

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

CENTURIONS AGM



This was held on Saturday 31 January commencing at 11am and had an extended life of nearly 3 hours (with one welcome 5 minutes' break). It didn't get off to the best start as a mix-up over "zoom" access codes meant some were unable to gain access and others - including Hon Ed (who joined after agenda item 6) - only with some hassle. Despite this setback, the meeting was quorate. Respects were shown to 15 members who passed-on during the year, both home-based Centurions and from mainland Europe (previous AGM only listed 6 deceased members). As for re-election of Officers, the line-up remained the same as newcomers failed

to show. A good discussion took place on how to up the profile of the Centurions and generate more interest - and attract new members. Another thorough interesting discussion took place on aspects of our 100th British Isles 100 Miles' Walk held on Lewes track in August. Most of this was for members - and if you want to be at such meetings - you'll know how to qualify as a member. You won't get a UK 100 miles race in 2026 as such an event is postponed - there were contrary opinions expressed, but that's how it stands. So potential newcomers have longer to build up experience at such a distance challenge. After having no new home-based new Centurion members in the last 3 races, it gives the sport in general more time to try and increase interest so a 2027 return to action can be memorable and well supported. Line-up going forward: President **Dave Jones**, Immediate Past President **Pam Ficken**, Hon Secretary **Chris Flint**, Hon Assistant Secretary **Martin Fisher**, Hon Treasurer **Richard Cole**, Captain **Roger Michell**, Vice-Captain **Frans Leijtens**, Merchandising Officer **Chris Flint**, Website/Facebook and Archivist **Jonathan Hobbs**, Social Walks' Secretary **Steve Kemp** and Hon Auditor **Alex Ross**. Re-elected Hon Secretary Chris has, in 2 terms, served long and well - very long and very well. He's looking towards stepping down and wishes to see interest from potential newcomers to fill this post. Can those interested please make themselves known so as The Centurions 1911 can plan for the future of this great Organisation.



England Athletics
Steeplechase, Walks & Endurance
Festival
(WA Ranking Competition)
2nd May 2026

West Suffolk Arena
Bury St. Edmunds Leisure Centre
Beetons Way
IP33 3TT

Steeplechase races:

1200m	U14 @ 76.2cm
1500m	U16G / U18W / U20W / SW @ 76.2cm
2000m	U17W / U20W / SW @ 76.2cm
3000m	U20SW @ 76.2cm
1500m	U16B / U18M / W60M @ 76.2cm
1500m	U18M @ 83.8cm
2000m	U18M @ 83.8cm
2000m	U20M/SM @ 91.4cm
3000m	U20M/SM @ 91.4cm

Also:

1 mile
5000m
1000m Walk (Juniors developmental race)
2000m Walk
3000m Walk

Entry fee: £15 per race
Entries online at: [Home | Steeplechase Festival](#)
UKA Event Licence number: OUT 26/079

For further information please contact:
David Cripps
david.cripps@boulton.com 07484811982

www.Englandathletics.org



ENGLAND ATHLETICS FESTIVAL: Bury St Edmunds, 2 May 2026

Entries online at: [Home | Steeplechase Festival](#)

A DECADE IN THE HOT SEAT

Congratulations to Olympian **Howard Timms**, who raced for GB over 50 Kilometres at the 1972 Munich Games. He came 25th in 4 hours 34 minutes and 43.8 seconds on his International debut in which 29 finished (2 DQ and 5 retired). He's just clocked up 10 years as the Cheltenham Poetry Festival Director. Howard is well known in the area as an actor, writer, producer, poet and a playwright. His one-man play "[Accidental Olympian](#)" dramatically showcased his rapid rise from novice to Olympian status and featured in the 2012 Edinburgh Festival as well as the Cheltenham Playhouse and other venues. Many readers met Howard when he attended a memorable 2012 Race Walking Association Olympians' Tribute Luncheon at London's Tower Hotel.

ALEX ALLEN'S 99th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

On 2 February Alex Allen, father of Ilford AC's Steve, celebrated his 99th birthday. Decades ago Alex walked (and ran) for Ilford AC as well as for the Post Office - he was a postman at Upminster Sorting Office and a regular in "Post Office-in-Uniform" races, as held at Mount Pleasant, York and on the Isle-of-Man. He travelled far and wide to support Steve (and Loughton 2nd claim postal walker Dennis Jones) in famous marathons around the globe. When son Steve appeared in London Marathons he donned his father's old dated Royal Mail peaked cap - it helped him to be picked out on BBC television coverage. In races like the New Year's Day 10k, which for many years was a 2-event card (*10k walk first, then 10k run*) in the City of London and later at Victoria Park Alex was one of a trio of Ilford AC walkers who raced both times. They were Steve and Alex Allen plus John Perkins. One year at Victoria Park, when John was making his way to the start line for the 10K run, one wag shouted out, "*You better slow down this time John as it's a run*". Alex resides in South Ockendon but for his 99th birthday he spent it at Steve and Lisa's Prittlewell home. Many birthday cards were sent to Steve's house and kept in a pile to surprise Alex on his big day - Monday 2 February. Birthdays run in quick succession, as Steve himself was 68 - but looks younger - on Thursday 22 January.



RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This was held on 'zoom' on Friday evening, 23 January with online attendance of just under a score. After tributes to a long list of participants who'd sadly passed on, with respectful silence observed, apologies for absence were read out. Efficient pre-AGM arrangements had seen reports circulated in advance to avoid having them read out in full. Then came an Election of Officers you'd like to see taking our sport forward. RWA President **Chris Hobbs** (who chaired the AGM) reached an end of his record-breaking 4 years with our Chain-of-Office, for which he was profoundly thanked for such dedicated and active service in this role. A President's role is now discontinued - let Chris explain: *The President's role as with South isn't really needed and a smaller leaner committee was needed. It was more of an honourable role.* **Glyn Jones**, a most long serving competent RWA Chairman did not seek re-election and he was also, rightly, praised for his time with the gavel. Into the Chair came well known **George Wilkinson** who certainly lowers an average age of those Officers governing our chosen discipline - a great step forward. We should all agree with Chris Hobbs when he stated, "Let's support George". **Hear hear!**

True meritorious servant of our sport, former National Champion, **Colin Vesty** agreed to be nominated for another year as Honorary General Secretary if nobody else came forward. Then came 4 Positions which were **not** able to be filled. Long-serving stalwarts - Honorary Treasurer **Mark Easton** and Competition Secretary **Noel Carmody** - did not seek re-election. Both were, again rightly, sincerely thanked for their time in these important roles. Alas no nominations were received so there are vacancies. Two further positions (Coaching and Development Secretary/ Promotions Officer) failed to secure any nominations for consideration and voting on. Alas that leaves **your** Race Walking Association with **4** major posts vacant. **They need filling for us to progress with maximum efficiency.** *Can please you give this a thought?* An "Extended Committee" will be active in supporting the Officers: volunteers were **Iain Presnel** (English Schools Athletics Association), **Chris Flint**, **Glyn Jones**, **Anne Perry**, **Dave Annetts**, **Adrian Edwards** and **Len Ruddock**. All are profoundly thanked for stepping forward to represent your interests - so please all give them your support as they endeavour to promote better times ahead for our athletics discipline.

JOHN GODBER RIP

Sadly news reached the RWA AGM that long serving Cambridge Harriers stalwart JOHN GODBER had passed on over the Christmas period. John relished our shorter distance races with many remarkable times over track sprints/10k/7 miles/10 miles, though he had considerable success at 20K even though he preferred races up-to-10 miles, hence most of his appearances were those distances he did best at. Few got the better of John when it came to sprint finishes towards the line. As an athlete he was one

with a "double life" as you'll find his name on many result sheets as a talented sprinter - looking them up makes good and interesting reading. Many will remember John as a regular attendee at long established (but now sadly ended) enjoyable "Bexley Winter League" races which were held on an "around-the-houses" course - often helping out "behind the counter" and always with a cheerful smile. Condolences are expressed to his family on the passing of a popular competitor. **DA**

EW readers commented:

- Sad news re John Godber. I was wondering what happened to him the other day. I believe he competed in the Lugano Cup in the early 60s over 20 kms. As a veteran he took up sprinting and was running around 30 seconds for 200m indoors around the age of 70, which is pretty good. I'm sure many remember him as one of the organisers of the Bexley Road League and very often the man behind the tea bar. I'm guessing he was in his mid 80s? **Steve Uttley**
- Sad to hear that John Godber has passed on, and I remember him well at the Bexley clubhouse. **Chris Flint**
- I remember John GODBER very well in my early days in the 60's. A fierce competitor with a very pleasant nature, unless you raced on his turf at hilly Bexley. GB had really great race walking teams in the 60's and beyond and John was as tough as you got especially in a sprint finish! Lovely guy as they all were in Cambridge Harriers. May he rest in peace with so many race walking stars in the heavens! With sincere sympathy to his family and many friends. **Kath and Bill Sutherland**

PS: One never forgets the International 20 and 35 Kms at roasting hot Bexley in 1969. Still waiting for my engraved plaque to be returned by the RWA 57 years on! Our team at 35 Kms was Ray Middleton, Shaun Lightman, myself and George Chaplin. Got my spot in place of Charlie Fogg by winning the Colchester-to-Ipswich 2:11.30 (2nd fastest to runaway Peter McCullough) and by finishing 2nd to the great Shaun Lightman in the Middlesex 20 at Enfield in 2:29.20 in the 2 weeks before the Bexley race. In those days one was only as good as your last race.

FRANK DOLAN RIP

I heard from Chris Flint that Frank Dolan (Lancashire Walking Club) has passed-on aged 80. He was in that famous 1979 Ewhurst 100 Miles at which a record UK 100 Miles' field of 107 started - 78 finished (37 new Centurions). Frank clocked 21:33.14 to be presented with Badge No 656. He was to finish 3 more UK 100s (*2 in Essex*) and also become Continental Centurion No 104 as well as having a fine record in 'classic' Manchester-to-Blackpool Walks. His 3 other 100s were in 1980 at Congerstone 20:49.02, 1985 Colchester 20:27.25 and 1986 Ashtons Track, Woodford 20:26.25. We mourn the passing of a race walker who enjoyed his successful visits to Essex and express our profound condolences to his family and friends.

EW readers commented:

- Incredible Centurion numbers. I remember Frank in the Manchester to Blackpool walks. **Richard Cole**
- How very sad, as we reflect again on the great days of British Long Distance Walking. May he rest in peace. Sincere condolences. **Bill and Kath Sutherland**
- Very sad news. We remember Frank well from happy years at the Roubaix 28 Hours with Phil Hastings, Charlie Weston and our current Centurions Captain Roger Michell and others. Our condolences to family and friends at Lancs WC. **Sandra and Richard Brown C735, C760**

FIXTURES and DIARY DATES

(March to May 2026)

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

MARCH	1	Essex & Eastern AA Indoor Championships	Lee Valley Arena*	TBA
	2	Andi Drake's catch-up meeting for coaches	Zoom	6.00pm
	4	Metropolitan Police Walking Club Annual Dinner/Reunion	Civil Service Club SW1A 2HJ	5.00pm to 10.00pm
	21	Tri-Counties (Herts/Kent/Middlesex) 2,000m and 3,000m	Lee Valley	TBA

