

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

NOTE THIS DEADLINE

Your annual Essex County Indoor Track & Field Championships at Lee Valley Athletics Indoor is to be held on **4 March**. We need a good turnout from Essex race walkers to keep our event on the programme, which sees us race in front of a sizeable crowd. The walk, now upped in distance from 1 Mile to 3,000 Metres, is also an Eastern Counties Championship (in conjunction). For spectators there's a £5 entry fee, with an unspecified discount for Under 18s and Over 65s. Coaches with a valid licence are admitted free. What you need to know is that **entries close at 2359 hours on Wednesday 22 February**. *No late entries!*

A MILESTONE OCCASION

Tony Perkins, himself a key figure in parkruns, has notified us that former International race walker and National Champion **Amos Seddon** has reached a commendable milestone in this ever popular series of athletics events. Although based at Ramsey near Harwich, his name appears on results far-and-wide. He holds a number of age group records. Amos completed his 250th parkrun on 25 December 2022. Here's his record at that 250th parkrun:

POSITION/54
 PARKRUNNER/Amos Seddon
 GENDER/Male
 AGE GROUP/VM80-84 75.92% age grade
 CLUB/Harwich Runners
 TIME/28.23 (pb 23:47)



All readers congratulate this super fit octogenarian on his continued sequence of commendable performances.

WALKS EXCLUDED FROM COMMONWEALTH GAMES YOUTH GAMES

Race Walking's continued downhill route to obscurity now sees another important Games discontinuing our event. The context is the announcement at [2023 Commonwealth Youth Games selection policies - Athletics & Running](#), where the exclusion of race walks (among other events) from this year's Commonwealth Youth Games is confirmed and England Athletics confirm their intention to provide opportunities for the athletes thus excluded - but omit race walking from the list of events thus affected. All isn't lost as your RWA Southern Area Committee are taking up this issue.

LONDON OLYMPICS - DIRE LEGACY

In early January BBC television news bulletins (['Little progress' in tackling barriers to participation in sport](#)) prominently reported the poor legacy of our London 2012 London Olympic Games. This featured an issued official report by the **House of Commons Public Affairs Committee**, chaired by Dame Meg Hillier MP. Points:

- Sports participation was much reduced in 3 years after the London 2012 London Olympics.
- This continued, but then an increase in adult participation between 2016 and 2019 was just a paltry 1.2%.
- Sport England were handed £1.5 **billion** to distribute in grants - but on audit, could not account for almost 2/3rds of it, as to where it went!

The news bulletin visited a sports club (Repton Boxing Club) which was in a run-down building, having not had legacy money - when so much appears to be unaccounted. So less sports clubs appears a National issue and not specifically one affecting a decline in race walking.

STILL IN THE RUNNING

Two more noted race walkers in competitive action during our festive season were Neringa Masilioniene and Stephen Crane, who ran in Ilford AC's tough 10 miles cross country race which took over 150 competitors 3 times around Hainaut Forest, starting and finishing at Chigwell Row. Neringa ran a brilliant 67.42 to win the women's race by 8 minutes, while Stephen was near the front with a commendable 75.28 timing which saw him fill 16th position. All runners, officials, helpers and supporters were given special "Ilford AC 100" t-shirts marking a start of the Club's 2023 Centenary season.



RAINING CATS AND DOGS

We won't publish a result, as we don't want to steal the thunder from "Enfield Walker" - however we applaud all who showed up for Race No 1 of your 2023 Enfield League campaign, held at Donkey Lane in near zero temperatures in torrential rain throughout. It was atrocious and all credit must be given to the officials, organisers, helpers, competitors and spectators who braved the elements. Recorders had nowhere to shelter as heavy rain made recording sheets soggy and difficult to read. **Well done to all, and thanks for your much appreciated efforts.** Also, thanks for overcoming difficulties to declare a result. Our race commenced at 11.00 am - but just past noon, rain stopped and sun came out! *Oh well - let's hope for better luck next time!*

RAY MIDDLETON RIP

[Lancs Walking Club - Ray Middleton RIP the race walkers' walker](#)

Readers will be much saddened to hear of Ray's death. A detailed account of his most impressive record of success is published in this newsletter courtesy of respected statistician Peter Matthews. A key figure on the London athletics scene in his heyday, Ray spent his final years as a Norfolk resident, and was often seen at Moulton Village giving us all his encouragement. In earlier times made his mark with a sequence of fast wins in the annual Postmen's 6 Miles-in-Uniform event, where postmen raced in full uniform with hats and carrying mailsacks. A European version of this format saw always popular Ray crowned as "Europe's fastest postman". We say farewell to an Olympian and Commonwealth Games 20 Miles' silver medallist, whose triumph in the Accolade 8 Hours at the New River Stadium will never be forgotten. We remember at this sad time his wonderful wife Jean, who predeceased him and was one of the most enthusiastic supporters race walking ever had; as she gave support to Ray and a highly successful Bels team of notables. Ray will be remembered for many achievements and also for a wonderful friendly nature as one who got on, and was admired, by all. Tributes to Ray in this newsletter and on social media underline this big time! Thanks for so many great memories. Ray Middleton RIP.

