

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION

The 2026 Ken Livermore Relay. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make it a successful and enjoyable event. Photos are available from Mark Easton using the link: [Mark Easton | Ken Livermore Relay/Enfield League 2026](#). The next Enfield Race Walking League fixture is the Annual Moulton Walks on 4 July. The link you should use for online entry is: <https://www.fabian4.co.uk/default.aspx?EventID=4189>.

This year will be the 25th Edition of the Moulton Walks so we hope to see you there! If you require any more information please contact me. **Tracey Wilkinson** traceywilkinson17@aol.co.uk

DETAILS OF THE MOULTON 'VIRTUAL' RACE

It's a 25th Anniversary of an always popular Moulton Open 5 Miles on Saturday 4 July 2026. For those unable to attend, you can participate in a 'Virtual' race and submit your distances/times to: **Ron Wallwork** at: ronc893moulton@gmail.com.

- Writes Ron: "The virtual distance can be anything up to 5 miles and as usual must be registered with me **no later than midnight on 4th July.**"

READER'S QUESTION IS ANSWERED

Even close to Glasgow's Commonwealth Games walks, information is somewhat patchy. In our previous edition Bill Sutherland asked for some info? Mark Wall, who is well connected in our sport, has proved a detailed answer for which we express our thanks. Please read on:

"In answer to Bill Sutherland's question about UK representation at the Commonwealth Games. ALL teams are size limited (Scotland's quota in 2022 was 15 Track & Field athletes as was New Zealand), so you fight for your place either against all other T & F athletes or even the whole team, so no just filling teams. Wales have already closed off the qualifying period (See the Hannah Briers story on the BBC).

The race is 10,000m (that is a track distance). England accept performances in suitable meeting (Level 2 permits as a minimum) road or track. Australia have selected two walkers to date McMillan and Beecroft (doubling with the World Juniors), without a guarantee they will pick a second or third walker. Fair to say hard not to select 3 women and at least two men. Lists for 2026 performances (max 3 per nation) from World Athletics data:

Women's list 10,000m Walk (cut off at 49:00)

1	42:50.13	Elizabeth MCMILLEN	10 APR 2004	AUS
2	43:26.86	Rebecca HENDERSON	04 JUL 2001	AUS
3	44:29.66	RAVINA	21 MAY 1997	IND
4	44:46.41	Olivia SANDERY	22 JAN 2003	AUS
5	44:57.94	Reshma PATEL	15 SEP 2004	IND
6	45:23.92	Munita PRAJAPATI	15 JAN 2002	IND

Superior 10km time 43:49 PRIYANKA 10 MAR 1996 IND

Note: Defending Champion and dual 2024 Olympic Bronze medals 43:36.0h Jemima MONTAG AUS (10,000m race 25th April, beating Olivia Sandrey in race, first race after surgery)

Men's list 10,000m Walk (Cut off at 43:00)

1	38:54.11	Isaac BEACROFT	18 JUL 2007	AUS
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2	39:13.93	Declan TINGAY	06 FEB 1999	AUS
3	39:28.76	Tim FRASER	22 FEB 2000	AUS
4	39:51.95	Sandeep KUMAR	01 MAY 1986	IND
5	40:23.22	Servin SEBASTHIYAN	26 NOV 1999	IND
6	40:51.65	Paramjeet Singh BISHT	03 MAR 2002	IND
7	41:12.68	Evan DUNFEE	28 SEP 1990	CAN
8	41:49.56	Jonah CROPP	08 JUN 2005	NZL
9	42:46.09	Rivers WILLIAMS	17 OCT 2004	RSA

Caveat: Cameron Corbishley surpassed the standard enroute during UKA Half Marathon title 2025 performance 41:54.77 Cameron CORBISHLEY 31 MAR 1997

Mark Wall, ATFS executive Member

WHERE IS CENTURION C972 PAUL KING?

"Hola. I was walking up a slope the other day and found myself crossing my arms across my body uncharacteristically, which brought his walking style to mind. That made me think I'd not seen his name in any results for a long time, hence my enquiry. How strange just to disappear like that." **Cath Duhig**

Cath has enquired about Paul King? So have a number of others - this mainly as he was such a regular attender at our races, week in-and-week-out. Then he just stopping coming. Over the years I've wondered myself? After a few goes he became Centurion C972 having clocked 22:48.59 at our 2000 Millennium Challenge on Newmarket's Rowley Mile Racecourse. In total he completed 5 UK 100 miles races in under 24 hours. He's a 5-times former winner of the annual Stock Exchange 52 Miles London-to-Brighton race - which was completed 10 times between 1979 and 2003 with a 9:18.16 best in 1995. Cath's not the only one enquiring about Paul King as many have. His last known address was 53 Mount Earl Gardens, Streatham, London. SW16 2NL. Phone 07722-795363.

His previously listed 020-8677-0139 number is no longer active. He's now not been heard of for over a decade. It's possible to trace "missing" race walkers - but sadly such searches don't always end well. Recently I've personally learnt of sad deaths of C431 Paul Briggs (over 2 years after his demise), John Powell (over a year later), Christine Coleman and Dave Baxter. Another recent notification was a passing of Surrey Walking Club/Stock Exchange walker Iain Lindsay - over a year after his departure. The great Paul Nihill wrote a letter to Essex Walker (*which was published*) complaining about various walkers who'd passed-on, with him never informed of their funerals. Perhaps someone with Belgrave Harriers, Stock Exchange or Centurions connections might know something about Paul King's whereabouts - or whatever? If so, if sent to me I'll make it known.

I've suggested if Belgrave Harriers have a Welfare Officer (*or similar position*) he/she can visit or get a locally residing Club member to visit Paul's last known address. Perhaps whoever answers will know what happened to the property's previous occupant, if Paul's no longer there. Or maybe a knock on a neighbour's door either side might provide an answer? Good news or hopefully not bad, it's worth knowing. Paul, a stalwart supporter of race walks, was active most weekends. But not for over a decade!

Sadly with so many racewalkers dropping out or getting older over the past couple of decades, race walking as a sport hasn't always kept in touch with those who've graced the sport before leaving it. Many have just disappeared so are quickly forgotten, which is a pity. My own Club no longer functions with an active "Walking Section" as members have quit, or gone elsewhere. However, the Club holds regular pub lunchtime get togethers for former activists - organised by Tony Perkins - with pictures published in "Essex Walker". In some Clubs funerals are the only occasions when former walkers get contacted - and that often doesn't happen. For those walkers mentioned above, whose deaths I'd unearthed - all had funerals well before their demise had been discovered. So have others. We hope Paul King's still with us. Let's try keeping contact with former race walkers! Cath raises a good point.

