

# Essex Walker

Editor: Dave Ainsworth

## DUDINCE 35K held on 23 April 2022

The King and Queen of UK endurance competed in a world class field in good conditions in Dudince, Slovakia. **Dom King** performed solidly and finished 40th in a field of approximately 100 male walkers his time of 2 hrs 45 mins 49 secs and overall was 17th European walker. Dan King retired after 14kms with a leg injury. **Bethan Davies** was 18th in a good time of 2hrs 58 minutes and 30 seconds. Her pace judgement was excellent until the last 5kms, just missing out on a world class time and qualifying time for the world European champs. However, in the next year her time will improve and reach the standard required. The women's race was won in 2hrs 43 mins by the London Olympic 20kms champion. The men's race was won by the Italian Olympic champion Stano Massimo in 2hrs 29 minutes 9 seconds. Dom King will now wait to see if he is selected for the next major World and European championships on his rankings and qualifying time over 50kms last year. Both Dom and Dan will race in the world vets champs in Finland.

*Report by **George Nibre***

## THE NAME GAME

Southend-on-Sea AC is no more. To reflect this Estuary town's elevation to City status, the Club have upped their own title accordingly. They're now known as **City of Southend-on-Sea AC**. A shorter version can be used: **City of Southend AC**. For programme compilers and results sheets' writers, they'll be known as **COSAC**. We wish them well when competing under their new name.

This newly-named Club recently held their Annual General Meeting, at which members opted for experience at the helm as they showed their contentment with matters by re-electing into key positions **Ray Pearce** (President), **Ron Dawson** (Chairman), **June Cork** (Hon Secretary, Membership Officer and Date Protection Officer), **Keith Palmer** (Hon Treasurer) and **Mike Jeffery** (Website Manager). Among positions left unfilled were Trophies Officer, Press Officer and Walking Secretary. However, Keith Palmer, who has enjoyed successful appearances in our Essex County's shorter distance Championship walks (outdoors and indoors) has a key position. It's hoped the City of Southend-on-Sea Athletic Club can find a Walking Secretary - who can commence the task of reigniting serious interest in our event. *We'd all love to see them with a strong walks squad again.*

## BILL WRIGHT RIP

Like many race walking newcomers Bill entered the sport via family connections as his father Percy Wright was an established Belgrave Harriers race walker. Bill followed in his footsteps by signing for the Bels. Percy was a talented cartoonist who drew pictures of race walkers, so Bill could be in a collection somewhere! Bill moved on to join Southend-on-Sea AC who then had several "big name" race walkers. Bill had to work hard to even make a scoring 4 (all races needed 4 scorers in such times) - but he did, even in National Championships, as proven by his impressive collection of medals/plaques/certificates/prizes. Bill resided at Basildon and taught at Hornchurch College of Further Education. He regularly trained with 1968 Olympian John Webb. John recalls travelling to Market Bosworth with Bill for a race which was part of a local festival. It started with a lap around a cow field, before an out-and-back stretch on country lanes and then finishing with another circuit of a cow field. In past decades there were many such local enjoyable races which top walkers used to support. Among competitors was our 1967 National 20 Miles' Champion the Reverend Roy Lodge - who mentions this event in his tribute. Bill and Janice often talked about that Market Bosworth race. They used to be members of a health club at Bosworth Hall, and Bill would go out for a training walk from there - avoiding the cowpats! While in Basildon Bill spent a year working for Carreras Tobacco Co. He talked about when he was given 200 cigarettes for the honour of representing the

firm in the annual Tobacco Trades Athletics Championships. When he left Basildon the cigarettes were left behind!

Bill, who achieved Welsh International status, regularly supported the Principality's Championships. In 1976 on Cwmbran track he became their 10,000 Metres Senior Champion in 51.29. A year later he was silver medallist at the same distance as John Eddershaw broke the tape. Earlier in 1969 he was a bronze medallist at 3,000 metres as 1st and 2nd places went to Roy Hart and Dave Rosser respectively (both Commonwealth Games representatives in their time). His Welsh senior appearance came in a Home Countries International over 10,000 metres at a rainy Aldersley Track (Wolverhampton) in 1976 when he clocked a respectable 51:41.2. It was 2-a-side and involving Ken Carter and Dennis Holly (England), Alan Buchanan and Graham Scott (Scotland) and John Eddershaw and Bill Wright (Wales).

