

Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR BERYL RANDLE

A funeral service for **Beryl Randle** is to take place on **Thursday 1 February at 1300 hrs.** Anyone who wishes to attend the Service at Sutton Crematorium, Tamworth Road, Sutton Coldfield, B75 6LG and afterwards for a gathering at Moxhull Hall, Holly Lane, Wishaw, Sutton Coldfield. B76 9PE, should contact Beryl's niece Chris on 07977-051755 or email chrisandrobd@hotmail.com

The family's chosen charity is the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).



ON PARADE

Our previous issue recorded names of our numerically strong 1973 Youth and Boys' National Squads. A couple of readers have enquired **who** was in our 1973 National Senior Squad? – so, in order they were announced after that year's RWA National 10 Miles at Leyland, are the 21:

Messrs **B Adams, A Banyard, K Carter, R Court, R Dobson, O Flynn, M Holmes, C Lawton, P Marlow, R Mills, S Lightman, R Middleton, W Sutherland, A Smallwood, H Timms, P Selby, R Thorpe, J Warhurst, A Taylor, R Wallwork and A Seddon.**

They, plus others near to them, were all worthy of representative selections - that was our strength in such times. All were well known as they supported Opens, County, Area and National races plus Inter Club events etc. On this list was Howard Timms who'd just suffered hepatitis while on business in America. Two of our 1972 Munich Olympic 20K trio were missing. **Phil Embleton** advised selectors he was suffering serious illness - which so sadly was to claim his life in 1974. **Paul Nihill** asked not to be included as he announced his retirement - he later returned in time to come 2nd UK finisher in a dramatic 1976 "sudden death" 20K selection race at Thorpe Bay to secure a Montreal Olympic 20K selection. It saw him become the first British male athlete to appear in 4 Olympics.



Their official title was: **The British Amateur Athletics Board Four-Year Coaching Squad.**

"USE IT OR LOSE IT"

This, attributed to Dr Marion Diamond in the early '60s when developing a theory of brain plasticity, stated that brains change throughout our lives and we need to "use it or lose it". It became the main slogan when Dr Beeching introduced major railway service cuts. It's still used by Railway Companies when seeking to boost ticket sales on services, such as from Shropshire-to-Marylebone and Brighton-to-Watford. More than ever it's relevant to race walking, as many walks have been removed from your fixture lists - as competitors stay away. At the opening fixture of the 2024 Enfield League your "start line M/C" drew attention to the fact that there were almost as many present to stage this race as in it - to ensure it went ahead were a starter, judges, judges' runner, a busy board writer, marshals, entry table numbers steward, recorders and a timekeeper. All in extreme cold, without actively participating to keep warm. Some travelled long distances, such as from Croydon, Suffolk and North Essex. The field was described in "Enfield Walker" as disappointing in terms of numbers. Please, please, please help keep race walking going by trying your best to support what's put on for **you**. Next Donkey Lane fixture: **Saturday 24 February 11am** (advance entries now being taken).

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT - GET TRAINING

2024 Centurion race – Entries now open at Race Director (www.racedirector.co.uk)

<p>10:00 AM 24 AUG</p>		<p>Gloucester Track Ultras 24 Hours - Centurions Walking Severn Valley Events Ltd - Gloucester Athletics Track</p>	<p>12:00 AM 24 AUG</p>		<p>Gloucester Track Ultras 50km - Walking Severn Valley Events Ltd - Gloucester Athletics Track</p>
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The 2024 Centurion "100 miles in 24 hours" race walk will be held 24 – 25 August in Gloucester at the Blackbridge Jubilee Athletics Track, 13 Ardmore Close, Tuffley, Gloucester GL4 0BJ in conjunction with the annual ultra distance running races organised by "[Events we Run](#)".



The event will incorporate a 50K race walk, time limit 9 hours. Starting times: 100 miles - 10:00am; 50K – midnight. Walkers will use different lanes to the runners. To complete 100 miles walkers in Lane 4 must complete 381 laps plus 12.2 metres.

The following will be provided: tables and gazebos for walkers' crew, aid station with snacks, hot drinks, soup and water for 50K walkers: 3 meals will be provided for 100 mile walkers; changing facilities; trackside portaloos; parking; medical cover.

Entry fee: £125.00 for UKA-affiliated, £127.00 for non-affiliated.

Further details on the Centurion website www.centurions1911.org.uk.