DA

Tributes to Ray Middleton

- Good old Ray gave me some of my finest memories of race walking or anything else - what a character! I still try occasionally to imitate his voice! He introduced me to Belgrave - I'll tell the story in due course with a few additional ones. I have to smile just thinking about him. Great memories. **John Hall**
- I had some great times with Ray who looked after me on my first internationals. A wonderful character! **Ron Wallwork**
- Very sad news about Ray Middleton whom we knew back in the day - he was a good chap who did a great deal for racewalking and our community. **Sandra Brown**
- Ray a great character and great person to have in the dressing room and on your team, he will be hugely missed by myself and many others. **Bob Hughes**
- Sad news. One of the legends. **Tim Erickson**
- I lived quite close to Ray back in the 70s and had the pleasure of training with him on a few occasions. He was a great character for the sport of race walking and an inspiration to many. **Jack Lord**

- I am so sad Ray has passed away, not only was he a great walker but such a good person. I remember him so well at a Southend 5 miles and chatted ... he was keen to improve his form.
Adrian H James
- What a formidable competitor and such a great character. He used to give me stick for being a lightweight. He was right. **Tony Taylor**
- We feel numb with sadness at the loss of dear Ray. It is so hard to put one's feelings into words as so many are passing on recently. **Bill & Kath Sutherland**
- Sad news indeed - Ray was the ultimate 'hard man' of race walking. **Guy Goodair**
- Although I don't believe I ever met Ray, I do remember John speaking well of him. I'm sure he will be greatly missed by the race walking community. My thoughts are with the family at this sad time.
Sarah Webb
- I am so sorry to hear that my old friend Ray has passed away. Ray was a wonderful character with a great sense of humour and I enjoyed his company. On the track or road, Ray was a determined and disciplined competitor. This was particularly evident in long distance events where he was really impressive. He had an excellent style and he was one of the people I admired most as an athlete. I once asked him how he managed to beat a rival in a close race "it's my class!" said Ray with a smile. Never a truer word - class" is the word that best describes Ray Middleton. **Mike Scamell**
- Sad news. Ray and his wife Jean were part of our lives from when I first met Bill in London 1961 and Bill was a member of Belgrave Harriers. **Janice Wright**
- I was so saddened to hear of Ray's death. If you are able to recall I was the Chaplain who christened Ray's child (cannot remember name or gender) at the Royal Air Force chapel at RAF Halton near Aylesbury. I cannot even remember the date although I remember the occasion so very well. It was an honour for me to do this favour for Ray. He was so kind and helpful to me in my Race Walking days and was one of the first to congratulate me when I won the National 20 mile title in 1967. Ray was third on that occasion. As an established Race Walker on the international scene he was someone I could look up to for advice and encouragement. He will go down in Race Walking history as one of the greats, never to be forgotten. We give thanks for the way he enhanced the lives of others, for his kindness, for his reliability and fantastic sense of humour. A happy gentleman, happy in his gifts of character, in his friends and family. Everyone loved him, enjoyed him and believed in him. We give thanks that he has left a legacy of laughter and happy memories, - warm hearted with a tough core - human warm memories from a very human warm man. We give thanks that Ray's life was characterised by a kind of passionate intensity, stretching out eager hands to grasp life, enjoying life to the utmost, living life to the full. He was Olympian, yet the twinkle of humour always lurked. Thanks be to God for a life lived with love, caring, courage, dedication, determination, laughter and joy. Ray, all these things and more you have given to all those who loved you and will miss you. You have left your living self with your family. You are still alive in them and you are forever alive in the hearts and memory of all your friends in the Race Walking fraternity. May Ray rest in peace and rise in glory. **Rev Dr Roy Lodge MBE Ret'd**
- I was so sorry to learn of the passing of Ray Middleton. What a fine race walker he was, and what a great international career he had!!! One of my first memories of Ray was at the 'one hour walks' meeting at Parliament Hill in 1958. It was the 'B', and after competing in the 'D' section earlier I sat down to watch the action with my fellow Southend AC team mates. Ray went straight to the front and for a number of laps was tracked closely by then 18 year old Peter Marlow. Then Peter was pulled for lifting which left Ray well clear, and walking strongly he finished with 7 miles 834 yards in the hour. Another memory is of Ray's wife Jean, a great supporter of his club Belgrave ... you could hear her at track or roadside yelling 'come on the Bel's!' Lovely memories. My condolences to the family. **Mike Hinton**
- Sad to read about Ray. It seems there are getting fewer and fewer of us racewalkers around these days. I guess older age is catching up with us. **Mike Sweeney**
- This concentrates the mind! I think I am now the last survivor of the 1964 Olympic Walks GB team. Ray really was a top man – I remember many battles - I had the pace - he had the stamina! **John Paddick**

- I remember going to Lugano with an RWA group to walk against S A L the local club, Ray was in the group along with Charlie Fogg and others whose names escape me. **Gerry Grosse**

Expressions of sadness/condolence were also received from: **Hilary McDermott, Alison Potts** (England Athletics), **Kathy Crilley, Peter Addison, Brian Keegan and Pat Furey.**