When Bill moved to Nuneaton he joined Nuneaton Harriers AC for whom he enjoyed successful times in Midland Area races. He established himself as a respected coach in which capacity his "know how" was passed on to many others. Bill was very proud to see Andy Penn compete in both the Olympic and Commonwealth Games. The 1992 Barcelona Olympics meant as much to him, maybe more than being Honorary Treasurer. As an experienced judge he officiated at International level having been put forward by Welsh Athletics.

He was prominent in the administration of our athletics discipline when serving 29 years as our Race Walking Association's Honorary Treasurer. In the RWA centenary publication "A Hundred Years Afoot" it's written that Bill's the only Association office holder to fill the same position continuously for over a quarter of a century. He was elected an esteemed RWA Life Member and served an active 1995/96 term of President.

Among other sporting interests is football where he'd been a loyal Nuneaton Borough FC supporter in good times and bad (often the latter). Once in a higher position in a now named National League they've slipped to the 7th tier Southern League Premier Central Division. But in whatever League Bill wanted them to do well and he cheered them when playing both home and away.

We say farewell to a true "good-un" and express our sincere and profound condolence to Janice and all other family members.

**DA**

#### **Tributes to Bill Wright:**

- Bill was an excellent RWA treasurer and a great human being. He will be missed. **Peter Marlow**
- Seriously, I am once again sad to read such sad news. Bill and Janice were such keen supporters and Bill was always willing to share interesting stories and sound advice. Sincere condolences to all concerned. **Cath Duhig**
- So Sad. A premature loss. **Edmund Shillabeer** (Edbanger C590)
- Thanks for letting us know. John (Webb) said he used to go training from his house. Sarah Webb
- Like so many we'd known Bill for years and years, and the Race Walking Association owes much to him for his long service as its Honorary Treasurer during my time as Honorary Secretary. Our thoughts and sympathy go to Janice and the family. **Peter Cassidy and Pauline Wilson**
- I remember the event at Market Bosworth and competing with John Webb and Bill Wright in a cow field. Bill was a true gentleman, kind and courteous of heart. This was in my early days of Race Walking and Bill gave me advice that held me in good stead for the future. My sincere condolence to Janice and all his family. May he rest in peace. **Roy Lodge**
- Another piece of really sad news. Bill was a really good bloke, always friendly and helpful and an absolute stalwart whether on the road or officiating. We can't afford to lose people like Bill, it's terrible news. **Steve Uttley**
- Sad to hear of the passing of Bill Wright. He was a legend in our sport being Treasurer of the Race Walking Association for countless years. A very good team player. A great loss indeed. May he rest in peace. Sincere condolence to all his family and many friends. **Bill and Kath Sutherland**

- This is extremely sad news, and such a sad loss to family, friends, and our race walking community. He will be sadly missed by so many, it has been a privilege to have known him, and been in the pleasure of his company. I first knew Bill when I started race walking as a child in the 70's, and again when I returned to race walking. He had been so supportive and encouraging to me as he was with so many other athletes. I had been in contact with Bill and Janice whilst he was in hospital with a broken leg, and when he returned home to recover post operation. The last time I had been in contact with Bill and Janice he seemed to be making good progress. He was a passionate Nuneaton Borough supporter. What a wonderful man, Bill was great company to be in. A sad day and sad loss to Welsh Athletics. Too many of our race walking community have passed away in recent times. **Mark Williams** - another Welsh Walker
- I was so sorry to hear the news about Bill. Although I have not really seen him for couple of years (except on Zoom) we knew each other since the "sixties" (rather like many others). He was always ready to share a joke and a laugh before and after a race ... but during an event he was a true competitor, but like many respectful of his opposition. He did sterling work for RWA and Midland AAA and had a keen financial brain. He will be sorely missed. **Peter Selby**

## ANIMAL FARM



Former International, respected Centurion and committed animal lover Don Cox - owner of the hero celebrity dog "Bowza" - has taken a newcomer into his home. He's adopted a chicken as a pet 🐔 ... company for Bowza and Kaz.

Apparently a fox had been preying on chickens in the area so he decided to bring this golden chicken indoors at night for safety. Don says that "she pays her rent with eggs"!

