

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

BRITISH ATHLETICS TO AXE TRACK WALKS?

Tom Boswell has stated, in a post on the FB page *Race Walking Group*, that British Athletics has made a behind-closed-doors decision to remove walking races from future British outdoor and indoor track championships.

While no formal announcement appears yet to have been made, the information (presumably leaked) is disturbing for all who love the sport and revere its heritage, both in UK athletics and as a component of track and field worldwide. Once abolished, what are the chances of reinstating it? No doubt discussion will centre on whether the British race walking community can mount a sufficiently strong challenge to have this decision overturned. The consequences for the sport of shutting down such a vital developmental outlet for young talent aiming at international representation need no spelling out here.

Follow the *Race Walking Group* discussion at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/139423539480219>. In the meantime, we hope the decision can and will be reversed. If Great Britain ceases to recognize race walking – a sport in which it was a 20th century powerhouse – as worthy of a place alongside other athletics events, the sport will be lost to potential stars there who were born to do it yet will likely never know of it.

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WALKING SHOWN THE DOOR

Here's a reader's comment - relevant - about where National Championship status race walking goes next, after being dropped from main programmes: "I love the word 'showcased' in this context (ie the dropping of walks from the main UK Champs). Rather than being 'showcased' in front of an audience of several thousand spectators in the stands and potentially several million on TV screens they will now be 'showcased' at somewhere like Bedford or Nuneaton together with multi events, where there will be no TV coverage and the audience will be a few coaches and a handful of friends and family of those competing. One problem with the Inter Counties is that you can't enter. You have to be nominated by your county".

THINKING ALOUD by Hon Ed

At a time when Southern Area, and race walking in general, is trying to devise ideas to encourage more newcomers into our chosen discipline, it's of no assistance to learn that British Athletics aims to ditch our event from **all** Indoor and Outdoor Championships. Twice in recent years we've been thrown out of Inter-Counties Championships. **Our shop window is continually having its shutters closed down on it.** As for Inter-Counties exclusion, after breaks, we successfully campaigned for re-admittance. The next such time can't be far off (considering how few race walkers have supported this meeting). We won't get back a third time! It's no wonder the Southern League voted so heavily against having one walk in their summer-long programmes. It's no wonder nearly all English Counties have abandoned track walks in the main County Championship programmes. I could go on, but won't as it's obvious what needs doing next. Our National body needs to raise objections to our exclusion from all British Athletics Indoor and Outdoor walking Championship meetings. December's Race Walking Record informs you of this "*behind closed doors*" decision by British Athletics. We're told they want to cease 5,000 metres walks as BBC prefer shorter events. So surely it'll be better to reinstate 3,000 metres walks into their meetings, as opposed to 5,000 metres. At least - if agreed - it'll might keep us on the programmes: *well for a bit longer*.

In past years your RWA General Committee voted not to accept an offer of a London Marathon Walking Section as it couldn't be judged properly (although other World Marathons have them). Even our inclusion

in televised sponsored meetings ended when they decided not to provide judges for such events as unfavourable publicity was generated when short distance events (1 mile/1,500 metres) saw walkers caught 'up' on televised slow motion. As the late John Hedgethorpe wrote at the time, *"All publicity is good publicity"*. Oscar Wilde wrote, *"There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about"*. So, let's contest this decision to exclude race walking from National Championship track meetings, even if it means reducing the distance raced. We must remain on the card!

DA

AT THE TABLE

Former Essex race walking leading light, talented **Andy O'Rawe**, now enjoys training with Steve Kemp and Kim Howard in their squad (see details in our fixtures column). All-round sports participant Andy has recently taken up another one - table tennis - at which we soon expect to be hearing of success.

RESPONSE TIME

Since that constructive article by Martin Love in The Guardian (*"God Bless 'em"* said Roger Mills) - about taking up competitive race walking - over 300 enquiries have been generated. **Peter Cassidy** is currently wading through them.

