

# Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

## RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S APPEAL

**Chris Hobbs** Hon President Race Walking Association writes:



It's an honour to be re-elected as Hon President of the Race Walking Association for a fourth term. I would like to start by launching the 2025 President's Appeal to raise funds for our developing Race Walkers to reach the next stage in their athletics careers. In the last couple of years, the RWA has provided about £5000 in financial support to 15 athletes to compete in prestige events and we wish to continue doing more. This can only be sustained by increasing our funds and that is the aim of this year's appeal. The more we raise the more athletes we can support. Should you wish to contribute to this appeal please contact Mark Easton, [rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk), and he will advise accordingly. Alternatively, if you wish to contact Mark or myself face to face, please do so. We have many talented athletes so let's support them. Whether you are an athlete, Olympian, coach, parent, official, fan or a combination of the above may you enjoy your sport.

## RAY PEARCE RIP

A message from June Cork (Southend City AC) tells all that's known at present: "Just heard via another Club member: apparently Ray Pearce died earlier today. This is all the information I have at present. As soon as I know more I'll let you know. Ray joined Southend 60 years ago and 2 weeks ago. He would have been 89 this August. It was Ray who helped me pursue Race Walking. **June Cork**

*PS: If you have anything in your memory of Ray I'd really love to hear. We haven't seen much of him at all over the past few months."*

Adds Hon Ed: Rochford-based octogenarian Ray commenced race walking with the famous Polytechnic Harriers - indeed in the '60s past editions of "Race Walking Records" show this Club to be among the top teams in "Open 7s" with, among scoring 4s with Ray, was Frank Butler - another who became a part of our Essex walking scene. After a brief spell with Ilford he was to become a legend at Southend-on-Sea AC (as then called). He was also an active member of Stock Exchange AC. Ray was a County Senior Champion when winning our 1965 Essex 7 Miles' Track Championship in 55.57. (Note: From 1969 onwards, this Championship went metric by switching to 10,000 metres). Ray had terms of Office as RWA Southern Area President, President of the Essex County Athletic Association and at the 2011 Race Walking Association AGM was elected their President. At Southern Area level he was a long serving and highly efficient Association Chairman. So sadly, Ray died in Office while custodian of Southend City AC's President's chain, this Club having changed its name after a then town was awarded City status. Many a race walker's first meeting with Ray came after hearing his loud call of the number they were wearing at the time! Ray was a strict judge and highly respected for being so. He was one who officiated well into his 80s and his meritorious contribution will be much missed, indeed a so sad loss for the world of athletics. To his relations we send sincere condolences. As we go to press, tributes are still coming in. We'll collate them and publish in our next edition. **DA**

## COACHING AND DEVELOPMENT

Minutes of the Race Walking Association (Southern Area) Committee meeting ([published](#) on 30.01.25) include a Coaching and Development report by **Chris Hobbs**:

"It has become apparent that there are more qualified and licensed coaches amongst the Race Walking community than we thought. A survey conducted a few years ago produced little response. Now we have the start of sub regional coaching coordinators we have a better chance to find the active and non-active coaches and more importantly get coaching where it's needed."

SRWA committee members discussed the remit of Area Coaching and Development Officers, plans to set up their aims and objectives, and the importance of recognising the experience of established and advanced coaches in our area. It was noted that additional coaches need to be identified to cover the south and west.

### A STEP AHEAD OF BILL

Regular correspondent, **Bill Sutherland**, recommends changes to prepare race walking for a more modern era. Those attending November's RWA Southern Area AGM (on "Zoom") will know this was dealt with during business of the day. Your Southern Committee is now much slimmed down for efficiency and is modern to deal with difficult challenges British race walking now faces. One example was doing away with an old Press Officer's position - to be replaced by a Communications type appointment to handle high technology means of mass and social media communications now essential in modern times. This new post failed to attract an applicant - so **is any reader prepared to take it on?** Could interested persons please let any of the Officers and Committee members know your interest - it's an ideal opportunity for a person wishing to make his/her mark in athletics administration and make a serious contribution in driving our chosen discipline forward. Bill thinks we need to "get modern" and writes: *"I think all these ancient Committees are totally out of date and unnecessary in this more modern era and account in a big way for the lack of attraction of Race Walking in the UK. Our approach needs to radically change and quickly as we sadly are standing still presently!"*

**PS: Are any of our other Essex Walker readers and contributors eager for change?**



### NEW OFFICE HOLDER

On the Communications theme, British Champion 100 miler **Jonathan Hobbs** has succeeded Sue Clements as The Centurions' Website Manager. We thank Sue for her diligent and enthusiastic service in this role and welcome Jonathan to the task. So, folks - any news/snippets/details, please let Jonathan know.

