

ESSEX WALKER



'ESSEX HISTORY LIVES ON'

This was the joyful comment from 1978 Commonwealth Games walking champion Olly Flynn when he heard that Colchester Harriers DANIEL and DOMINIC KING had been selected to represent England in the 2006 Games – to be held in Melbourne between 15th and 26th March. Current Essex Walker readers to have also gained Commonwealth Games Walking medals are RON WALLWORK (Gold – Jamaica 1966) and BILL SUTHERLAND (bronze – Edinburgh 1970). Of course others from the British Isles have won medals, but we'll concentrate on our own readers! For Dominic it's his second appearance on the Commonwealth Games scene. Back in Manchester (2002) many from Essex journeyed to Salford Quays and cheered him on. One suspects that support from Essex many well be much less evident in 'The Land of Oz' – which can't be reached on a Virgin Rail cheap day return! Many reading this newsletter will have seen the promising King twins in earlier days, as youths, and watched their progress with interest. Well done to them and all who have coached, helped and encouraged them along their way. Steve and Bridget must be truly proud parents. We congratulate them and wish them well in their build-up to the big day, and every success once they hear the starting gun next March! With them will be fellow 20 Kilometres walkers ANDY PENN (Nuneaton Harriers), JO JACKSON (Redcar RWC) and NIOBE MENDEZ (Steyning AC). Our *congratulations* and best wishes to these England representatives as well!

BOXING DAY MEET AND GREET

Enfield & Harringey AC invite you to give the Boxing Day sales a miss and head for Donkey Lane, where a 5 kms Run and Walk commences at 11 am (you have to pre-declare which one you wish to appear in). It gives you an opportunity to race over a different course! Buckshee entries!



ANOTHER AWARD FOR RON WALLWORK MBE

On October 20th at the Millennium Mayfair in Grosvenor Square, the 'Pride of Racing' award presentation evening was held. Ron was presented with a lifetime achievement award for his work at Newmarket's New Astley Club – which is at the centre of much which goes on in-and-around the town. *Congratulations!*

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

We congratulate Corringham-based former walking officials DEREK & SHIRLEY ROBERY on their 50th wedding anniversary. They were inspirational in a highly successful HAVERING A.C. walking squad in former times, which included talented daughter JULIE (who made a brief comeback in 2001) During those times Haverling A.C. (as it was then called) was brimming with young talent. They also had experience and, in DAVE HAY, boasted an Essex League Champion. Derek and Shirley love travelling in the U.S.A. and have now visited 29 states. They will celebrate 50 years of marriage by visiting Las Vegas on Christmas Eve (the date of the anniversary) during a month-long vacation. Derek and Shirley paid us a welcome visit at the 300th Blackheath Walk and they want us to share in their happy anniversary. They have donated additional wine prizes for the regulars at Ilford's traditional pre-Christmas 10K on Sunday 18th December at Chigwell Row (10.30 a.m). On behalf of all our readers we express our **congratulations!**



SING AND YOU'LL WIN

Athletes should listen to music if they want to improve their performances, scientists say. Studies show that playing the right sounds can boost a sportsperson's ability by as much as a fifth. Favourite tunes include 'Born to be Wild' by Steppenwolf, 'I Got You' by James Brown and 'Reach' by S Club 7. James Cracknell played Red Hot Chili Peppers 'Blood Sugar Sex Magik' before helping Britain to rowing gold at the Athens Olympics. Experts say that it can help amateurs as much as pros. Dr. Costa Karageorghis of Brunel University concluded, "Music inspires superior performance". So... now we know why some long distance walkers use their Walkmans, though we haven't seen any iPods yet at our races! No doubt when we get some younger walkers tackling distance races, we'll be seeing them as well.

THE HALF CENTURY

We *congratulate* that well read publication 'LOUGHTON LINES' ON REACHING Issue No. 50. Imaginatively edited by PETER CASSIDY (aka Captain Barclay), it's a must have publication.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

On Saturday December 10th Loughton's members will be quickly away for their racing endeavours (their walkers will hopefully be at either Bexley or Enfield) to head for THE ROYAL OAK for their annual CHRISTMAS DINNER. Loughton now distribute 39 copies of Essex Walker, so it'll be a nice social gathering for their walkers, and a truly marvellous evening if they all support the event.

ESSEX WALKER READER CO-WRITES A BOOK

Leading light of Essex and Stock Exchange walking in the 70s, the popular and much-missed STEVE KING has co-written (with Dan Cumming) a quality paperback book (227 pages). It's entitled A HANDBOOK FOR SEASONED ATHLETES. It's got 26 moving contributions from older runners (ages 46-76) who share their love of running, triumphs and challenges. It's a must for seasoned athletes. It costs £12.14 (Euro 17.52). You can obtain it from Trafford Publishing – their order line is 0845 230 9601. And of course... we love to see the author if he's any further European trips planned!

MAKE IT TO THE LAST

The New Year's Day Walks in Victoria Park (11 a.m.) will be the last; so ending a long tradition which commenced in the City of London with entries open only to time standard qualified entrants. Nowadays the race is a truly OPEN to all. **As we bring down the curtain, let's see an appearance by everyone who has ever previously appeared in past NYD races!**



EDITORIAL – FUTURE IS IN THE BALANCE!

Back in 1997, when 125 raced in the Essex Police 5 Miles at Harlow (so many turned up that the organisers ran out of numbers – a problem that we'd love nowadays), Essex Walker commented on just how many times we heard, "See you next year" as participants were leaving. Well, we even heard it again after the 2005 celebration of the same event.

Race walking in both Essex Police and Colchester Harriers circles is down to just a handful of activists. Yet both have latent potential to bounce back, and just one spark could ignite things. Throughout walking 3 things are clear, to wit (A) Many Clubs have achieved great success with just 1 motivator ensuring that things keep ticking over. (B) Many Clubs have seen their fortunes nosedive, even to the point of obliteration, after 1 motivator has ceased motivating (an example? Bristol after the sad demise of Chas Shelley). (C) History proves that, usually, statement 'B' marks a total end of the pursuit in an area. Witness such great areas as Wales (Roath and Splott), Bristol, and most of the South and South West. We don't want it to happen in Essex do we?

