

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

SAMBA BOYS

Congratulations to Ilford's "Edbanger" (Aka ED SHILLABEER) for his 3 silvers at the World Masters' Championship. Indeed well done to all who spent money and time on reaching Brazil to "show the British flag" - including former Ilford AC 2nd claimer GARY SMITH, Olympian and newly elected BMAF Honorary Walking Secretary IAN RICHARDS and true stalwart DAVE STEVENS. Full results in AW/Record and on www.racewalkuk.com

DELIGHTS OF SOUTH ESSEX

The annual Centurions' Social Walk comes to Essex. In recent times they've staged highly popular social walks such as: in conjunction with The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Walk, around Bristol and Bath, in North Oxfordshire (Bicester) and along Hadrian's Wall. In 2014 STEVE KEMP's organising a day's social walk based on South Essex and Canvey Island - an area with many gems worth strolling past and unspoilt Estuary views. Previous Social Walks have been open to Centurions and non-Centurions alike. Meet at Benfleet Railway Station on Saturday 22 March at 9.30 am for a 15 miles' walk around Canvey Island plus an optional 5 Miles' to include Hadleigh Castle and Leigh-on-Sea Cockle Sheds. Large free car park at Benfleet plus frequent train service. But ... this clashes with the annual heavily sponsored "Pat Furey Trophies Meeting" over 5 Miles, which also offers "double" Enfield League points!

RWA AGM UPDATE

Congratulations to still active octogenarian ERIC HORWILL (Dudley and Stourbridge Harriers) who became Centurion 390 when completing the 1966 Leicester-to-Skegness 100 Miles in 21.51.09, on his election as Race Walking Association President - taking over the chain of office from MARK EASTON (winner of the last ever London-to-Brighton). Eric, who chaired the Centurions 2013 AGM, is in Centurions' history - for the longest interval between successful sub-24 hours' 100 miles' races, as on Ware track in 1997 he was successful for a 2nd time also earning Roubaix selection.



Our thanks go to PETER CASSIDY who stepped down as the longest serving RWA Honorary General Secretary with 23 years under his belt. He's replaced by CATHARINE TELLING, who'll combine this task with her Race Walking Record Editor's duties. Peter now brings his experience to the table as our RWA Vice President. Respected IAAF Judge Catharine was joint Assistant Chief Judge at the 2012 Olympics. Long serving stalwart BILL WRIGHT, one with Essex connections, stepped down as Honorary Treasurer after 29 years and is replaced by our Immediate Past President Mark Easton. And what can you say about Essex Olympian PETER MARLOW - he's reached 40 years on the RWA General Committee - the Great Train Robbers only got 30! This AGM was pretty straightforward with no controversial resolutions debated. Good news is that an eagerly awaited "100 years-of-the-RWA" book is now at the printers, so you'll all soon be able to purchase your copies. Our AGM wasn't well-attended and it was remarked that "it was the same people again" ... so there's opportunities for newcomers to get involved by making their mark in Committee rooms.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: "Friends are the fruit cake of life - some nutty, some soaked in alcohol, some sweet - but mix them together and they're my friends."
Oliver T Flynn

AND THEN THERE WAS ONE!

Southern walkers showed contentment with the state of affairs, and confidence in those conducting our sport, as only one person (from outside of the Committee) turned-up for the RWA Southern Area AGM in Central London. That sole attender was MARTYN CARTWRIGHT. No new names were advanced for any positions so all Office Holders remain in post for yet another year. For a first time ever, not a single person wanted to be RWA Southern Area President (a position once fought over) ... so genial SEAN PENDER agreed to do a third year. Any takers? MIKE FOX agreed to be Vice President. A motion, proposed by CHRIS HOBBS, to reduce Committee meetings (currently 6-per-year) was lost. Not all 10 Committee places were filled, so there's opportunity for volunteers wishing to make their mark in the Committee Room.

PRESS AND PUBLICITY OFFICER'S REPORT (October 2013)

Walker statistics have done well this year. There have been 2,265 active walkers in 2013, with 388 walking in three or more races. There have been 765 new people trying their first walking event. These are very encouraging numbers.