### GEORGE EASTWOOD RIP

Sad to say that just days after The Centurions AGM (25 January) at which tributes were spoken in honour of George, who celebrated his **100th birthday** on St George's Day last year, he passed on.



George was an esteemed Life Member of Woodford Green with Essex Ladies AC and their oldest member. In the colours of Woodford Green AC (as then called) on 28/29 May 1976 at Ashtons Playing Fields Track in Woodford Bridge he became Centurion 576 when completing 115 miles and 1,705 yards in his Club's own 24 Hours' event - passing 100 Miles in 20 hours 29 minutes and 39 seconds - also leading the host Club to team victory. On retiring from race walking George linked up with Charlie Megnin for regular walks, and sometimes runs, together in Hainault

Forest. George was a founder and former Company Director of Loughton-based Higgins Group Construction. A tribute is on [Woodford Green with Essex Ladies AC website](#). George resided at Thornwood near Epping. Profound condolences are expressed to his family.

### GEORGE EASTWOOD RIP - FUNERAL SERVICE

The funeral service for Centenarian George Eastwood will be held on **Tuesday 4 March 2025** at 1pm.

Venue: Green Acres, Kiln Road, North Weald Bassett, CM16 6AD.

Afterwards at: The Green Man Pub, School Road, Ongar CM5 9SD.

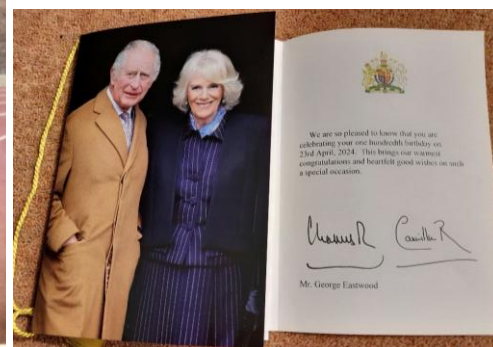
For catering purposes, kindly let me know if you would like to join the family afterwards for drinks and a cold buffet, indicating any dietary requirements. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, to St Clare Hospice [online](#) or via [Just Giving](#).

**Linda Eastwood** Mobile: 07942 071553

Pictures (below), supplied by Linda Eastwood, show him (L-to-R) in the 100 miles race, resting after completion plus a 100th birthday message from King Charles III and Queen Camilla.



**George Eastwood RIP**  
- a true "good-un".



## CENTENARIAN AND CENTURION GEORGE EASTWOOD RIP - TRIBUTES

- Many thanks as always for your care for our walkers' community. Sad to hear of the demise of my old friend. George was kind to others while tough in adversity, always with his easy manner like his hero, Gary Cooper. He'd been an opening batsman in his early sporting years, where I guess you need a lot of toughness and patience to face the first fire of those fast bowlers. Later on, he was a generous host, making his forest cottage available for meetings and a checkpoint, even if he couldn't get there himself. These were the days of the Great Gatsby film, and he did have some resemblance to that hero too. **Jack Rossiter**
  - Good old George! He and my Dad had a great rivalry and friendship. **Mike Scamell**
  - I remember that track walk, disappointing for me but that's when I came across the amazing George Eastwood RIP. **Ed Shillabeer**
  - Over 115 miles in 24 hours when he had past 50 years of age. What an athlete he must have been. **Colin Harle**
  - Please accept my deepest condolences on the news that George Eastwood has died. **Karen Kendall (Higgins Group Construction)**
  - Very sorry to hear this news. **Euan Crumley (Athletics Weekly)**
  - Sad news. Some good memories of those busy days. **Vic Collins**
- Expressions of sadness were also conveyed by **Gladys Bird**.