We have 3 areas of great latent potential in our 'Essex Walker' circulation area: The South East of the County, Essex Police and Colchester Harriers.

In the South we have seen new names on our result sheets, including younger walkers plus an established distance international settle into our patch. And we've had comebacks. But again we need an ignition spark! One comeback making walker from Southend (a Centurion) has 4 times made journeys to walking venues - only to lose his way almost within sight of the venue and miss the starts. All it needs is one person to ring around and arrange a few meets, and the 'club atmosphere/club spirit' follows. And we ought to be looking at our own races and asking ourselves why they aren't attractive enough to see our long-distance international at even one start line in over 18 months?

In the Essex Police, this year we've seen new names in their Championship. And those newcomers have been enthusiastic. At the presentation, RON WALLWORK had the last word when he complimented those newcomers on their efforts and hoped that they would now come to our other meetings. Some years ago VICTOR SPAIN 'dipped his toe in the water' at Enfield and did very well (including winning a novice award on his first appearance there). At this year's Police race, some of the newcomers actually approached Club walkers and asked if there were any fixture lists, training meets etc? Luckily we had a few spare copies of Essex Walker to give out. For a number of years we actually produced an extra 30 copies of Essex Walker for mailing out with the Police result sheet (for the top 20 Policemen and top 10 Policewomen), to try and drum up interest. We stopped doing that a few years back when somebody tipped the whole lot into a wastepaper bin, rather than disseminate them. So we now appeal to our Essex Police recipients of 'Essex Walker' to get a few copies run off and mailed to our recent Earl's Colne newcomers – or forward 'Essex Walker' to their email addresses. The optimism is tangible this year. And don't forget, Essex are always placed in the Police Athletic Association Championship. Maybe it's now time for another team **victory**?

And finally, let's look at Colchester Harriers where the potential is vast. They now have 2 high profile Commonwealth Games representatives (the KING twins), a current ultra-distance international (DON COX) and a talented Championship class contender (ALAN ELLAM) who is always a threat in Civil Service meetings and is a noted fast starter in the classic BRIAN ARMSTRONG/PETER HANNELL mode. Yet, for endless months, nobody turns up at our meetings in their colours. We used to be always going to Colchester Garrison for walking races, but when did we last go there? Things are now even more favourable for walking promotions as the ABBEY FIELD (in the heart of the Garrison) now has a cycle track constructed around much of it. Colchester have won the Essex League and used to put out 'B' teams (even at 50K). Their 'Mr Motivator' admits that he's not been paying much attention to walking as he's been involved in Athletics Team Management, Field Judging and writing his book about the history of Colchester athletics (now a 3 volume job). I refer to JERRY EVERETT who kept things bubbling along nicely when JOHN HEDGETHORNE moved on. Again, we ought to be asking why race promotions are not attracting the King twins and Don along more often? Colchester could dominate Southern walking if something could 'click'. At Earl's Colne I asked where GLEN ROBERTSON was? He usually supports the Essex Police 5 Miles. I was told, "He probably doesn't know about it". I was further told, "Nobody sees him these days". He moved house over 2 years ago, and I asked a Harriers official if we could have his new address, so as the Centurions could mail him their newsletters (Glen is Centurion No. 946)? Six requests later there is still no answer. Probably because they don't know it! We recently saw a Colchester Harrier make a 100 mile round trip to a race which had been postponed. Why? Because nobody had bothered to pass on a copy of 'Essex Walker' which would have advised him of the matter. Is there a Colchester Harrier out there who can run off a few copies of 'Essex Walker' off his email at work – and pass them around? Let's build on the King twins profile and see a walking revival in North Essex!

Let respected LANCE WILLIAMS have the last word. He gave a good account of himself at Earl's Colne, as he did in 2004. But between these 2 races he hadn't walked in a single race. Why? Lance said, "I suppose it's because nobody rings me up anymore and tells me what's on at the weekend – like John Hedgethorne used to do". And that folks underlines what's needed, in South East Essex, the Essex Police and at Colchester Harriers. A 'Mr. Motivator' who would arrange meet points for walkers, to go to races and then to keep the bandwagon rolling. Just like Flight Lieutenant 'Dickie' Bird did for years in the Royal Air Force. Time-and-time again walking history has proved that 'One Man Bands' have delivered most success. D.A.

WRITES FORMER WALKER JUNE CORK

Dear Dave,

Southend-on-Sea AC Centenary Ball

At the end of last month, to celebrate our 100 years of existence (3rd oldest club in the country) we entertained members past and present to a sumptuous repast at the Cumberland Hotel in Westcliff-on-Sea. It really was a superb evening made all the better by having such an incredible cross section of the Club's membership including Mary, the daughter of one of our Founders, Tom Dainty, and his nephew Peter who is our oldest surviving International athlete together with an impressive cast of younger past-internationals, past Presidents, Club Record holders and Life Members, as well as all five members who were awarded medals by the South of England three years ago. Howard Williams represented the County and Mike Seaman was there in his capacity as President of the South of England AA.

Our youngsters were a credit to themselves, their parents and the Club – the girls were all resplendent in their finest party-wear and the young fellas looked particularly dashing in evening suits and bow ties.

I was especially impressed by the representation from the walking world. As most of your regular readers will know, you have persuaded, cajoled and (almost) bullied our one-time team of Wondrous Walkers to present themselves and some of our key chaps put in an appearance in their finest attire (hardly recognised some of 'em – never seen them in bow-ties before!). We were very pleased to see: Peter Marlow, Alec Banyard, Pat Rogers, Steve Kemp, Linda Mountford, Ray Pearce (Club's Chairman, so he couldn't really miss it, could he?) as well as Olly Flynn. I really think 'Wee' Georgie Woods and Johnnie Atkinson would have enjoyed the occasion.

