

December 2007

Issue No. 289

ESSEX WALKER



NEW SOUTHERN RWA PRESIDENT

It's TIM WATT who was presented with the Presidential Chain of Office by NOEL CARMODY. Tim, known as a walker with many great performances in his book, is now equally well-known as both a photographer and a journalist - being Editor of the Race Walking Record. We call on all readers to give Tim full support as he serves his term of high office. All other major office holders remain in post.

WISE WORDS

Essex Walker, like other publications, has not always seen eye-to-eye with the Southern Area's Immediate Past President NOEL CARMODY. Noel is the Southern Area's Honorary Championship Secretary. At the AGM, as few folk were present to hear his words, they are repeated here, for they were well received and were worth listening to. He stated, "We must devise a master plan to get 9 UK walkers selected for the 2012 London Olympics". Now readers, who would disagree with that? Probably Beijing 2008 is too close for a rabbit to be pulled out of the proverbial hat, but as Noel says, we must have a strategy in place to deliver a full complement of UK walkers to race on home soil in 2012.

QUESTION TIME



Reader NICK SILVESTER really speaks for most when he asks "Will someone please explain to me why the Leamington Grand Prix has been arranged for the same weekend as the Moulton 5 Miles on June 14th?"

Adds Hon. Ed. There are a lot of emails flying around over this latest fixture fiasco, most of which are quite fiery. Races that have long-established traditional dates must always come first, followed by those events which are announced first. The Moulton 5 Miles organisers claimed June 14th for what is now firmly installed as the best supported race in the South (by far). So why now a 'Johnny come lately' notification of the Leamington Grand Prix on the already claimed date of June 14th? It's ironical that in 2005 Leamington Spa Town Hall Chamber was the venue for a seminar on fixture congestion. It was an apt choice as such Chambers are synonymous with hot air. Essex Walker calls on all readers to continue their support for Moulton!

FROM PETER MARLOW

EAA have appointed the following Race Walking Commission.

Peter Marlow (Chairman)
Luis Saladie (Spain)
Miloslav Lapkal (Czech)
Frederic Bianchi (Switzerland)
Luis Dais (Portugal)
Maris Peterson (Russia)

It has been agreed today that there will be a woman's and men's 20km walk in the next Commonwealth Games
Regards, Peter

AMSTERDAM DIAMONDS

Speedy MICKY SUTTON switched to running and sped around the Amsterdam Marathon course in 3 hours and 29 minutes. STEVE ALLEN, who was still suffering from an injury picked up while running the Southend Classic 10K, race walked it in 4 hours 28 minutes. DENNIS JONES pounded out a solid 4 hours 50 minutes. A tidy sum was raised for the MS charity - and the sponsorship sheet is still open for donations.

THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG DISTANCE RUNNER

Our September issue reported that DENNIS JONES had wandered off course at Victoria Park during a Post Office 5 Miles run, getting so totally lost that he couldn't find his way back - only doing so after asking Police who drove him back in their van. Basildon-based Dennis walks regularly in Post Office events and used to walk in the Essex League for Loughton AC. Readers asked how Dennis strayed so far off course? So we asked him for an explanation. Said Dennis, "I just followed the guy in front for a considerable distance. When I finally passed him I noticed that he didn't have a number



on. I asked him if he was in the race and he told me that he was a local jogger on his way back home".

GRAND HARRY

Our last issue reported that STEVE WYNN had pockets bulging with over £600 in cash and cheques at the buffet/drink following Harry Jefford's funeral. This sum was raised by mourners making charity donations in lieu of flowers. Steve reported that money continued coming in and that the fund passed £1,000. Chosen charities are St. Joseph's Hospice and the British Heart Foundation. Thanks to all who made donations in the name of a truly popular timekeeper, recorder and competitor.

CASH FLOWS IN

JOE BROWNE, brother of Southend-to-Ilford 38 Miles' charity walker OLLY, has been in touch to say that the amount raised has now passed £4-and-a-half thousand, and it's still rising. That amount is being split between a number of Essex-based charities. So another "well-done" to Olly and those who made his task easier by walking with him for whole or part of the way. The collection sheet is still 'open' if you see Olly at the meetings. If you've pledged and haven't yet paid up, please make that collection chores easier by stumping-up pronto. Thanks also to Joe who was Chairman of the Fund Raising Committee.



From our Readers

FROM JUNE CORK

History of SAC – will advise publication date asap – thank you for your offer to promote it on our behalf.

I hope you're keeping well – I've just been on a study tour to Egypt which was very interesting (and involved plenty of walking, tho' not of the racing variety of course). Temperature hit 43C while we were there. You'll have heard of the Ancient Egyptian gods Horus, Set, Osiris etc – there's a new one to whom many of our party were praying by the end of the tour. Immodium!

Thank you for continuing to send Essex Walker to me, it always makes very interesting reading.

Best Wishes, June.

EMAILS MIKE HINTON

Hello Dave,

Got A.W. today and I see there is a nice photo in it of Commonwealth Games medal winners. What twit provided the info for this!!

Walking from the Station to the LPR 9kms on Sunday with Mike Scammel on a miserable wet morning, we were discussing an expected poor turnout and lack of youngsters.

What a surprise, 19 turned up to compete including half a dozen youngsters!! Although it rained throughout it didn't dampen enthusiasm. Great for Steve Wynn, just a pity he doesn't get this support every time.

All the best, MIKE.

FRESH IDEAS FROM BARRY INGARFIELD

Hi Dave,

Some controversial food for thought! It has recently crossed my mind that it might be a good idea if you were to conduct a 'no-holds-barred' interview with me; and also possibly some others. In particular, my/our vision for the future of British Race Walking and the likelihood of us sending a team to the Beijing/London Olympics...can we as a sport, ignore the pathetic present situation; if not, where we need to make some positive changes to its format. As George Nibre effectively said in his write-up....changes can be very painful! Some people's faces, may not always fit, but they might just be holding the 'golden key'.