## FILM SHOW

This is the latest in-depth interview from talented film-maker Len Ruddock. In it is a wonderful picture of Ilford's 2 race walking Olympians (Roger Mills and Neringa Aidietyte). It's just over 57 minutes' long.

[Race Walking Extra: Neringa Aidietyte - 2024 & Farewell to the UK](#)

2024 - Farewell to UK  
In Conversation with Neringa Aidietyte  
(with Len Ruddock)  
Race Walking Extra

- Writes Ilford AC Press Officer Billy Green: Most of us will know Neringa, who was a very popular member of the club, both race walking, and later on running - both of which she excelled in. One of our members, Len Ruddock, has put together a fantastic interview with her, that is well worth a watch.
- Writes Len Ruddock: Please refer to the [YouTube link](#). It speaks for itself, mainly referring to her race walking career. However, from around 40 mins, it references her involvement with Ilford AC, both as a race walker and a runner. It covers her London Marathon experience and I was glad to have been able to include her final appearance in the Elvis 5 miles at Hainault Forest. Post race, I filmed Andy Catton's fine presentation speech and Neringa's emotional response. A fitting end to the video. I hope you enjoy it - please feel free to distribute and I look forward to any comments that you may wish to make.



**ROLL UP, ROLL UP**

Registration for the **100<sup>th</sup> CENTURION RACE** opens on 1 March 2025 via:

[www.fabian4.co.uk/default.aspx?EventID=3939](http://www.fabian4.co.uk/default.aspx?EventID=3939)

For further details contact Peter Selby: [selbypw@outlook.com](mailto:selbypw@outlook.com) 07721 747999

**CENTURIONS 1911 STORIES**

Our second featured Centurions Story is by **Sue Clements** who achieved Centurion status (C950) at the Colchester 100 in 1996 in a time of 23:13:59.

[C950 Sue Clements](#) Photograph courtesy of The Centurions 1911 website

**FIXTURES**

*It is recommended that dates/start times are confirmed directly with organisers for accuracy.*

MAR	2	Essex & Eastern Counties Indoor Championships 1,000m	Lee Valley Arena	TBA
	2	UK 20km Championships (Men/Women) + supporting events	Douglas, IOM	9.30am
	4	Funeral of George Eastwood RIP	North Weald Bassett	1.00pm
	5	Metropolitan Police Walking Club Annual Buffet & Reunion	Civil Service Club SW1A 2HJ	5.00pm to 10.00pm
	10	RWA Southern Area Committee Meeting	"Zoom"	6.30pm
	15	Herts/Kent/Middx Indoor Championships	Lee Valley Arena	TBA
	27-30	World Masters Indoor Championships 3,000m Track/5k Road	Florida	TBA
APR	5	Enfield League Walk	Cambridge	Early pm
	8	Veterans AC 5k (all welcome)	Battersea Park Bandstand	6.50pm*
	12	England Athletics 10,000m Championship	Northamptonshire	TBA
	26	Herts/Essex/Suffolk/Cambs Championships (see p9/10 for more info)	Bury St Edmunds	from 11.00am
	27	TCS London Marathon	Greenwich/Blackheath	10.00am (mass start)
MAY	13	Veterans AC 5 miles (all welcome)	Battersea Park Bandstand	6.50pm*
	18	European Team Championships	Dudince	TBA
	31	The Centurions' Social Walk (all welcome + families/friends)	Winchelsea, East Sussex	TBA

\* Make time - as registration and start line are a distance apart.

- Regular distance training walks are held from Leigh-on-Sea's Belfairs Park – details from Centurion Steve Kemp on **07860 617899**.
- Enfield League** races require online pre-entries to: [www.fabian4.co.uk](http://www.fabian4.co.uk). Any problems, call 07532-397528.

**THREE LINE WHIP**

A date for all your diaries - **Saturday 5 July** - as it's a now long-established **Moulton Open 5 Miles** (*Enfield League in conjunction*) which includes "opt-out" distances. Since becoming an annual event, it's continued its popularity - as shown by appearances of many who come not only to race - but just to enjoy a wonderful friendly atmosphere and enjoyment of this occasion.

