

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

STAR PERFORMANCE

Well done to double Olympian Dominic King (Colchester Harriers) who, on 25 March in Dudince (Slovenia), came 13th in a top class 50K field with 4.04.16 on the stopwatch - a timing which should guarantee him more International selections. In that same race a Portuguese lady set a world-best of 4.08!

power of 10[↑]



50KW

Pos	Perf	Name	AG	Coach	Club	SB	PB		
13	4:04:16	Dominic King	SB	SEN	M	Colchester H	4:04:16	3:55:48	

CHRIS BRUNNING RIP

Sad to report that Hertfordshire-based **Chris Brunning** has passed on, not far short of his 90th birthday. He was a Vice President of Stock Exchange AC, and had been a member of Verlea AC in earlier years. At the 2003 Centenary London-to-Brighton event he'd been a food station steward at The Coppingham Arms (Horley). In May 1967 he came 3rd in the Stock Exchange London-to-Brighton clocking 9.24.30. Chris also recorded L-to-B finishes in 1959,66,69,72 and 73. Chris was the attendant when Southend-on-Sea AC member Ken Tuson won the 1971 SE Brighton. In younger times he'd served in the Royal Air Force. Profound condolence is expressed to his family.

LONDON WALKS HILLINGDON

Ilford AC earned 2nd team awards over 10kms at Hillingdon Cycle Track on Sunday in the London Walks even. In dry but chilly conditions the Ilford quartet, Steve Uttley 9th in 62-32, Dave Kates 13th in 65-32, Seb Parris 16th in 66-14 and Ed Shillabeer 21st in 72-38, finished just one point adrift of winners Surrey Walking Club, helping to make Ed Shillabeer's long journey from Devon worthwhile. Ilford achieved further success in the Southern Area Championship held in conjunction where they also secured second place, while Dave Kates won the award for the first centurion award, ie the first finisher to be a member of the exclusive club of those who have walked 100 miles in 24 hours or less. Mention should also be made of Seb Parris whose 16th place represented his 3rd event of the weekend, having participated in the Essex Indoor 1 Mile Walk Championship (1st) and the Valentines Park parkrun (2nd) the day before.

Steve Uttley

Adds Hon Ed: While racing, a competitor's car was unfortunately broken into and items stolen. A regular commentator on walking affairs has stated that it's time to reconsider this venue. But to put this matter in context, we've raced at Hillingdon Cycle Circuit for 8 years now, and only 2 unwanted events have occurred - this crime, and once someone was locked in a changing room after all others had left. These things happen, and are unpleasant for their victims - to whom we express our genuine sympathies.

THE LONDON OPEN WALKS

INCORPORATING THE SOUTHERN AREA RACE WALKING ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sunday 5 February, 2017, Hillingdon Cycle Circuit

In weather that was dry and not too cold, the event attracted its best field since 2014, the last of the Victoria Park years, with some interesting competition. Clearest winners were Sophie Lewis Ward in the Junior Women's 5k and Luc Legon in the Senior Men's 10k, both contributing largely to Cambridge Harriers' second place in the Reg Jacobs competition, in which all finishers count. The victors, thanks to weight of

numbers allied to some fine walking, were Aldershot, Farnham and District AC, whose 8 finishers never had an individual placing lower than fifth, but who had no individual winners. The closest finish came in the Under15 girls' 3k, as Molly Meleady-Hanley of Sheffield held off Aldershot's Lois Carty by a slender four seconds to record her club's only Gold of the day.

It was good to see a wide spread of clubs – 21 in all – competing on the day; a couple of other clubs may have been discouraged from setting out by the thick early morning fog. The diversity of clubs is nicely shown by the 2 that finished equal twelfth in the Reg Jacobs Table: Luca Cundey won the Under 11 boys' Development race for Intake School, Sheffield, while Rebecca Collins was first Senior Woman for North Down A.C.

It seems that Cambridge and Aldershot are the pace setters in the South at present, although Ashford and Medway & Maidstone may be coming up on the rails.

Peter Cassidy

ALAN FLAVELL RIP

Readers will be sad to learn that Enfield & Harringey AC stalwart for decades, Alan Flavell, has passed on at the age of 85. Alan last raced in an Enfield League event on Hemel Hempstead track in September 2014. He had expressed interest in officiating. He was a professional toastmaster. His funeral was held in Amersham. Condolence is expressed to a loyal clubman.

AWARD FOR ESSEX OFFICIAL

Jean Tierney (pictured right), former long serving Honorary Secretary of Havering AC (a Club once brimming with talented race walkers of all ages), received a "Lifetime Achievement Award" from Havering Sports Council at their annual presentation evening, held in Upminster Golf Club. This award was sponsored by McDonalds Restaurants of Romford, and was presented by Havering's Deputy Mayor, Councillor Linda Van den Hende.

