

Varne Ridge Channel Swim Camp

Sunday 28 May to Friday 2 June 2017

Sunday 8 October to Friday 13 October 2017



Welcome to the Varne Ridge English Channel Swim Camp. David and Evelyn Frantzeskou welcome you to the Varne Ridge Channel Swimming Accommodation (inducted into the International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame in 2015). Roger Finch from South Africa and Tracy Clark from New Zealand (now residing in the UK) will be taking you on an invaluable journey to prepare you for this massive and life changing challenge. Stuart Gleeson a Channel Boat Pilot for several years, will be escorting you on two Channel training swims. Stuart will also be giving a talk on crewing, his boat piloting experiences and Channel tides and currents. We are very proud and happy to have Dr Otto Thaning also from South Africa and the oldest person in history to swim the English Channel at the age of 73 3/4, join the swim camp team to impart with you his experiences. Otto who is still a practicing heart surgeon, will be giving a talk about his experiences and nutrition.



Varne Ridge Channel Swimming Accommodation

David and Evelyn Frantzeskou



David and Evelyn have been hosting Channel swimmers for 20 years now. They have seen *everything* where the English Channel is concerned – from the notorious weather to swimmers preparations (or lack of). They have made this sport their life and are proud parents to 100s of Channel swimmers around the world. Both Roger and Tracy stayed at Varne Ridge during their own English Channel swims and several times since when crewing. The friendships you make here are life long and life changing. Varne Ridge overlooks the English Channel. Accommodation is made up of large 2 and 3 bed roomed caravans. Each caravan has a well equipped kitchen, shower/toilet and lounge/dining room with TV and heating. Each swimmer will have their own double bedroom. Wifi is available in the wifi zone.



Roger Finch



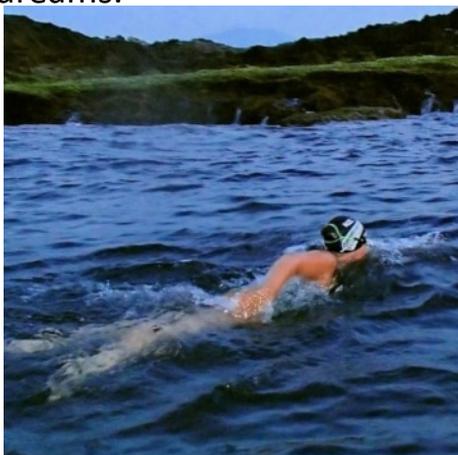
Roger’s list of swims is impressive. His major achievements include: 2 Rottneest Channel swims in Perth, Australia in 2010 and 2012. Island of Coin de Mer to Maritius Mainland in 2010. Dassen Island to Yserfontein in 2011 – 8.5km in 10 degrees. English Channel in 2011. Manhattan Island Marathon Swim in New York in 2012. Catalina Channel in California also in 2012 (making him the first (and only) Triple Crown holder in South Africa). International Self-Transcendence Marathon Swim in Lake Zurich in 2013. Ederle swim from Manhattan Island to Sandy Hook, USA also in 2013. 24 Robben Island to Cape Town swims plus one double. S.C.A.R Swim Challenge, Arizona in 2015. Gibraltar Strait (Spain to Morocco – tandem solo with Tracy Clark) also in 2015. Boston Light Swim, Boston, USA in 2016, days after crewing for Tracy’s Manhattan Island swim. Roger has many more swims planned and booked. He also dedicates himself to help new marathon swimmers to achieve their dream of completing a Robben Island swim – from the weekly training sessions to the actual swim on the day. He has also mentored and crewed three world record swims across the English Channel. With his extensive experience and knowledge of what it takes to achieve this mammoth goal, Roger also always brings a massive element of fun.