**IN A SKIP**

A Centurion medal (No 490) was found in a rubbish skip. It'd had been earned by Squadron Leader **Mike Perkins** of Trowbridge AC (now disbanded) and the Royal Air Force. Its finder (Richard Newson) wasn't connected with athletics, but interested enough to "Google" what it stood for and has been thanked for his public-spirited action in handing it to The Centurions. He found "The Centurions 1911"

website and obtained contact details of its Honorary Secretary (Chris Flint) - then posted it with an account of where and how he'd come by it. Mike, with a traditional "RAF moustache", retired to the Suffolk village of Ufford near scenic Woodbridge and showed up to encourage and support at a number of our Essex races - the 300th and 400th Essex League races (in the latter he received his "John Hedgethorpe blue and white mug" as that race was in memory of the great man himself), and all our 100 miles' events at Colchester's Lower Castle Park. Mike was a regular member of a Royal Air Force representative team in the '60s/70s. His name graced a 1970 London-to-Brighton 52 miles' result sheet, when from 85 starters he was 37th in 10:17.01, one position ahead of the then 22 year old Hon Ed who clocked 10:18.20. He joined The Centurions at the 1972 Leicester-to-Skegness 100 Miles with 20:05.32 on the stopwatch. His attendant was Centurion 454 Larry Miles, who'd qualified on the same course 2 years' earlier - with Mike as his attendant - as walker and attendant had switched roles! Sadly, Mike passed on during 2015 after a lengthy illness. RAF team members of that time included Tony Challis, Ray Flynn, Dave Gulliver, and Padre Roy Lodge. Mike kept regular contact with Metropolitan Police leading light Doug Fotheringham, whom he always got on very well with. This recent account of Mike prompted the latter to pen a tribute:

Thank you for sharing your correspondence on Mike Perkins which brought back so many memories. Mike and I were contemporaries at RAF Stafford in 1970/71. We lived on the same married quarters patch. Mike was the i/c Athletics and organised all the cross country events and station sports day. He was very keen on supporting all the RAF walking events. On my posting to Cyprus I continued to value his friendship and encouragement from a distance. Following his death I corresponded with his wife Barbara for a short while but have not been in contact since. Mike and Barbara were regular attenders at the Station church of St Chad's and remember that on his retirement from the RAF, he was Churchwarden of his local church in Ufford where he was buried. Sadly, he died of prostate cancer. Your contact with all the Centurions makes me very envious that I cannot be included in this roll of honour both of the living and departed. I was interested to learn of the phrase "attendant" that Mike offered Larry Miles and makes me think that if only I had had an attendant in my attempt I might well have finished in Skegness! To quote Shakespeare "He was my friend faithful and just to me".

**Dr Rev Roy Lodge MBE**

### APPRECIATION FOR ESSEX WALKER'S READERS

It was kind of those readers who responded to our article about Steve Allen's father, Alex, who race walked for both Ilford AC and in Post Office races, celebrating his 98th birthday. It's good to report positive reactions - and Alex was so pleased. *Thank you readers.*

### TWO SPORTS STARS MEET

In February Ilford's octogenarian superstar C590 **Ed Shillabeer** (better known as "Edbanger"), who made a "Guinness Book of Records" as our oldest athlete making a full GB debut and, since 1985, is still our UK 100 Kilometres' track record holder. With him (photo right) is centre back Maksym Talovierov, a Ukrainian International who in January's transfer window became Plymouth Argyle's record signing for an undisclosed fee. They met at a home match.



### GET BETTER SOON

We're sorry to learn that a knee injury has caused West Sussex-based stalwart **Alan Buchanan** to take a break from his park runs. We all wish him a swift return to the start lines.