	21	Enfield League Spring Track Meeting 5,000m + supporting distances	QEII Stadium	11.00am
	24	Ilford AC Annual General Meeting	Ilford Sports Club (Cricklefields)	8.00pm
	27	European Masters Championships 3,000m M65+ and W75+	Torun (Poland)	TBA
	28	European Masters 3,000m M35-65 and W35-60	Torun (Poland)	TBA
	31	European Masters Road 5K	Torun (Poland)	TBA
	31	Veterans AC Road 5k (all welcome)	Battersea Park Bandstand	6.50pm**
APRIL	6	Tonbridge Easter Monday Open Meeting (various distances)	Tonbridge School Track	TBA
	11	Cambridge Race Walking Meeting 10km	University West Campus CB3 0AS	TBA
	18	Young Athletes' Training Day	Aldershot	TBA
	19	Ray Hall Festival of Walking (1500m/2000m/3000m/5000m)	Aldershot	TBA
	30	European Masters Non-Stadia 10k & 20k	Catania (Sicily)	TBA
MAY	2	Herts/Middx/Essex/Suffolk/Cambs + Open County Championships + Open	West Suffolk Athletics Arena, Bury St Edmunds***	11.00am 2K 11.25am 3K 12.00 noon 1K
	4	Hampshire County Championships	Winchester	TBA
	5	Veterans AC Road 5 Miles Championship (all welcome)	Battersea Park Bandstand	6.50pm**

NOTES

- * Depends on entries and availability of judges.
- ** A walk to start line from changing rooms – allow 10+ minutes.
- *** See advert (P1) for entry details.
- 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.

MEDALLISTS AT THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN VETS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Congratulations to all medallists in the Southern Counties Veterans and Eastern Masters AC

Championship indoor 2000m

race at Lee Valley on Saturday

14 February :

- **Colin Harle** of Belgrave Harriers
- **Steve Uttley** of Ilford AC
- **Matt Ellerton** of Blackheath and Bromley Harriers
- **John Borgars** of Herts Phoenix AC
- **Geraldine Legon** of Bexley AC

Place	Bib	Name	CAT	Cat Pos	TEAM	Time	AG
1	87	Colin HARLE Eastern Masters Athletics Club	M65	1		11:51.02	52.76
2	187	Steve UTTLEY Southern Counties Veterans AC	M65	2		11:57.97 SB	52.74
3	68	Matthew ELLERTON Southern Counties Veterans AC	M50	1		12:07.31 SB	45.25
4	29	John BORGARS Eastern Masters Athletics Club	M75	1		15:07.61	49.65
5	119	Geraldine LEGON Southern Counties Veterans AC	W65	1		15:41.60	51.54
	33	Pat BRIGHTMAN Eastern Masters Athletics Club	W70			DQ TR59.7.1	

REPEAT BOOKING

On 15 February Double Olympian Tom Bosworth MBE appeared on ITV's "Celebrity Chase" on a repeat which was wheeled-out to fill Sunday afternoon's television offerings - this a repeat - first screened 13 May 2024. The 4 celebs were Danny John-Jules, Yinka Bokinni, Eamonn Holmes

and Tom. On celebrity quiz shows, very often a first question asked by viewers in armchairs, is *"Who are these people?"*. Eamonn was well known, but few outside athletics would have known Tom - but by appearing in such shows (he's a television regular) he gets better known and ups our UK race walking profile. Tom was up against quiz expert Jenny *"The Vixen"* Ryan. Tom racked up an impressive £6,000 to be placed in a combined £17,000 prize pot - which the team didn't win when up against "The Chaser".

Perhaps inspired by Tom's appearance on the programme, a recent episode featured a race walk question, with presenter Bradley Walsh posing the question "what happens if a race walker is shown a red paddle?" The guy answered correctly to add £1,000 to his cash builder.

MILESTONES

At the 1968 Mexico Olympics held in high rarefied air, East German **Christophe Hohne** won the 50 Kilometres Walk in 4:20.13.6, over 10 minutes ahead of the silver medallist. He celebrated his **85th** birthday on 12 February. In the big race 28 finished (7 retired, including Paul Nihill who more than matched the winner for long periods, and 1 was DQd). In that race was Bristol's Brian Eley, who now resides in Weston-Super-Mare and celebrated his **87th** birthday on 29 January. Brian was 8th in 4:37.32.2 - just 19 seconds ahead of Mexico's Jose Pedraza who was a much remembered 20 Kilometres' silver medallist at those Games. Back to 50K, Shaun Lightman, also a now octogenarian, was 18th in 4:50.20. A more recent race saw Ilford AC's former GB International Ed Shillabeer racing against Christophe in Perth over 20K. Let Ed take up the story: "I just couldn't maintain my intensity! We were holidaying with friends, and I didn't know he was so relaxed shadowing me until he forged ahead not long after halfway. Happy days nonetheless!" Ed has a photograph to record the occasion.



OVERSEAS COMPETITOR MUCH REMEMBERED BY OUR READERS

On 5 January alas Centurion 927 **Willem Mutze** (RWV Holland) age 70 who clocked 20:43.50 in the July 1994 Leicester/Hungarton 100 Miles passed on. However, for Essex Walker readers he's better known for clocking 19:58.30 when 2nd in a July 2003 SWC/London Vidarians 100 Miles at Newmarket's Rowley Mile racecourse. Essex resident C984 Peter Ryan RIP won with less than a minute to spare in 19:57.35 in one of the greatest 100 miles finishes ever witnessed. Peter faded badly in the closing stages and just about hung on to claim a gold medal position. Many of our readers were at Newmarket that day to see a most dramatic conclusion to the race, in which Pete deserved much for somehow hanging on with a 45 degrees' lean. Indeed he actually stopped to lie down on grass about 200 yards into his final lap - the event referee stood beside to make sure Pete returned to the circuit at an exact spot he'd left it ... and unaided. After narrowly losing out on victory Willem said, "If only I had known that the gap was so small sooner, then I could have overtaken him". However he shed no tears over a lost race as he always eagerly looked forward to his next. He was fabled for his love of strong beers and port at the finish of every event. British walking has similar devotees of end-of-race drinks, including the stalwart Watts brothers who relished a fag and can of Guinness (*with widge*). *Willem is also Continental Centurion 220 - achieved in 1992 with 18:51.27 on the stopwatch.* Condolence is expressed to his good lady Annemarie who'd often attended him on both walks and runs. A Memorial Service was held on 13 January in the Netherlands town of Boxmeer.