Many, many thanks for your efforts on our behalf – as I mentioned, there were a dozen absences from the 'do' so we could have looked for even more 'old' friends to fill their places – and as a friend of Southend AC, you would have been welcome too – of course!

Regards,
June.

PS1. I was delighted to receive in the post this week, a letter from Alec Banyard enclosing a photograph of his father's Club Kit from the late 1920s. MY collection is now almost complete. All I need now is the Leigh Harriers outfit but I don't think any of the walking fraternity was associated with them.

PS2. **I'm still writing the book so am still looking for snippets, memories, photos or press cuttings (all copied and returned) from any one-time members so that I can produce a jolly good account of Walking at Southend AC.**

FROM THE PEN OF DAVE SHARPE

Dear Dave,

A lot has been recently written about the early 70s when Newham A.C. had a good squad of walkers. Well the main man was Tommy Kent. When he passed away I made the wrong decision to get Matt Davitt to take over as Club President. As dear old Tommy Boy had been one of the founder members, they wanted a walker as a President. I was asked but turned it down as, at 22 years of age, I had no experience of life, so I became Vice President instead. Well, within 2 years, the Walking Section had finished. Joe Scamell was stopped from doing the job because he was 1st Claim Belgrave. The people who were there at the time were Mike Scamell, Paul Dyble, Nigel Stone, John Hedgethorpe, Denis and Roy Sheppard, Steve Barton, Steve Wynn, Pat Rice, Tony Hynds and several other Essex Police and Post Office walkers. The best we ever got was 2nd team in the Garnet – when the Garnet was a race.



Yours in Sport, Dave Sharpe

Adds Hon. Ed. Newham also got bronze team medals in the Southern Area 10 Miles Road Championship.

WRITES KEN TUSON

Dear Dave,

I have read in a newspaper that the Captain Birdseye character was updated in recent years to make him more appealing. Even you Dave cannot halt the march of progress.

Yours in sport, Ken Tuson.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“Let thy speech be short, comprehending much in few words” – from The Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus Chapter 32 verse 8.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Yes folks, you can start the year with some racing activity in Victoria Park! A full card commences at 11 am (change in the Club HQ). Men's 10 kms, Ladies 5 kms and younger aged groups categories.

Please, please make that extra effort to show a leg and reward Peter and Pauline, and their Loughton AC colleagues, for all they do to stage this long established meeting – which moved to Hackney some years ago after leaving its City of London venue.



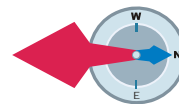
I'VE STARTED... SO I'LL FINISH

On October 25th, freelance translator NEIL CROCKFORD booked himself a place in the MASTERMIND grand final when winning his semi-final by a solitary point. Neil had 26 and 2 others were just behind on 25 each. His specialised subject was 'The Life and Works of the Suffolk Poet George Crabbe'. He was lying 3rd after the 1st round. What contributed to his single point success was his correct answering of a general knowledge question about athletics: to wit, "What is the longest athletic event in the Olympic Games?" Answer = the 50 Kilometres Walk. This is 31 miles and 121 yards, so making it around 5 miles further than the marathon. John Hedgethorpe once got his dander up because the official film of the 1972 Munich Olympics had a section entitled 'The Longest' – and it was all about the Marathon. But... Neil knew his stuff.

WHO KNOWS HIS WAY AROUND EARL'S

COLNE BEST?

It must be KEN LIVERMORE, for he goes there for orienteering meetings, at which he is a competitor of note!



A REPORT FROM LINDA SPINKS

Iceland Lava Trek – July 2005

It was with a large amount of trepidation that I set off for Heathrow Airport on the morning of 21st July to embark on my Charity Challenge. I felt a little better once I got to the check-in desk and met up with the rest of the group that I realised that they weren't all going to be athletic young things but that in fact there was a good mix of people!

Well, some ten hours later we arrived at Landmannalaugar to be greeted by a bowl of hot soup before the first task of the trip – pitching a tent on rocks!!!! After much laughter, Gill (my tent-mate) and I managed to complete this task ensuring a certain degree of stability, before heading off for dinner then a soak in the hot spring at the campsite.

The next day brought an early start following a camp breakfast and we were off, with butterflies in our stomachs, on the first 27km leg of our trek. What can I say but WOW!!! I have never passed through a land of such contrasts and colours. Iceland truly is a beautiful country! We walked through fields of black obsidian rock, passed hot geysers, travelled across snowfields, climbing a total of 500m by midday. Our legs certainly knew that they had been put to the test, but boy was it worth it!

This long and gruelling day wasn't without its trials but we finally trudged into camp at about 9pm – although it was of course still broad daylight. Soup again before erecting tents (on a slightly less rocky surface) before tucking into another hearty camp dinner. A further 25km were covered during the subsequent two days before arriving at Porsmork and the end of our trek.

Although exhausted, aching and sore of feet this was an amazing trip and one I would recommend to anyone wanting to embark on a challenge that is exhilarating and enjoyable and doesn't take you away from home for too long.

Finally my thanks to all who supported me in raising £2000 for Wheelpower, namely Ian Spinks, Ron and Joan Wallwork, Kerry Marvell (for suggesting the idea in the first place), everyone who sponsored me and attended fundraising events, the rest of the July 2005 group and in particular Gill Newsome, my tent mate who made us laugh through the hardest of times.

Linda Spinks

QUIDS IN!

The Cambridge Harriers Winter League is a bargain – for yet another season they've retained their entry fee at just £1. Bearing in mind that £3 is common at many races, and the Dartford crossing toll is £1 each way, then the low fee at Dartford offsets your tolls. There's racing for both genders and all age groups on a near traffic-free course. All senior races are staged over 5 Kilometres with a 2 p.m. start (but 10 minutes walk from the Cambridge Harriers HQ, which is behind No. 60 Glenhurst Avenue in Bexley) and there's parking both at the Clubhouse and in the street. The next 2 dates are Saturdays December 10th and February 11th.