### IN THE MONEY

Latest trio of winners in the Race Walking Association's "[200 Club](#)" prize draw are **Jon May**, **Pauline Wilson** and **Nolan Simmons** - three worthies who've contributed so much to the British race walking scene, and still are. If wishing to join, details can be obtained by seeing Mark Easton at the meetings or emailing him on [rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk)

## SIGN OF THE TIMES

On 16 February at an annual Inter-Area Indoor Match at Lee Valley, 3 men's 2,000 metres 'A' races were combined with 12 senior athletes toeing the line, from whom 6 (50%) made it to the tape, with half the field (6) left beside the track unpinning numbers after seeing red disks waved in their direction. No surprise participating numbers are nosediving - as what incentive is there to travel long distances just to "come out" when most deemed as transgressors aren't intending to cheat in any way. Perhaps more will be lost to race walking, leaving 'the few' even fewer. *Where are we going?* No criticism for our Officials as they offer their services to ensure "fair play for all" and must operate under Laws prevailing on the day. Not long ago, when rumoured a 'B' race experiment would end, 1946 European Championship 50k bronze medallist (4:57.04 in Oslo) Charlie Megnin RIP was a loud and prominent voice against this. Charlie liked pontificating and stated that great names such as Ernest Neville and Alf McSweeney would be turning in their graves if they'd ever seen tolerated styles at the front of top-class fields in comparison with those middle and backmarkers being hauled out in "rank-and-file" races.

From an Essex angle, praise for Ilford's **Steve Uttley** (Southern Counties) and Upminster-based loyal Belgravian **Colin Harle** (Eastern Masters) who were rewarded when clocking 12:07.43 and 12:09.40 respectively. Full results will appear in Race Walking Record. **DA**

## STILL IN THE RUNNING

On Saturday 22 February our annual National Cross Country Championships were held at its always testing spiritual home of Parliament Hill Fields. Ilford's team were led home by **Seb Parris**, a former Essex County AA race walking champion, who clocked 65 minutes and 41 seconds for the tough 12 kilometres distance, so filling position 1,001 from 1,783 finishers. A report described it as "Parliament Hill Fields at its worst" as prolonged heavy rain earlier in the morning made it muddy and tricky for all.






## NEWS FROM CANADA

I'd a phone from South African **Richard Vlotman** (C529), now a Mississauga (Ontario) resident. We've always kept in touch since walking much of a 1973 London-to-Brighton Walk in close company - helping each other to "dig deep" in its middle stages. We qualified as Centurions in the same race: 1974 Leicester-to-Skegness 100 Miles, which Richard completed in a wonderful 19:55.23 (the race of his life). Race winner was Brighton & Hove AC team colleague - a one-and-only Dave Boxall RIP - in a most impressive 17:50.01 (WOW! - so recording his 3rd successive UK 100 miles' victory). Richard was **88** earlier this year (6 January). He still plays bowls in summer, but has now quit cycling. If you recall he was a keen cyclist in Brighton - only taking up walking as his bicycle was stolen and he couldn't afford a new one. He said that after our phone chat he'd go for a walk - which he still does with regularity. Despite living in Canada Richard was the first booking received for a memorable 2011 Centurions' Centenary Dinner at the House of Commons - he came over with his wife to attend our Dinner, then went on a holiday tour around Scotland. While here, he made a generous donation to The Centurions. Richard mentioned a duo he holds in high regard: Brighton colleagues Alan Buchanan and John Lees. Richard isn't on email so asked me to pass on an *apology for absence*, at a 2025 Centurions AGM, and sent best wishes to Centurions Honorary Secretary Chris Flint - and to all Centurions. **DA**

## BRITISH ATHLETICS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS 3,000m

Congratulations to the medallists in the British Athletics Indoor Championships 3000m races in Birmingham. A recording of the day's events can be viewed on YouTube (the walk features from 1:41 onwards):

[UK Athletics Indoor Championships Birmingham - Day 2](#)

Men's 3000 Metres Walk		
	Participant	Duration
1	 Callum Wilkinson	11:12.44
2	 Cameron Corbisley	11:49.53
3	 George Wilkinson	13:50.51
Women's 3000 Metres Walk		
	Participant	Duration
1	 Hannah Hopper	14:21.97
2	 Jessica Wilton	15:28.50



