

It is with regret that I advise that Roger LeMoine, Australian Centurion Number 34, passed away on the morning of Thursday 22 April in his home country of England. He was having treatment for cancer of the liver, and was on his second course of chemotherapy when his body reacted adversely. He had a heart attack whilst having an x ray and died. It was his wish that he would be cremated without any funeral service.

Roger's main contribution to competitive race walking came in the colours of his first claim Surrey Walking Club and at Stock Exchange events. Indeed the distance scene was his forte, with his Stock Exchange London-to-Brighton (53 Miles) finishes spanning 3 decades (70's/80's/90's). His best shot was on May 19th 1979, when he secured 12th position in 10:09:54 – just a place behind long-time friend Tony Perkins (10.06.30). His last recorded finish saw him in 7th spot, clocking 10.40.09 on May 19th 1991. Roger also enthused business colleagues to appear, and so received a number of team victory awards. Eventually the ultra-distance scene caught his attention and, on 25-26 July 1986, at Congerstone, he completed the Leicester Walking Club's 100 mile race in 21:18:42, coming 12th out of 33 finishers from 59 starters. The race was won by Surrey's other finisher, Richard Brown in 18.17.17. He became the 21st Stock Exchange member to achieve this feat (becoming Centurion No. 802). Roger was to achieve this feat a further 3 times in the U.K.

Roger came to Australia for our 1998 event, held at the Collingwood Harriers track. There he walked a well-judged race to gain his Australian Centurion badge number 34 with a time of **23:04:51**. He was a continuous presence on the track, never stopping, taking his drinks on the fly and never losing concentration for a minute. His determination was obvious and many remarked on his gutsy performance.

At the time of our walk, he had recently been retrenched from work, had done his financial calculations and decided to retire. This was the first of a number of trips that he then made, making the most of his new found leisure time. He came to Melbourne a week before the race to acclimatise and saw a lot of Victoria during that brief time. He left on the Monday after the race and travelled to Queensland where he took in the Great Barrier Reef and the mountain railway trip to Kuranda. He spent 5 nights with Fred Baker in Brisbane and caught up with John Harris to swap stories about how they had pulled up. Then Roger hired a car and drove slowly down to Sydney to finish off. He was very impressed with Sydney with its great waterside location but felt he preferred Melbourne (a wise decision which I can endorse - with no personal bias at all!). While in Sydney, he had a great trip to the Blue Mountains. It was certainly a trip to remember.



Roger completes his 100 mile in Melbourne in 1998. Also shown is fellow Centurion John Harris

Roger was already a British Centurion and a Continental Centurion so his Australian badge made him second only to Chris Clegg who had 4 badges (British, Continental, Australian and American).

In March 1999, he was off to Florida for another holiday and then in July 1999, he made the trip to New Zealand to try for a fourth Centurion badge with the newly formed Centurion club in that country. Unfortunately, he was forced to retire soon after the 50 mile mark and was taken to hospital for a brief checkup. All seemed ok and he returned to the track to watch the completion of the event.

Towards the end of 1999, he sold his family home and moved to a new abode near Bournemouth. He enthusiastically threw himself into various endeavours – setting up the British Centurions website, helping walkers in their long distance endeavours, working as an official timekeeping or manning the feeding stations at various events.

Like most old walkers, Roger always felt he had one final walk left in him and he made the trip to Colorado in September 2000 to try for the American Centurion badge. In conditions of snow and sleet, he retired after only 26 miles.

Never one to rest on his laurels, Roger travelled in June 2001 to Holland and walked the 50 miles Kennedy walk with Sandra and Vicky Brown. He then returned to America in November 2001 for a second American Centurion attempt, this time completing 43 miles in the San Diego event.

It was in 2002 that Roger was first diagnosed with cancer and an initial operation seemed successful. Unfortunately, the remission was only temporary and earlier this year things took a turn for the worse. His emails had become less frequent and I detected both frustration and despondency in his brief correspondences. He had only a short time to enjoy his retirement but he had used it to the full doing what he enjoyed most – immersing himself in the Centurion world.

Roger will be remembered warmly and with gratitude for his dedication and his real contribution to the Centurion brotherhood worldwide and to Surrey Walking Club, and for his tough and plucky approach to competition in all conditions. He will be greatly missed by all his friends in the many countries that he has visited.