[youtu.be/iJuHrVrxKIk](https://youtu.be/iJuHrVrxKIk)

## FIXTURES

MAY	8	British Masters 10,000m Championships	Horspath	TBA
	9	Southern Vets AC League 2,000m	Lee Valley Track	6.40 pm
	10	VAC 5 Miles Champions + Open	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
	14	Essex County AA 3,000m Championship	Melbourne Park	TBA
	15			
	21	Cecil Gittins Memorial Walks 2.5K/5K/10K ( <i>incl Enf League</i> )	Gravesend Cyclopark	3.30 pm
	28	Centurions Social Walk ( <i>Constable Country</i> ) 7.25 miles	Dedham (Milsoms Hotel)	10.30 am
JUN	11	Moulton Open 5 Miles ( <i>Enfield League</i> )	Moulton Village	12.50 pm
		+ YAG & Novices 1 Mile		12.30 pm
	11-12	BMAF Track & Field Championships	Derby	TBA
	19	BMAF 5K Championship	Horwich	11.00 am
	20	Southern Vets AC League 2,000m	Stevenage	7.15 pm
	25	LICC/Enfield League 5,000m + 1K and 3K	StoneX Stadium (Cophall)	10.30 am
	24-26	UK Athletics Championships	Manchester	TBA
	25	LICC/Enfield League 5,000m + 1K & 3K	StoneX Stadium (Cophall)	10.30 am
	29	SWC club meeting Open 4 Miles	Norman Park	7.30 pm
JUL	12	VAC 5 Miles	Battersea Park	7.00 pm
	16	England Athletics U21/U23 Championships	Bedford	TBA
	24	LICC/Enfield League 5,000m + 1K & 3K	StoneX Stadium (Cophall)	10.30 am
	31	Commonwealth Games Friendship Walks (various distances)	Birmingham	TBA

## CENTURIONS TRAINING WALKS

A series of training walks (6, 8 and 12 hours) organised by Steve Kemp, to assist race walkers in their build-up to the Middlesbrough 100 Miles, are now being held from Belfairs Park, Leigh-on-Sea. They will be held each weekend, either Saturday or Sunday, and will usually start at 8.00am (although this may change for the longer distances). Contact Steve Kemp at [racewalker@sky.com](mailto:racewalker@sky.com) or 07860 617899 for further details, or to confirm interest in participation or support in the events.

## WOODFORD TUESDAY WALKS

As we enter the merry month of May, we've still **no** announcement from our hosts Woodford Green with Essex Ladies AC about their 2022 Woodford Graded Open Meetings at Ashtons Track (which traditionally feature 3,000m walking races). Best advice we can offer are the often-used words of "watch this space".

## INTERESTING HISTORY LESSON

Over the years a number of Essex Walker readers have enquired who Molly Barnett was? The good lady's name is commemorated annually in the Molly Barnett Open Walks - once an occasion at which many walkers travelled to appear. This included numerous Essex-based readers, as results have shown. Sadly, it's not quite the same nowadays, but thankfully this long-established enjoyable meeting keeps going. Race Walking Association Chairman Glyn Jones has kindly given us the lowdown:

"The Molly Barnett Walks were instigated in the early 1970s following the death of Molly Barnett in November 1972. Molly Barnett was the mother of Judith Rushforth (nee Barnett) who was the wife of Jim Rushforth, one of the original members of Greyfriars Walking Club, Coventry who staged the event. Molly had been a helper at previous walks and events and the Barnett family donated the cup in memory of Molly to be awarded annually to the winning team of the Boy's event." *Glyn Jones*

## SOUTHERN COUNTIES VETERANS AC INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP - LEE VALLEY

Dave Hoben advises us of a result and also of another PB for Grazia at the SCVAC Indoor 3k champs.

### Southern Counties Veterans AC Championships

Lee Valley  
2 Apr 22

#### 3000W X35

Pos	Perf	Name	AG	Year	Coach	Club	SB	PB	
1	14:03.79	i David Annetts	<b>SB</b>	V55	M	23	North Herts/Veterans	14:03.79	13:36.25
2	15:50.42	i Grazia Manzotti	<b>PB</b>	V50	W	18	Tonbridge/Southern Counties Vets	15:50.42	15:50.42
3	16:36.71	i Melanie Peddle		V50	W	19	Loughton/Eastern Masters	15:56.12	15:44.60

Essex Walker doesn't normally include results from here, there and everywhere - as we don't want to steal Race Walking Record's thunder. However, hot-on-the-heels of an appalling turnout by race walkers in our combined Essex & Eastern Counties Indoor Championship - again in a meeting which saw a complete and varied athletics programme - we present a poor numerical image. In EW's last edition a respected contributor stated our need to be more involved in mainstream athletics if we're to make progress in reviving our chosen discipline. How much longer will event organisers keep faith with race walkers if this is how we reward them when races are put on for us? **DA**