IMPRESSIVE STATISTICS

Respected statistician Peter Matthews, who was guest speaker at our Race Walking Association's Centenary Dinner at the Royal Air Force Club, has again kindly supplied us with detailed stats of 2 of our leading race walkers who passed on in January. Here are bios in his usual form:

Raymond Christopher MIDDLETON (GBR) (b 9 Aug 1936 Marylebone, London) died on January 8 aged 86. One of Britain's greatest walkers, he had 17 internationals 1961-73, mostly at 50k, at which he had a fine record in the Lugano/World Cup: 1961-63-65-67-70-73: 4/2/7/8/11/19. Also 13th 1964 Olympics, dnf 1962, 5th 1966 & 1969 Europeans. RWA champion 1963 & 1965 (2nd 1961-2, 1964, 1966-7, 1970). At 20 miles he was 2nd at the 1966 Commonwealth Games and 2nd RWA 1965-6 (3rd 1961 & 1963), 3rd RWA 20k 1967, 3jrd AAA 7 miles 1962.

He set world walks bests at 50M 7:31:06 & 8hr 85.618m in 1974; walks pbs: 3000m 13:25.0 (1969), 2M 14:05.0 (1968), 10000m 46:59.0 (1969), 7M 52:02.0 (1968), 20k 1:34:06 (1968), 1:32:57 short (1970); 30k 2:26:46 (1969), 50k 4:15:51.4 (1972).

Christopher James SMITH (b 23 Dec 1958 Leicester) died on January 8 aged 64. A member of Leicester WC he had 3 internationals 1985-7 and three national walks 2nd/3rd placings. Walks pbs: 3000m 12:05.0 (1987), 5000m 21:16 (1987), 10000m 43:15.0 (1987), 20k 1:28:34 (1985), 30k 2:31:22 (1988), 35k 2:54:38 (1983), 50k 4:31:52 (1987)

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FIXTURES

FEB	4	Steyning 15K/10K/5K	Steyning	2.00pm 30 min walk to start
	11	Enfield League "Adrian James" 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	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
	25	Centurions Social Walk – Kent Cliffs	Folkestone (RAF memorial)	11.00am
	27 - 31	World Masters' Meeting	Torum (Poland)	TBA
APR	4	Veterans AC 5K (non-veterans/non-VAC members welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00pm 10 min+ walk to start

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.**

TRAVEL BULLETIN

Nearest railway station to Moulton Village is Kennett on the Cambridge-to-Ipswich line. Kennett Station is 1 stop east of Newmarket, serving Kentford village (pop 457). Turn right on leaving the station and walk into Station Road which heads towards the village centre. This road leads directly into Moulton Road and a pleasant rural walk to Moulton Village (2 miles' walking). Kennett Station is the only stop on a 2 hourly service from Newmarket-to-Bury St Edmunds, so needs careful planning if one isn't to be kept hanging around in a waiting room for ages! Advance notice for those considering public transport for their annual trip to the Moulton Open 5 Miles.

DAVE BOXALL C464 RIP – by Richard and Sandra Brown

Dave Boxall was one of our great Centurions. He completed 12 UK Centurion events over more than 30 years 1971 – 2005, winning 6 of these.

- he qualified as C464 at Ewhurst 1971 in 18h 26min.33sec [4th in race]
- he won 6 times 1972,73,74,75 and 1979,80.
- his best time was 1979 Ewhurst, 17h 24min 00 - and this we think is the 10th best men's time for UK Centurion completions
- his completions were all sub 20h except the last, Kings Lynn 2005 in 22h11min 10sec. We think he was 72 years of age when he achieved this completion.

In the 1970s, Dave competed in France in a number of qualifying races for the Paris-Strasbourg ultra-distance classic. He won the following and may have completed others:

1973 Rouen 200kms, 22h 12min

1974, Rouen 24 hrs, 206kms

1976, Conflans 200kms, 23h 09min

1977, Chateau-Thierry, 200kms, 23h 26min

1978, Conflans, 200kms, 22h 04min (*this may be the 2nd fastest 200kms recorded by a UK walker*)

He never seems to have entered the Paris-Strasbourg (despite clearly qualifying), leaving that to his compatriots Colin Young and John (Paddy) Dowling. He subsequently said he never had the funds to put together a team to compete.

In later life, he gave generously to the Centurions before succumbing to ill health.

Richard and Sandra Brown

Tributes to Dave Boxall

- Sad ending for a popular runner and race walker we have known for 60 years and was with me in Hove when the first flakes of snow fell on Boxing Day 1962 preceding that terrible winter. RIP Dave. *Alan Buchanan*
- Really sad to receive the news about the death of an old club mate Dave Boxall. Occasionally Dave and I would pass each other at some un-Godly hour on a Sunday morning along the Coast Road between Brighton and Peacehaven. Dave heading towards Brighton, me going the other direction, occasionally we might walk a couple of kms together, usually it was just a high. He was a character that's for sure, I thought I used to pack the miles in, but it was nothing compared to what Dave would

STRASBOURG TO PARIS

Upon a winding road in France
 She walked with me, her hair did dance.
 Shedding my way, a thousand lights
 Frozen stars on a night of nights.
 Her eyes were shadows in the gloom
 And yet her face shone like the moon.
 Floating, marching effortlessly
 I changed my pace, I felt so free.
 I'm sure she was quite unaware
 A galaxy was in her hair.
 Dew formed a spray of frozen space
 Above this unknown French girl's face.
 In timeless open countryside
 We walked together stride for stride.
 I carry yet the memory

Yet somehow question, 'was that me?'

