

Celebrating a Decade of Sailing

Governor's Cup Race 1996 - 2006



A decade of sailing

2006 Governor's Cup Yacht Race



Start of the race from Table Bay

(Royal Capers Yachting Magazine 1997)

With the recent announcement of the Governor's Cup Race in December, yachting on St Helena will celebrate a decade of sailing. The 6th race of its kind, the Governor's Cup Race, was originally conceived by former Captain of the *RMS St Helena*, Captain David Roberts, with the enlisted help of Governor David Smallman and a Royal Cape Yacht Club member, Nina Maclellan in Cape Town. This historic race came into being on December 8th 1996 in the shadow of Table Bay Mountain, with the RMS setting 13 competitors on their way for the race of a lifetime (2 more joined the race from Walvis Bay). With few Saints given the opportunity to sail even though hundreds of yachts choose to stop over in the shelter of our majestic cliffs while cruising the trade winds to the Caribbean or other far-flung destinations, the launch of the Governor's Cup race 10 years ago became the catalyst for a new-found love for yachting. A "round the Island" race, in which competitors of the inaugural Governor's Cup invited Islanders on their yachts is said to have captivated imaginations and fired the Saints' enthusiasm for the sport. Later 4 hobie cats were procured and sail training started soon afterwards enabling 10 St Helenians to represent the Island two years later in the 1998 race. The establishment of the St Helena Yacht Club came six months later coinciding with a two-year sponsorship with British company, Monarch Assurance. Monarch Assurance went on to sponsor the 2000, 2002 and 2004 races in addition to making provision for sail training of a group of St Helenians in South Africa



The Race of 1996



The race that kick started it all in 1996 is described as one with "truly a happy ending" by Craig Middleton, the organiser for the Royal Cape Yacht Club, who reported on the race with great enthusiasm at the time. Starting on a Sunday afternoon under the shadow of Table Bay Mountain, the 1,695 nautical mile race was witnessed by 140 invited guests onboard the *RMS St Helena*. Leaving three days after the start of the race, with 15 family members and supporters on board, the RMS acted as a support and communications vessel for participating yachts. The RMS arrived at St Helena in

Photos: Trudy Constantine,
Negatives developed by
Daniel Stroud

Below: Visiting yachtsmen and families enjoy a Christmas lunch at JT Community Center



Photo: Royal Capers Yachting Magazine 1997

time for the first boat to cross the line. Mr Middleton comments in his report that "there was great excitement, especially amongst the locals, including the media and photographers aboard the finish launch." The first boat to arrive was the Santa Cruz 50 footer, *Nina*, arriving at 11am on Tuesday 17th December, 9 days after departing Cape Town, to take the line honours after a hard night in pitch darkness, wind and rough seas. Her arrival made the front page of the local newspaper with a photo of a jovial but weary crew being met by the welcoming party. The crew set about making themselves at home on our sleepy isle, as they patiently awaited the arrival of the other yachts before her final handicap position was known. Middleton's report gives a detailed account of the race, with accounts of the activities on island, final positions and even details on boats going adrift and the RMS accidentally snagging a 100-year-old anchor upon her arrival. Middleton reported that fortunately all the boats arrived safely to what he describes as hospitality "generous in the extreme." Vanessa Yon, race co-ordinator for the 1998 race says that being the first of its kind for St Helena, the build up of interest to the race and welcome was small in comparison to more recent events in which St Helenian's have participated. A welcoming party went out to each boat individually to present a case of Castle beer (the main sponsor of the race), champagne, and a basket of local produce with coffee, honey and tuna as well

as a first day cover, phone cards and a poster designed for the event by Nicolas Yon.

"Several yachties were adopted by families and treated to local customs and taken around on tours. It was wonderful to see just how positively the locals reacted to the invasion of some 70-odd yachties onto their island. There were several occasions when get-togethers for dinner were arranged; the caterers were able to feed up to 40 people in one sitting" says Middleton.