Now, whenever I come across a new walker or interested spectator, I engage them in conversation, and tell them exciting and interesting stories, trying to encourage them to come to more races. This is proving positive, with some new walkers re-appearing at more events. Each person that be converted into a regular participant is very important to supporting races.

Two events which have generated significant publicity during the past several months were Irishman Robert Heffernan winning Gold at the World Championships in Moscow, and Tokyo being awarded the 2020 Olympic Games. Race walking appeared on television news items repeatedly when these events occurred. Media that contacted me were forwarded onwards to relevant people, along with background information and much encouragement.

The biggest success has been the "Facebook" Race Walking group. Since the last meeting it has grown from 350 to reach 520 members now. Several dozen walkers create active discussions on everything, including events, results, technique, and advice. New walkers have been recruited who came across this Facebook group, asked a

question, and were encouraged by the online community.

I have created a "YouTube" web channel, which has groups of videos relevant to race walking. There are currently 106 videos which people can watch anytime. These videos include technique demonstration, various Olympic race walks from 1920 to 2012, Commonwealth Games, IAAF Challenges, European Cup, World Cup, and also some amusing video clips.

Where I can, I now list events to show how long the event has been going, to increase awareness of the importance of our events. For example I am listing the 2014 50k as the "UKA/RWA 79th National 50km Championships".

Finally, the long awaited fixtures poster has been re-designed taking into account that the calendar frequently changes. It is now a generic yearly calendar, listing months, and listing all the major events plus area events relevant to the club which will receive the calendar. Some dates are listed, but other events are listed without dates, with the intention of letting general club athletes know about the variety and depth of competition that exist, that they may not have been aware of before. I will be linking these posters via the website and discussing via the Facebook group, before the final versions will be sent out to clubs that may have an athlete interested in walking, and clubs close to regular walking events.

John Constandinou

WORLD DEFENCE TITLE IN BRAZIL by ED SHILLABEER, "OUR MAN IN BRAZIL"

"Hi Michael, good to see you" was the greeting that signalled the arrival of my Locum Tenens that Friday afternoon which meant I was "good to go". Packing. My per hate. And now such is airport security I can't delegate it any more. Phew! All done in time to be driving to Downside House Farm, by Bristol airport, at 4.00 am Saturday to leave my car.

Internet bookings proved beyond me so I had Peter Goord to thank for a KLM out and Air France return designed to minimise my Locum and travel costs - no support for OAP athletes so a totally self-funded trip which has always been the norm throughout my competitive career flying England and Plymouth's flags! Amsterdam 0845. So far so good. Rio bound on the 11:15 "Litomysl Castle" Boeing 777-200 I was glad of a super lunch! No problems on the 11-hour flight but on collecting my hold bag I read that import of food was prohibited ... I had cornflakes, Porridge oats, condensed milk, tea, and powders for making my competition sports drinks! Deciding honesty was best policy I chose the "something to declare" channel with my docket suitably inscribed - to be waved through without a second glance. Phew again! Storing said bag and my knapsack in a left luggage locker I took a bus into Rio, just time to see Copacabana beach (in the dark!), have a beer and get back for my early morning connection to Porto Alegre. Except I was given the wrong bus number and had a tour of the inner city instead ... fortunately a fellow passenger came to my aid and got the driver to put me in the coast bus from the terminus. After a hairy drive there it was ... THE beach! No time to set foot on it, a quick beer near the next stop and a taxi back the long drag to the airport where the check-in queue was so long I had to ask a friendly staff member to rush me through. Phew again! Sunday: 10.10 am local time. 32°C, but being wary of taxi prices opted to walk to nearby station for a short, very cheap, ride to Malbado, the end of the line whence it took fifteen minutes to walk to Hotel Acores Express. Too early to check in but allowed to leave luggage after changing



into shorts! Lunch around the corner: steak, chips, two eggs and a lager from a cooler sleeve - just over a fiver! I strolled on past the park on the lake where the walks and part of the marathon course would be, past an air conditioned sports hall after pausing to cool off and watch a handball match, eventually reaching the main stadium to register - shut!