18.10.2009

by David Boxall C464

do in his preparation for those ultra-long races. Sometimes he would walk all through the night, I suppose training himself for sleep deprivation. Every year at Christmas time Dave would walk from Peacehaven to Portsmouth where his mother-in-law lived. Dave's wife was the sensible one she drove there. I used to think he was crazy, but really, he was just a great character. RIP Dave. **Mike Parker**

- Very sad news. We knew Dave was ill. A very sad loss of a great athlete. He was one of our unsung Centurion heroes. RIP. **Richard & Sandra Brown**
- A sad passing of Dave Boxall. **Adrian James**
- We are sorry to hear of the loss of Dave Boxall. We will add Dave's name to our obituary list for the Hall of Fame. We also shared news of Dave's passing on social media. **Andrew Parkinson** (England Athletics)
- Very sad. He was an inspiration to all long-distance walkers. He wrote poems with a walking theme and they are quite good. I always enjoyed his company. RIP. **Chris Flint C849**
- Crikey - that is sad news. I don't think I ever met Dave but I know all about his achievements. What a sad end to a remarkable race walking career. **Kathy Crilley**
- Sad to report of Dave Boxall, he was 89 and had been in a home with dementia for some years. I had many a scrap with him in years gone by, a very determined and gutsy walker, always cheery. One of Sussex's great ultra long distance race walkers. Competed on the continent many times. I believe he was the only Sussex walker to compete and finish in the Strasbourg-Paris races, nearly 500kms. **Ron Penfold**
- Time goes by, and we see many friends leave. I remember so well all my meetings with Dave in Brighton, and France. I accompanied him with my French friends and Jacques Garit in his 200kms and Strasbourg-Paris (16th in 72-302k). He was mostly a 100/200 walker but performed on all distances, like many walkers at the time. He had such great energy. **Denis Dugust** (French International walker)
- More sad news. Dave was a great athlete and recorded some brilliant ultras. He was a regular at Sussex races for many years and I got to know him as did others on the annual "Brighton", "Hastings to Brighton" and other long-distance events. He rarely missed a long-distance competition. Like many of us he was a "chatty walker". **Peter Selby**
- He went I believe to Rouen with Colin Young and Brian Saunders to do a 24-hour race. He won the race and won a TV. Colin told him not to take it back to the UK because it was different voltage and instead to ask for cash as his prize, but he didn't. He went back the next year to defend his title and took the TV back with him. **Tony Perkins**
- Impressive stats achieved by Dave. **Chris Maddocks**



RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION AGM

Despite the convenience of "Zoom" the 2023 AGM in January was poorly attended. However race walkers showed satisfaction with matters by their desire to see the same major office holders taking our event forwards: President Chris Hobbs, Vice President Alan Callow, Chairman Glyn Jones, Honorary Treasurer Mark Easton and Pam Ficken as Trophies Secretary. Unfilled vacancies from 12 months ago remain unfilled - now added to by long-serving John Constandinou's communication stating he didn't wish to stand for re-election as RWA Honorary Press & Publicity Officer. He'll be missed as he's given enthusiastic and meritorious service to race walking in this capacity - so deserves our profound thanks. One attender drew attention to the amount of publicity now retired Tom Bosworth had brought race walking over many years, and wondered if he'd consider taking on the role? Tom wasn't at this "Zoom"

meeting, so couldn't comment on the suggestion - but it's "*food for thought*" as they say. In a thoughtful President's Address Chris spoke of attending many meetings, both of a sports nature and also in Committees. During the year under review he'd been selected to carry the Queen's Commonwealth Games baton on a leg which saw walkers turnout to give support from the sidelines. This baton relay was escorted by West Midlands Police personnel, 2 of whom had joined in by walking alongside Chris. We look forward to seeing these 2 worthies giving it their all in this year's Ryan Cup meeting! Chris was pleased Commonwealth Games walks had been successful, well attended and held without controversy. A National Championship attended was the 100 Miles at a new venue: Middlesbrough Sports Village, where he was proud to witness his son Jonathan break the tape. Chris told his audience that his year as your President has been "enjoyable". That's nice to hear.

GUEST APPEARANCE

Your Enfield League race at Donkey Lane on Saturday 11 February (11am) is named in honour of International athlete **Adrian James**, who was a serious contender for GB Olympic selection in his heyday. Adrian was a top-class walker for both Borough of Enfield Harriers (as then called) and Stock Exchange AC - in their 1985 Stock Exchange London-to-Brighton race he won in 7:55.27, nearly 2 hours ahead of 2nd placed Southend member Ken Rodrigues, a name well known by Essex Walker's readers. The bonus is that Adrian is to be present as our celebrity "*Mr Starter*"; so if you've not seen him for a while, this'll be your opportunity to meet him again and maybe chat about walking's former great times. A warm welcome awaits Adrian. Let's see a full turnout.