Anyway, I'll let you mull this suggestion over...point is, I want to take-over the reigns both at RWA and UK Athletics levels, but I would expect strong resistance from some, stick-in-mud quarters. (sorry for the mixed metaphors).

Best Regards, Barry

P.S. .My motives, I constantly seek to improve our sport.

ANECDOTES FROM DAVID HOBAN

Dave,

While on the LDWA's White Cliffs Challenge another walker told me he'd entered for an event. Folkestone Half Marathon or similar, where the entry fees were £2 for walkers and £14 for runners, where exactly the same facilities/t-shirts etc were offered. When he enquired why different he was reliably informed, "ah well, runners will happily part with £14 but walkers aren't prepared to pay more than £2!" So now we know!

At LDWA Steppingley Step last Sunday they ran out of route sheets for the long course, and the LDWA Blackwater Marathon the week before they were oversubscribed some while back - so things are looking up.

See Ya Dave.

EMAILS

PHILIP HOLLOBONE MP

Dear Dave,

It's always nice to be mentioned in despatches!

Best Wishes, Philip.



EMAILS CENTURIONS VICE CAPTAIN

SUE CLEMENTS

It was Stansted Airport and the OLAT was not a race....the route comprised 4 different 40km loops and the walk was also an IVV Event which means that in order to qualify as an IVV walk a variety of distances to cater for a wide range of ability and wishes must be offered.

Those doing the full 160km started 2.00pm on the Saturday and walked the first 2 together at 7km/hour. At the end of each loop we returned to the same base where you were fed and could access your bag. From then on it was 'free speed' as long as you complied with the checkpoint opening and closing times. Sometime during the 3rd loop Jill zoomed off and just as I was going into the finish she was starting her 4th and final loop. So far so good....however the venue was now bedlam, loads of people were there checking in to walk 40/20/10 kms, their baggage was everywhere and I couldn't identify anybody checking the 160km walkers off. Consequently I set off again after a very brief breather. I wasn't sure which arrows I should follow but a Dutchman pointed one out to me so off I went. Bear in mind that there were 2 difference types of arrows and it seemed easy enough. However, at one point I started thinking "That's funny, I've been here before" and then shortly afterwards found myself back at the hall where I was greeted at being the first back. I said I couldn't be the first, they said you are. I said I can't possibly be...! We couldn't work out precisely where I had been and so that I could make the distance up somebody kindly drive me out to a checkpoint so I could make some of the distance up. To my amusement we passed Jill who was walking with Remke Rutgers and Paul Altena so they got quite a surprise when they found me already at the checkpoint because they knew I had been behind them. I still don't know exactly how far I walked but it was around 93 miles. In fact I'm feeling quite pleased with myself because only 2 weeks before I had done 92 miles in 24 hours on the Tooting Bec track.

I am planning to do more events over there next year and when I have decided which ones I'll pop them into an email for inclusion in Essex Walker and invite others to come along. These events abroad re an excellent way to build you stamina up for the Centurions. One I shall definitely be doing is the 15 hour Loon op Zand in April. Cath Duhig, Kevin Marshall and David Hoban have joined me on that. They all enjoyed it too.

More news later, must go to work,

Sue

p.s. This year the Centurions will be well-represented at the Dutch Centurion AGM. Chris Flint, Charlie Weston and Jill Green will be going.

EMAILS PETER MATTHEWS

Bob you asked at Enfield about your record in my UK Merit Rankings. Answer is that you were ranked for a record 26 years - and that is equalled for any event, this year by Mick Jones at hammer. Most years ranked at an event.

26 Bob Dobson	50km W 1969-93, 1997
26 Mick Jones	HT 1982-2007
25 Neville Thompson	DT 1978, 1981-97, 1999-2000
23 Tessa Sanderson	JT 1972-92, 1996-7
23 Judy Oaks	W SP 1975-91, 1994-9
23 Sharon Gibson	W JT 1980-2002
22 Peter Yates	JT 1976-94, 1996-7, 1999
With Best Wishes	
Peter.	

WELSH CENTENARY DINNER REPORT FROM BOB & OLIVE DOBSON

We were invited to buy tickets for this black tie function in a city centre hotel. The qualifying standard seemed to be past champions, record holders or international medallists. It was a sell-out of 25 tables each seating 10. GB marathon record holder Steve Jones came over from his home in Colorado USA to join Lynne Davies, Colin Jackson, John Disley and Tanni Grey-Thompson to become the first 5 inductees to the Welsh Athletics 'Hall of Fame'. Many other current and ex-GB international athletes there, including former sprint star Ron Jones, and international walker Steve Barry.

Best Wishes Bob

DAVID HOBAN'S REQUEST

After an account of Centurion STEVE KING's 1972 100 Miles race, DAVID HOBAN asked if any further such accounts were available. The answer is "Yes" so here's one from Ilford AC's Mag.

A STRIDENT PERFORMANCE - LEICESTER TO SKEGNESS 100 MILES WALK - 1974

Saturday, 3rd August, is a day that will go down in the Club's history, for it was then that Ilford A.C. closed home a team in a 100 miles' race for the first time. For our three entrants, Dave Neagle, Alan Barber and Dave Ainsworth, it marked the end of many months training and preparation as at 4 p.m. on Friday, 2nd August, they lined up with 69 other aspirants to tackle the 100 miles Leicester-to-Skegness walk - along the very route that our erstwhile captain Steve King had blazed some two years earlier. As soon as they had wiggled their way through the rush-hour filled streets of Leicester the field soon thinned out into a snake-like procession and, by thirty miles, some of the over-ambitious were already dropping back (or in some cases out). Not the Ilford men who were ploughing their way purposefully through the field. At this juncture the race leader, a German, was dramatically disqualified for lifting after having received five warnings from a motley of officials. His "me no understand" patter got his a further seven miles before he finally came to terms with the adjudication and promptly accused the organisers of harbouring a grudge because of the '39/45 war.

