

# Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

## LOOK SHARP

After little apparent interest in this year's TCS London Marathon among race walkers, **let's try getting several race walkers on the 2027 start line** - so we can showcase our chosen discipline to over one million spectators who'll line the route, plus television and other media coverage. Entries close **Friday 1 May at 4pm**, with late entries not permitted.



[Enter the ballot | London Marathon Events](#)

## MARATHON 2026 NEWS

Before April's TCS London Marathon we asked if any race walkers would be in the field - answers came there none, which is a pity. Nobody seems to know of any who'd been accepted. If any come to light after dust has settled back onto London's streets, we'll give them a mention and also any good causes if applicable.

Also in April was the 130th Boston Marathon where a finisher was Competitor No 26037 - better known as **Fiona Bishop**, a regular participant in our race walks. Fiona's net time was 4:38.15 (2:11.58 at halfway). Fiona said:

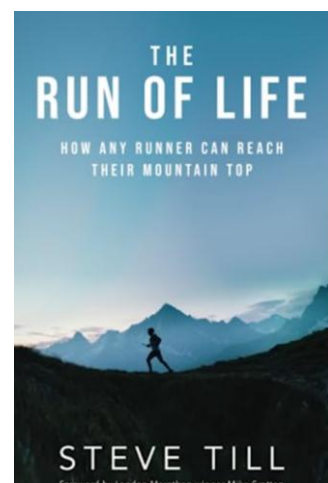
*"I found it hard. It was very up and down. I was hoping to go under 4hrs 30 mins ... but I did it!!"*

## THE RUN OF LIFE – Steve Till – FREE COPIES

Steve writes: "For many years, I didn't think I was worthy of writing a book – I mean I wasn't Mo Farah or Paula Radcliffe or Ken Matthews – but finally friends convinced me that I should, that I had a story worth telling and that, alongside my own story, I could relate dozens of running anecdotes that had inspired me and would hopefully inspire the readers.

My story went from coming last in school cross country races to finally earning a Great Britain ultra-distance vest – through zero talent, I should add, just a lot of hard work. And I had done it while working full-time and bringing up a family – something, my friends said, that would resonate more strongly with the average athlete reader than, say, Mo Farah's story. That journey forms some of the book, but, as I say, there are lots of stories about other athletes, people you've heard of, and people that I've coached whom you've never heard of. In race walking terms, off the top of my head, there are stories about Don Thompson, Paul Nihill and Roger Mills in there. And then there are also stories about Ronnie O'Sullivan's mental health struggles, Geraint Thomas's bike training and even the Battle of Stalingrad!

I have been very grateful to Dave for mentioning the book in Essex Walker, so I thought I'd repay the favour by offering three copies (signed by me, though that does devalue the book!) to three Essex Walker readers, chosen at random. Please just send your name and address by any means to Dave, and we will draw the winners out of a proverbial hat in the next month. Thank you!"



**Adds Hon Ed:** Essex Walker's first readers' competition, which it's hoped will be well received. In our previous 2 editions we've given a favourable book review, given online access details of how you can order your copy and published a picture of Steve speaking at his official book launch. Steve has a wonderful London-to-Brighton record - his last 4 races saw him 7th, 2nd, 3rd and 2nd ('81-to-84). Surrey Walking Club were the promoting Club - and frequently won the team trophy - with Steve often their 1st scoring man. In Steve's top years, those competing at the head of the fields were internationals, including Olympians. He has a 3rd place to his credit in the Dithy Cup, an event which replaced the London-to-Brighton on fixture cards. The author joined The Centurions when claiming membership number **768** at his Club's Ewhurst 100 Miles in June 1983 when clocking 22:13.18 in a race which saw 84 starters and 15 finishers with Belgravian Carl Lawton breaking the tape as the first of 28 new Centurions. Many will have met Steve at last year's 100th British Isles 100 Miles' event on Lewes Track in August. Steve was among many who participated in The Centurions 100 laps' relay around the track's outer lanes.