Centurions' Honorary Treasurer **Richard Cole** recollects the same 1994 race 100 miles race at Leicester/Congerton in which both joined the Centurions. Richard writes:

"As C928 you will see the link in the same race. Willem was physically very strong and had a very good time. The course was possibly the most difficult ever held. Lapping over a number of steep hills (for a 100). A very hot day with flies annoying you. The race broke records: Fewest new Centurions (3) Including Willem and me. Fewest starters (34) Fewest finishers (13). Nearly all very experienced walkers. Fewest percentage finishers If you look at the walks before, some had very large number of starters. And more new Centurions than starters in 1994!" **Richard Cole C928**

WHEN OLYMPIAN FRANK BELONGED TO ILFORD AC

Frank Clark walked for Australian in the 1968 Olympic 20K Walk at the high altitude Mexico City with its notorious rarefied air. He was 16th (1:40.06) from 35 starters of whom 29 finished. 1 was Dq'd (though the home nation's close 2nd placed Jose Pedraza was considered fortunate not to hear a loud call of his number near the finishing line) and 5 other recorded DNFs. In 4th came Essex Beagle Rudy Haluza representing the USA (he was in the US Air Force and stationed locally over here). Roger Mills, who himself lined up for an Olympic 20K Walk (Moscow 1980) has penned this recollection: "Steve King, Frank and I lived in a leaky house near the track in Seven Kings, with three other Ilford athletes. The place was renowned for the fantastic parties. We did weights in the lounge. The floor had to be eventually propped up by bricks! Frank is still in good nick, in touch with sport and hasn't even changed much now in his early eighties."

WOW!

A record 2,331 attended a Valentines Day parkrun at Ilford's Valentines Park. **W O W !**

[Love was certainly in the air at Valentines parkrun on Valentines Day 2026 | Valentines parkrun](#)

As race walking continues going the way of the hula-hoop and yo-yo, this form of mass participation athletics goes from strength-to-strength. So it's worth reminding readers most parkruns now incorporate "parkwalks" - so please get out there and show 'em all our chosen discipline. All race walkers attending are implored to act as "sales representatives" for our event - so if you see participants adopting race walking gaits, please chat with them and tell how to get involved in what we've got to offer, and where our meetings are to be found. Thanks to regular parkrun helper Tony Perkins for this information.

UK ATHLETICS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS Birmingham, 14-15 February 2026

Congratulations to the following race walkers:

3000 m Walk			
Rank	Name	Age	Time
1	CORBISHLEY Cameron Team: MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE AC	28	11:55.13
2	THOMAS Guy Team: TONBRIDGE AC	28	12:36.46
3	HIGGINSON Fraser Team: BRIDGEND AC	18	16:32.68
4	MITCHELL David Team: SOUTHAMPTON AC	54	16:47.31 PB

3000 m Walk			
Rank	Name	Age	Time
1	DAVIES Bethan Team: CARDIFF AC	35	14:00.94
2	JENNINGS Abigail Team: ALDERSHOT, FARNHAM & DISTRICT	25	14:11.59
3	WILTON Jessica Team: ASHFORD ATHLETIC CLUB	20	15:01.59 PB
4	GHOSE Emily Team: TONBRIDGE AC	26	15:21.40
5	MITCHELL Natasha Team: SOUTHAMPTON AC	20	15:37.80
6	PEDDLE Melanie Team: LOUGHTON ATHLETIC CLUB	57	15:54.14
7	MANZOTTI Grazia Team: TONBRIDGE AC	56	16:50.76
8	DERBYSHIRE Carolyn Team: NUNEATON HARRIERS AC	48	17:49.23

TRAGIC ATHLETICS INCIDENT ON OUR PATCH

UK Athletics (UKA) face a 7-figure fine after pleading guilty to corporate manslaughter when a paralympian was hit on the head by a metal pole while preparing for the 2017 World Para Athletics Championships at Newham Leisure Centre. A pole attached to a throwing cage fell on 36 year old United Arab Emirates athlete Abdullah Hayayei, who was pronounced dead at the scene 20 minutes' later. UKA, and Head of Sport for the Championship Keith Davis, are to be sentenced in court at a later date. UKA will not comment while this case is still 'live'.

[UK Athletics pleads guilty to corporate manslaughter - BBC Sport](#)



RWA 200 CLUB - LATEST WINNERS

Top prize of £25 goes to **Steve Wynn** of SWC and Post Office fame, £15 to much remembered distance star **Geoff Tranter** RIP, with £10 to true racewalking supporter **Penny Darton**. Congratulations to a worthy trio.

[200 Club - Race Walking Association](#)

[BBC Radio 4 - Just One Thing - with Michael Mosley - How Nordic walking could boost your workout](#)

How Nordic walking could boost your workout

Ever heard of Nordic walking? It's a technique that uses poles to drive you along as you walk. It looks a bit like skiing but you don't need any snow! In fact, Nordic walking first gained popularity in the 90s when skiers used it for summer training and has since exploded worldwide.

The long poles keep the muscles in your body engaged, transforming a regular walk into a more intensive, full body workout. Research shows Nordic walking gives you a bigger fat burn and unique health benefits – like improved back posture – compared to regular walking.

In this episode of *Just One Thing*, Michael reveals why you should pick up some poles!