SOCIAL EVENT

Towards closing issues of a now defunct Metropolitan Police Race Walking Club newsletter, then Hon Editor Bill Sutherland commented there were few social events in race walking. This was true as in those times, few ladies competed and race walkers usually only met together in changing rooms at races before heading home in various directions - until another day. This article urged walkers to support what few events were on social calendars. One still going, in a recently changed format for only a nominal *tanner* a head, is a long-established Metropolitan Walking Club Annual function and reunion - now a buffet in Central London (so excellent public transport). It's open to all, plus your guests, whether or not you've served in the Police or for that matter, ever had your collar felt by them! It'd be nice to see several Home Counties race walkers, past and present, and their families attend on Wednesday 6 March at the Civil Service Club in Great Scotland Yard, London SW1 2HJ (a road running from Whitehall-to-Northumberland Avenue). In the last edition of Essex Walker (page 6 of [EW 435](#)), Organiser Dr Kitty Hung provided you all with full details plus booking information.

SERIES WINNERS

A picture of Ilford AC's 2023 Enfield League winning team (4-to-score). Picture taken on Saturday 13 January at Enfield's Queen Elizabeth II Stadium - supplied by Ron Wallwork. L-to-R Abigail Jennings (who presented awards), Shaheda Arthur, Simon Morgan, John Arthur (with Individual Trophy) and Stuart Bennett (with Team Trophy). It was a proverbial *'red letter day'* for Abigail, who won the morning's 10k race in 50.35 - by 7 minutes over the 2nd finisher, who now is England's No 1 female walker. As always, we'll not *steal the thunder* of "Enfield Walker" which most of you receive, as they have published a [full result](#) and the 2023 Enfield League's final standings.



IN PRINT

Writes eagle-eyed Ilford AC President John Batchelor: "*Saw this in the comments' section at the foot of an article about **Kate Moss**...*"

One of the few to come out of Croydon and become a global star. Even better known than Dave Prowse and Paul Nihill...

HE'S OUT AND ABOUT

Oscar Pistorius (the "Blade Runner") was an *"Enfield League visitor"* after he popped in to make a personal appearance at an Enfield League prize presentation in the Lee Valley Centre cafeteria. At the time he'd just become the only (and still is) disabled athlete to earn a full medal at an IAAF World Championship - this a silver medal in the 4 X 400 metres relay at Daegu (2011). In those 2011 IAAF Championship Women's 20K Walk **Joanna Jackson** was our only GB entrant and also racing was Enfield League competitor **Neringa Aidietyte**. Oscar, now a convicted murderer, has been released on parole. Athletics pundits state he's unlikely to try a comeback. That day at Enfield, Oscar was filming a British Telecom advert. The advert commenced its run but this advert was *binned* when Oscar had his collar felt.

FIXTURES

It is recommended that dates/start times are confirmed directly with organisers for accuracy.

FEB	11	EMAC/VAC Indoor Championship 2,000m	Lee Valley Arena	TBA
	17	British Masters 3,000m Championship	Lee Valley Arena	5.00pm (prov)
	18	British Indoor Championship 3,000m	Birmingham	TBA
	24	Enfield League "Ron Powell" 3/5/8/10K	Donkey Lane	11.00am
	25	Eastern Masters Inter-Area Indoor Match 2,000m	Lee Valley Arena	TBA
MAR	6	Metropolitan Police Walking Club Annual Reunion Buffet	Civil Service Club SW1	from 5.00pm
	9	England Athletics 10,000m Track Championship	Kettering	TBA
	12	Ilford AC Annual General Meeting	Cricklefields Stadium	8.00pm
	16	Tri-Counties (Herts/Kent/Middx) 2,000m *	Lee Valley Arena	TBA
APR	2	Veterans AC 5K 'B' Road Race (all welcome) **	Battersea Park Bandstand	7.00pm**
	6	Enfield League 10K (+ opt outs)	Donkey Lane	11.00am
	20	RWA 10K & YAG Championships 10/5/3/2K	Leicester Cycle Circuit	7.00 pm
NOTES	* Organisers have invited Essex walkers to hold their own County Indoor 2,000m Championship in conjunction with Tri-Counties if there's support. This would "save" our event which is discontinued due to lack of support. Please show support to reintroduce an abandoned event. At this stage the race is provisional for Essex walkers.			**Allow 5-10 minutes from registration to start line
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular distance training walks are held from Leigh-on-Sea's Belfairs Park – details from Centurion Steve Kemp on 07860 617899. Reminder: All Enfield League races now require online pre-entries to: www.fabian4.co.uk. Any problems entering refer to 07532-397528. 				