**How to enter:** Just send your name and address to the Hon Editor, whose contact details are at the foot of our back page. You can email, post or phone (leave messages if out). Essex Walker is distributed from the start of the month, so we'll allow **3 weeks** to get your entries in - **with a closing date of 11.59pm on Saturday 23 May 2026**. One entry for each reader's name. After closing date Hon Ed will forward all entrant's names to Steve, who'll arrange for 3 names to be drawn at random from a hat. Prizes will be posted by Steve to our lucky winners' addresses as supplied. We **thank** Steve for his kind offer to donate these prizes and pay for post and packaging. **Over to you - our readers!**

## PARKRUN/PARKWALK CRITICISM



April was a month of "Parkwalk" celebrations as planned by National Organisers - with Saturday 25 April designated as "*Parkwalk Day*". Efforts were made to get race walkers along to participate and so showcase our event to the masses - and hopefully get some of our number present to try enthusing activists into attending our race walks. Not all entered into the spirit of it. Sports gear manufacturers Nike put up large billboards in-and-around parks proclaiming "YOU DIDN'T COME ALL THIS WAY FOR A WALK IN THE

PARK". *Hmmm!* National parkrun organisers were keen to promptly issue statements to the effect that parkruns/parkwalks are events where **all** will be made welcome. A number of these billboards have been removed. Similar ads were seen in Boston leading up to the city's famous Marathon on April 20th: also removed after facing criticism. As for parkwalk, we hope to hear from readers who supported April's initiative - especially if they succeeded in getting some newcomers to come and try competitive race walks.

## MOST WELCOME NEW APPOINTMENT

At Southend City AC's recent AGM there is a newly elected Walking Secretary after some years without such an office holder. It's 16 year-old **Erin Frisby**. We welcome the young lady and hope this will help to ignite a revival in a Club that, in its heyday, had the Country's top Walking Section. Please give your support to Erin.

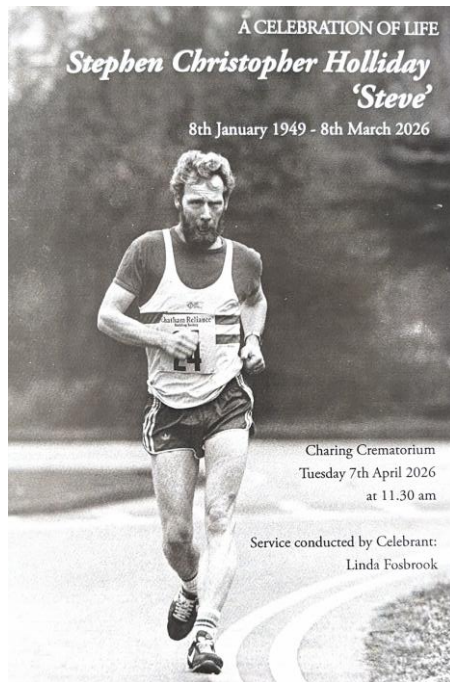


## GLASGOW COMMONWEALTH GAMES JUDGES ANNOUNCED

Congratulations to: Noel Carmody (Eng), Zoe Eastwood-Bryson (Aus), Daniel Michaud(Can), Ian Richards(Eng), Verity Snook (Scot) and Steve Taylor (IOM).

## SAD FAREWELL

One of Southend's top office holders, has sadly passed on aged 82. Esteemed life member **Dave Lesley** was a long serving Honorary Treasurer and successful ultra runner. We extend condolence to his family.



