

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

EDITORIAL

While many enjoyed a weekend in a historic East Sussex town of Lewes for the hundredth British Isles 100 miles walking race, a few unwanted facts came to light on result sheets. For instance, only 9 finishers (including 1 lady) of the whole distance, only 2 with home connections (Ashford AC and Isle-of-Man Veterans), a high average age and for a 3rd successive year - **no** new British-based members of The Centurions. **Not** The Centurions' fault, but all Clubs and Organisation need flows of newcomers to make their mark and ready to take on tasks and give support.

As for ages, when Hon Ed appeared in 2 such races (1973 and 74) average age was mid-30s. Nowadays it's much, very much, higher. You don't need Human Biology lectures to know body strength declines slightly as each year passes. 100 miles is a stiff challenge and an uphill task (even on flat surfaces). While competitors prepare with long training walks and overnight sessions - worth doing as it's a completely different game in hours of darkness - they don't get opportunities to **compete** over long distances in races. Today's potential new Centurions often leap from 5 Miles/10 kilometres-to-100 Miles - **a very big ask!**

100 Miles challenges within 24 hours were previously nearly always faced after competitive long distances had been successfully completed. Race walkers stepped-up distances in stages. Gone are 10 miles events, 20 Kilometres races are mostly gone (we've even had some advertised, then cancelled due to low entries), County, Area and RWA National 20 Miles all gone, County, Area and RWA National 50K Championships also all gone, great Open distance events such as a 19.4 Miles Guernsey Church-to-Church, Leicester Mercury 20 Miles, Birmingham Outer Circle 25 miles plus, Barking-to-Southend 34 Miles, 38 Miles Hastings-to-Brighton, plus a really testing Bradford 50 Kilometres, Plymouth-to-Dawlish 42 Miles and 2 over-50 miles 'classics' - Manchester-to-Blackpool and London-to-Brighton (both versions: Open and Stock Exchange). Many folded due to increased traffic dangers and - sadly - others due to dramatically falling entry numbers. All these races - and others - were *valuable stepping stones* towards 100 Miles. The Long Distance Walkers Association provides an entry route into long-distance racing - several names proved it a successful way in. Since 1973 they've promoted an annual 100 Miles - good for spending endless hours on your feet, but an allotted time is 48 hours, so an aim for finishing in half that time (24 hours) isn't there as an incentive. Other such races have occurred, such as a recent "*Flower of Suffolk 100 Miles*" and there are more such UK-based events in years ahead (see LDWA's *informative website*). Long distance race walks are still held on the Isle-of-Man offering an opportunity to compete - maybe coupled with a few days' holiday. Some Centurions Social Walks have offered distances without racing - but useful to "*Get Some In*" borrowing a well-known Royal Air Force phrase. Indeed, some among those participating in a 73 miles Hadrian's Wall social walk went on to succeed over 100 miles soon after.

The RWA, despite unwarranted criticism, tried hard to keep your National 50 Kilometres Championships on fixture lists - even with appalling support by Club race walkers. When entries nosedived to single figures it could only be doomed - but credit to RWA persistence for trying to keep it going. At a Centurions 2006 AGM the late Peter Markham C526 clearly stated, "The Centurions can only be as successful - or unsuccessful - as our general race walking scene", this said after a disastrous (*in numerical terms*) RWA National 50K in Essex (Earls Colne Airfield). It was heartening to see UK race walkers lining-up at Lewes aiming to join The Centurions, so there's desire for membership - but sad none made it this time - probably for reasons in this Editorial. *Answers on a postcard!* **DA**



A MEMORABLE OCCASION

Our 100 Miles on Lewes track saw 2 respected sporting organisations to the fore: The **Centurions** (this a hundredth 100 Miles qualifying race to be staged on the British Isles) and **Surrey Walking Club** who were still rightly celebrating their 125th Anniversary of a year ago, having formed in 1899.

The weekend commenced with Friday night's social walk - racing starting on Saturday at noon when 35-of-39 entrants faced Mr Starter - SWC stalwart Roger Michell (a loyal member since 1969) and The Centurions Captain. An expected hottish temperature was mercifully much reduced by predicted low