Just approaching Peterborough (41 miles) Dave Ainsworth was hailed as the winner by an interested motorist who had driven right through the competitors and was turning off just as Dave was overtaken. Of course he did not let on that umpteen were ahead of him. In fact the first 45 miles were well known to Dave as he was brought up in Peterborough and had spent much of his RAF service in Rutland just two miles off the course. Dave Neagle's speed landed him in trouble for he negotiated Peterborough as the pubs were tipping out - perhaps that affected his own concentration for he went slightly off course here. A transit van pulled alongside him, the passenger door slid back and a voice boomed out, "You charity walkers are amenace". The quicksilver Neagle retorted, "Why don't you mind your own....business?", to which the abuser banded back, "There's no need to get like that you know" and vanished off into the night. In this area curious nightshift workers used the race as an excuse to down tools and spectate. They offered everything from abuse to advice and from encouragement to good humoured banter (something walkers are well used to).

The worst part of the race was from 45 to 60 miles as it was pitch dark, deserted (except for a few isolated farmhouses and barking dogs), flat fenland and long straight roads which seemed endless and on which any voices carried for miles. And so into Spalding (60 miles) where early morning milkmen, postmen and the like were startled to witness scantily clad men puffing and groaning their way towards the coast. As the sun rose between this town and Boston (77 miles) it was obvious that this was going to be a hot day. Boston market place was a test for any athlete as a string of weary men treaded their way through the stalls and amused the Lincolnshire shoppers.

Then came the final 23 miles of Queen's Highway that are much easier to write about than complete. The traffic was really heavy with weekend drivers and day-trippers' charabancs hurtling into 'Skeggy' as the locals affectionately term it. Here the attendants really proved their proverbial weight in gold for the road surface was covered in loose stones, etc. Amongst the back up teams were Tony Perkins (Mr. Reliable) and Peter Hepworth, our new signing from Southend. Also siding our team were several athletes from other clubs who deserve mention - Brian Ficken, Bill Newhill, Trevor Sliwerski, Tony Warren and Jim Williams. Without this 'team' you might not be reading this article now.

The 90 miles point was passed and only single figures remained. However, that means little as, having performed for 90 miles, to cover just one mile seems a long, long way. The last ten miles were all marked off, except the '96' one as some hobbledehoy had upped it for a wheeze. Well many a walker had a wheeze or two extra looking out for it! Dave Neagle's performance carried him past the tape (or at least where it had once been) well before noon and, to use racing parlance, was officially placed fourth despite going off course only 300 yards from the line at a loss of 10 minutes. Following a prolonged forty winks Dave and Tony rose to see how the rest of the team were making out...Alan's increased productivity over the closing stages was halted by British Rail who downed a level crossing on him at Wainfleet All Saints (95 miles). Those caught in the resultant traffic jam were entertained by Alan, who kept walking around in circles, just to keep moving, as a stop at this late stage could have been disastrous. The 'iron horse' rattled by, but Alan didn't for he had to wait for another to pass before he made the seafront in under 22 hours.

Meanwhile Dave Ainsworth, walking in on blisters, managed to exchange a few words with those stuck in a two miles traffic jam outside Skegness. "I do hope your sponsors cough up" muttered one; "where have you come from?" enquired another. On being told 'Leicester' he replied in a Yorkshire dialect, "It's no hundred miles from Leicester". Well, it was the way that Dave had trudged. Meanwhile Dave and Tony drove out of the town looking for our third scoring man and saw him only 200 yards from the finish where he, like the others, was welcomed by Alan Barber's father. Incidentally, Alan's name was right on this programme - whenever his performance is below average he uses an alias of 'Tony Barker'. But this time there was no mistake for it's now Alan Barber (Centurion).

AWARDS -

Dave Neagle 1st Class time standard plaque and Centurion No.527 badge
Alan Barber 2nd Class time standard plaque and Centurion No.535 badge
Dave Ainsworth 2nd Class time standard plaque and Centurion No.540 badge
ILFORD A.C. 5th team placing

NOTES -

The Dutch competitor who finished in last position walked the whole event in clogs thus earning for himself a nickname of 'Clever Clogs'. No times are available for the 90 miles point. Ilford A.C. marked this great team triumph by making a donation to the world famous Centurions Club.

LEICESTER - SKEGNESS TABLE OF TIMES

Miles	DAVE NEAGLE		ALAN BARBER		DAVE AINSWORTH	
	Pos	Time	Pos	Time	Pos	Times
10	10th	1.47.46	41st	1.58.40	47th	2.00.10
20	12th	3.37.23	36th	3.55.24	44th	4.00.47
30	9th	5.27.50	24th	5.55.20	37th	6.00.50
40	9th	7.23.35	21st	8.01.55	34th	8.19.05
50	4th	9.20.32	23rd	10.20.18	31st	10.40.07
60	4th	11.29.45	20th	12.50.15	28th	13.15.20
70	4th	13.15.17	20th	14.49.22	27th	15.22.12
80	4th	15.08.45	21st	17.17.05	26th	17.49.40
100	4th	19.15.11	19th	21.59.59	27th	22.44.41

40 finished (all under 24 hours)

FORMER COLLEAGUE CONCURS

CARL LAWTON's views on walking were published in October's Essex Walker. DAVE SHARPE, once a comrade in arms with Carl at the Bels, has voiced his support for Carl's letter. Said Dave, "We have to get back to proper walking, as that's what the public understand. Let's put an end to running. There are cheats in walking. I know some who run between judges. There are others who are up your backside in 'B' races but don't turn up for 'A' races". Dave is well known as a bastion - a bastion for fair play!

