



Centurions Captain's Christmas Letter 2015

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Dear Fellow Centurions

Season's greetings to you all! I would like to start by saying what an amazing first year it has been for me as your Captain and I have taken great pleasure in reporting all the successes of Centurions world wide. An amazing year but, sadly, our President has acknowledged in her accompanying letter the passing of Centurions, home and abroad, including our very own past Captain Charlie Weston C.584. We shall remember them all.

This year our flagship event, the 100 miles, was held at Castletown (Isle of Man) in August. Many walkers, officials and supporters have commented on the superb organisation, led by Steve Taylor (international race walking judge) with Centurions Robbie Callister C.1108 and Jock Waddington C.1032 plus an army of local volunteers. It was so successful that the chairman of Castletown Town Commissioners wishes to host it again in 2017. Also, the results speak for themselves: an entry list of 92, 48 finishers and 32 new Centurions. Can't argue with that!

As for the race itself, it was a bit of a knife edge race but Centurion 1107 Vinny Lynch came through and won the day in a time of 19:41:21. Indeed, it was a fantastic result for Centurions as they featured very high on the results list. Centurion 1117, Janette Morgan was 1st Lady (and 3rd overall) and walking alongside Janette was Andrew Titley C1038 who came in 4th. Past Centurion Captain, Sandra Brown C 735 was 2nd Lady with a time of 20:57:26 and husband Richard, C760, finished in 10th position with a time of 21:45:23. Richard also won the Eddie McNeir Shield as the 1st male walker over 65 (apologies for divulging your age, Richard!) Ditto Sandra, for winning the Chris Shelley Trophy as 1st female walker over 65 years. Hattie Thomas C1164 (Manx Harriers) was awarded the Bill King Trophy as the youngest finisher. Manx Harriers also won the Sunday Dispatch Trophy for finishing the first team home. In the annual battle between GB and the Netherlands for the Ko v.d. Kwaak Cup - GB won!

The Centurions owe huge thanks to all the competitors, organisers, officials, Centurions, families, friends, supporters, sponsors, who made this event possible. As always, our Dutch and Belgian friends travelled to the 100 miles event, whether walking or supporting. I would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you for your continued enthusiasm with all things Centurions and especially the CVN Secretary Piet Jansen C.389 who has served as CVN Secretary for over fifty years". In November, your President, Captain, Hon. Secretary and Assistant Secretary travelled to Wijk en Aarburg to join our Dutch and Belgian members and their families at their excellent Annual Reunion Meeting. Certificates and medals were presented to all finishers in the 100 miles by our President, Ann Sayer C.599.

Other Activities and Achievements

So many! Centurions were in action in a very wide range of events at home and abroad. At home, the popular Enfield League promoted by Ron Wallwork C.893 deserves special mention: Twenty-four members of the Brother/Sisterhood took part in the 2015 Enfield Race Walking League. Twenty competed, among them two who also officiated at some races and five who officiated only. Sean Pender was the top placed Centurion in 13th position; club-mate Gary Smith was second in 18th and David Ainsworth third in 20th. Sue Clements finished 13th lady, Kathy Crilley 14th and Suz Beardsmore 20th.



Centurion League Walkers 2015

c386 Ken Livermore
c540 Dave Ainsworth

c890 Bill Sutherland
c893 Ron Wallwork

c 986 Cath Duhig
c1057 Sean Pender

c661 Mick Barnbrook
c740 Carl Lawton
c798 Pauline Wilson
c849 Chris Flint
c858 Stuart Bennett
c865 Gary Smith
*formerly Alstrachen

c933 Kathy Crilley
c934 Pam Ficken
c936 David Kates
c950 Sue Clements
c972 Paul King
c984 Peter Ryan

c1064 Ian Richards
c1094 Suzanne Beardsmore
c1095 Angie Lunderdown*
c1098 Dominic King
c1100 Daniel King
c1102 Steve Allen

The opening race of the 2016 series is on 9th January at QEII Stadium, Enfield. contact details; 01638 751 869; wallwork4@sky.com or on enfieldleague.weebly.com

Among notable achievements by Centurions: Dom King C.1098 qualified for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. Beat that! At the RWA 10km championship Centurion Ian Richards C.1064 of Steyning AC finished 3rd. Sarah Lightman C.1093 was 2nd lady at the RWA 50km Championship. Back on the Isle of Man, Centurion Richard Gerrard C.1106 set a new record of 14 hours 40 minutes at the Parish Walk. So many Centurions completed the race, almost too numerous to mention, but included Vinny Lynch and your Captain (a few hours later...!) and Ed Shillabeer C.590 gained the record as the oldest finisher. Centurions also participated in many overseas events: several 24 hour race in Bourges, Chateau Thierry, and at the last major French 24 hours race of 2015 held in St Thibault des Vignes there was success for Sandra Brown and Captain, Kathy Crilley. Martin Fisher C.788 won his spurs at Weert qualifying as a Continental Centurion and Frans Leijtens C.949 won the 24 hour race. In June, Karen Lawrie completed the Paris Alsace (formerly Paris Colmar) ultra distance event; in August, the British record for 6 days race walking in the age W65 went to Captain, Kathy Crilley, and the W40-45 record went to Suzanne Beardsmore C.1094. New Zealander Richard McChesney C.1131 competing in the 3 day race gained the NZ 48 hour record. Centurions also participated in the Nijmegen 4 day Marches (with Piet Jansens completing his 50th walk) as well as the Nijmegen to Rotterdam 100 miles walk, and the 62nd edition of the Roubaix 28 hours race, with its supporting 24h relay event. Rob Tersteeg C.1118 won the Dutch 50km championship and Anne van Andel C.1144 became the Dutch 20km ladies champion.

Centurions Vice President Jack Thomas C. 606 was presented with the Welsh Athletics' Meritorious Award for his services to athletics in the Principality. Well Done, Jack, who has acted as chief judge at numerous 100 miles events.

Social Walks and Future Programme

Two social walks were held this year: the Langport Walks (Somerset) well organised by Hans Rennie C.915 in June followed by the Cotswold walk called All things Windrush on 3rd September 2015 led by Norman Smith C.976. Support for these social walks needs to be encouraged, and ideas for 2016 are very welcome. Steve Kemp C.1075 is our Social Walks Secretary on racewalker@sky.com

The 50th anniversary of the CVN will be celebrated on 19th March 2016 with a special lunch in Amsterdam Central Station where the CVN held their very first meeting. Details will be published on the website when they are available.

Overseas events in 2016 start in France with the 24 hours race in Bourges 27-28 February, 24H of Chateau Thierry 26-27 March). The Continental Centurions qualifying race is at Schiedam (Rotterdam) on 14-15 May. See our website for details and entry forms. Already a good number of Centurions are signed up for all these races. Do come and join us!

At home: 24th May : Whit walk, now in Kirby Fleetham. 35km and 50km. Information at <http://www.northernracewalking.com/products/kirby-fleetham-24th-may-2015/>

And of course, our 100 miles qualifying race in Redcar, 6-7 August. Details on our website.

As always, our Christmas letters gives us a chance to think of our many friends around the world, so please raise your glass for the traditional 2 o'clock toast, 'The Centurions'.

Happy Christmas

Kathy C.933