[*Photo courtesy of Romford Recorder*](#)



NOT ON TRACK

Russia will remain banned from International athletics until after this summer's World Championships in London. They've been judged not to have made sufficient improvements since state-sponsored doping was exposed. The IAAF has stated it'll be at least November before Russians can be brought back in from the cold so none of their stars will be seen on The Mall on *Walks' Day* (Sunday 13 August).

AWARD FOR ESSEX-BORN CENTURION

In recognition of 25 years' continuous service to the British Red Cross, Sue Clements was awarded a [Long Service Award](#) and an additional clasp for her Voluntary Medical Services Medal (VMSM).

During 25 years, Sue's been involved in swimming for the disabled, transport services and is an ambulance technician and currently a first aid and moving and handling trainer/assessor, and involved in crisis education.

The VMSM was introduced in 1932 by decree from King George V. The medal is awarded on completion of 15 years' service in a medically related service, with a clasp and an emblem being awarded for every subsequent 5 years.



ROLL-UP, ROLL-UP!

Preparations for the St Edmunds 100 in August are progressing well. In order to 'test' the route and organisation we are organising an afternoon of 6 and 8 mile race walking events on Saturday 8 April starting at 1:00 pm.

The races will be on the same 2 mile lap as the St Edmunds 100 in August, so walkers will be able to 'test' the 2017 Centurion 100-mile qualifier route. Both races will be held under Category 'B' race walking rules. The route will be around the Moreton Hall estate just off the A14 so easily accessible by car. For those travelling by train, a bus goes from the railway station to the location. Please email the race organiser at info@positivestepspt.com to let them know you intend to race.

The £6.00 entry fee is payable on arrival. Registration is from 12:00 pm at the Skyliner Sports Centre, Sybil Andrews Academy, Rougham Tower Avenue, Bury St Edmunds IP32 7QB. Walkers, helpers and supporters are invited to come and enjoy an afternoon of race walking and help us to get ready for the main event in August.

Sue Clements: Tel 01223 292 155
Mob 07940 524 716



St. Edmunds Race Walks

Saturday 8th April 2017

6 miles (3 laps), 8 miles (4 laps)

These race walking challenges at Bury St Edmunds offers walkers the opportunity to 'test' the 2017 Centurion 100-mile qualifier route.

All races will be held under Category 'B' race walking rules. Walkers must maintain contact with the ground in order to satisfy the judges.

The routes will be around the Moreton Hall estate just off the A14 on a 2 mile loop using cycle paths and pavements with good surfaces.

RWA permit applied for.

Start time: 1:00pm

- Team prizes for first three teams – Ranked in order of furthest distance covered in the fastest time. (3 walkers to count)
- Memento to all taking part
- Chip timing
- Please email info@positivestepspt.com to advise of intention to race.
- Entry £6 payable on the day
- Registration from 12:00pm at: Skyliner Sports Centre, Sybil Andrews Academy, Rougham Tower Avenue, Bury St Edmunds IP32 7QB

Come and enjoy an afternoon of race walking and help us to get ready for the main event in August.

Kevin and Sue

EASTERN COUNTIES/ESSEX COUNTY 1 MILE INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP (Combined)

Held at Lee Valley on Saturday 4 February

1	Adam Hills	Bedford Harriers AC	9:06.76	5 started and finished
2	Seb Parris	Ilford AC	9:26.17	Essex County AA Championship: Men 1. S Parris 2. K Palmer 3. D Ainsworth
3	Keith Palmer	Southend-on-Sea AC	10:55.63	
4	Pamela Abbott	Enfield & Haringey AC	11:31.35	
5	Dave Ainsworth	Ilford AC	12:12.89	

Eastern Counties' Championship: Men 1. A Hills, 2. S Parris, 3. K Palmer. Women 1. P Abbott

Adam Hills, a proverbial "dark horse", blasted away from the start and led to the finish line, when he flopped-out in lane 1 before being told by an official to roll off the track as others were still competing! In his 2nd indoor walk newcomer Seb Parris won the Essex County Senior title, having come 2nd in Ilford's 5k parkrun in Valentines Park earlier that day. Keith Palmer, Essex winner in 2015 and 16, defied injury to support the event and was rewarded with an Essex silver medal. Pamela Abbott, returning after illness to win an Eastern Counties' Women's title, was another who'd attended a morning parkrun. In claiming an Essex bronze medal, Dave Ainsworth extended a remarkable 42 years' span of winning Essex County AA individual medals, having earned a bronze medal in the 1975 Essex 50 Kilometres. Essex County President John Weir presented the awards. On the judges' panel was Olympian Shaun Lightman - another who'd completed an earlier morning parkrun! Informative commentary came from former walker and immediate Essex Past President June Cork, who enthused the crowd to give every finisher a good round of applause. Yes a crowd - which is what you get at a County Championship, so it was disappointing so few entered. After last year's low numbers, a case was put to the County Committee for keeping this walk in the meeting. Two years' ago the walk switched from Day 2 (Sunday) to Saturday to avoid clashing with the London Walks' meeting. **So where was everybody else?** It was fortunate our walk was on a Saturday, as Sunday's Day 2 programme was abandoned when a power cut plunged the Indoor Arena into darkness, with only faint light coming through windows. Tea urns stopped boiling and electronic timing stopped, forcing the referee to terminate the action.