Participants of the race enjoyed a full itinerary. Allowing time for even the slowest boat to arrive in time for the planned events, which started on Monday 23rd December, with a snorkelling/dive day at Lemon Valley. Disco's, Jacob's Ladder challenges, a carnival day and a cricket match were just some of the entertainment laid on for the visiting yachtsmen and their families. A Governor's Ball was also held with a wonderful feast. A live band and dancing finished the evening off.

Twenty-two days after the start of the race, the *RMS St Helena* left for Cape Town on the 30th December with 121 passengers on board including lashed securely to the deck specially constructed cradles for 4 yachts including the winner – Dr Carel van der Merwe's farr 30 *Massey Ferguson Freedom*. Governor Smallman said at the time: "St Helena is on neither the world yachting charts nor the international tourist maps. We very much hope that this inaugural Cape Town to St. Helena yacht race will once more put St. Helena indelibly into the minds of travellers."

In all 12 yachts participated in the inaugural race.



Photo: Trudy Constantine, Negatives developed by Daniel Stroud



Photo: Royal Capers Yachting Magazine 1997

Above: Islanders in high spirits dancing down mainstreet

A decade of sailing

2006 Governor's Cup Yacht Race



Back on dry land!

(Courtesy of Basil George)

Two years later the Governor's Cup Race included for the first time ever St Helenian's as part of the crews of the participating yachts. A huge milestone in yachting for St Helena, the 10-man team left the Island for Cape Town to join yachts *Group 4* and *Sprint*. Making the historic trip was Andrew Greentree, Tara George, James Herne, Donny O'Bey, Jonathon Herne, Delicia Thomas, Dorian Caswell, Denny Leo, Andrew Moyce and Troy Bennett, who underwent three weeks intensive training for a race. Governor Smallman and his wife were at the steps to see them off and they arrived in the Cape on the 18th November to be welcomed by *Group 4* out on the water and under full sail engaged in part of her corporate entertaining duties for her owner Phillip Sorensen. Training started the following day and the first weekend of sail training was a 6-hour sail to Dassin Island. The race started on the 5th December at 3 in the afternoon with the sounding of the RMS whistle. There were 22 entries for this race with only 20 actually finishing and *Merlin*, skippered by Hush

Brown with a handicap position of 12 winning the race in a time of 8 days, 23 hours, 5 minutes and 40 seconds. *Nina*, the yacht which sailed in first over the line two years earlier and captivated the Islands imagination with her arrival came in 2nd place for the 1998 race clocking in a time of 8 days 23 hours 11 min 31 sec. *Group 4*, sponsored by Anchor Marine and skippered by Paul Bennett finished the race in a total time of 9 days 17 hours 53 mins 13 sec with a handicap of 9. Putting her in 3rd place. Onboard were St Helenian's Donny O'Bey and Dorian Caswell. The newspaper at the time describes their arrival as "a jubilant atmosphere at the steps as the young mariners and their few professional counterparts came across exhilarated but tired." *Sprint*, the second vessel with St Helenians onboard and flying the sponsorship colours of Curnow Shipping was skippered by Jonathon Blain and finished the race in a total of 11 days, 10 hours 50 mins and 17 secs with a handicap of 6 and came in 6th place.

The Race of 1998



Back Row L-R:

Dorian Caswell,
James Herne, Donny O'Bey,
Jonathon Herne, and
Denny Leo

Front Row L-R: Delicia Thomas, Andrew Moyce,
Tara George and Troy Bennett.

Andrew Greentree not pictured (Courtesy of St Helena Yacht Club)

Dorian 'Duffy' Caswell Interview: Tina Yon-Stevens

Dorian was attracted to the advertisement for people to participate in the Governor's Cup Yacht Race in 1998. He said his love for the ocean helped him decide that this was something he wanted to do. After the interviews, Dorian was on his way to Cape Town to compete as one of the St Helenian team to participate in the Governor's Cup Yacht Race '98.

This was Dorian's first time to Cape Town, so apart from the excitement of the Yacht Race; he was also looking forward to seeing what Cape Town was like.