## A GOOD SEND OFF FOR A WORTHY

Steve Holliday's funeral service at Charing Crematorium in Kent saw an impressive *Order-of-Service* designed to resemble a Race Walking Record front cover (as before going on email distribution) and of the same size. An action photograph of Steve in action was one of the best race walking photographs seen. Photographer was Graham Maynard. Steve's son Michael gave the eulogy. At the lectern he held up Steve's 1972 RAF 20 Kilometres' Championship gold medal, won at RAF Cottesmore in Rutland. A wonderful tale was told of Steve reaching 10 miles thinking he was 4th as 3 others had got out-of-sight, only to be informed he now led as those 3 had been "*chopped*". This medal was then placed in an exhibition of medals/certificates/press cuttings/RAF Command representative blazer badges plus many photos at the nearby "Woolpack" pub where a wake was held. The "Woolpack" is a Beefeater establishment in the same road as the Crematorium. A eulogy, delivered by his son Michael, recalled Steve's commendable record - from a debut in the mid-'60s to when hanging up his racing shoes in 2017. During a long

span only twice was a loud call of his number heard - both times while getting acquainted with our sport's laws. Throughout this time he was most active. One always learns things about deceased persons at a funeral - we were told of Steve's 4 years' Merchant Navy Service before enlisting in the Royal Air Force. Steve got almost everywhere by public transport as only in later years did he learn to drive. Race walking was represented by our Race Walking Association's Immediate Past President Chris Hobbs and Hon Ed (both incidentally born in Bexley, Kent), this the County were Steve won 30 Championship athletics' titles. Perhaps more watched on "*live screening*". The service can be viewed for 30 days after the service. Steve's daughter Sara wore an RAF blue trimming to reflect Steve's RAF service. Finally a presentation ("*Steve Holliday : King of the Road*") was made at the funeral service marking Steve's contribution to Kent athletics. This can be viewed at: [Stephen Holliday Oral History Recording · Kent's Sporting Memories](#)

## STEVE HOLLIDAY'S FUNERAL

If you missed this service on Tuesday 7 April, there is a screening available for viewing for 28 days afterwards - so (until 5 May) you've still time to watch it. Access: [Watch](#) (User name xefab63)

## FURTHER TRIBUTE TO STEVE HOLLIDAY

We do remember Steve Holliday as a real champion in his day both for the RAF and in many races in Kent. May He Rest in Peace and join the many former Race Walking Champions and All in the Heavens. With Sincere condolences to his family and many friends

*Bill and Kath Sutherland*

## LATENT TALENT

Obituaries published in respect of recently departed, multi-talented, **Mary Rand** MBE have reported that among a long list of different events she'd appeared in was a 1 Mile Walk! As far as our discipline goes, perhaps Mary was the one who got away?

## MEDALS FROM POLAND

At the European Masters 5K Road Championships in late March at Torun, British race walkers came home with gold medals. Congratulations to **Diane Brain** from the Midlands, **Melanie Peddle** of Loughton AC and **Sue Payne** of Aldershot, Farnham & District AC who secured team gold. Sue won an individual age group gold, as did 1980 Olympian **Ian Richards** of Steyning AC. Well done to those mentioned, and all who competed. Photographs (below) courtesy of the [RWA Southern Area Facebook page](#). Why not make a visit to this informative page to follow race walking news?



### RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION 200 CLUB

Latest winners are all well known respected names in our chosen sport: **Penny Darton**, **Ed Shillabeer** and **John Hall** who are now better off respectively by £25, £15 and £10. How about you joining? It's only £1 per month with profits going towards assisting race walking progress. For details please contact Colin Vesty at: [rwasecretary@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rwasecretary@yahoo.co.uk)

### ILFORD AC WALKERS' MEET-UP

Numbers were slightly down but it was still an enjoyable pub lunch on Thursday 9 April at "The Bull" in Romford Market Place - outside which was the course as used for big turnouts in Romford Brewery 3K walks during the '80s. What links all 5 was they'd completed 53 miles' London-to-Brighton Walks. Tony (the Organiser), Alan and Dave are Centurions and Brian and Dave are past Ilford AC Presidents. There have been a number of these gatherings and another is planned for July.

L-to-R: Len Ruddock, Brian Armstrong, Tony Perkins, Alan Barber and Dave Ainsworth. Photo taken by "The Bull" bar supervisor using Len's phone/camera.



