

“ Plain speaking legal advice ”

## LOCAL SOLICITOR FIRM CHALLENGES ANCIENT GREEKS FOR CHARITY

Camberley 19th March – Peter Miles Marketing Manager and Liz Batchelor solicitor at law firm Herrington & Carmichael have entered the 2007 Flora London Marathon.

Not a natural long distance runner Peter has set himself this challenge because, like Mallory and Everest “because it’s there”. With just 6 weeks left to the event and with the Fleet half-marathon completed, Peter’s training is progressing smoothly and without any injury worries. It is not quite true that Peter is doing the marathon, just because it’s there. He is also hoping to raise in excess of £1,500 for the charity Surrey Care Trust.

The Surrey Care Trust is a local charity for local people and communities. It gives practical help to families and individuals facing hardship in towns and villages in every part of Surrey. It tackles the causes of social exclusion by providing first steps into lifelong learning and education for people of all ages. Its work in alternative education also enables young people who have struggled in mainstream school to discover their abilities and fulfill their potential. For more details see their website at [www.surreycaretrust.co.uk](http://www.surreycaretrust.co.uk).

Liz is a keen fun runner and regularly turns out for Sandhurst Joggers club and has just completed both the Fleet and Woking half-marathons and will continue her training by entering the “Cranleigh 21”. Although Liz gained her place in the London Marathon by the ballot system, she has decided to use the opportunity to raise money for Children with Leukaemia. To sponsor Liz online visit [www.bmycharity.com/lizbatchelor](http://www.bmycharity.com/lizbatchelor)

**Children with Leukaemia** is the UK’s leading charity dedicated exclusively to the conquest of childhood leukaemia. Through a programme of national events, appeals, and the unfailing generosity of our supporters, we are raising more than £10 million each year to fund pioneering research into causes and treatments and to support welfare programmes for leukaemic children and their families. For more details see their website at [www.leukaemia.org](http://www.leukaemia.org)

Why is it called a Marathon?

In 490 BC the Persian army landed on the plain of Marathon, about 25 miles from Athens, with the intention of capturing and enslaving that city. The Athenians prepared for a battle that would determine the course of history for centuries to come.

While the massive Persian army landed, the Athenians sent a messenger named Philippides (his name was corrupted in later texts to Pheidippides) to Sparta to enlist the aid of the Spartans in the battle. He covered the distance of about 150 miles in less than two days, a remarkable accomplishment by any standard.

Back at Marathon, however, the decision was made not to wait for the Spartans. The Athenian army fell upon the vastly larger Persian forces while they were still preparing for battle. Against great odds, the Greeks prevailed.

Though historians writing close to the time of the battle make no mention of the event, writers some 600 years later claim that a runner was dispatched to Athens to carry the news of the great victory. According to legend he reached the city, said, "Rejoice, we conquer," and fell to the ground dead. Though one source gives the runner's name as Philippides, it is highly unlikely that he would have made such a run after having just run to Sparta.

If he had, contemporary historians would surely have noted it. In the centuries that followed, the legend of Pheidippides and the legend of a runner who died to bring news of victory to the Athenians merged, and many later writers gave the name Pheidippides to the ill-fated runner. In the nineteenth century Robert Browning wrote in his Dramatic Idylls of Pheidippides' dash to Athens, his announcement of victory, and his death.

Though Pheidippides was certainly not the runner who carried the news of Greek victory to Athens, and though it seems unlikely that any professional foot courier of ancient Greece would have perished after such a run, the legend took hold, and out of that legend grew the modern marathon race.

### **So how did Pheidippides 150 miles become just 26?**

The current marathon distance of 26 miles and 385 yards was set for the 1908 London Olympics so that the course could start at Windsor Castle and end in front of the Royal Box in the White City Stadium. However, it was not until 1921 that distance adopted as the "official" Marathon distance by the IAAF.

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Established over 70 years ago and with heritage of 120 years, Herrington & Carmichael LLP have a staff of 80 with over 25 highly qualified legal staff based in offices in Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire. Herrington & Carmichael work with both commercial and private clients offering a wide range of services from commercial and business law through to residential, family and matrimonial and wills.

The firm is also a patron of Surrey Chambers of Commerce. [www.surrey-chambers.co.uk](http://www.surrey-chambers.co.uk)  
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