Dorian said "The trip from St Helena to Cape Town on the RMS was good. We had to work our way up so that included deck work which was fine because it got us in gear for the race. Besides this, everyday we had circuit training and Captain Roberts made sure we ate the right things".

Arrival in Cape Town was just as anticipated, bright lights and big city. Duffy said he shared accommodation just on the outskirts of Cape Town with James, Andrew, Donny and Johnny. He described the accommodation as 'perfect'.

However, despite all optimism, Dorian was disappointed with the actual training they embarked on. He said "It just wasn't enough. Apart from doing an actual yacht race once a week around some buoys, any other training consisted of going on board yachts with different skippers and doing what they required. It wasn't what I expected the training to be like. We only went on board 60ft yachts; we didn't get the chance to go on smaller yachts, catamarans or hobby crafts."

A month after arrival in Cape Town, high spirits set in as Dorian and his team set off on a 60ft yacht named 'Group 4' racing to St Helena.

Dorian said "The first two days out from Cape Town were great; good winds, it was just as I expected. Then the wind settled down and the task of actually sailing the vessel was left to the skipper.

He had to find currents and wind to keep us going. This is something I thought our lack of training should have covered." Dorian went on to explain "The yacht we were on was actually designed to travel against the wind, so in other words, travel in the opposite direction."

The shifts were split between the crew, 3 hours on and 3 hours off during the night. In the day shifts consisted of 4 hours on and 4 hours off. Dorian told us that they were fed well and all on board took it in turn to be chef.

Dorian said "Apart from family and friends, there wasn't any big welcome at the Wharf. I just felt so tired from the trip that it didn't really matter. The yacht race for me was an eye opener when you try to consider and appreciate what people go through on races around the world. Going on the yacht race was definitely a good experience and maybe one day I will try to go again"



Tara Pelembe (nee) George



Back Row L-R:

Delicia Thomas,
Jonathon Herne, Andrew Greentree
Dorian Caswell, James Herne,

Front Row L-R:

Tara George and Donny O'Bey
(Courtesy of Basil George)

Tara Pelembe (nee) George shares Dorian's thoughts on the training and his enthusiasm for the experience, reflecting back she told us:

"The training in Cape town did not live up to expectations as it was not as intensive as envisaged, but the experience of being in Cape Town was great. The start of the race was amazing, the feel of all of the boats lined up and ready to go, with helicopters filming, small boats following us out was incredible. That is when it really felt like the start of a race. Everyone was on tenderhooks. After the start of the race, you

can go for days without seeing another yacht and the race becomes one against time, against the elements and is part of an internal development for all on the boat. Hours and hours in the confined space of a yacht means that everyone gets to know each other at an accelerated rate. Then there is the home coming – St. Helena on the horizon drawing slowly closer and closer, it is an amazing feeling to see the Island after so many days at sea. There is a feeling of elation, of having achieved, regardless of the position in the race. Winning is not about crossing the line first"

A decade of sailing

2006 Governor's Cup Yacht Race



On the Open waves

(Courtesy of T Richards)

The 2000 race saw 16 entries, of which 12 finished the race, with the winner being the 37-foot yacht *Gladeye*. Arriving after 10 days, 9 hours, 41 minutes and 58 seconds of sailing from Cape Town, the *Gladeye*, with a 7-man crew from the British Household Cavalry Regiment and skippered by Major Charles Clee was declared the overall winner due to the handicap rules.

Paul Bennett (ex-Group 4 of 1998) & Jonathon Paarman made history by setting the new course record anchoring first in St Helena waters with Monarch Assurance yacht *Beluga* and coming in 2nd place overall after her handicap was taken into account. A second huge milestone for Saints participating, *Beluga* completed the race in an amazing 8 days 2 minutes and 4 sec and had onboard St Helenian crew members Andrew Ellick, Anya Richards, George Furniss and Leroy Caswell.

Along with three months sail training, the publicity prior to the start of the race received great response both here and in Cape Town, with a reported six months promotion offshore and a fortnight's worth of corporate events that climaxed with the race day itself.