MEDAL CEREMONY - ESSEX COUNTY INDOOR 1 MILE WALK CHAMPIONSHIP



Left-to-right: Essex President John Weir, Keith Palmer (2nd), Seb Parris (Champion) and Dave Ainsworth (3rd)

ON THE SURFACE

We thank Enfield resident John Hall - his house backs onto King George V Playing Fields - for lobbying Enfield Council to repair many (and deep) cracks on the footpath surface upon which we stage our walking races. John's Chairman of "The Friends of King George Playing Fields", and using his clout has brought much improvement for our benefit. A number have fallen here, and we know one walker's wife banned her husband from appearing there after the state in which he returned home after one such fall. He's now back on the Donkey Lane start lines and all's well thanks to John. If you've not raced there of late owing to the surface - it's now time for your return!

NEWS FROM OUR KENT OUTPOST

Mick Barnbrook, who recently celebrated his 74th birthday, has been into hospital for an operation. Now back home recovering and needing rest - he'll be off the scene for a while as he gets back to full fitness. Public-spirited Mick recently became a Parish Councillor on his local Cliffsend Parish Council in Ramsgate - which should certainly buck them up!

'ALLO 'ALLO 'ALLO!

Retired Police Chief Trevor Pearce is the UK's new Doping Chairman. The former Director of the Serious Organised Crimes Agency said, "I want to ensure everyone's right to clean sport is protected in the UK and abroad". We all wish him well in what is clearly to be an uphill task.

INVITATION TO ONE-AND-ALL

The latest in The Centurions' well-established series of "Social Walks" is to commence at Cambridge Station at 10.30am on Sunday 30th April. These walks are open to all (whether Centurions or not) and families and friends are made warmly welcome. Many haven't been to Cambridge, despite it being only an hour's drive from Essex. It's a great tourist centre, and an experienced local guide is to conduct our walk at a nice steady pace - yes, a social walk! What about making it a "day out" for all Essex Walker readers? Good public transport to Cambridge Station and the nearby National Express stop - the station has Sunday parking for just £3 (all day). Here's the plan ...

The 10K route will include picturesque views of the river, some of the colleges including the opportunity to walk round one of the gardens, along the Backs to see the spectacular view of King's College Chapel, through Sheep's Coe Fen and end at the Sunday market. There will time to gaze at other sights along the way and learn some interesting facts about Cambridge. Lunch will be either taken in one of the many restaurants or pubs, or those bringing sandwiches will be able to find someone convenient to sit while others buy lunch. Walking back to the railway station from the market will take about 15 minutes and I will accompany people back. Sue Clements 07940 524716

NB: Train and coach times from London are on [The Centurions' website](#).



FIXTURES

These event details are published for your information, and to the best of knowledge are accurate at the time of writing – you are advised, however, to check the status of any event directly with the organisers.

APR	8	100 Miles' Course Test Events 6 & 8 Miles	Bury St Edmunds	1.00 pm
	12	VAC/Middx/Herts/Surrey 10,000m Championship	Tooting Bec Track	6.45 pm
	17	Easter Monday Open Meeting (1/2/3K)	Tonbridge Track	10.45 am
	18	Veterans AC 5 Miles (all welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
	22	RWA Inter-Area Representative Match	Lee Valley Track	12 noon
	22	Slater Bryce/Sussex Championships 10K	Broadbridge Heath	11.00 am
	23	Virgin Money London Marathon	Greenwich	10.00 am
	27	Haywards Heath 1K	Crawley K2 Centre	TBA
	29	RWA National & Inter-Counties 10K Champs + YAG	Coventry	1.00 pm
	30	Centurions' Social Walk (Historic Cambridge)	Cambridge Station	10.30 am
MAY	1	Hertfordshire Vets 3,000 Metres	Stevenage Track	12.20 pm
	1	Pednor Open/Enfield League 5 Miles	Chesham	5.00 pm
	2	Woodford Tuesday Walk 3,000m (+ YAG)	Ashtons Track	8.30 pm
	4	Haywards Heath Harriers 1K	Crawley K2 Centre	8.00 pm
	8	SCVAC T&F League 2,000 Metres	Lee Valley	6.40 pm
	9	Veterans AC 5 Miles (all welcome)	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
	14	Essex County AA 3,000m Championship (+ YAG)	Melbourne Park	TBA
JUN	3	Moulton Open 5 Miles/Enfield League	Moulton	1.00 pm
	4	Surrey/Sussex Vets 3,000 Metres Championship	Ewell	TBA
	7	EMAC League 1,500 Metres	Garon Park	7.00 pm
	10	Jack Fitzgerald Memorial Races 3 and 6 Miles	Tilgate Park	12.30 pm
	13	Veterans AC 5 Miles Championship	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
	13	Woodford Tuesday Walk 3,000 metres (+ YAG)	Ashtons Track	8.30 pm
	17	Isle of Man Telecom 85 Miles' Parish Walk	Douglas	8.00 am
	18	BMAF 5 Kilometres Championship	Horwich	TBA
	19	Southern Counties Vets League 2,000 metres	Battersea Park	7.20 pm
	24	BMAF Track & Field Championships Day 1	Alexander Stadium	TBA
	25	BMAF Track & Field Championships Day 2	Alexander Stadium	TBA
	25	RWA 20K Championship	Leeds	TBA