WRITES RON WALLWORK MBE

Dear Dave,

Mal and Carole Blyth dropped in at the Astley today, hence the following copy for EW.

One of Leicester Walking Club's ever present men of the 1960s, Mal Blyth takes up residence at 5, Norman Close, St. Osyth, Essex. CO16 8PN on 1st November.

In those halcyon days of race walking Mal clocked sub 80 for 10 miles just over 2.51 for 20 miles, 4.47 and some odd seconds for 50 km. He collected a bronze in the Brighton with a time well under 8.40 and in 1966 qualified as Centurion 384 in 20.26.15. He placed individually in county and area championships and collected a number of national team medals when scoring for the mighty Leicester team of that time.

Carole and Mal were part of the back-up team at King's Lynn and indicated that they will be seen at events in our area. I'm sure I speak for many, when I say "that we look forward to seeing them".

Ron Wallwork.



2006 ENFIELD LEAGUE PROGRAMME

(Provisional only at this stage)

1	Sat 28th Jan	5 Miles (2.30 pm)
2	Sat 4th Mar	5 Miles 'Pat Furey Trophies Meeting' (Double League Points!) (2.30 pm)
3	Sat 8th Apr	5 Miles (2.30 pm)
4	Wed 10th May	3 kms Track (7. 30 pm) (inc Club Champs)
5	Sat 27th May	5 miles (2.30 pm)
6	Sat 17th June	Moulton 5 Miles (?) (2.30 pm) (Club Champs/Double League Points)
7	Sat 1st July	5 miles (2.30 pm)
8	Sat 5th Aug	5 miles (2.30 pm)
9	Sat 16th Sept	5 miles (2.30 pm)
10	Sat 7th Oct	5 kms (VAC/SCVAC Champs) (2.30 pm)
11	Sat 11th Nov	Open 7 miles (inc Club Champs/Double League Points) (2.30 pm)
12	Sat 9th Dec	5 miles + prize presentation (2 pm)

Please note that the Club may be moving to Picketts Lock sometime during late 2006 or early 2007, so we may have to find a new course, &/or new changing facilities at some point. Still, we'll cross that bridge when we come to it! – Martin Oliver.



ESSEX POLICE 5 MILES – SUN 30TH OCT AT EARL'S COLNE

1	Dominic King	37.04
2	Scott Davis	39.27
3	Peter Ryan	42.45
4	Steve Uttley	42.59
5	Roy Sheppard	43.38
6	Carl Lawton	45.10
7	David Kates	45.57
8	Dave Sharpe	46.10
9	Steve Allen	46.46
10	Amos Seddon	46.53
11	Laurence Dordoy	47.24
12	Peter Cassidy	48.16
13	Steve King	48.28
14	Dennis Sheppard	49.19
15	Lance Williams	51.24
16	Mark Schofield	52.51
17	Kim Howard	53.00
18	Alan King	53.18
19	Peter Orpe	53.49
20	Clive Hanson	54.20
21	Mick Barnbrook	55.14
22	Brian Bogenpoel	56.00
23	David Hoben	56.04
24	Fran Fernandez	56.55
25	Dave Ainsworth	1.00.02
26	Alicia Saigado	1.00.52
27	Pam Ficken	1.01.07
28	Alexander Allen	1.01.09
28	Courtney Cavell	1.03.18
29	Pauline Kates	1.07.16
30	Lyndon Holt	1.07.43
31	Lee Abrahall	1.08.02
32	Anne Bird	1.09.15
33	Graham Bird	1.09.15
34	Tony Hoult	1.09.15
Louise Simpson		(1 lap)

ESSEX COUNTY 10 MILES CHAMPIONSHIP (+LEAGUE)

To be staged at the Metropolitan Police Sports & Social Club, CHIGWELL, on Sunday 19th February at 10 a.m. At the time of going to press it is not clear which other Counties are seeking to include their own Championships, but usually Hertfordshire and Middlesex walkers join-in. We express our thanks to recently retired Met. Police walker GEORGE NIBRE for making the booking on our behalf. Just a tip: Bring a few bob with you, as in recent years a number of our attenders have stopped on for an excellent and competitively priced Sunday lunch in the Clubhouse.



John Hedgethorne Memorial Trophy – Ilford A.C. (most entries)

BASILDON'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY EVENING – OLLY FLYNN REPORTS

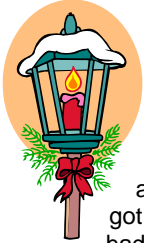
Dear Dave,

It appears that I was the only one from the walking fraternity, so there is little to report other than it was a great evening with some old friends including Eamon Martin. It was very encouraging to see so many young people there enjoying themselves and I was left with the impression that the club was in very good hands going forward.

Kind Regards,
Oliver.

Adds Hon Ed. And don't forget Padre Lodge, who was a National 20 miles champion.





AN EXPLANATION

The editor of Loughton Lines (Captain Barclay) has taken space in his own publication to explain his absence from the National 50K result sheet. He writes, "It was a pretty warm day – well up in the eighties as we old 'uns put it and Capt B lost interest half way through; still he got further than a former National Champion, who had had enough by about 10K".

CLUBCALL: BASILDON AMATEUR ATHLETIC CLUB

This Club was formed in 1955 and their headquarters are at the Gloucester Park Arena. Their colours are gold with a blue stripe with a badge (a shield carrying Basildon's arms and club initials). In walking terms they are famous mainly for the great success of their individuals. As we've written in previous nostalgia columns, team-wise little came their way. It was common for them to have 3 in the top 10, and then either somebody way down the field or often nobody at all. They often lacked that 4th scorer (all races needed 4 scorers in Basildon's 70s heyday), and they also had a bit of bad luck with somebody either dropping out or getting the chop during a Championship event. If only they could have mustered that extra pair of quality legs they could have dominated UK walking for a decade! The year 2005 saw them celebrate their half-century, and a walker was there at the function to celebrate their glorious past! Apart from walking Olympians JOHN WEBB and OLLY FLYNN, they also sent ROB DENMARK, EAMON MARTIN and MATTHEW YATES to the Olympic Games.