11 days, 18 hours, 48 minutes and 34 seconds later and all boats were safely anchored in James Bay the hospitality programme

began. Three contracts had been awarded by tender to the private sector covering everything from entertainment, catering, transport and services such as an internet bureau, currency exchange and a whole host of information and facilities for visiting yachties. Between Saturday 9th December to Friday 22nd December some twenty events were organised ranging from pub crawls, environment walks, diving, water sports, Island tours, BBQ's, Jacob's ladder race and sailing races.

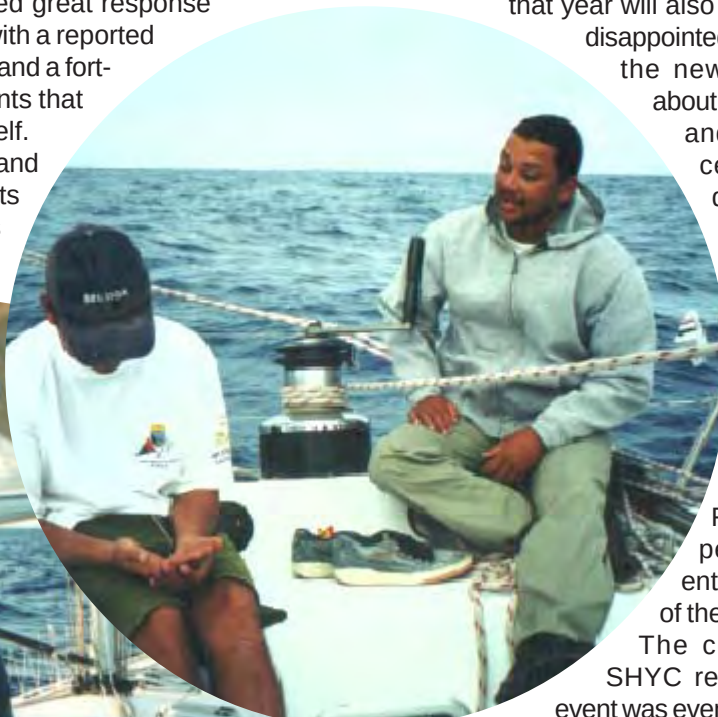
Celebrations was not all that came with the race of 2000, that year will also be remembered for disappointed letters appearing in the newspaper, concerns about the future of the race and the welcome received from certain quarters.

In the editorial in December of that year it was commented that "Yachtsmen were less than impressed with their reception at Plantation and at the presentation at Francis Plain most people were apparently annoyed by some of the governor's speech. The commodore of the SHYC resigning before the event was even over...has the crystal trophy turned to ice, which has gradually begun to melt away in the popularity stakes so early in its life."

The minor upset of Governor Hollamby's attitude and reception at Plantation sparked a lot of aggravation with three letters, one of which came from saint crew members voicing their opinion on the 'poor show' at the plantation reception, saying; "If His Excellency Governor Hollamby had a problem with the



The Race of 2000



Life on the Open Sea
(Courtesy of T Richards)

**The Crew of 2000 whilst on sail training in Cape Town, L-R:
Andrew Ellick, Leroy Caswell, George Furniss and Anya Richards**
(Courtesy of the St Helena Yacht Club)



organisers of the race then maybe it would have been advisable to take the parties concerned aside and discussed the issues but not for it to be mentioned in his public speech at the celebratory event, prior to the presentation of the coveted trophy and other prizes. It put a bit of a damper on what should have been a joyous occasion..."

Others expressed their embarrassment at the reception held at Plantation house, saying: "Nowadays it seems like Plantation House, which is part of the heritage of St Helena, is becoming a museum piece...or maybe not even a museum piece, because one gets to view such places. Functions are now being held in Marquee tents, not even a first class one at that but the same old one, which hundreds of people traipse through Customs and guests, are to use outside toilets...This in my opinion is not on. To kit oneself out in evening wear, and to stand on tarmac, doesn't jive by my standards, I'd feel a bit degraded. A prestigious occasion like The Governor's Cup Race with foreign visitors for example calls for the red carpet treatment. I dread to think what kind of image they will take back with them. Not a very good one if I can judge by what I've heard from some of the people."