One pause on the way back to Acores was at a small bar where a group played, and on the grass of the central reservation opposite they had a barbecue going!! Another pause to buy a 5 litre bottle of water and I was able to check in and unpack - especially glad of the mini kettle my staff had suggested! Phew! Nothing more refreshing than two cups of English breakfast tea! Evening meal: "Eldorado 2" again for, you've guessed it, steak, chips and egg supplemented with my daily organic supplements and washed down with the local Skol. Crash! 0620 Monday. Thunder and Lightning on the grand scale, only relenting at lunchtime so I could go, by bus this time, to the HQ track to register and get my race numbers for the morrow. 4,080 athletes from 164 countries were boosting the local economy but the city of well over a million easily absorbed the influx. Time to browse a little, see the Angel "statue", say a little prayer in the Church across the road, and get back for my cups of tea before my pre-race evening meal of ... steak, chips, eggs as yesterday. Fortunately after a good night's sleep it was dry for the mile stroll to race HQ and collect the chip, starting the 10k walk at 8:45.

With Ian Richards, M65 gold medallist on the track 5k the week before setting a new world record in the process and Dave Stevens in the M75 category, we started a team of three. As it warmed up, previous record holder Andrew Jamieson from OZ got his revenge over Ian who saw off his Mexican challenger and claimed silver. Aussie Ralph Bennett had moved into my group and was well clear of me but silver was one better than my bronze in Sacramento 2011. Dave's time to come eighth in his group added to ours was enough for team silver - four countries behind us - whoopee! At first disappointed by times, we were consoled by the laps proving slightly over distance, my 1:06:41 equating to a sub one hour performance faster than Sacramento two years earlier.

Back to hotel for shower and cup of tea, my pate caught the 24C sun! Lunch - guess what, Eldorado 2 usual!! Then sleep, to prepare for big party in eve. Walked there and taxi back; enjoyed company of Mauritian athletes on my table; local cultural dance group then disco dancing, where it seemed Chileans and Venezuelans excelled! Wednesday back to thunder and lightning!! So after breakfast I had a couple of hours kip - oh luxury - before catching up with another couple of Brits on the open top city tour bus. Then the storm returned - wow! So hi-tailed it back to hotel to dry off, change, go for my usual (steak and chips plus!) and watch Brazilian footie.

Thursday an Argentinian family I met gave me a lift to the stadium after breakfast, I gave the little lad my UJ hat as a memento of the "entente cordiale". Medal ceremony after rain delays was also an opportunity to chat with my conqueror Ralph; I realised I would have my work cut out to defend my 20k title on the Saturday. So luckily I was able to get a treadmill session in the afternoon in a small gym above a hairdressers opposite Eldorado 2. Speaking of which ... yes, same meal, but footie this time was Swansea City. When I saw Argyle play them just a few seasons ago, little did I think they would now be 3 leagues above us and playing in Europe! If that's what a new stadium does for you, hurry up and get the bulldozers in Mr Brent! Friday morning after a quick burst on the treadmill it was a day in the hinterland with minibus and guide. Nice countryside a bit like North Italy and wineries run by Italian families from the thirties. Had to curb my instincts when it came to the tastings! Early to bed after usual meal and mixing my race drinks.

Early call - 5.00 am, walked to course, 7.00 am and BANG the starter's gun scattered the birds roosting on the banks of the lake and set competitors off down the ten lap 2+ km course of smooth tarmac. Passing 10.5k in 67:01 I was well behind Ralph and despite a strong second half of 67:45 where I lost no more ground I had to relinquish my world title to the younger, better man, finishing in 2:14:46. Applying the over distance factor I estimate my true 20k time would have been faster than Sacramento two years earlier, so I had performed to my best and without getting any judges cards for either race. Can't complain at that.

The younger age groups could complain however as by the time their races started it was teeming down again, at least I was on my way back for a hot shower. Disaster! Eldorado 2 shut! Phew again - next door same deal, steak chips and two eggs but a smaller lager for same price! This time a trip back to the stadium in the afternoon - still raining - and medal collection achieved without ceremony as I was flying home next day.