## NEWS OF AN ESSEX-BASED CENTURION

Always in the news is Halstead Road Runners' member **Andrew Wilmot**, who many saw race walking at last year's Moulton 5 Miles. Andrew became Centurion 997 at Newmarket's Rowley Mile course in 2003 clocking 23:33.19. Andrew is better known in the running world where he's achieved fame by completing so many marathons. On Easter Saturday he crossed the finishing line (5 hours 43 minutes) in his 815th! That was a multi-terrain event in strong sunshine at Barrow in Suffolk. *What a wonderful record!*

Essex Walker 415 (May/June 2022)



**RACEWALKING REUNION**  
MAY 14TH 2022  
4pm - 9pm  
COVENTRY RUGBY CLUB  
CV1 3BH  
**COST £6 Per Person**  
BUFFET  
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## WALKERS' PARADE

The funeral of Eric Hall was held on Tuesday 19 April 2022 at the Colchester Crematorium. The race walking fraternity was represented by the following:

Left to right: Dave Ainsworth, Glyn Jones, Amos Seddon, Jon May, Ron Wallwork, Carl Lawton, Gerry O'Doherty (Essex County AA President), Lance Williams and Pam Ficken



Photographer: Joan Wallwork

**Denis Sheppard** commented: "A nice tribute. Good to see you all looking so well."

## CHARITY DONATION - FAMILY WISHES

Two notable and respected octogenarian race walkers with Essex connections have recently and sadly passed on. In date order of their demise we said farewell to **Eric Hall** and **Bill Wright**. Those unable to attend their funeral services may wish to mark their passing by making charity donations. Details of each family's chosen organisations are given below:

**ERIC HALL RIP** - "Dementia UK". Please use this link: [www.memorygiving.com/ericwilliamhall](http://www.memorygiving.com/ericwilliamhall) or send cheques to: c/o Eustace King & Birkin Funeral Directors, 87 Church Road, Tiptree, COLCHESTER. Essex. CO5 0HB.

**BILL WRIGHT RIP** - "Mary Ann Evans Hospice" and "National Deaf Children's Society". Send cheques to: c/o Devall & Son Funeral Directors, 2 Wembrook Street, The Green, Attleborough, NUNEATON. Warwickshire, CV11 4FJ.

## NEW APPOINTMENT

It's often hard to keep track of leading administrative figures at Britain's various athletics organisations. UK Athletics now have a new Chief Executive in **Jack Buckner**, a successful runner in the '80s and early '90s. At 5,000m he collected Gold at the 1986 European Champions, Silver at the Commonwealth Games that same year and bronze in the 1987 IAAF World Championships. Jack has a 3.51.57 1 mile PB. He replaced interim Chief Executive Mark Munro who'll continue serving UKA as Chief Operations Officer. Jack's previous role was as Chief Executive of British Swimming where he enjoyed great success, particularly at a delayed Tokyo Olympics. We wish him well - and of course, our often-asked questions as newcomers appear - is to enquire what is their opinion and knowledge of race walking. Anybody know?

## UNIVERSITY NURSING AWARD IN HONOUR OF CHELSEA O'RAWE-HOBBS RIP

The University of Essex (where Chelsea attained her nursing degree) made a donation to Essex Air Ambulance in her memory at their recent annual conferment of degree ceremony, and announced that they have set up a new 'award for excellence' in her name which will be awarded each year for a deserving student.

## RAY FLYNN RIP



Ray became Centurion 512 at the 1973 Bristol 100 Miles in late September 1973 aged 19, making him the 2nd youngest qualifier - after 18 years old F T Lock of Ashcombe AC in the 1909 24 hours' track race at a famous, but now demolished, White City Stadium. (*Thanks to Centurions' archivist Sue Clements for that information.*) Ray clocked 21:40.13 with London Vidarians club colleague Jim Hurley taking the next number (C513) in 21:58.26. Two other Vidarians on the programme were Alan Jenkins and Dave Ainsworth - worrying for him, the latter is the only one of that quartet still with us. In the race now retired Essex Police Inspector Barry Daymond became Centurion 508 in 20:13.42 with Centurion 413 John Hedgethorpe (who'd won the 1969 Bristol 100 in 18:48.59) as his attendant. Brighton's Dave Boxall C464 was, as so often, a convincing victor in 18:42.23 on a most testing 10 laps' rural circuit. The 1973 programme also lists recently departed Geoff Hunwicks (Ilford AC) who was attended by stalwarts Tony Perkins and Len Ruddock and C557 Ken Roost (Stevenage & North Herts), Peter Worth (Verlea) and Hew Neilson (Woodford Green). Also listed were the top officials: Chief Judge was affable Chris Newman, Chief Timekeeper was the legendary C116 Tom Reynolds, among judges was C100 Tom Richardson and among recorders was C580 George Hallifax. Organiser was another stalwart C356 Chas Shelley.