ROOM AT THE TOP

At our recent Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) AGM, Chris Carter stepped down due to ill-health as Chairman, a position held since 2009. He was rightly praised for his services. Taking over his gavel is Walter Nicholls, who also continues his role as Honorary Secretary. Honorary Treasurer remains Martin Etchells. South of England Rep is John Gebbles and Events Manager is George Bunner. Other offices filled were Cross County Rep and Road Running Rep, but there's no Race Walking Rep! Why? The President's position wasn't filled.

"PUBLISH AND BE DAMNED"

So said the Duke of Wellington, to whom this remark is attributed. It could apply to the book "POWERPLAY" due to be published by Yellow Jersey Press in May 2018. It'll name names, lift the lid and leave no stone unturned as it concentrates on the business of sport and where money goes behind the scenes, told through case studies involving the World Cup, Olympics and bidding for major events. It's written by UK Athletics Chairman Ed Warner and will cause trepidation throughout track and field with his plan to write about his time in our sport. Mr Warner, an outspoken leader of UKA for a decade, is to step down at the end of this year. His book will detail confrontations with IAAF President Lord Coe. He's writing it himself and will deliver a final manuscript to publishers in September - so he can include his view of August's IAAF World Athletics Championships. One newspaper states that Lord Coe will have to brace himself for Warner's memoirs!

MORE PROGRESS

Congratulations to Olympian Tom Bosworth on setting a new British Indoor 5,000m record of 18 minutes and 39.47 seconds.

DEREK CROSS RIP

Derek, in his late 60s, has died. He raced for Verlea AC (which in 2002 combined with Hertford & Ware AC to form Herts Phoenix AC). His son Andrew was a fast walker - Andrew emigrated to Australia a good few years' back - returning for the funeral service. Derek ran a bicycle shop, so couldn't race often on Saturdays - but was fabled for being a true giant on the midweek scene. Indeed he was unbeaten for many years in the long-established series of Southern Veterans Track & Field League 2,000 metres track walks. For many years both Hertfordshire & Middlesex combined their annual 10 Miles' Championships with Essex, and as many such races were switched to Sundays, Derek was able to attend and win Herts' titles. He entered the 1997 100 Miles on Ware's Wodson Park track (now the Stuart Storey Athletics Track) and was confident of doing well - as he'd completed Continental 6-Days' Cycling races, so 24 hours of effort could be coped with. He went off at a good pace and kept it going, but alas such tactics didn't serve him well as he crashed out well before halfway, and clearly had suffered badly. Condolence is expressed to his family members.

HAPPY 90TH

Three cheers for Alex Allen, who has celebrated his **90th** birthday. Alex has been a regular at all Post Office events and also appeared in many an Essex League event - over a variety of distances. His name has graced results sheets at both running and race walking events. Alex knows the game backwards, and used his motivational talents to see son Steve through the stresses and strains of completing that 100 miles' event at Colchester during Olympic year. On that occasion Alex was allowed to "ring the bell" as Steve sped (yes sped) into his final lap at Lower Castle Park on route to a 22.08.57 clocking which saw him claim Centurion No 1102. Alex was a Team Manager on many Post Office trips and has visited many countries to attend top athletics races. The family celebrated this milestone birthday occasion with a gala weekend celebration at Butlins in Bognor Regis - a place Hon Ed once briefly worked at in the early 70s. Our best wishes to a great and popular stalwart supporter of grass roots athletics!