Stuart Bennett asked *"Do you think he may send some my way?"*. Sandra Brown, Chris Bent, Ed Shillabeer, Olly Flynn and Bill Sutherland all remarked that this was "great news" (albeit with some caution from Bill who commented that *"we have no meaningful races and few clubs and coaches and judges! In short, the mansion of old has no foundations!"*)

FIXTURES

JAN	14	Enfield League 5 Miles (incl opt-out distances) + 2022 Series Presentation	Donkey Lane	11.00am
	15	Race Walking Association AGM	Zoom	TBA
	28	The Centurions AGM	Leicester Cricket Club	1.00pm doors open at noon
FEB	4	Steyning 15K/10K/5K	Steyning	2.00pm 30 min walk to start
	11	Enfield League 5 Miles (incl opt-out distances)	Donkey Lane	11.00am
	12	SCVAC 3,000 Metres Indoor Championship	Lee Valley	11.00am
	18	BMAF Indoor Championships	Sheffield	TBA
	18 & 19	UK Athletics Indoor Championships (walk probably on Sunday)	Birmingham	TBA
	26	Veterans Inter-Area Representative Match – 2000m	Lee Valley	TBA
MAR	1	Met Police Walking Club Annual Dinner & Reunion	Civil Service Club/SW1	6.00pm
	4	Molly Barnett Track Walks including 10K	Coventry	TBA
	4 & 5	Essex County/Eastern Counties 3,000 Metres Indoor Championships	Lee Valley	TBA
	18	Enfield League 5 Miles (incl opt-out distances)	Donkey Lane	11.00am

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**.

Note: After hanging-on by the skin of our teeth (due to woeful turnouts) your Essex County AA have ended their 1 Mile Walk Championship and upped the distance to 3,000 metres. Some weren't prepared to travel to Lee Valley for 1 mile. Well, you've got what you want, **so please now give maximum support.**

GET WELL SOON

Sad to say **Bob Watts** (London Vidarians & Centurion 838) has been a hospital in-patient at Kings College Hospital for 6 weeks before transfer to Guy's Hospital on 19 December. Brother Ken reports that Bob has a collapsed lung, needs an operation, and will be "in" for a while. Ken will update us as time passes. Bob's a former Centurions' archivist and is one of only 6 race walkers (all Centurions) to have completed over 100 of those popular long-established Blackheath Park 9K yacht handicaps. Bob also enjoyed a spell as an active Loughton AC 2nd claimer. In 1997 Bob and fellow Centurion brother Ken (C859) produced, edited and printed the 10th Edition of The Centurions Handbook. We all wish Bob well.

2018 NEWSLETTER ARTICLE REVISITED

Here's an extract from Autumn 2018 VAC Newsletter featuring Ken Livermore, kindly supplied by Dave Hoben:

**Ken Livermore**

Ken Livermore has been a member of VAC and Enfield & Haringey for some years. He has competed regularly over an incredible eight decades and will be 86 in December 2018. Ken is on the organising committee of the successful Enfield Race

Walking League, and is the walking secretary of Herts County. He shares with us a few of his athletic highlights.

In 1945 my first race was a 2 mile run on the road starting at Eldon Road School, running down to Pickett's Lock and back to the school. This race was organized by North London Harriers, the club that I later joined. In the 1960s I completed the Leicester to Skegness 100mile race. I have run one London Marathon and walked two and competed in cross country, orienteering and a whole range of mountain marathons. In 2006 I walked the Athens Marathon, which started in the town of Marathon and finished in the 1896 Olympic Stadium.

As for my ambition, that is not finish last in my next race.

DICK HYLAND RIP - Notification from **Gerry Grosse**

"Sad news I'm afraid. I heard that Dick Hyland has died in hospital in Chatham. I knew he was seriously ill as I had spoken to him just a couple of weeks ago. I'd been trying to contact him for a while and finally had a call from his friend Pam who explained that he had been ill for some months. I was able to talk to Dick using Pam's phone and while he seemed cheerful he made it clear that all was not well. By the way he and I competed in many walks back in the 50's and 60's. He represented Kent and was proud of his achievement in the 100 becoming Centurion 340."