Sunday dawned, almost as hot a day as the week before, at least a dry trek to the airport. This time my carrier was Air France so a different local airline (Tam, it was Gol with KLM) flew me to São Paulo where by chance I met up with Mike Parker, M60 winner and New Zealand Olympian. He had lived in England last

century so it was great to catch up. I was flattered by being asked to sign an old book he had, signed by some all-time walking greats like Ken Matthews OBE and Golubnichy of Russia! Stopover in Paris Monday morning was a mistake - two and a half hours crammed in a commuter train due to signal failures when about 30 mins was the norm for that journey to Gare de Nord. C'est la vie! At least when I got back to C de G airport the lounge facilities were good. Phew! Uneventful from there to Bristol to home, ready for work Tuesday morning. Nothing to choose between the airlines, it was all good and helpful really including the meals on board. I bet prices go up for World Cup and Olympics though! **Ed Shillabeer**

AT BOTH ENDS OF THE COUNTRY

Iford's Pete Ryan finished 165th in The Culloden 10K (55-27) on a scenic one lap course with a hill. A bit breezy early on in the opening 3K, Pete did splits of 28-16 and 27-11. 330 finishers. Also interesting was another race of 17.46 kilometres, named after that 1746 battle. Both races were on perimeter roads of Culloden battlefield. On the same day in a wind/rain lashed Portsmouth, Club colleague STEVE ALLEN race walked the BUPA Great South 10 Miles' Run clocking 1.52.12 in full Postman's Uniform including a traditional peaked cap. In an event transmitted 'live' by Channel 5, former Loughton AC walker DENNIS JONES (Pitsea) finished in 1.57.22. Steve's appearing in the Virgin London Marathon, racing for Diabetes UK, so please "dig deep" nearer the day!

"ONE FOR THE ROAD"

We've been advised that major Games participant ALEX WRIGHT is pursuing his race walking in Ireland where he'll be close to the big-time action of that Country. We all wish him well.

BACK BY POPULAR ACCLAIM

Talented amateur dramatic player CATH DUHIG had announced she'd stepped back from the limelight ... only to be called back onto the boards by public demand, for a role in Robinson Crusoe. Also in "Panto Land" was former Enfield and Met Police walker CHRIS FOSTER as the Dame in Jack and The Beanstalk.

TEAM WIN FOR 4TH SUCCESSIVE YEAR



Iford contested the 87th Annual Enfield Open 7 Miles' Walk at Lee Valley. On route it was windy with heavy rain descending and entrants assumed they'd be in for an uncomfortable afternoon with a drenching. But just minutes before the "off", nothing could have been further from the truth as clouds passed and wind abated leaving faint sunshine with perfect athletics conditions!

From the start on a pleasant 3 times' "out-and-back" course along a canal bank, Iford's Captain STEVE UTTLEY tucked-in behind the leading trio and was ready to pounce should any fail to maintain their pace. But that never occurred so he raced for 4th spot, and had to work hard gaining that position as the race's closing stages saw the event's leading lady competitor, Lithuanian GRAZINA NARVILIENE (Belgrave Harriers) launch a grandstand finish to draw level with him and then forge slightly ahead within yards of the finish line. One last gasp from Iford's man as both sped across the line saw them jointly timed at 60 minutes and 17 seconds with Steve getting 4th place by the width of his singlet! In close order came twice-former event winner PETE RYAN with 61.50 on the stopwatch to fill 8th spot, while former Scottish international STUART BENNETT was 17th in a sound 67.21. Closing home the team in 18th position was STEVE ALLEN in 68.42, which was a remarkable performance as he'd started with a hamstring injury but didn't want to let the team down by not appearing! Iford narrowly won 1st team prizes, for a 4th successive year, but were hard-pressed by hosts Enfield and Harringey AC. A word for enthusiastic LEN RUDDOCK who manages a Saturday morning football team ... as at the final whistle he ran to his car and sped to Lee Valley - arriving just in time!

NICE TO SEE YOU

Our Essex 1979s 50K Champion VIC COLLINS (ex-Woodford Green AC), a former British Police Representative race walker, was at Lee Valley on Enfield 7 day with his family. He was out on the course encouraging all, and attended our presentation, where many established walkers were truly pleased to see the genial giant again.