ATHLETES REUNITED (ESSEX BRANCH) LUNCHEON

Walkers were well represented at this gathering in "The Cow" by the entrance to Stratford's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. As always this now well-established function was well supported in good numbers. If you've never been, why not try to make it next time? It was great comradeship with an excellent quality buffet. Former Woodford Green President Tony Maxwell welcomed all and, according to tradition, gave special mentions for first timers. Tony also set an athletics quiz - which the Walkers **won!** Surrey County AA Chairman Tom Pollack proposed a vote of thanks to organiser Tony. Among attendees from the walking world were: Dave Ainsworth, Bob Dobson, Michael Croft, Pam Ficken, Les Hislop (former Ilford President who has walked in Essex League events), Roger Mills, Paul Nihill, Ian Statter and Bill Sutherland.

LOUGHTON AC - THE WOODFORD TUESDAY WALKS

By kind permission of Woodford Green AC with Essex Ladies, this year's series will, as usual, take place within the WGEL Open Graded Meetings:

2 May 2017 13 June 2017* 4 July 2017 5 September 2017 (all races begin at 8:30 pm)

**This meeting was previously advertised as 6 June, but has had to be changed because WGEL could not book the track on that day.*

The format is familiar; the best 3 races out of 4 count for the individual trophies and all 4 count in the team competition. For more information, please contact Pauline Wilson: Pauline.Wilson@btinternet.com or 01277 220687.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

March 4th saw a Golden Wedding Anniversary celebration for Mike and Iris Hinton. Mike now lives on the outskirts of Bournemouth having moved from Rainham (Essex) in 2010. He started Race Walking in 1957 being a member of Highgate Harriers and then Ilford AC competing over many years particularly in the Essex League and for Veterans AC more recently. Mike also turned out for Newham AC, Southend-on-Sea AC & Havering AC in his long active career. More recently he has become closely connected with Bournemouth Boxing Club and attends their amateur training evenings and Boxing Shows.

FROM OUR SOCIAL CORRESPONDENT

I am pleased to say the Metropolitan Police Walking Club 2017 Dinner and Reunion was a great success. With around 40 attending there was about a 50-50 split of regular attendees and the present Long Distance Walkers. The reunion between 2 and 6 pm was held in a specially reserved part of the bar area and everyone attending was given a seating card specially designed with their name, meal selections and table number thereon and was cordially welcomed. It was particularly pleasing to see George Beecham with his daughter Catherine and Anne Sayer present being truly outstanding Centurions. The Master of Ceremonies, in lieu of the familiar sight of Andy Bignold who was unable to attend, was a South African Long Distance Walker Andre. He did a great job with his introductions and many toasts on topical and past Walking achievements ie he wished to take wine with any other person present who had had their fences blown down by Storm Doris earlier in the week! Many congratulations to Dr Kitty Hung and her helpers for organising such an enjoyable Dinner and Reunion once again. We all look forward to 2018!

Adds Hon Ed: This report is in a minority, as of 8 comments received it's the only positive one (hence we'll include it - to be positive).

ILFORD ON FORM

Ilford contested Race 3 of this year's Enfield Walking League, over five 1 mile twisting circuits of the vast and flat King George V Playing Fields. It was Ilford's day, as their members filled 3 of the top 4 positions. Lining up for a 5 miles' event was Olympian, Neringa Aidietyte, who made her 2nd appearance since recovering from injury sustained in the Rio Games. Her performance, like her previous one, was sensational. On this occasion Neringa enjoyed the kudos of leading from start-to-finish and also beating all the men competitors to boot! Her time of 40 minutes 48 seconds was outstanding. A by-product of Neringa's success was inspiring the next 2 women in her wake to season's personal bests! Organiser Ron Wallwork MBE - the 1966 Commonwealth Games Gold medallist - stated, "In exceedingly mild conditions, double Olympian Neringa Aidietyte demolished the field and looked very impressive doing it". Next home was Steyning AC's Jim Ball, a frequent winner on this course, who clocked 43.49. Maintaining his commendable sequence of top-3 finishes was 3rd placed Seb Parris, who put in his best work over the penultimate and final laps, as he came through the field to record 48.12 just ahead of colleague Stuart Bennett 4th in 48.32. Stalwarts Mick Barnbrook and Dave Ainsworth finished among the "also walked". Ilford members Mike Croft and Len Ruddock were present as the former judged and the latter gave support. Seb had plenty left in the tank, as the following day he took 6 minutes of his half-marathon PB at Dartford when timed at 1:28.36. Seb aims to join that band of athletes who've completed 100 marathons - he's nearly halfway there. He adds to his tally when running the London Marathon on April 23th. Also appearing - as race walkers - will be Centurions Stuart Bennett and Ed Shillabeer, while you'll see other Ilford members toiling on their Canary Wharf water station near the 19 miles' mark.