- Good to catch up today with everyone. **Len Ruddock**
- Nice picture. Keep me posted regarding the next one - you never know ... **Ed Shillabeer**
- Ha Ha. I've got one of those red bags as well (issued to commemorate 500<sup>th</sup> Essex Walking League race). **John Hall**
- Looks like you all had a great time. **Bill Sutherland**
- Looking sprightly. **Cath Duhig**
- The 5 Musketeers of Ilford. Sounds like you had a good time at The Bull. **Chris Flint**

An article featured in a number of local newspapers about the “ex-walkers’ reunion”, acknowledging a few of their respective achievements in race walking.

[ilfordrecorder.co.uk/news/26027448.ex-ilford-race-walkers-reunite-bull-romford/](http://ilfordrecorder.co.uk/news/26027448.ex-ilford-race-walkers-reunite-bull-romford/)

- Well done All! Great publicity indeed! Can you put into print to your many readers of your wonderful Essex Walker that we really need many more present and former race walkers to sell our great sport to others. I have a good photograph of me winning my Commonwealth Bronze Medal in 1970, which I distribute a copy of to all interested parties when I shop twice weekly at Muswell Hill. That includes Mark FALCO, Spurs Legend goal scorer from the past who works in Marks and Spencers. Great guy! No time like the present. Onwards and upwards! **Bill and Kath Sutherland**



**PARKRUN SUCCESS**

Congratulations to Val Mountford who over Easter claimed 2nd place in her age group at her local Shoeburyness parkrun. A keen supporter, Val’s also had top spot in her age group in previous events on this course. Well done Val.

**CAMERON CORBISHLEY FEATURES IN GB SQUAD**



[Cameron Corbishley sets new British record at inaugural Half Marathon Race Walk National Championships | British Athletics](#)

**Cameron Corbishley** of Medway and Maidstone AC has been selected for the England Athletics squad in the World Athletics Race Walk Challenge race in Madrid at the end of May.

He recently achieved the Commonwealth Games qualifying time, whilst setting a new UK record at the National Championships for the inaugural Half Marathon distance.



**FIXTURES and DIARY DATES**

**(May to end July 2026)**

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

<b>MAY</b>	1	Entries close for 2027 TCS London Marathon at 4pm. No late entries.	<i>(Aide memoire)</i>	4.00pm
	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*
	10	Kent County Championships	Gillingham	TBA
	11	SCVAC 2,000 metres Men & Women (over 35 & over 50 categories)	Lee Valley track	6.30pm
	17	Kent Young Athletes League	Erith	TBA
	20	Biggleswade AC Track Fest 1,000m	Sandy	6.40pm

JUNE	2	Veterans AC Road 5 Kilometres (all welcome)	Battersea Park Bandstand	6.50pm*
	4	Entry closing date for Ken Livermore 10,000 metres Baton Relay	<i>(Aide memoire)</i>	
	6	Ken Livermore 10,000 Metres Baton Relay	QEII Stadium, Donkey Lane	11.00am
	13	Jack Fitzgerald Memorial Walks approx 3 and 6 miles 'B' race	Tilgate Forest Golf Centre	1.00pm
	20-21	UKA Athletics Outdoor Championships	Birmingham	TBA
	26	SCVAC (Kent) League	Dartford	TBA
	27-28	Welsh Senior & U/18 Championships	Cardiff	TBA
JULY	2	Ilford AC Walkers meet-up	The Bull, Romford Market Place	1.00pm
	3-5	England Athletics U20 & Senior Outdoor Championships	Bedford	TBA
	4	Moulton Open 5 Miles + 2000m/3000m/5000m undercard	Moulton Village (Suffolk)	TBA
	6	SCVAC 2,000 Metres Men & Women/Over 35 & Over 50 categories	Lea Valley Track	6.40pm
	25-26	England Athletics U16 & U18 Championship	Bedford	TBA
	31	Commonwealth Games Men's 10,000m	Scotstoun Stadium, Glasgow	TBA

#### NOTES

\* A walk to start line from changing rooms - allow 10 minutes+.