In those times Ray was in the Royal Air Force and had a lengthy spell stationed at RAF Chivenor near Barnstaple in Devon (now a Royal Marines base), from where he became a popular figure on a then thriving West Country race walking scene, in which he turned out for Dawlish & South Devon. After his RAF demob he settled in County Sligo and recorded many impressive times in the colours of Calry AC. and was acknowledged as a talented coach and mentor. Ray put a vast amount of time into officiating and rose up the ranks to fill a number of important positions on the National scene and wider. He was a most welcome attender at The Centurions' memorable 2011 Centenary Dinner in the House of Common, which was booked for us by then Colchester MP Sir Bob Russell who also hosted this occasion. The "Irish Examiner" newspaper's tribute to Ray stated that "he was the kind of Swiss Army knife everyman of athletics that the sport relies heavily on". This newspaper also described him as "a tireless Evangelist". [Irish athletics reels from the loss of another tireless evangelist and foot soldier, Ray Flynn \(irishexaminer.com\)](http://irishexaminer.com)

Ray officiated at the "Irish Examiner" National Road relays in Dublin on Sunday 24 April and suffered a serious heart attack on his way home. Fortunately someone in the car knew first-aid and gave the necessary attention to the sufferer, who was taken to the Midland Hospital in Mullingar, the County Town of Westmeath. Sadly things didn't go Ray's way and during the early hours of Monday evening he so sadly passed away, leaving behind his wife Liz, son Calvin and daughters Rachel, Edel and Zola. The latter was first woman in the 2018 "Irish Examiner" Cork City Marathon clocking 2:58.05 after which she praised her father Ray for his support. Ray was a most genial and popular athlete - and to his immediate family and all other relatives we express our profound condolences on their loss. **DA**

Photo source: [Death Notice of Raymond \(Ray\) Flynn](#)

### Tributes to Ray Flynn:

**Richard Cole** was amongst Essex Walker readers who expressed sadness at the news of Ray Flynn's passing. Other tributes are noted below:

- I would pick up Jim Hurley and Ray Flynn at Exeter Countess Wear café and go from there to London sevens for the Vids. By the time Dawlish and South Devon club was formed he had, I think, left the RAF to return to Sligo. We met again occasionally in Ireland, including a National 20km there with Max (Chris Maddocks - Ed), second to Jimmy McDonald I think, and my time was significant for a reason I don't remember!! I do remember my first and still the best Guinness in Knock airport waiting to fly home!!! **Ed Shillabeer**
- A piece of me died along with this man. I am going to miss you so much Ray Flynn. We hit the highs and the lows, we had the laughs and the rows but we had a very special bond like no other. I can't believe you are gone but I suppose a spirit like yours was never destined to grow old with your body. You have left a great legacy and affected so many people's lives in such a positive way. I owe you so much but I'm happy I knew that. We will never see another like Ray again. RIP my friend. **Robert Heffernan**
- Ray was a member of our Dawlish & South Devon team in its early years and a really nice chap and a real lively character. **Andy Bainborough (C670)**
- What dreadfully sad news. The only plus is that someone was with him when it happened. Oh, and the last thing he did was watch some athletics. **Cath Duhig**
- A very sad day and a memorable article in tribute. I remember Ray being around in my era. I particularly remember a Paddy DAVIES who was a member of Highgate Harriers and came from Sligo too. On a very hot day he took part in the 1969 RWA National 20 Miles at South Croydon on a very hilly gravel hill, where one side of the course had been laid with fresh tarmac on previous day and stuck to everyone's feet on route! Last seen lying flat out on the roundabout at the bottom of the hill. I got 3rd behind Nihill and Eley and that was the day that gave me the belief that I could medal in the 1970 Edinburgh Commonwealth Games. The 60's and 70's were the Golden era of British Race Walking. May Ray Rest in Peace with his great friend the late Jim Hurley of London Vidarians Race Walking Club. With sincere condolences. **Bill Sutherland**
- Ray was a strong team member of the now defunct London Vidarians WC, and his contribution to the growing reputation of the Vids as a long distance club was well known. Sad news and all condolences to the family. **Chris Flint** (former London Vids WC President)
- I said on Facebook I'd known Ray for over 30 years; thinking back, it's more like 40 years. 68 is way too young and such a shock. Savour what time we have. **Chris Maddocks**

The family's chosen charity for donations in memory of Ray Flynn is **The Irish Heart Foundation**, c/o Sean Feehily's Funeral Services, Cartron Cross, Duck Street, SLIGO. F91 EH98. Ireland.