2023 BATTERSEA PARK EVENING SERIES

Can we see a boost in support for this long established of road walks around the Queen's carriageway at this famous public park, which is synonymous with race walking for as long as any of us have been involved with it. For your diaries (*all Tuesdays*): 4 Apr/6 Jun/1 Aug 5 Kilometres races at 5k at 7pm. On 9 May there is a 5 Miles walk at 7pm. Races are organised by Veterans' Athletic Club, however non-veterans may compete as guests. **All are welcome**. Let's see some really good turnouts. Further details from always enthusiastic Dave Hoben. While on the subject of Tuesday evening walking races, we've yet to hear what might happen at Astons Track, where also long-established Woodford Tuesday Walks have been held - but didn't occur last year. *We'll let you know as soon as news reaches us.*

SPOTTED IN WITHAM

Simon Morgan walked the Witham Boxing Day 5 clocking 1:04.55. He was upright and relaxed as he went round with a girl runner. So says our spy on the course!

CHRIS SMITH RIP

We're sad to hear that former Race Walking Association Press & Publicity Officer **Chris Smith** has passed on as a hospital patient aged 64. A top-class race walker for Leicester WC when they always turned out formidable squads, he passed his 'know-how' to others in his role as a respected coach. His name graces the UK all-time ranking lists: for instance at 3,000 metres he clocked 12.05 on May 17th 1987 and 3 days' later his 10,000 metres time was 43.15 - both achievements were in Leicester. On page 126 of our RWA's Centenary publication, "*A Hundred Years' Afoot*" can be found a picture of Chris in competitive action!

DA

Tributes to Chris Smith:

- Sad news indeed. I first met Chris in 1982 at the Universities champs. He was a runner who tried the 3000 walk which he won in 12-40 something from memory. I went for a warm down with him afterwards and persuaded him to give walking a serious go. I said he could make it as a walker as opposed to just being another decent distance runner. He obviously had tremendous basic ability. I like to think I had a role in his taking the event seriously, joining his local club and becoming a UK international. Anyway he was very good for a number of years. Sadly he had suffered with serious mental health problems in later years which I don't think were helped by his profession of teaching. He was always very amiable and hard working and we always exchanged a few friendly words when

we met. I'm so sorry to learn that he's passed away at such a comparatively young age, I think he must have been only 64. **Steve Uttley**

- Very sad news. Always a pleasure to chat with. One conversation was around the time he walked his 88-minute 20km PB. British walking had strength in depth late 1980's early 1990's. He seemed genuinely happy that his ranking put him just outside any GB 'A' team ... but then, he was a genuine guy. **Chris Maddocks**
- How very sad! For many a long year he was a stalwart member of Leicester Walking Club and beyond. **Bill Sutherland**
- Very sad news. Chris had a heart of gold and was always supportive of up-and-coming race walkers. He hadn't been around for some time as I hadn't seen him at races. Another sad loss to the Race Walking fraternity. **Glyn Jones**
- Despite all his problems he was in his prime a great walker and represented GB a few times. His coaching and organising races for youngsters was legendary. He will be missed. **Peter Marlow**
- Sad news. He was a great enthusiast and many YAGs enjoyed his series of walks. **Chris Flint**

FUNERALS INFORMATION

- Dave Boxall's funeral will be at 1.00pm at Downs Crematorium on Wednesday 8 February. Donations are welcome to dementia charities (full details on the day).
Note: Downs Crematorium is in Bear Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 3PL.
- Ray Middleton's funeral is on Friday 10 February at 12.30pm at Earlham Crematorium, 193 Earlham Road, Norwich NR2 3RG, with post-service gathering at The Railway Tavern, 1 Norwich Road, Poringland, Norwich NR14 7AB from 1.30pm.
- Dick Hyland's sister advises that the family had a private funeral service. A memorial service is to be arranged for a future date to be advised.

RISING NUMBERS

Responses generated by Martin Love's much appreciated favourable article about competitive race walking, published in "*The Guardian*", was reported as attracting over 300 enquiries in our previous edition. Well folks, it's risen to 570 - and still rising. We express our profound thanks to stalwart Peter Cassidy who sent full details of our activities plus contact details of senders' nearest athletic clubs personally to all. When benefits of this 'kick-in' and newcomers start rolling-up at our meetings, we must make them all welcome. We thank Peter Cassidy - a true good egg - for all his good works on this project.



Middlesbrough 100 miles in 24 hours

Saturday 19th – Sunday 20th August 2023

ROLL UP - ROLL UP

The Centurions are promoting the Middlesbrough 100 Mile Challenge to be held on 19/20 August 2023 at the Middlesbrough Cycle Circuit, Middlesbrough Sports Village, Alan Peacock Way, Marton Road, Middlesbrough TS4 3AE.

Entries are now open at Entry Central [The Middlesbrough 100 mile Challenge](#)

More details are on the website [Centurions 1911](#).