NO SPITTING IN ENFIELD

You've probably seen on National television news/newspapers that the London Borough of Enfield has passed a By-Law prohibiting spitting in public places in their Borough ... the first UK Council to do so - maximum fine is £400. Some 3 years' ago was a piece in "Essex Walker" about a competitor's unacceptable spitting at a Lee Valley race. Sadly some athletes spit while competing ... might be worth a warning?

AN OLYMPIAN'S VIEW

After the action PETER MARLOW commented that the 87th staging of Enfield's famous Open 7 Miles had been its worst in terms of overall standard. It was won in just under 58 minutes, with only a trio bettering 1 hour with 19 over 70 minutes and a sky-high average age. However he noted this event has been popular and had made for a pleasant afternoon. Also to be applauded was a 16 year-old victor in Suffolk based

CALLUM WILKINSON of the host Club. 20 year old "Church-to-Church" winner JONATHAN HOBBS was 2nd with Enfield League regular FABIAN DEUTER also under 1 hour.

FIXTURES

18 Jan	Enfield League 5 Miles + 2013 Presentation	Lee Valley	1.00 pm
25 Jan	Steyning 15K	Steyning	2.00 pm
25 Jan	Centurions AGM	Tally Ho! Centre	1.00 pm
26 Jan	London Indoor Games 3000m	Lee Valley	10.00 am
2 Feb	London Walks Meeting (all categories)	Victoria Park	12 noon
8 Feb	Cambridge Harriers Winter League 5K + Presentation	Bexley	2.00 pm
9 Feb	Essex/Eastern Counties 1 Mile Indoor Championships	Lee Valley	
15 Feb	SCVAC (VAC in conjunction) Indoor 3000m	Lee Valley	
22 Feb	Enfield League 5 Miles	Donkey Lane	1.00 pm
5 Mar	Met Police Walking Dinner	New Scotland Yard	6.15 pm
8/9 Mar	BMAF Indoor Championships	Lee Valley	
9 Mar	National 10 Miles (+ Essex) Championship	Victoria Park	
22 Mar	Pat Furey Trophies Meeting/5 Miles	Donkey Lane	1.00 pm
22 Mar	Centurions Social Walk	Benfleet Station	9.30 am
29 Mar	RWA Southern Area 10K Championships + YAG	Sutcliffe Park	1.00 pm

AWARDS

At a ceremony in Birmingham 9 athletics' greats were inducted into the England Athletics Hall-of-Fame. Our 1960 50K Olympic gold medallist and Centurion DON THOMPSON MBE was recognised. So too were Sir Ludwig "Poppa" Gutterman CBE, FRS, Jack Holden, Sheila Lerwill, Diane Leather, Alan Pascoe MBE, Gordon Pirie, Jim Peters and Mel Watman. A "Services-to-Athletics" Award was posthumously made to Jean Pickering and accepted by her daughter Kim. The "Athletics Network-of-the-Year" Award was won by the Essex Athletics Network. Persons are nominated must have retired from active competition for 5 years.

WHO ARE YOU?

Borrowing a line from football terraces, it applies to Essex County AA. They've a new President, Vice-President and Honorary Secretary - but who they are. I've been unable to find out. Any details anybody?

CHRISTMAS CARD APPEAL

Raised £300! Many thanks to those who supported this long established annual appeal :

Anon, Dave Ainsworth, Steve Allen (Barnet), Jim Ball, Mick Barnbrook, Peter Crane, Dave Delaney, Ken Livermore, Hilda Nyman, Alan O'Rawe, Tony Perkins, Jim Rooke, Len Ruddock, Dave Stevens and Bill Wright.



MINISTRY OF SILLY WALKS

The Monty Python team, less one, have reformed ... but not returning will be Ministry of Silly Walks sketches. Silly walker John Cleese can't perform this stunt owing to now having a replacement knee. So we've avoided that "send-up" coming our way. Writing in the "Daily Wail" about the 1977 Lugano Cup Final at Milton Keynes, the late Roy Moor described our meeting as a convention of The Ministry of Silly Walks.