thin cloud which took most all the sting out of the heat leaving perfect ultra-distance racing conditions until the evening. A mild night ensued. From around 9am onwards, Sunday saw a rising thermometer - but from then onwards, it was the final 3 hours of permitted time, so competitors still racing would have already covered a lion's share of the required distance. A detailed [result sheet](#) is reproduced for readers to show you the outcome - who got there, who didn't, and in the latter category how far they reached. This result will stand out as none bettered 20 hours - in fact not even 21 hours. **Bart De Vries** won, with long-time leader **Jonathan Hobbs** 2nd - the latter was bidding for a hat-trick of victories and put up a good show in trying to achieve the feat. Jonathan was one of only nine 100 miles' finishers (just 1 lady), mainlander Jonathan Hobbs and Andrew Titley (4th) from the Isle-of-Man Crown Dependency represented home interests. There were 3 new Centurions - all from a famous Netherlands based Rotterdam Wandel Vereining (RWV) Club, who'll proudly wear Badges 1223-to-1225. A word for Martin Fisher, who although short of a full distance, remained on his feet for the duration - Martin qualified as a Centurion in Essex (Colchester Garrison Track) back in '85 and has an impressive 28 sub-24 hours' UK completions to his name. Needless to say, team honours went to the only Club to close in - RWV. The meeting had commentary on the go, except at night (which was probably appreciated by nearby residents). The weekend's activities were featured on [BBC Sussex Radio's "Sarah Gorrell Show"](#) (from 1hr 09min 48secs to 1hr 17min 12secs). Indeed, looking at recent UK 100 miles races, turnouts have much benefitted from Continental visitors as home talent has failed to manifest itself in numbers. Accommodation was next door to Lewes track and proved so convenient those occupying it. A trackside mobile pizza van did good business with flame-heated products and during the late evening a "fish-and-chips" run was made to provide more catering delights. There were too many people to mention so we'll thank all who did anything to get this event going and then ensuring it progressed to its conclusion. It wasn't just over the weekend that efforts were made - this project's planning commenced over a year ago and required many Committee meetings, much correspondence and plenty of phone calls to get things moving purposefully. A most friendly presentations' ceremony was held on Sunday afternoon under shade of a large tree, where competitors, officials, supporters and spectators, with many sitting on the grass. It provided us with a wonderful atmosphere and end to our meeting. The number of spectators who travelled to Lewes (great road connections/10 minutes walk from a main line station) was much appreciated. The 100 Miles was our main event - in fact the big game in town. Many came to support a series of relay events on the outside lanes, among them some names and faces we'd not seen for ages - so it was also a great "Reunion occasion". Thanks for all who came to support the weekend's activities. **Here's your full main event result:**

[Centurion-Results-Lewes-2025.pdf](#)

RELAY SUCCESS

In Lewes track's outer lanes a series of relay walks were held, in which many Centurions participated. There were relays for The Centurions, Surrey Walking Club, Steyning AC, RWV, Tonbridge AC, an RWA/Lewes team and an Unattached team which included Shaheda Arthur and Brian Boggenpoel who spent this memorable weekend capturing it on camera. Not in a relay was Mark Easton, another leading photographer who came with specialised camera equipment to aim at athletics excellence. Many came to support these events - Centurions in numbers responded to an appeal from Essex-based Centurion 1075 Steve Kemp. Thanks to Steve gave up much time to ensure success as he arranged an order, recorded Centurions' names and participated

himself. Among Centurions who appeared in their team, and other teams, in no specific order, were Centurions 735 Sandra Brown, 760 Richard Brown, 912 Kevin Perry, 332 Chris Bolton, 1020 Kim Howard, 1102 Steve Allen, 987 Dave Jones, 724 Roger Michell, 555 Charlie Bean, 875 Jannette Bean, 849 Chris Flint, 794 Phil Carroll, 540 Dave Ainsworth, 685 Tony Perkins, 893 Ron Wallwork, 517 Jack Rose, 1064 Ian Richards, 1170 John Borgars, 909 Parminder Bhatti, 488 John Lees, 793 Carol Killick, 1075 Steve Kemp, 853 Colin Bradley, 963 Chris Cattano, 768 Steve Till and 911 Gils den Ouden. In The Centurions relay team *the one-and-only* Sandra Brown rightly had the kudos of starting the chain and also ending it. Thanks to all from The Centurions and the other Clubs for such appreciated support.

SHOW TIME

Stars of the weekend must be the world famous "Red Arrows" Royal Air Force aerobatic display team. The appeared just down the coast at the Eastbourne Air Show while we competed over 100 miles at nearby Lewes. An email circulated during a build-up to our race walking weekend gave notice they could be expected - as a flightpath towards their display airspace was low over the athletics track. A wonderful sight which saw many eyes gazing upwards, including many who were racing.

MOST PLEASANT CURTAIN RAISER

Over the years a number of top race walking events had social events on evenings before action commenced. We recall a Dinner in the Royal Leamington Spa's Pump Room Hall before the May 2007 European Cup of Race Walking, which saw team officials and supporters an opportunity to enjoy a social occasion. We recall August 2000's Newmarket Millennium Challenges when an evening reception was laid on for all *"out-of-towners"* in the town centre's King Edward VII Memorial Hall, hosted by the Town Council and attended by a Mayor, Constituency MP, Councillors - and even a few hangers-on, plus so many from the race walking world - competitors, officials, team managers and supporters from here-and-there. For August's Hundredth 100 Miles



Walk in the British Isles at Lewes, Peter Selby invited all for a Friday evening walk around this historic East Sussex town. He pointed out various sights of interest and *"marked our cards"* with a few pubs/restaurants for eating out on the walk's conclusion. A considerable number turned up. Of interest to many was the main road through Lewes - once a bustling A27 as also used by those in 38 Miles 'classic' Hastings-to-Brighton Walks, as featured in a late '70s BBC2 documentary called *"Getways"*. It sadly ended in 1987, mainly due to traffic levels. Now, with a by-pass, the old route through Lewes is a quaint cobbled pedestrianised heaven.