DIDN'T THEY DO WELL

The Organisers of May's European Cup of Race Walking at Leamington Spa, have been publicly honoured by being officially recognised for staging 'an outstanding event'. They received their award at a black-tie event in the Ricoh Arena (Coventry City Football Club's new home) from BBC Coventry 'Drivetime Show' presenter LORNA BAILEY. Stepping on stage to receive their award and applause were Competition Director Dr. IAN RICHARDS and Marketing Director MIKE SMITH.



EVERY LITTLE HELPS

Like many Athletic Clubs, Ilford AC have run a communal collecting pot for the latest TESCO VOUCHERS, which can be used to obtain sports equipment. So if you're not collected them for your own purposes, any Ilford members will gladly accept them.

FRIENDLY MEETING

SWC races are open to all-comers, who are truly made welcome at friendly promotions. See fixture lists for full details or ask any SWC members. Changing rooms are at the Monks Hill Sports Centre, Farnborough Avenue, South Croydon. Farnborough Avenue is off Selsdon Park Road (A2022) near the junction of Gravel Hill (A212). The 1978 Garnet Cup 10 Miles was staged along these roads – you certainly wouldn't want to walk in such roads in 2007. There's an excellent public transport link as the Croydon Tramlink (which connects to several rail stations as well as the underground) has a stop at GRAVEL HILL. From the tram-stop, a 400 yard walk along a public footpath takes you directly to Monks Hill Sports Centre. There is a large free car park at Monks Hill. Beware: don't cut it fine as the race start line is a long way from the changing room. A long way? – well I haven't been that far on my holiday!

In October they held their Gazette Cup (over 4 miles). Home favourite MARK EASTON won with ease. Essex resident STEPHEN CRANE came 2nd. Shrewd IAN STATTER sets a handicap, which was won by SWC President SHAUN LIGHTMAN. A nice touch was Shaun's presentation of wedding gifts to meeting organiser PETER SELBY from the Surrey members. Tonbridge AC were well represented at the meeting, so we saw many youngsters racing. **Remember – a warm welcome awaits all!**

LINK MEN



It's been pointed out that 2 out of Ilford AC's winning team of 3 in the 2007 RWA National 10K Championship are winners of the London Postman's 6 Miles-in-Uniform race. STEVE ALLEN won it in 1993 and 94, and from 1997-to-2007 (inclusive). Back in 1976 DAVE SHARPE was a postman and he broke the tape in 54.46. Those with Essex connections feature well in the all-time list of winners. Ilford's TERRY RILEY had 5 wins from 1972-to-75 and in 1977. Sadly a road accident in Dagenham ended Terry's interest in athletics. STEVE WYNN, who lived in the Collier Row district of Romford was victor from 1978-to-1982 and is now the event's Organiser. At one time Steve raced for Newham AC, which contained a promising walking squad that was brimming with characters. Another Ilford AC walker MICK SWEENEY won the title from 1984-to-1988, before moving to Hull. Mick has recently re-appeared on the London scene. Loughton AC 2nd claimer STEVE ALLWOOD broke the tape in 1995 and 1996. He made a brief comeback at Enfield a couple of seasons back, but nowadays is better known as a cyclist. Of the 46 races held since 1962, 33 have been won by competitors with Essex connections. Of those other 13 races, 7 were won by the one-and-only RAY MIDDLETON who triumphed in 1962, 65, and from 1967-to-1971. KEITH READ, now a respected judge claimed 3 victories in 1963, 64 and 66. South East London resident ALAN THOMAS headed the field in 1989 and 90 while London Vidarian BILL MUNTZER was top man in 1983. Over those 46 years this race has attracted many novices, many of whom have progressed to greater distances and greater things. Those racing must don a Royal Mail uniform – indeed until recent times they also had to carry a mail-sack. That rule is now relaxed. STEVE WYNN has vowed to keep it going – and long may it continue.

HAPPY RETIREMENT

CARL LAWTON will be 60 in January (he doesn't look it) and he'll mark that milestone by opting for an early retirement from full-time employment. We wish Carl well as he prepares his retirement plans.

ON THE RECORD

Congratulations to Ilford's 2nd claimer ED SHILLABEER – aka "Edbanger" – on his British M65 50 Kilometres Walk record of 5.26.31 set in Tilburg (Holland) on October 7th. Ed's a former British Senior 50K individual medallist and, at the RWA Centenary Dinner guest speaker PETER MATTHEWS mentioned Ed as a record-breaker in his after-dinner speech. Well done to Ed – he's a great advert for that energy drink that he acts as a UK agent for! Want to buy some?



WALKER COMES LAST

PHILIP HOLLOBONE MP (Kettering) can be found listed in Surrey Walking Club's Centenary Handbook and is also on the list of all-time Blackheath Park 9K finishers (recently updated by STEVE WYNN). He's just come a commendable last in the latest list of MPs yearly expenses, at a mere £44,551 (the top claimant raked in £185,421). According to his website Philip does not even employ a Constituency Case Worker, preferring to handle such matters himself. His website also fails to mention his 'past form' as a race walker of note. Since being elected to the Commons for his Northamptonshire constituency we were hoping that he might have come along to the occasional race with his vest and shorts, and shown us his past form.

A POUND FOR A POUND

For the umpteenth season Cambridge Harriers have retained the Bexley Winter League entry fee at £1. So low that it offsets the £1 Dartford crossing fee (that's a rip-off). Hopefully many Essex Walker readers will be there for a 5K race on Saturday December 8th at 2pm (10 minutes walk to the start line from the changing room in Glenhurst Avenue), as it's also an Essex League race (replacing the Essex Police 5 Miles which wasn't staged in 2007).



FELLOW TRAVELLERS

As Essex Walker readers headed for the Amsterdam Marathon (see separate article), they were spotted in the airport departure lounge by SUE CLEMENETS who was heading to Holland for the OLAT Jubilee Walk. Sue did well for despite going slightly off course on one of the 40K loops, Sue finished way ahead of her schedule.