Adds Hon Ed: Dick was a London Vidarian who achieved Centurion status (No.340) in 1963. It was an unusual race, as there were 19 races of 100 miles+ held between London and Brighton with 18

starting/finishing in the Capital and just 1 starting/finishing in the Sussex resort. That was in 1963, when Dick was the first of 6 Vidarians completing a "reverse journey", doing so in 20:47.17. The next Vidarian home was recently departed Doug Hopkins in 22:24.10. The other 4 were A J. Clarke, D H Hill, C T Mason and A Parsons. This set a record of **six** 100 miles' finishers from the same Club - which was broken in the 1974 Leicester-to-Skegness by Leicester WC who got 7 members over the finishing line. That 1963 race was staged over 106 miles and billed "as a stroll up to town-and-back", with an option to stop at 100 miles - which all 6 did. In 1989 Metropolitan Police WC had **eight** 100 miles finishers in the "Arthur Eddlestone BEM Memorial Race" at Hendon Police College, but the worthy eight all competing for their various athletics Clubs. Dick's last appearance race was our 1979 RWA National 20K Championship (won by Carl Lawton) held on a hot day around Victoria Park, after which he hung up his racing shoes. We express condolence to his family.

- "Very sad news of Dick Hyland's death." **Chris Flint**
- "Very sorry to learn of Dick's passing - quite a character. What I do remember was him catching me up and shouting "get a move on". Took me a long time to realise I was actually in front of him and it should have been him that had got a move on! Great and loyal guy. Medway as well I believe." **Brian Keegan**

TRIBUTE AFTERNOON

Our last edition covered a sad death of Woodford Green's **Tony Maxwell** - a great friend of race walking. Tony expressed a wish not to have a funeral service when his time came - so didn't. Instead, his family held a tribute afternoon in his memory at Ashtons Track – Tony's spiritual home! It was on Sunday 18 December which, alas, was when much ice was on the ground making it dangerous to venture out in such conditions. This of course caused a number of attenders to stay at home, which was understandable. Tony deserved a tribute occasion and rightly received one.

BRIAN MOSS RIP

Graham Jackson posted a Facebook entry (dated 30 November) notifying the death of R B Moss (Brian). Brian clocked 23:13.16 at 100 miles in a race which 77 had started, 55 finished of whom 33 were new Centurions. There was 1 DQ.

The Facebook entry reads, "Sad news to report. Brian Moss formally of York Postal RWC Centurion No 740 has passed away. Brian was 85 and qualified as a Centurion at Leicester 100 (Congerstone) in 1982. Thoughts are with his family and friends." There's a Facebook page tribute from **Rob Elliott**: "Rest in peace Brian. I remember him from my York Postal RWC days". Centurions Hon Treasurer **Richard Cole** wrote, "Raced with him many times. A bull of a man. When around 40 or older, he trained hard every day. He was very fast after that in 10K races. I remember him doing 50 minutes for 10K. Outstanding. He lost a leg through illness many years ago".

DOING WELL

Steve Wynn reports that former London Vidarians and Post Office race walker **Bill Muntzer**, now an octogenarian, is doing well and is often seen at "The Den" (home of Millwall FC) where he's a season ticket holder, as indeed is Steve himself. Bill now resides on the Old Kent Road.

EX-SERVICEMAN HONOURED

Swaffham-based octogenarian **Dave Gulliver**, who race walked with distinction for London Vidarians, Anglia Striders, Royal Air Force and Combined Services, has been made an honorary member of RAF Marham Aviation Heritage Centre at the RAF base near King's Lynn. After a long career in the armed forces, as an armourer, Dave ended his time in uniform as a Warrant Officer at this Norfolk station. Dave recalled an enjoyable occasion – a visit by Essex Police, led by John Hedgethorpe, to compete against the RAF Germany squad.