Friday evening's Lewes town centre social walk.

Photographer: Brian Boggendoel

Our walk included a really steep hill out of Lewes, heading west towards Brighton - with an official 50k timing point shortly after the summit. However did we race walk up it? **Thank you Peter Selby.**

READERS WRITE

- I am sure there will be some points for improvement looking at the event, but I think all elements were there: a good track, good time keeping, feeding stations, medical assistance, toilet facilities etc. Thank you all for hosting this race, including the relay, where all our supporters had such fun. The glass paper weights, custom trophies and medals were highly appreciated by all walkers. But for now: please know that you did very well! We are planning on our annual gathering on Saturday 15 November 2025 in the village of Nuenen, where we

will probably visit the local Van Gogh Museum. If you would like to join us, please let me know. **Frans Leijten Centurion 949/Centurions' Vice Captain**

- The Lewes event was a good social, I see that the evening stroll on Friday night was supported too. The track event only allowed 40 I saw, maybe that put people off? Track doesn't go down well with everybody. **Dave Hoben**
- These guys are proper warriors!!! I can only dream about! **Andy O'Rawe**
- We are already planning future events and without doubt see you soon. The commentary at Lewes was much appreciated. We hope next year's Centurion event goes ahead. **John and Shaheda Arthur**
- It was great to see you and so many other Centurion and walking friends for the very special Centenary 100 weekend. Thanks again to you and John Lees for your excellent commentaries. **Sandra C735 and Richard Brown C760**
- A really nice group photo. It's always good when those moments when friends come together and captured in a memorable pic. Thanks also for forwarding results and images from the 100th Centurion comp last weekend. It looked like it was a great success. I like the addition of a 'social walk' as it's so inclusive. I might have considered attending as a supporter but for a long-planned holiday trip with my daughter. **Chris Maddocks**
- It was enjoyable, friendly and inclusive and the relay proved a real success. Overall the event went well and I was relieved that we have 3 new Centurions. The relay was fun and people entered into the spirit by doing what they felt able to do, such as Charlie Bean who did a lap with sticks. Dave and John's commentary was excellent and spread nicely over the daylight hours. The work done by Steve Kemp compiling the relay results is most impressive. Tony Taylor's post is very good with the photos and comments. We shall have a debrief in due course but in the meantime time just relax in the knowledge that the job's done and with success. **Chris Flint C849 Centurions Secretary and Surrey Walking Club President**
- Thank you for your great support, shame I didn't finish. I'm hoping to do the last Enfield league race if I'm fit. Cheers again for your years of supporting us. **Chris Cattano C963**
- Thank you everyone for making this event a success. It was an all-round team effort. Great credit to all the athletes who took part and their seconds. It was wonderful to see so many old faces and it brought back a lot of nostalgic moments when Ron Penfold stormed past me on the second leg of my relay lap, he did that in 1958 I recall!!! I am sure we all came away with some memorable competitive thoughts. If you total up the ages of some of the competitors in the relay event there is over 1,000 years of Race Walking experience rather like a Bale of Galapagos Giant Tortoise (Bale is correct I checked it on the internet). I also always use capitals for Race Walking, gives it more emphasis. Well done; another memorable weekend. Take care and again a BIG thank you. **Peter Selby**
- Thanks for all the details on Lewes, which seemed to be a great success (Congratulations to Peter Selby and Surrey Walking Club) ... in reality it painted a vivid picture of where Race Walking is in the UK today with no new UK Centurions and only 9 finishers in the main from Europe. Proper FAST WALKING has long ceased and the athletes of today do not seem to have the appetite for COMPETITION at the top level as we did, but give a fine example of WALKING being for fun and entertainment and health but not a TRULY COMPETITIVE Sport as it once was. What we really need is the likes of A D McSweeney and so many others in abundance over the UK to resurrect proper Race Walking. **Bill C890 and Kath Sutherland**
- Smashing social walk picture! It's embarrassing to admit how few worthies in addition to your good self that I recognise. Chris Flint, Ian Richards, Richard Brown, Peter Selby. Over Lewes track: glad the Red Arrows are still "strutting their stuff". Congratulations to all involved at the 100. **Ed Shillabeer C590**
- My thoughts are with you all and all those at Lewes and I applaud all those who attended. I look forward to seeing the results. Keep up the great work. Thanks again. **Bob Dobson C786**
- Thanks for the result list, it makes interesting reading. You would have been 3rd with your qualifying time*. Until our next meeting. **Chris Bolton C332** (* Hon.Ed.22:44.41)
- Few finishers at 100 and no names I recognise. The weather here was really hot so I did think it might be tough for them. **Hilary McDermott**