Listen to *Just One Thing: Nordic Walking*

HYLDA NYMAN UPDATE

We've recently heard from Chigwell Row-based Hylda who said she was now 87 and could only get about using a 3-wheeled push support - so rarely got out anywhere, unless someone came to collect her. She'd been in hospital for a while recently after collapsing at home. She recalled some of her overseas trips that were connected with race walking: Guernsey, Lugano, Isle-of-Man, etc. Hylda remembered going over to Donkey Lane several times for Enfield League walking races, when Hon Ed drove her - where she recalled that she always *"did the teas"*.

- It is good to hear that Hylda is still around, albeit with mobility issues. **Steve Uttley**

"CHANGE STEP"

To use an old military drill term - something's changing in the sports footwear world. Long established famous British sports footwear manufacturer "Gola" - once often seen on race walking start lines, has been bought up by Tokyo-listed Marubeni Corporation for an undisclosed sum.

IN THE MEDALS

Southern medallists in the British Masters Indoor Championships, all achieved at Lee Valley Arena, in 3000m races on Saturday 21 February.

GOLD medallists in their age groups

- **Melanie Peddle** of Loughton AC
- **Susan Payne** of Aldershot, Farnham and District AC
- **Marcin Wojtowicz** of Winchester and District AC
- **Steve Allen** of Barnet and District AC
- **Matthew Ellerton** of Blackheath and Bromley Harriers

SILVER medallists in their age groups

- **Celia Cordran** of Brentwood Beagles AC
- **Colin Harle** of Belgrave Harriers

BRONZE medallist in his age group

- **Steve Uttley** of Ilford AC

Full results [here](#) for the **women**.
Full results [here](#) for the **men**.

The races can be watched back [here](#) on Youtube with the women's race starting 4h12m in and the men's at 4h 39m.

Two of Mark Easton's pictures appear below and the rest can be seen online [here](#).



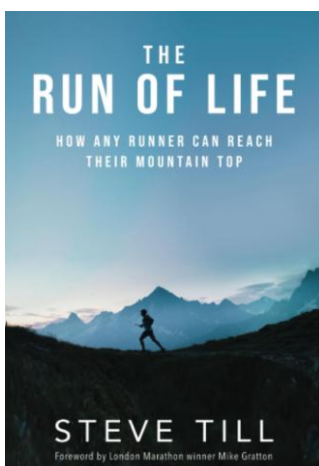
RACE REPORT - A YEAR LATE BUT WORTH WAITING FOR

June Cork, prominent in organising an annual Boxing 2 miles' Southend Pier Race (out-and-back on planks of the World's longest pier) penned a report of last year's event. Alas it got lost in drafts - but has just been found. It makes interesting and enjoyable reading.

Pier Race: This was the Club's **70th** Anniversary of a race started by Vice President John Tyler way back in 1954. In view of the history of distance running over recent decades we're fortunate that this historic club can run its historic race on the historic structure of Southend Pier after seven decades. The weather was athlete-perfect: bright, cold but not bitter, no rain, no snow, no ice and no ghastly cross-wind. It would be better if everyone could start at the same time but we fear the poor old Pier wouldn't be able to cope with the combined weight of all the athletes simultaneously pounding along its boards; beyond that of course the Pier is also open to the public [enveloped in their warmest walking-the-Pier outfits] some of whom must have been somewhat surprised to see these [must be mad] half-clad people speeding past them. As a nod to their 'maturity' two of the Elders in the race, Bill Lee and **David Rosser** [former Commonwealth Games Race Walking International], were given a 'scratch' start, but these two Senior Athletic Statesmen [SAS 😊] accounted well for themselves. David also brought along his daughter Claire and her partner Daniel Titcomb who both belong to Harrow AC. Daniel has a best 5000m of 15:30 so is a very useful athlete. It came as little surprise then, when the handicap calculations were done to find that he had, in fact, finished 2nd behind former Cross Country International Adam Hickey. [Regrettably I failed to ensure a snap of the pair of them together - but we're working on that]. It was a great event, handicapping done extremely proficiently by the Club's Handicapper Mike Jeffery, with awards presented by June Cork the Club's Secretary. Everyone was presented with a Finisher's Commemorative medal, the winners being awarded a trophy and gold medal [Elliott, First Home trophy winner, aged 10], Isabelle Carlin [Fastest Lady trophy] and Adam Hickey [Fastest Man trophy].

June Cork

"THE RUN OF LIFE: HOW ANY RUNNER CAN REACH THEIR MOUNTAIN TOP"



Here's a book review from Amazon's website:

Ever wondered what separates those who achieve their wildest dreams from those who just dream? What if the secret to reaching your ultimate running goals - or any life goal - was hidden in plain sight? Welcome to "The Run of Life" - where international ultrarunner **Steve Till** pulls back the curtain on what it really takes to transform from a back-of-the-pack runner into a Team GB athlete. This isn't just another running book - it's your personal roadmap to unlocking breakthrough performance, whether you're aiming for your first 5K or your hundredth marathon. Through raw, inspiring stories from his journey from dead-last finisher to national champion, plus insights from countless athletes who've defied their limits, Steve reveals the exact framework that turns big dreams into reality. You'll discover how to identify your personal "mountaintop" goal, craft an unshakeable game plan, and develop the mental toughness to

push through when everything screams "quit." Inside these pages, you'll find the battle-tested strategies that helped Steve complete over 100 marathons, 500 parkruns, *and even tackle the mind-bending challenge of race-walking 100 miles in under 24 hours.*

It's a helpful book with plenty of useful information for both runners and race walkers. Details on the [Amazon website](#), which gives various formats and prices. As for the author, Steve (Surrey Walking Club) is Centurion No 768 earned in 22:13.18 at his Club's 1983 Ewhurst 100 Miles. Readers saw Steve at the 100th 100 miles race to be staged in the British Isles - on Lewes Track in August, where he was one of many who participated in The Centurions 100 laps' relay organised by C1075 Steve Kemp. *Happy reading.*

TREE PLANTING

At a ceremony in Redbridge Recreation Ground a memorial tree was planted in honour of Ilford athlete Fauja Singh BEM who died in a July 2025 road accident when aged 103. Fauja was the oldest athlete to have completed a marathon and, in a number of marathons, he'd raised considerable sums for good causes. It was well attended by his family, friends, community representatives and dignitaries.