ENJOYABLE NATIONAL ATHLETES REUNITED LUNCHEON

Over 20 attended the **National** Reunited Luncheon on Friday 10 March at the Cow Pub in Stratford. Enthusiastic organiser Tony Maxwell gave us an excellent talk on the Olympic Park from its early beginnings to the present day and its multi-use by so many. There was a lively debate with Martin Hyman and a Scottish contingent of Alastair Blantire, Fergus Murray and Les Edwards giving their views. One of them had left Aberdeen at 0500 on the day to attend the function! International race walking was well represented too with Olympians Paul Nihill MBE, Roger Mills and Bill Sutherland BEM being present. It was great to see and talk with so many famous GB Athletes of the past. One talking point was the pride everyone held in the old style Great Britain Vest with a Union Jack Badge as the centrepiece. All in all it was a really memorable occasion with a multitude of thanks to Tony Maxwell for staging it.

WE K(H)AN

London Mayor Sadiq Khan called on Londoners to be inspired by the likes of Sir Mo Farrah and Usain Bolt when launching a £400,000 athletics funding programme. Referring to the IAAF and IPC World Para Athletics Championships coming to London this summer he said it was a "great opportunity".

<https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/budding-athletes-given-chance-to-shine>



FROM OUR TELEVISION CRITIC

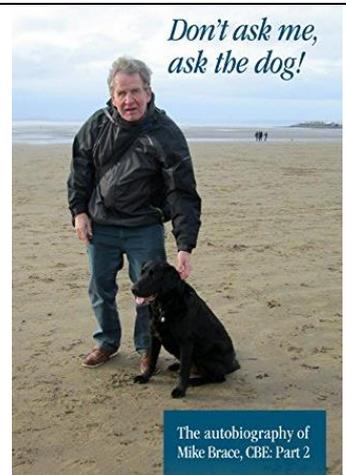
On a lighter note have you seen the latest advert for Tetley's Tea with the Brownlow twins race walking? It's a wonder they didn't use TB, as he's so well-known up North.

PAUL FREEDMAN MBE RIP

Not a walker, but a Hornchurch resident and runner with Havering Joggers (who occasionally turned out members in walking races). This lifelong Hammers' fan, who had the kudos of being the London Marathon's *oldest finisher* in 2011/13/14 and 15, has passed on aged 92. His debut marathon was as a 69 year old and he completed 24 in total, with 18 being run to support St Francis's Hospice. Condolence is expressed.

BUY THE BOOK

Hornchurch-based Mike Brace CBE has published his second book entitled, "*Don't Ask Me, Ask My Dog*". It covers his sporting career and how he's helped so many others with disabilities over 3 decades. The focus on the title comes from getting his first guide dog - Izzy. Mike race walked in the Essex League with Alex Ross as his guide. Mike was blinded by a firework when a youngster. He was part of our 2012 Olympic Bid Team, and served on 3 Olympic Committees leading up to those highly successful Games. During the 2012 Olympic build-up he received a CBE from Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace and in polite chat said "I'll see you again tomorrow Ma'am". Indeed he did, as the following day Her Majesty hosted a Buckingham Palace reception for our 2012 Olympic Committee. Mike was one of the best after-dinner speakers ever booked for the Metropolitan Police's Annual Dinner & Reunion for they were "rolling in the aisles", as they say in the theatre. *It's available on Kindle.*



HOWARD WILLIAMS RIP

Readers will be sorry to hear that Billericay-based Howard (Ilford AC Life Member and past President) has died (aged 84) after a long illness. He was a former Essex County AA President and Honorary Secretary who also held other positions. For decades he was the main Organiser of the Metropolitan Cross Country League and was protagonist of the well-supported Ingatestone 5 Miles. Howard was a fine runner in his extended heyday. Athletics was "in the family" as among his talented brothers was the late Colin Williams - a top class race walker of the '60s. To his family members, profound and heartfelt condolence is expressed.

ANOTHER WHITLOCK

Sadly, aged 86, South London born Ed Whitlock has died after suffering prostate cancer. His claim to fame was becoming the first over 70 runner to complete a marathon sub 4-hours : 3:56.33 in the 2016 Toronto Waterfront Marathon - and he was disappointed not to have broken 3.50

GOLDEN QUINTET

Gold medals were won by 5 athletes with Essex connections at March's BMAF 3,000 Metres Indoor Championships (Lee Valley): M55 ex-Ilford protagonist Francisco Reis 14:05.21, M60 Malcolm Martin (he works in Essex) 15:52.97, M70 John Borgars/Loughton 20:08.45, W45 Melanie Peddle/Loughton 17:43.03 and W60 former Loughton star Cath Duhig 18:39.29 in a final performance before packing her bags to settle in Spain.