GET WELL SOON

All readers offer their **best wishes** for a full recovery to a trio of walkers with Essex connections, who are currently suffering medical setbacks. Eddie Trotter hasn't been seen for a while as he's under the doctor, as they say. Estuary-based Steve Allen is a hernia sufferer which rules him out of competing. Steve Wynn, who for many years resided in Collier Row (Romford) isn't working owing to a bad back. We look forward to seeing all 3 *out-and-about* again, and soon!

CENTURIONS SOCIAL WALK - SATURDAY 25 MARCH

The latest in a now long-established series of social walks has been announced by Steve Kemp (Centurions Social Walks Secretary). These popular walks are open **to all**, not only Centurion members, and families are welcome. The latest is to commence at the Royal Air Force Battle-of-Britain Memorial near Folkestone and will take in the Kent cliffs. It'll be about 7 miles, at a casual walking pace, and led by Chris Flint. Writes our Walk Leader, *"Start at 11 am from the RAF Memorial. Those travelling by car can park there. Those coming by train will be picked up at 10.30 am from Folkestone Central station and taken up to the Memorial site where we all congregate. Good boots and warm clothing, and a walking stick are recommended"*. The Centurions stage 2 such walks a year, and later in 2023 is to be the next - in the St Albans area (details nearer the time).

GET WELL SOON

Post Office walker and former Ilford AC member Romford-based Noel Mooney has notified us that another former Ilford member, now Suffolk-based octogenarian **Terry Riley**, suffered a bad stroke just before Christmas, and requires carers. We really hope his treatment is progressing well and this setback will be a short one. May full recovery come Terry's way - and soon! Terry (*"The Big Man"*) performed well for Ilford at all distances from short sprints to a London-to-Brighton, until a road accident in Becontree when riding a moped left him with one leg shorter than the other. Terry tried a comeback after his time in hospital, but it didn't work out, and he retired. Terry was also a big name in Post Office athletics, in which he won 5 consecutive "Postmen's-in-Uniform" 6 Miles races. Noel sent a get well card and also raised a glass to Terry's health, which we all hope will improve. For anyone wanting to send a card, Terry's address is: 13 Ramsey Road, Hadleigh, Ipswich, Suffolk. IP7 6AN.

NEWS UPDATE

Epping resident George Eastwood (Centurion 576) of Woodford Green AC fame is to celebrate his **98th** birthday in April. Still at home, but needing carers daily, he's now bedridden. George led Woodford Green to team victory in his Club's 1976 24 Hours' race at Ashtons Track clocking 20:29.39 at 100 miles, going on to reach 115 miles 1,705 yards in 24 hours. Derek Harrison won with Colin Young second. Super-fit Cambridge Harriers veteran Eddie McNeir completed 100 miles race for a remarkable 10th time. Among 8 new Centurions qualifying were Jack Rossiter, *"character"* Dave Sharpe, Alan Pickering of SWC and now honoured with a CBE and Woodford Green colleague Ken Turner who also represented the City of London Police and British Police - Ken also had talents as a weightlifter. After George and legendary Charlie Megnin retired from active race walking, they met up once a week to for a stroll in order to keep themselves fit. We all wish George, a tough walker in his prime, the very best.

MORE EXPENSE FOR AMATEUR SPORT

At Havering Sports Council's January meeting, Havering AC pointed out that at their last promotion 7 officials had cars that were old enough to trigger "ULEZ" ([Ultra Low Emission Zone](#)) payment of £12.50p, and, from August onwards, such sums would be added to travelling expenses claimed at their meetings. It's due for implementation in August. *Hmmm!* Food for thought!

CENTURIONS AGM - 28 JANUARY



The venue was the *"Charles Palmer Suite"* at Leicestershire Cricket Club ground - a large facility which can be hired for up to 200 conference attendees. It's named after former County Club Chairman, Charles Palmer CBE (1919-2005), an all-rounder who scored 17,458 runs, took 365 wickets and made 147 catches in first class cricket. In addition to those statistics he was a Test cricketer capped by England. This impressive room has lists on walls of past achievements by those of this County Cricket Club. That's as maybe, but it still took some finding, even when only a few streets away! A fine buffet was

provided. However, a 200 limit was nowhere near reached as it was a disappointing turnout. By taking this meeting to the Midlands it was hoped many more seldom-seen Midlanders would show up. A

business-like meeting was well chaired by Martin Fisher, who'd qualified as a Centurion in Essex, back in 1985.

Pam Ficken (President) and Martin Fisher (Captain) completed their terms of Office and were warmly thanked with presentations made in appreciation. The Centurions new President is Dave Jones of Yorkshire Walking Club who qualified in Newmarket (2003). The new Captain is Roger Michell of Surrey Walking Club who qualified at Leicester/Congerstone (1982). Southern readers will know Roger well as an active race walker, judge and an official of the English Schools. He now resides in Wem (Shropshire). Chris Flint continues as Honorary Secretary and Richard Cole does likewise as Honorary Treasurer. Vice Captain's position is retained by Frans Leijtens. Steve Kemp is again Social Walks' Secretary. From afar Alex Ross is again Hon Auditor. Two positions weren't permanently filled, as nobody offered their services to become Hon Assistant Secretary or Merchandising Officer. These positions are open, should any volunteers show interest. In respect of Merchandising Officer, Chris Flint kindly offered to continue selling stock until a volunteer is found - so see Chris if seeking to purchase products. Four esteemed Centurions on the Committee (with the Officers) are: Martin Fisher, Carl Lawton, Richard McChesney and Ian Richards. Your next opportunity to join The Centurions will be at Middlesbrough Sports Village on 19/20 August.



