

Why we joined the Road Runners Club.

by Keith Scrivener (RRC 11600)

Fifteen years ago Keith Scrivener and his son Aaron joined the RRC and are still running most weekends somewhere or other. It is worth a recap as to what led them to join.

From infancy Keith suffered from epilepsy, being discharged from the R.A.F when he had a fit during a medical. In 1981 aged thirty-nine Keith wasn't taking part in anything athletic. At that point he had a massive epileptic seizure and would have died had not his wife Meryl's first aid training saved him.

As fate would have it, his GP was Doctor Warren the father of David Warren who was our third British finalist in the eight hundred meters with Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett, when Ovett won the gold. Within a few days Keith was in the presence of his personal hero Sir Roger Bannister who had been the first man to run under the four-minute mile barrier. Sir Roger as well as being a supreme athlete was also the world's top neurologist. Keith remembers Bannister putting him through a hellish assessment. He was spun round and over, had bright lights flashed in his eyes, while powerful sounds crashed in his ears. These caused Keith to have dozens of fits. After studying his print outs the great man gave Keith two treatment choices. Go on the most powerful drugs, never drive and move slowly like a seventy year

old indefinitely. Or try a new radical treatment. Basically this was to become vegetarian, drink just water and force his heart beat fast every day for the rest of his life. To do this not surprisingly Sir Roger Bannister the supreme athlete prescribed running. Sir Roger hoped this would stop the electrical connections in Scrivener's brain from tripping out, thus creating the massive seizures that had up until then blighted his life.

Keith, who had travelled alone to the Hospital in London, tried to walk to the tube but collapsed onto a park bench still suffering reoccurring seizures. The alcoholics already on the bench offered him meth's to drink assuming he was also an alcoholic. In a rare lucid moment Keith resolved to try the running option.

His son, Aaron, then fifteen, was a good runner and was supportive but was sceptical of his father's success when Keith told him he was going to run to the School Aaron attended six miles from the family home and then run back. After one-and-a-half miles Keith was sick and so walked the rest of the way. A few weeks later Keith

and Aaron completed a half-marathon. Then Keith completed his first marathon in North Wales in just a bit less than four hours. Two weeks later he ran his second Marathon, this time Aaron ran as well. Aaron was only fifteen but told the organizer he was eighteen. They both finished a little over three hours thirty. Keith was sticking to his new diet and running every day, importantly he hadn't had any more seizures.

More marathons followed before he got into Triathlon. Learning to swim and cycle took time but it all helped to keep his heart beating vigorously. Then came Quadrathlon by adding Kayak and Canoeing to his other athletic achievements. Soon Keith found he was better at the longer distances so moved into Ironman Triathlon 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile cycle and





26.2 mile run. He even became the British over fifties champion. But it was Diamondmen Quadrathlon he enjoyed most. This comprised of a five km sea swim, a twenty km wave ski canoe a fifty km cycle in the mountains followed by a twenty-one km run. In this he represented Great Britain in three European and three world championships, reaching the rank of third in the world in his age group.

Then Keith got fed up with hauling his twenty-foot long wave ski and bike through Heathrow! When he saw the London to Brighton run advertised he phoned to see if he could get an entry. However the organizer said only running club members could get an entry to the London to Brighton. As Keith hadn't a running club the Road Runners Club was suggested. Both Keith and Aaron joined and fifteen years later they are still members. Keith has now run a hundred and twenty-one marathons and several ultras. Aaron has run just as many distance races, a lot of marathons but prefers off road ultras, fifty and a hundred milers being his favourites. Keith did come second in the 2010 RRC championships.

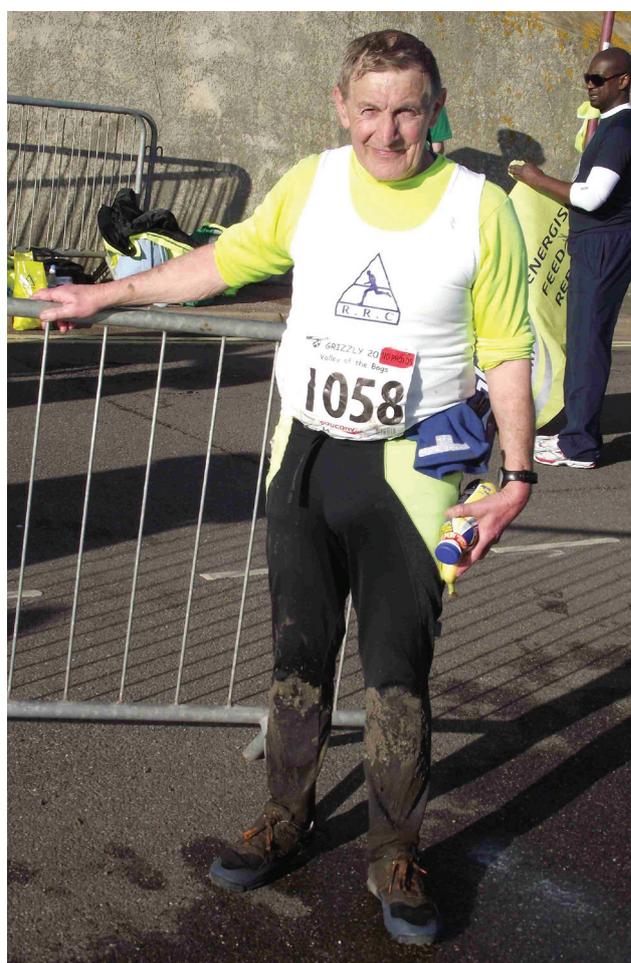
When Keith runs he works out the plots of stories then writes them down on his return. As Keith travelled around UK and Europe by Motor Home to run his marathons his stories developed into two novels. His first historical thriller novel 'Viking Sword, Saxon Shield' has been published and is selling well on Amazon particularly in the US.

When it was the fiftieth anniversary of Sir Roger Ban-

nister first sub four minutes mile Keith wrote to the great man, telling him his treatment had worked and it is now thirty years since he has had an epileptic seizure. Sir Roger Bannister wrote back to him congratulating him on his resolve and that he remembered Keith well as he was the first patient who had brought his two greatest loves Athletics and Medicine together.

Thank you Road Runners Club for keeping me alive.

Keith



Editor's note - I have just had the pleasure of meeting Keith for the first time at the Virgin London Marathon Exhibition, where he visited the RRC's stand, and he gave me a signed copy of his historical novel "Viking Sword, Saxon Shield", which I am much enjoying reading.