- Paul was famous as a messenger for getting the breakfast for his work colleagues from a nearby bakery called Kossoffs. They would frequently call the office to say he had left his Bearer Bonds behind but had the breakfasts. I believe he carried his medical card with him. **Tony Perkins**
- There are so many forgotten names and faces as we advance in years. Race Walking as we knew it is becoming a forgotten sport! Our wonderful Monarch Queen Elizabeth II used to say that many GB athletes were household names in her great era. Now very few know who the top ones are, as illustrated in the London Marathon. We worry more about overseas visitors than our own. Keep up your wonderful Essex Walker, it is a gem! **Bill and Kath Sutherland**
- I once met Paul by accident on Bath railway station. When visiting Bath on business I alighted and saw a group of enthusiastic train spotters gathered at a platform end. I recognised one - yes - it was Paul King. We had a chat. He was on a West Country tour of railways with his next visit to be at a Heritage Line. **DA**

PRESIDENTIAL WIN



Your Essex County President Sharon Herbert, one well known in race walking circles, is our latest top prize winner (£25) in your Race Walking Association 200 Club's monthly draw. 2nd/3rd prizes went to popular duo Julie Drake (£15) and Michael George (£10). Alas with this announcement came information that membership had sadly declined. All profits from this well-established fund raising initiative benefit UK race walking. It's only £12 for a year's entry into 12 monthly draws. Many of Essex Walkers readers (most) are former race walkers who like

being kept informed and in touch. Think how much you're saving by not travelling long distances to races - perhaps some of those savings can be 'invested' in your RWA 200 Club? Just a thought. For entry details contact Club's Organiser Colin Vesty. See him at meetings or email him at: rwasecretary@yahoo.co.uk **Over to you!**

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Our last issue featured Centurion 997 Andrew Wilmot of Hadleigh Road Runners. He's soon having cataract operations on both eyes - 2 separate operations spaced apart. This may cause him to miss our annual Moulton Open 5 Miles on Saturday 4 July. We wish this remarkable athlete well and may he have two successful treatments.

KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST (extract right)

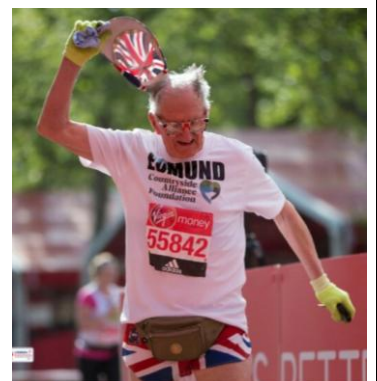
Iford AC's still active octogenarian race walker **Ed Shillabeer** has been awarded the **British Empire Medal (BEM)**. Ed's still our UK 100 Kilometres' Walk record holder, set as far back as 14 September 1985 on Colchester's Garrison track when clocking 9 hours 41 minutes and 50 seconds. Ed has represented London Vidarians, Dawlish & South Devon WC, Plymouth City Walkers and currently Iford AC. Congratulations to Ed Shillabeer BEM. A worthy honour for a true "good-un".

Dave A

Writes "**Edbanger**":

"Pleased to report that I got a BEM in this year's list! Happy bunny! (For utilising athletics for charitable purposes). Indebted to Chris Maddocks for three years of persistence lobbying the Cabinet Office! And to family's support, especially the inspiration of my dad, Eric Shillabeer. Blessings. Ed Shillabeer Centurion 590"

- Dr Edmund Harold Shillabeer. For services to Charitable Fundraising, to Athletics and to the community in Plymouth, Devon. (Plymouth, Devon)



Ed at a London Marathon

Readers' comments:

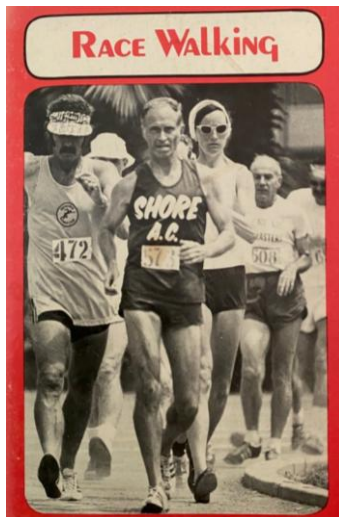
- Great to hear. **Kevin Emsley Centurion 761**
- This is timely recognition for all his charitable work and great achievements in race walking and in support of athletics generally. It's always been great to see Ed as our ambassador at so many events both in the UK, the Isle of Man, continental Europe and beyond. Well done Ed, a

fantastic finale to a great athlete and friend. Its so good to know that Chris's persistence has been so well rewarded and Dave's coverage of your exploits in the Essex Walker. Congrats.

Chris Flint C849

- Great news. **Steve Till**
- Excellent news. Congratulations to "Edbanger". **Cath Duhig**
- Many congratulations go to Ed following his lifelong endeavours and dedication to others and organisations. Each individual achievement and participation are all noteworthy on their own. I recall his account of training for and racing in the short-lived Quadrathon, amazing. Cheers Ed! **Len Ruddock**
- Great news regarding Ed. **Dave Hoben**

WE SHOW YOU A WINNER



One of 3 prize winners in Essex Walker's first ever competition was double Olympian ('68 and '72) **Tom Dooley**, one based in California. This a 1974 front cover of a "Runners' World" booklet and supplied by our competition's sponsor Steve Till.

Writes Tom,
"Was I ever that young??"

END OF THE ROAD FOR ONE

We've recently reported on fewer race walkers appearing in London Marathons - or even entering as our interest in long distance events wanes. Worth noting that the London Marathon's "Ever Presents Club" now has only 5 esteemed members. Formed in 1995 with 42 members, it's only open to those who've completed all since this race's 1981 beginning. Before April's race there were 6, but 84 year old Mac Speake from Suffolk had to stop at 7 miles owing to a pelvic stress fracture. Said Mac, "I took myself off the course and waited for a taxi". And then there were 5!