[Ilford tree planted in memory of runner Fauja Singh BEM | East London and West Essex Guardian Series](#)



Dear Dave ...

CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK FOR THE FUTURE

We were greatly pleased to hear of the appointment of George Wilkinson as the new Chairman of the RWA. Chris Hobbs the previous President has done a sterling job, but young blood in a key role is encouraging indeed for the future. We fully support his appointment and if we can lend a helping hand we are very willing to do so. I was Press and Publicity Officer for the RWA in the 1970's when we held a very successful campaign with many others to keep the 50 Kms Walk in the Olympics after it was omitted in 1976 and returned in 1980 at Moscow. Apologies for not being present at the Zoom AGM, but we were there in spirit. All the best for the future.

Kath and Bill Sutherland

JOHN POWELL RIP - TRIBUTES

- John Powell had been a stalwart member of the NUTS for many years, and was one of the original members of our NUTS History subgroup (along with Colin Young) from when we started that group in 1997. We miss John greatly - it is great to see the tributes that you have received about him. Frankly race walking has as long a pedigree as any other event in athletics (more than most of course!) and it is hugely important that records and memories are kept alive of the achievements and personalities of these great stars. ***Ian Tempest*** (Chairman, National Union of Track Statisticians)
- It was very sad to read about John's departure and over a year ago too. He was one of those rare breed of people who did so much for our sport and always unsung and always in the background. We, the sport of Race Walking, have been blessed with many people like John. And still are and if we look around we know who they are and we all thank you. We easily forget that our sport does not, and cannot, exist without administrators like John. John, you gave our sport so much and quietly too, belatedly, thank you. ***Oliver Flynn***

APPRECIATIONS

- Thanks for the mention of my National Award in the Essex Walker, really nice words. Well done on your long service award too, again very well deserved. ***Keith Palmer***
- Edition 459. Much obliged! An absorbing read. Thanks. ***Ron Wallwork***
- Keith Phillips RIP. It's so lovely to read the comments from friends and fellow athletes he raced with. ***Jacqui Owers (nee Phillips)***

- Thanks for plugging Essex Indoor Championship again. **Peter Marlow**
- Much appreciated. An excellent edition. **Tony Taylor**
- I receive Essex Walker and it's a very good read. Thank you. **Paul Gaston**

NEWS FROM ENFIELD LEAGUE'S FOUNDER

I haven't seen your name on the 'Enfield League' result sheets lately, and what has happened to your Ilford squad (not that Enfield are much better)? I have a mobility scooter these days (top speed 4 mph!) - my walking speed nowadays is about one mile an hour (if that!). Hopefully I'll see you sometime.

Martin Oliver

Steve Davis surprise winner of Stock Exchange 'Brighton' (May 16th). Having set up an extremely wide gap within 4½ miles, Paul Jarman was disqualified. With the outcome thrown wide open it was young Steve Davis who emerged the strongest to finish just inside 9¼ hours in difficult weather conditions. 1, S. Davis (Sy) 9:14:02; 2, N. Finney (Ton) 9:25:56; 3, R. Hague (Sy) 9:40:33; 4, D. Raiton (Sy) 9:47:56.

Dave Jarman almost a kilometre clear in French 12km, at Cantelou (May 16th). On a fast, flat, 3-lap course, Dave Jarman quickly showed that he had recovered from a recent illness to win in fine style. Serge Coutourier put in a solid effort in second place while Matt Davitt was pipped in the final 800m for third by Steve Till and Jean-Claude Briffault. Popular race organiser, Freddy Wahl finished eighth in 68:31 and once again showed fine hospitality to his visitors. 1, D. Jarman (Sy) 53:55; 2, S. Coutourier (Fra) 58:03; 3, S. Till (Sy) 60:16; 4, J. Briffault (Fra) 60:30; 5, M. Davitt (Camb. H) 50:46; 6, T. Gates (Sy) 64:17.

A READER RECALLS

Thank you for Essex Walker.

I was sorry to read of Paul Jarman's passing. He was of course a member of my club, Surrey Walking Club. I remember when he was disqualified in the Stock Exchange Brighton. I happened to be in France with his brother, Dave, and Matt Davitt and Tom King. I can remember Dave phoning Paul when we got back and being really upset that he had been DQd.

... I have an Athletics Weekly cutting from the French race ... also noticed it has the Brighton blurb!

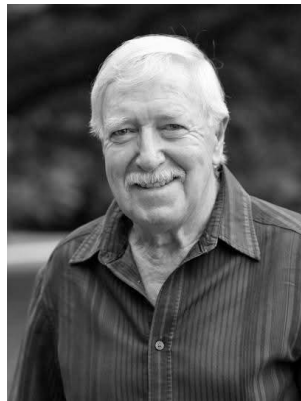
Steve Till

LONG DISTANCE WALKING PARTICIPATION - OBSERVATION

It seems that since the year 2000 most of the Centurions came from The Netherlands ca 71, followed by Isle of Man 65, GB 62 and Belgium 40.

Corina Riezebos-Rijploeg C1203

Adds Hon Ed: An interesting spot by Corina who qualified at Castletown (IOM) in 2019 clocking 23:35.12.



DEREK WARRILOW RIP

It is with great sadness to inform you that our long-standing walking friend Derek Warrilow passed away at the age of 85 on Boxing Day 26 December 2025 and his family were with him at the end. Derek had been ill for some time and the last year he had been in a local care home. We will raise a glass to remember Derek in our Annual Dinner and Reunion on Wednesday 4 March 2026.