SHARPIE'S RED CARD FOR FOOTBALLERS

October's LPR 9K walk finished just as the full-time whistle was blown to end a Blackheath Park football match - and as both soccer players and race walkers headed to the showers DAVE SHARPE risked life-and-limb by remonstrating with several players who were using the ablutions to clean muddy boots! For a second successive race showers in The Old Addeyans Club were cold. At least when ex-England soccer star TONY KAY ran the place, he used to get his boiler working at full steam for the showers. He neglected a lot else...but at least hot water came from the taps!

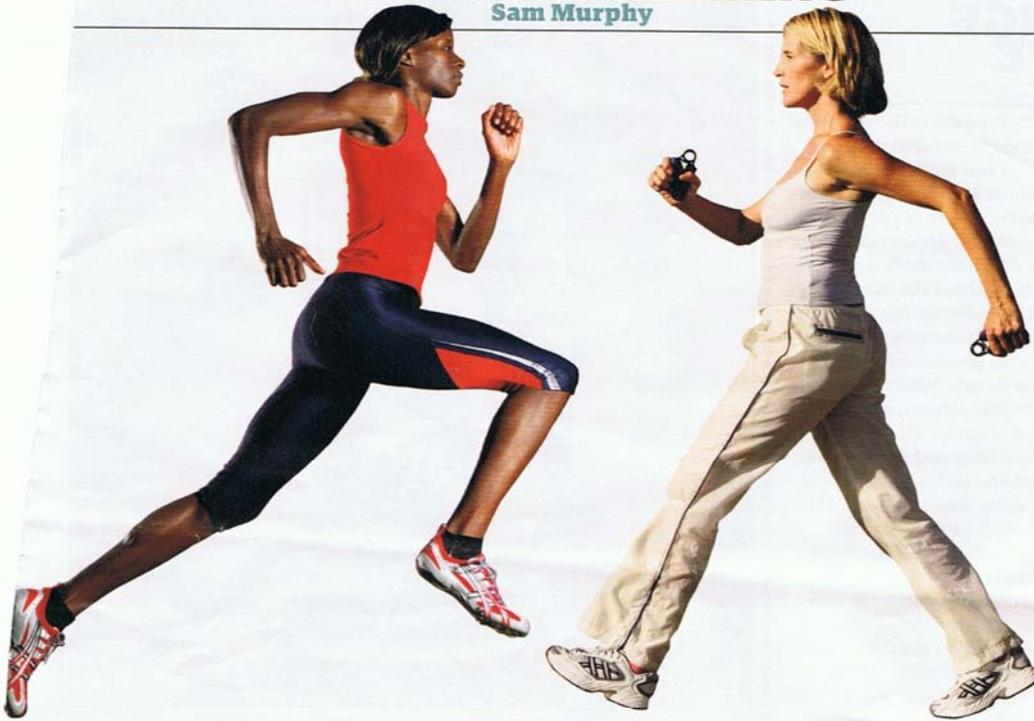


CRAWL IN CRAWLEY

PAM STOREY has been in touch (via SUE CLEMENTS) to advise that the Crawley 12 Hours event in March will be open to race walkers. Sue suggests that this could be a useful stepping stone for those aspiring to become Centurions. It's a good idea and entry details will be published in a future issue.

RUNNING VS WALKING

Sam Murphy



Busting calories

For calorie expenditure, running beats every other form of exercise. Even at a leisurely 10-minute-mile pace, an 11-stone man burns 700 calories an hour. ★★★★★

When walking, one foot is always in contact with the ground, so the workload is easier – the same 11-stone man would take twice as long to get the same calorie-burning benefits from walking. ★★★☆☆

Keeping healthy

High-intensity exercise such as running can suppress your immune system. Research on marathon runners suggests the higher your mileage and more quickly you increase it, the more likely you are to get sick. ★★★☆☆

Walkers get ill less often than both sedentary people and runners. In one study, they experienced half as many colds as non-walkers, and showed an increase in the number of cells that attack viruses. ★★★★★

Boosting heart

Running impacts on the four big causes of heart disease by lowering blood pressure, reducing the risk of diabetes, raising HDL cholesterol and helping to shed excess body fat. ★★★★★

One study found that women who walked briskly for at least three hours a week had the same protection against heart disease as women who exercised vigorously for 90 minutes a week. ★★★★★

Altering mood

For those unaccustomed to it, the effort involved in running can increase stress levels and anxiety. But in the long term, studies show that running can make you more resilient to stress and depression. ★★★☆☆

Moderate exercise is thought to be more effective in alleviating anxiety than high-intensity exercise. In fact, one study found a single walking session reduced tension as effectively as a tranquilliser. ★★★★★

Strengthening back

The impact involved in running can increase stress on the spine and raise the risk of lower-back pain, especially in runners who don't use good technique, and who have limited flexibility and poor core stability. ★★★☆☆

A recent study found that three hours' walking a week was more effective than specific lower-back exercises in reducing pain, improving mobility and lowering psychological stress in back-pain sufferers. ★★★★★

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Who is wishing you these words? Well it's from, alphabetically, Dave Ainsworth, Mick & Sharon Barnbrook, Kevin Marshall, Paul & Pauline Nihill, Ken & Margaret Livermoore, Alan O'Rawe, Tony Perkins & Christine, and Ron & Joan Wallwork. In lieu of Christmas Cards they'll be making donations to The Gambian Home for Children with Learning Difficulties which is run by former Essex Champion Walker and Junior International GEOFF HUNWICKS and his wife Rohey. This follows a 2006 gesture by Ron which has now been followed up by Mick Barnbrook and Tony Perkins who jointly launched a 2007 appeal among the walking fraternity. This appeal is still open if you want to send money to Tony; and Essex Walker will list your name so as other readers get to know why they didn't get a Christmas Card from you.