THANKS TO THE FEW

On Saturday 20 June at Birmingham's Alexandra Stadium England Athletics we held our National Championships. On the programme were 5,000 Metres' Walks for men and women - which saw 3 and 4 finishers respectively. We thank "The Magnificent Seven" who supported race walking at National level and showcased our event before television cameras. Also, thanks to judges and other officials who turned out to enable this Championship to continue. Can our 2027 numbers increase?

Men: Cameron Corbishley 19:54.98, Guy Thomas 22:50.39 and Tim Perry 24:40.76.

Women: Bethan Davis 23:43.39, Abigail Jennings 25:31.80, Natasha Mitchell 26:17.82 & and Hannan Hopper 27:02.78.

HOW'S HE DOING?

From Ken's son Tony, we've an update (below) on the health of **Ken Roost** - Verlea AC, Borough of Enfield Harriers (as then called) and the Royal Air Force. Ken is Centurion 557, having qualified in 1975 at Ewhurst. On that same course in 1979 Ken went sub-20 hours for 100 miles as he led Enfield to win a team race against strong teams from both the UK and mainland Europe. Enfield's other scoring members were C577 Jack Rossiter and the late Peter Worth C491. Now resident in Stevenage (Hertfordshire) Ken's aged 95 but alas not in good health. He rarely goes out and relies on heavily on carers. Ken is an esteemed Enfield Life member. He was for very many years a marshal at Enfield League races - and attended a memorable 90th Enfield Open 7 Miles' Reunion in 2016 at Lee Valley Athletics Centre - and in a group photograph of 30 Centurions' present - is in the centre of the front row! He was also, like so many, at The Centurions Centenary Dinner at the House of Commons. In earlier times he was a talented water polo player in the RAF and also achieved a high standard in the amateur snooker world. Ken was joint 'Clerk-of-the-Course' (with fellow 1979 sub-20 hours 1979 100 Miles finisher C652 Ron Purkiss RIP) for our

1976 RWA National 20 Miles Championship at Stevenage, won by Roger Mills in 2:32.13. *We all wish Ken well.*

- “My Dad is still fighting on but he is getting more tired by the day. He is spending most of the time in bed. Amazingly he is managing to eat 40+ bags of Walkers crisps a week! I didn't think it was possible to eat that many. He did have a recent blood test and surprisingly his sodium level was normal! I will let you know of any changes to his health.” **Tony Roost**
- Give him my best Tony, and assure him he's doing better than some. I can't challenge him to a 100 walk(ers) crisp race as my hospital have yanked all my teeth out. **Jack Rossiter** (team mate in that 1979 race).
- I remember Ken as a worth competitor back then. **Ed Shillabeer**
- Ken is amazing. **George Masson**

FIXTURES and DIARY DATES (July to end September 2026)

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

JULY	1	Johnson Bowl 4 Miles-in-an-Hour Challenge	Norman Park, Bromley	TBA
	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 + Enfield League	Moulton Village (Suffolk)	12.30pm
	6	SCVAC 2,000 Metres Men & Women/Over 35 & Over 50 categories	Lea Valley Track	6.40pm
	11-12	Spitefire Scramble 24hrs Multi-terrain Relay or Solo event	Hornchurch Country Park	12 noon
	16	Ashford AC Summer Open Series Mile	Julie Rose Stadium (Ashford)	TBA
	21-24	Annual Nijmegen Walk	Nijmegen	TBA
	25	Fred Pearce 3 x 5K Relay (all welcome)	Simister (Lady Wilton Hall)	1.00pm
	25-26	England Athletics U16 & U18 Championship	Bedford	TBA
31	Commonwealth Games Men's 10,000m	Scotstoun Stadium, Glasgow	TBA	
AUGUST	1	Commonwealth Games Women's 10,000m	Scotstoun Stadium, Glasgow	TBA
	15	European Championships Marathon & Half-Marathon Walks (M/F)	Birmingham (road course)	7.30am
	31	City of Southend AC Open 1 Mile	Garon Park Track	10.00am
SEPT	8	Veterans AC 5 Kilometres Road (all welcome)	Battersea Park Bandstand	7.00pm*
	9	Biggleswade Open 3,000 Metres	Sandy	TBA

NOTES

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

- 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.

SAD FAREWELL TO A BATTERSEA PARK CENTURION

C924 Michel Neheust of Neuilly sur Marne Club (France) who qualified when clocking 23:43.56 on reaching 100 miles in a joint Surrey Walking Club/Metropolitan Police Walking Club "London 200 Kilometres" held around Battersea Park in August 1993, sadly died on 6 June. Michel had a number of successful "long-uns" on his record, including a 1990 Roubaix 28 Hours. His Battersea race was held in better times for UK distance walking as 105 lined-up with 58 finishing, of whom 53 did so in under 24 hours (25 becoming new Centurions). Racing got off to an unexpected beginning - a proper "Mr Starter" with red jacket had been booked to officiate. But he missed the start (*you couldn't make it up*) when stuck in heavy traffic along the Embankment. Minutes before the "off" Centurion 854 Alex Ross (one of the Organising Committee) spotted 2 of the famous Chelsea Pensioners enjoying an afternoon walk in the park and asked if one could act as starter? - up stepped retired Sergeant Tommy Battle, a paratrooper at Arnhem in 1944. So thanks to the initiative of Alex, we still had a "Mr Starter" in a red jacket! First to 100 miles was C901 Alexsey Radionov, a 2nd Russian to join the Centurions when making 4th on an all-time fastest qualifiers' list with 17:32.30. Alexsey entered a couple more UK 100s in future years - but without showing. Among others joining The Centurions that day were Chris Berwick whose 17.57.07 got him 12th on a fastest qualifiers' list, Lillian Millan, Parminder Bhatti, Kevin Perry, Hans Rennie, Mike Lewis and Christine Gray. In the park were the famous "O'Rawe's Support Squad" who, as so often, helped and encouraged all. As for Michel, he was a public spirited person who served a lengthy term as Deputy Mayor of Neuilly sur Marne and took much interest in many sports. We offer our condolences to the family of a truly popular competitor. **DA**

- **Chris Maddocks** writes: "A fascinating read. The Battersea race was clearly quite special. RIP Michel."

