



# The Rambler-March 2008

## Group Secretary: Resignation.

As the majority of members will be aware, Doug Davidson, our Group Secretary and Nijmegen Event Manager (NEM) from 2004-2007, was taken ill prior to Nijmegen 2007 and was unable to undertake the NEM responsibilities last year – Herman Boston stepping into the breach at the eleventh hour.

Unfortunately, the hoped for improvement in Doug's health to a point where he could once again take his role at the helm has not materialized. As a result, with the interests of the Fellowship uppermost, Doug has professionally and resolutely tendered his resignation.

As a committee we have formally accepted that resignation.

We all hope that with the added demands and distractions of the BDWF now being lifted from his shoulders Doug's recovery will be accelerated.

We sincerely thank Doug for his contribution to both the BT Group and to the BDWF, in particular as Group Secretary and especially as NEM.

We send our best wishes to you Doug for a speedy and continued improvement in your health.

Roy Hayward  
Chairman.

**British Dutch  
Walking Fellowship**

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## Message from Doug Davidson

I have enjoyed my time in the BDWF and prior to that as part of the BT Group. I have met some great people, made some great friends and feel that the Nijmegen event strengthened me both physically and mentally. It is certainly something I would recommend to anyone and everyone.

You will always be a part of me no matter what and my thoughts will be with you every 3rd week in July.

My best wishes to you all, success to all those walking this year and I am sure that, with the enthusiasm of the committee & membership, the BDWF will 'live long and prosper'

I hope our paths cross again in brighter circumstances.

Doug Davidson

## Co-opted Group Secretary

As a result of our recent discussions regarding the position of co-opted Group Secretary (GS), the committee were all of the opinion that the introduction of an impartial BDWF member to the role would be the ideal.

Whilst we had cascaded to the membership the temporary selection of Bob Gutteridge combining the role of GS until Nijmegen 2008, the committee all agreed to consider and actively approach suitable candidates - to be put before the committee for approval - who could take over as a co-opted GS or be nominated for election at Nijmegen 2008.

In fact, following the distribution of the 'Doug Davidson Resignation' e-mail by Herman, I was contacted by Steve Arscott who was prepared to be co-opted onto the committee.

With his experience from having been a previous Organising Team member from 1998 to 2003 which broadly covered the Group Secretary role the committee have readily agreed that Steve be co-opted as GS with immediate effect.

Steve will remain in the co-opted GS role until Nijmegen 2008 when the post, due to the initial resignation, will now be up for election. Steve may then seek approval/election of the role during the week prior to Founders Day.

I would also like to thank Bob Gutteridge for his active co-operation in looking for a suitable candidate and in reverting from the co-opted GS role after so short a space of time.

Welcome back on board Steve.

Roy Hayward

Chairman

## Support Issue.

It has become very apparent that all members need to be quickly informed of an issue currently surfacing in order to avoid rumour and speculation.

You may or not be aware of an e-mail circulating amongst a number of our members asking for support in a vote of 'No Confidence' in our Support Coordinator Gina Coltman. At the same time I have received requests for a similar article to be included in the next edition of the 'Rambler'.

The background to this Issue is a committee decision made in January 2007 to provide blister support for the De Dennen campers during Nijmegen week 2007. This undertaking has again been made for Nijmegen 2008. Gina has selected her own team of First Aiders and Support from the applications received by the closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008. This has resulted in the rejection of the majority of the long-standing members of the Support team who were informed by letter following the closing date. The e-mail calls for the reinstatement of the 2007 team.

As a result of the e-mail, the committee have received many e-mails supporting the motion the majority of which are from the said First Aiders and Support personnel as would be expected. There are several others from the circulation list used who have also responded, some threatening resignation.

Whilst both these documents and other Support Issue documents submitted contain some factual errors and conflicting statements, the valid key issues are communication with the existing team, the way in which decisions have been reached, the reasoning behind those decisions and the risk factor of the competence and experience of a comparatively unknown new team. Gina is currently on an extended holiday and is not in a position to defend herself against these allegations.