BOXING DAY

Enfield & Harringey are staging their traditional 5K at 11 am on this day. So if you've had enough of your home and the ballyhoo, then "come on down" to Pickets Lock to get shot of a few calories. Don't forget....bring your Santa Clause hats and anything else that might add to the festive occasion. Please tell your club-mates that a 5K run sets off at the same time - all welcome - it's buckshee and enter on the day for a 'B' race, which incidentally does not count in the popular Enfield League programme. Enfield League action recommences down the road at Donkey Lane a few days later on Saturday January 5th at 2 pm.

HARDY MEN

The final Blackheath 9K race of 2007 saw sub-zero temperatures and a wicked wind chill factor. A number wore hats, gloves, 3 vests, as well as other additional garments to keep warm. But not former National Champion walker PETER HODKINSON who strode around the course in short shorts and a singlet with bare arms and no hat/gloves. Peter was always an 'Iron man' - as was spectating fellow former National Champion ADRIAN JAMES (who was among those who had appeared to support the Final Race Presentation) who also used to appear in the minimum of sports attire in the worse of conditions. Among spectators was Blackheath regular CARL LAWTON's daughter, though she was well wrapped-up.

A DIG IN THE RIBS

As well as OLLY BROWNE, others to suffer recent rib injuries have been PAM FICKEN and PETER RYAN. At the Enfield Open 7 both Pam and Peter appeared as recorders.

HIP HIP HOORAY!

GIDEA Park based Centurion KEITH WILSON, who qualified in the 1989 Arthur Eddlestone Memorial Walk around the Hendon Police Training School, has had a successful hip replacement. Keith walked in the 2001 John Hedgethorpe Memorial Walk and is now back in action with the local Ramblers, with whom he is a leading light. JOAN WALLWORK has also had a successful hip replacement operation and now getting out and about. We look forward to again seeing Joan enjoying her usual brisk walk around King George's Playing Fields while we toil around the footpaths at racing speed.

FIXTURES

Sun 16 Dec	Essex/Enfield League 10K	Chigwell Row	10.30 am
Wed 26 Dec	Boxing Day 5K	Pickets Lock	11 am
Sat 5 Jan	Enfield League (+ Presentation)	Donkey Lane	2.00 pm
Sat 12 Jan	SWC Open 10K (RWA Southern Area)	Monks Hill	2.30 pm
Sun 20 Jan	LPR Open 9K Yacht Handicap	Blackheath Park	11.30 am
Sun 3 Feb	London Walks (incl. Essex League)	Victoria Park	1 pm
Sat 9 Feb	Camb Harriers Winter League 5K	Bexley	2 pm
Sat 16 Feb	RWA National 10 Miles (+Enfield/Essex Lge)	Donkey Lane	2 pm

ESSEX WALKER REUNITED

Former big name Enfield walker KEN EASLEA, who is also a Past President of Ilford AC, has a long-lost cousin (also named Ken) residing in Surrey. The Kens had lost touch with each other. Surrey-based Ken searched the web in a bid to seek contact and came up with an Internet copy of Essex Walker. He found the edition which described Ken's appearance at Donkey Lane to present the prizes at the Pat Furey Trophies meeting last March. Fortunately that edition also contained the Acknowledgements Column which we publish every 3 issues, and he 'phoned-up Hon. Ed. In keeping with correctness, details were not given out - but a message was relayed to Clacton-based Ken that his long lost cousin was seeking contact. Ken acted on the message and they are now reunited. The power of Essex Walker! Most folk use Friends Reunited to re-establish past links. Hon. Ed. looks at that from time-to-time. It's amazing how many former school chums now have the same address - the Cemetery!



A DIG IN THE RIBS

OLLY BROWNE suffered 2 broken ribs after an accident on a ladder while working. He's the proprietor of a Painting, Decorating and Home Renovation Company based in Leigh-on-Sea. So there's a free plug for his services, which over the years have been secured by a number within the walking game. Olly brushed the pain aside and had just 1 day off work before resuming - and walking training!

ENGLAND V SOUTH AFRICA

Follower of the oval ball game BILL SUTHERLAND was in Paris to see England take on South Africa...but not in the World Cup Final. Explained Bill, "I booked an overnight coach trip to see England play South Africa in the group stage, when South Africa won easily and England failed to record any points. I went with a coach load of England supporters; but being Scottish I cheered for and supported South Africa during the match". Bet that made him popular! Another yarn from Bill Sutherland.

ANOTHER HAT-TRICK

Triple 50K National champion SCOTT DAVIS recorded another hat-trick as he led them all home at the annual Enfield Open 7 Miles, leading his club - Ilford - to team victory. Organiser RON WALLWORK commented, "Scott had it in the bag before halfway". Sadly, as in 2006, less than 50 lined-up for a piece of the action.

HALL OF FAME

In 1957 Belgrave/Colchester member ERIC HALL won the Enfield Open 7 Miles in 51.28 from 179 starters, also leading the Bels to a team victory. Half-a-century on, in November 2007 Eric was a participant in the well-established event. Well Done!

WHO ARE YOU?

That's a familiar chant from the footie terraces. It's also a question being asked of BILL SUTHERLAND. Bill's a former National Champion who has represented Great Britain in the European Games and Scotland in the Commonwealth Games. He is a holder of the British Empire Medal and, for 7 years edited the now defunct Metropolitan Police Walking Newsletter. Bill won Scotland's first medal of the 1970 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh - striking bronze in the 20 Miles Walk. He's a Past President of Ilford AC, and a former Honorary Secretary of The Centurions. Bill is also a former RWA National Press & Publicity Officer.