NIJMEGEN MARCH

We wish all readers who'll be appearing in this year's event - to be held from 21st-to-24th July. Regulars **Sue Clements**, **Hans Rennie** and **Andy Bignold** are among our UK participants. For Hans it'll be his 49th and Andrew's 46th - that's true dedication! As well as walking, Sue has at times been on First Aid duties. Mention of which, we hope it won't be too hot for those in the big March.

RACE WALKERS IN ACTION

Prittlewell-based Centurion **Steve Allen** completed a very well supported Southend Half-Marathon on Sunday morning the 14th of June. Steve showcased our event before a good crowd by race walking it. The Southend-on-Sea area, and its surroundings, has a number of half-marathons and 10K races on offer each year - indeed race walkers were often regular sights in such races. Let's see some more giving it their all in future promotions - how about it? Among crowds giving support was Val Mountford, a former highly successful Captain of a then Southend-on-Sea AC race walking squad brimming with talent. Val was also in action later that day when Rayleigh Brass Band gave a free afternoon concert on Southend's Priory Park's bandstand. Val's an established euphonium player. Popular Sunday afternoon concerts in Priory Park are part of Southend's cultural scene..

PHOTOGRAPHS APPRECIATED

Our previous edition showed 2 photographs which were part of a large collection of awards amassed by the late Steve Holliday RIP, a winner of 30 Kent County Championship titles during his long span as an active race walker. Writes his son Michael, "Thank you so much it is much appreciated".

A GOOD "PLUG"

On "Celebrity Pointless" BBC1 (Saturday 13 June), 5-times' Olympian Jo Pavey MBE was a competitor. Presenter Alexander Armstrong introduced her. During introductory chat, Jo mentioned other athletes had achieved this feat and highlighted "Race walker Chris Maddocks" for also making 5 appearances - as well as javelin thrower Tessa Sanderson for making 6 appearances. Good of Jo to mention Chris - Jo must be one of his many fans! In this popular

teatime quiz Jo was paired with Former Ilford AC member Ashia Hansen - our current UK triple jump record holder. *Hope you were watching.*

The Pointless Celebrities [episode](#) was first broadcast in 2022 - Jo Pavey mentions Chris M about 16 mins in. This episode is only available on BBC iPlayer for 28 days since airing.

NEWS FROM THE ISLE-OF-WIGHT

One of our most distinguished Centurions – No 898 the remarkable **Jill Green** has suffered a bad fall leaving her with a serious hip injury which will take an estimated 12 weeks' plus for a hopeful recovery. Alas the good lady had to scratch from the annual Nijmegen March (21st-to-24 July inclusive). London Vidarian Jill qualified at Leicester's 1992 tough Hungarton 100 Miles in 23:13.59 and completed 8 more sub-24 hours' completions. Jill was a welcome and popular visitor to last year's 100th British Isles' 100 Miles in Lewes. If you'd like to send Jill a "Get Well" card her address is: Fernleaf, Alverstone Road, Apse Heath, Sandown. Isle of Wight. PO36 0LF.

VETERANS AC 5KM WALK CHAMPIONSHIP

Battersea Park, 2 June 2026

The third of the regular Battersea Park races had an average field on a fine sunny evening, contrary to

expectations when the thunder and lightning threatened the event with abandonment. The ongoing Tube

strike didn't help either. The ladies

and overall winner was Susan Payne, AFD, followed by Chik Ha Kwok

(Billie) of Belgrave Harriers, reversing

their positions of the previous race. The men's winner was Man Biu Lam, also Belgrave Harriers, with second place taken by Mark Selby (SWC). VAC was pleased to welcome for the first time Jon Hancock from Oswestry A&T.

Results

Pos	Name	Time	Category	Club	Cat Pos
1	Susan Payne	30:36	W65	Veterans AC/AFD	1
2	Chik Ha Kwok	31:13	W50	Veterans AC/Belgrave Harriers	1
3	Man Biu Lam	31:37	M65	Veterans AC/Belgrave Harriers	1
4	Maureen Noel	33:56	W60	Veterans AC/Belgrave Harriers	1
5	Mark Selby	34:26	M50	Surrey Walking Club	1
6	Jon Hancock	35:48	M70	Oswestry Olympians Athletics and Triathlon Club	1
7	Fiona Bishop	37:43	W65	Veterans AC/Woking AC	2
8	David Hoben	38:57	M70	Veterans AC/Surrey WC	2
	Stefano Zennaro	DNS	M50	London Frontrunners	

MANX SUCCESS

Mainland distance race walking is probably at its lowest ebb with few, if any such, distance races featuring on fixture lists with regularity. Yet a short hop across the Irish Sea they're booming - as over 1,200 walkers lined-up for an annual Manx Telecom 85 Miles' (137km) Parish Walk - which visits all 17 Parishes. Of that number 115 finished under 24 hours over a course which started/finished in the Island's capital Douglas. Always welcome mainland walkers have featured well on past results sheets. In the wake of 115 who covered a full distance within an allotted time were many who reached their own goals - at various permitted stopping/timing points. Winner Callum Gawne set a new record of 14:22.45. The ladies' race had joint winners in 17:21.8 in Samantha Bowden and Lorna Gleave. Last full distance finisher in 23:53.9 was Alex Townell who was also 25th veteran man. Perhaps more mainlanders might consider appearing in 2027 perhaps combining this race with a holiday and also as a step towards completing a 100 miles walk?

11th JACK FITZGERALD MEMORIAL WALKS, Tilgate Park, Crawley, 13 June

To all, thanks for supporting the event.

Veterans AC approx 3 miles and 6 miles road race

Veterans AC were pleased to host the eleventh running of this event on a lakeside course once used as the test bed for Britain's water speed record round popular beauty spot Campbell's lake, formerly a mediaeval hammer pond. The weather was fine, sunny and dry, the best for some time for this event. The leader of the headline race was not unsurprisingly Olympian Ian Richards from Steyning AC, who continues to be an ever-present medallist and competitor at European and World Masters meetings. The runner-up was Peter Gregoire, also from Steyning AC in a time little different to 2025. VAC were pleased to welcome Paula Blackledge from Brighton & Hove, in her first race walk on the road. The race was held to raise funds for the RAF Benevolent Fund, as a tribute to RAF fighter pilot Jack Fitzgerald.