Dear Dave ...

FROM A CARMARTHENSHIRE BASED READER

When I joined Brighton AC in 1961 race walking was very popular - in fact in the Sussex 20 miles champs the run and walk were held together and there were more walkers than runners. This was also the case with the Brighton Boxing Day races. I have always been a runner over distances up to 100miles and in my early days I ran with Alan Buchanan, Dave Boxall and John Birks (he died recently) who went on to race walk. I always followed race walking and did the Hastings to Brighton and Chippenham to Calne a couple of times, but didn't race walk again till I was 67, and I have gradually seen the demise in race walking which is a shame as it is a great sport. My one regret is not doing the London to Brighton race walk as it always clashed with the Ben Nevis Race, which I did 30 times, but I did the London to Brighton run 8 times. Let's hope there is an upturn in the numbers doing race walking but I fear not!

Paul Gaston Surrey Walking Club V75

BOXING DAY PIER RACE PRAISED

I did indeed have the pleasure of taking part in the iconic pier race. I kept myself busy, this festive season, competing in two park runs, one on New Year's Eve and then on Christmas Day at Barking Park. The two mile pier event was an enjoyable distance. Just enough to relieve the stiffness in my legs. You are right about the fresh air on the pier. Breathing felt much easier. I was slightly disappointed with my time. Fortunately, there was no ice on the boards. The only obstacles are groups of sightseers we had to avoid. Some in wheelchairs, thus it is our responsibility to yield, and take care, which for all the entrants was no problem. The discipline and respect for others was conducive to a fun event. Well done to June Cork and City of Southend AC for a truly unique event. There was no entry fee. All they asked was that we bring a small gift wrapped present, which was placed on a table at the finish line. As each entrant passed the table we could take any present at random. Stuart Bennett has arranged a training session at Raphael Park (Romford). Which is a sensible idea and everyone seems keen to get back in action. This weekend there is the opportunity for two more parkruns in a row. We look forward to another year of your compellingly comprehensive newsletters.

John & Shaheda Arthur

FROM A REGULAR CORRESPONDENT

Thanks for my inclusions in the latest EW. I may not be the favourite writer for many readers, but I speak with honesty and reality from my experiences from the Greatest Era of British Race Walking. In 1968 at the peak of my build-up to my best days, 1969-1972, I did 8 races in June and

7 races in July clocking 47 races for the whole year, travelling all over the country from east to west and north to south and on one occasion doing 2 races in 1 day. Training is one important thing, but racing is quite another. Like many things in life, what one puts in determines what one gets out in the long walk! One lives and learns and builds up self-belief from success and failure too. Who would have thought that, having lost to the great Commonwealth Gold Medallist from 1966 Ron Wallwork by 16 seconds in PAA 3 Kms Walk Championships in Lancashire, I would win a Bronze over 20 miles for Scotland 7 days later? If there's a will there's a way! **Bill Sutherland**

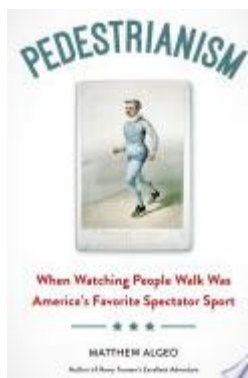
SOUTHEND PIER COMMENTS

Mike Jeffery (he's Mr Starter the rest of the year) organised the Handicap (something you only take on if you're a masochist!). I do believe I'll be able to sign up the walkers again for our next Pier Race. Hopefully, as these two enjoyed it so much we might be able to add another walker or two for 2023. Boxing Day - race morning: sun shone, the boards were dry: blooming cold, but absolutely perfect running conditions nonetheless. **June Cork**

A READER'S WISE WORDS

It is sad that there have been quite a few race walkers who have sadly passed over the past year, leaving many good memories for those left behind. Let's hope the younger generation of race walkers continue to take the sport forward and encourage the motivate others. **Sarah Webb**