#### INSPIRATIONAL WORDS from MR MOTIVATOR

- "I shouldn't wait for my ship to come in. I should swim out to it."
- "There's an old saying, 'You get old when you stop being young' ..."
- "We should never say, 'I'm going to do'. We should just do it, because the only thing we can be sure of is now. Enjoy today!"

#### MEMORY LANE features ... NOW IS THE HOUR

From north of the border, Alec Ross has delved into records to unearth a copy of his Highgate Harriers One Hour Walks' result sheet, as held on **28 September 1968** at Copthall Stadium (since called *Allianz Park* and nowadays known as *The StoneX Stadium*). Needless to say this double-sided result sheet was a Jack Goswell production. Competitors had to walk as far as they could in 60 minutes and it was graded (by current form) into 4 sections: 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' which respectively saw 20, 41, 53 and 54 starters. A packed card also featured a Boys 1 Mile with 34 finishers and a St Dunstan's Men's Handicap Mile which was supported by 9 entrants plus their guides. *What turnouts we had in the '60s!*

That afternoon's only walker exceeding 8 miles - Peter Fullager of Basildon AC in the 'A' Section - covered 8 miles 319 yards. He'd been a serious, but unsuccessful, contender for GB 1968 Mexico Olympic 20K selection. Completing the top 6 in order were Jake Warhurst, Bill Sutherland, Colin Young, Roger Mills and Len Duquemin. The 'B' Section was won by the host club's Alec Ross with 7 miles 1121 yards to his credit

- just 9 yards ahead of fellow Scots athlete Alan Buchanan. Completing the top 6 in order were Dave Rosser, Brian Armstrong, Dave Stevens and Paul Maidment. The 'C' Section were led home by recently departed Geoff Hunwicks who recorded 7 miles 732 yards. Completing the top 6 in order were Dennis Holly, future Olympian Wilf Wesch, Richard Emsley, Lyn Atterbury and Steve Gower. The 'D' Section saw only R Fortune of Essex Beagles pass 7 miles, doing so by 42 yards. The top 6 were completed in order by R Evans of Brighton, G Lee of Essex Police, S Chance from Borough of Enfield, J Brooker of Newham and Bill Fenlon also from Enfield.

A team race was held with a scoring 4 of those who'd covered the furthest total distance from across all Sections. Leicester's star quarter of Messrs G Toone, M Tolley, P Markham and M Blythe won easily - indeed all 4 scorers came from 'A' Sections top 13 - and just missing a team place was future Olympian Brian Adams (15th). Hosts - Highgate Harriers - were 2nd team scoring W Sutherland, A Ross, L Dick and L K Evans) with 3rd place going to the Bels (L Duquemin, J Moullin, G Cameron and P Duncan). In the team race was a Junior Trophy with, again, 4 scorers coming from across the Sections. Ilford AC won scoring Roger Mills, Brian Armstrong, Geoff Hunwicks and Keith Phillips with an aggregate distance covered of 29 miles 899 yards. 2nd junior team were Steyning AC (R Emsley, K Emsley, S Ring and K B Ring) who accounted for 27 miles 1,089 yards.

A well supported Boys Mile saw two break 8 minutes as the tape was broken by A Grant (Basildon AC) in 7 minutes 46 seconds with Ilford's Laurence Dordoy 2nd in 7.55. Newham's Dave Maynard completed the frame in 8.03. The St Dunstan's Mile was a victory for W Miller in 9.08 with Ilford AC's Roy Mendham 2nd in 9.09, the same time as 3rd placed F Barratt. St Dunstan's were winners in another way - as a collection taken during this meeting for their worthy cause was generously supported by donations.

This race was originally reported in the [Race Walking Record \(November 1968\)](#).



#### **IN THE MONEY**

Walkers with Essex connections were again prominent in your latest Race Walking Association [200 Club](#) monthly draw, as Jack Thomas won a top £25 prize with Basildon's John Sales taking second prize of £15. Third out of the hat for a tenner was Midlander David Ratcliffe.

