

CENTURION FOOTNOTES

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DATES ... DATES ... DATES

The 2024 European year will kick off in grand style with the following races (amongst others) already gazetted.

Feb 4, 2024	8 Heures de Charly	Charly-Sur-Marne, FRA
Feb 24-25, 2024	24 Heures de Bourges	Bourges, FRA
Mar 30-31, 2024	24 Heures de Chateau-Thierry	Chateau-Thierry, FRA
Apr, 2024	Marche du Grand Est	Domrémy-la-Pucelle, FRA
May 28 - Jun 1, 2024	Paris Alsace Classic	Across France

On the local front, there will be lots of ultras in Australia, but many of them will be trail based and hence not conducive to fast walking, and there will be fewer track based ultras, given the current AURA/IAU ruling re track accreditation debacle. I see a few 2024 events have already been added to the AURA calendar at <https://www.aura.asn.au/upcoming-events>.

Three of the Centurion Clubs have announced dates for their 2024 qualifying events.

May 11-12, 2024	NZ Centurions Qualifier See https://nz.srichinmoyraces.org/races/auck/24hr	Auckland, NZL
May 18-19, 2024	Continental Centurions Qualifier See www.rotterdamsewandelsportvereniging.nl	Schiedam, NED
Jun 102, 2024	USA Centurions Qualifier See https://fansultraraces.org/	Minneapolis, USA

It's the same timeframe as usual for the Continental and USA centurions, but the NZ Centurion Qualifying event is being held much earlier than usual. NZ Centurions Secretary Philip Sharp comments: *For the last few years, the event has been in September, October, or November. The month of May is the lead in to New Zealand's winter. You can expect the weather to be better than in September but not quite as good as that in November.*

43RD GRAND PRIX DE LA VOIE SACRÉE, VERDUN TO BAR LE DUC, FRANCE, SAT 11 NOV 2023

Emmanuel Tardi reports on a very special commemorative fixture on the French walking calendar:

November 11th is a public holiday in France because it marks the end of the First World War. Various walking races have been organised on this date but the best known and most long lasting is the *Grand Prix de la Voie Sacrée* which is a race between Bar le Duc and Verdun. Held each year since 1980, the race goes from Bar le Duc to Verdun in even years and from Verdun to Bar le Duc in odd years.

The road used is a special memorial road named *La Voie Sacrée* (The Sacred Way). It was along this road that some one million soldiers travelled to the famous Battle of Verdun in 1916. Most of them never came back. Memorial milestones, each with a soldier's helmet on it, are placed every kilometre.

Only a few walkers were on the start line at 9am for the start of the 55.1km race, which **Florian Letourneau** won for the 4th time (previous wins in 2018, 2019, 2022). He led the race the whole way, but was accompanied by **Laura De Bontin** for the first kilometre. Laura was in the French team in 2006 and was born in Verdun. It was one of her goals to finish this race and she did indeed, coming second overall!

An ancillary event was a 21.5km between Erize and Bar le Duc, and this was won by **Valérie Boban**.

And check out the great photo gallery at https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipOEwL_9HXB-acOulvigV6IsuMMb0vZukoMNRfghLvVwEsFjxCCzykAMwKPSDMZD8Q.

Verdun-Bar le Duc	5km	10km	15km	24km	34km	42km	55.1km
1. Florian Letourneau	30.16	1h00.30	1h30.34	2h23.20	3h26.55	4h23.50	5h52.22
2. Laura De Bontin	30.45	1h01.35	1h32.20	2h27.14	3h32.50	4h34.22	6h06.41
3. Christophe Erard	33.35	1h06.06	1h39.12	2h36.52	3h47.40	4h56.52	6h37.00
4. Frans Leijtens	33.28	1h07.55	1h42.33	2h44.45	3h58.38	5h07.15	6h51.40
5. Gildas Gros	34.40	1h09.52	1h45.40	2h49.23			7h07.44
6. Pascal Marechal	37.50	1h15.04	1h52.47	2h58.50			7h09.06
7. Yannick Simon	37.57	1h15.28	1h52.50	2h56.20			7h13.39
8. Vincent Peter	35.45	1h12.39	1h48.48	2h56.28			7h32.37
Nadia Ducruet	38.12	1h18.40	1h59.35	3h			DNF