## HAPPY 80TH TO A GREAT SUPPORTER OF ESSEX RACE WALKING



One of our **greatest supporters** of race walking is **Roger Buxton** ("Rocket Rog"), who had a long broadcasting career at "Essex Radio" and then "BBC Essex". Leigh-on-Sea based Roger celebrated a "milestone" **80th birthday** on Tuesday 18 February. When he started a regular Friday night "live" interview programme with a noted Essex sportsperson - his first choice on the opening show was **Roger Mills**. He came to many of our events, such as the 1976 RWA National 20 Kilometres (and Olympic trial) at Thorpe Bay, the 1984 RWA National & Inter-Counties 10 Miles at the same location, the 300th and 400th Essex

League Races (latter was a 2001 John Hedgethorpe Memorial race at Chelmsford), a Barking-to-Southend Police Walk, 100 miles/24 hours races in Essex (Colchester and Southend) and a couple of our testing Basildon 50k events - for "live" outside broadcasting and feature interviews. When interviewing **Bill Sutherland** via phone link, it was interrupted by a dish dropping in the background. He heavily featured a 10th consecutive London-to-Brighton Walk by **Tony Perkins** which generated considerable amounts for charitable causes. Roger attended our Race Walking Association's wonderful 2012 "Olympians Tribute Luncheon" at the Tower Hotel. Over decades he'd interviewed many Essex Walkers. Before entering the radio world, he was a "Southend Standard" sports journalist. Sadly, Roger's health has taken a turn for the worse in recent years. He really was one of our greatest race walking supporters before a well-earned retirement. *We all wish Roger well.*

WAF Indoor T&F Champs



### TREADING THE BOARDS

**Steve Uttley** of Ilford AC won a silver medal in a 3000 metres walk in the British Masters Championships at Lea Valley indoor track on Sunday, finishing 2nd overall as well as 2nd in the M65 category. Still unsure of fitness following cancer treatment last year Uttley started steadily and settled in 5th behind 1980 Moscow Olympian Ian Richards and Midlander Peter Boszko and Man Biu Lam (Veterans AC) as leader **Steve Allen** (Barnet AC) opened a decisive gap for victory in 18 minutes 13.9 seconds. Richards was disqualified in the closing laps moving Uttley up to 4th. After several unsuccessful attempts to overtake on the narrow-banked track the Ilford man decided to wait until the bell, making a decisive move with 200m left to open a 5 seconds' gap on Boszko and a near 8 seconds' gap on M65 bronze medallist Lam. Uttley recorded 18 minutes and 27.96 seconds; over 20 seconds his fastest time for the distance since returning from his enforced layoff.

*Writes the victor.* "Yes, that was me - following a 3rd in the Polish M65 Indoor Championship two weeks ago - 17.59.53 there."

### MERITORIOUS SERVICE ACKNOWLEDGED

After February's Enfield League race at Donkey Lane, Enfield & Harringey AC Chairperson Emily McMahon presented long serving **Ron Wallwork MBE** with a watch and a bouquet for his wife Joan. This recognised Ron's sterling efforts as the League's Organiser from 2007-to-2024 and for his lengthy all-round contribution to Enfield & Harringey AC. Martin Oliver founded the League in 1998, and on stepping down in 2007, Ron took over. Ron's now passed the baton on to Tracey Wilkinson. It's vital Enfield League support continues - as North of the Thames - it's the best-supported series of race walks on your fixture cards. Incorporated in the Enfield League is an annual Moulton Open 5 Miles, in delightful Suffolk countryside at a village north east of Newmarket, and the annual



Enfield Open 7 miles - which this year will see it staged for a 98<sup>th</sup> time as the only traditional Open 7 still going. Our more established readers will recall "Open 7's" once being the backbone of British winter race walking. Also in the League Programme was a 2012 "Olympic Friendship Walk" at Donkey Lane and the adjacent King George V Playing Fields. It was a first time in many years over 100 race walkers made a result sheet - let's face it, who wasn't there? Racing that day included supporters from Overseas countries "in town" for the London Olympics and also team support members of competing Countries. As a race walker Ron's been receiving awards since the 1950s. On behalf of all readers we add our congratulations to Ron and Joan on being award recipients on this latest occasion.