Results**4.425km**

1	Brian Kirkdale	M65	Hastings Runners	34:54
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5.9km mixed

1=	Dan Maskell	M75	Surrey Walking Club/VAC	42:54
1=	Paula Blackledge	W50	Brighton & Hove AC	42:54
3	Shaheda Arthur	W65	Unattached	1:09:41

10.325km

1	Ian Richards	M75	Steyning AC/VAC	1:01:12
2	Peter Gregoire	M50	Steyning AC	1:05:32
3	John Arthur	M60	Unattached	1:15:34
4	Paul Gaston	M75	Surrey Walking Club	1:17:42
5	Graeme Heaton	M65	Heathfield Rd Runners/Lewes AC	1:18:42

Acknowledgements

Judge: Shaun Lightman, Starter: Ron Penfold, Time keeping/lap recording: Peter Selby, David Hoben, Marshal: Chris Cheeseman, Signage: Ron Penfold, Hospitality: Tilgate Forest Golf Centre. From an original idea by Walter Hill, SCVAC.

**ULTRA-LONG DISTANCE SUCCESS**

Former Centurions Chairperson C1202 **Claire Bass**, a member of Ely Runners, completed the 268 miles' Pennine Way - from Edale-to-Kirk Yetholm in 139 hours, 14 minutes and 18 seconds. The race started on Sunday 14th June and Claire completed the distance on Friday 19th June. The race was used as an opportunity to raise money for Holly's Active Stars ([Holly's story – Holly's Active Stars](#)) a UK charity set up in Holly's memory in 2023. Holly was a keen and popular footballer. This Ely-based charity redistributes sportswear and equipment to help people participate in sport, particularly in Cambridgeshire and around Peterborough. So sadly Holly at the age of 16, died unexpectedly when during anaesthetic recovery complications developed.

The charity's email address is: info@hollysactivestars.org.uk
Further racing details: www.thespinerace.com

**Dear Dave ...****APPRECIATION**

Thank you for ALL you do with regards to Race Walking. So many memories. I remember catching you on the BLACKHEATH circuit ... we walked together for a while. About this time I had health problems. I am 80 on 23rd September. Hoping to see you (and others) at the Annual Police event in London. So happy! My son Alan (living in Canada) has just had a daughter (Elizabeth) with his wife July.

Adrian H James

FROM OUR SOCIAL CORRESPONDENT

The chosen day of Friday 12 June was a very busy one at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo being the day before the Trooping of Colour Ceremony. 19 Metropolitan Police Athletic Association esteemed Life Members of the MPAA attended with a further 10 Guests. Pride of place must go to All Round Sportsman and Top Class Race Walker Peter Hodkinson a very long standing member for 29 years since 1997. He is the Winner of the London to Brighton 52 Miles Walk twice clocking around 8 hours and is the Holder of the Course Record of 4 hours 38 mins for the Famous Barking to Southend Walk over 34 miles. He was a Champion Boxer for the Met Police winning in the

highly popular Lafone Cup Competition. He obtained Centurion status in 1989 at the late Arthur Eddleston BEM 100 Miles at Hendon and was a Great Britain International and very valued at his Club Cambridge Harriers. He said 'He was very proud of what he had achieved in Sport in his lifetime' and so he should be too as we all are as his close friends. Also present was the hardworking administrator Chris Flint another established long standing Centurion and former winner. We were particularly pleased to see Andy Bignold who as very well travelled Toastmaster who had as his Guest David Ainsworth also a Centurion and so well-known and respected through Essex Walker and beyond. Humbly I made up the scoring team of 4 Centurions achieved at a much slower time than those before mentioned! Absent for the first time only was double Olympian Paul Blagg and Former Chairman of the MPRWC Terry Siggs, CBE, QPM who sent their warm regards to all present. Although we were smaller in number after a years break from the Union Jack Club, the meal and spirit and camaraderie were as strong as ever. We now all heartily look forward to our next gathering in November 2026.

Bill Sutherland, BEM

CHANCE TO "GET SOME IN"

Next month on 11/12 July there will be a superb event called the [Spitfire Scramble](#), which I will race-walk as part of a team including my two sons Freddie and Samuel. The Spitfire



**SPITFIRE
SCRAMBLE**
Jul 11-12 2026

Scramble is a 24-hour multi-terrain relay or solo race. It takes place in Hornchurch Country Park, former home of RAF Hornchurch and a squadron of Spitfire fighter planes during World War II. The event will start at midday when your 'squadron leader' begins your first 5.75-mile lap. As a team you will not stop again until midday the next day. Each squadron can have a maximum of one runner on the course at all times and runners must complete a full circuit before handing over to a team mate.

Colin Harle

READER'S ENQUIRY

Thanks for Essex Walker. Always a nice read. Do you know of any shops in the UK that sell race walking shoes? I have had two x 2-hour brisk walks this week so far. But at the age of approaching 70, it's more of a brisk walk. Two weeks ago, I did more of a really fast 1-hour walk, pushing it, as I am in the habit of doing. And I ended up with a new pain in my right knee. It's telling me to slow down and remember I am not a young guy any more. But I think part of the problem is wearing these high-heeled, spongy, modern-type of running shoes. They do not support the shape of the foot when fast walking - heel-toe.

Mike Sweeney

Adds Hon Ed: Any suggestions sent to me will be forwarded to Mike. *DA*

REMEMBERING PAUL NIHILL MBE

This is from my book acknowledgements ... I almost literally bumped into Paul Nihill, Olympic silver medallist in the 50km walk in 1964, more than once, training around the streets of South London in the 70s and he also gave me valuable advice in the lead-up to the Quadrathon in 1983 and 1984, where he was manager of the race walk stage. I have also just told Clare (Paul's daughter - Ed) of our first meeting ... I first bumped into him when I was just starting race walking in 1976. He was trying for a fourth Olympic Games (successfully as you know.) I saw this figure down a dark alley near Crystal Palace/Streatham Common and chased after him. "Are you Paul Nihill?" "Yes. I thought you were a mugger!" *Steve Till* (Surrey Walking Club and Centurions)

PRIZE WINNER'S THANKS

Thank you so much for letting me know the good news. It is the first thing that I have ever won in race walking. It was you who taught me all about winning various competitions. I must have listened to your words of advice. I will savour every word, especially as my wife has cruelly positioned me into the slow readers' group.

Chris Foster

CAN YOU PLEASE ASSIST PETER FAWKES?