Erize la brulée -Bar le Duc	8km	21.5km
1. Valérie Boban	54.18	2h16.01
2. Thierry Florentin	54.18	2h16.37
3. Catherine Florentin	58.10	2h27.48
4. Claudine Anxionnat	1h06.58	2h49.54
5. René Colombo	1h06.58	2h50.36
6. Mickael Guillot	1h06.40	2h52.07
7. Pierre Merveille		3h21.32
8. Michel Thomas		3h50.26



Florian Letourneau and Valérie Boban on La Voie Sacrée

8 HEURES D'ETAMPES SUR MARNE 2023, ETAMPES-SUR-MARNE, FRA, SUNDAY NOV 26, 2023

Thanks again to Emmanuel Tardi who spent Sunday 26th November in the small town (1500m people) of Etampes-sur-Marne, 100km east of Paris, at the 22nd 8 Heures d'Etampes-sur-Marne.

Walkers competed over a 2.5km loop for the first 7 hours and then over a 500m loop in the final hour. It was a tough loop, with a 420m hill that rose 34 metres (that equates to a 9% gradient). The weather was very cold for the 8AM start, with the temperature around -2°C, but it did warm a little as the day progressed.

In the men's walk, **Florian Letourneau** led from start to finish, passing the 50km mark in 4:55 before slowing to his final winning distance of 76.803km. The battle for second place was fierce, with the next 3 walkers always within a couple of minutes of each other. It was **Philippe Morel** who eventually took silver, just ahead of **Alain Malfondet** and **Jacques Arnault**. In the women's walk, **Veronique Bessot** was a convincing winner with a distance of 67.791 km. Emmanuel was one of 10 competitors who had a stroll around in the ancillary 10km walk event.



Veronique Bessot, Chloe Raes-Haure and Magalie Gouet



Florian Letourneau, Philippe Morel and Jacques Arnault

8 Hour Walk Men

1.	LETOURNEAU Florian	Ac Chateau Thierry	76.803 km	9.600 km/h
2.	MOREL Philippe	Ac Chateau Thierry	71.666 km	8.958 km/h
3.	ARNAULT Jacques	Neuilly Sur Marne Athletisme	71.115 km	8.889 km/h
4.	MALFONDET Alain	Nl Paris	70.363 km	8.795 km/h
5.	GILLES Philippe	Usm Montargis	69.724 km	8.716 km/h
6.	VICTOR Etienne	Arnouville Gonesse Villiers-le	67.879 km	8.485 km/h
7.	KERLAU Yves-michel	Cm Roubaix	66.332 km	8.292 km/h
8.	VARAIN Cedric	Ac Chateau Thierry	66.063 km	8.258 km/h
9.	LANEAU Maxime	Us Camon	65.956 km	8.245 km/h
10.	SIBOUT Daniel	Neubourg Ac	65.238 km	8.155 km/h
11.	MAILLOT Marc	Grac Athletisme	65.191 km	8.149 km/h