COMMENDABLE CHRISTMAS DAY EFFORTS

Every Christmas Day for decades, star long-distance International walker and Centurion **John Lees** completed a 50 kilometres walk from his Brighton home. Only in recent times was this distance shortened. John always keenly supported Essex race walking and was commentator for our memorable "European Friendship Walk at Chelmer Village in the '70s. He travelled from Sussex to finish 79th (from 183 finishers - yes 183) clocking 30.30 in the 3 Miles John Hedgethorpe Memorial Walk from Essex Police HQ at Springfield. John said Tony Perkins and Len Ruddock were two of his favourites on our Essex race walking scene.

Essex stalwart Len Ruddock well remembers John and writes:

"I was very grateful to meet up with John and was impressed with his application to training and personal dedication to get the best out of himself. And he was great fun as well. For about 3 years we trained regularly together. 2 x 10K lunchtime bashes along the embankment and St James's Park plus a 14 miler on Wednesday evenings which was 4 x Regent's Park outer circle loop. Many fond memories".

NEWS OF HILDA NYMAN

A while ago Hilda had a foot operation in King George Hospital (Goodmayes) - sadly it wasn't successful and our NHS need *"another go"*. However, Covid plus two "lockdowns" prevented much routine surgery and now there is a long waiting list (which Hilda is on). Hilda has difficulty walking to her front door due to discomfort and pain, so is housebound. When Hilda quit active race walking, she still showed up at Enfield League walking races to watch races before helping out on a tea counter. Nowadays Hilda doesn't go anywhere unless collected and transported *"door-to-door"*. However, it was nice to hear from Hilda who was always a popular participant in our events. Indeed, Hilda has been a stalwart Walking Section member for ages, and still takes keen interest in all we do. We wish the good lady well.

ESSEX BOXING DAY FIELD DOUBLED

Four years' ago **1** race walker competed in Southend City's annual Boxing Day 2 Miles race (out-and-back on the World's longest pleasure pier). It was Prittlewell-based Centurion Steve Allen. After 3 years without race walkers on the pier's planks, this time **2** appeared - John Arthur and Sue Clements - both saying they enjoyed the event. Thanks to June Cork and her Southend officials/helpers for turning out. In East Sussex, an annual Brighton Boxing Day meeting took place in Preston Park - a location London-to-Brighton participants got to know well as they sped past in the closing stages of that famous race, and which actually finished inside this park on the last occasion it was held. Last year it didn't happen, but it was *"business as usual"* this time. Well-known names such as Trevor Jones, Julie Drake, Ian Torode and Dave Hoben - who does so much to promote this event - were among those in good form.

Boxing Day is big business on our athletics scene, as many Clubs stage events on this public holiday; mainly runs, but walking also saw good turnouts - none more than an original Enfield race in the 70s/80s. This started from an old chapel in the town centre, and featured a delightful course which went through posh areas where the well-heeled lived. For example, it passed Guinness Book of Records co-author and BBC commentator Ross McWhirter's residence in Village Road - where in 1975 he was gunned down on his doorstep by the IRA. Races ended where they'd started before a prize giving/buffet in an upstairs function room of a large public house in Enfield Town Centre. All good things come to an end, and this race folded - however it was revived in later times using a different course from Donkey Lane passing a cinema complex and using an A10 pavement; and later still an *out-and-back* course passing a sewage works starting/finishing at Lee Valley Athletics Centre. That folded as numbers dropped to a handful. But we've still a Boxing Day walk in **Essex**, so let's see if we can again increase turnout in 2023.



Dear Dave ...

THE BURNING ISSUE

I am not at all surprised by the views of British Athletics on Race Walking today. To me it is like a large mansion with a mighty impressive past, where unfortunately the foundations have well and truly collapse, and has been left in disrepair for countless years and urgently needs new blood in the management to bring it up to the needs of present day athletics. Only problem is many other events in athletics are in the same position. Where are the Andy Norman, Cliff Temple, Neil Allen, James Coote, Neil Wilson, John Rodda and their like today? Any answers would be most welcome!

