

Let' s make waves with.....

June
2009

Jersey Long Distance Swimming Club

Newsletter

Affiliated to : A.S.A.S.E.R, B.L.D.S.A., J.A.S.A. and CS & PF

President : Mrs Sally Minty-Gravett

Swimming Season Opens in style

Friday 26th June saw Sea Swimmer take to the water in earnest for the first time this year. On board was Canadian born Lisa Freeman with her husband Jonathon and our successful crew of Skipper 'Charlie' Gravett and first mate Mick Le Guilcher.

Leaving Elizabeth Castle Breakwater at around 8 am on a grey and murky morning, with the sea temperature at 15.6C, Lisa began her attempt at becoming this year's first successful swimmer and incidentally the first Canadian to attempt the feat.

At each update telephone call 'Charlie' described Lisa, who currently lives in the UK, as being cheerful and smiling. Eventually the sun broke through the clouds to warm up the sea a little for Lisa.

The local BBC radio station picked up on her swim and she was amazed that so much interest had been taken locally in her swim. Her husband commented on the members of the public that had shouted encouragement to Lisa from cliff tops, breakwaters and passing boats. "Are you that Canadian swimmer?" shouted a couple of guys in a passing canoe, "Good on you. Best of luck. You must be mad!"

Well she made it folks, in 11 hours and 9 minutes she became the first swimmer this season to successfully complete the course. Tired and shoulders aching Lisa was surprised when so many people turned up to applaud her success at Fisherman's Slip at St Helier Harbour. Champagne corks popped and the Guinness flowed as she met some of our previous successful Round Island and Channel swimmers, whilst not forgetting a few of this season's hopefuls.

Here is an extract of a message received from Lisa following her return to Birmingham: "I am so pleased to have completed the Round Jersey Swim. I have to thank everyone on the Island of Jersey....you all made me feel very welcome and supported. From the first Swim at St. Catherine's Bay to the crowd that met me at the boat after the swim. I have to say that it was the hardest thing I have done so far in my (almost) 40 years. You are extraordinary members of an extraordinary swimming club. Thank you for making my time in Jersey so memorable. I will be back to do Jersey to France!!!" Lisa Freeman.



Lisa Freeman with 'Charlie' Gravett enjoying a well earned rest

Well there are a few more Round Island swimmers in training at present and a couple of Jersey to France contenders so watch this space. Finally, congratulations Lisa on a truly brilliant days swimming!

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Let's make waves with the Seniors

PILOTING – A BLACK ART – OR A GRUMPY WAY TO SPEND A LOVELY SUMMERS DAY AT SEA

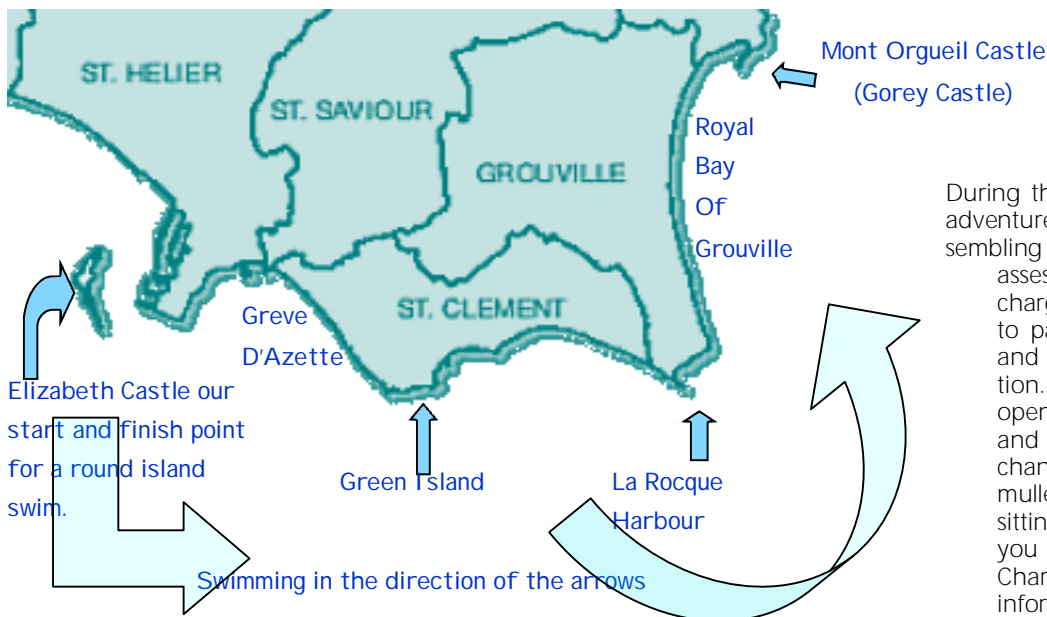
(Part one)

by
'Charlie' Gravett

Accompanying swimmers around Jersey and out across La Manche Two in the general direction of 'la belle France' begins many months previous to toes being dipped.