- The Commemorative Relay Challenge attracted nearly 60 participants including 24 Centurions as part of the Centurions team, plus a further 2 representing their clubs. Teams from the Centurions, Surrey Walking Cub, Steyning AC, Tonbridge AC all completed to 100 lap relay, with teams from the Race Walking Association/Lewes AC, RWV and an open team completing another 50 laps between them. Some Centurions went onto do further laps as part of their club teams. **Steve Kemp C1075**
- Interestingly, my lap times of 6.30 plus were about my mile time when at my peak. **Ron Wallwork C893**
- We all witnessed Jonathan's valiant efforts. **Chris Hobbs**
- Looks like it was very successful. **Stu Cooper Australian Centurion No 5**

LEWES ACTION



In shot at the track 100 miles are **Jonathon Hobbs** (28 - Ashford AC) who retained his Race Walking Association Long-Distance Championship title, **Roy Gunnett** (29 - Lancashire Waking Club/formerly of Borough of Enfield Harriers and Verlea AC), **Martin Fisher** (22 - Lancashire Walking Club, formerly of Yorkshire Walking Club and Redcar) who has completed an impressive 28 UK 100 Miles races and true stalwart **Sue Clements** (25 - Cambridge & Coleridge formerly of London Vidarians and Enfield & Harringey AC).

Photo courtesy of Brian Boggenpoel

OF INTEREST

Two former Centurions' Honorary Secretaries, Sue Clements and Bill Sutherland, have come up with a list of Highgate Harriers who've joined the Centurions Organisation.

Centurion Number	Name	Time	Number completed	Deceased	Nationality	Year qualified
33	R L PARKER	106m1436y at 24 hr		...	GB	1909
44	A GRUBB (Snr)	23:06.27		...	GB	1909
94	A D McSWEENEY	21:37.18	3	...	GB	1933
137	J C R COOMBER	22:27.36		...	GB	1947
166	Chris SAUNDERS	21:16.28		...	GB	1951
167	W LONGSHAW	21:35.49	2	...	GB	1951
174	R J BOARD	23:31.21	3	...	GB	1951
215	J A D MAGOG	22:19.24		...	GB	1953
218	J G (Todd) SLAUGHTER	22:54.38		...	GB	1953
234	T MILNER	19:55.25		...	GB	1955
250	J R TAYLOR	22:04.51	2	...	GB	1955
254	Fred DUFF	22:12.07		...	GB	1955
266	Freddie Perry BAKER	22:30.13	19	...	GB	1956
288	Charlie MEGNIN	19:05.28		...	GB	1959
289	Sid McSWEENEY	19:58.01	5	...	GB	1959
297	R G DICK	21:57.44		...	GB	1959
341	Wally G TUCK	21:03.52	2		GB	1963
362	Reg E YOULDON	22:31.20		...	GB	1964
584	Charlie WESTON	18:29.14	4	...	GB	1976
890	W M S (Bill) SUTHERLAND BEM	23:49:36			GB	1991

Fastest: Charlie Weston. Bill modestly points out he was the slowest. The trail's gone cold since 1991, so we hope for revival at Highgate - and elsewhere!



INTERNATIONAL SELECTION

Cameron Corbishley (Medway and Maidstone AC), coached by Andi Drake, is a Novuna GB & Northern Ireland selection for the 35 Kilometres Walk at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo (13-21 September). We congratulate Cameron and wish him the very best on his latest major selection.

Cameron won't wait long for action as the walk is on Day 1 (0800 hours local time) on 13 September.

FIXTURES and DIARY DATES (September to November)

It is recommended that dates/start times of fixtures are verified directly with organisers.