The North Shields Poly team (of which Marion is a life member) is conducting a history of the Club and have invited certain members such as Marion, Alan Bell, Arthur McKenzie, Ian Chipchase and a few others along to do a 1 hour video each of their recollections of the Club and achievements.

These will be put together and made available for current members to view. Last week I came across a posting which showed a list of top modern UK racewalkers ranked by success and performance. This list rated everyone on it by giving a points score. Top was Ken Mathews with 69 points followed by Marion with 68. Then, if my memory is correct came Paul Nihill with 66 followed by Don Thompson. I can't find this comprehensive document (may have been posted on Facebook) anywhere so I was wondering if you have come across it and could let me know where to find it. The list could be useful to quote during the interview.

Peter Fawkes

Adds Hon Ed: Any responses sent to Essex Walker will be forwarded to Peter.

ANTIQUES ROADSHOW BBC1: 7th June 8.15pm

I suggest you view this programme on BBCiPlayer, but remember not to blink or you may miss it. A great picture of race walking as it was in the distant past with key objectives to walk legally faster than others and cover ultra long distances as a real challenge. Couldn't identify many although faces looked familiar other than the Great Olympian Tebbs Lloyd Johnson, who I believe is still the oldest person ever to win a medal for Athletics for Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Remarkable! Great viewing indeed which clearly illustrates how different Sport was in the past from the present day.

Bill and Kath Sutherland

Adds Hon Ed: You can view this for 11 months after it's broadcast date.

AN INVITATION FOR ALL

At the last Lancashire Walking Club race we had a discussion about the forthcoming Fred Pearce 3x5k relay. We thought it would be a good idea to extend a welcome to everyone across the country who might like to do this event. It would be an opportunity for walkers to meet up and see old friends. The team race is a 3 legged relay, each team comprises 3 members and each member of the team does 5k. To help spread the word about this event would it be possible to include this invite in the next Essex walker? Our club would be very grateful if you could.

Event: Fred Pearce 3x5k Relay. Date: Saturday 25th July 2026. Start Time: 13:00hrs.

Venue: Lady Wilton Hall, Simister Lane, Simister, Manchester M25 2SB.

Anybody who intends to enter should contact Dave Evans, the Lancashire Walking Club Chairman, using this address: Contact Dave at dave.evans08@hotmail.co.uk

Roy Gunnett, Secretary Lancashire Walking Club

DISTANCE WORK

Last weekend I drove the many miles to the Highlands of Scotland where I competed in the Golspie 3 Peaks Challenge. This is an annual event which incorporates a half marathon run and hike race. The hike starts 30 minutes earlier than the run but is very much a race with over 150 competing in the hike alone. I would say that I was able to race walk between each mountain (known as a Ben of course) on a reasonably flat terrain for approximately half the distance, leaving me to push hard to reach the top of the 3 peaks in between on a much tougher often very steep surface. This is the third such race I have completed after being made aware of them by 2 of my sons and teaming up with them to compete at Windsor then the South Downs last year. The reason I mention these events is that I have been disappointed in my efforts to racewalk any distance beyond 10k and I am using these highly organised races to improve my fitness, stamina and speed over the longer distances. Many of the traditional runs now include a hike race. They are not judged events but organisers impress on all competitors that if you hike you must WALK. I have been very impressed with the organisation of all 3 races. With so few racewalks over 10k on offer these are an excellent way to improve stamina and speed and I would highly recommend them to all. Entry can be as an individual or as a team. The entry fee for the Golspie race was £20, so much better value than most races these days. The company advertising these events are: [UK running events - Run rebel trails and hikes](#).

Colin Harle

Adds Hon Ed: Our last 3 UK 100 Miles walking races failed to produce any new home-based Centurion members. This year hasn't a qualifying race with our next hopefully in 2027. Colin's correct in saying how few races there over 10 kilometres. Asking competitors to move up from 10K-to-100 Miles is a big ask. One that's clearly been too much in recent years. Race walkers

seeking to join The Centurions should think of an old Royal Air Force saying and "Get Some In". This initiative, brought to our attention by Colin, looks to be worth trying.

Readers write:

- I would suggest that even finding a race over 5km is a problem nowadays. Race organisers appear to presume we all can drive to a venue. Not so. I rely on public transport and I have better things to do than spend 3 hours or so travelling to a race venue which would usually involve tube, train and then a bus journey for a 5km race and then 3 hours travelling home. I do participate in LDWA walking events which are not races but a good opportunity to walk a reasonable distance - 15-30 miles for the shorter events. I also participate in shorter running events as walker just to be able to compete in something. Regarding Centurion events - due to the lack of long distance races it would appear that it could possibly be such a huge and daunting huge leap from a 10km race to a 100 mile race. So no surprise that there aren't many takers to enter a 100 mile race walk. And now even less so when even Centurion races appear to be held less than annually. Myself and a couple of other Centurions have advocated for years to follow the Dutch clubs' presentation of their Wandel Weekend events and hold 50km, 50 miles, 100km races within their 100 mile race Centurion qualifying race. It really makes sense. So why doesn't the Centurion committee see the value of this? They have always said NO to this. Head to the Netherlands, Belgium and France to get some decent races and 'challenge' walks. **Kathy Crilley C933**
- In the deep south west the problem has existed for decades, easily solved by entering local half and full marathons and simply race walking them. The support structure is there in preparation for 100s, you don't need all your distance sessions to have judges. Another ploy is to do the course early with an attendant and time it so as to give yourself a little break before going around again in the official race! It served me well!! **Edbanger C590 (Ed Shillabeer)**
- Thanks for passing on Colin's thoughts. The Centurions are to have a Committee where ideas for 'training events' will be discussed. There are a number of events, designed primarily for runners, but which accept walkers. They would make excellent training events. Interestingly, all appear to sell out and be oversubscribed! Perhaps we could put links to these 'training' events on our website. [GB Ultra Runners](#) are just one example of promoters of ultra-distance races over various distances. **Steve Kemp**

WRITES THE CENTURIONS VICE CAPTAIN

I would support any effort in this direction! I think the British should focus on these long distance races (running/hiking) and on the LDWA long distance walks to increase interest in any future Centurion event. Race walkers on a 10K will almost never switch to 100 miles, but ordinary (fast) walkers on a 50 miles might. On the Centurions1911 social media channels I already try to incorporate LDWA-events on posts, hoping they will also share some of 'our' news items and that their members and followers will also start to follow our channels. If you, or any of the others from the Centurions committee, have information on these long distance events, please post this directly on the Centurions1911 Facebook page or Instagram account. Or, mail or app some information to me and then I will try to post it. In the Centurions committee meeting where it was decided that there wouldn't a 100 miles event in 2026, we already discussed the option to connect to the LDWA, so that the Centurions could advertise amongst LDWA-members and -participants. Since I am not in Britain, I hope other committee members will take up this task. But I will help wherever I can from a distance, with the website, Facebook and Instagram.