Bill Sutherland

Adds.Hon Ed: Bill mentions distinguished specialist athletics' journalists who were so supportive of UK race walking. All backed our "Keep Walking in the Olympics" campaign in the 1970s, and a National campaign for Ken Matthews to be awarded an MBE 13 years after his 1964 Olympic gold medal when 3 other athletics gold medallists (Lynn Davies/Mary Rand/Ann Packer) were honoured immediately afterwards. Except for Neil Wilson, sadly all are no longer with us. I also mention Sydney Hulls (Daily Express) who recently died aged 97. Sydney was keen on walking and wrote on both above campaigns and a major article when Barry Ingarfield gave up work to train full-time in Mexico in a bid to secure 1980 Olympic 50K selection. In posh Blackheath he viewed our long established 9K yacht handicaps from his window!

APPRECIATION

- On behalf of our family, thank you for the tribute to John in the December Essex Walker. It has meant a lot to us all as we continue to get on with our daily routines. I was down on at Chelmsford on Monday for John's sister's funeral. He was very close to her so all in all, quite a sad time. But we all have happy memories of them both. Wishing you all the best. **Sarah and family**
- Thank you for your kind words in Essex Walker. It was lovely to read those tributes to Tony Maxwell. **Petra Maxwell**
- Excellent read and so sad to see so many have departed. **Arthur Gutteridge**

NEWS FROM CLARE

Sad news regards Tony Maxwell. My dad enjoyed the get togethers at The Cow. I need to sit down really next year and add more to dad's Facebook page ([Paul Nihill MBE | Facebook](#)) which has been a little slow. We had our first grandson arrive this year. Dad would have been pleased as a boy and hopefully sporty like my son and dad. Thank you again for the updates. Have a happy new year.

Clare Dennis (Paul Nihill's daughter)



AS I SEE IT

In the main we have a massive shortage of walkers, meaningful races from juniors to senior level, Coaches and Judges for all levels. We need to attract a substantial sponsor or groups of sponsors in areas to promote race walking to a much wider audience. Presently we are just marking time and not moving forward at the much increased pace required.

Hope is not all lost, but I just cannot see how race walking can go forward with such low numbers on the starting line and so few races too. The virtually blank Fixture list in the South from mid-November to mid-January illustrates this clearly. Your ideas may create a few extra participants in the long term, but probably of the wrong age group mostly over 50 with nothing to attract the younger ones to continue. We

URGENTLY need more numbers and maybe a London Boroughs' Star Walk just might do that or regional or postal code competitions. You need many more Judges and Officials of the under 50 age group. Park Run attracts them every week so why can't race walking. I know it's not easy, but all food for thought as the saying goes!

I am solely now only involved and interested in Park Run, because with such few race walking events and so few coaches, judges and race walkers it would be unfair of me to promote a Sport that I knew, but seems to be fading away rapidly. We partook in our Great Sport in a truly Pedestrian era with top class competition and a real will to win and achieve improvement, but unfortunately Sport has reverted to entertainment and putting on a good show with money the main priority nowadays. The Judging System, Internationally and domestically, is detrimental to the promotion of our Sport as it stands nowadays.

Bill Sutherland

VIEWS OF A RESPECTED 50K WALKER

At a time when British Athletics doesn't support the 50kms walk how can they justify sending teams to the world mountain and trail running championships in Chiang Mai Thailand, which include an up and down race and an uphill only race? Plus sending teams to Turin for the European Cross Country Championships, the IAU European 50kms Championships in Avila, Spain, and the IAU 24 hours European Championships in Verona, Italy? Yes, they won a few medals at these "mickey mouse" events but we will never regain our status as a great 50 kms race walking nation unless we have the opportunity to compete.

Bob Dobson

DIARY DATE FOR CENTURIONS READERS

It is confirmed the Centurions AGM is to be held on Saturday 28 January 2023 at Leicestershire County Cricket Club, Grace Road, Leicester from 1 pm to 5 pm (Doors open at 12 noon). Coffee/tea on arrival and mid meeting. Free parking. Post-AGM hot fork buffet meal (if minimum of 20 stay).