SEPTEMBER	6	Eastern Masters League Final	Thurrock	TBA
	10	Biggleswade Open 1 Mile	Sandy	6.50pm
	13	World Championship 35 Kilometres	Tokyo	0800 (local time)
	13	BMAF 3,000m Championships	Derby	Women 12.58pm Men 1.23pm
	20 - 21	English Schools Race Walking Championships	Melbourne Stadium, Chelmsford	12.15pm
	21	Southern Veterans T&F Final	Oxford	TBA
	24	Police/Civil Service Championships + Ryan Cup (10K Men, 5K Women)	Evesham (Vale Park)	1.30pm
	25	Stock Exchange AC Annual Supper	Old Dr Butler's Head Pub EC2	7.00 pm for 7.15 pm
	27	Biggleswade Open Graded Meeting - 3,000m Walk (award for a Stadium Record)	Sandy	TBA
	27	The Bosworth Miles Championship	Leeds Beckett Headingley Campus	2.00pm
	28	Morning Group Training	Leeds Brownlee Centre	TBA
OCTOBER	4	Vets AC/Herts/Middx/Surrey/Sussex 10,000m Championships + Jnr 2,000m	Norman Park	1.15pm
	10	European Masters Women's 60+ & Men's 65+ 5,000	Madeira	TBA
	11	Jack Fitzgerald Memorial Walks 3 miles & 6 miles (both approximately)	Tilgate Forest Golf Centre/Sussex	1.00pm
	11	European Masters Women's U-60 & Men's U-65 5,000 metres	Madeira	TBA
	14	10 Kilometres road walk	Madeira	TBA
	18	20 Kilometres road walk	Madeira	TBA
	18	Enfield League 10 Kilometres	King George Fields/Donkey Lane	11.00am
NOVEMBER	8	Enfield Open 7 Miles' Walk + Veterans AC 7 Miles Championship	King George Fields/Donkey Lane	10.30am
	10	Race Walking Area (Southern Area) AGM	Zoom	7.00pm
NOTES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Any problems, call 07532-397528. 				

YOUR FULL SUPPORT PLEASE

Veterans AC and Counties 10000m Track Championships - for your diary please – **Saturday 4 October 2025 at 1:15 pm**. Veterans AC and Surrey, Middlesex, Hertfordshire and Sussex County 10,000m Track championships. Venue: Norman Park, Hayes Lane, Bromley, Kent.

BR2 9EG. All 'A' if attending VAC and Counties 10,000m Track Championships; otherwise 'B' 2000 metres track. Juniors 'A'. Organised by Veterans AC. Contact: walks@vetsac.org.uk

RWA 200 CLUB - LATEST PAYOUTS



In the money in your latest draw are **John Hall** £25, **David Ainsworth** £15 and **David Ratcliffe** £10. With this result came news that membership is declining. Can we persuade more members to sign up? It's £12 yearly, which gets you into 12 monthly prize draws, with profits going to the Race Walking Association. For details please see your RWA Honorary Treasurer Mark Easton at our meetings or contact him at: rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk

CONGRATULATIONS

To ... Castle Point Joggers, who on Sunday 17 August celebrated 50 incredible years of fitness, fun and friendship with an afternoon social junction at St Peter's Hall. A number of race walkers from the area have been associated with this successful Club. On Sunday Brian Boggenpoel was at both our Lewes 100 Miles before driving to the Joggers' celebratory afternoon. On behalf of all readers we send our best wishes to the Joggers.

ESSEX OLYMPIAN ON THE MOVE

After an incredible 2 decades in Higher Education at the University of Essex Students' Union, Colchester Harriers double-Olympian **Dominic King** has a new chapter in his career path - at Suffolk County Council's Children's and Young Peoples Service where he's now Social Care Project Manager. We wish him many successful years to come in his new role.

SUBSTANTIAL DONATION

From the Estate of recently departed Centurion 431 Paul Briggs came a much appreciated amount of £1,000 to the Centurions, which will indeed be put to good use. Our profound thanks are recorded.

CITY OF SOUTHEND AC 1 MILE REPORT

Our best attended race walking in Essex, for over a decade-and-a-half, continued its successful sequence and format on 25 August at Garon Park track as 23 faced the starter in oppressive heat. Ilford's **Phil Barnard** was never troubled as he continued winning ways with a hat-trick of victories (2023/24/25) added to his 2013 win. A proverbial icing on the cake was that he's getting faster as his latest win was best: 7:24.87. The frame was filled by in-form Upminster-based Belgravian **Colin Harle** 2nd and a comeback making Shoeburyness-based Centurion **Chris Cattano** 3rd. Chris last raced on this track in 2014 when completing Southend's 100 Miles (402 laps, far further than Monday's required 4). Chris received the coveted "*George Woods Trophy*", named after a great Southend-on-Sea AC (as then called) stalwart and Centurion 683 - this presented by Centurion **Alan O'Rawe**, a former holder of this trophy. First lady was **Linda Mountfield**, who always gives a good account of herself at Garon Park when clocking 10:04.23 for 4th overall position. Linda's trademark blistering pace down the home straight, enabling her just to pip **John Arthur** (5th) by a fraction of a second, drew praise from commentator - former race walker **June Cork**.