Frans Leijtens

A YouTube PLEASURE

Much more than his valued BCG Bronze
Bill Sutherland - A Conversation
 Race Walking Extra

[Race Walking Extra: Bill Sutherland - Much more than his valued BCG Bronze](#)

Many thanks for those who replied to my earlier request for photos and some I actually used. (Money in the post?). It's been quite an effort bringing all this together, especially the editing - I feel that Bill has been living with me these last three months. But all good fun as it's been a pleasure to allow Bill to speak from his heart on a number of issues. A humble man and as the chant at Spurs used to be when Harry Kane played for Tottenham, 'One of Us'. People who may want to view it, is to try and watch it on a Smart TV or large pad or PC rather than on a phone as there are a lot of details which could easily be missed.

Len Ruddock

Adds Hon Ed: Len provides some helpful tips below for viewers:

This was filmed on cameras providing a higher quality than we would normally see on YouTube. Hence, even viewing it on a mobile phone, it's clear and presentable throughout. However, to appreciate additional features and if you are able, I would recommend viewing it on PC/tablet or even a SmartTV. Underneath the title of the video, **Race Walking Extra: Bill Sutherland - Much more than his valued BCG Bronze**, I have sub-divided our conversation into, what is called, 'Chapters'. Therefore, scroll down and you will see the timings of the 36 chapters which I have added. If you click on any of the timing numbers, designated in blue, for example, '27:58 Edinburgh Commonwealth Games', it will take you to the beginning of that 'chapter' in the video. So that will enable people to view perhaps only the bits of the conversation that may interest them. Also, I would welcome any comments, so click on the Reply button.

[Race Walking Extra: Bill Sutherland - Much more than his valued BCG Bronze](#)

Len Ruddock

WORTH A "BEST FILM" OSCAR NOMINATION

I am so grateful to Dave and Len for all the long hours you must of put to produce such a memorable YouTube interview. As Jonathon Martin, then Head of BBC Live Sport said, many years ago if Dave had been connected to a more notable Sport you would have 'Top Gun' indeed and combined with the talent of Len Ruddock and his versatile son everything is possible and probable too! We are so very fortunate to have you still producing such a great read in the Essex Walker. I'm so glad my input too produced a real positive link for Race Walkers past and present. So pleased to hear from Reverend Roy Lodge and Tom Dooley too. They were the top drawer Race Walkers in my era and we had some memorable races with Roy from 1967 onwards and Tom in the GB v USA Match at Battersea Park. I firmly believe that where possible GB Race Walkers and many other Star names ought to sell ourselves and our many achievements to all and sundry wherever and whenever the occasion arises. We ALL have so much to be proud of!. Many thanks again!

Bill and Kath Sutherland

Adds Hon Ed: What a great film - with the right balance between seriousness and light-hearted entertaining comment. I've played the hour long YouTube film - and I'll soon be giving it a 2nd viewing as it's that good. What came over was how enjoyable race walking was in the '60s/'70s/'80s/'90s - even for those in the middle and rear of large fields - as opposed to nowadays. Loved tales of the bank counter, C304 Stan Mantor, a 1970 Commonwealth bronze, a commendable faultless DQ record, tales of a wonderful supporter in Kath, an arduous 3rd attempt at joining The Centurions - and coming to an end with the Ali meeting. Bill has plenty more anecdotes and yarns - *enough I suggest for a sequel one day?* I'm pleased you used so many of my pictures - as all those ones I unearthed do assist in telling the story. Great stuff - and my sincere congratulations to both: a talented film maker and a most interesting subject! Whatever time was spent on this project - it was truly time well spent! **DA**

BILL and LEN's FILM APPRECIATION SOCIETY

- I have just finished listening to Len's excellent interview with Bill Sutherland. I was amazed at Bill's attention to detail in every question put to him and his memory recall was quite outstanding. It was a great experience for me to listen to Bill recalling walkers of my generation that brought back many nostalgic memories. I competed with them all in the 50's and 60's and lovely to hear their names come up in the interview. Bill will recall several races in which we competed against each other particularly the Highgate 7 which began with an enormous hill to climb! Sadly my race walking advancement came to an end with surgery for a brain tumour

otherwise I might have been around when Bill won his bronze in Edinburgh. It was particularly poignant for me to hear that Bill and I lost our parents in childhood noting Bill had guardians whereas I was in care of LA Children's homes and Dr Barnardo's. Gratifying to note we made something of our lives against the odds. Thanks again for this fantastic interview and for bringing to memory names in our race walking fraternity that we can be so proud of. **Rev Dr Roy Lodge MBE**. Former International & National 20 mile champion 1967. Olympic squad member selected for altitude training prior to Mexico 1968 Games.

- Many thanks for the latest bit of nostalgia. **David Rosser**
- Thanks. The next time you see Bill tell him 'Hi' from me. **Tom Dooley**
- Thanks, looking forward to seeing it. **Ed Shillabeer**
- Len's films are both a joy and an important historical record. I'm very much a bit player but much has been lost from the days when I was at my best - the great courses, up and down dale, the intense but friendly team rivalry, the depth in talent and width in enthusiasm of those participating. **Tony Taylor**
- Thank you for the interview with Bill Sutherland. I listened to it with great interest. I knew that there was an amicable rivalry between him and John! John often spoke of him. Bill certainly has a lot to be proud of, and I know from the newsletters that he is a valued spokesperson for the future of racewalking. I hope you are well, and have been able to keep cool during the hot weather! I have just returned from Belgrade, where it was very hot too! **Sarah Webb**
- Great interview. **Peter Marlow**
- What a fascinating documentary highlighting in great detail the life and times of a race walker in the period leading up to the major rule changes of the discipline, that I believe contributed to the decline of race walking in the UK, although not the world. At the time that I was racing seriously I lived in the north and only really knew Bill as a rival and so the discussion with Len opened up a whole new fascinating chapter of knowledge about him. Keen rivals we were, but racing days over, he has been a staunch supporter of most of the projects I've been involved with. We share the good fortune of having wives without whom our achievements would have been impossible. Keep the discussions coming Len. **Ron Wallwork C893**
- A great deal of effort went into creating this video. It was very well done and brought back great memories and many names I have not heard in years. **Jack Lord**