AN INVITATION FROM JOHN PADDICK

Hello from the far north!

You will all be pleased to hear that numbers are RISING! The first Winter League 10k attracted a good field of 30 to Chleckheaton. We never made 20 last year. What a superb race at the front too with three walkers under 50 minutes. Ben Wears, age 15, followed the leaders for 5km in around 25 min and then 'lost patience' and 'put the pedal down' to finish first in 48-53 – yet another big lump off his PB. Jo Jackson was second in 49-35 and Paul Evennett was third.

Northern Championship dates were finalised after the race. So if any of you want an early season PERFECTLY FLAT 50km, the 'Northern' and Open will be held at Redcar on a multi-lap course on 30th April. Dave 'ballet shoes' Jones is raising a team from Redcar for the National 50km – we are serious this time, even though we recognise that we will need to bring our own beer with us if the race is in the south! Perhaps you would all let him know what your cigars are like

Best wishes from 'The Smoggies'.

"DOING THE LONDON WALK"

This popular and established meeting is centre-stage on Sunday 5th February with a full card for both genders and all age groups commencing at 1 p.m. in Victoria Park, Hackney. Nearest station: Hackney Wick (Silverlink North London Line) then 10 mins walk. Nearest Underground Mile End (District, Central, Hammersmith & City Lines) then 20 mins walk or 277 bus to Victoria Park. **It's an Essex League race.**

The Essex League race is in conjunction with the main 10K race at 2 p.m. By wonderful stage management, the Women's and Juniors 5K also starts at 2 p.m. – so offering its finishers the opportunity of pressing on in search of Essex League points by completing another 5K. But... as in previous years, we implore as many readers as possible to get there by 1 p.m. to give some support to our younger entrants on the under-card. They are the sport's future.

WRITES OUR TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT TONY PERKINS

PERKINS TRAVEL took a party of 10 people from the Stock Exchange and Ilford Athletic clubs to compete and watch the SAL Lugano one hour walks on the weekend of 9 October. Some travelled by car and the others by plane. AOR was promoted to navigator as Kates and Ryan were not travelling. This was a bad move as, at the first junction, AOR announced he couldn't read the map in the dark as the print was too small for him. Whilst in the other group, Kim couldn't get her hire care started as she couldn't find the immobiliser. It turned out she had been sitting on it! On race day there was confusion re the start time. We believed it was a 10.00 start but it turned out to be 9.00. The organisers held the start believing that Dave Kates was going to appear, but it was Dave Stevens who missed it, he was allowed to compete in the ladies' race. The SEAC supporting party of Tuson, Browning and Railton were pleased to see that light refreshments had been provided during the race by Perkins Travel. On the track AOR was undaunted by the fact that he was in the company of 5 SEAC members who had a total of 63 London to Brighton finishes between them whilst his personal best was the slowest he put in a solid performance whilst in the ladies' race Kim tracked Dave until he took a comfort break which allowed her to put a lap between them.

14	A. O'RAWE	ILFORD	9857M
15	K. HOWARD	SOUTHEND	9738M
16	D. STEVENS	STEYNING	9263M

Perkins travel would like to thank the unknown Italian motorist who showed them the way to Verona Bresica airport to enable us to check in with 5 minutes to spare.

WRITES STATISTICIAN COLIN YOUNG

Dear Dave,

Firstly, may I congratulate you on producing a regular 'enjoyable read' – 'Essex Walker'. I can't give you higher praise than call you a contemporary Alf McSweeney. Your style and delivery is different but so are the situations and circumstances the sport in G.B. now exists (unfortunately!!!).

Was delighted to read (in another magazine) your reminisces on your '100' in view of what you wrote about the honour of becoming a Centurion. It is a very big highlight in your walking career – as it should be.

The reference in Bob Dobson's letter of the 1891 Essex 2 Miles Championship is very interesting. I detail below some details which go to show how strong the County was at that time in British race-walking. H.J. Cheverton was an Essex Beagle who finished 4th in the AAA 4 miles in 1894, two places behind his great rival and club mate Dave Fenton, who clocked 30.26.2. They preceded another fine track specialist from the Beagles, Ernie Dover (whose name is very familiar to anyone who has won the 2 Miles Championship). The 2 Miles did not commence until 1901, the 4 Miles being in vogue between 1894 and 1900. F.G. Kimber belonged to Walthamstow Harriers and finished 3rd in the AAA 7 Miles in 1892 & 1893. In the 1950s I raced Jack Kimber regularly in the Open 7s. He was a regular member of the Highgate Harriers first team. He also belonged to Lyons Sports Club, who promoted events from Sudbury Hill. Jack was a relative (? Grandson) of F. J. Kimber. A.N. Holland (Centurion 98) who qualified in the 1933 Brighton-and-Back, was a relative of the 3rd man in the 1891 Essex 2 Miles – possibly his son.

It is nice to know that my club-mates were 'Kings' of the spirit distances over a hundred years ago – unfortunately they did not get the opportunity to go to Melbourne!!!

See you in 2006 I hope.

Yours truly, Colin Young (Centurion 317)



SPOT – ON

An allegation has been printed (in another athletics publication) that owing to a suspected over distance King's Lynn circuit, those accomplishing 100 Miles may have knocked-up 104 in so doing! Hmmm. **Balderdash.** The longer measurement, which came from global satellite positioning technology, has been totally refuted by PETER DUHIG. He says, "This course was measured no less than 4 times (that is visits to the site) by the approved RRC course measurer who went to great pains to calculate the exact distance by circumnavigating the course with his calibrated cycle several times each visit. Because of the 100 Mile course and the need to be absolutely accurate in the face of there being 50 laps, and just a few inches out magnifying into a significant distance. His calculations were then re-checked by the top advisor to the course measures. The course was 100% accurate and the event had the necessary documentation on display to prove it".

