

## C 1132 Jayne Farquhar

Southend A.C. 100 mile race Walking Championship 2014  
(Garons Track)  
23.37.46

Club: Isle of Man Vets A.C.



Having lived my whole life in the Isle of Man I was always aware of the Parish Walk but could never imagine being able to complete it myself. However, in 2009 I was talked into trying to walk 32.5 miles of it with some friends. To my surprise I reached 32.5 miles without too much trouble but decided I didn't want leave something half-done, so I carried on alone, eventually managing 52.5 miles I decided that with proper training maybe it was actually possible to walk 85 miles in 24 hours.

Having completed the Parish Walk in 2010, 2011 and 2012 I was looking for a new challenge and became aware of the Centurions. As chance would have it, the 2013 event was to take place on the Isle of Man so I decided that was definitely my next goal. I worried about speed as I knew that based on my Parish walk times I would be struggling to get the extra 15 miles completed in time, so I needed to start some serious training.

Unfortunately things did not go according to plan and, due to problems with my back and subsequently sciatica, I missed months of proper training. I was finally able to start training about a week before the event but, as advised by my physio, to restrict those to 1 or 2 miles. During those short walks I could not get anywhere near the minimum speed I needed to go in order to complete 100 miles in 24 hours, so I knew that running out of time was a big risk. I turned up on the day of the walk feeling OK. I had not had any feeling in my left leg for 4 weeks but that was fine. I pushed myself and for quite a while managed to get up to the speed I wanted. However as the miles went on I got slower and slower and could do nothing about it – my legs just felt empty and no amount of encouragement, energy gels or determination could make them speed up. I also started to suffer badly with sickness. Eventually came the sad realisation that I was never going to make it. Despite people telling me that I was not going to complete the 100 miles in 24 hours I was determined to carry on for the 24 hours as I still had a desperate hope in the back of my head that I was just having a really long bad patch, and that eventually I would pick up and make up the time. My husband kept asking me to "please stop". Eventually, at 78 miles, I realised that he was right and there was no point carrying on. Having subsequently seen video and photos of myself from that day I can fully understand why he was suggesting it as I hadn't actually realised I was limping – or that I was a grey colour.

I was absolutely heartbroken and could not wait to have another go at it. I was leaving nothing to chance so entered two Centurion events in 2014, my logic being that if anything went wrong again at least I had two chances.

I completed the Continental Centurion in Rotterdam in June 2014 and 7 weeks after took part in the British one at Southend on Sea that August. Although my Continental Centurion number (CC406) is very special to me I really wanted a British one and that was also the one that had defeated me on the Isle of Man.

Again, I panicked that I would run out of time, especially as I was probably still recovering from Rotterdam.

403 laps round an athletics track! I had never walked even a mile on an athletics track so that was going to be a new experience for me but I was pleasantly surprised. Although for most of it I just went into my own little world and distracted myself by looking at all the people round the track, there were other times I thought it would never end. I suffered from sickness quite a lot throughout the night and at about 90 miles my ankle really started to hurt, but by then I was sure I could manage the last 10 miles. When I heard the bell indicating the Richard Gerrard was on his last lap I started crying. I am not sure whether it was because I was happy for Richard (especially as he was going to win it), or whether it was the relief as I now knew that I only had to do the number of laps that Richard had 'lapped' me. When the bell finally went to indicate my last lap I cried for the whole lap – I was just so happy that I was finally going to get that number and become a Centurion and I could put the defeat of 2013 behind me.

14/07/15