If you want some RWA 200 Club action please contact Mark Easton at: [rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rwatreasurer@yahoo.co.uk)

#### **GOOD MAN GLEN**

West Bergholt based Glen Robertson is still on the active list. Despite the setback of a touch of arthritis in both knees, we're pleased to hear that determined Glen still manages to support his 2 local parkuns which are held in nearby Colchester. In the colours of Colchester Harriers he was one of 2 Club members gaining Centurion status in the August 1996 100 miles held around Colchester's Lower Castle Park. Glen clocked 23:10.45 to claim number 946. Colleague Jerry Everett, who was also on the event's Organising Committee, showed his fortitude over a difficult and testing final 20 miles when *digging deep* to clock 23:47.37 and become Centurion 951. Others joining The Centurions that day included popular Midlands '*postie*' John Fenton C947, Sue Clements C950 who was to hold a number of important positions with the Centurions and Frans Leijters C949 who went on to fill a Secretary's role with the Dutch Centurions. 39 started/26 finished/1 DQ. As for Glen, he's enjoying a long athletics career during which he's only twice ever failed to finish: the 1995 100 Miles around the Queen's Carriageway of Battersea Park when he reached 80 miles, but with blisters so painful he was unable to press ahead - and in a 40 miles' trail race which he'd started despite suffering cold/flu symptoms. We wish Glen well and hope to see him at one of our meetings/functions where a warm welcome awaits.

#### **STILL GOING STRONG**

Former Civil Service Champion Alan Ellam who used to amass Enfield League points for the host Club, and appears on all-time event records for Colchester Harriers is still involved in walking. Alan will always

be remembered for his *trademark* fast start - a tactic which served him well, as his awards' collection proves. We'd love to see him getting quickly into his racing stride again. Alan recently led a "University of the 3rd Age" walk of 8.75 miles. Who knows, perhaps some of his walks' followers may have enough pace in them to try out power walking - and maybe more? Alan reports that, apart from a few minor ailments, he's fine; and we're pleased to hear it.

## **RAY PLATT'S REFLECTIONS OF CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNING**

We recently re-published Ray's poem about becoming a Centurion, and we include another of his musings about his experience of cross-country running. This originally appeared in [Essex Walker \(February 2005\)](#). As most of our race walkers belong to Athletics Clubs which offer other events, and most will have done cross-country runs in their time, this may sound all too familiar ...

### **THE CROSS-COUNTRY RACE**

by Ray Platt

As I stand at the line  
I gaze all around  
Are these the right shoes  
For this treacherous ground?  
Should I wear studs  
Long spikes or soft leather?  
Oh God how I wish I had  
Studied the weather

My hands are all red  
My legs are so white  
I do wish my shorts  
Were not quite so tight  
With thermal tops  
And rolled down socks  
My fingers grasp the bottle top

The gun goes off – a sudden push  
I find myself astride a bush  
I rise from the ground and chase thereafter  
To echoing sounds of the crowd's wicked laughter  
One by one I pass them by  
I know today that I can fly  
If only I could keep this pace  
Then, surely, I should win this race

The miles go by  
I start to tire  
My face is wet  
As I begin to perspire  
As I round the last bend  
I sight the end  
I know my last breath  
Could be my best friend

The finish line arrives at last  
My mud-spattered legs give their last blast  
The cross-country race that I've just run  
Could either be grief or hysterical fun.



### **“A TRADITION NOBLY UPHELD”**

These words are inscribed on George Formby's grave in Warrington Cemetery. They could apply to the athletic Tuson family as Ken Tuson's son William ("Will") recently attained a high 6th position in the Layer de la Haye 5 miles run clocking 35.35 on a scenic countryside course. Will belongs to Halstead Runners. His father Ken was a member of a famous Southend-on-Sea AC squad of the early and mid-70s, which had a number of big names on their books. Ken is forever in our memories as the 1971 Stock Exchange London-to-Brighton walk winner in 9:04.32. It was a Southend 1-2 that day, as 2nd after an epic contest was club colleague the late Jimmy Venn who clocked 9:06.03. We wish Will well in his future races.

Photograph: [Halstead Road Runners – Posts | Facebook](#)



## Dear Dave ...

### WOODFORD WALKS IMAGE

I enjoyed looking at the photo in your latest fanzine showing the start of one of the Woodford Walks from 2007, which I remember being held on a Wednesday evening (to make it WWW), as opposed to a Tuesday as described in the piece. Seeing the faces of the various characters who turned up to walk 3km brought back happy memories. It also rubber stamped my theory that after the first few yards you could determine the final places. Having looked at the photo again, I worked out what was likely to be the finishing order, and then looked at the bottom of the photo showing the results and times, and the placings were spot on!

As for me, I am now six months post-op following my ankle replacement surgery at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital at Stanmore. I am now walking slowly with a stick but pain free. I hope to resume leading my guided walks around the back streets of Holborn and Bloomsbury in the summer.

