

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

DAY OUT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Ilford had 2 walkers competing over a rural and delightful West Sussex countryside course on 29 October, starting and finishing in Steyning village. In a mixed 10 kilometres John Arthur clinched 3rd place in 64 minutes and 50 seconds beaten only by 2 locals - one of whom was winner Ian Richards of Steyning AC, an Olympian who'd competed in the same 1980 Moscow Games as Ilford's Past President and now retired race walker Roger Mills. Indeed, but for John Arthur's arrival, members of Sussex clubs would have filled the top 6! In a women's 5 kilometres always enthusiastic Shaheda Arthur was placed 4th in 53.51 as "locals" filled the frame.

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLICITY

Observer walks
Walking



Martin Love

Mon 31 Oct 2022 09:00
GMT

We're indebted to RWA and Southern Area Treasurer - former International of note - Mark Easton - for drawing our attention to a major article in The Guardian which positively encourages folk to take up race walking. We can't reproduce it owing to copyright regulations, but can inform you where it may be read. It's worth reading: [A need for speed: if running is too risky, why not try race walking?](#)

LETTER FROM THE FLEET STREET JOURNALIST

"Very nice to hear from you. I really appreciate you taking the time to send me those details. As you will have gathered I am very much a beginner, but am really enjoying it. Hopefully I will be able to come along to one of your events sometime soon."

Martin Love, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU

Preliminary Notice of AGM



Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Race Walking Association will be held as a virtual (online) event on Sunday 15 January 2023.

Colin Vesty, Assistant General Secretary

Adds Hon Ed: Your Club Walking Secretary has been sent details of how to place business on the agenda (resolutions/motions, etc) plus details of vacant positions that need filling. Such information should have been circulated to all walkers by now.

TONY MAXWELL RIP 1941-2022

I recall vividly those days when Ilford AC and Woodford Green AC (as then called) held annual Dinner and Dance functions - tradition was that Presidents of both Clubs were top table guests at the other's function. When I was Ilford President, so was Tony Maxwell Woodford Green's.

Tony's "**Athletes Reunited**" occasions were legendary. Tony's support for up-and-coming young athletes was also legendary (from whatever Club they came from) and he gave encouragement to our late Laurence Dordoy RIP, becoming a family friend who was also at Laurence's funeral. When Ilford President Tony was a top table guest (along with guest speaker Tom Pollak) at Chigwell Manor Hall wearing Woodford's magnificent chain of office (valued over £3,000 even in 1989) - he left it on the table when leaving. The waiter thought it the best tip he'd ever had. Chigwell Manor Hall Managers locked it in their safe and called me the following day, when I collected it and drove it to Tony's Buckhurst Hill home. Tony's well supported "**Athletes' Reunited**" and "**Essex Athletes' Reunited**" luncheons saw great times. If you never attended, you truly missed something special.

Tony was author of a tome "*The First 100 Years of Woodford Green Athletic Club 1908-2008*" as bought by many and which contained a detailed chapter on his Club's great race walking history. Tony was born in the Peak District and was well known locally as Headmaster of Barking Abbey School. He gave a lifetime of meritorious honorary service to our world of athletics. As many know, he was indeed a great friend of race walking. RIP Tony Maxwell - never to be forgotten. **DA**

Tributes to Tony Maxwell RIP

- Very sad news of Tony Maxwell's passing. Great guy whose meetings of Athletes Reunited will always be fondly remembered. May he Rest in Peace and join the many stars of Woodford Green AC in the heavens. I look forward to reading your tribute in Essex Walker. He was a great friend of the Race Walking fraternity. **Bill Sutherland**
- Shocked and saddened by the news. There will never be another like him. RIP Tony and condolences to Carol and family. **Bob Dobson**
- This is very sad news. I did not know Tony particularly well but I was aware of his Athletes Reunited meetings and I attended one held I believe in or near Borough Market some years ago. His interest and support for race walking was well known and I'm pleased you mentioned Laurence Dordoy who was an upcoming walker and benefited from Tony's encouragement. I love the story of him leaving the Woodford Club chain of office on the table and it eventually being rescued and returned by you. RIP. **Chris Flint**
- Tony was a friend and rival from our schooldays back in the late fifties but will be most warmly remembered by myself and so many for his founding of "Athletes Reunited" and the subsequent highly memorable lunches he subsequently organised. Irreplaceable. **John Batchelor**

VETERANS ATHLETIC CLUB 7 MILES CHAMPIONSHIP

This was held in conjunction with the recent Enfield Open 7 Miles. Writes VAC Hon Walking Secretary **Dave Hoben**: "There wasn't a VAC 7 mile presentation as there is only just time for the main presentation; but I will still do VAC results for the VAC's own site, and anyone who wants a medal I will be happy to forward. Amazing weather, almost too hot in the café bar upstairs."

GET WELL SOON

We're sorry to learn that **Noel Blatchford** has suffered a stroke. On behalf of all readers we wish her well in her recovery process, and look forward to warmly welcoming her back to our races.

"IN THE BACK"

Ilford's genial Centurion "*cabby*" **Steve Allen** has been hailed by another big-name celebrity fare - Adrian Dunbar who plays character Ted Hastings. Such tasks are all "*In the Line of Duty*".