\*\* See pre-published advert 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](http://www.fabian4.co.uk). Any problems, call 07532-397528.

#### GOOD NEWS FOR ATHLETICS

Many readers will have raced at Crystal Place, on a track or an old motor racing circuit around the site (or both). Crystal Palace athletics stadium fell into neglect and ceased being used for major and local meetings. A short while ago a new track was opened by the local Constituency MP. Now the rest of this complex is on track for progress. A 130 million pound renovation of the National Sports Centre has taken a significant step forward, with plans to include extended 25,000 seating now being submitted to Bromley Council's Planning Committee. When completed, it'll make a viable alternative to the London Stadium. Sustainability is a key part of this project with a transition to all-electric power and a 97% reduction in carbon emissions. New facilities include a 6-court padel centre, more baseball courts, 5-a-side football pitches and full-size artificial multi-sports pitch. An outdoor gym included as is a "community space". Some on-site buildings are so old they're Grade II listed - these are to remain with major refurbishment plans coming into effect. London's Mayor stated, "This is a historic and much-loved national sporting and community facility, where many UK sporting stars have started their careers and training, but it needs major investment and refurbishment and I am committed to this. I am pleased with the positive progress that has been made so far."

Let's hope our race walking scene will be much improved by the time it opens, so we can again display our discipline before the many.

**TONY BELL'S RETURN TO CAMBRIDGE**

This lovely article penned by **Tony Bell**, a popular and active competitor on our scene when Cambridge-based, was published in Lancashire Walking Club's Newsletter. It's reproduced by kind permission of its Editor Tony Taylor who writes: "Thanks to Tony Bell for this report on his return to the Cambridge of his younger days and his embrace of race walking."

**[Race Walking Down Memory Lane: Tony Bell in Cambridge](#)**

- **Sue Clements** writes: "Indeed, a lovely report".

**IAIN LINDSAY RIP**

Late notification informs us this long established Surrey Walking Club and Stock Exchange AC member passed away on 21 April last year. Iain joined SWC in 1982 and, as listed on the Race Walking Association results' history website, last raced on Sunday November 11 2005 over 9,000 metres. He's well remembered as a Stock Exchange team member in those big-time Lugano meetings. He resided in Hoddesdon. We extend our belated condolences to his family.

**Readers' comments:**

- Iain is famous for a particular Stock Exchange AC trip to Lugano. Most of the mini bus athletes were merry when we got to the Basel border. Beer cans and miniature whisky bottles were everywhere with a very, very strong smell of alcohol. I was the driver and I was asked to get out of the bus. The border guards were all carrying guns. Iain got out of the bus and told the guards to let us through as we were now members of the European Union. We were refused entry to Germany and had to go back onto roads with no border control to get in. **Tony Perkins**
- Real gent. May he rest in peace. Sincere condolences. **Bill and Kath Sutherland**
- Sorry to hear that. Iain was a good lad ... liked a beer but could hold it better than most. **Roger Lancefield**
- Oh no, that's really sad, he was a great chap. **Sid Bishop**



## Dear Dave ...

**HOW I DID IT**

I built my major successes in Race Walking on weekly races for the Metropolitan Police Race Walking Club (MPRWC) over 14 years with a maximum of 65 appearances in 1 year to the lowest level of 33 appearances in my hey-day. Many officials said I raced too often, but when I did finally have some down-time prior to the 1970 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh, 7 years of hard graft and shift work finally came to roost, and much of that was due to the fantastic support and drive provided by the MPRWC and my dear wife Kath.