Although a committee meeting had been scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008, I was asked to convene an emergency committee audio-conference to discuss these issues as feedback was escalating, time and cheap flights were passing quickly and the Marshall's walk and associated RAF WARMA walk at Cosford were bearing down upon us.

A series of committee audio-conferences took place on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> February. These were both heated and very pointed debates and although many issues were answered opposing views became entrenched to the point of resignations being likely throughout the membership whichever way the decision went. Unfortunately, none of those present were in receipt of all the information necessary to move their standpoint - information which could only be provided by Gina.

The potential of this issue is to seriously jeopardise the lead up to and smooth running of Nijmegen 2008 and ultimately to the make-up and existence of the BDWF.



## Support Issue (Continued)

In order to establish a way forward, I have suspended the rejections of, but not reinstated, the '2007' First Aid and Support team. The issue will be debated to conclusion on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2008. At the same time I have asked the Treasurer to reject any requests for flight tickets etc – all involved having already been informed that bookings can only be undertaken via the Treasurer. This will ensure that, whilst we may not now get the cheapest flight tickets etc, there will not be any of the more expensive unused non-refundable tickets at resolution of the issue. On these points I thank the committee members present on stepping back from the brink

I have deliberately avoided identifying specific names, actions taken, failings, complaints and feedback from Nijmegen 2007 in this note to avoid clouding the issue. A full briefing will follow the March meeting.

Please be assured that our attendance at Nijmegen 2008 will go ahead.

I am not at all happy at the way this issue has been handled. I offer my apologies to the membership for the way that this issue has escalated outside of the control of committee agendas. Our reputation has been tarnished, however, once sorted, our procedures will be reviewed to ensure due control and consequential action in the future.

Roy Hayward  
Chairman.

**Note:** Originally sent out to the BDWF membership having internet access as an e-mail on 22nd February, 2008.

## Second Tranche Registrations

**Just a reminder to all newcomers and returning members.**

The registrations for the first tranche will close at midnight Friday 7th March and will re-open on Monday 10th March for the start of the 2nd tranche for registrations.

Will all newcomers and returning members wishing to take part in this years Nijmegen Vierdaagse, please ensure they submit their application form to Herman Boston as soon as possible and no later than 30th March 2008.

As at start of play Thursday 6th March the number of walkers registered in tranche 1 totalled 24,945. Just Thursday and Friday to go. The total for tranche 1 in 2007 was 33,323.

The overall limit has been set at 45,000. Total registrations in 2007 were 42,270.

# Weblog Johan Willemstein

## 4 Days Web Site: [www.4daagse.nl](http://www.4daagse.nl)

A weblog of Johan Willemstein, chairman of the Board of the 4 Days, will be posted every two weeks on the 4 Days web site

18 February

By now, the registration for the 2008 edition of the Four Days Marches has been well under way after opening on February 4th. We have received 18.000 registrations up to now, which is somewhat less than in earlier years. The reason for this may lay in the carnival and spring vacations which were enjoyed in parts of the Netherlands. In addition to this, the participants have discovered that it is not necessary to hurry up. The principle of "first come, first served" has been changed several years ago to a registration in two periods of ca. 5 weeks each, in which it doesn't matter if you register on the first or the last day. This has proven to be much less stressful for both the participants and the Central Administration.

The last 14 days were dedicated to further investigations and meetings on such diverse subjects as the Flag parade and a possible new distribution system for the tickets thereof, the announced experiment with a "follow the walker"-system as well as the continuing of the medical research on the effects of walking on the human body by prof. Hopman and it's financing. In addition to this, the first reconnaissance trips "in the field" have been made to find suitable sites for the new civil resting areas. As soon as there are any definitive results or decisions about these or other subjects, I will of course inform you.

At the moment, we are finishing the assembly for the submission of our plans to the authorities. The routes are almost the same as last year, with only two small changes concerning the passage through Grave (40 km military and 50 km) and through Beers (50 km). All plans must be submitted before March 1st, so it is truly a busy period for us.