Tracy Clark



Tracy started in this amazing sport with the big one. Setting herself the goal to swim the English Channel. She achieved this in 2013 and was awarded the trophy for 'Swimming in the Most Arduous Conditions' of the season. Tearing her left bicep tendon during her English Channel swim, she set herself the goal of training for an ice mile during her recovery period. Tracy became the first person in the Netherlands to swim an ice mile in January 2015 in a temperature of 3.6 degrees Celsius. Tracy has since completed the Gibraltar Strait (Spain to Morocco - tandem solo with Roger Finch) in 2015. She also swam the Catalina Channel, California in 2015. In February 2016, Tracy swam her first Robben Island to Cape Town alongside Roger. She has also crewed with Roger for three world record swims across the English Channel plus many more including a world record double English Channel. Tracy swam the 20 Bridges Manhattan Island circumnavigation swim on 15 August 2016 with Roger as her crew. This completed her Triple Crown and she became the first New Zealander to do so. She has goals to achieve many more Channels and Straits. Her belief is to 'dream big – and you're never too old to achieve your dreams.



English Channel Boat Pilot Stuart Gleeson



Stuart has been escorting swimmers across the English Channel for 8 years now. He comes from a fishing family so has always worked at sea. Sea Leopard is his second English Channel Pilot boat.

Stuart can't stress enough the importance of training properly for this enormous challenge. If swimmers put the hard work into their training they will succeed in swimming the English Channel.

When training, swimmers should also work on their feeding too. Swimmers need to have this right and not leave it to the last minute to decide what to eat. Practice this well in advance of your English Channel crossing. Always remember what works for one swimmer may not work for you so test it out during training sessions!

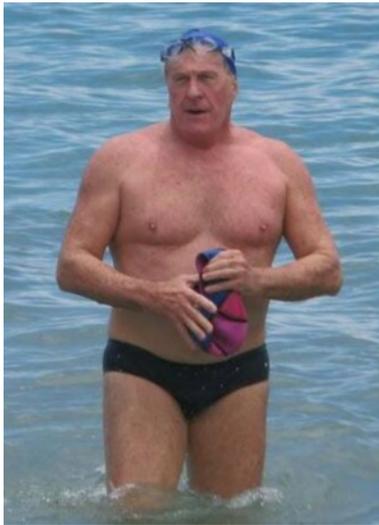
Swimmers need to understand if Stuart thinks their feeding is not working or they are getting cold or if he thinks something needs changing during the swim, he will change things with their support crew. Swimmers need to have faith in their pilot and just swim...simple!

Stuart will be escorting all swimmers on two English Channel training swims with his Channel boat Sea Leopard and his IRB boat. He will conduct an on board orientation around his pilot boat.

Stuart will give a talk about tides, the currents off France, notorious Channel weather and crew do's and don't's and his own personal piloting experiences.

Just Keep swimming

Dr Otto Thaning



Otto has completed the English Channel twice. On 30 August 1994 at the age of 53 years old (10:29) and again on 6 September 2014 when he became the oldest person in history to swim the English Channel at the age of 73 $\frac{3}{4}$ in a time of 12:52. Roger put Otto's crew together and Tracy was a part of this team. Otto also swam the Gibraltar Strait on 24 September 2004 in a time of 4 hours at the age of 63. He has completed multiple Robben Island crossings. Otto set a world record when he swam across Lake Malawi in a time of 10:05 when he was 51. Swimming has always been a passion for Otto shared with his commitment to his career in heart surgery. He was fortunate to have been trained by Cristiaan Barnard (the first person to perform a heart transplant) and he still performs surgery at the Cristiaan Barnard Memorial Hospital. Otto will give a talk on his swim experiences, Nutrition, cold adaptation and stroke technique. Otto is living proof that age is no barrier in the world of Channel swimming. Otto is most looking forward to enjoying the swims in his beloved Dover.