JOHN ALBERT WEBB 1936-2022 RIP

Essex Walker readers will all be much saddened to learn of John's death, aged 85 in Bristol where he'd been based for decades, on 9 November. John was a key figure in Essex athletics who commenced his involvement our sport a runner, indeed he ran when doing Army National Service which including a posting to Hong Kong. Born in Dagenham he came from a large family - indeed one where interest in sport flourished. Brother Syd RIP was both a runner and race walker with Essex Beagles as they were then called and another brother, Harry RIP (who served as Havering Mayor 1998/99), was prominent in local football as Chairman of a couple of Leagues and President of another. There's no doubt that John excelled at running and after deciding to concentrate on race walking, his athletics career blossomed - reaching the highest level when reaching Olympian status in 1968. In Essex County terms John won 8 Essex County Championship titles: 2 Miles, 7 miles (twice), 10,000 Metres and 10 Miles (4 times in succession 1966-to-69). It took some doing as Essex contained a "Who's Who?" of top race walking talent during these times. Interesting to note John crossed the changeover period to metric distances, as he won the last County track 7 miles in 1968 and the first in its replacement 10,000 metres track Championship in

1969. John knew what he was best at - shorter distances where he demonstrated an ability to make progress with pace. He did few "long 'uns" but in 1969 when wanting just to finish the 33 miles Essex Long Distance Championship in order to gain League points when top of the table and aiming to remain there! Our Essex Long Distance Championship disappeared from fixture lists after its last staging in 1970 (won by Brian Armstrong) to be replaced by a fixed 50 Kilometres' Championship from 1971 (the first of Bob Dobson's many victories). John was a National track champion at both 2 miles and 7 miles and in 8 International appearances (all at 20K) he was a *"big time player"* for these included 2 European Championships, one Lugano Cup and, as previously mentioned, an Olympic experience. On principle he turned down one International call-up in the 60s as it involved a visit to South Africa when apartheid was in force. His Olympic selection came after a highly competitive *"sudden death"* selection trial in Cymbran. It was controversial as a pointsman was late making his post and some went astray before realising their error of their ways, so lost ground before getting back into the race. Our 1968 Olympic 20K selections were John along with Bob Hughes (Royal Sutton Coldfield) and Arthur Jones (Brighton & Hove AC). The latter emigrated to Australia soon after the Olympics is now in a Care Home with dementia. For interest our 1968 50K selections were Brian Eley (Bristol), Shaun Lightman (Metropolitan WC) and Paul Nihill (SWC). When looking at John's Olympic performance (22nd from 34 starters/1:42.51) it doesn't compare well with a career best of 1:29.59. However, Mexico's Olympics were held in rarefied air of 7,000ft above sea level and our GB squad were somewhat amateurish in preparation as other Nationals had much extensive high altitude training. Fellow 1968 Olympic walker Paul Nihill MBE complained that the only high altitude training he had was training in the Shirley Hills near Croydon (top height 480ft). Also, John picked up an injury as the Games approached, and from arrival at the Olympic Village to race day, he was daily on a treatment table in an attempt to make the start line - which thankfully he did. John was Basildon AC's **first** Olympian - to be followed by Olly Flynn, Eamon Martin, Rob Denmark and Matthew Yates.

Many consider John's best race was our 1973 National 10 Miles (held on a one lap course) when winning his first National road title aged 36. in 72.43. Despite so far north at Leyland 210 started/191 finished/15 disqualified with 29 teams (27 closed-in 4 finishers). With a mile to go John was neck-and-neck with Roger Mills, a younger competitor fabled for his sprinting ability, so was considered favourite at that late stage. Not to be - as on an uphill finish to a Leyland Vehicles factory - John opened up a winning 23 seconds' advantage. Completing an *"all-star"* top 15 (in order) were Jake Warhurst, Olly Flynn, Ron Wallwork, Roy Thorpe, Carl Lawton, Bob Dobson, Peter Marlow, Alan Smallwood, Brian Adams, John Moullin, Mike Holmes, Geoff Toone and Len Duquemin - all under 77 minutes. Roy Posner's action picture is on the [Race Walking Record Issue 367](#) (April 1973) front cover.



John's best marathon time was 2:36.41 set at a fondly remembered Unigate Marathon in Harlow - that time in London Marathons guarantees entry acceptance the following year. Prior to November's 95th Enfield Open 7 Miles, organiser Ron Wallwork gave a start line speech in tribute to John, who we were reminded had won this long-established event in 1966 and 68 in 51.06 and 50.20 respectively, the latter then being a 2nd fastest event time behind 50.18 by Ken Matthews in 1958. After retiring from serious race walking John still made casual appearances at Ilford AC's now defunct Christmas 10K around a course which Colin Young described as no billiard table. For year's John and Sarah Webb visited family members in Essex on the weekend before Christmas, on the same weekend as Ilford AC's race. He was always comfortable in the middle order, and kept this up until well into his 60s. When he stopped racing entirely, he still visited Chigwell Row and usually watched near "The Camelot" with the one-and-only Colin Young. Racing or spectating John was always a welcome visitor at this event. John was a popular visitor when The Centurions held a Social Walk starting from Bristol's Temple Meads railway station" as he turned out to meet and greet its participants before waving them off. Like so many race walkers John continued exercising by turning the pedals! Like brother Syd, John was also a lifelong supporter of the Arsenal.

John's funeral was in a natural burial meadow at Midford Hill on the outskirts of Bath. Here his body was returned to the earth in a moving ceremony in accordance with his wishes. A post service gathering was held in a Country Inn at nearby Monkton Combe. Essex County athletics, and race walking, were represented by a trio of Dave Ainsworth (who was a speaker), Gerry O'Doherty your Essex County Athletics President and now Lancashire-based Greg Smith, who for many years was Basildon AC's Walking Secretary in its heyday years of John and talented team mates. On behalf of all readers our heartfelt condolence on their so sad loss is offered to Sarah and all John's family members. **DA**

[Echo News - Legendary Essex race walking Olympian John Webb passes away](#)

[Lancs Walking Club - RIP John Webb - one of the great stylists](#)

Tributes to John Webb:

- John Webb was my hero. And remained so. As a 13-year old, I was awestruck by the upright, athletic-looking man in a GB tracksuit. He was friendly and soon invited you into the world of international athletics, introducing the leading contenders here and in Europe. He named his dog, Abdon (Pamich). As you might guess from this, he was playful. During our runs in the woods, he used to play a game of submission. If I accepted a branch he offered me, I was defeated. To decline it would result in another 5 minutes of searing pace.
His technique was superb. When, later, I had the opportunity to witness the leading race walkers from Europe, I still thought none matched John's upright, athletic and always safe mode of progression. His running style, by contrast, was a rangy, bouncy affair. On occasions he mixed both in a training session, switching from road walking to cross country running - and all with no notice of the changes, as I struggled to keep up and understand quite what was happening.
He was his own man, starting his day at 6:00 am with 30 minutes of reading his beloved Charles Dickens before setting off to run to work at the centre for adults with learning difficulties. Years later when I learned that my first born had Down syndrome, John was one of the first people I telephoned. His was the perfect, yet totally unexpected, reply: "some of my best friends have Down Syndrome!" I feel honoured to have known John, and during my daily walks through the self-same woods we used to run through, I think of him every time. **Oliver Caviglioli**
- Such sad news - the loss of another race walker from the happy times when we lived in Basildon. John and Bill were good friends, training partners and fellow walkers. Bill framed the postcard John sent from Mexico in 1968. And now, 54 years on, it's still on Bill's memorabilia wall at home. **Janice Wright**
- This is sad news indeed. John introduced me to race walking when I was 13. **Greg Smith**
- Oh NO not another one! A great guy and a great stylist. Very sad news. **Bob Dobson**
- Sad to hear John has passed away. He was such a nice chap and a fantastic race walker. **Peter Marlow**
- Sincere condolence from the Robery family to the walker's family. Fond memories of a lovely man. **Ian Robery**
- Very sad news indeed. John lived near the Bristol-Bath old railway path/cycle way and said he did all his training up and down that excellent recreational route. Vicky and Guy joined us on that walk and we always speak of him whenever we walk on the old railway path, as we did recently. **Sandra Brown**
- Sad news on the passing of one of our greats. I wonder if the high altitude of Mexico City affected his performance. I was in that city many years ago and went for a run, and it was a struggle to gain breath. **Chris Flint** (RWA Southern Area President)
- Very sad to learn that yet another fellow athlete has passed on. I remember John with an immaculate upright style and smooth cadence. **John Batchelor**
- John Webb and my other fellow Olympian Arthur Jones were 2 of the best guys you could wish to meet, as goes for many of our race walking buddies. Johnny Webb came to my wedding along with Paul Nihill and one or two other notable walkers, way back on 15 November 1969. I had a

few battles with both and also suffered in a few races with them but we always went back for more, sometimes taking it in turn to be victors. RIP John and may God be with Arthur through this difficult time. **Bob Hughes**

Note: Mention is made of fellow 1968 Mexico Olympic Games 20K walker Arthur Jones (Brighton & Hove AC). Arthur is Australia-based and news of John's sad death was passed to Arthur via George White who lives near Arthur. George advised us that Arthur isn't well and is a dementia sufferer. **DA**

- Another very sad loss to be added to the departed list. Sincere condolences to all the family. I remember him winning the National title at Leyland in 1973 and in which I raced in that very same fixture. **Glyn Jones** (Race Walking Association Chairman)
- John was a real enthusiastic supporter of the London Business Houses (LBH) events, both Road and Track, over the years he was at Fords. Not only did he take away winners' medals but he also represented the LBH at the annual fixture for the City Charity Contest when it was held at the White City and Crystal Palace and of course in those days when that meeting was considered as a major fixture which included many International Athletes. Even after retired he would still come along to support. **Laurie Kelly** (Hon Sec LBH)
- Very sad news indeed. I can remember many battles on the road and track and he was always a very tough competitor and had an outstanding style and very fair too. He will be greatly missed by all around that golden generation of GB International Race Walkers being so humble and complimentary and encouraging to all others. May he Rest in Peace with the hope that we ALL meet again. With sincere condolences to Sarah and his family. **Bill Sutherland**
- On behalf of the Essex Athletics Association I wish to express my condolences to Sarah and family on the passing of beloved John. I personally did not have the privilege of knowing John, but speaking to many people of John's era at an Essex cross county meeting last weekend he was certainly held in the highest regard by all who knew him. People were genuinely saddened to hear the news. A good friend and training partner Ron Dawson (now City of Southend AC) recalls John as "a decent cross country runner before he found he had a talent for race walking. John was a tough man to train with and had a huge love of grass roots athletics. He was a credit to our sport in Essex". People involved in athletics in Essex are hugely proud of their athletes. Those, like John, who were dedicated to their sport, and went on to achieve success in the Olympic Games are always remembered. As President of Essex Athletics I will be representing the Association at John's funeral in Bath. With sympathy. **Gerry O'Doherty** (President of Essex Athletics Association)
- Just heard about John Webb dying. Have an abiding memory of a race-long duel in the 1970 National 10 in which I prevailed by a few seconds in close to 74 minutes. **Tony Taylor**
- Sad news. I didn't know John, but another race walker passing away is always bad news, especially when there are so few younger walkers to take their place. **Chris Bent**

So many people have got in touch with their tributes. John would have been humbled. **Sarah and family**

'ALLO,'ALLO,'ALLO, WHAT'S GOING ON 'ERE THEN?

Word is out that the Metropolitan Police Walking Club, after a break, are to revive their long-established Annual Dinner & Reunion on their traditional "First Wednesday in March" date (in 2023 St David's Day). Nearer the day, booking details/timings/venue etc will be made available to all. Yes, it's open to **all** walkers and their guests - you don't have to have been in the Police or 'nicked' by them, to dine at this function. It'd be nice to see more now retired Met Police race walkers attending - those who made this Club famous!