GET WELL SOON

Ken Watts informs his brother Bob has - again - been admitted to King's College Hospital in Camberwell. Before admission Bob was housebound. Bob's been a hospital patient on a number of occasions and we hope he'll soon turn the proverbial corner. Ken will update us as we go along. We all wish Bob, a true stalwart of long distance walking, well as he's being treated - and hopefully cured.

ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK

Two AGMs in quick succession at the end of January, one on Friday evening (Race Walking Association 7pm) followed by another on Saturday morning (Centurions 11am) saw both organisations experimenting with new start times. It worked as both drew similar numbers to those seen in 2023, while both saw higher numbers of *'apologies for absence'* submissions - this interpreted as having more persons showing interest than in recent times. Not long ago an Essex Walker reader called for younger newcomers to fill positions - however at both AGMs, there were no contested elections. This shows rank-and-file are content with what office holders have done - among those in the **RWA** retaining positions are President Chris Hobbs, Chairman Glyn Jones, Secretary Colin Vesty, Treasurer Mark Easton, Trophies Secretary Pam Ficken and Examiner of Accounts John Elrick. Noel Carmody made a return as Hon Championships Secretary, so filling a vacant post - so readers, please give Noel the

support he deserves when entries are sought for your Championship races. Three unfilled positions are still so: **Vice President/Assistant Secretary/Press & Publicity Officer** - any interested persons please make yourselves known, as such posts are ideal for those wishing to make their mark in athletics administration. The **Centurions** line-up remains mainly unchanged, their office holders include President Dave Jones, Secretary and Merchandise Officer Chris Flint, Treasurer Richard Cole, Archivist & Website Manager Sue Clements, Captain Roger Mitchell, Vice Captain Frans Leijtens, Social Walks Secretary Steve Kemp, Trophies Secretary Pam Ficken, Auditor Alex Ross while Martin Fisher and Carl Lawton retain Committee status. Committeemen Richard McChesney and Ian Richards stepped down and were warmly thanked for their contributions. A tradition going back to the first Centurions' meeting, held on 11 May 1911 at the "Ship and Turtle" public house (it is no more) at No 121 Leadenhall Street in the City of London, has never been amended - that the Centurion present with the lowest number is invited to Chair the meeting. This year's senior attender in terms of membership length was Centurion 540 Dave Ainsworth. Had it been a "face-to-face" AGM, he'd have picked up the gavel - but not when a Chairperson now must work the wonders of "Zoom". But still an honour to be minuted as the senior member present. Both AGMs were business-like and enjoyable occasions.

LET'S SEE YOU ALL ON-THE-DAY

Centurions' recently re-elected Social Walks Secretary, Canvey Island-based **Steve Kemp**, announced details of his next Centurions Social Walk, to be about 10 Kilometres (ordinary paced progress) around interesting places in the Brentwood area. This next walk will be led by **Kim Howard**.

It'll be in April or May and carefully scheduled to ensure it won't clash with National Championships, County dates or the popular Enfield League programme. These now long-established walks are open to all (whether or not Centurion members) and their families and friends. It was pointed out the Elizabeth Line serves Brentwood - and beyond. Greater London residents are reminded "Freedom Passes" are valid for free travel throughout weekends - all the way from Reading-to-Shenfield (east of Brentwood). A few years' ago, Len Ruddock wrote in 'Essex Walker' that a social walk would provide good opportunity for our entire Essex walking scene, and others, to enjoy a pleasant occasion together. So, as they say, **watch this space**.

Social walks

Steve Kemp C1075, our Social Walk Secretary, organises a couple of shorter walks each year.

These walks are a great opportunity to catch up with the news, and everybody – friends and family – are welcome to join us. If you have any ideas for future walks or are interested in leading a social walk please contact Steve.



[Social Walks - Centurions 1911](#)

Social Walks

RELATIVE NEWCOMER MAKES BIG IMPRESSION

Claire Law, who as Claire Bass was one of 16 new Centurions qualifying in the 2019 Isle-of-Man 100 miles at Castletown - a location also well known in race walking as a venue for probably the best Race Walking Association 20 Miles' Championship ever held and won by Bob Dobson in 1975. Claire attended January's "Zoom" Centurions AGM and when various positions were discussed, offered to become Centurions' Chairperson - an offer the meeting couldn't turn down. Claire is an athlete you'll be seeing and hearing much more from; as one keen to play her part in reviving our long-distance race walking scene.