Chris Flint



MET POLICE WALKING CLUB ANNUAL REUNION GATHERING

Finally, after two years of no Annual Dinner, it looks as though we will be able to meet up again and celebrate our sport and at the same time catch up with old friends and meet up with new ones. I am glad to be able to invite you to join the club at the Annual Reunion which will take place on Wednesday 1 March 2023 at 18:00 at Civil Service Club, 13-17 Great Scotland Yard, London, SW1A 2HU. www.civilserviceclub.org.uk

Over the past few years sadly the number of people attending the function have declined quite considerably. There are a number of possible reasons why this could be the case:

- Is the price of the tickets too high?
- Is the cost of transport into London too high?
- Is there insufficient entertainment on the night?
- Is the fact that the numbers are declining another reason not to attend?
- Is the falling number of members of the club also contributing to this?
- Have people moved too far away from London to attend?

I am sure there are other reasons, and we welcome any feedback you are willing to share that could improve the event for the enjoyment of all.

All of that said, we are looking to adapt the format this year which will be more of a reunion rather than a formal dinner. This will keep the cost of the tickets down and we aim to sell the tickets for £10 per person with the club partly subsidising the cost. The tickets will include a buffet for everyone. We will have our own function room in the Civil Service Club.

The club has changed considerably over the years and so that we can all learn from each other it is our intention to put up a rolling slide show of photos of people enjoying their sport (be it walking, supporting or officiating). We hope this will spark off great memories and what better place to share those memories than with others. To make this possible I ask that you please forward your most memorable photos to Haley Mattinson so these can be put together and made into a slide show ready for the reunion. Even if you are unable to make the event and still have photos, please send them as I am sure there will be other members interested in them. This would include photos of friends who are sadly no longer with us.

Please could you let us know as soon as possible if you would like to join us and in any case by **31 January 2023** so that I can confirm the number to the Civil Service Club. Payment of £10 can be made via bank transfer or cheque. Cheque payable to: "MPWC" and send to: Dr Kitty Hung, 50 Boleyn Way, Barnet, Herts, EN5 5JS or by **Bank Transfer** to: Bank Name: **Natwest Bank**, Account Name: **DR KSY HUNG**, Account Number: **98997564**, Sortcode: **60-24-23**, Comment Box: **MPWC - "your name"**.

I look forward to meeting you all again in March. In the meantime, have a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

***Dr Kitty Hung**, Dinner Secretary, Met Police Walking Club (Tel: 07930-343205)*

SAD NOTIFICATION

Shaheda fell in training and has a fractured humerus bone just below the shoulder. She is in severe pain and is wearing a sling.

John Arthur

Adds Hon Ed: We're sorry to hear the news and all wish the good lady a swift recovery.

MEMORY LANE

Well, I am now beginning to feel my age (I will be 80 in early March 2023). Mainly suffering from balance problems but can walk naturally without a walking stick but not race-walking style as have difficulty walking in straight line and when crossing road. I am really writing just to say how much I have enjoyed reading through the Essex Walker 422 (which arrived 30 November). From 1960 going forward, this was my era! My wife and I married in 1966. I was 23 then and it was the year we won the Football World Cup. Perusing through EW 422 brought back many memories of some of our leading walkers of those days. Most I would only know the name and perhaps have never been in conversation yet would have met in changing rooms and after-race celebrations. Too many RIPs now. I did know John Eddershaw (Sheffield) who gave a short tribute in a RIP. Our club (Belgrave) was one of the top clubs around the 1960 - 1970's but my status didn't make the scoring team of 4.

Perhaps my best memories are around the time of our management by Jack Goswell yet I recall "Jerzy Hausleber" and "Jose Pedraza". Perhaps, my best performances were when we were accused of 'Pot Hunting' after winning first and third team prizes ... was it Briantspuddle? My best performance was a third team man in 50Km and 5th team man one year in the London to Brighton. John Keown was fourth scorer (and winning team member). I had closed a five-minute gap (with about four miles to go) down to one minute and I saw John finish on the sea front in front of me. Ah, very fond memories. My regards to all.