Dr Kitty Hung

Adds Hon Ed: My first Club in the late '60s was London Vidarians, which then had established members such as Chris Flint, Gerry Grosse, Dave Gulliver, Jim Hurley, Dick Hyland, Brian Keegan, Ted Levett, Paul Maidment, Ron Pantling, Jim Williams, Dave Young - and Derek Warrilow. He was a most popular

member, who also raced for Metropolitan Police Race Walking Club, and who turned out with regularity. He really enjoyed that Club's top promotion - an annual Met Police Open 7 Miles at Imber Court in January. Derek was a stalwart supporter of Long Distance Walkers' Association events. After quitting athletics he kept fit and became an accomplished Morris dancer. A lovely fellow and liked by all.

EW Readers comments:

- So sorry to hear of the passing of Derek Warrilow, who was a highly valued member of the Metropolitan Police Race Walking Club over many years as well as London Vidarians. He was quite a character at all the wonderful races at Carshalton. May he rest in Peace. With Sincere Sympathy to all his family and many friends. **Bill Sutherland BEM**
- Condolences. I guess we trod the tarmac in the same race for Vids sometimes. **Ed Shillabeer**
C590 Ex-London Vidarians via Plymouth
- Sorry to hear about Derek. **Brian Keegan**

- He will be greatly missed. *Michael Walker*
- I was so sorry to hear about Derek's passing and at a good age when you think of his lifestyle in his earlier days! What a wonderful character and always cheerful, and how he enjoyed the Nijmegen Marches and the Tanners Marathon, also the Barking to Southend although I don't think he thought it much fun, just hard work. He was a strong member of the London Vidarians walking club and we met many times at events wearing the L. Vids colours, and the MPWC vest. I met Derek when we were in the SPG Unit 4 near Clapham South and were much involved in the hunt for Harry Roberts, one of the killers of the three police officers in Foxtrot One One (plain clothes) at the Scrubs. We also provided the escort when the Charlie Richardson gang were on remand at Brixton. When they went to the Old Bailey for trial we again did the escort and perimeter patrols (no guns like now) and we did press ups (minimum 20) to get fit for the Barking-to-Southend race. The day before the race a few of us treated ourselves to a T-bone steak at a local restaurant. We were the T-bone Steak Club. Not sure it made any difference how we did in the race but they tasted good. In sadness, *Chris Flint*

Adds Hon Ed: A funeral service, even on "live screening" was moving. A Morris Dancer for over 40 years, his coffin passed through a guard-of-honour from their ranks - who then sat at the front. At funerals one learns more about the deceased. Derek was an accomplished steel band player - an interest taken up from being a regular Caribbean visitor, a location he first went to on a Metropolitan Police detachment. A long distance canoeist, loyal long established Freemason and much, much else. We said farewell to a father, grandfather and great grandfather. A screen presentation of his life was loudly applauded. Metropolitan Police Walking Club were represented at the service, with more tuned-in at home. Derek will be further mentioned at the Club's Annual Reunion on Wednesday 4 March at the Civil Service Club in Great Scotland Yard. Adds Chris Flint: "It was a wonderful send off for Derek also watched thru live screening. He was a wonderful character and times in Nijmegen and on other walks were vividly brought to life by the excellent narrator of his eulogy. I was pleased my reference to his time on the SPG and escorting the Charlie Richardson gang was mentioned, and the lovely story of the plastic cup being holed. Great to see so many attending."

"CHARIOTS OF FIRE"

I recorded Chariots of Fire over the festive period. I have a fond memory of watching it for the first time at the cinema with a group of old school friends. Walking out and mindful of me having missed out on Moscow Olympic selection the previous year, Kim put her arm around me saying, "Hopefully, that's going to inspire you to make the next Olympics ..." It did. Thanks to all connected including, Paul Warburton.

Chris Maddocks

Adds Hon Ed: Every Festive Season this multiple Oscar-winning film based around athletics gets re-runs - this time on BBC2. Mention of Paul Warburton is because he's in it - in 2 scenes as an extra in running kit. Try to spot him next time it's repeated. As for Chris he was indeed inspired to make the Olympics - in 1984/1988/1992/ 1996 and 2000 - our only British male athlete to become a 5-times Olympian.

FILM STAR

Here's Paul (right) in an Oscar winning "Chariots of Fire" film with 3 unknown extras.



FOR YOUR DIARY

Veterans Athletic Club summer series; 'B'; road; all; Battersea Park, London SW11 4NJ; 6:50 pm. Registration: Bandstand. Footnote: check Veterans AC website for exact starting point: Tuesdays 31 March 5k road, 5 May 5m road, 2 June 5k road and 8 September 5k road.

Dave Hoben

NICE MESSAGE FROM SARAH WEBB

Thank you for still keeping me on the mailing list for all the race walking news. I find time rushes by - is it because we are older? I didn't seem to notice this when at work and having a family! I keep myself busy - including dog walking, volunteering, stained glass, and exercise classes. My family is well; I am very involved with supporting my middle son, Oliver and his family - 2 granddaughters, who live locally. I also travel to Sweden regularly, where my youngest son, Harry, lives with his family. They are expecting a second child in February. All my sons still run - Harry told me he managed to get out for a run on the 21st, John's birthday. He would have been 89. I went to visit John at Midford on 21st with Oliver and family. Still a very peaceful place. However, there have been several burials that have taken place, and John now has 2 neighbours on either side.

*Sarah Webb***WRITES A BIG NAME FROM EARLIER YEARS**

Thought I'd share a pic from this morning's 5km and 600 metre race as it's the first I've ever had with any of my grandsons. Cayvan ran the 600 metres, he lost a shoe at the halfway point so had to stop. He finished 6th. I ran a 22:34 and finished 5th in the Masters. The 4 in front of me were 50 and 60 year olds so spring chickens compared to me.