CARRYING ON IN HIGH OFFICE

Here's a picture of Race Walking Association's popular Chris Hobbs - proudly wearing a promotional top! Readers were previously advised that your Race Walking Association Vice President had announced not to step up to become President - and you were all asked to consider who you'd like to nominate for this top position. Readers appear to have been undecided, as no names came from you. So, Chris offered his services as President for another term of office - so please all give him your full enthusiastic support.





Dear Dave ...

THE DEMISE OF RACE WALKING

Thanks for your latest newsletter read with great interest. I've been a runner/race walker for 63 years now and still active. Although numbers are dwindling there are still active walkers not supporting their local events which we must do. I travel from west Wales to support the Sussex races only to find active Sussex/southern walkers not supporting the events. I don't support the Enfield League as logistically it's difficult for me to get to, but I feel guilty that I don't! Also, us older walkers are put off by strict judging in 'A' races for bent knee although we do our best to walk correctly (I've never been DQ'd as yet but I'm starting to get warnings). Do I travel a 500 mile round trip for an A race and risk not finishing? Another thing I notice is that top race walkers never turn out in club races to support them! Or do they think it's beneath them? Let's hope race walking revives.

Paul Gaston (Surrey Walking Club)

FOR ENTRANTS' INFORMATION

One important note as we finalise details of the Tri Counties 2k Walk - just to ensure there are no misunderstandings: **as a County Championship the race will be judged in accordance with UKA 'A' Rules.** To further ensure that the race is a good advert for Race Walking there will be an **entry time standard of 12:30.** This will also keep it neat within the timetable when published - 15 mins of Track time being sufficient.

Dave Annetts (Hertfordshire Race Walking Secretary)

Adds Hon Ed: This event is still listed as 'provisional' so we'll keep you posted.

BATTERSEA PARK VAC SUMMER SERIES

For your diary. Veterans AC summer series; B; road; all; Battersea Park (Bandstand), London SW11 4NJ; 7:00 pm. Allow 5 – 10 minutes from registration to start. Dates: 2 April 5k road, 7 May 5m road, 4 June 5k road and 16 July 5k road.

David Hoben

NOT ME

Reading your latest Essex Walker and the lengthy remarks on the State of British Race Walking it occurred to us that as the article is so lengthy (nearly 2 pages) that the contributor should really have been bold enough to provide his or her name. Name and address supplied probably makes many readers feel that it may have been me and perhaps the same going on the remarks made after the last Middlesbrough Centurion 100 Miles Walk to which Chris Flint reacted so angrily. As Editor I think you need to be careful publishing things where the contributor is unwilling to disclose themselves. Your thoughts would be much appreciated.

Bill Sutherland

Adds Hon Ed: As in most reputable publications, contributions from "name and address supplied" readers are accepted. It's anonymous ones which fail to be published.

APPRECIATION

I am always interested in what's going on with race walking and in particular what is happening locally. The "Essex Walker" fanzine is always a must-read as soon as it appears in my in-box and I make a point of reading every word and having a chuckle at the appropriate time.

Chris Foster

HELP NEEDED

The Essex AA Indoor Track & Field championships are being held at Lee Valley over the weekend 2/3 March 2024. Volunteers are sought to help to cover jobs such as assisting the registration team, assisting the seeding team, helping with photo finish results, running results to announcer/presentation team, raking sand pits, etc. Please can you pass on this message to your membership. Can all willing volunteers please contact Rick Thompson at:

1968 MEXICO OLYMPIAN's 85th BIRTHDAY

Our previous edition mentioned Brian Eley's milestone birthday. It prompted one of our notable readers, **Bob Hughes**, to send in his comment: *"Brian a proper competitor and true iron man, full respect from a fellow Mexico Olympian. Send him my very best wishes."*

TRYING TO SAVE OUR ESSEX COUNTY INDOOR MILE CHAMPIONSHIP

I would have been doing the indoor mile this year at the Essex Champs but didn't realise until the schedule was out that it had been withdrawn. It's a shame we're having to prove we want the event at another event rather than giving us a last chance at our own event. Post-covid certain things have taken time to recover. I believe this is possibly one of them. I had never missed a county indoors event but have now not attended since the last pre-covid event in 2019. Thank you to the Davids and all those who have made efforts on the walker's behalf here.