Adds Hon. Ed. Q.E.D

WRITES THE NOBLE LORD MOYNIHAN – CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION

9th Floor,
Prince Consort House,
27-29, Albert Embankment,
LONDON SE1 7tj



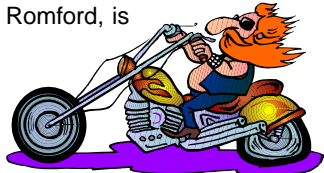
Dear David,

I wanted to write and thank you very much for your kind note in Essex Walker following my recent election to the Chairmanship of the British Olympic Association (BOA). With the London Olympics on the horizon there are some tremendous challenges ahead for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Olympic Governing Bodies and the wider interests of British sport.

It is a privilege to be involved through the BOA.
Very Best wishes and my further thanks.
Colin.

ON HIS BIKE

Former international PETER HODKINSON, who works in Romford, is



one of our sport's keenest enthusiasts. He got his high-powered motorbike out and headed for Earl's Colne – just to come and lend his support!
Thanks Peter.

LOOKING BACK

Our more established readers will remember the Essex Police Cadets School at Springfield, where the late JOHN HEDGETHORNE was Commandant. Quite a few of the entries organise reunions, and it's nice to know that Mrs. Elizabeth Hedgethorne – John's widow – is always on the invitation list. Latest to hold such a function is the 8th Entry, though our Essex Police contact advises us that this entry didn't throw up any notable race walkers!

WRITES MIKE HINTON

Dear Dave,

When race walking was most probably at its zenith in the late 1950s and early 1960s, with entries of 200 plus for open and national road walks the norm, Ilford AC was only able to muster 4/5 members.

Now with walking at its lowest ebb, with 50 being a huge field, the club can regularly put out 12 walkers. Doesn't make sense bucking the trend.

Regards, Mike.



NICE TO SEE YOU – TO SEE YOU NICE!

A couple of Stock Exchange stalwarts popped in to spectate and encourage the Earl's Colne walkers. We saw TONY PERKINS (20 London-to-Brighton Walks from 1973-to-1992) who lives in nearby Cressing and is now prominent in

Race Walking Association hospitality duties; as well as organising 'Perkins Tours' to race walking venues, both near and far, at truly competitive prices. And we met up again with JIMMY VENN who graced the London-to-Brighton race in the late 60s and early 70s. He came 2nd twice – behind the late DICKIE GREEN in 1970 clocking 9.08.43 to the victor's 8.54.22, and in 1971 clocking 9.06.03 just behind winner KEN TUSON'S 9.04.32. The 1971 was truly a great race, about which people are still talking. Neck-and-neck until near the top of the infamous Dale Hill (which is not far from the Brighton boundary) it was Ken who made that decisive break and sprint for the seafront. Jimmy now resides at Eight Ash Green and is a member of the Golf Club at Earl's Colne.

BRIGHT MORNING AT EARL'S COLNE

A 36 strong field, plus a handful of interested spectators, made it a successful meeting followed by a pleasant mini-social/buffet in the upmarket Golf Club. DOMINIC KING was there to receive the rightful acclaim from his back-slappers and well-wishers following his second successive Commonwealth Games selection. The King twins have seldom been at Essex events for some years; so perhaps the genuine welcome afforded to Dominic might tempt him (and his equally talented brother Daniel) back onto our start lines. Dominic had an untroubled morning as he set the pace throughout his 5 miles of racing. In his wake came former junior international SCOTT DAVIS, who has won his 3 previous comeback races (which had included a National Championship). On this occasion he was a comfortable 2nd. In 3rd came PETER RYAN, who lived up to his pre-race billing as the favourite in the Essex Police stakes. The race to determine the silver (STEVE KING) and bronze (DENIS SHEPPARD) Police positions was a close one with just 51 seconds between them! The Inter-Division title changed hands with COLCHESTER now taking centre-stage.

In late October we enjoyed strong sunshine and most donned singlets, although a strong wind blew up during the closing stages. For athletes who are used to somewhat austere conditions, the Earl's Colne Golf Club offered sheer luxury. In every shower cubicle there's a dispenser offering complimentary coconut-scented shower gel. Well...we know at least one walker who used the visit for an annual filling-up of his erstwhile empty shower gel bottle! He might not get that 'perk' next year as – according to the rules – the winning Division is permitted to stage the next race. So we could well be at Colchester in 2006. The gloom of 2004 has been replaced by the optimism of 2005, as more Police walkers have stepped forward to accept the challenge. We thank STEVE & BRIDGET KING and their team of helpers for organising an enjoyable morning – and particularly for STEVE for possessing the enthusiasm, and conviction, to press ahead with the promotion of athletics within the Essex Police Service.



PERSONALISED CAMPER VAN

Those lining up for a bargain at the back of AMOS SEDDON's new camper van will, no doubt, have noticed that the latest version comes complete with personalised number plates!

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL ENFIELD OPEN 7 MILES

Essex did well, with SCOTT DAVIS recording a most convincing victory (his 4th win in 5 starts since his comeback) and Ilford retaining their team title. This was remarkable in that the scoring 3 (nowadays it's nearly always a threesome) saw a complete change of personnel from those who formed the 2004 winning team. STEVE ALLEN, STEVE UTTLEY and OLLIE BROWN were all unavailable – so up stepped the golden trio of SCOTT DAVIS, DAVE SHARPE and MIKE HINTON. Indeed Scott and Dave appeared despite both travelling on vacation the following day (to the Dominican Republic and Atlanta respectively). Most distance travellers would have spent the day packing! The team finishing order (Ilford, Belgrave Harriers, Enfield & Harringey AC) was as it was in 2004. "As you were" as the drill sergeant used to say. This year Ilford only gained top team spot as Belgrave had a high-profile retirement among their leading lights. Race Walking Record Editor TIM WATT raced, then immediately on finishing, picked up his camera to cover the event and finally appeared as the dignitary who presented the awards. As always it was nice to see KEN ROOST (Centurion 557) who always pops-in to see us at the Enfield 7. Again he was one of the raffle ticket sellers for a raffle that is truly legendary in terms of what it pays out. RON WALLWORK again excelled as the start line and presentation M.C.