Varne Ridge Channel Swim Camp Itinerary

Sunday Arrival

4-6pm Arrive and meet at Greenacres, 155 Old Dover Road, Capel Le Ferne, (in between Dover and Folkestone), Kent CT18 7HX. Roger and Tracy to welcome swimmers and hand out camp bags/goodie bags. We will walk you down to your trailer accommodation.
We recommend you bring supplies with you as the accommodation is self catering.

Sunday night evening free.

Monday Orientation, Dover Harbour Swim and Roger and Tracy Talk

8.00am Meet at Greenacres. Each swimmer to introduce themselves, swim history and goals.

9.00am Dover Harbour – the heart of channel swimming.
2-3 hour swim dependant on goals and level of fitness.
Roger and Tracy will be in kayaks or in the water assessing each swimmer.

Swimmers are free for lunch.

3pm Greenacres
Afternoon talk – Feedback on the morning's swim.
Roger and Tracy to give a talk each on their own English Channel swims and other swim experiences. Also about the many English Channel swims they have crewed, observed and been the support swimmer for.

Monday night evening free.

Varne Ridge Channel Swim Camp Itinerary

Tuesday Boat Pilot Experience – Sapphire Hoe simulated start/swim to France – Stuart Gleeson Boat Pilot talk

Time dependant on tide – time to be advised by Stuart

We will meet English Channel boat pilot Stuart Gleeson down at the Dover Marina. Orientation on Stuart's English Channel boat the Sea Leopard. Stuart will take us to the start point of most English Channel swims – Sapphire Hoe. Swimmers to swim ashore and experience a simulated start. Weather permitting we will swim for two hours towards France.

Swimmers are free for Lunch

3pm Greenacres
Stuart Gleeson will be giving a talk on Channel tides (neap and spring tides), both shipping lanes and the separation zone, currents especially off the coast of France. Stuart will explain how a swimmer's course is plotted. He will share piloting experiences from the many swimmers he has escorted across the English Channel – both successful and unsuccessful swims. Crew do's and don't's and the importance of training properly and testing your feeds. Talk about crew and assigning duties. Most important! Does your crew get sea sick? Many a swim has been in jeopardy because of ill crew. What does the swimmer like or not like to know in the water i.e. distance covered/to go....

Tuesday night evening free

Varne Ridge Channel Swim Camp Itinerary

Wednesday Coastal Boat Pilot escorted swim
Dr Otto Thaning Talk on nutrition and swim experiences

Time dependant on tide.

Stuart Gleeson will escort swimmers for a coastal swim experience in the English Channel following the beautiful coastline along the famed Cliffs of Dover. Experience swimming with the tide for two hours. Test feeding from the boat. Both Sea Leopard and an IRB boat will escort swimmers. Roger and Tracy will be on kayaks assessing swimmers.

Swimmers are free for Lunch

3pm Greenacres
Dr Otto Thaning - the Oldest Person to Swim the English Channel and Practicing Heart Surgeon.
Otto will be talking about his own swim experiences and how age is no barrier when it comes to swimming the English Channel. Otto will also be talking about nutrition, cold adaptation and stroke technique. We are so lucky to have Otto swim with us and share his world of knowledge with us.

Wednesday night swimmers free.

Varne Ridge Channel Swim Camp Itinerary

Thursday – Last Swim/Final Assessment

4am Swim in Dover Harbour 2-6 hours dependant on goals and level of fitness. Night lights compulsory!

Afternoon - one on one discussion/feedback with each swimmer.

Evening dinner at the White Horse Inn, Castle Hill Road, Dover CT16 1QF. The White Horse is the Channel Swimmers Pub where Channel swimmers from around the world sign their names on the walls.

Dinner costs included in the camp fee (drinks are swimmer's own costs).

Friday – Check out before 10am

** Should you wish to complete your 2 and 6 hour English Channel relay and solo qualification swims, please advise us in advance – temperature dependant. There will be plenty of time for more 6 hour swims!*

***Itinerary is subject to change due to weather and ocean conditions – we are training in the English Channel after all!*