"Although it has to be said the lack of his Excellency's presence during the arrival of the first yacht, *Beluga*, which as it happened was the yacht that had four of our young St Helenians onboard was duly noted. However the main object of this letter is to focus on the reception held last weekend at Plantation in conjunction with the Governor's Cup Race...I thought the whole idea was to encourage the Governor's Cup Race, how then does one justify making the invited guests wait outside the gate until the hosts are ready to accept them."

"The reception, it was soon revealed, was not to be held as was said on the invitation at Plantation House, but rather in

Plantation driveway under what appeared to be the Customs tent. The guests it would appear weren't even allowed inside to use the facilities but rather there were two erected signs indicating male and female toilets towards the back of the house to be entered by crossing the lawns. To say there was an air of disappointment among the invited guests would be an understatement, many of the youngsters (but not only them) were looking forward to experiencing a unique part of our St Helenian Colonial heritage – being invited to the Governor's House."

"St Helenians have always been known for their hospitality, especially that shown to total strangers, but I don't think that these visitors will remember St Helena with quite so many fond memories, due I might add not through no fault of the St Helenaians themselves. The treatment of our guests from across the seas left something to be desired to say the least and if we are to encourage the 'yacht race' in the future then there are issues that need to be addressed. After all the focus of this race and I quote 'should be St Helena'."

But it was not all doom and gloom that year. The race was overall well received, if not very courteously by those in office at the time. On a more positive note, Anya Richards, one of the St Helenian team reflected on the race saying, it was a once in a life time experience, a journey they would never forget.

2000 is also the race that saw the introduction of a sail training programme for St Helenian's by Monarch Assurance and Saint Malcolm Maggott achieved yachting master status and successfully delivered transatlantic journeys - delivering yachts to USA and Europe.

A decade of sailing

2006 Governor's Cup Yacht Race



Sail Training in Cape Town

(Courtesy of Raymond Young)

This year not only saw the fourth Governors Cup Race take place but it was also the year that St Helena celebrated its 500th anniversary of discovery. The race, which ended the year long quinqucentenary celebrations, was organised together with the False Bay Yacht Club in Simonstown and sponsored by Monarch Assurance and Anchor Marine Racing. 13 saints were able to participate in the 2002 Governor's Cup Race and they were sent to Cape Town to participate in a 2 month sail training program sponsored by Monarch Assurance and run by Olympic yachtsmen Ian Ainslie. This was also the first time a Tristanian - Norman Glass - joined the Saint team for training and also race promotion.

In addition to the 13 St Helenian's who eventually sailed back to St Helena in the race, two other saint's attended the sail training courses in 2002. Elizabeth Thomas and Donna Clingham also took part in the programme and returned to the Island via the *RMS St Helena*. Elizabeth says that the training involved not only keel boat sailing but also a week's course in being able to sail hobicats. "We did sailing on lakes and sailing outside of Cape Town every day and we pretty much had to learn every aspect and eventually once our skipper saw what was our strong points then he decided what would be our job as we carried on"

The race was started November 30th by Mrs Helena Hollamby and although nearly 19 yachts had registered for the race, only 14 were at the starting post. Three of

those participating yachts were sponsored by Monarch Assurance – The "*Beluga*," "*Our Diane*" and "*Solitaire*" and, amazingly, all three arrived at St Helena one after the other.

The *Beluga* arrived first 8 days, 22 hours 2 minutes and 53 seconds after the start of the race with Tristanian Norman Glass and Saints Malcom Maggott, Andrew Ellick, Leroy Caswell, Leroy Stroud, and Tara Thomas on board. With her handicap considered, *Beluga* was placed 3rd in the overall position.

Our Dianne who had Saints Raymond Young, Nola Henry and David Williams as part of her 6-man crew complement arrived the next day - some 28 hours after the celebrated arrival of the *Beluga*. Having clocked a total race time of 10 days 2 hours 26 minutes and 55 seconds and with her handicap advantage, *Our Diane* was eventually awarded first place overall.