GOING DOWN AT ENFIELD

Said one walker at the Open 7, "We came off the roads and into the park for safety, and look what happens". Well Sketty and Ladysmith Roads did have a few car movements, but at least the local Council swept leaves and conkers off the tarmac. Enfield club rightly publishes a disclaimer with regularity and advises punters that they appear at their own risk. We're into double figures with fallers and a number have been serious. Just ask STEVE ALLWOOD, DOUG FOTHERINGHAM, PAUL RAY and STEVE UTTLEY. At Enfield we have umpteen speed humps which themselves attract large puddles around them (why are humps there in any case?). We have a carpet of wet squelchy leaves which can cause 'ice rink' conditions. We have conkers which can easily cause ankles to be turned over when trodden on at speed. We have many tight and twisting turns – indeed the course has more twists and turns than a New Year's Eve conga! Then we have flying footballs, not to mention Tel and Wayne (footie players) running across the course to retrieve them without looking. Quite a few altercations have already taken place between park footballers and race walkers and it really only is a matter of time before somebody gets a 'right-hander'. Add stray dogs and old duffers (not competitors) ambling on the course and the recipe for accidents is well advanced. The 2004 Enfield 7 had FOUR fallers in one race! The 2005 celebration only had TWO, but they were both bad ones.

One walker got a flying football trapped between his feet, so causing him to take a heavy tumble onto the concrete. A painful shoulder ensued and he was badly shaken up. With pluck, he finished after which he was seen shaking with a face as white as a bed sheet. He was driven to the Casualty Unit at nearby Chase Farm Hospital by a concerned KEN LIVERMORE. Faller No. 2 went down heavily with a couple of circuits to go, and finished with a deep skin gash from which copious amounts of blood flowed.

In MARTIN OLIVER we have a shrewd organiser and in today's 'compensation society' he's dead right to publish his disclaimers. In Martin, we also have one who (as a former Councillor) knows how Councils work (or don't). Perhaps the host club could use their influence to get the Council to undertake some basic housekeeping on their paths – especially during the autumn season.

Perhaps they could even remove the speed humps – after all, with locked gates, when did you last see a car on our racing circuit?



NOT MICK'S DAY

Amicable plodder MICK BARNBROOK was 'Faller No. 2' at Enfield. He came to race 5 miles, and only realised that it was 7 miles when someone told him so on route to the start line. Mind you, as previously reported, he did the last WWW race of the season and thought he was competing over 3,000 metres until – having done 4 laps – saw 8 on the lap board and realised that he was in a 5,000 metres race!

WHY DID I BOTHER?

That is a question PETE DUHIG, promoter of the highly successful King's Lynn 100 Miles may be asking himself. Essex Walker has already highlighted the classic event, but sadly a tirade of criticism has originated from the Isle of Man. Manx attendees may have whined, but it didn't stop them stepping forward to accept awards. If you want details of their complaints, then it's all in the Record. However...also in the Record is the best reader's letter seen for many years... from JACK THOMAS, a joint Chief Judge. His reply to criticism was so forceful that one doubts if the complainant's head will ever be seen above the parapet again! Pete was the protagonist on the Organising Committee and he spent over 6 months of his time in staging the race, as well as dipping into his own pocket in order to get the show on the road. After the verbose Manx complaints who would blame Pete if he asked himself "Why did I bother?" Most readers however will be hoping that his organising talents will be seen yet again!

FIXTURE CLASHING

About this time last year, the RWA held a Fixture Seminar in order to try and eliminate this recurring problem. The RWA's choice of a Town Hall Chamber was an appropriate one, for such locations are synonymous with abundant waffle and broken promises. 2005 saw little or no improvement – indeed as previously reported, Ilford AC once put out teams at 3 separate venues on the same day. Folks – you couldn't make it up.



However there always comes a proverbial 'last straw', and that is December 10th. That date belongs to Cambridge Harriers and it goes back decades – when that Club put on their Open 7 Miles. Recent nostalgia articles have referred to this event in both the 60s and 70s. Their date is set in stone, just as much as are the Enfield and Belgrave Open 7s. The Winter League races at Bexley may lack popularity because they maintain 'A' status but, let's be frank, there is still a sizeable minority who believe in one law for all (the 'A' code) and we all ought to respect other athletes views. Much disquiet has been heard about this clash, including adverse comments from members of the Club which is providing the rival event. More comment has been heard from Senior RWA Officials who have, some weeks ago, announced that 2006 will see a totally different approach. Quite simply, any Club that tries to pinch another Club's traditional date won't get a permit. 10/12 has provided the final spark to ignite this reaction!

THANK YOU PAM

PAM FICKEN has just ended 3 years meritorious service as a most active and ubiquitous PRESIDENT of the RWAs SOUTHERN AREA. Pam is the first holder to complete 3 terms and we thank the good lady for all that she has done for our sport and for all the many miles spent travelling to venues near and far. Pam has also been a truly active President, having many times been in the races as well. Pam has handed on the chain of office to NOEL CARMODY, who is our Bexley host and whose name is synonymous with Metropolitan Police race walking. Noel is also the Southern Area's Honorary Championships Secretary.

FIRST AID TRAINING – THE IDEAL CHRISTMAS PRESENT

How many times have you seen somebody hurt themselves while taking part in a race? Did you know how to help them or did you stand there wishing you knew some basic first aid skills?

Essex born racewalker Sue Clements will be teaching and 8 hour Red Cross Basic First Aid course at the Abbey Meadows Community Wing, Barnwell Road, on Saturday January 14th. By the end of the day you will have the practical skills to treat injuries and keep someone alive. The course costs £24.68 and places can be booked by calling Patsy on 0845 054 7007. If you are wondering what to buy someone for Christmas you can purchase vouchers for a place on this course – the ideal Christmas present.



