

C 594 Ole Steen Hansen

Leicester to Skegness 1976 (100 miles) 23:00:43

Club: Trongaarden and Herlufsholm



English Hospitality

I have completed 3 Centurion "100 miles" in England – Leicester (1976), Bristol (1977) and Ewhurst (1979). Especially the first two are clear in my mind, it was a connection of Centurion and hospitality for the lone young Dane.

1976 - I travelled by myself from Denmark by train/ferry/train to Leicester, arriving the day before the start. The Speight family picked me up at the rail station and took me on a short tour of the city. The family lived 19th the Parkway, Humberstone, Leicester and after the long journey, I had a meal and went to bed early. Harry woke me up in the morning and Vera made a large full English breakfast table with lots of homemade jelly and tea. Harry advised me to eat a lot of jelly in the morning and before the start, but he also helped along the route with water and jelly, as I was by myself. I didn't know jelly – a sweet pink substance – but Harry told me it was good and that I would become a new Centurion. Before Harry and I went to the starting line in his grey Morris, I had an extra portion of Vera's jelly, toast and some tea. The start was on the 30th of June, 4.00 p.m. - start nr. 3- in Leicester and Harry arrived with water, jelly and bananas the first time after two hours. He did this continuously throughout the race and when I passed at the finish line in Skegness, Harry was the first one to congratulate me. I was also told, that I was the first one from Denmark and Scandinavia, to complete a Centurion. After finishing and changing clothes, Harry drive me back to Leicester and the family. I never forgot the Speight family and their help. I had never tried jelly before, but I completed my first Centurion as number 594, with assistance from Harry and Vera's homemade jelly.

1977 – Winterbourne, Bristol. I travelled by myself from Denmark by airplane, then by train from London to Bristol and then by bus to Hamgrove hotel. Here I stayed with the owner Mrs. and Mr. Joan and Nick Baker. The Bristol 100 mile walk on the 14th of October, with a 6.00 p.m. start – start nr. 53 -. It was a 10lap an icy cold race, but we had to start in t-shirts and shorts. I do recall, that during in the night the temperature dropped to 4-5 degree Celsius and it was very foggy. Visibility was only a few meters, so i had to follow the white stripes in the middle of the road. A lot of participants dropped out due to the cold weather and in the middle of the night, the officials allowed us to put a sweat shirt for some hours. I have completed the Centurion once more. After the finishing the race, completely cold and stiff, I went back to the Hamgrove hotel, a few miles from the finish line. When Nick saw me, I was immediately served a big beer at the bar. Joan then went to the bathroom on the first floor and filled the tub with hot water and soap. She called to the bathroom and she helped me to get undressed and into the tub. A few minutes later, she came up with a cup of tea and after about 30 minutes she helped me dry up with warm towels, I was then taken to my bed (with pre-heated blankets) where I was served another cup of tea and some sandwiches. Short after I fell asleep and I was fully rested the next morning. After breakfast with the family, we said our goodbyes, and Nick and a friend drive me to Bristol, and I went back to London by train.

Two remarkable host families who gave me some unforgettable "Centurion" days in England.

1979 - Ewhurst, Surrey. I travelled by myself from Denmark by airplane to London, stayed at the Regent Palace Hotel, Glass House Street 9 in Soho near Picadilly Circus, a few days, before taking the train from London to Guildford, and then the bus to Ewhurst. The race started on the 22nd of June, at 6.00 p.m. – start nr. 88 – 10 lap. After finishing I went back to London in the evening, and enjoyed a few days more days of holiday in Westminster City and London

This story is written for Centurion before the Centurion Centenary Dinner at the House of Common, on the 14th of May 2011-a great day in this house and evening with dinner partner Ann Sayer C 599 - the first

Centurion women 1977 in Bristol – and other Centurion friends from many countries, in Westminster Palace, London, for the lone old Dane.

Centurion 594

Ole Steen

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