The third Monarch Assurance sponsored Yacht *Solitaire* skippered by Dave Elcock (who was competing in his 3rd Governors Cup Race) arrived the next morning with a race time of 10 days 23 hours 47 minutes and 23 seconds. The *Solitaire* also had onboard Saints as part of her crew; they were Helen Crowie, Aaron Legg, Oscar Thorpe and Adrian Joshua.

The fifth yacht to cross the finish line after more than 12½ days was *Woolworth's Rotary Scout* which was mainly crewed by SA Sea Scouts but also on board as part of the crew was St Helenian Aaron George.

The Race of 2002

Back Row:
Left to Right:
Aaron Legg,
Leroy Stroud,
Oscar Thorpe,
Helen Crowie,
Adrian Joshua,
Leroy Caswell
& Aaron George.

Middle Row:
Left to Right:
David Williams,
Raymond Young,
Nola Henry, Andrew Ellick,
Tara Thomas, Tristanian -
Norman Glass and in front,
Malcolm Maggott
(Courtesy of
Raymond Young)



Raymond 'Buffalo' Young

Interview: Tina Yon-Stevens



On the high seas

(Courtesy of Raymond Young)

In 2002 Raymond Young was interviewed along with others to participate in that years Governor's Yacht Race. Raymond told us that his love for the sea engrossed him in this venture. "I love being near the sea, I have worked on and around boats for years and when I heard of the yacht race I thought it would be something I would like to do." Raymond was selected for the Yacht Race along with 12 others and soon were departing St Helena for Cape Town (The 13th St Helenian to participate was Malcolm Maggott). The race was sponsored by Monarch Insurance so all participants had less worry of funding. Raymond had previously visited Cape Town with his family on a short break. Despite this upon arrival Raymond's exhilaration for the yacht race still got his adrenaline going and he was eager to begin training. Raymond had to share accommodation with the others "The accommodation was fine. They had big containers put together with the sides taken off so it looked like a dormitory. Because I was used to living in dormitories on Ascension, I was used to it. We shared bathroom as well but that was ok with me." Once training begun workings hours were from 10am to maybe 4 or 5pm. "During the day we would work on 'boat-swain boats' which are similar to the 'saldana boats' we have here. We would work with skippers and go sailing. Sometimes when there wasn't any wind, I would go walking with a mate of mine, which meant a 6am start. That was the only problem, when there wasn't any wind, there was little we could do so couldn't actually train".

"I did feel the training we had was good but I personally would have liked to have done some training on the bigger yachts". Having said this, Raymond also told us "Twice a week we did go on the bigger yachts and that was to do a race not to actually train. This was optional and not part of the yacht club arrangements. We could just turn up and board a yacht that needed crew. It was great though, I really enjoyed myself." After 3 months training, it was the day of the race. Raymond told us excitement was in the air and everyone was rearing to go. "The race started about 12 noon, we had a fair wind and

the sun was shining. I was one of the crew on *Our Diane*, along with David Williams and Nola Henry. We were all energized and ready for this life time experience."

"The RMS started the race in the normal way, the sea was good and we had a good breeze. It was a bit intimidating the first two days because the yacht was doing 250 miles per day. It would normally do 100-150miles. This was because of the wind though. After two days the wind settled and the yacht seemed like it was going too slow for me, I had got used to it going 250mph. Despite that, we still did our normal 4 hours on and 4 hours off shifts. We had three people on each shift. I was left in charge of the spinnaker."

Raymond went on to say "The food was OK. we had one cooked meal in the evenings, at breakfast we would help ourselves to biscuits or toast, for lunch we had sandwiches. I can't complain about anything as I really did enjoy the experience."

The trip from Cape Town to St Helena took *Our Diane* 10 days. *Our Diane* and her crew were winners on handicap. Raymond said "Although whilst on the sea, I wanted to complete the race the quickest, I was a bit sad that it had ended. But it was nice to see family and friends waiting at the wharf."