**Writes Roy Lodge:** "May I add my congratulations to Ron Wallwork's outstanding commitment as Organiser of the Enfield League for 17 years which deserves in my book a recognition beyond the ordinary. **We are so fortunate to have former international race walkers who give back to the sport what they received when competing.** The reference to the Enfield League reminded me of the Midlands Winter League which became my entrance into Race Walking and receiving my first plaque for coming first in the 5 mile handicap and competing at the 6 and 7 mile races and meeting Bob Hughes who became a rival and friend. I won the National 20 miles and Open races in 1967 - my only regret is that I came to ultimate fitness in the year that fell between the Commonwealth Games '66 and the Olympics 1968. My only bonus was to be in the Olympic 'probables' squad that were selected for altitude acclimatisation training in Font Romeu in the Pyrenees accompanied by Ron Wallwork and Charlie Fogg. For various reasons, none of us made the Olympic team. The last time I met up with dear friends Ron and Charlie was the year I was Mayor of Stratford upon Avon 2006/07 at a function in Leamington Spa. Such happier times."

**Roy Lodge**

Adds Hon Ed: In '67, as well as our National 20 Miles, Roy won an all-star Leicester Mercury, the Midlands 20 Miles and was 2nd around the Birmingham Outer Circle. He's the front cover athlete on [Race Walking Record No 299](#) (August 1967).

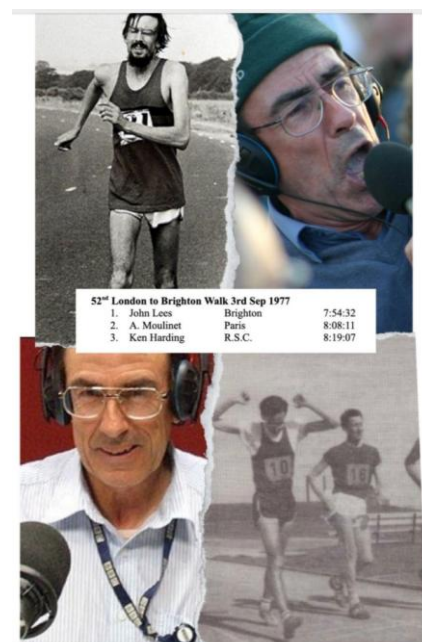
## A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO JOHN LEES

From Brighton & Hove AC President Melanie Anning



1974 Brighton & Hove winning team  
Dave Boxall, John Crook, John Lees, Brian Saunders

Thank you John, for everything you have given to our sport, both as an athlete and as a commentator. You are a legend in sporting circles and we wish you a very happy day and year celebrating your milestone 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.



# Dear Dave ...

## NEWS OF BURY ST EDMUNDS EVENT

We have just finalised a combined Eastern Counties outdoor championship for **Saturday 26 April** at the West Suffolk Athletics Arena, Bury St Edmunds - Herts/Essex/Middx/Suffolk/Cambs.



Races: Senior 3,000m (11.20am), Junior 1,500m & 2,000m (11am) and 1k Development race (11.45am). Entries: [Home | Steeplechase Festival](#)

**Dave Annetts**

## READERS' COMMENTS

### Centurions' AGM:

- It was good to see all present. Except for our annual 100 and social walks, we are a "virtual" association, and our zoom meetings are appropriately inclusive, and serve us well. Thanks to all our volunteers and active members. **Sandra Brown C735** and **Richard Brown C760**

### Ilford AC Photo:

- Nice picture. Well done! **Edbanger C590** (Ed Shillabeer)
- Excellent photo! Good luck and well done. **Bill and Kath Sutherland** (members of your Fan Club)

### European Friendship Meeting:

- ... and it led to a bigger event we did with Ilford two years later. They were great times. **Denis Sheppard**

### King Visits Parkrun:

- Fantastic! Prince Charles came to our Penn Road summer party and mingled with our neighbours. That was about 30 years ago and we now live a mere quarter of a mile away no less! **Bill and Kath Sutherland**

