



George Nibre RIP

Ilford AC are mourning a sad loss of former International race walker George Nibre who died suddenly aged 67. He was a key figure in Club successes and, on hanging up his racing shoes, became a respected coach and mentor. Hailing from the north east, he came to the Capital for enlistment in the Metropolitan Police. After retiring, he had a second career as a Security Investigator with Ford Motor Company. His best effort in Club racing was when a member of Ilford's 1978 winning team in the National 10 Miles Championship in Crystal Palace, along with Steve Gower, Geoff Hunwicks and Brian Armstrong. He was an established International at 50 kilometres. On retirement, he settled in Frinton-on-Sea and kept regular contact with the athletics scene.

Stated Ilford's 1980 Olympic walker Roger Mills, "A great shock, George was a credit to the sport. Charisma, enthusiasm, dedication, humour and a zest for life. A sad loss. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and his beloved Newcastle United at this most difficult time".

Tribute to George Nibre from Canadian-Based Jacky Lord

I'm sorry I couldn't attend in person, however I was there in thought. George and I have known each other since we were both 15 or so years old, we met at Battersea Park walking event and became good friends from that point on. George would often take the train from Newcastle on his own and come South to stay for the weekend at my parents' house in Hendon. We trained and raced together for quite a few years. A few years later, George would be back in Hendon attending the Hendon Police College where he began his policing career. My wife and I were back in the U.K. in 2012 and we had the pleasure of staying with George, Dawn and Anya at their home in Frinton for the weekend. It was no surprise to learn that Anya was heavily involved in many sporting activities and George and I were still competitive with each other when we went out for a "training" run along the Frinton sea front. I'll miss our email exchanges and updates on the "Kings" progress as he always loved to share how proud he was of their accomplishments.

Wanted to share his final email to me earlier this year as a tribute to my friend and a lasting memory of the Newcastle Lad.

January 2024

Hendon lad, good to hear, yes meet up in July hopefully, my girl is now 16, yes ready for summer exams etc. Just walked another 20 thousand steps, glad you are all OK. Newcastle man. George Nibre

All the best

Jack

A TRULY PROPER "SEND OFF"

The funeral of race walking legend George Nibre saw a large turnout at St. Mary's Church on a hot day in Frinton-on-Sea. Race walking was well represented with, among our numbers, 4



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Olympians : 1976 Olly Flynn, both 1980 walkers Roger Mills & Ian Richards and 2012/2016 double-Olympian Dominic King plus other Internationals, National Champions, National record holders, Club walkers and their families and our Race Walking Association President Chris Hobbs plus Southern Area activists including Chris Flint. Many travelled long distances to this Essex outpost. George's daughter Anya qualifies as a former walker as she, and her friend Gemma (also present) won medals in the 2016 Southend Mile. At this service was Frinton resident Brian Armstrong, now sole living member of Ilford's 1978 National 10 Miles winning scoring 4 - as George, along with Steve Gower & Geoff Hunwicks, has now sadly left us. A family tribute was spoken by daughter Anya, followed by 3 speeches recalling George's past times in the North East, his race walking contribution and role in the Metropolitan Police. Many former Police colleagues were at the service, including ones who'd held high rank and one who'd joined the same day as George at Hendon. Many chose to proudly wear Police ties in recognition of George. Following exit music "*Every Breath You Take*" by The Police, a cremation for family and close friends was held in nearby Weeley Crematorium. Immediately after the funeral service a gathering commenced at Frinton-on-Sea Tennis Club, a short walk away, which those who'd been to the Crematorium joined on their return. The walking world are thanked for giving such a much-missed athlete, coach and mentor a truly memorable send-off.

Dave A.

George with 3 Ilford AC stalwarts. L-to-R : Stan Hart, George Nibre, Brian Armstrong and Roy Mendham. Photo supplied by Brian Armstrong.