In the darkest depths of a cold windy winter's night prospective swimmers plot their adventures, giving little thought to the unrelenting pain of long hours in the pool, before, out at sea, the ice is broken and reality sets in. Hours dreaming of mad-cap scenarios, taking them over sun dipped distant horizons and into various record books of nautical facts and figures, are about to become all too real. There is a buzz of excitement whilst attacking unforgiving application and medical forms requesting personal and private information. Embarrassing middle names, which make the holder squirm, given by adoring parents when they were mere babes in arms and long hidden from public view, are tossed into the spotlight. Heights far shorter than bragged about and true weights known only to the bathroom scales, are there for all to see. Lumps, bumps and strange growths, located where

Mummy never kissed them, are exposed in the privacy of the doctor's surgery as the all too necessary medical content of applying is completed.



During this period of the adventure the pilot is assembling the applications, assessing his future charges with a view to past performance and present dedication. A book is opened on runners and riders and the chances of success are silently mulled over. A lot can be learned sitting and watching on pool-side, you just thought I was being lazy! Charts are revisited to ensure latest information is current and routes are not only possible, but leave little



room for error. 2B pencils are sharpened, rubbers cleaned and plotters have last seasons grubby marks removed. Finally and probably the most important fact of the future day's adventure is preparing the escort boat. This year we've had the boat and its contents checked over by the Sea Safety officer from the RNLI, a very worthwhile and informative exercise. Engines are serviced and the boat had its bottom scrubbed, a task which could well be transferred to one or two swimmers!

Weather patterns and forecasts have been tracked incessantly over the weeks leading up to the season's start date. Our passage times are greatly extended to those of 'normal mariners' whilst accompanying swimmers as we progress only at the swimmer's speed. 'Normal mariners' who pass us do so with wide opened mouths and stares of amazement. Because of this our planning needs to be a little more precise. We have to deal with prevailing weather conditions for a greater length of time which at normal speed would be far less detrimental to forward progress. At 10 knots/11 mph the wind is Force 4 which if 'nose on' will act with sufficient force on the boats heading as to have us swinging violently around and take boat and swimmer into unpleasant waters So we have an unwritten rule that we don't venture out in such conditions be they actual or forecast. Tidal charts and tide heights are also checked for springs and neaps. See; it's all tying in with the last news letter now.

Now with everything pitch perfect and God in his heaven we slip our moorings and head out to the start point. On board 'Sea Swimmer' will probably be two crew, Mick Le Guilcher and 'Charlie' Gravett hand picked to endure the privations of many hours of Radio 2 and Rolling Stone tapes! The swimmer usually appoints a 'second' or three, who will wait hand and foot on their charge, supplying sustenance on demand and hoping they don't chuck up in the process. Moi? Never! Round Jersey swims use the power of a spring tide to propel the swimmer anti-clockwise around the Island normally starting and finishing at the Elizabeth Castle breakwater. Starting two to two and a half hours before high water to ensure we sneak past La Rocque before High Water. Jersey to France swims leave La Coupe Point just north of St Catherine's an hour before Low Water. And this is where our story really starts:

Her Majesties powers besides being gracious are both far reaching and omnipotent and she has at her command her very own cartographers beavering away in the warm and dry at HM Hydrographic Office in the seaside town of Taunton Somerset. Their final products are taken on board 'Sea Swimmer' where we use paper together with electronic charts and a wet finger to map our progress on all swims. These are no more important than in the initial hour as we feel our way across Greve D'Azette towards Green Island. There are several pointy bits across this bay and as we normally set off in the dark these charts are boons to us ancient mariners. By the time we reach mid bay after half an hour or so the great golden globe has begun to rise in the sky to light our way and we can switch to a combination of chart and local knowledge, the wet finger is replaced.

(Continued on page 3)

Swimmer of the Month

The following junior swimmer was nominated swimmer of the month for May :-

Dominic Holley



Fancy Dress Swim

As the junior member of the club committee I organise a few swims a year and in 2 weeks (12th July) you will have realised on your swim programme that there is a fancy dress swim!



This swim was run 5 years ago for the 30th anniversary of the club and has been decided that we will run it again this year as it is the 35th anniversary.

All club members are welcome to 'dress up' for the swim but you must be able to swim a set distance in your costume. Dependent on boats/buoys in the water on the day we will make a short course that will be suitable for all abilities to swim. (There will be other committee members/more experienced swimmers to assist with the younger swimmers.)

Fancy dress can be any theme...I will be buying prizes for the best and most imaginative costumes!!

For those of you not wanting to dress up/are in training for big swims, there will be a club swim as normal so just come down to St Catherine's at the time shown on the swim programme.