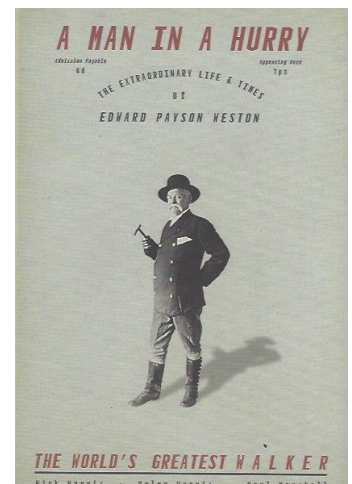
WRITES OUR BOOK REVIEWER DAVE KATES



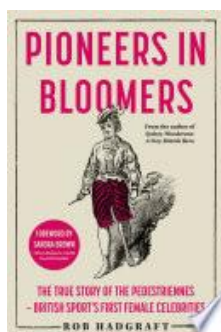
Centurion Dave Kates brings our attention to a book: "*Pedestrianism : When Watching People Walk Was America's Favorite Spectator Sport*" by Matthew Algeo, an award winning journalist. It chronicles competitive walking's peculiar appeal and popularity - *and its rapid decline*. It's a history of race walking in America, and a sport which paved the way for cycling's 6-day races. We're indebted to Dave who writes, "I recommend a little magic for the New Year. Get yourself a copy of this book. You will step back in time to the late 1800s and find events and heroes that you never knew existed". It's available on Google Books and a preview can be accessed on this [link](#). At the time of writing it is also on sale at Amazon for £13.46 new in hardback/used copies on sale at £7.05. Maybe it'll be in your local public library?

BOOK REVIEWS by PETER CASSIDY

Those with a bent for ultra-distance walking may also find the following two massive books of interest, both by P S Marshall, published by Author House, Birmingham: *King of the Peds* 2008: on extreme pedestrianism in the 19th century (752 pages) and *Weston, Weston, Rah-Rah-Rah* 2012: a career biography of the celebrated long-distance walker (723 pages). Also relevant is N Harris, H Harris & P Marshall: *A Man in a Hurry: The Extraordinary Life and Times of Edward Payson Weston the World's Greatest Walker* published by de Coubertin Books, Birmingham, 2012 (276 pages). A scan of the front cover is attached, showing Weston in all his self-confident swankiness. If you have any problem finding such books (such as via Amazon) I recommend www.AbeBooks.co.uk who provide a very good service at a very good rate. Good heavy reading to one and all!



Peter Cassidy



ANOTHER BOOK RECOMMENDATION

A new publication in late 2022 is the following: Rob Hadgraft: "*Pioneers in bloomers. The true story of the pedestriennes – British sport's first female celebrities.*" Pp 258. ISBN 978 1915352 323.

Sandra Brown

Adds Hon Ed: This new publication features a Foreword (which you can read in full on this [link](#), courtesy of the book preview feature of Google Books) written by Sandra Brown, ultra distance world record breaker.

BOOK REVIEWS - READERS' WRITE

- Very many thanks for the book recommendation (courtesy of Dave Kates) – I have just ordered my copy. Here's wishing you all the very best for the New Year and many thanks for all the work you continue to do for the sport. **Steve King**
- Many thanks for recommended reading! I did buy *King of the Peds* when it was published and had many interesting email conversations with the author which was really nice. So now I must check other books on your list. **Kathy Crilley C933**

COMMENT FROM A LEADING OFFICIAL

I understand the reasons the walks have been dropped. The Championship Secretary was not a fan of the walks. They were not Championship events (World and EAA). Top Walker Tom Bosworth retired - I informed the Championship Secretary I was retiring as Chief Judge after 25 years. Fields were poor. *Did you see the 35k in the Irish walks was billed as British Championship?* **Peter Marlow**

CURRENT ISSUE

Having A and B rules in the same race is a backward step, as everyone should be walking under the same definition and rules and, if not, should be disqualified with reasons given. Is that not one of the major reasons why athletes are put off by race walking? It happened to me on a number of occasions when I competed in my early races between 1963-1965 and didn't do me any harm, but made me all the more determined to reach the top level. Over to you What an advert for Race Walking in the SRWA! Nearly 1800 turned out for 4 Park Runs within a mile of where we live - Finsbury Park, Highbury Fields, Hampstead Heath and Alexandra Palace with 550 coming to Finsbury Park after 660 the previous week. 43 were first timers and 73 tourists! It's a no brainer why former Race Walkers find the Park Runs a real refreshing new challenge! **Bill Sutherland**

UPON REFLECTION - 2012 FONDLY REMEMBERED

I think the best thing we can say about the value of the Great Britain staging the 2012 Olympics is that they were an incredible success, something for all British people to feel proud of. Prior to the Games I was sceptical about 'us' pulling it off. Logistically, it's a massive undertaking and the importance of volunteers working well together for the greater good and not moaning cannot be underestimated. I was in London doing media work and experienced the feel-good factor throughout. It was brilliant. When I arrived home that feel-good was evident everywhere. A truly memorable Olympics which I think matched the likes of Sydney 2000. London 2012 legacy? Minimal. Events and achievements likely to live long in the memory? Absolutely. **Chris Maddocks**

FORMER RWA PRESS & PUBLICITY OFFICER'S STATEMENT

"The RWA appointed me to the committee in December 2007. I've unfortunately had to step back from many things due to my wife becoming disabled. I will continue to provide website and social media support for race walking. In race walking you find so many dedicated people, and I'm honoured to have worked with the committee and encourage anyone to consider joining it and help keep our sport going for another hundred years. I'll still keep the website running. I'll keep running the Facebook group. And I'll continue to answer questions and encourage anyone who contacts me. And I will always remain a racewalker. I'm race walking the 25th Cyprus Marathon in March. **John Constandinou**

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