CLIP KLOPP

We're indebted to Enfield sub-20 hours' Centurion Ken Roost, for drawing attention to the fact that Liverpool FC Manager Jurgen Klopp has written a thesis on walking while studying for a Sports Science Diploma. It's entitled "Walking - Inventory and Evaluation of a Sport for all". The concluding words are, "You'll Never Walk Alone" - a melody taken from the 1945 hit musical Rodgers & Hammerstein "Carousel". Mr Klopp claims to know all the words of this song. As for octogenarian Ken, who we last saw at Enfield's wonderful 90th Open 7 Reunion, he's been into hospital recently for an operation - we all wish him well as he recovers.

CRIME COLUMN

Welsh-based transgender athlete, Lauren Jeska, 42, was jailed for 18 years after using 2 knives to attack Ralph Knibbs - UK Athletics Head of Human Resources at Alexander Stadium. Mr Knibbs suffered life-changing injuries after this attack in his office, which saw 2 others injured as they tried to intervene before half-a-dozen other workers pinned this attacker to the floor. Mr Knibbs, who played 436 times as a centre for Bristol at the top level of English Club rugby, suffered a severed jugular vein, stroke and partial sight loss. Jeska was 2010/11/12 English fell-running champion and British Champion in 2012, but had racing results declared null and void as she hadn't provided samples of testosterone levels.



Dear Dave ...

DEREK CROSS RIP

I am saddened to hear of Derek's premature death. Derek did not quit immediately after the Ware 100: he kept winning Herts Championships for a few years, until Andrew started to win them. The first time I met Andrew he had come to the Essex/Herts 10 mile Championship to bring back the cup because his father was injured and took it home again, having beaten Adrian and myself by several minutes: as far as I can recall Derek never competed against Andrew.

John Borgars

DEREK CROSS RIP TRIBUTE

Very sad to hear the news about Derek Cross. He was a real speedster over the shorter distances and he posted some cracking times over 1 mile, 2000 and 3000 metres. In later years his appearances, were as you say, restricted due to his bike shop business, but he was always a formidable opponent. I won my first Masters International Medal with him at the World Masters Track & Field Championships at Gateshead. In the Men 50 Age Group, the team of Brian Adams, Derek Cross and Dave Kates won Team Gold for Great Britain & NI in the 20km Road Walk. I remember that day clearly. It was one of the hottest days experienced in the U.K with the temperature around 37C. The course was multiple laps around an industrial estate with concrete roads and not a tree in sight. You can imagine the temperature out on the road. I remember the great Gerd Weidner suffered a rare disqualification when the torrid energy sapping conditions affected his technique late on in the race. Afterwards I remember lying prostrate on my back alongside Derek, who as he lie there, eyes closed was working positions back in his head. Suddenly his eyes opened and he sat bolt upright, before exclaiming 'I reckon we've won that mate, I reckon we've gone and won it'. He was right.

Dave Kates

THANKS

Thank you so much for including so many pieces from us. As usual it was a truly outstanding effort by you and your team. You ought all to be given a high award! Great thoughtful article by Stuart Bennett. We have known Stuart and his dear wife Kim and family for so many years and he played a big part in the most successful 'N' Division Race Walking Team of that era along of course with the outstanding Coach George Nibre. Oh if we could roll back those years now when large numbers of race walkers were so easy to encourage. Keep up the good work which is much appreciated by so many readers.

Bill Sutherland

LOST PROPERTY

Can you help me find my blue bag with a pair of black shoes my English Masters vest and my racing hat which I left it at Hillingdon on Sunday 5 February in the presentation room? Please let me know. Tel: 0771086098

Francisco Reis

THANKS

Good to see you are still pounding the sod and getting medals for it and thanks for Essex Walker (and you don't include nostalgic results etc any more!) So, thank you again for contributing to the Essex Walker Appeal on behalf of HART HOUSE. We really appreciate your continued support, as we do with other walkers, and of course especially more recently with the Sheppards joining in with Tony Perkins to form Hart House Charitable Fund which (along with their expertise in all things computer, smart phone etc related) has helped and is continuing to take the project forward and make things easier for me! The children returned last week after an absence of 2 weeks due to the uncertainty caused by the political impasse! We have 26 on the register and so therefore usually over 20 sleeping Monday-to-Friday.

Geoff Hunwicks

BRRR!

262 hardy souls turned out at 0900 for a Finsbury Park Run in freezing temperatures of just 1 degree! It reminded me very much of the 1966 National Police 10 Miles' Walk Championship at Northallerton when we walked on snow covered roads in a blizzard. Walter Batson OBE was the Referee and he rang a bell to guide us all to the start. What would Health & Safety think about that today, eh? Great to see Kevin Marshall and Sue Clements' Bury St Edmunds Taster Walks and forthcoming Centurion 100 Miles walk taking such positive steps forward.