**Bill Sutherland**

**APPRECIATION**

- Thank you. Always good to read (the 'Essex Walker') and remember some of the great names in the UK racewalking world. I was recently in Mexico City in February and got to see the World Athletics Race Walking Tour event, serving as a qualifying event for the World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships in Brasilia. I was amazed at how well it was supported by several hundred spectators and curious onlookers. It brought back some memories of many well attended events we witnessed in the early to mid-1970's all of the UK. **Jack Lord**
- Many thanks indeed for keeping me and the race walking community in touch with what is happening out there. **Kathy Crilley**

**INFORMATION REQUESTED**

I thought these were very interesting. The country photos are around the Surrey countryside, with road-signs to Surrey Walking Club's familiar stumping grounds. These are probably athletes out for a ramble to build stamina around the lanes and looking forward, one suspects, to enjoying a few drinks at the old Swan and Sugarloaf or another hostelry afterwards. It would be nice to share these with fellow walkers and – you never know – someone may be able to shed a little more light on their content. My intention is then to suggest that they are placed in the care of the Surrey History Centre at Woking which holds the SWC and Centurions archives.



We received from a lady in Leicestershire a small set of old photos of walkers. It was very kind of her to get in touch through a contact who shares our interest in ultra-distance athletics history and archives. None of the photos is dated nor do they provide any information about names etc. The lady who sent them has inherited the photos through her family and she has no information about them. However, from a date on another photo which she has, the lady thinks these may be dated around 1905. Some of the photos show racewalkers and attendants on the road, and others show walkers in weekend tweeds on what may be a social training walk on rural lanes and paths. The photos are small and do not reproduce well as they are faded and blurred. A photo of a walker with a shop in the background has been taken in Brighton. Sandra has identified the fruit and veg shop in Marine Parade, Brighton as that owned by R W Herriott, around 1900. The same walker features in another photo on what may well be the road to Brighton. The shop is in Marine Parade, Brighton, ca 1900 according to a website. Needless to say, there are no cars! A craze for London to Brighton events began in the late C19th and continued in the early C20th. We wonder if the tweed-suited group may be members of Surrey Walking Club on a social walk or club "stroll." The photo of the group by a signpost shows mileage to Croydon and Addington. Such country walks, often on and around the routes used for SWC club races like the Croydon to Godstone and back, soon developed as weekend training. We wonder if you might please circulate these images and invite any thoughts on the people and places in the photos. The photos are a special record of late C19th or early C20th walkers. Before placing the photos in the care of the Surrey History Centre, with the archives of the SWC and the Centurions, it would be good to obtain as much information as we can about them.



**Sandra and Richard Brown, C735, C760**

**CALLUM WILKINSON FILM - APPRECIATION**

- Thanks - Brilliant!! **Ian Garmston**
- Thank you for sharing this. Looking forward to it. **Grazia Manzotti**
- Thanks for forwarding the link, it was enjoyable to watch. **Kevin Perry**
- Thanks for the link about Callum. it was a good article. What a great PR man you were. **Oliver Flynn.**
- Thanks so much for the link. Really enjoyed watching, listening and the production - nice work Len - and great to see the backstory on Callum. **Steve King**

**STEVE HOLLIDAY'S FUNERAL**

Your write up on Steve Holliday's funeral was nicely worded. I agree the photo was a good one and made to look like the front page of Race Walking Record. His family gave him a good send off. It clashed with another commitment so I couldn't join you and you are to be congratulated on your long journey to Charing in deepest Kent. Good to see the RAF camaraderie is still strong.

**Chris Flint**

**THANKS FROM STEVE HOLLIDAY'S FAMILY**

It's so lovely to read everyone's messages for my dad, it's been a very difficult time. I have also shared the article with my children.

*Sara (daughter of Steve)*

**FROM THE FAR EAST**

How are you doing there in Essex? How's life back home in the UK at this time? It's been years now since I last came back there. Though not missed it. I miss the big Parks full of fresh-smelling cut grass and walks along the Thames river/embankment. May I ask you a question? Do you have any editorial mentions of the 42-mile Dawlish walk we did with Bob Dobson, Olly Browne and others? No rush on that. I'm retired and now live in Thailand, in a small, quiet area called Jomtien, about 6km from Pattaya. I like it here. Great for retirement. Many thanks.