IN THE FABULOUS FIFTIES

Since our last edition reported a sad death of Warren Roe - author of "A 75th Anniversary Ilford Athletic Club 1923-1998" - his funeral was held at Kemnal Park Crematorium on the Sidcup by-pass. A large

gathering included members of both Ilford AC & Havering AC, both Clubs having benefited from meritorious service by the deceased gentleman. Among mourners was octogenarian Essex resident **Peter Harrison**, who was at the same school as Warren and in 1959 at Wembley was in Ilford's winning "Garnet Cup" team, which with 72 points, was 1 point better than Brighton AC as Trowbridge AC came 3rd on 81 points. Ilford victorious scoring 4 were Ray Betts 5, Norman Alderman 5, Peter Harrison 11 and P A Williams 52. The individual 1-2-3 was Ray Middleton (Bels in 80.22), John Godbeer (Cambridge H) and C J Manning (Highgate H). Ilford had a number of keen walkers at that time, none more than the late Colin Williams who was ineligible for the Garnet, having won in 1957 at Wimbledon clocking 79.10 with Arthur Thomson (Metropolitan WC) and M H Tadd (Brighton & Hove AC) 2nd and 3rd respectively. That day's 1-2-3 teams were Metropolitan WC. Woodford Green AC and Brighton AC. Other Ilford AC walkers around that time were Alec Tiffin and Centurion 293 Charles "Reg" Bond who qualified at the 1959 London-to-Brighton-and-Back in 20:43.42. Reg opted to retire on reaching the 100 miles mark - he could have continued for a further 6 miles to complete a 106 miles round trip if he'd desired. That 1959 race had been extended from 104-to-106 miles owing to extra distance added by an opening of the Gatwick Airport stretch. The race, won by Olympian Frank O'Reilly (C276 (Lozells Harriers) saw Highgate Harriers stalwart and Essex resident - the *one-and-only* Charlie Megnin C288 - become the first of 15 new Centurions in 19:05.28 at 100 miles and 20:27.10 at the 106 miles finish. Further down the order to claim No 299 was Sheffield's John Eddershaw who made 100 miles in 22:25.55 - much more was to be seen from John over decades to come and he's now the only survivor from that 1959 intake of new Centurions. Sadly, M25 protesters adversely affected Warren's funeral by co-ordinated action near the A12 and A127 junctions. Some mourners, including a number from Havering AC were trapped - so upping a planned 40 minutes' journey to almost 3 hours. However, they didn't turn back and arrived towards the end of a post-service gathering. Hon Ed and Peter Harrison used their nous to navigate a near empty B186 from Warley through North & South Ockendon down to Chafford Hundred and then by Lakeside Retail Park to enter the M25 just 300 yards from the bridge, as nothing was coming down the M25. That back route, parallel to the M25, is worth storing in your memories!

"I HEREBY DECLARE"

At November's Southern Athletics League AGM a resolution to include a walking race in one of their many summer meetings was defeated by 33 votes to 13.

Comments:

- "I guess no real surprise as the vast majority of League Clubs don't have any walkers." **Andy Catton** (Ilford AC's delegate)
- "I knew the result of the vote, which is not surprising, but had hoped a few more clubs would have supported it. The positive here was that an athletic club raised the item for the SAL AGM, without consulting any race walkers, so there is some desire to have a walk." **Mark Easton** (RWA Southern Area Chairman)

RWA SOUTHERN AREA AGM



In his last few days as your RWA Southern Area President, Chris Flint was "given the floor" after the 95th Enfield Open 7 Miles to appeal for a good AGM attendance which was on "Zoom" so none needed to venture into central London on a dark cold night. Chris stated there were 10 Committee positions, which at present saw only 6 persons occupying them - and "new blood" was needed to drive our organisation forward. Sadly, to borrow a quote from St Mark's Gospel, his worthy words mainly "fell on stony ground" as only 3 from outside the Officers/Committee showed up at the AGM. Your new President, taking the chain-of-office from Chris, is long serving Mike Fox. In an acceptance speech he said, "I will strive to do my best in the illustrious footsteps of past office holders. I hope I can do the role justice". Changes were that hard-working Stephen Cartwright stepped down as your Judges and Official Hon Sec to be replaced by Noel Carmody. Stephen was rightly warmly thanked for his worthy efforts. Southern Area walkers showed satisfaction with the way things progressed during the past year by re-

electing other positions: your Hon Sec is Chris Flint again looks after our admin, though stressed he'd delegate a number of tasks as the year progressed, Pam Ficken is Hon Assistant Secretary, Mark Easton is Hon Treasurer, Graham Chapman is Webmaster and Chris Hobbs fills a vital role in charge of Coaching & Development. Keeping an eye on your ledgers are auditors Trevor Jones and Ian Richards. All positions mentioned were unopposed - further sign of your contentment with their work on your behalf. Three posts went unfilled as no nominations were received: Vice President, Hon Championships Secretary and Chair of the Records & Standards Committee. If readers think can help out, please make themselves known to Chris Flint. Despite an appeal made after the Enfield Open 7 Miles, 4 Southern Area Committee places remain on offer. This could be ideal for persons to make their mark in the administration of our athletics event.

JOHNNY BIRKS 1933 -2022

Johnny Birks, or "JB" as known by many, passed-on while in the Royal Sussex County Hospital on 9 October aged 89. He was both a runner and race walker and a popular athlete on the scene. He competed well into his veteran years. We thank Alan Buchanan for sending us news of his sad passing.

[Brighton & Hove AC - John Birks RIP](#)

Bill Sutherland writes: "I remember him well in my race walking photo memory of years gone by. He was a character and a member of a strong and very successful Brighton and Hove Race Walking Team. May he Rest in Peace. With sincere condolences."