IT'S NOW A DIFFERENT GAME

Very interesting and much appreciated read from Mark Wall. I totally disagree with the Selection Process producing the reduced numbers in Commonwealth Athletic Teams across the board. In 1970 the Scotland Athletic Team numbered 57 and 37 finished in the top 8 in their event. Today the Scotland Team for Glasgow will be around 25% of what it was in 1970. We won 4 Gold 2 Silver and 2 Bronze and finished 3rd in the Team rankings ahead of the fantastic Kenya Team. All of the Race Walkers from various countries were NOT making up Team Numbers, but had fought long and hard over many competitive distance races to earn their selection. One was only as good as your last race, so out of sight was out of mind. In many events athletes performed better than they were expected too. Take the Marathon where Bronze Medallist Don Faircloth nearly defeated the great Jim Alder, who won in 1966 in Kingston, Jamaica. What a shame today that many results are so predictable and many of the thrills of the past are not there. Where UK Race Walking goes from here heaven only knows, but we really need an Ernest Neville and his like to reinvent our great sport. Where there is a WILL there is a WAY! **Bill Sutherland**

OLYMPIC RACE WALKERS AT 50th ANNIVERSARY OCCASION

I have been fortunate to have enjoyed two recent 50th Anniversary celebrations ...

The first was to celebrate a landmark dinner held in June 1976 at the Park Lane Hotel, Mayfair. The dinner was organised by a small group of Christians aiming to contact and gather together Christians involved in sport. I have no idea where they got my name from, but it made a huge impact on my attitude to my sport. The very next day I flew out to altitude training and then onto the Montreal Olympics. That 1976 gathering was the start of my wondering how my Christian faith

and my walking fitted together. On returning to England after the Olympics, Joy and I became very involved in what later that year developed into the organisation Christians In Sport (CiS) and it had a profound effect on both my walking and my faith. CiS is now a large organisation with groups in many Universities and runs 10 Sports+ summer camps for around 1,000 teenagers each year.

The second celebration was just five days later on June 9th. Held at the at the Lansdowne Club in Mayfair, Joy and I attended a reception and dinner for the 50th Anniversary Reunion for the Montreal Olympians, organised by the GB Olympian Association. The 50km had been dropped from the Montreal Olympics, so only 3 walkers were selected: Olly Flynn (14th), Paul Nihil (30th) and me (11th). It was great to meet up with Olly again (and Janet his wife) and reminisce about our time in Montreal. Of course, four time Olympian the late Paul Nihill was never far from our thoughts. In all the athletic events represented, only the steeplechasers and the women's 1500m matched our two event representatives. However, walkers were even better represented, as the husband of Mary Stewart (1500m) is Dave Cotton who was there as a guest. Dave won the 1978 RWA 50km and competed in the European Champs 50km in Prague that year. Although we three walkers were placed on different tables we did have the chance to mingle between courses! We also had the opportunity during the reception to meet another Olympian from the '76 Olympics, when all Olympians were presented to HRH Princess Anne who, of course, represented GB in the equestrian events.



1976 Olympic Reunion: L-to-R
Dave Cotton, Brian Adams,
Olly Flynn

Here is a personal summary of those I mingled with ...

- Avril Lennox (Gymnastics), who, although I did not meet up with in Montreal, was from the same school I attended in Leicestershire (8 years apart), and where on a short teaching practice in 1972 I taught a basketball lesson with her group. She went to the Munich Olympics later that year, followed by Montreal in '76.
- Mary Stewart and Angela Creamer were two of the six athletes on altitude training with me at the US Air Force base in Colorado Springs. I also met Angela's husband who was a member of the my athletics club in Leicester!
- Ian Hallam MBE and Dudley Hayton (cycling). Olly, Paul and I shared accommodation in the athletes village with the cycling team. These two were on the same table as Joy and me. Ian Hallam rode in the Team and Individual Pursuit picking up bronze medals in the 1972 & 1976 team pursuit. Dudley Hayton was on the road team ... 43rd in the Road Race and 6th in the Team Time Trial. He knew Mick Holmes having worked with him in Basildon and was unaware of his untimely death.
- Barry Watson (marathon). Barry and his wife were also on our table and a new friendship was made. Barry's memories were not so happy as he was unfortunate to suffer a stomach upset on the day of his Olympic race.
- I sought out David Moorcroft whom I knew a little because he was Leicester based (Loughborough Coll.) during the 70's. I was able to point out that his first teaching post was at Roundhill secondary school where I started my walking career and that his school, the much used Woodlands in Coventry was the venue of my only DNF, when I came to a standstill in my first 20km, the RWA champs 1968.

I don't think that I will make it to the next reunion if it is another 50 years! **Brian Adams**

Adds Hon Ed: Essex connection - Our 3 walkers gained selection in a dramatic "*sudden death*" race around the leafy lanes of Thorpe Bay.

PUT YOURSELVES ON STANDBY

I am contemplating including Essex in the Counties 10.000 metres track event later in the year.

Dave Hoben



RACE WALKER ON TV

Nice interview with Bethan Davies on BBC Sport. (View on BBCiPlayer here: www.bbc.co.uk/sport/athletics/videos/cgevr9yl2j5o)

She has a recent addition to her family, who shouted her support this year after falling asleep last year! Great performance by the Commonwealth Games Bronze Medallist from Brisbane who is making a comeback. It would be great to have an Interview with her by Len Ruddock in the future!

Bill Sutherland

25th MOULTON OPEN 5 ANNIVERSARY

My congratulations to Ron, Joan, and all the family for Moulton's silver anniversary. A great achievement. Have a great day of celebration.

Chris Flint

MOULTON's 25th

Thank you very much for keeping me abreast of these fantastic races. I'm in the middle of a house move and I sadly won't be able to attend, but I wish you huge luck and enjoyment!

I hope you're coping well in this heatwave.

Tessa Killingbeck

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