enough for roping me in!! Hell at times but looking back possibly 42 of the best days of my life!!! If you are ever in touch with any of the other guys that were involved, please pass on my best regards.

www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/dunwoodys-last-steps-in-epic-1000-mile-walk-28486437.html



Richard Dunwoody

A SLIMMED-DOWN CENTURIONS' WALK

Despite everything the weather forecasters had said to expect wet and windy conditions it was a surprise that John and Ruth Borgars joined me at the Battle of Britain RAF Memorial on Saturday morning. After coffee we ventured out and it was very bleak with hail and very slippery surfaces, especially descending the White Cliffs. The further we descended so the weather improved and the photograph shows how nice it turned out. We walked towards the Martello tower at Folkestone and started the uphill trek, stopping to read a rather neglected description of a Roman villa and its dimensions and importance. As we returned to the Memorial so the weather turned nasty and didn't improve. But we had covered 9.5 km and it was an enjoyable walk. We examined the Spitfire and Hurricane fighters, and paid our respects to the named pilots whose names are carved on the black granite panels of the Memorial wall. The committee agreed that we hold a social walk using the same format next Spring when weather and people's availability is more assured. I think the walk we've just done can count as the 2021 Social Walk as it maintains our good record of year-on-year social walks. Maybe we could have two next year, one in the north or midlands, and the other revisiting the south coast.



Chris Flint

Adds Hon Ed: The Social Walk was postponed - so Chris turned out to see if anyone appeared. Two hardy walkers did, and with Chris as "Walk Leader" the trio made good.

JOHN NORTHCOTT's 1957 VICTORY REMEMBERED

Sad to hear of the passing of Freddie Baker, a very good club member of Highgate. You mentioned the name of John Northcott a couple of times, and that brought back memories of my first year in racewalking in 1957. I took part in my second race at the one hour walks at Parliament Hill Fields. After finishing my stint in the 'D' section, I sat down later to watch the 'B' section in action, and what a race unfolded that afternoon. It entailed a four-way battle between John Northcott, Roy Sheppard, Arthur Thomson and Dennis Read. For the first half hour or so the four were glued together with the lead changing a few times. Sheppard and Read were juniors, with Read being the younger brother of Norman, the Olympic gold medal winner from the previous year's Olympics at Melbourne. Eventually Northcott proved the

stronger in the second half and pulled away to record a distance of 7m 626y in the hour. The other three had a titanic struggle before Sheppard pulled away to come home in 7m 359y. Thomson of Met WC just edged out Read by one yard recording 7m 276y and Read 7m 275y. It was a wonderful show of competitive racewalking at its best.

Mike Hinton



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