FIXTURES

DEC	17	Open Track 3K (including 1K & 2K) 'B' Event & Development race. All welcome.	Lewes Track	12.00 noon
	18	Tony Maxwell RIP Tribute afternoon	Ashtons Track	2.00 pm
	26	Southend Pier 2 Miles (out and back) Yacht Handicap	Southend Seafront	10.00 am
2023				
JAN	14	Enfield League 5 Miles + 2022 Series Presentation	Donkey Lane	11.00 am
	15	Race Walking Association AGM	Zoom	TBA
	28	The Centurions AGM	TBA	TBA
FEB	4	Steyning 15K/10K/5K	Steyning	TBA (1.30/2.00?)
	12	SCVAC 3,000 Metres Indoor Championship	Lee Valley	11.00 am
	18 & 19	UK Athletics Indoor Championships (walk probably on Sunday)	Birmingham	TBA
	18 & 19	BMAF Indoor Championships (walk probably on Sunday)	Sheffield	TBA
	26	Veterans Inter-Area Representative Match – 2000m	Lee Valley	TBA
MAR	4	Molly Barnett Track Walks including 10K	Coventry	TBA
	4 & 5	Essex County/Eastern Counties 3,000 Metres Indoor Championships Valley	Lee Valley	TBA

Regular distance training walks are held from Leigh-on-Sea's Belfairs Park. Owing to popularity these continue – details from Centurion Steve Kemp on **07860 617899**.

OFF THE SCENE

Not seen for a couple of months is Surrey Walking Club Centurion **Kathy Crilley**, one of our most active participants. Alas Kathy is under treatment for a cruciate ligament injury, which has prevented her from

racing. Races missed include the 95th Enfield Open 7 Miles and a prestigious 8 days' event in Monaco. We wish the good lady well on her road to full fitness.

WALKER ON THE MOVE

Ken Roost, formerly of Stevenage & North Herts AC, Verlea AC and the RAF, and now with Enfield & Harringey AC, is relocating from Stevenage to Esher in Surrey. A sub-20 hours 100 miler in 1979 at Ewhurst, Ken is to celebrate his 92nd birthday on Boxing Day. Ken, who served the Enfield League as a marshal for many years, was present at our wonderful 90th Enfield Open 7 Miles reunion in 2016 and also at 2011 Centurions Centenary Dinner at the House of Commons. He's moving into his son's house. We all wish popular Ken well in his new surroundings.

NO VISIT TO THE PALACE

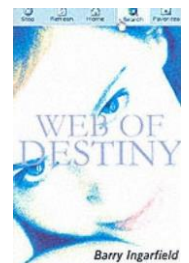
A now run-down/dilapidated Crystal Palace National Centre, once venue for top class athletics - and where many top race walks have taken place - is now closed for all until further notice owing to its dangerous condition. Concrete pylons which support floodlights are in a woeful state. Many athletes who train there have had to relocate. The Greater London Authority have a long-term plan to restore this site to its former glory. [Crystal Palace Stadium: Former home of athletics 'managed to disrepair' - BBC News](#)

BARRY HAROLD INGARFIELD RIP

Sorry to report that GB International Barry has passed on, aged 83 due to Covid, in a Care Home where he'd suffered with dementia. Former Royal Air Force technician, Barry commenced race walking when residing in Ipswich and as a member of Ipswich Harriers. He organised 2 popular walking races: the Ipswich 10 Miles and, of course, the wonderful Colchester-to-Ipswich 17-and-half miles race which took in parts of the "Constable Country". In later times he went on to race for the famous, but now defunct Metropolitan Walking Club, and Belgrave Harriers.

He achieved full GB International status in 1976 at a match against a then named West Germany. He gained selection after an Easter Saturday trial race around the infamous 5 laps' Basildon Industrial Estate course. Alas for Barry, the 50 kilometres' distance at which this International was arranged, was at short notice reduced to 35 Kilometres by the West German hosts. This certainly didn't suit Barry, and he complained about it for decades afterwards. Those 4 on International duty for the match were Barry, recently departed Stuart Elms, John Lees and Roy Thorpe. Leading up the Moscow 1980 Olympics Barry gave up his job and travelled to Mexico where he trained with the all-powerful Mexican squad in a bid to gain Olympic 50K selection. He returned to the UK for our trials, but wasn't successful. Barry coached and launched a strong bid to be our National Race Walking Coach, as he had ideas on how to reverse our downwards spiral. His application was unsuccessful. He was a qualified pilot and once circled a walking venue a few times in a light plane before landing on a nearby airstrip for the meet. His Cessna aircraft had an unlucky future after Barry sold it, as it was demolished/written off when crashing into Welsh hills killing both occupants.

Barry was a talented crooner who sung professionally in clubs and twice auditioned for "Britain's Got Talent". As an author he wrote the 363 pages novel *"Web of Destiny"* in 1999 which was published by Minerva Press and still listed (albeit out of print) on Amazon Books website at £14.99 and is in the British Library. Before dementia sadly set in, Barry was working on another (now unfinished) novel - *"Camberwell Beauty"*. His son Milt who resides in Arbroath, broke the news after Barry's funeral. We express condolence. **DA**



Tributes to Barry Ingarfield:

- A shock to me ... he was totally inspired by top athletes and was very pro-active (training for him was racing speed often) ... and long training sessions. I trained with him for a while ... so I

treasure these memories (he had us walking 50 km in Richmond Park) ... just one memory!! He inspired me ... he was always so positive. BARRY I WILL MISS YOU. **Adrian James**