*Mike Sweeney*

Adds Hon Ed: If any readers have reports of Plymouth-to-Dawlish races with Mike mentioned, can they please forward them to Essex Walker and we'll pass to Mike. Mike won golds in Civil Service, Post Office Championships as well as winning a Ryan Cup Representative Match in a class field. He won 5 consecutive London Postmen's 6 Miles in Uniform races (1984-to-1988) with a fastest time of 44.25 in '87 when he also won the National event held in conjunction. He was a top performer for Ilford AC, especially in those much missed Open 7s. On Royal Mail retirement he became an excellent photographer (*Manager of "Capital Life Photo Professional Photography Service"*). For many the last time we saw Mick was when at Ashtons Track to photograph a Woodford Tuesday Walk Open 3,000 metres.

**HOW TO MAKE CONTACT**

Unfortunately, our email addresses have been partially hacked, so that, while we can send messages, we cannot receive them. The consequence is that, if you have any comments or additions, you will have to communicate them by other means, by:

1. text message to 07745 371742
2. speaking to us at 01277 220687
3. post to Hufflers, Heards Lane, Shenfield, BRENTWOOD, CM15 0SF
4. seeing us at an event
5. telepathy, although this may not work!

We are working on the problem as hard as we can and hope to get sorted out as soon as possible. Thanks for bearing with us.

*Peter Cassidy & Pauline Wilson*

**MIKE HINTON's 85th**

In case you haven't already picked it up, Bournemouth resident Mike Hinton had his **85th** Birthday on Monday 13 April. He was a very well known Essex Race Walker in his day especially when competing so regularly in Ilford Colours having previously been in Southend AC, and a long-standing regular in a great era for Highgate Harriers. Since moving to Dorset he has become actively involved in Bournemouth Amateur Boxing Club acting as their hard working Secretary. I am sure that many others in Essex and Ilford would wish to be remembered to him with their Happy Birthday wishes.

*Bill and Kath Sutherland*

Adds Hon Ed: For decades popular Mike was a Rainham resident - a couple of streets away from '*man-of-many-Clubs*', John Perkins, another who appeared for Ilford AC. Mike had an extended athletics career as age failed to dent his impact as a competitor when he continued giving a good account of himself - often at the expense of younger race walkers. Mike was a loss to Essex walking when he moved south. Other Highgate Harriers to make their mark in Essex, with Ilford AC, were Bill Sutherland and John Evans. Bill's commitment saw him become Club President in 1994 and while wearing the Chain of Office presided over a wonderful annual Dinner & Dance at Chigwell Police Sports and Social Club when the one-and-only Mel Batty (sadly no longer with us) was its after-dinner guest speaker. John managed to gain place medals in Welsh Senior Championships then gain full Welsh Senior International Status. Both Bill and John were British Police Representatives during their time associated with Essex walking. We wish Mike a belated Happy Birthday with many more coming his way!

**MUM**

Just a quick note to inform you that my mum (Lena) passed away last week. Mum was always an active feeder and supporter to all the O’Rawe’s during our walking careers. She was also present at many 100 milers, assisting and cheering on others. She’ll be sadly missed.