Alice Harvey June 2009



Dominic Holley

Dominic Holley is certainly catching the eye of the committee with his efforts as he was also jointly awarded the Flambard trophy at the swim on Sunday 28th June. He shares the trophy with Joe Foley who was also noted



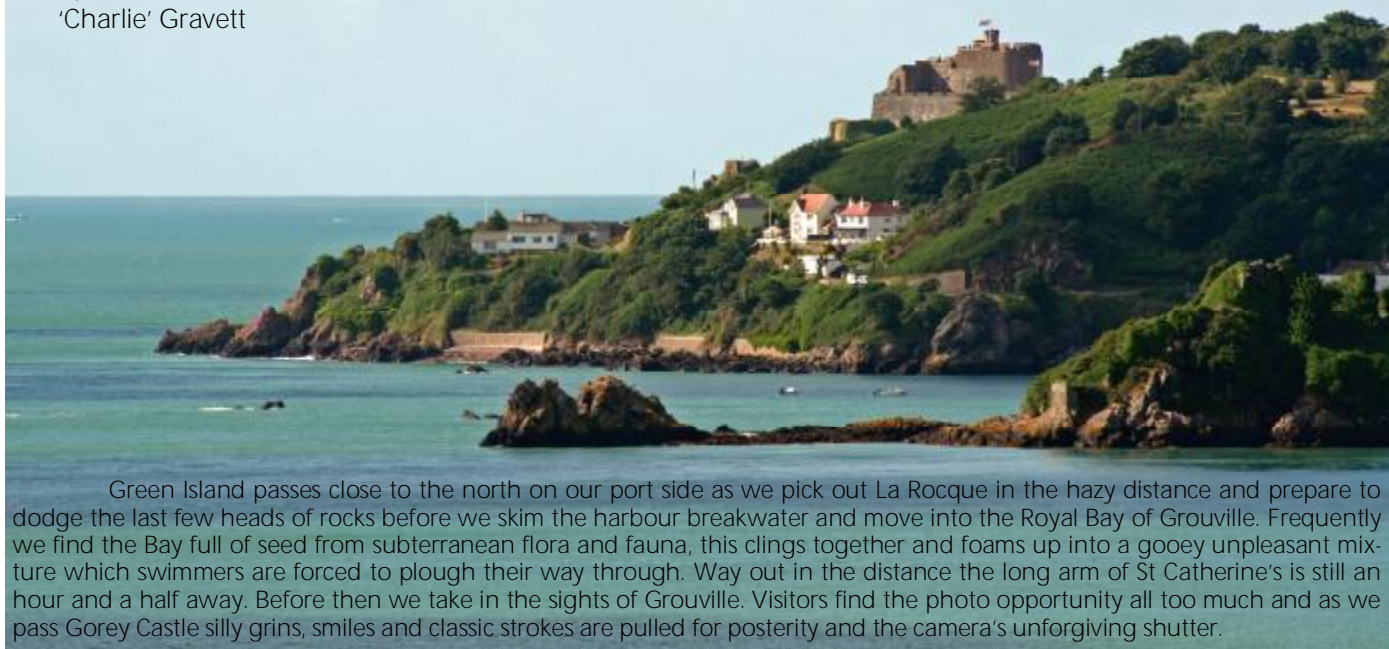
Joe Foley

to be trying very hard. Juniors note there are also Junior trophies to be won at the De Caux swim scheduled for Sunday 9th August at Ouaisné at 8.45 a.m.

PILOTING – A BLACK ART – OR A GRUMPY WAY TO SPEND A LOVELY SUMMERS DAY AT SEA

(Part one—continued from page 2)

by
'Charlie' Gravett



Green Island passes close to the north on our port side as we pick out La Rocque in the hazy distance and prepare to dodge the last few heads of rocks before we skim the harbour breakwater and move into the Royal Bay of Grouville. Frequently we find the Bay full of seed from subterranean flora and fauna, this clings together and foams up into a gooey unpleasant mixture which swimmers are forced to plough their way through. Way out in the distance the long arm of St Catherine's is still an hour and a half away. Before then we take in the sights of Grouville. Visitors find the photo opportunity all too much and as we pass Gorey Castle silly grins, smiles and classic strokes are pulled for posterity and the camera's unforgiving shutter.

(To be continued in next issue.....)

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Don't forget to check out our website for all the latest news. Swims and events are updated weekly so there is no excuse to miss out on a swim or meet a swimmer! Simply go to www.jerseyseaswims.org



J 2 F

Colleen Blair is the first to take on the crossing from Jersey to France this year. Colleen, who is more used to swimming in fresh water, hails from Dundee and

her challenge began at La Coupe on 1st July at 7.16 am. 'Charlie' reported that at the beginning of her swim there was a heavy sea mist reducing visibility to zero (this stayed for much of the day). On board 'Sea Swimmer' to cheer her on was her father Bill along with the usual double act 'Charlie' Gravett as captain and Mick Le Guilcher as first mate.

Well it turned out to be a scorcher, and after 12 hours and 27 minutes Colleen was victorious, landing in France after a truly gruelling swim where she seemed for many hours to be going nowhere. A good crowd turned up to welcome Colleen back to dry land at around 11 pm that evening. A long hard day but a good one. Congratulations Colleen on a truly amazing swim!

JLDSC Open Water Championships

Sunday 13th September 2009

Junior/Masters 3km race

Senior/Masters 5km race

At St Catherine's Bay

St Martin, Jersey

Competitor's must have ASA Club

Membership Category 2

Our website contains full details of the swims, rules and other information simply click on the JLDSC Open Championship button at www.jerseyseaswims.org

Entries now invited — limited spaces

Lining up for breakfast at the Mike Kempster swim on 24 June