Bob Picton

Former Belgrave Harrier and Grade 1 Judge

FROM OUR SOCIAL CORRESPONDENT

Dame Cressida Dick, DBE, QPM took 'Pride of place' at the Metropolitan Police AA Christmas Life Members' Luncheon having her MPAA Life Membership Award Presentation. A wonderful feast of 5 courses was enjoyed by 40 assembled Honorary Life Members of the MPAA and their guests at the Union Jack Club at Waterloo. Amongst them were 6 from race walking and three guests. They were Chris Flint, who gave the Loyal Toast, Andrew Bignold who was

Toastmaster with ever lively guest Chris Foster, Great Britain International Peter Hodgkinson, Double Olympian Paul Blagg with Dr Karen Coumbe as his guest and Kath and myself. Three with Race Walking connections who were not able to attend were Terry Siggs, CBE QPM, Amos Seddon and Noel Carmody. Life Membership has been awarded to 96 since 1955 with 47 who are still living and 49 sadly deceased, but always fondly remembered by those present. Amongst them are the late Walter Batson OBE QPM, Reg Youldon, Bert Stevenson, Geoff McLean CBE QPM, Charlie Fogg BEM and Doug Fotheringham, all of whom contributed massively to Race Walking in their lifetime. Many speeches and toasts were made amongst healthy banter in the highly decorated large dining room divided into separate multiple tables with many waiters and waitresses. We now look forward to warmer weather at the end of May, 2023 when we all meet again.

Bill Sutherland

COMMUNICATION NOTIFICATION

My mailbox is now refusing to allow me to email so I've decided to add a new address - and here it is. june.urry.parris@gmail.com Can you update the various Walking circulations please, plus anyone who *might* need to get in touch.

June Cork

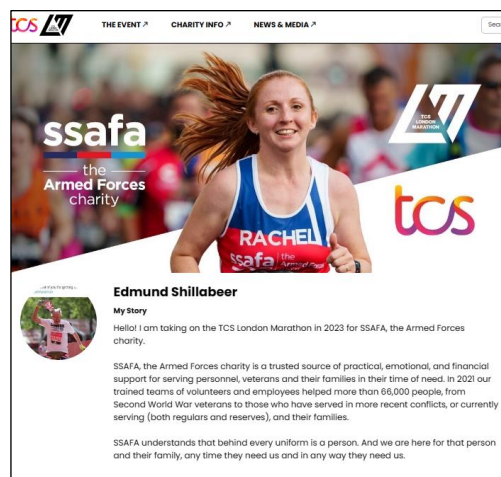
CHARITY NOTIFICATION

My SSAFA fundraising page is now live, on Facebook in my name. Please publicise!

[SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity: First donation made! \(enthuse.com\)](https://www.enthuse.com)

Ed Shillabeer

Adds Hon Ed: Ilford AC's super-fit octogenarian Ed Shillabeer will add to his London Marathon appearances on Sunday 23 April when he'll generate funds for The Solders, Seamen and Airmen & Families Association (SSAFA) - the UK wide charity which supports after serving members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their families.



PRAISE FROM A FORMER INTERNATIONAL OF NOTE

Thank you for the Essex Walker newsletter (fantastic) ... so readable. Keep well and take care. Happy Christmas and New Year from Adrian, Stella (wife), Alan (son) and Naomi (daughter).

Adrian James

NEWS FROM OUR RACE WALKER IN CHINA

We had an intense lockdown here over a 4 to 5 week period in my City. No main problems. Not as bad as what the news tends to make out. Chinese people seem to follow the rules and laws of epidemic prevention and keeping everyone safe, if it leads to the greater good. But like it is now, back under control, people are going out and leading normal lives again. Just take the necessary precautions as always. How are things in England? Keep up the good work. All the best and keep safe.

Mike Sweeney

Add Hon Ed: Mike was a many times' Post Office-in-Uniform winner as well as a Civil Service 7 Miles' Champion (in days when big names were in the fields).