12.	DELANGE Dominique	Aj Auxerre Section Marathon	64.706 km	8.088 km/h
13.	MAURE Rene-jean	Neubourg Ac	64.008 km	8.001 km/h
14.	MARECHAL Pascal	Ac Chateau Thierry	63.430 km	7.929 km/h
15.	VANDENBERGHE Renaud	Us Champagne-sur-seine	63.020 km	7.878 km/h
16.	LABARRE Bertrand	Nl Saint-brice	60.792 km	7.599 km/h
17.	MARTIN Thierry	Ac Chateau Thierry	57.609 km	7.201 km/h
18.	VINCENT Robert	Ac Chateau Thierry	57.308 km	7.164 km/h
19.	TILLIER Ludovic	Le Chesnay-rocquencourt 78 Ath	56.485 km	7.061 km/h
20.	RIVIERE Sylvain	Val-de-reuil Ac	56.370 km	7.046 km/h
21.	HAGHEBAERT Eric	Nl Chezy Sur Marne	55.881 km	6.985 km/h
22.	DELARUE Jean-michel	Ac Cauffry-liancourt-rant-laig	53.384 km	6.673 km/h
23.	BEGIN Jean-pierre	Val-de-reuil Ac	52.516 km	6.565 km/h
24.	MOUGENOT Patrick	Marne Et Gondoire Athletisme	52.036 km	6.505 km/h
25.	NICOLAS Alain	Nl Chateau-thierry	50.879 km	6.360 km/h
26.	OLIVARES Mathieu	Neuilly Sur Marne Athletisme	46.102 km	5.763 km/h
27.	BEGIN Maxence	Val-de-reuil Ac	17.500 km	2.188 km/h
	MICHELOT Remi	Es Thaon	32.500 km	8.007 km/h

8 Hour Walk Women

1.	BESSOT Veronique	Domont Athletisme	67.791 km	8.474 km/h
2.	RAES-MAURE Chloe	Neubourg Ac	65.448 km	8.181 km/h
3.	GOUET Magalie	Pays Saint-lois Athletisme	63.383 km	7.923 km/h
4.	SILVI Nathalie	Nl Barzy_sur_marne	61.197 km	7.650 km/h
5.	TOP Virginie	Baskets Aux Pieds	59.302 km	7.413 km/h
6.	HOUPLON Virginie	Nl Barzy-sur-marne	58.805 km	7.351 km/h
7.	BIZARD Claudie	Thiais Ac	58.624 km	7.328 km/h
8.	SONNOIS Martine	Racing Club Haut-jura Morez	58.174 km	7.272 km/h
9.	RODIER Nicole	Efs Reims	54.471 km	6.809 km/h
10.	LANDRU Noelle	Nl Chailly-en-bière	38.816 km	4.852 km/h

8 Hour Walk Relay

1.	ADN 2 Marcheurs	Weiler P , Hausmann D, Royer L	63.092 km	7.887 km/h
2.	Less Droles de Dames	Ducreut N, Maurice F, Has E	59.914 km	7.489 km/h

10m Walk

1.	STEFANELLY David	Grand Paris Seine	1:00:15	9.959 km/h
2.	GALMICHE Catherine	Arnouville Gonesse Villiers-le	1:08:53	8.710 km/h
3.	PLAYE Ludivine	Nl	1:16:01	7.893 km/h
4.	PLAYE Christophe	Nl	1:16:04	7.888 km/h
5.	PANNIER Josiane	Havre Ac	1:16:07	7.883 km/h
6.	JOURD'HUY Frédéric	Nl Harfleur	1:16:21	7.859 km/h
7.	GUILLOT Mickael	Ac Chateau Thierry	1:17:01	7.791 km/h
8.	BORDIER Daniel	Ac Chateau Thierry	1:19:57	7.505 km/h
9.	TARDI Emmanuel	Lp Longjumeau	1:26:59	6.898 km/h
10.	PLAYE Kassandra	Nl	1:48:43	5.519 km/h

EMMANUEL TARDI FILE UPDATES

Emmanuel Tardi has updated a couple of his very comprehensive stats/results files.

- The first update is to the file where he had collected the complete results of all the French 100km walk championships for 1966-2020. He has now added the results for the period from 1937-1965 and added in the last couple of years, including 2023. So the file now covers the period from 1937-2023. The direct link is <http://centurions.org.au/documents/00-Palmares%20ch%20fr%20100km%2001.11.2023.pdf>.
- The second update is to his history of the Bourges 24 Hour Walk, which has been one of the Paris-Alsace qualifiers since 1997. The document has been enhanced to now cover the complete period from 1997-2023. The direct link is <http://centurions.org.au/documents/24%20Heures%20de%20Bourges%201997-2023.pdf>.