WAYSIDE PULPIT

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

Book of Amos, Chapter 3 verse 3.

AN INVITATION FROM SUE CLEMENTS

Run through California and Dunkirk for £7 in the Ely New Years Eve 10k! – and enjoy a New Year's drink at the end..... If you doubt this is possible check out the course map on the event web site:- www.newyeareve10k.co.uk

Entries to this popular event, to be held at Little Downham, near Ely on Saturday, 31st December 2005 at 11.00 a.m. are filling up fast. The Race Director has set a **limit of 550 runners** and already we are approaching 200 entrants with 9 weeks to go!
There will be a Walking Section.

We WILL NOT be taking entries on the day – to avoid disappointment, enter now.

You can enter online for no extra charge (payment is via the NOCHEX secure server) by clicking on the following link –

http://www.rrodbaron.co.uk/nye10k_newentryform.htm

Online Entries close 17th December 2005

There is plenty of information on the event web site www.newyeareve10k.co.uk including links to the postal entry form and online entry.

We look forward to seeing you at the last race of the year.

Rod Baron (NYE10K Entries)
Tel: 0845 1081608



NEW APPOINTMENTS

The brains behind Britain's most successful series of current walking races, MARTIN OLIVER has been elected a Vice President of the RWA Southern Area. PAM FICKEN (see tribute article) has stepped forward to be the new Honorary Assistant Secretary.

POLITICS

MABON DANE is not the only one to step down. So has former Havering Mayor Cllr. HARRY WEBB who will retire from the Chamber in May. He's the elder brother of Basildon Olympian JOHN and the late Essex Beagle SYD. Harry has also been very active in local sport and many of us met Harry at Syd's funeral, where he was the eulogist. One man making his mark in the world of Committees is RON WALLWORK – for among his multifarious commitments to the local Suffolk community is that of being a Parish Councillor.

BRAIN-DEAD

Athletics supremo DAVE COLLINS (UK Athletics Performance Director) has accused some of Britain's coaches of being 'brain-dead'. He stated, "I have come across some coaches who told me that they did not require any help, and they knew everything. Well those guys who reckon they know everything are brain-dead". Mr. Collins is targeting 5 athletics medals in China and wants to see many more athletes making finals. Athletics will now have to show evidence of progress to maintain lottery funding.

DAVID MOORCROFT, UKA's Chief Executive said, "Over the last decade I've seen other sports, particularly rugby and cricket move on. Athletics hasn't. We are potentially facing a tough couple of years, performance wise, but can only move forward through changing and that includes athletes, coaches and all of us".



AN INVITATION FOR A SOCIAL/RACING WEEKEND

On behalf of the organising committee, I am please to confirm that the 2006 Manx Harriers Open Meeting will take place at the National Sports Centre, Douglas, Isle of Man, on Saturday 25th February.

This popular meeting always provides an early season opportunity for some good competition in a competitive field. The actual programme will be finalised shortly, but the day will start with a 1 mile race for youngsters, followed by races for junior and senior men and women over a variety of distances ranging from 5km up to 25km, including 10km, 15km and 20km. The programme will conclude with a 10km run.

As always, we will endeavour to make the weekend as full and enjoyable as possible by arranging a social (usually an informal get together at a Italian restaurant) on the Saturday evening, followed by a coaching session on Sunday morning. We hope that the wide choice of distances on offer will provide something for everyone, hopefully including some of those who are heading to Melbourne for the Commonwealth Games the following month.

We hope to see many of our friends who have supported the meeting in the past, and would be delighted to see some new faces in 2006. We have always enjoyed tremendous support from the Irish walkers in the past, and hope to see plenty of you again in February.

Further details will be posted soon. If you require any further information please contact Bridget Kaneen (contact details on www.manxharriers.com website).

David Griffiths, Manx Harriers.

WRITES CENTURION 454 LARRY MILES EX -RAF/TROWBRIDGE

Dear Dave,

Thank you very much for thinking about me and sending a copy of ESSEX WALKER. It brought back memories. I thought you completed the Leicester-to-Skegness in 1970 – the same year as me – but on looking it up, it was in 1974. We're always thinking about good old Harry Callow, who lived into his nineties I believe.

All the best.

Yours sincerely, Larry Miles.

Adds Hon. Ed. With Larry's letter came a £20 cheque for The Centurions, which has been duly forwarded. Thanks.

OUT OF THE CHAMBER

Having covered former Essex League Champion (3 wins in 3 years with 3 different clubs) MABON DANE's political career, it now appears to be over for the time being. He's quit, having landed Haverhill Town Council with the expense of a word by-election. He's the last one from the Haverhill Representative Alliance (a sort of Suffolk version of the Tooting Popular Front) to sit in the Chamber. Essex Walker has given him free publicity, right from his manifesto of 'Home Rule for Haverhill' – not to mention his aim of attaining Suffolk County Councillor status. With his political shilly-shallying now shelved, perhaps he'll find time to return to the walking scene? In walking circles he was both controversial and talented. He also held various positions, including that of Suffolk County Walking Secretary and once vowed to make Tiptree the top walking club in the country. Now's the time to return to the fold. Mind you – don't 'phone him up to tell him about our races, for his telephone no longer accepts any incoming calls (a message so informs).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Typing/Layout and email distribution, Eileen Allen at TheEssexWalker@aol.com, please email here if you would like an email copy. Subscription copies: Tony Perkins, Courier: Steve Allen, Photocopying: Peter Cassidy (for Loughton AC, Havering/Maybrook A.C. Essex and Southern Officers), Ron Wallwork (for Enfield League regulars), Val Mountford (for Southend readers), Tony Perkins (for Direct Subscribers), Alan and Jamie O'Rawe (for Canvey Island and locality), Jerry Everett (for Colchester Harriers), Steve Wynn, Steve Uttley, and Dave Sharpe. Hon. Ed Dave Ainsworth, 18 Angmering House, Barnstaple Road, Romford, Essex. RM3 7SX, 01708 – 377382, dave_ainsworth@SAFe-mail.net.