2014 TOUR DE FRANCE COMES TO ESSEX

Stage 3 of Le Tour makes its way through Essex before heading to London to finish on the Mall in front of Buckingham Palace. The route enters Essex north of Saffron Walden, taking in parts of Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford and Epping Forest and leaves the county through Epping. Essex will welcome spectators to the event on Monday 7 July 2014. Perhaps we'll see some Essex walkers along the route? Further details available on the website:

<http://www.letour.2014stage3.com/>



Dear Dave ...

ENFIELD'S BOXING DAY TURNOUT

It was a shame so few turned up for this as it is a shop window for race walking at an event which is a mainly running event. It might just be a bit of fun to race on Boxing Day but it can introduce the sport to a wider audience and possibly attract new blood. Race walking needs to use these events which are combined with mainstream athletics to gain wider acceptance. That's my thoughts anyway.

John Ralph

Adds Hon Ed: I was missing, albeit for a first time in over a decade owing to a prior commitment. A word for Ron and his family who had a round trip from Suffolk in excess of 100 miles ... to stage this race for a quartet! I first guested at this long-established event in the early '70s when it started from a small chapel on the Town's one-way system, and passed the late Ross McWhirter's large house, ending with a presentation in the upstairs function room of a large pub near the Town Centre traffic lights - the name of which escapes me. Perhaps next time walkers might indicate intentions so organisers know what demand there is ... if there's to be one next year! I concur with John's views. DA

WANGAHIU HALF MARATHON

On a hot morning on the North Island 25 male and 58 female walkers set off on a course that consisted of footpaths sections of grass and rough paths. I had a challenge from the men of Taranaki Race Walking Club based in New Plymouth - yes they are the only race walking club in New Zealand that have only race walkers and no running section. Dave Wackrow from that Club led at halfway from me, and then two other Taranaki walkers, but by the end the Ilford man took the win:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 P Ryan 2-7-49 | 3 H Terweil 2-11-44 |
| 2 M Nield 2-9-33 | 4 D Wackrow 2-13-16 |

Times were slowed by surface and I believe Norman Read walked for Taranki Race Walking Club. Lastly the friendly group invited me to their club training session the following Tuesday and about 10 walkers went out training including Eric Kemsley, who I had raced against years earlier in the World Masters in Auckland.

Pete Ryan

PHIL EMBLETON'S GREAT NEWHAM EVENING REMEMBERED

I believe Phil did a fantastic 41.55 that night. Was it on cinders? Thanks for the headline coverage as well!

Geoff Hunwicks

Adds Hon Ed: Yes, on cinders!

BRITISH MASTERS RACE WALKING SURVEY - YOUR VIEW COUNTS!

In order that I might truly represent Masters (and Vets for those who prefer the old description), develop the service that the BMAF provides to the walking community and generally help older walkers get more out of race walking, it would be helpful for me to know the extent of older walkers participation – both racing and training, their commitment and aspirations, and general views of where masters sit in the overall walking scene. I should be most grateful, therefore, if anyone age 35 or over who has raced at least once over the last couple of years, were to complete the on line survey which can be accessed at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/283C5FT> . If anyone would prefer a paper copy please contact me at 24, Pevensey Road, Worthing, BN11 5NS E-mail: ianrichards.racewalker@virginmedia.com or ask me if you see me at a race.

This is probably the most comprehensive survey done about grass roots race walking for many years and should help provide an informed view about the current state of walking as a sport, or athletic event if you see it that way. I hope, therefore, that as many people as possible will complete it. Please do encourage others to complete the survey so that it is as representative as possible. I will publish a report with the results for the benefit of everyone and a separate report on how I propose to react to the findings. Thank you in anticipation.

Ian Richards, BMAF Race Walking Secretary

Adds Hon Ed: Ian's offered to extract Essex Club member's responses for a true Essex picture.

COMPARISON: 1969 MET POLICE OPEN 7 v 2013 ENFIELD OPEN 7 MILES

Brings back the memories 1969. I finished 5th in that 1969 race in 51.59 compared with (I think) 60.17 for 5th place at Enfield. Entry Fee was 2 shillings and 6 pence compared with £5 now. How life changes but not for the better!