Yes, 23 starters/finishers with travellers from far-and-wide including Great Yarmouth, Newmarket and all stations east. Please read result sheet closely to be amazed how many new names are listed including many from our friendly host Club: City of Southend-on-Sea AC, where a race walking revival is in progress. **They've enquired if a session can be organised with a race walking coach in attendance?** Two really well-known athletes judged: Essex County AA Life Member Peter Cassidy and double-Olympian Dominic King (2012/16) ensured fair play: both were much appreciated. Only disappointing note was an absence of unavailable "*event regulars*" - with whom we've have had even more starting - so those missing, please ensure you're back with us next year. Some regulars kindly sent apologies for absence. *You were missed.*

What more can you say about **Keith Palmer**, an experienced race walker with a number of Essex County Athletic Association track walk medals in his collection. At this meeting he's its competent

and enthusiast linch-pin. He takes entries, meets and greets competitors, officials and their families, co-ordinates a major all-day meeting of umpteen events with 465 names on its programme, sorts out results, issues results, conducts a presentation ceremony - and fits in time to compete with his family members also in contention. WOW. Keith had enough energy for a storming home straight finish when giving his best to hold off equally fit Prittlewell-based Centurion Steve Allen. A genial notable personality presenting awards was former '70s/80s active member **Clive Shiret** who organises Garon Park's major events and concerts, was a key figure in getting the Centre's 4G football pitch and made a significant donation towards a track grandstand which was well filled on Bank Holiday Monday. Clive's brother Tony is Newham & Essex Beagles Chairman and still Southend's 400 metres hurdles record holder with a 1977 54.0 timing. A sign of popularity was the number stopping to watch other events, in which local Centurion **Steve Kemp** showed versatility (see separate account). Race walking was showcased before a large crowd, who were kept "up to speed" by June Cork's always interesting informative commentary. Immediately before our start June Cork spoke a fitting and moving tribute to former Club President **Ray Pearce RIP**, who came each year to judge our Mile Walk - it was much appreciated. A word about timing - great we start as a 10am "curtain raiser" as we're early into the City, so beating traffic with plenty of available on-site parking spaces. On Bank Holidays many from the Home Counties head like proverbial lemmings on Southend day-trips. We're at the track while most are finishing breakfasts. On leaving Garons back along the A127 Southend Arterial Road, a tailback of coastbound motorists stretched back way beyond Rayleigh Weir roundabout - miles which needing seeing to be believed. Long may we be at this Community meeting and long be first on. We remind you Southend traditionally invite walkers to guest in a long established 2 miles Boxing Day out-and-back pier race (*details later*).

Post presentation picture of competitors and officials at the City of Southend AC Mile

Photo June Cork

- Oops! Seemed to have missed that one. Was no doubt in the shower.
Colin Harle
(who came 2nd)
- Excellent photo. **Chris Maddocks**
- Treat to see Alan and Chris. **Ed Shillabeer**
- Good turn out! **Andy O'Rawe**



- Congrats to all! ... 9 prospective youngsters from Southend and so many unattached. Sizeable field, good to see Dom KING out judging and Alan O'RAWE generously presenting an award. Your AFIB (atrial fibrillation) must be good to take part in a mile event. Well done. I am still in recovery mode from Atrial Flutter Ablation. **Bill Sutherland**
Adds Hon Ed: We wish Bill's recovery well. Hon Ed's May 1966 mile debut was 8.01; now aged 77 at Garons it was nearly double, and with help needed to get on a presentation dais!
- Well done everyone. Sorry I couldn't make it this year. **Kim Howard**
- Amazing mix of ages! Doesn't happen a lot these days. Congrats to all. **Sandra Barnes**

- Great turnout, regards to Dom and Peter for travelling down to judge. It was great to see Alan O'Rawe ... he and Kevin Perry first introduced us to walking, many years back. It was great to see he presented the George Woods trophy 🏆. Hope to see him in other races, if he can, as he's a great motivator. **Chris Cattano**

Centurion 791 Alan O'Rawe presents the "George Woods Trophy" to the first Essex-resident Centurion in the annual City-of-Southend AC 1 Mile at Garon Park on August Bank Holiday Monday morning. In oppressive heat it was won by Shoeburyness-based Centurion 963 Chris Cattano who came overall 3rd behind Ilford's Phil Barnard (who recorded his 4th win: 2013/23/24/25) in this long-established event, and Upminster-based in-form Colin Harle. The trophy was donated by the sporting O'Rawe family.

Photo supplied by Andy O'Rawe



MAKING THE NEWS

Former pilot **Norman Smith**, now aged 82, of the Long Distance Walkers' Association was a successful Centurion qualifier at Newmarket's memorable "Captain Barclay Millennium Challenge" in 2000. He clocked 23:46.02 to earn badge number 976. Norman's documented every mile he's walked since 1994 and it's the equivalent of three-and-half-times around the world. Since 2016 he's devoted much of his time to collecting litter/rubbish around Bicester where he resides. For this he's been featured in local newspapers and an interview of his walking interests and activities is available after his appearance last year on [BBC Radio Oxford](#). In 2022 Norman was described as a "hero pensioner" for his litter picking in all weathers, and received a Community Award. Notable Bicester race walking resident Steve Uttley has seen Norman out-and-about and spoken with him.