Raymond said the yacht race hadn't really changed his outlook on life. He told us "Things haven't really changed for me since the yacht race, I still love being near the sea and boats. The experience was tremendous." When asked if he would like to see anything different with regards to the yacht race, Raymond replied "It would be nice to see younger people participate. It will also be good to have a staggered start to the race, therefore most yachts will finish within a few days the most of each other. Sometimes yachts finish a week or so later than the first one and the atmosphere have already gone by then." I asked if he would participate in yachting venture like this Raymond replied "Most definitely and hopefully very soon. I know at the moment things aren't very clear with this year's yacht race but hopefully it will work itself out in time for the race of 2006."

A decade of sailing

2006 Governor's Cup Yacht Race



L-R Front: Jolene, Jackie, Sadie & Rosie
L-R Back: Stephen, Leroy, Gov Clancy, Oscar, Aaron, & Andrew

(Courtesy of St Helena Yacht Club)

The most recent race in the Cup's history and the third to be sponsored by Monarch Assurance saw the participation from ten saints. The first four, Rosie Bargo, Jackie George, and brother and sister, Tristan and Sadie Legg were sent to Cape Town in October of that year to undertake sail training. They were shortly followed by the second group, Oscar Thorpe, Leroy Caswell, and brothers Andrew & Stephen Ellick. The ninth Saint to represent the island was Jolene Sim who financed her own trip to Cape Town. There they were to be joined by St Helenian Skipper Malcolm Maggott. The race started on Saturday 11th December with 13 yachts taking part, five of which were in the rally fleet. Our *Dianne* came in first position followed by the *Southern Isles* in second place and Monarch Assurance's *Beluga* in third place. This was the first time in the history of the race that all ten Saint's crewed on the same yacht – the *Beluga*, alongside 4 South Africans and skippered by Jonathan

Paarman and Malcolm Maggott.

2004 was also the year that the record for the fastest time from Cape Town to St Helena was broken. The record had been set four years earlier in the race of 2000 by the Saint-manned crew *Beluga*. The record was broken by "the yacht *Bossanova*, bearing the sponsor's temporary name of *Shackattack*. Skippered by Adrian Kuttel, *Shackattack* shattered the previous record by over 3 hours, crossing the line in 7 days 20 hours 24 minutes and 19 seconds.

Beluga arrived the same day "in front of an eager crowd including the Governor at just before 4pm Sunday 18th December, only 7½ hours after the line winners *Shackattack*. Their official time was 8 days 3 hours 57 minutes and 26 seconds, not quite as fast as their record-breaking run in 2000, but faster than their time in 2002 and enough to gain them third place in the race"

On the open seas
(Courtesy of Rosie Bargo)



2004
The Race of

Rosie Bargo

Interview: Tina Yon-Stevens



Rosie was one of the Saint Helenians selected to participate in the race of 2004. Rosie told us prior to the Yacht Race, she became a member of the St Helena Yacht Club and undertook some basic training and adventures.

"When the opportunity arose for the Yacht Race 2004, I thought it be a great experience as it was something I had never tried before. Some of my friends were also interested which made it even more worthwhile applying to go."

Rosie and some of her fellow crew left St Helena on the RMS, heading for Cape Town. Rosie said "It was all so exhilarating; besides the Yacht Race, this was my first time to Cape Town and when we arrived I thought it was an absolutely beautiful place. We were welcomed by Malcolm Maggot who was our overseer and trainer." Monarch Assurance sponsored this race and everything was paid for. Rosie told us "We were given a food allowance of R350 per week which was enough for one proper meal per day, but you know us 'Saints', we like our food so therefore we all 'chipped-in' and cooked between us."

All nine of us shared accommodation, which was a beautiful house in Panorama. It consisted of a swimming pool, a bar room, indoor and outdoor grill, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a huge kitchen and a huge sitting room. It was gorgeous and we lived like kings and queens."