**Andy O’Rawe**

**Readers’ comments:**

- I well recall her enthusiastic support given to all the talented O’Rawe race walkers – all over the place – and at runs such as the popular Nicola 5 Miles. The ‘O’Rawe Support Team’ were truly a legendary group. If I could go a step further, her support wasn’t confined to those family members who were participating – Lena had encouraging words for them all. We’ve said goodbye to a real ‘good-un’. We send our profound and sincere condolences on the sad loss of such a wonderful lady. **Dave Ainsworth**
- Condolences! Prime member of the supporters' army. **Edbanger C590**
- Perkins Travel could always rely on Lena to provide a good choice of food on overseas trips for the UK supporters. Team O'Rawe often carried more food onto a plane than their hand luggage. On a trip to Dublin during the foot and mouth epidemic we were asked at the check in whether or not we were carrying any food. We answered "YES ... going to Dublin Race Walking Grand Prix... got food for the English supporters". We had to open our bags and explained there were 100 chicken drumsticks, sausages and sausage rolls. We were told they couldn't be taken on the plane so we started to hand out the food to those in the queue. It started to cause chaos so the check-in staff changed their minds and let us through with the food. I bought Lena a plug-in kettle for their car. On a trip to Dudince I was surprised that they had packed the kettle into their hand luggage so we could have a hot drink, but when we used it the water was still cold after 30 minutes! For many years the Basildon 50k had the O'Rawe food station and people just assumed they would be there. They never got the recognition that they deserved for manning the station for up to 6 hours. Lena's food was welcomed by all at overseas races. Rumour has it that Peter Marlow asked for sausage rolls to eat whilst he judged! Happy memories. **Tony Perkins**
- Lovely lady! Kath says she still remembers the lovely burger she made her at one of the Battersea Park 100 miles. May she Rest in Peace. Sincere condolences to Andy and all the O’Rawe family. **Kath and Bill Sutherland**



TALKING RACEWALKING

Page 1



**THE RACE WALK CHIP**

**INSIDE THE RWECS "RACE WALK CHIP" AND THE FUTURE OF THE SPORT**

For decades, racewalking has lived with a paradox. It is one of the most technical and rule-driven disciplines in athletics—yet its defining rule is judged by the human eye. "Progression of steps so that no visible loss of contact occurs."

This single word—visible—has shaped the sport at every level. It has driven how athletes train, how judges officiate, and how performances are understood. It has also fueled confusion, controversy, and ongoing debate.

Now, for the first time, technology may be ready to change that definition.

Noel Paine - founder of Talking Racewalking

"Racewalking is at a crossroads and is being pushed toward change. The Race Walk Chip could be a meaningful step forward for the sport."

**Who is creating this Racewalk Chip?**

Behind the Race Walk Chip is a multidisciplinary, international team bringing together expertise in biomechanics, engineering, data systems, and racewalking itself. This includes biomechanical engineers, IT specialists with racewalking knowledge, experienced judges, and Olympians connected to a global network of athletes, officials, and sport leaders.

While the full team is extensive, a few key public figures have helped bring visibility to the project. Among them are lead researcher Javier Calvo's Royal Fellow at the prestigious University of Catalonia (UPC) in Spain, and Olympian Jordi Saez. Both have been actively involved in testing and presenting the technology in public settings across Europe.

At its core, this is a group driven by a clear purpose: to support the sport by developing a more accurate and reliable way to measure loss of contact in racewalking competition.



Image from the RaceWalkChip Facebook page.

**Race Walking Electronic Control System (RWECS) - THE DEBATE CONTINUES**

Thank you for publishing my letter, outlining details of the research and application of this device. Noel Paine of Talking Racewalking has published an interesting article updating the latest information on the historical and recent developments, along with the significant development plans for its application. All to be unveiled at the 2026 World Athletics Team Racewalking Championships in Brazil on 12th April. Following the event, Noel has stated that he intended to host a discussion on the Talking Racewalking podcast. For view Noel's excellently produced and balanced article, please go to:

[Racewalkers all over the world | RACEWALKING NEWS](#)

[Facebook](#)

**Len Ruddock**

**READER’S CONTRIBUTION**

There was a 2-page article on the benefits of walking in last Saturday’s Mail newspaper (25 April, pages 46-47), well worth a mention in Essex Walker coming up. [Mail Online](#).



Also, with the second anniversary of the passing of **George Nibre** it would be good to recall some of the many vivid memories of his Race Walking career. He would have been 69 and it was really tragic that his life was cut so short. 'Chicken George' will always be remembered by us and so many other admirers.

***Bill and Kath Sutherland***

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