IN THE PICTURE

Our previous edition made mention of super-fit octogenarian Andrew Wilmot (Halstead Road Runners) who qualified as Centurion 997 at Newmarket in 2003, and has appeared at Moulton Open 5 Miles races over the years including last year. With more than 850 marathons to his name at the age of 81, unsurprisingly his endurance accomplishments continue to be regularly featured [Halstead Road Runners | Facebook](#)



Halstead Road Runners

3 August at 16:16 · 🌐

BARROW MARATHON CHALLENGE

Andy Wilmot has been taking part in the 10 in 10 marathon challenge at Barrow running centre.

His aim was to run 4 of the 10 marathons. Marathon number 1 was last Thursday and consisted of four out and backs and he finished in 5:13.

His second marathon was last Sunday which he completed in 5:43.

Running his 3rd Marathon of the week on his 81st birthday (incredible!), Andy finished in 5.30, and he ran marathon number 4 on Saturday also in 5.30

Absolutely outstanding Andy.

ON THE RECORD

Jonathan Edwards has reached 30 years as our World Record Triple-Jump holder; or Hop, Step and Jump as our more established readers will recall its former title. It was set at 18.29 on 7 August 1995 in

the World Championships at Gothenburg. Said Jonathan, "I don't think it's a good sign for athletics as a sport that you have a record that stands for 30 years". One wonders what Jonathan thinks of those decades our UK 50 kilometres record was held by 5-times Olympian Chris Maddocks, before passing to 2-times Olympian, Colchester's Dominic King - or our UK 100 kilometres record, set by Ed Shillabeer on Colchester Garrison Track in September 1985? The latter record holder is still 'Edbanger' himself.

WALKING ON THE COVER

The Royal Mail are to issue a set of 10 special commemorative postage stamps paying tribute to 'one of Britain's most influential and enduring comedy troupes'. They'll feature characters and famous sketches from 'Monty Python's Flying Circus' - a show which ran from 1969-to-1974. Among action featured is 'The Ministry of Silly Walks'. Surprisingly race walking has a link with that - as when Britain first staged a 'Lugano Cup Final' at Milton Keynes in 1977, the Daily Mail ran an article in which its journalist disgracefully compared races at that meeting with John Cleese's famous sketch. Also on sale will be 4 postage stamps celebrating 1975 cult movie 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail'. Michael Palin stated, "Very glad to share a stamp with a nude pianist".

ESSEX WALKERS IN THE MEDALS

The British Masters Athletic Federation held their annual 5,000 metres track Championship at Nuneaton's Pringles Stadium on 24 August. 15 started/12 finished/2 DQ/1 DNF. [Full results](#)

Selected results: 1st **Grazia Manzotti** W55 SCVAC 25.50, 2nd **Marcin Wojtowicz** M35 27.59, 3rd **Melanie Peddle** W55 EMAC 28.01 (*silver age group medal*), **Steve Uttley** M65 SCVAC 31.28 (*silver age group medal*) and 12th **Fiona Bishop** W65 39.16. Well done to all who supported this meeting.

[Southern Race Walking Association - SRWA | Facebook](#)



ESAA Parade of Champions 1925 - 2025



"WHO GOES THERE?"

Essex Walker published details of a "Parade of Former and Present Champions" at the English Schools Athletic Association's Centenary Meeting on 12 July at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium, which race walkers were implored to support - so giving vital extra visibility to our chosen discipline. Some readers have enquired how many we mustered? We still wait for reports from walkers who showcased us in this Parade. **Were any in the march past? Please let us know.**

BARON BLAIR OF BOUGHTON RIP

Better known as Sir Ian Blair QPM, who has died aged 72. What's his connection some readers may ask? When Metropolitan Police Commissioner he travelled to the Nijmegen March for 4 days to support a Metropolitan Police Walking Team, and nearer home - in New Scotland Yard - he made a guest appearance at an annual Metropolitan Police Walking Club Dinner and Reunion, as which a number of our readers were present.



Dear Dave ...

FOR OUR GREEK READERS

Re Ed Shillabeer's 86th birthday: Congratulations and best wishes on your birthday from all at the Lancashire Walking Club. And seeing I'm communicating with you from Crete, Χρόνια πολλά - to be translated as 'may you have many more years'.

Tony Taylor

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!

Just to say thanks again for the kind piece wot u wrote about me in Essex Walker! I just wondered tho'... Where did you find that pic??? It was taken one Saturday in 2019 when I was busking outside the Moulton Stores!

Ian Garmston 😊

CHIVALRY IN DEVON

Race walkers are a chivalrous lot which I had noticed in the year when I competed in both an RRC and an RWA event and helped me to make up my mind to switch! I remember about 2-3 miles out on the steep hill down to the Plymouth to Dawlish finish line. I passed Carl Lawton languishing in the hedge and got Barbara to give him sustenance! The dog then had the temerity to sweep past me with just a short way to go!! Happy days!!