HOW I GOT INVOLVED IN ATHLETICS – by former International ALAN BUCHANAN

Eric Liddell (Chariots of Fire) was indirectly the reason I took up athletics in 1960. Eric Liddell, the main character and Olympic champion held the Scottish 440yds record and I went to Edinburgh with a friend at work to the Scottish championships with two of his athletic club mates to see one of them successfully break that record. He was Ming Campbell an 18-year old Law Student and now Baron Campbell of Pittenweem, an ex-Liberal Party MP and Olympic runner.

The other friend, Ewen Murray, was to be my first Scottish team manager and President of the then British Amateur Athletic Board. Inspired I joined Bellahouston Harriers and had my first race before we emigrated to Sussex in January 1962. Best wishes to all for 2023.

Alan Buchanan

Adds Hon Ed: I met then plain Menzies Campbell at Kilmany (near St Andrews) when involved in a 1997 unveiling of a Jim Clark OBE statue, as my employer (Ford) purchased it as he'd been their No 1 F1 driver. Ming attended to speak as the area's MP. I spoke to him, saying I was a race walker, to which he spoke about Ken Matthews from the same 1964 Olympics, and was known to Ming who'd ran in a 4 x 100 metres relay team (Peter Radford/Ron Jones/Ming Campbell/Lynn Davies) to came 8th in the final. Peter has a walking connection as he wrote about Captain Barclay and was guest speaker at a Centurions Dinner in Newmarket's New Astley Club. Before the Kilmany unveiling I collected then unknighthed Jackie Stewart and his wife Helen from RAF Leuchars (now an Army Unit) after his private plane landed from Switzerland. Driving to Kilmany I overtook a spluttering Morgan car with smoke billowing from its exhaust. Jackie, on the nearside, flagged down the driver to give advice - the driver couldn't believe who it was! After the unveiling by Jackie, at a reception, Ming said he'd go to Brussels for a meeting - Jackie offered to divert his plane via Brussels to take Ming there - so I drove both back to Leuchars. Another "Chariots of Fire" connection was that former race walker and journalist, and now Commercial radio broadcaster Paul Warburton (Bels & Southend), was among its stars. **DA**

WRITES A STAR FROM "CHARIOTS OF FIRE"

Sorry but my glittering triumph was a one-off. Bizarrely, it came about after a tiny ad appeared in Athletics Weekly. At the time, it read like 'extras wanted for a film about a 1948 ping-pong champion'. Yeah, we all know Chariots went on to become an Oscar winner, but it didn't appear like that at the time. The subject seemed random. In fact, I kept getting surprised from day one to Oscar ceremony. The fact I was sitting next to actor Richard Griffiths during one of the lunch breaks; the fact the film got released; the fact it was then very popular; and the fact it won Best Film Oscar! I kept getting asked: was I on the beach? I then had to tell folk I'm in the collage of Harold Abrahams' achievements that he wrote himself. A neighbour happened to be in our gaff when it was being shown over Christmas. She said: 'Blimey! I never recognised you...' I felled her unconscious, of course...

Paul Warburton

Here are 2 "stills" from the film. Spot Paul, who raced with distinction for Belgrave Harriers and Southend-on-Sea AC (2nd claim).



BBC TWICE SCREENED "CHARIOTS OF FIRE" OVER CHRISTMAS - Follow-up

The film Chariots of Fire brought back memories for me, especially Eric Liddell's refusal to compete on a Sunday. After I won the National 20-mile championship in 1967 I recall the selectors asking me, as priest in Holy Orders, if I would compete on a Sunday if selected to compete in an international match against France in La Baule. Having been selected, the press both local and national were anxious to interview me to make a story out of it. As it happened, I had no objections to competing on a Sunday and politely responded by saying I regarded it as a great honour to represent my country. End of story. The event in question was a 20 kilometre on the track accompanied by Arthur Jones and another (cannot remember his name) who collapsed with heat exhaustion. This was my first international which I am proud to say I actually won beating Arthur in a sprint finish to the line. Arthur went on to represent GB in Mexico. May I wish you and all your readers good health and winning ways in the New Year.

Dr Rev Roy Lodge MBE



New Year's greetings from the Essex Walker team

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