The files are amongst an ever growing list at <http://centurions.org.au/centranks.shtml>.

OUT AND ABOUT

A few of us old timers met for lunch at the Glasshouse Restaurant in Caulfield in late November, to catch up with former Melbourne member **Mark Wall (C59)**, now resident in the UK and back on a visit to his old stomping grounds. It was great to catch up with Mark!



100 mile mates meet up: Bill Dyer C15, Ian Jack C17, Clarrie Jack C4, Terry O'Neill C18, Mark Wall C59, Stu Cooper C5 and Tim Erickson C13

TIME FOR OUR AUSTRALIAN CENTURIONS TO VOTE FOR THE 2023 GORDON SMITH AWARD

This annual award, named after Australian Centurion Number 1, is awarded for the **Best Australian Ultra Distance Walking Performance of the Year**. Award criteria are as follows

- It is restricted to performances done in Australia.
- It is awarded for the best SINGLE performance.
- All Australian Centurions will vote on a short list of performances, as proposed by the Executive.

Previous winners are	2005 Deryck Skinner (C 51)	2006 Stan Miskin (C 23)
	2007 Terry O'Neill (C 18)	2008 Deryck Skinner (C 51)
	2009 Peter Bennett (C 24)	2010 Peter Bennett (C 24)
	2011 Michelle Thompson (C 58)	2012 Barry Loveday (C 62)
	2013 Tim Erickson (C 13)	2014 Michelle Thompson (C 58)
	2015 John Kilmartin (C 67)	2016 Linda Christison
	2017 Robin Whyte (C29)	2018 Claire Tallent
	2019 Gerald Manderson (C31)	2020 Not Awarded
	2021 Pramesh Prasad (C81)	2022 David Billett (C50)

Here are our nominations for 2023, in date order, as proposed by our Executive:



Joffrid Mackett (C82) - a new Australian 48H Walk record of 294.973km

Walking in the Sri Chinmoy 48 Hour Carnival in Canberra on the weekend of 25-26 March 2023, Joffrid powered through the first 100 miles in a time of 23:47:02, his second centurion walk and only slightly slower than he walked to qualify as a centurion in this same event last year. He then powered through the second 24 Hour period with barely a stop, working his way up through the field of runners to finish second overall (and first male) in the 48 Hour Australian Championship with a distance of 294.973km, bettering the Australian 48 Hour Walk Open Record by 11km (obviously also setting a new Australian M50 48H Walk record into the bargain) and claiming the Male Australian 48 Hour Run Championship. The only runner who finished ahead of him was American Camille Herron who set a new Women's 48 Hour World Record of 435.336km. No shame in being beaten by that sort of performance!



Arie Kandelaars (C85) - Australian Centurion Number 85 on his fourth attempt

Dutch walker Arie Kandelaars had previously tried for his Australian Centurion badge in 2018, 2019 and 2022, falling short on all 3 occasions. He toed the start line once again in our annual qualifier at the Coburg 24 Hour Carnival on the weekend of 15-16 April 2023. Conditions were horrendous, with hours upon hours of torrential rain, but Arie never missed a beat, becoming Australian Centurion C85 with his 100 mile time of 23:28:07. Arie already had 5 Centurion badges to his credit: African (2016, 23:52:00), English (2017, 23:49:27), NZ (2017, 23:36:29), USA (2018, 23:52:14) and Continental (2021, 23:21:20). Finally an Australian Centurion badge to take his tally to six. Understandably, this performance won him the Jim Gleeson Trophy for the most meritorious performance of the day.