Ed Shillabeer

ON THE LARGEST CHANNEL ISLAND

Jersey had a similar church walk over 27.4 miles approx depending on what paper you read. Died out in the late 60s. One time Jersey attracted UK walkers over various distances with Guernsey walkers added into the mix. Two walkers used to come to Guernsey to race. Ron Robinson who was English and won a couple of Church walks in the 60s. He reappeared again in the late 70s for the church but was a DNF. Denis Le Marinel from Jersey actually joined Sarnia Walking Club in the 60s. Became a Centurion (326). Great to read all the old stories in Essex Walker.

Rob Elliott

WORDS FROM NERINGA

I'm at the age where I'm young to older people and I'm old to the younger people.

Neringa Aidietye

APPRECIATION

- Always a pleasure to read the gossip. Fancy being a ghost writer for my autobiography? *Ed Shillabeer*
- Edbanger's birthday. Now there is a mad man with smiles and a positive outlook, no matter what. 86 years young. *Chris Maddocks*
- Ed Shillabeer. One of the greats of the race walking world. *Chris Flint*
- I did like your tribute to Paul Briggs, Centurion 431 RIP. Your racing gesture was a lovely show of sportsmanship and friendship. *Chris Maddocks*

FORMER CENTURION SECRETARY's LEWES VIEWS

In the weather I fear only the bravest will survive! I'm so glad I did it at Ewhurst where you could get lost on the 10 mile lap with tree covering from the sun, total darkness at night other than a very few car headlights and the eternal sound of the screaming peacocks on the dog leg. But for Pat Duncan joining me and adding encouragement I might well have needed my spare 10 minutes to beat the 24 hours. Never again after 'third time lucky' following drop outs at Hendon (60 Miles) and Battersea Park (40 Miles), so I think I covered the 100 Mile distance twice! I've organised 2, at Hendon and Battersea Park plus 3 Barking to Southend as well as being Secretary of the Centurions for 5 years. There was much to look back on at the 100th at Lewes!

Bill and Kath Sutherland

PS: Anyone told the National Papers particularly the Daily Telegraph where John Arlott was a great fan? The most exclusive group in Sport as you can't buy your way into it or get elected into it, but to be a Centurion you MUST do it within 24 Hours!

Adds Hon Ed: Our previous edition mentioned Peter Selby's Hastings-to-Brighton debut when aged 20. Bill informs us his debut was as a 19 year old.

LONG ESTABLISHED SOCIAL FUNCTION

Stock Exchange Athletic Club - Annual Club Supper Thursday 25 September 2025 - Invitation. Could you do me the great favour of passing the invitation to the Club Supper to the walkers for me? Keep going, keep prospering and hopefully speak with you soon.

Andy Coltman

Adds Hon Ed: If you'd like to attend please contact Andrew Coltman on 07957 543682 or at: andrewcoltman@gmail.com for further details on menu choices. Cost is £30 exclusive of drinks. Estimated finish time is 10.00pm.

RON WALLWORK'S WORDS

Just a line or two to register my appreciation of the work you organisers and your team of helpers and volunteers put in over the weekend. Your efforts produced a memorable occasion which embraced the daunting challenge of the distance against time and the inclusion of other less demanding walking challenges, which allowed a "has been like myself" to be part of the event and of course SWC's 125th Anniversary celebration. I can't over stress the reunion opportunity that the event creates; for example I met up with Steyning's Ron Penfold and Charlie Bean who I raced against along Olympic Way, Wembley in the 1959 National Junior 5. Obviously on a sombre note we noticed how many of our race walking friends are no longer with us, but they live on because so many of them were mentioned in stories and recollections that abounded over the duration of the event, often initiated by input from the knowledgeable race commentators Dave Ainsworth and John Lees.

So, once again, well done to you and your team, especially to the three new Centurions and everyone who turned up and made for such a wonderful atmosphere.

Ron Wallwork

*"We have a winner **Bart de Vries (RWV)** - 21hrs 13mins 36 seconds - brilliant."*



Photo supplied by Ron Wallwork



AN ACCOUNT BY STEVE KEMP

I did 3 events at the Southend Open Meeting on Bank Holiday Monday and although my overall finishing positions were in the middle of the pack, I won Gold medals in the M65 Vets 800m, 400m and 200m with times of 2:43, 70.16 and 31.45 respectively. I would have liked to have done the 1 mile walk but it preceded the 800m with little time for recovery.

All track and field events were well supported; I think Keith Palmer said that there were 465 athletes competing. The Officials and Marshals did a terrific job, many being there all day, including the familiar faces of some known to racewalking; Peter Cassidy, Dominic King, June Cork and Keith Palmer. May I, through Essex Walker, thank all those volunteers and the City of Southend Athletic Club for an excellent meeting.

Steve Kemp C1075

ESSEX WALKER

Dave Ainsworth
18 Angmering House, Barnstaple
Road, Romford, Essex RM3 7SX



Telephone:

01708-377382



Email:

dave_ainsworth@yahoo.co.uk
essex.walker@btinternet.com

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