Keith Palmer (Essex & Southend)

FROM ONE WHO PUTS SO MUCH BACK INTO OUR SPORT

I would also like to say a big thank you to all those attending RWA AGM, and for the many contributions throughout the year in keeping our great athletics event moving forwards.

Athletics-wise, I keep my hand in; I'm an honorary life president of Devon athletics and will show my face at their AGM next month at Exeter. I still answer requests to give talks at schools and various organisations. Last summer I gave four career-related presentations in one day at my daughter's high school; a selection of other parents (be they medics, lawyers, artists et al) were asked for their contributions. I might have some media work with the Paris Olympics.

Essex Walker is good at copying me into athletics' news including race walk matters. Only this morning I was forwarded recent Steyning road race results. That in itself brought back fond memories of taking part in what was usually a highly competitive annual men's 15kms. This year great to see a few familiar names still racing. Continued good luck and success in your ultra-distance challenges.

Chris Maddocks

SAD NOTIFICATION

A sad reflection on the passing of a colleague. Dave Maynard, Cambridge Harriers who passed away on 16.9.23 (just days after his wife), aged 89. He was a Walker, Organiser and a Starter.

Glyn Jones (RWA Chairman)

Readers' comments:

- *"I have many great memories of Dave and his wife Vicki. Dave always put in a very respectable time in races."* **Reg Denny**
- *"I remember him well in yesteryear at many Internationals and Opens from the Cambridge Harriers Club HQ in Glenhurst Avenue being my first Senior GB International in 1968. May he be Resting in Peace after his stalwart service to Race Walking. With sincere condolences."* **Bill Sutherland**

NEWS FROM JUNE CORK

Re the Essex One Mile Indoors, it's taken a huge hit in recent times, hasn't it; it's very disappointing. It may be a Cinderella event, but I've always found it to be the most friendly.

Over at Basildon for the Essex XC Champs a couple of weeks back, a familiar figure appeared before me: *"What are you doing here at Cross Country?"* I enquired of Dan King. He told me that he hasn't been doing any walking training recently. Mind you, he and Dom have put in a great number of miles and competed at super-level for what seems a very long time; even our stars will be calling it a day at some point. I assume he "enjoyed" his tour round the mud-flats and hills of Gloucester Park.

June Cork

A READER'S OPINION

I believe like many others that the RWA has to radically change to meet the needs of the athletic world today as sadly we are clearly living in the past with no urgency to change anything and very little of any significance is happening. One only has to look at Park Run and its massive success and attraction to all to see where we could be going, but no, we continue to mark time year after year!

Bill Sutherland (Highgate Harriers)

A WELCOME BACK FOR STALWARTS

Good to see Jimmy Ball and Stuart Maidment on the result sheet!

Ed Shillabeer C590

WELCOME PROGRESS

Most of our meetings are now held online and I do miss that personal interaction. I have news ... I was a competitor in the Presidents 5km as part of the Midlands Masters winter series. I had a slow race, but Wendy contacted me to tell me I had won my age group. I was delighted with my first racewalking medal, even though there was very little competition among ladies of a certain age 😊. Dad (Lew Mockett RIP - Ed) would be laughing at me now!! Anyhow, Wendy suggested I join their Ladies team in Nuneaton and get some training from Ann Wheeler.

Hilary McDermott

MEMORY LANE

I spoke to Roger Mills when we sat together at the 2014 London walks luncheon. It was all good humoured but Roger recalled neither of my recollections:

1. At a **1982 trial race**. After Roger deservedly won the race, he told me that when we were battling for the lead he played on my naivety - when he saw us passing by judges, he would occasionally put a spurt on knowing I would respond/panic and lose technical concentration (words to that effect). Caught on the hop, I duly got the judges' chop.
2. At **Yeovil 1982**, Roger and his wife were on holiday in the South West and unexpectedly turned up for a SW track 10kms. Prior to the start he asked what I was hoping to do. I replied a PB sub-45 would be nice. He said, stick to me and I'll help you get it. I did and walked a few seconds under. In the finishing straight I had the audacity to try and pass him. Roger was having none of it and with a last push edged me out. Everyone was a winner.

Chris Maddocks

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