Bill Sutherland

APPRECIATION

I just mention that, having been the former organiser of the Met Police Walking Club Dinner for some years, I got to know many of the race walkers by name and indeed still recognise some - if not always by sight! But to get to the point, I still read with interest the Essex Walker publication by email, where I enjoy seeing how those still walking are getting on. I noted in a previous issue there were 4 race-walkers who successfully completed the death March in Bornem, Belgium. I thought you might be interested to know that 3 members (one being myself) of the MP Walking Club and

one member from the Sussex Police walking team, also completed that massive event - and within the time too! (although our times were clearly not quite as competitive!!) We did happen to bump into Kathy Crilley et al prior to the start so congratulations all round!

Though a little early, I hope to see you at the Met Police Walking Club Dinner which I understand will be held at New Scotland Yard yet again!

Paddy (Karen Bailey)

IT'S A SAD TIME

We were very sorry to hear of the passing of George Mitchell of Birmingham Walking Club at the ripe old age of 99. He was a marvellous character who will always be remembered in the History of Famous Race Walks as organiser of the Birmingham Outer Circle at the unusual distance of 25 miles. Wherever he trod he left his mark in the most positive way. Most top race walkers are supported in their endeavours to reach the top of the mountain by a marvellous wife and family, so we were sorry to hear of the passing too of Beryl wife of Roy Thorpe, 1974 Commonwealth Games Silver Medallist in Christchurch, New Zealand. She was always on the side of the road giving her support and will be sadly missed. May they Rest in Peace.

Bill Sutherland

Adds Hon Ed: With EW bi-monthly we've not always space for Obituaries of those outside our Essex scene. As well as those 2 worthies Bill mentions, we've lost genial **Ron Jones**; backbone of Weymouth St Paul's Harriers in past decades, who drove team members to venues in his large Jag! Although not a walker December also saw Olympian **McDonald Bailey**, 92, (1952 Helsinki 100m bronze) depart.

GEORGE WOODS TROPHY

I read in Essex Walker that the above trophy is being considered for competition at the Southend AC August One Mile walk. This is a good idea. George was a Southend man and I well remember him appearing at Southchurch Park track of a Sunday morning for a chat with anyone there and we were all very pleased when he did his 100 miles at his advanced age.

John Brock

EMAILS CENTURIONS' CAPTAIN SANDRA BROWN

Many thanks for another bumper Essex Walker - much appreciated as always. I sent this to Vicky [nee Brown, now Mrs Barnes] and Guy, who were very grateful for EW's best wishes on their marriage. They both very much enjoyed joining the Centurions for our social walk in June, and regularly get out walking in and around Bristol. They are both members of both Surrey Walking

Club and the LDWA - keeping walking in the family and keeping the family walking!

Sandra Brown

LONDON BUSINESS HOUSES NEWS

Many of you will have been upset that we have not managed to stage our track and field championships for the last two years. This has been due to fact that I have not been able to book a track at the period that we usually hold this meeting.

Laurie Kelly

NEWS OF THE TALENTED and POPULAR SPORTING O'RAWE FAMILY

Myself and 2 brothers, Richard and James, along with 3 other friends completed the South Downs Way (105 miles) on our bikes. Ryan, my son, has signed for Brentwood Town FC. He is also a youth scout for West Ham ... bit of a traitor really as whole family support Tottenham Hotspur!! ... never mind!! Will keep you in touch with our next venture ... 110 miles in the Lake District (The Fred Whitton Challenge).

Andy O'Rawe

FROM PETE RYAN TO RON WALLWORK

I want to thank you and your team for all the hours spent in providing many competitors the opportunities to enjoy the Enfield League. I know that you are volunteers and spend hours being involved in this and I know that if the Enfield League wasn't around many of us would be worse off. What is also good is that the League has support from Hillingdon and their members who this year put on two of the events and, although I personally don't like the track events, they are held involving athletic meetings and racewalking is seen by others. People like John May who works out all the points month by month and has the most difficult job in handicapping as everyone wants to win ... There are all the Judges who turn up receiving little praise, at times travelling distances. Just think of the miles Pauline and Peter clock up each year but if the judges weren't there the event could not take place. The many lap recorders, those that provide the food and refreshments, yes there are so many people I personally want to thank.