Said Bill, "When I collected my number for the WWW 5,000 metres on our RWA Centenary Night Celebration I was asked "What have you done?" When I booked-in for the 5K walk at Enfield on the afternoon of the RWA Centenary Dinner I was asked "Who are you and what Club are you with?" While at that Dinner a picture was taken of 4 UK-based Commonwealth Games medallists; myself with OLLY FLYNN, RON WALLWORK and JAKE WARHURST who all won golds for England. This photo was published in 'Athletics Weekly' and I was captioned as MICK BARNBROOK".

"Going back to 1970 I received little recognition in the Edinburgh Commonwealth Games. Well before the event, those selected were sent a form which asked for size and measurement details, so as Scottish uniforms could be mailed out. Mine went astray and I was the only squad member without a uniform, hence I was prevented from marching with the team at the opening ceremony. I wore my own clothes throughout the Games - and having no uniform I was omitted from the official team photograph and also not permitted to march with the Scottish team in the closing ceremony. When I finally received my official uniform it was a fortnight after the Games were over, and even then the jacket was too short". Another yarn from BILL SUTHERLAND.

THE ANSWER LIES IN THE SOIL

We've previously informed you that Loughton 2nd claimer JOHN HALL is Chairman of the local Allotment Holders Society. Well he's now extended his horizons to become Chairman of the Friends of King George Playing Fields at Enfield - home of most Enfield League walking races. So if you've any grumbles about squelchy leaves, conkers, puddles etc on the course or burnt-out cars, graffiti etc, then bend John's ear!



A WARM WELCOME

The Enfield & Harringey President, broadcaster and respected statistician PETER MATTHEWS appeared at the Enfield Open 7 Miles as both Mister Starter and Awards Presenter. We were indeed most pleased to have his welcome company for the afternoon.

DYNAMIC DUO

That's PAUL & PAULINE NIHILL who truly have stamina. They had two functions on October 13th and were obliged to attend both. They attended an afternoon function before heading to Piccadilly for the RWA Centenary Dinner. So they had a double dose of speechmaking, wining and dining. In fact they came to the Centenary Dinner straight from a 'proper do'.

MAN OF THE TIMES



Saturday's edition (27 Oct) of The Times announced the latest winner of The Times Crossword. 'Twas Hon. Ed himself, who not got the kudos of seeing his name printed in said newspaper - but also £120 worth of quality books (Atlas, Dictionary, etc, etc.) as a prize.

WINTER LEAGUE OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT

Good to see a well supported opening meeting on October 20th. We should get even more on Saturday December 8th (2pm) as it's an ESSEX LEAGUE event to boot!

WALKER ON THE MOVE

Three times National 50K champion SCOTT DAVIS has moved to Southgate, in fact only a couple of streets from former Enfield and Metropolitan Police stalwart CHRIS FORSTER. We wish Scott and his wife all happiness in their new abode. He now lives closer to Donkey Lane!

RWA SOUTHERN AREA ATTENDANCE RISES

In 2006 the Officers and Committee of the RWA Southern Area awaited the arrival of the rank-and-file for their AGM. **None** came. A **nil** attendance. The 2007 RWA Southern Area AGM saw an improvement. The attendance was **1**, thanks to the arrival of Hillingdon protagonist TREVOR JONES. The Southern Area are shrewd and after last year's fiasco a much smaller AGM room was hired. One remembers how such meetings were supported in the 70s/80s when many London-based walkers would attend after work. It is a once-a-year opportunity that the rank-and-file have to express their views from the floor and vote for the Officers and Committee that they want to move the sport forward. It's either apathy on a mass scale or you're all very satisfied with what is being done for you. Let's hope it's the latter!

MAN WITH A SMALL PART

As for CHRIS FORSTER, Christmas is always a busy time for him as he 'treads the board' in Panto. In Christmas pasts he's landed plum roles....but this time he's playing a lesser part in Jack and the Beanstalk, as he steps aside to give up-and-coming talent a chance. We haven't seen Chris for a while at Donkey Lane; but still maintains close interest in the goings-on of the Enfield League. As cheerful as always Chris says, "I'll try and get there if I can, even if only to appear as turning bollard".



HIGHGATE OPEN 7 MILES

A long since killed-off event (by increasing traffic), former victor BILL SUTHERLAND (in 50.18) has recently walked the course in training and reports that "no way" could a large field race on such busy roads nowadays. Near Parliament Hill Fields Track Bill stopped for a breather and an 'old dear' told him that she could remember hundreds of walkers doing the annual Open 7.

DIARY DATE



The Metropolitan Police Annual Dinner & Reunion in New Scotland Yard is set for Wednesday 5th March. Details to follow.

HIGH PROFILE RACE

A suggestion was discussed at the Southern Area AGM about staging a walking race over the closing stages of the Flora London Marathon, say along the Embankment, Birdcage Walk and The Mall, before the main runners arrive. Crowds would be positioned along the course in great numbers (over 1 million line the entire route, most of whom stand alongside the Central London stretches). 2008 is probably a bit too late for inclusion, but certainly we should go for it in 2009. The trouble is well...the image of the sport. We would need plenty of youngsters to be racing. We couldn't really hope to advance our profile with a 50 strong field of whom the majority would be middle-aged and elderly men. You can't knock such participants, as without them Race Walking would have all but vanished in recent years as they make up the bulk of most fields. But for a really good image before thousands, we need plenty of youngsters - the sort who are going to benefit from the plans that Noel Carmody was talking about at the AGM.

RETURN OF AN OLD FRIEND

After many years absence from fixture lists the RWA National 10 Miles is to reappear. This was the most popular race of the year as walkers from all areas united on the start line to form 3-figure fields (often in the higher 200s). It's coming to Enfield on Saturday February 16th in conjunction with the Enfield League, Middlesex 10, Herts 10, Essex 10 and the Essex League to boot. The distance looks open to negotiation. Many want it to reflect metrication and be staged over 15K, but that's a debate for 2009 onwards. But let's make it a most happy return in 2008 at Donkey Lane. All readers are asked to ring-fence this date now in their new 2008 diaries.