Bill Sutherland

Adds Hon Ed: Many readers may recall such snow covered events, including a late '60s *GLC 10 Miles* when Battersea Park's Queens Carriageway was snow-covered and a dressing room vote was held to see if racing could commence. It did!

RUNNING JOKE (continued)

Just to say that following your 'Running Joke' in the Essex Walker. Not to be too sexist - beeps, comments, etc, are very regular for me as a male walker in Clacton on Sea as well.

Stephen Cartwright

ALAN FLAVELL TRIBUTE

I met Alan some years ago on a Toastmasters course. A nice chap who was fascinating re his motor racing cars. He was not a member of my Guild and I didn't know he was a race walker. Shame but he has had a very good innings.

Andy Bignold

PAST RW RECORDS and AWs ON OFFER

Thanks to the Essex Walking Newsletter. Tom Dooley from the USA contacted me and offered to take the lot, postage paid. **Len Ruddock**

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Weeks after mailing out traditional Centurions' Christmas newsletters (much appreciated by all recipients) 10 came back marked "Not at this address". An appeal at The Centurions' AGM in late January saw a great response, as 7 we identified as living elsewhere. That still leaves a trio. Can readers assist in locating the following?

- G Hibberd C648, last address at Bedford
- Barry Daymond C508 (ex-Essex Police)
- Brian Ashmead C565, last address in Bristol

Chris Flint

Adds Hon Ed: Can readers assist - Barry may still have Essex contacts in the know?

WELL WORTH A VISIT

This year will be the 11th Langport (Somerset) 2 day walks across the superb countryside of The levels (17/18 June). Each day there is a 5, 10, 20 and 42 km route, different on the Sunday. Entry form: www.slamstrollers.co.uk **Hans Rennie**

THE WAY FORWARD

The numbers doing race walking are declining year by year and no one on the RWA or Area RWA's have managed to reverse that trend. When one sees such large fields at the parkruns week-in-week-out where there are no entry fees, prizes or entry forms surely race walking must be envious of just what attracts the athletes? Yet the pattern of races and format remains the same old fashioned way as in yesteryear. Why don't the RWA look at the bigger picture and do something about it before it is too late? They urgently need younger officials who want to see this change and race walking survive. **Bill Sutherland**

FUTURE OF INTERNATIONAL RACE WALKING

I am going to Barcelona in June to test the prototype of the electronic shoe. I don't think it will work but if it does it's going to be the end of Race Walking. It's a fallacy to say walkers didn't infringe the contact rules in the past as I have many photos of British International walkers off the ground. On 14 April IAAF Council will decide drastic changes to the Olympic and World Championship race walking distances. **Peter Marlow**

BOB DOBSON's THANKS

I'm taking this opportunity to express my sincere thanks for all the work and effort Tony Maxwell put in to organise a most enjoyable and successful reunion. It was certainly successful as far as the walkers were concerned, being the winning quiz team. And we didn't even field our star player, memory man Colin Young. Roger Mills thought it was just as well that he wasn't there, because we would never have completed the quiz with Colin not only supplying the answers but recounting everyone's CV's as well. Tony must have spent hours and hours and hours on research and compilation so the magnificent winning trophy was a true reflection and just reward for such an in depth competition. We shall treasure it and try to defend our title next year rather than cash it in on eBay. **Bob Dobson**

ATHLETES REUNITED (ESSEX BRANCH) - ORGANISER's THANKS

Sincere thanks to everyone who came to the lunch on Friday. 42 attendees was a record number. I think everyone enjoyed the afternoon - the food was good, the company great and although the quiz could have been shorter I think everyone enjoyed it. When I got home I had an email from Roger Clark, ex RAF, telling me Derek Ibbotson died on Thursday evening (he had been suffering from Alzheimers for over 4 years).

I hope those who travelled the furthest - Bob, Bill, Dick, Ray and Geoff - managed to get home before any more strikes began. It was no surprise that the walkers won the quiz. They sulked so much after my previous effort that I thought I would have to improve on the number of walking questions or they might never turn up again. Let me know contact details of anyone else who might like to join us next time please. **Tony Maxwell**

TOM POLLACK's APPRECIATION

Thank you to Tony Maxwell for organising yet another successful event. I'm sure we all appreciate the enormous effort put in to ensure it's a success. Contriving the quiz must have involved considerable research and time. Fortunately, Tony's retired - like most of us. It would be interesting to know who the oldest and youngest attendees were and the average age of the gathering assuming we were all of pensionable age and qualified for our free bus passes!! Thanks again for another great occasion and I look forward to the next one in the summer. I'll try to get there a little earlier - promise ex-headmaster!! **Tom Pollack**

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