- Sorry to hear of yet another, must watch my back. It was only yesterday that I was thinking that I had heard nothing of him for a while. **Carl Lawton**
- Very sad news indeed. He trained a lot with Wilf Wesch in his heyday and loved the distance walks. We respected him greatly especially for his honesty over the late 60's and early 70's selections internationally. I'm truly proud to be 2nd fastest in the Colchester to Ipswich in which many top walkers took part in. May he rest in peace. Sincere condolences. **Bill Sutherland**
- Sorry to hear another great character has passed away. He was so confident about his race walking career and was so disappointed not to be picked for the Moscow Olympics. He will be missed. **Peter Marlow**
- Sorry to hear of Barry's passing. I remember when we held an international track walking match at Brighton's Withdean Stadium that Barry flew over in his plane and circled above. The international mentioned included two of our Brighton walkers John Lees and Stuart Elms, the latter having also passed away this summer. **Alan Buchanan**
- I have some memories of Barry. He was always outspoken and this didn't always go down well with everyone. Nevertheless, it is yet another one to bite the dust. As you know he competed in the London Business Houses (LBH) events and for the LBH in the City Charities meetings. **Laurie Kelly** (Hon Sec London Business Houses Athletic Association)
- Saw the post about Barry whom I knew. Shame I knew little detail of his stellar history until now. I remember him more from his being a coach at races. **Ed Shillabeer**
- Sad news. I never really knew Barry but had the impression he was a complex character but obviously talented in many ways. **Chris Flint**
- On hearing the sad news of Barry Ingarfield's passing away, my mind reflected on his kindness, inspiration and knowledge he passed onto me when I was a young racewalker over 40 years ago. I hope he continues to walk tall and aim high in his next chapter in the circle of life. **George Nibre**
- He was a character - I believe he'd had 3 wives. **John Eddershaw** (Some say 4 - Hon Ed)

PETE DUHIG's SETBACK

Alas Spanish-based Peter has suffered a stroke. Currently under treatment, we hope it's progressing well and recovery is soon to come. All readers wish him well and a swift return to better health.

ESSEX MEMBERS AT THE ENFIELD LEAGUE

November's 95th Enfield Open 7 Miles (our only Open 7 remaining on fixture lists) saw Ilford's double Olympian Neringa Masilionė (also 2011 winner) triumph in an emphatic 58.11. As for the rest of news from this event we don't want to steal Enfield Walker's thunder - as they've covered this race and result in much detail - and most of our readers are on Ron Wallwork's email distribution list. But a word for Ashford's Jonathan Hobbs whose 3rd place proved that any stiffness from his impressive 100 miles triumph at Middlesbrough in adverse conditions is truly out of his system. Sadly, the field was again well down. Last year's result (16 men/5 women finished as 8 completed lesser distances from 3-to-6 miles) was an insert in the 2022 race programme. This year's field wasn't much better and talk afterwards included speculation as to how much longer it might continue? A prize table, groaning under the weight of items on it, saw awards for all 4 scorers of the top 4 teams. But only 2 teams closed-in, so Ron distributed those unclaimed 8 prizes as "spot prizes". Everybody got something! Like other sports, we've people who haven't returned to action after "lockdowns". An appeal to "stayaways" - please return as we need more turning out to keep such traditional races going. We're grateful to former Enfield & Harringey AC President Bernie Hercok's estate for prizes and free entries for all.

This race was a **final** one in our 2022 Enfield League campaign. Again, we'll only mention a few Essex achievements, as a full League report is to be issued by Ron, to go to all on his email distribution list. Pride of place for an Ilford AC squad who topped the League table (2,479 points) after a few years not even making the top 3. Second team were genial hosts, Enfield & Harringey AC with 2,267, with Belgrave Harriers 3rd on 1,429. 4th came Loughton 990, 5th Ilford 'B' 820 and 23rd Colchester Harriers with 80. In the men's individual table, 4th, came John Arthur (Ilford) who enjoyed a truly successful season as did 1st and 2nd ladies Melanie Peddle (Loughton) and Emma Dyos (Ilford). Loughton's John Borgars, who in 2016 at windy Redcar qualified as the most senior Centurion ever to do so, was "1st Centurion". Prize presentation is to be on Saturday 14 January in the Club room after the opening 2023 Enfield League fixture, over 5 miles (including opt-out distances) at Donkey Lane (11am start). A three-line whip for full attendance please - to get the League off to a cracking start.

SOUTHEND PIER PLANKS RACE - REMINDER

This long established 2 miles race, out-and-back along the world's largest pleasure pier, is a run for City of Southend AC members only. However, walkers from all Clubs may appear as guests. All you need do is to give prior notice to Southend Hon Secretary, former walker June Cork on **01702-472195** or email southendac@hotmail.co.uk giving name, Club, age category plus anticipated 2 miles' time (this to work out a yacht handicap). Entry fee is a small purchase (alcohol, confectionary, toiletries, etc) wrapped, to be placed on a prize table. On finishing all pick up a wrapped item to go home with. Boxing Day at 10am. Southend pier is in the City Centre on the seafront. It's in Western Esplanade SS1 1EE. Come ready changed - all welcome for an enjoyable morning.

WEALTH WARNING

There's a scam about - and we thank Pat Furey for tipping us off. Pat received an email purporting to come from Eddie Trotter. It stated Eddie had won millions on the European lottery and wanted to give some away to friends - indeed a laudable intention! Pat was asked to send bank details to Eddie, so money could be transferred directly into his account. Hmmm! Eddie said, "I've been hacked and haven't won a vast sum on the Euromillions Lottery". So, readers - be warned.

