

Liddell Olympic centenary celebrated today

The niece of legendary Scots athlete, Eric Liddell, has paid tribute to his sporting feats and lasting influence one hundred years to the day after his most famous achievement in winning gold at the 1924 Paris Olympics.

Sue Caton, from Edinburgh, said it was important to celebrate not only her uncle's record-breaking feats on the track but also his values, which earned widespread respect and admiration.

Liddell, a devout Christian, famously withdrew from his favoured 100m sprint event because the heats were held on a Sunday, the Sabbath.

He ran instead in the 400m, despite having rarely competed in the distance, and won the gold medal in a world record time on 11 July 1924.

Liddell, whose extraordinary victory a century ago helped inspire the 1981 Oscar-winning film *Chariots of Fire*, is now being celebrated with a series of events running throughout this year, including an exhibition to be unveiled at the Scottish Parliament later this month.

Ms Caton, ambassador for the Eric Liddell 100 campaign, said: "It is both heartwarming and inspiring to see the way

communities have come together all over the world to remember and celebrate my uncle.

“For being a world-class athlete in multiple sports, Eric was a family-first man who cared deeply and earned the respect of everyone whose life he touched.

“One hundred years on from his most iconic achievement, it is important to celebrate what he has done in sports as well as learning and taking inspiration from his values and legacy.

“With the Eric Liddell 100 we hope to keep his legacy alive for future generations.”

Born in China to Christian missionary parents, Liddell’s early life was split between China, London and Edinburgh, where he later studied at University.

A keen sprinter, Liddell represented Scotland at rugby seven times, scoring four tries as a winger in the early 1920s before winning the gold medal in Paris that would seal his legacy.

The “Flying Scotsman”, who remains the last British athlete to win gold in the men’s 400m event, later served as a missionary teacher in China until his death in 1945.

The Eric Liddell Community, an Edinburgh-based care charity and community hub founded in the Olympian’s memory, launched The Eric Liddell 100 campaign in 2022, with HRH the Princess Royal as its patron.

The campaign seeks to celebrate Liddell’s life, achievements and legacy, and inspire future generations by emphasising his unshakeable values.

Events marking the centenary include Eric Liddell Sports Days in schools throughout Scotland and The Eric Liddell 100 Olympic Appeal Fundraising Scheme. Last month, a service of celebration and remembrance was held at Edinburgh’s St Giles

Cathedral and a path through the city's Bruntsfield Links was renamed in Liddell's honour.

The exhibition, "Eric Liddell: Legacy of an Olympic legend", will open at the Scottish Parliament on July 25 – coinciding with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe – and run until September 12.

Another event, The Flying Scots Challenge, will run throughout September, encouraging individuals or teams to either walk or run 400m or 1km per day in September or to complete 100km over the month.

John Macmillan, CEO of The Eric Liddell Community, said: "It's officially 100 years to the day that Eric Liddell shocked the world and won 400m gold in record-breaking time at the 1924 Paris Olympics.

"As much as the world has changed in 100 years, the values that Eric possessed – passion, compassion and integrity – still remain relevant today, now more than ever.

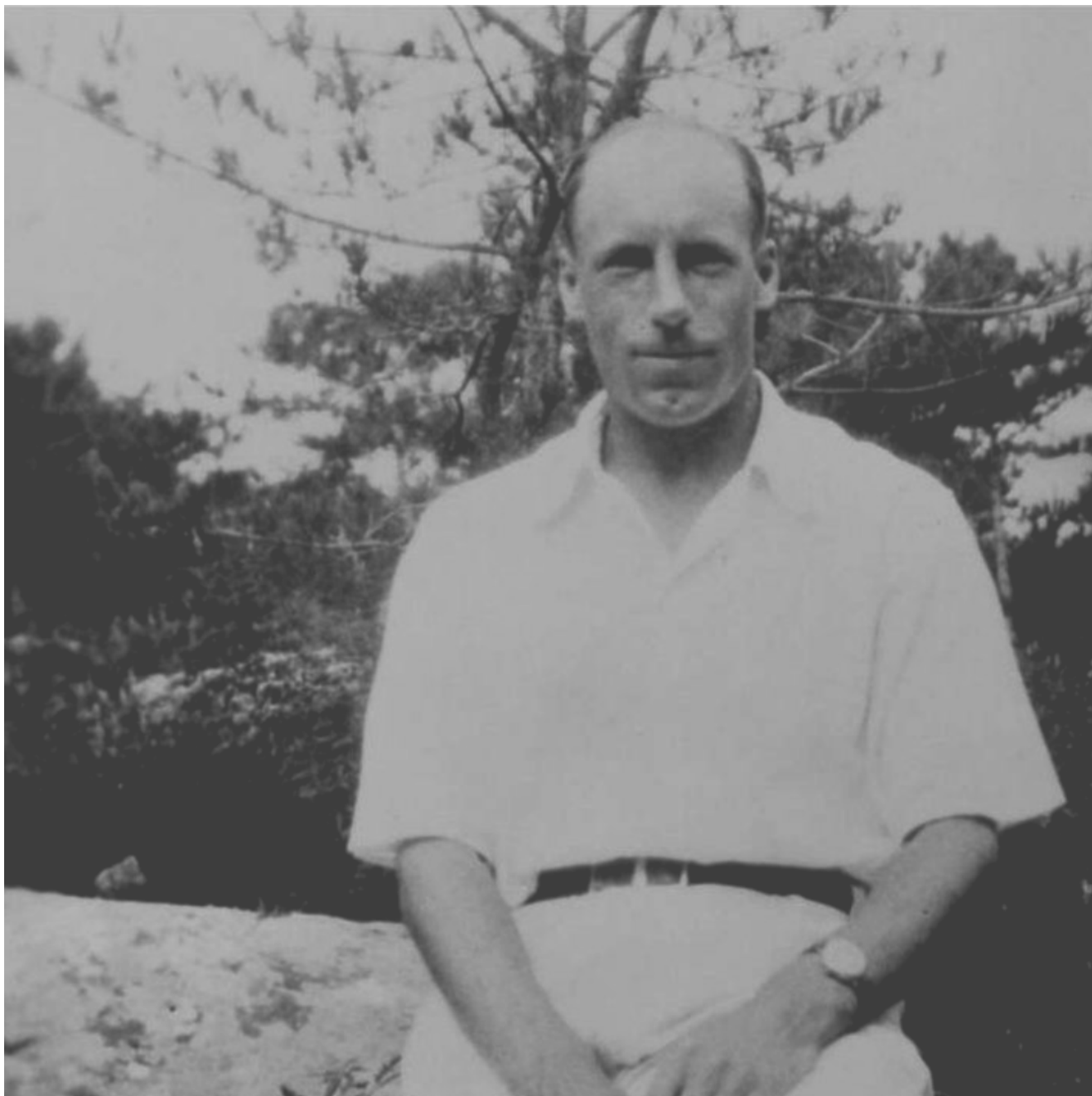
"The Eric Liddell 100 is a campaign working hard to ensure Eric's memory, legacy and values live on for another 100 years, inspiring generations to come.

"To join us in remembering Eric today, please do consider supporting our Olympic Year Appeal."

[You can donate to the appeal here.](#)



Eric Liddell PHOTO courtesy of Eric Liddell Community



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