*Chris Foster*

### TRIBUTE AT THE MATCH TO BILL WRIGHT RIP

There was a minute's applause for Bill before Nuneaton Borough's home match on Easter Monday. A poignant but painful occasion for me and Alistair, who supported the Boro with his dad for 47 years. The appreciation was organised by the Supporters Trust and the Club Chairman.

*Janice Wright*

### THANKS TO WALKERS WHO ATTENDED ERIC HALL'S FUNERAL

Dad would have been pleased, surprised and humbled that you all made the effort to attend.

*Sharon (Eric's daughter)*

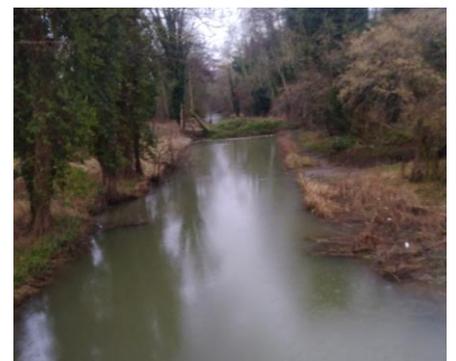
### COMMONWEALTH GAMES WALKS - TICKETS UPDATE

Commonwealth Games tickets are released ([tickets.birmingham2022.com/](https://tickets.birmingham2022.com/)) and there are tickets for the walks on Saturday/Sunday morning.

*Peter Marlow*

### BOWZA STILL MAKING THE NEWS

Hi folks, just to give you a laugh ... I still walk 2 or 3 hours or more a day with my dogs, the well-known Bowza and Kaz. Well, in Hadleigh after storms we had a few weeks ago, trees fell over the river. One afternoon, walking along the river walk, I decided to try and climb across the river on one of the fallen trees, the trees were dead held together by ivy. I got half way across and had to hold onto a branch ... well you can guess what happened, the branch broke and I ended up in the deep river. I pulled myself back to the river bank but it was steep and slippery, Bowza stood firm and I grabbed his collar and pulled myself out. Bowza has saved others in the past, maybe this time he saved me. I told my sister what I had done. She said "at 75 you should not be doing this". "WHY NOT?" I said, "I'm not dead yet."



### COMMONWEALTH GAMES MEDALLIST'S OPTIMISTIC VIEWS

I suppose what makes sport so appealing is that anything can happen on one of the most important days in an athlete's career. Fast forward to July 2022 with two highly exciting 10 kms Walks in prospect. The weather, form prior to the big day and satisfying the Judges throughout. Tactics may play a big part and windows of opportunity will be few and far between. The standards will be very high, but in straight finals the podium finish is always difficult to predict. My hope is that there is a top-class field in either race representative in numbers and as many countries as possible. We shall be there to show our support! Let's hope it lives up to the brilliant Australian show in Brisbane in 2018. Great news recently that Victoria, Australia has been chosen as the Venue for 2026. Good Luck to one and all on the day!

*Bill Sutherland*

### **ERIC HALL's FUNERAL: OUR ESSEX COUNTY AA PRESIDENT WRITES**

I was proud to be among such eminent race walkers. It's very obvious the walking community are very close knit ... and you all have huge respect for 'double Olympian' Eric. It was lovely to hear his life story told so well by his family at the service .... what an interesting man Eric was RIP. It is an honour to be President of Essex AA .... in my third year now (due to covid). I do my best to attend events out of respect to the athletes, officials, coaches and administrators who put such time and effort into our great sport of athletics. I was at the Essex pentathlon at Lee Valley last week ... heading to Witham for the Essex 10 mile road champs on Monday ... and then on to the T&F Essex champs at Chelmsford over the weekend of 14th & 15th ... it's a busy time of year presenting county medals to worthy winners. Keep up the great work you do for the race walkers of Essex and further afield ... your news sheets are always an interesting read. Keep well.

***Gerry O'Doherty***

### **FROM AN ESTABLISHED READER**

I still get Essex Walker - a great read and I look forward to it. I had a great walk today seeing deer and a red kite (rare eagle in the South). Also bumped into Hadleigh Hunt hounds. Cheers mate, you do a great job for Race Walking.

***Don Cox***

### **SAD NEWS FROM GUERNSEY**

Len Duquemin, formerly of Sarnia Walking Club and Belgrave Harriers, has passed away.

***Rob Elliott***

Adds Hon Ed: Tributes to Len will appear in the next edition of Essex Walker.

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