DECADE CELEBRATED

Enfield's **Pamela Abbott** has completed 10 years as a parkrun regular and held a celebration to mark this feat. We congratulate her on completing her first parkrun decade. At time of writing she has completed 296 'runs' and volunteered 94 times. When asked whether she runs or race walks at these events, Pamela writes: *"It's a bit of a mixture - the faster ones are run, then middling ones (especially those with a hill) are run and a bit of racewalk, and the slowest just a normal walk."* She goes on to report: *"We supported a bid for racewalking to be in one of the Southern Athletics League matches but it was defeated 33 clubs against to 13 in favour which was a shame."*

90 NOT OUT - OUR CONGRATULATIONS

One of race walking's greatest – yes, greatest - stalwarts is to celebrate reaching nonagenarian status on 12 December. It's Hemel Hempstead-based **Ken Livermore** who for decades raced with distinction for Enfield & Harringey AC (and under its Club's former names). His worthy race results can be seen in Race Walking Record editions going back to the '50s, indeed he was a leading competitor in Royal Air Force races in such times. Ken loved doing traditional "Open 7s", once the backbone of our winter race walking scene - where his name always came near the top of results lists. In 1966 he completed the Leicester-to-Skegness 100 Miles in the colours of Woodford Green AC (as then called) clocking 21:07.41 to become Centurion No 386 when aged 33. At Centurion AGMs a member present with the lowest number is always personally identified and recorded - it's often been Ken. Over decades Ken's done so much to assist athletics and hasn't missed many 100 miles/24 hours events where he's put much back into the sport by

recording for endless hours - so enabling others an opportunity to qualify as Centurions. He has talents as an efficient organiser of events, as well we know - and in respect of The Centurions' now long-established programme of Social Walks, used his knowledge of London to lead such walks around our Capital. On behalf of all readers we salute the worthy Ken Livermore and wish him a truly enjoyable 90th birthday celebration.

SO SAD NEWS

With profound regret we've been informed that Ian, husband of Cambridge-based Sue Clements, died on 26 November after a long illness. Sue, a former Centurions' Honorary Secretary, a coach and a diligent statistician and archivist is a most active race walker with many successful distance completions in several countries. For many years a Romford resident, Sue has represented Essex in Inter-County representative matches. Readers will be saddened to hear of Ian's passing. We express our sincere condolence to Sue at this sad and trying time.



Dear Dave ...

TONY/DAD

As I think you will already know, my dad Tony Maxwell passed away after a brief period of illness. My brother Stuart, mum and I were all with him, and it was very peaceful. Although there will not be a funeral (he always hated them with a passion (!), we are planning to organise an evening for friends and family to get together. As soon as we have any details I will be in touch. In the meantime, if you could let everyone know who you are in touch with that would be really helpful, as mum and I won't necessarily know all the networks dad was part of.

Petra (Tony's daughter)

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLE PRAISED

Interesting article in The Guardian which clearly shows how LITTLE the athletic public know about Race Walking past or present. One would have thought our great sport has only just been introduced recently. More is known about netball, skateboarding, climbing, walking football and now golf football! The Sporting World has gone mad! Do they really want to know about a sport as slow as ours in this ever-faster world? We have never ever sold ourselves enough and have created the situation we now face. Thankfully we lived in a truly pedestrian era and with a judging system that was FAIR but FIRM, with Judges that truly knew whether you were walking to the rules. Heaven knows how the Race Walking Association committee would deal with the issue now if they received a large response to The Guardian article, although I doubt it.

Bill Sutherland

NICE WORDS

- Thank you for the Essex Walker, so that I can get news of old friends. I see that Pauline Wilson has had some medical problems and I wonder if you would mind passing on my best wishes. Both Pauline and Peter have contributed so much to our sport and I'd like them to know that I am thinking of them and hope that Pauline will continue to get better. Nice to see that there will be a 35km at the Paris Olympics!
- Good reading. Always proud to toe the line with so many great athletes mentioned in the last edition.

Mike Scamell

Arthur Gutteridge C476

NEWS FROM SUSSEX

Glad to hear Pauline is out of hospital and slowly getting better. Steyning AC have decided not to promote the Alf Palmer Races scheduled for 10 December at Horsham. We have sorted out a date (4 February) to have our 15K 10K and 5K at Steyning.

Ron Penfold

1968 OLYMPICS AND FIRST GIRL ROCK BAND



I came across an article in the [Nation.Cymru](https://www.nation.cymru/). I googled "The incredible untold story of Wales first all-girl group The Fabs". In the article appears a picture of Brian Eley, Paul Nihill (hidden), myself and John Webb with the band. The story ... they wanted to see the Olympic Village so we agreed to 'smuggle them in' wearing GB tops not very convincing. The article confuses us with the Australians because Brian and Paul were wearing Australian hats.

Shaun Lightman

Cutting from a Mexican newspaper of The Fabs arriving at the GB village in Mexico City

TRIBUTE TO JOHN WEBB AT ENFIELD OPEN 7 MILES WALK

I hope there was mention at the start of the Enfield Open 7 Miles' Walk for the Late Great Olympian John WEBB. He started race walking late with a few extra years on his belt than some, but we had some wonderful races between 1967-1972. It's such a shame that we live in the current era of UK Race Walking, when we have such vivid thrilling memories of the past. They don't know what they are missing!

Bill Sutherland

NOT THIS TIME



L-to-R: Hilary, Ellie, Philip (Mockett) and Alan

I hope all is well. Thank you for the Essex Walker. Unfortunately, I was not successful in the ballot for the London Marathon and therefore I won't be flying the flag for Race Walking next April. My daughter, Ellie, was successful but she is committed to running it!

It was interesting to read in the Essex Walker about Park Walk. Most of the Leicestershire ParkRuns welcome walkers and I am a frequent park walker race walker. I was in Sussex last weekend and met up with Alan Buchanan and we race walked the Worthing Park Run – he pushed me all the way to the finish line!! My brother, Philip, and niece also joined us.

Hilary McDermott

NEWS AND VIEWS

All of these things sound so good, and every time I get a newsletter I read it and am always tempted. I even want to have a go at the Centurion attempt. I have a full-time job which takes up nearly every waking hour and am really under the waves of it all at the moment, however, my knees are feeling good and I will race walk again as soon as possible. The Battersea and Moulton ones sound possible soon. Rest assured I'm keeping abreast of what you're doing and look forward to re-inserting myself if accepted, at the earliest opportunity.