CO-OPERATION PLEASE

Since losing their changing rooms at Chigwell Row in the late 80s, Ilford AC have had to make do with a portacabin. Space is very limited, so if you can help by turning-up ready changed, it would certainly help. There will still be a piping hot shower for you afterwards. The field is likely to be more than usual as it's an Enfield League/Essex League joint venture, with the 2007 Essex League awards to be presented post race. It's on Sunday 16th December at 10.30 am. Parking is in side streets or further down the village. Bus 150 runs from Becontree Heath to Chigwell via Ilford (One Railway) and Hainault (Underground Central Line) Stations. Please further assist by leaving your bags in the changing rooms before coming into the small Presentation Room, as we want to get everybody in. The racing distance is 10K - and if you've not appeared before, be warned that it's no billiard table. Also note that, traditionally, many go over the road to 'The Maypole' (by the crossroads) for a post race Christmas drink and social gathering.

NEWSFLASH

DAVE SHARPE enjoys a reputation as being 'first with the news' on most occasions. Dave has reported that the Pickets Lock Badge Race - a new initiative - was a great success with 29 booking-in for their hour of walking. Dave was a recorder, electing to keep his powder dry for the final Blackheath 9K on the following morning. NICK SILVESTER, winner of August's Dartford Hour, added another hour title to his impressive CV. Dave reports that 3rd placed IAN RICHARDS (the 1980 Olympian who raced for the Metropolitan Walking Club) has made a comeback with the aim of becoming a Centurion at Milton Keynes in 2008. Second was Enfield's PHIL WILLIAMS with STEPHEN CRANE recording a PB to place 4th. Full results in AW/Record and on the Racewalk UK website.



REVEILLE

Two attendees at the RWA Centenary Dinner at the Royal Air Force Club in Piccadilly were KEN and MARGARET LIVERMORE. Ken's an ex-RAF Serviceman who has heard reveille sounded many times while in uniform, and he certainly rose early on Sunday morning after the dinner, for he headed to Mansfield in Nottinghamshire for orienteering. Ken did well and amassed many points. He's a true activist for, as well as racing for Enfield & Harringey AC, he also competes on golf courses. It's good to see Ken back in regular action since his setback on Canvey Island in late April. Streetwise Ken also led a convoy of cars from Donkey Lane to the RAF Club.

CURTAIN COMES DOWN - HOPEFULLY NOT FOR GOOD

The 10th and final race of the 2007 Blackheath Trophy series of 9 Kilometres walking races was held on a bitterly cold Sunday morning around 5 blowy circuits of Blackheath Park. The day did not start well as the Old Addeyans Club was boarded-up and a 'No Admittance' sign was posted on the door along with a compulsory purchase notice from Greenwich Council nailed to the premises. But...walkers are a hardy lot and they braved the cold to change in bushes and/or wherever they could. Footballers obviously knew of this setback, as none turned-up. A call for a bumper turnout to end the Series drew in 16 starters! The presentation, in the street, lacked something as some folk who had won awards were either not present or had left soon after they'd finished racing, perhaps not realising just how quickly awards come after that final race. PETER SELBY proposed a vote of thanks to STEVE WYNN and his helpers and hoped that the races would continue in 2008. Steve Wynn and Micky Sutton intend visiting other Sports Clubs in the area - and even Old Folks Home near the finish line, to see if alternative accommodation can be found now that The Old Addeyans Club is history. Steve's hoping to have something in place for the opening race of 2008 in January. It was agreed that the late Harry Jefford would have liked events to continue. Dave Sharpe had advised that Harry Jefford's widow was coming to present the awards, though Organiser Steve Wynn knew nothing of any such arrangement and stated that Mrs Jefford had not even been invited. Good job she didn't turn up, with no Clubhouse and only a cold and windy street in which to present awards. Tonbridge AC ended Ilford's long hold on the Blackheath team trophy by hitting the lead for the first time in the final race to nick it by just 5 points. Best Essex placing in the individual awards was by 2nd-placed ALAN O'RAWE, with Romford-born MICK BARNBROOK 3rd. Mick was 3rd with 2 races to go, neither of which he could appear in - but his margin held good for him. In the Ladies stakes CHELSEA O'RAWE-HOBBS came 3rd. Steve Wynn and his helpers deserve all credit for keeping this Series going despite some appallingly low turnouts. Man of facts and figures, Steve, had drafted various endings to make it quicker for him to deliver the final table to those waiting for presentations. It was not STEVE ALLEN's day for he strained his groin while warming-up and withdrew without coming under starters orders while Loughton 2nd-claimer KEN WATTS missed the start. It was good to see some walkers coming over just to support the presentation, including injured LAURENCE DORDOY and former National Champion ADRIAN JAMES. Here's to 2008...we hope!

FACTS



How far does the average woman walk in her lifetime while vacuum-cleaning? Answer: 7,300 miles. The same question asked of me brings an answer of 850 miles.

NEWS FROM JOLLY JACK

Former Woodford Green star JACK THOMAS reports a clean bill of health after his recent setback. He's travelling again, having visited France for a fortnight. We look forward to seeing Jack back on the walking scene; where he's known as a Welsh Veteran Representative walker as well as being a top official. Jack used his influence in getting the Athletics Association of Wales to put their weight behind that successful campaign to retain Commonwealth Games race walking.

TROPHY CABINET CLOSES

Following views from walkers Ilford AC are 'mothballing' a number of trophies. There will be some available at Ilford's 2 Open races (December 10K and Summer 5 Miles)...but most are being stored at the home of Tony and Christie Perkins. So no more will there be a trophy for every category under the sun!

MILESTONE

BOB DOBSON, the 'Peter Pan' of walking has reached OAP status, without looking anything like a 65 year old. Bob's still one with great enthusiasm for athletics and long may his gusto continue!

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PLEASE NOTE

New email address for the email subscription takers, is yet to be announced.



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