### Gloucester 100 Film:

- Very good. Nice to see it. Thanks. **Len Ruddock**
- Great video. From Centurion 761. Just had a second hip replacement but no regrets. **Kevin Emsley**
- Brilliant watch ... Thank you. Your health is your wealth. **Angus Brown**

### Enfield Zero Degrees:

- Well done for taking part in freezing conditions. Locally, people went into the sea for a dip. I regret not being able to participate in more League races. **Chris Flint**
- Well done, the indefatigable Ron W, and bravo and warmest thanks to Ron and all those involved, walkers and our dedicate officials. **Sandra Brown**
- Commendable as these results are on such a cold day, one must be greatly concerned at the lack of speed and competitiveness throughout UK Race Walking. This has got to change if we are to have any hope of competing at international level in the future. I know the truth hurts, but surely it needs to be said while there is still a glimmer of hope left. **Bill Sutherland**
- Thank you for supporting the walk, it was much appreciated especially given the weather. **Tracey Wilkinson**

### General appreciation:

- Thanks. Good reading. Thank you for my inclusions and another wonderful edition! **Bill Sutherland**

## HOW TO DO IT

I don't know if you have seen [this](#)? It's 200 young Spanish walkers with some Irish and others. How to encourage numbers participating, I guess.

**Cath Duhig**

Note: One viewer's comment highlights that they are using the "Beep Test", also known as the "[Multi-Stage Fitness Test](#)", to improve race walking stride patterns.



## BILL IS FIRST WITH THE NEWS (and it's Welcome News)

### Glasgow 2026 Medal Event Programme



Great News! 10,000m Race Walk included in 2026 Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

[Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games Medal Programme](#). At least they have not excluded us as they did in 2014. All we need now is high standard Race Walkers from throughout the UK to participate and win medals as in former years.

**Bill Sutherland**

## COUPLE OF RESONANCES

Hola, I have just had the chance to begin browsing through the latest EW, and a couple of things popped out at me:

Firstly, you mentioned being at Butlins Bognor Regis, which is where Pete's son mainly cut his entertainments teeth, in the Skyline team, after a brief sojourn at Minehead looking after Kiddies' Korner. We went to pay him a surprise visit one year when he was performing in a Xmas show, and ended up staying at The Unicorn, which still holds its place in the Duhig annals as probably the worst ever accommodation we have survived. The only thing it didn't have was cockroaches, and that was probably only because it was too damp and cold for them. Anyway, Al still has Butlins connections as his own company now oversees the creation and direction of many of their special events, like Weekenders, summer shows, Xmas specials, street theatre, etc. But he now resides back in Norfolk, near Sandringham, which segues me neatly to:

Secondly, you mentioned the presence of the King at a recent Sandringham parkrun. At that event Al's daughter, pictured, in the attachment, with the royal man himself, crossed the finish line second, in her buggy, propelled by her mum, who completed the bumpy 2 laps in just over 20 minutes.

Anyway, there we are. And this has filled a few minutes of what has become a rather sedentary existence of late, due to Pete's continuing incapacity.

**Cath Duhig**



*Adds Hon Ed:* In the Sandringham parkrun report for that particular day it refers to: "our ... first lady finisher was Marie DUHIG in a time of 20:32 with her spritely lovely daughter in her pushchair."

## THIS BRIGHTENS UP THE EDITION

I was just looking for a particular photo on my laptop and came across this rehearsal picture from when I played Madame Arcati (Blithe Spirit) all those years ago. Thought you might like a laugh ...

**Cath Duhig**

*Adds Hon Ed:* Madam Arcati is a great dramatic role - which takes talent to play it. Cath is one of our race walkers who've excelled in dramatics. Others include Chris Foster, who is also a gifted light entertainer and a legend in pantomime. An Enfield colleague of Chris Foster, the late Ken Easlea, also "trode the boards" with distinction.



We offer our thanks to **John Constandinou** who kindly uploads a copy of this newsletter to the RWA website. Last month we had difficulties sending copies directly to readers via email so it was extremely useful to be able to send everyone a link to the uploaded version on the RWA website instead. For copies of all Essex Walker newsletters, past and present, please remember to go to [Newsletters - Race Walking Association](#) – this link always appears at the end of this newsletter.

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