Tessa Killingbeck

Adds Hon Ed:

Nice to hear from Norwich-based Tessa, who we've seen racing in the Enfield League from time-to-time.

AN OLYMPIAN'S CONTRIBUTION

I came across this quote from Theodore Roosevelt. Applicable to Race Walkers: "Keep your eyes on the stars and your feet on the ground".

Shaun Lightman

READER'S RESPONSE

Thank you for sending the latest version of Essex News to me. I always find it a really interesting read. My attention was drawn in particular to the article about Police Cadets at Hendon in 1975. I joined the Met Police Cadets in August 1974 and recall there being about 300 others joining with me on that day alone. Already there was George Nibre who was a little older and held the position of Mayne House Captain. There were 4 houses accommodating cadets and I was posted to stay in Mayne House. George went on to become the School Captain helped by his fame as a race walker of a very high standard. I recall John Bromley well and all cadets had to compete in the cross country run and race walk events. This was a totally alien sport to all but a small number but made compulsory by John. I was involved in other sports disciplines but actually enjoyed race walking and continued to dip in and out of the sport for brief intervals until I was 60 when I took it up as my number one preference. I'd been a footballer, a boxer then a runner for most of my life.

RACE WALKING			
On Sunday, 21 July 1974, Cadets Thomas, Lowery, Carmody (Rowan House), Wright, Lovell, Hibre (Mayne House), Thompson (Trenchard House), Cassidy (Sunbury (CTC1)), with Mr. Bromley, Physical Training Officer, participated in the Gloucester Carnival Open 7 Mile Road Walking Race at Gloucester. The Metropolitan Police Cadet team gained first place with 12 points with the Nomad Walking Club (an outstanding well known Midlands team) coming second with 14 points. Individual positions were:-			
	Place	mins	secs
Cadet Nibre	3rd	57	04
Mr. Bromley, PTO	4th	57	43 (First veteran award)
Cadet Thomas	12th	62	02 (First Novice award)
Cadet Lewin	16th		
Cadet Carmody	18th		
Cadet Wright	19th		
Cadet Lovell	22nd		
Cadet Thompson	26th		
Cadet Cassidy	32nd		

I am sure that all members of staff and cadets would wish to join in congratulating the above-named cadets who volunteered for these two activities and by their tremendous effort gained laurels for the Metropolitan Police Cadet Corps.

I have kept a fair bit of my past in a file. I found today Hendon Cadet Corps newsletters dated 1974 and 1975. There are many references to George's achievements contained. I bumped into him at Enfield at a race earlier this year nearly 50 years after we first joined the Met. The attached is from a newsletter. Interesting to me is that the name Carmody is mentioned too. I had no idea he

too was in the cadets at the same time as me. The other names mentioned may be the answer to the missing 3 in the picture you refer to.

Colin Harle

ESSEX COUNTY AA PRESENTATION at ENFIELD

I bet the medallists were delighted to be presented with their Essex medals by Callum, the current UK number one walker. Much more memorable for them than receiving their medals from yours truly !! (had I been available). Keep well Dave and keep spreading the 'walking news'.

Gerry O'Doherty (Essex County AA President)



AN AMBASSADOR FOR RACE WALKING

I am supporting a primary school charity walk with Fi and our 11-year old daughter, Eleanor. Around the same time, I presented two Olympic career talks firstly to the younger children then the older ones at Sampford Primary School, the like of which I've done at many other schools over the past five decades.

Chris Maddocks

OVER 300 ENQUIRIES

I really worry about what Peter Cassidy can do with these 300 enquiries (from The Guardian article on walking). We have so few younger active back up staff as judges, coaches and officials and the racing

calendar is so bare. You attend a few races still and we wonder what the current attendees to races as they are say and feel? Is this situation ever mentioned in the aftermath refreshment and presentations? Surely it should be! What response to the current situation do you get by those who take Essex Walker? Keep up the great work you and your team do!

Bill Sutherland

EDBANGER UK 100K TRACK RECORD HOLDER

I believe there was an uncharacteristic error amid all the wonderful facts and figures in your last Essex publication. Unless I missed a significant performance, Edmund Shillabeer is *still* the UK 100km track record holder. His 9.41.54 walk at Colchester in 1985 was achieved during the Telecom-sponsored 100mile UK track championships; I was there assisting the great man. This photo was taken by Richard Pannell shortly after Ed had crossed the finish line. While the longer event continued, Richard and I alternated much needed rest with helping others competing. It was difficult to sleep as music blared out from a trackside marquee inspiring the Centurions along their path to glory. To this day, Edbanger, never one to shun the chance to strut his funky stuff on the disco dance floor, boogied inside the marquee for his post-race warm down. Rock on ...

Chris Maddocks



Adds Edbanger: RAF man Gareth Davies also helped. Most of the time I was in the middle lane.

Adds Hon Ed: That 1985 event at Colchester Garrison track had 3 categories/3 different winners: Ed (100K), Charlie Weston (100 Miles) and Peter Worth (24 Hours). Another who had a great 100K race, before leaving the event, was Martin Oliver - writing in Essex Walker at the time, Organiser John Hedgethorpe said if Martin had carried on he'd have certainly joined The Centurions. Gareth Davies was a Penarth man who raced for Dawlish & South Devon Walking Club and completed 7 UK 100s - doing so to build fitness in order to join the Special Air Service (SAS). The Centurions have lost contact with Gareth (C736) - any readers know his whereabouts? Oops/sorry - a mistake in thinking Ed **was** the record holder - he **still is**. An easy mistake to make as it was thought a 37 years' old record ago must surely have seen a new holder by now - *not so!*



**Best wishes and compliments of the season
to all readers
from
the Essex Walker team**

ESSEX WALKER

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