Jack Lord

Adds Hon Ed: Jackie Lord was such a talented junior race walker he was a proverbial thorn in the side of our top seniors on race days. He had immense potential - alas his contribution was lost to our British athletics' scene when he left for Canada. Great to know he's still donning racing shoes to good effect and younger family members are nobly upholding a sporting tradition.

**TRIBUTE TO VIC COLLINS RIP**

I was saddened to read of the passing of Vic Collins, an old friend of mine. We two finished an Essex 20 miles in the line together, but he was credited with being in front of me, which he never let me forget. For a laugh I always threatened my revenge, but there he is in heaven with his victory intact.

*Jack Rossiter***FROM A READER'S COLLECTION - BRIAN ARMSTRONG**

An Athletics Weekly screenshot from 1967 which you might find interesting.

John Batchelor

Brian Armstrong (Ilford) wins the Metropolitan W.C. Open 5 Miles Junior Walk.
Ron Linstead

- What a good photo of a classic stylist. *Len Ruddock*
- Year I was born. *Billy Green*
- Five years before my first competitive walking race! Good style.
Ed Shillabeer

**ALEXANDER ALLEN'S 99th BIRTHDAY**

Alexander would like to say a big "thank you" to all the walkers who sent birthday wishes. He celebrated his 99th birthday with all his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Alex famously rung the bell on Steve Allen's last lap on his 100 miles to become a Centurion. Now Alex has one more year before he becomes an actual life time centenarian.

Steve Allen C1102

Good to see the photo of Alexander Allen, aged 99 years. Looks very well.

*Chris Flint***AN OCTOGENARIAN'S PLEDGE**

The Nijmegen Marches are an event still on my bucket list, eschewed in the past by needing to take too many days off (locum costs) and not fitting in with my competition goals! Hey ho ...

Ed Shillabeer

RACE WALKING

Hello ... I still haven't got round to giving it (race walking) a go. *Tommy Careless*

Adds Hon Ed: For over a decade-and-a-half Tommy's talked about making a big impact in race walking. He's excelled at parkruns in the Chelmsford area and made contact to ask if he could try race walking. Indeed he's written a couple of letters to "Essex Walker". Before his first race, or even training session, he asked how long it'd take from beginning to making an International Squad? As for distance, after reading a couple of "Essex Walker" issues, Tommy said 100 miles would be a good challenge. This again before a debut at any shorter distance! He's bags of confidence - and could be "*the next big thing*". But firstly he needs to get started.

ILFORD PARKRUN RECORD - COMMENT

Great news! But very hard to manage on a narrow or multi lap course. In short, large fields take away the pleasure of it as you are tripping over one another with a much greater risk of injury as the fast runners sweep by. We (Finsbury Park parkrun) now have around 40 to 50 volunteer helpers every week, some of which I am sure would be interested in Race Walking if they knew more about our great sport through publicity. Presently we have little to nothing to offer anyone interested through lack of meaningful races, clubs involved and coaches. That is why Race Walking is so successful in Australia and many other countries, because they have in abundance ALL of the things we don't have. Virtually every parkrun nowadays has 500 participants. At Finsbury Park we have to canvass for volunteers every week and often they are the same people - my current volunteering is 169 with 183 as a participant. As our Race Director said last week, if one volunteered once a month canvassing would not be necessary. Do you distribute Essex Walker to Will Norman who is the man promoting Walking & Cycling on behalf of the London Assembly? All good publicity. Looking forward to hopefully seeing you at the MPRWC Reunion and Buffet on Wednesday 4 March. *Bill and Kath Sutherland*

Adds Hon Ed: Will is the Greater London's Mayor's "Walking and Cycling Commissioner". I've mentioned him before in Essex Walker. As then RWA Southern Area Press Officer (a post now discontinued) I sent Will a few issues - I also personally invited him to attend our 90th Enfield Open 7 Miles race and Reunion, as I knew he'd see what nowadays passes as a bumper field of race walkers and also old timers along for a post-race reunion. Will couldn't make it. I suspect he's more interested in pedals than pedestrianism. A Southern Area Honorary Press Officer's role was replaced with a super Communications Officer type post and someone well up on new communication technology was sought. In two AGMs since this opportunity became on offer there's been no takers so it's currently vacant. Anybody out there willing to step forward to make a contribution in such an interesting role?

STEVE HOLLIDAY - STATUS

Just a quick update. Steve was in hospital for pain management last week then let home on Saturday. On Sunday he had a stroke at home and is now in a specialist stroke ward in Canterbury. I went to visit him this morning. He's pretty low and has difficulty forming words which is so frustrating for him. He knows what to say but can't form every word. He can be quite tearful at times. Apparently the Canterbury Stroke unit is one of the best in the country and they hope they can help get his speech back or a bit better. The plan is for him to go into a care home in a week or so. Sorry for the news.

Chris Hobbs Ex-Hon President Race Walking Association

Adds Hon Ed: Active and successful since taking up race walking at Folkstone AC in 1968, Folkestone-born Steve's a former Royal Air Force 20K Champion, and 3-times' British Railways Champion (in days when many employers organised staff sports days). As well as Folkestone AC he's been on the books of Medway AC, Medway & Maidstone AC and Ashford AC in a near 50 years' active athletics career in which he won a remarkable 30 Kent Athletics Association titles. Steve served in the RAF at the same time as Hon Ed. Steve was mainly based at RAF Hullavington near Chippenham (Wiltshire) as a parachute packer - where Leonard Cheshire VC trained in 1939. It closed in 1992. The very recent stroke was only one serious aspect - he was in hospital as a serious cancer patient. When cancer status was known, address details were circulated, 4 sent "Get Well" cards, which so pleased and cheered him up. They're repeated here if any readers wish to send their wishes: 73 Grasmere Road,

Kennington, Ashford. Kent. TN24 9BQ. His son regularly collects mail to take into hospital. *A popular figure who we all wish well.*

ESSEX WALKER

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