I write this knowing that the ages of walkers and officials get older and what we need is more youngsters involved. We don't have the Star Walk, the Mercury, Barking-to-Southend and Bradford events that brought hundreds into the sport anymore and we can't keep going on about the old days what is IMPORTANT is TODAY. More people compete in Park Runs. Did we miss out that, did we miss out with the London Marathon worrying about walkers in that event, how can we judge them? Sometimes we are our own enemy instead of going with the flow and keeping it simple, and I include myself in that .. I heard and

got involved with a discussion about PIT Lanes at Hillingdon. Race walking doesn't need to add controversy, it has enough of its own. I don't have the vision: but I wonder if we had Park Walks how many new walkers there would be, especially in the last few years with the number of Power walkers seen on our streets trying to keep fit? A big thanks RON, thanks and food for thought.

Pete Ryan

COMMENTS BILL SUTHERLAND

Many of Peter Ryan's points I wholeheartedly agree with, but by far the most important is the massive lack of younger walkers which we URGENTLY need to form the backbone of our great sport in years to come. I would like to know from the RWA how many new walkers aged 18 to 35 have joined our ranks since in very successful Mall Olympic Walks and what the RWA intend doing to attempt to improve our overall numbers? Perhaps some answers?

THERE IS NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT!

Reference: Hillingdon Races. One glaring statistic that could not go unnoticed is that, bar Sarah Lightman, all others entrants were over 45! With New Year Resolutions, race walking in the UK has got to find new young blood joining our great Sport and achieving top honours. Would it be that difficult for each of us to bring in ONE NEW RECRUIT in 2014? If we fail to do this then we surely know what the long term future is. I applaud those who have encouraged many to have a go at a short distance race, but we have got to look at ways of keeping would-be Race Walkers. There is no doubt there are athletes out there in the larger Sporting World who could be encouraged to take up our Sport, but presently our dedicated officials appear to be too inward looking when in the ever faster World we live in. We just have to go out and find the new Stars.

Bill Sutherland

EMAILS JUNE CORK re SOUTHEND MILE

The event will, once again, open our Open Meeting on August Bank Holiday Monday 2014, although I cannot guarantee that it will be started by former World 5000m Record Holder, Dave Moorcroft as it was this year; and we have decided to call it **The Southend Mile** [following its anointment as such by yourself in an earlier issue]. I'm very disappointed (but not at all surprised, bearing in mind the falling off of Race Walking at so many meetings) that the George Woods' Trophy has become redundant. I will not hesitate in offering

the Trophy a home for our **Southend Mile** if no-one raises an objection; in fact, it will make our special race even more special. *June Cork*

WHERE WERE YOU ALL?

4 walkers took part in the annual EHAC Boxing Day 5km. Only once in 5 races held since 2007 (one was weathered off) has there been fewer than a dozen walkers joining the runners in this festive season bit of fun. Result: Francisco Reis 26.55, Steve Allen 27.58, John Ralph 29.12 and Sean Pender 36.20. It was good to see Sean back in action following his fall a month or so ago which required 27 stitches to his head. All the best to you in 2014. *Ron Wallwork*

STEVE KING'S DEATH VALLEY RUN

I thought you might like to see a video/song that I've just uploaded to Youtube about the Death Valley run I did in 2001.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZFEIlsydFA>

It holds a lot of indelible memories of a spiritual run and an awesome crew, consisting of Rich Benyo, Rhonda Provost, Sandy McCallum, Murray Coates and my wife Jean.

Steve King

REDCAR RWC ANNUAL HAT MONDAY

Hello Essex ... this will prove that we are still alive! The picture below is of our annual Hat Monday fixture. It is held on the last Monday before Christmas every year and tends to cause a sensation. We make several newspapers and it is good for publicity.



Special prize for any southern walker who can identify all five! You will no doubt note that modes of progression are much better than in the Olympics. Some of them are actually walking! Look forward to any responses.

John Paddick

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