The last time I mentioned that we were busy with first talks with the Ministry of Defence to continue our co-ordination beyond 2009. This is also true for the municipality of Nijmegen. Both the municipality as well as the Ministry of Defence are important 'partners in organisation' for the Stichting DE 4DAAGSE, without whose commitment and cooperation the Four Days Marches as they are today would be impossible. Fortunately both organisation have already announced before the first talks that they are determined to continue the cooperation, so that the talks will have to be only about the details of this cooperation.

I would like to conclude with the happy news that the Nederlandse Spoorwegen (Dutch Railways) has announced to continue their commitment to the Four Days Marches. There will again be trains from Zwolle, Utrecht, s'Hertogenbosch and Venlo in the early hours of the marching days to bring the walkers to Nijmegen on time. And I would like to add: Please make use of them if it is in any way possible. By going by train you can make your own contribution to the lessening of traffic in Nijmegen itself, something fervently wished for by everybody.

**Note:** Information taken from the 4 Days web site.

## Your Letters

### Thank You

May I through the Rambler thank all the members, colleagues and friends that sent me congratulation cards on receiving my MBE. These were very much appreciated. Thank you one and all.

George Beecham MBE

## Charity Sponsorship

Until 2 years ago I raised money for Breakthrough Breast Cancer from 2001-2006. I combined sponsorship for all of the marathons that I did and although I can't remember exact figures, during those 5 years I averaged over £800 each year. Unfortunately, as my sponsors tended to be the same each year, they (and I) felt that we had reached sponsorship overload (I have been raising sponsorship for my various events for over 10 years), so it has been some relief to have 2 years free of fundraising. Do you think that other regular sponsorees - is there such a word?- have also experienced this too?

Jan Roberts

Last year Daniel Foxwell sought sponsors for the Nijmegen walk and raised £300 which he split between the ATC (Swindon 1244 squadron) minibus appeal and SOS Children. As an aside he also used the collection of the sponsorship and publicity towards his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award (under the community services section).

Di Foxwell

**Editor's Note:** Thank you both for your feedback

## Boots are made for Walking

A pair of size 8.1/2 men, brown Karrimor walking boots that supports the ankles and worn once, no longer required. Free to good home.

Contact Herman if you would like them.

# Birthdays

## British

- 1 Callum Weaver, Coralie Hancock,  
Sophie Kudelka
- 4 Jacquie Rawlings
- 5 Gemma Gillies, Christine Barr
- 6 Christine Brooks
- 7 Katerena Mabbott, Richard Dean
- 8 Christopher Allen, Robert Parkinson
- 10 Emma Clarkson
- 13 Sarah Coupland
- 14 George Newby
- 16 Paul Kirby
- 17 Nick Neale, Ann Williams
- 18 Gareth Ball
- 21 Chris Burridge, Pat O'Connor
- 24 Pavandeep Bains
- 25 Jim Usher, Adam 'Merrison
- 26 David Broughton, Mike Dean
- 27 Jan Roberts
- 28 Briohny Williams, Gavin Brown,  
Bridget Sinclair
- 29 Stephen Morgan
- 30 Joy Foster, Michael McDonald

## Nederlanders

- 3 Sebastian van der Staal
- 4 Anneleen Bolle
- 5 Willem Worters
- 8 H Gol, J Joosten, Marijke Zuidwijke
- 11 Anneke Duijn, Klaske Ludema-Korporaal
- 13 Ries Huaer, N Van der Wijdeven
- 14 Corrie Ruberg
- 15 C van Heeckeren, Jasmijn Govaars,  
Chris van Heckeren-Meiberg
- 20 Jantiene Manintveld
- 21 Henri Scheepens
- 24 Leni de Vries
- 25 Raymond Barbier,  
Arienne de Vos Laverman
- 27 H de Vries
- 28 Jacolien Plomp

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The British Dutch Walking Fellowship (BDWF) was founded out of the BT Nijmegen group in 2003. The club has no political or sectarian interests, and is non-profit seeking. Membership is open to anyone 12 years and over.

As a member, we want to make sure that you get the best from your relationship with us and that means keeping you informed.

Any news items to be included in the next newsletter should be with Herman by Monday 24th March 2008.

Contributions are always welcome. Remember, every member has a voice and this is the ideal medium to have your say

**Herman Boston**  
**BDWF Treasurer, Youth Secretary and CPO**