



# History of the St George District Athletic Club

Compiled by Michael Gentle

## Ron Gribble

### Life Member



Ron Gribble first joined the St George District Amateur Athletic Club on 22 January 1957.

His competitive career stretched over 44 years, representing the Club in State and National championship events. Throughout this time he has also worked tirelessly behind the scenes, performing many official duties for the benefit of all athletes.

Ron's official positions within the Club include:

- Patron 2004-2015
- Club President 1991-1996
- Senior Vice President 1986-1989, 2000-2005
- Vice President 1982-1985, 1990
- Executive Committee Member 1970-1984, 1991-1995, 2006-2012
- Club Distance Captain 1963-1973
- Club Track Captain 1967-1971
- Club Distance Selector 1963-1974
- Club Track Captain 1976-1977, 1990
- Club Track Selector 1967-1977
- Selector 1994
- Uniform Steward 1966
- Senior Team Manager 1968-1970
- Publicity Officer 1970, 1972, 1985, 1987-1988, 1992-1994
- Delegate to N.S.W.A.A. & Management Council 1973
- Delegate to Management Council 1991-1994
- Delegate to Athletics NSW 1995
- Delegate to Interclub 1992-1995
- Social Committee 1974, 1980
- Coach 1982-1985

Ron is a well-known and highly respected Club Member. His contributions to his beloved Club were recognised with Life Membership being conferred in 1975.

## Awards

- 1994 - NSW Government Ministerial Sports Appreciation Award
- 1982 - Athletics NSW Merit Award
- 1980 - J.J. Walsh Trophy
- 1975 - St George District Athletic Club Life Membership
- 1974 - J.J. Walsh Trophy



**Left:** 1975 Life Member Presentation

## Marathons

For 30 years Ron performed with distinction in the marathon, earning a number of victories and podium place finishes in championship races. Ron traveled throughout Australia to compete in marathons, and has completed marathons in New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. Some highlights of his marathon career include:

- 1966 NSW Country Marathon - 1<sup>st</sup> - 2:33:25
- 1966 Tasmanian State Marathon - 2<sup>nd</sup> - 2:46:44
- 1969 NSW Country Marathon - 1<sup>st</sup> - 2:41:51
- 1973 NSW Veterans Marathon - 2<sup>nd</sup> - 2:34:15
- 1973 NSW State Marathon - 3<sup>rd</sup> - 2:26:53 (Club Record)
- 1974 Newcastle Marathon - 3<sup>rd</sup> - 2:36:20
- 1977 NSW Veterans Marathon - 1<sup>st</sup> - 2:34:59
- 1978 Big M Melbourne Marathon - 1<sup>st</sup> Over 40 - 2:32:24
- 1979 South Australian Country Marathon Championship - 2<sup>nd</sup>
- 1979 NSW Veterans Marathon - 1<sup>st</sup>
- 1980 NSW Veterans Marathon - 1<sup>st</sup>
- 1981 Big M Melbourne Marathon - 1<sup>st</sup> Over 40 - 2:32:27 (Aust. Veterans Record)



**Above:** 1978 'Big M' Melbourne Marathon

Ron was awarded the J.J. Walsh Trophy for the Outstanding Marathon Runner in the Club in both 1973/74 and 1979/80. He was a key member of the many St George teams that dominated the NSW Marathon Championships throughout the 1960's and 1970's.

The final marathon of Ron's illustrious marathon running career was the 1994 NSW Championship Marathon. Ron finished 23<sup>rd</sup> in the wonderful time of 3:00:08!

## **City 2 Surf**

Ron developed a passion for the annual City 2 Surf fun run over the iconic 14km course from William St in the Sydney CBD to Bondi Beach. He completed the event on 14 occasions between 1976 and 1993, with a best time of 46:06 in 1979. Ron collected 11 gold, 6 silver and 4 bronze medals for individual and team placings in these events.

To this day Ron retains a key interest in the results of St George Club Members in the City 2 Surf, and compiles a list of the all-time fastest times every year for the Annual Report.

Ron has collected the official results supplement published every year for this event since 1975, and has very kindly made these available for all club members to access online via the link: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/0om4dxxtc5y69em/AABWWSXF9c\\_4xZa1Ufcuda](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/0om4dxxtc5y69em/AABWWSXF9c_4xZa1Ufcuda)

## Competitive Retirement

Ron Gribble's 44-year running career ended in April 2000 following the diagnosis of atrial fibrillation (uneven heart beat). Although the medical specialists could not agree on the cause of this complaint, Ron is certain that it resulted from the continual punishment of his body through competitive running as he aged.

"I have loved every minute of my time in athletics" - Ron Gribble, 1996



Ron stays fit by regularly walking, and he can be seen at Scarborough Park every Saturday afternoon throughout the cross country season.

Left:

Ground Announcer & Master of Ceremonies,  
NSW Novice Cross Country Championship

## Family & Friends

Ron married Jean, his very understanding wife, in 1969. Jean was also highly involved in the Club's affairs, serving as Secretary of the Social Committee from 1977 to 1990, and helping to organise the annual Club Ball, Christmas Dinner, cocktail parties, celebration dinners, Track & Field Season Opening Functions and Winter Cross Country Season Opening Functions.

Ron and Jean have two children, Penny and Ian, who have grown up in the Club. Grand children Imogen and Tess are also proud members of St George Club.

Ron's best mate Frank Thornton was a champion middle distance runner, particularly over 800m where he set Interclub records and held the State Title; was the Best Man at Ron and Jean's wedding; and was coach and mentor to Ron throughout his athletic career.

"Whatever success I have had in the athletic arena must be attributed to his understanding of middle distance and distance running, and his coaching ability." - Ron Gribble, 1996





**Above:** Scarborough Park, 1984

### **Further Reading**

The club website has many documents pertaining to the history of the club available for download in pdf format: <http://www.sgdac.org/documents.php>

The club website has detailed results of club events, open handicap events, track & field events, and State, National and International Championship events featuring club athletes from 1921 onwards: <http://www.sgdac.org/results.php>

Summary of Ron Gribble's results: <http://www.sgdac.org/?at=144&page=1>

Please contact the author via [webmaster@sgdac.org](mailto:webmaster@sgdac.org) with feedback, suggestions, additional information, results or resources to help expand and improve these history documents.