



Captain's Christmas Letter 2012

Season's Greetings to you all.

Firstly, may I say how proud and honoured I am to have been elected your Captain at our last AGM – the 10th Captain of the Centurions 1911 and the first lady in this role. On behalf of us all, I warmly thank Charlie Weston who represented the Centurions with dedication and enthusiasm as our Captain for eight years, and who has done so much for our sport during his long and distinguished career.

Our Key Aims and Future Development

Following our successful Centenary celebrations in 2011, and the excellent London Olympic Games, our challenge as Centurions is to help widen participation in our sport and secure its future. On becoming Captain, I put forward a number of ideas to pursue our key aims to:

- Reach out to and inspire a wide community of walkers and runners, men and women, of all ages
- Motivate aspiring Centurions to take part in the 100, our social walks and other events
- Encourage Centurions to stay involved: take part in our events, whatever your distance, help organise and support events, share with others the dream and thrill of ultra-walking!

I thank everyone who supports and is contributing to these aims. I hope you enjoy keeping in touch through my regular Captain's letter, which is placed on our website and circulated by email. We'd like to have your ideas and suggestions. Please get in touch with Chris Flint (C849) and myself at any time.

Vale

Sadly, we record the death of the following Centurions during the past year:

C 209	Phillip Malins	1953 Birmingham to London 21.26.11
C 337	Brian Scrivens	1962 Leicester to Skegness 23.45.30
C 376	John Kelly	1965 Chigwell 22.53.07
C 571	Theo Janssen	1975 Ewhurst 23.20.31
C 608	Di Bullard (Pegg)	1977 Bristol 22.05.30

Our Activities in 2012

Colchester 100 Miles

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee 100 miles race, held in Colchester on 22–23 September, was a great success, giving everyone the chance to experience this unique event of great endurance, courageous performance, mutual encouragement, tireless support, warm and lasting friendship and great fun.

It was my great pleasure, on your behalf, to welcome eight new Centurions to the Brotherhood. Of the 33 starters, no less than 19 completed the 100, and a further two were classified, completing over 90 miles. First and third men, in a first for the Centurions, were twins Dominic and Daniel King, GB international walkers and members of Colchester Harriers. Dominic won the Hew Neilson trophy for the 1st new Centurion, his time of 18.13.11 outstanding as both a winning and a qualifying time. Second man and new Centurion was Guido Vermeir of RWV Rotterdam in 20.20.24. Third man and winner of the Bill King trophy for the youngest to complete 100miles, was Daniel King, seven minutes younger than his brother! Third GB man, winner of the Hammond trophy for 1st male existing Centurion, also winner of the Eddie McNeir trophy for 1st M65, was Richard Brown (C760), Surrey WC in 21.23.10. Third overall and first lady was your Captain in 20.45.03; second lady, Suzanne Beardsmore (C1094) of Abingdon Amblers AC in 21.15.43; and third lady, Caroline Mestdagh (C1061) of RWV Rotterdam in 21.54.27. 1st Open Team, winning the Sunday Dispatch trophy, was RWV Rotterdam (Guido Vermeir, Rudy Schoors, Luc Soetewey).

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to all the officials, Centurions, families, friends, interested supporters and well-wishers, who gave their weekend so that others could walk. Thank-you all, and especially to Chris Flint who worked hard over many months, helped by Kathy Crilley, to make the race happen. We were delighted, as always, to welcome our Dutch and Belgian friends – as loyal and enthusiastic walkers, officials and supporters. I take this opportunity to thank them again for their many contributions to the Centurions, not least the valued help of Vice-President Gerrit de Jong and Vice-Captain Piet Jansens in the compilation and analysis of our results and records.

Social Walks

A sunny day in July saw 17 participants – Centurions and guests – meet at Westminster and enjoy a very enjoyable and interesting Centurions social walk along London's 60kms Diamond Jubilee Greenway. This was a great opportunity to meet fellow walkers and discuss ideas. Thanks to all who walked and introduced guests to the Centurions, and especially to Kathy Crilley who organised the event.

On November 11th. Norman Smith (C976) led a small group from Bicester airfield on a marathon distance walk which included five small churches where airmen who had been killed during training in WW2 are buried. Chris Flint joined in and hopes more Centurions will support this Remembrance Day walk. Other social walks are being planned for 2013 and it is hoped Centurions will come along to enjoy the comradeship.

London Olympics 2012

This summer saw the outstandingly successful staging of the Olympic Games in Britain. New Centurion Dominic King (C1098) represented GB in the 50kms walk, joining a distinguished band of Centurions who have represented their country. It was a joy to see so many Centurions at the RWA lunch on 7th July to celebrate Olympian walkers in Games past and present. The event was very well organised by Pam Ficken and Peter Marlow.

Centurion Archives and Memories

We are fortunate that our Centurion archives are safe and well cared-for, on loan at the award-winning Surrey History Centre in Woking where Centurions and others interested in our history may visit and see them. In July, the SHC chose the Centurions as their "Marvel of the Month" and mounted a display in their foyer. If you have personal archives which you would like to add to the Centurions' loaned collection at Woking, please let us know. At the Centenary dinner in 2011, we launched "Centurion Memories," a project to gather your thoughts on what being a Centurion means to you. I thank those who have responded to both these initiatives. The invitation is always open. Let's hear from you please.

Our Future Programme

Please let us have your ideas and suggestions about 100 miles events for 2013 and beyond and, keep in touch, and join in when you can. Working in partnership, we Centurions can do so much together! I wish all fellow Centurions worldwide a very happy Christmas and New Year, and remember to raise a glass at 2.00pm on Christmas Day to "The Centurions."

Sandra Brown C735

Captain, Centurions 1911

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