Michelle Thompson (C58) - a triumphant return at Coburg with another centurion finish

Arie was one of 3 walkers to complete 100 miles at Coburg this year, the others being Michelle Thompson (C58) with a time of 22:16:55 and David Billett (C50) with a time of 23:05:12. Michelle set the pace right from the start and was never headed. A former Coburg 24H Walk and 24H Run winner and Australian walk record holder, Michelle was in a class of her own, striding confidently through to reach her 100 mile mark in 22:16.55. That included about 30 minutes off the track helping look after one of the runners after he collapsed, but her lead was significant and no one was going to catch her. She retired at that point, task accomplished. It was her seventh centurion walk but her first one since 2016, after which she effectively retired. What a comeback!



Sabina Hamaty - new Australian 500km and 6 Days Records

Following on from her 200km and 48 hour walk records in June in Sydney, Sabina Hamaty was back in action in early October in the Australian 6 Day Championship in Adelaide and eyeing more records. The first two days in particular were very tough with daytime temperatures of 32C on Day 1 and 30C on Day 2, along with hot blustery northerly winds. Then just to add to the mix, a huge low front came through that night, with thunder, lightning, rain and high winds. There were electrical blackouts all over Adelaide but luckily the race was spared that additional angst, but conditions were still scary. Yes, it eventually cleared and the weather improved for the final days but it made what is already a very tough event even tougher.

It was another successful outing for Sabina as she set new Australian women's Open and W50 500km Walk (5D:16:17:31) and 6 Day Walk (537.513km) records. Deborah DeWilliams had held the Australian 6 Day Walk record with 448.170km, done at Colac in 2004, Sabina bettered that distance by a whopping 89km! Sabina now holds the Australian walk records for 200km, 500km, 48 Hours and 6 Days. An impressive start to her walking career!

I will be separately emailing all our Australian centurion members for voting purposes and will be announcing the winner at our AGM in January 2024.

2023 AUSTRALIAN CENTURIONS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting takes on even more significance this year because of a number of factors

The Coburg 24 Hour Carnival, which has hosted our annual Australian Centurion qualifier since 2002, is no longer in existence. That means we have NO official qualifying race for 2024. There are of course plenty of other 24 Hour races (track and road) around Australia and I am sure that any of them would welcome some additional entrants in the form of walkers. This may be an opportunity for us to forge a relationship with a new partner.

From a personal perspective, I was elected as Secretary of the club in early 1994 and have been running the show for the last 30 years. It is now time for others to take on the reins of leadership. As such, I will not be restanding as Secretary.

I will guide the club through to the AGM in January 2024. After that date, I am happy to continue producing the newsletter and maintaining the website but the club will need to consider someone else for the day to day administration. This is now an opportunity for others to step to the fore with new ideas and new enthusiasm and to guide the club into what can still be an exciting new future.

Details for the AGM are on the following page

**The Glasshouse Caulfield, 31 Station St, Caulfield East, VIC 3145
12:30PM on Sunday 21st January 2024**

1. Welcome to all members and friends
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of the minutes of the last AGM
4. Tabling of Annual Report and Financial Statement
5. The election of new Executive and Committee

The election of new Executive and Committee is required every second year, with the current 2 year period expiring at the end of the 2023 year. It is now time to vote in a new Committee for the 2024-2025 period.

The current executive and committee are as follows

Club Executive

President	Terry O'Neill (C18)
Vice President	David Billett (C50)
Treasurer	Stuart Cooper (C5)
Secretary	Tim Erickson (C13)

General Committee

Records and Rankings	Tim Erickson (C13)
Assistant Secretary	-
General Committee	Karyn O'Neill (C45), Michelle Thompson (C58), Pramesh Prasad (C81)

6. General Business

The AGM will be followed by lunch at the Glasshouse.

UNTIL OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER

That's my final newsletter for the year but one that has been a big harder than usual to finish off. I went under the knife in late November for a total hip replacement and then followed it up with a bout of covid, from which I am still recovering. So I am labouring on multiple fronts and out of action for the time being, from a walking perspective.

But they say you can't keep a good man down. So I wish everyone a wonderful Christmas and hope that 2024 brings only good news for everyone.

With kind regards

Tim Erickson (C13),
Secretary, Australian Centurion Walkers, Victoria, Australia