Rosie told us that everyone was eager to start training. "We all were committed to this mission; even before the training actually started we were invited to go sailing with Malcolm, and this was an experience to remember. The yacht actually went to one side and we were literally holding on or we would've fallen off, it was so frightening. But did it put us off? No! It actually made us even keener to begin training."

Training consisted of getting up early mornings for a 45 minute drive to the Waterfront docks. Rosie went on to say "Even though a few of us went out for the evening, we were still up bright and early to start our day." Malcolm being a St Helenian, he wanted the best for the Island and pushed his crew to do a 100% job. "Training was intense but well worth it. We did enjoy it and Malcolm was a really good trainer, he was professional and

passionate what he did and rubbed off on. In spite of all this, Rosie did tell us she did no Hobby Cat training; they went straight to training on the yachts. "We didn't do Hobby Cat training but we did other necessary training such as trimming, navigating, steering, pack spinnakers, cleaning and washing down the decks. It was great and indeed something different." When asked if she would have liked additional training, Rosie replied "Yes, it would have been nice to train for longer; maybe 6 months would have been ideal." On the day of the race excitement filled the air, as everyone geared themselves for the challenge. "We were all raring to go. I was a little worried about getting seasick but quickly pushed that aside and got on with it." Rosie also told us "It was a good day for sailing, we had good wind."

We asked Rosie about the trip back. "We worked 3 hour shifts, she said. I probably had one hour's sleep, if that; during each time I was off shift. Sometimes I would go up on deck with the others and have a chill-out session and a laugh, it was good. My main role on board the Yacht was taking care of the spinnakers and cooking. We all took turns to do things like washing down the deck and steering. We tore two spinnakers which was a bit scary at first but we got over it"

When we arrived at the Island eight days later there was a huge congregation at the Wharf to welcome and congratulate all on *Beluga*. "It was just fantastic."

Although I really enjoyed the whole experience, it was nice to be home." The RMS arrived a few hours after we had completed its task so the atmosphere was riveting. "There were just so many people from the Wharf to Donny's Place. The feeling was just awesome. Although we hadn't slept in ages, the buzz of the crowd just made us forget our tiredness."

Rosie told us from this experience she gained a lifetime philosophy 'Try anything; put your mind to it, you can do it'.

When asked if she would like to participate in the race again someday, Rosie replied "Yes I would, but not at this present time. I would, however, recommend it to younger people, it's an experience of a lifetime."



A decade of sailing

2006 Governor's Cup Yacht Race



(Courtesy of St Helena Yacht Club)

Ten years on, having made sailing milestones in the clubs history and with a wealth of experience under their belt, the St Helena Yacht Club is celebrating a decade of maritime enthusiasm with the announcement of this years race going ahead at the end of this year.

This year's sponsorship comes from the False Bay Yacht Club in South Africa and Elizabeth Thomas, the St Helena Yacht Club Commodore says that they had approached a few prominent companies/businesses in South Africa, such as South African Beer but to no avail, False Bay Yacht Club and business partners offered to between them raise enough money to run the race. "Basically we decided that the race would be run on the amount of money we could get together with the False Bay Yacht Club. Because the St Helena Yacht Club would never be able to raise the amount of money needed alone it was decided, that whatever money was raised we would run [the race] to that size, so if it meant that we only had enough to run a race of about five yachts then that's what we would have done."

Spaces can be made for about 12 to 14 St Helenians to take part in the race but a lot of the funds will have to be raised on Island, says Elizabeth. "From our side we're going to have to organise with Andrew Weir for the berths and probably various other companies on the Island to see if they could sponsor us in any way." Elizabeth says the club currently

had "a few irons in the fire," they just have to see who is willing to sponsor in some way. "Hopefully Andrew Weir will cover the cost of travelling to Cape Town with a few terms and conditions. From the St Helena side, the things we'll take care of will be the organising of the events and stuff when the yachts actually get here."

Although it's a bit early to say how much funding the Club will need to cover all its costs Elizabeth is hopeful that the Club can get the proprietors of various businesses to actually organise certain events themselves which will inturn bring a bit of profit to on Island organisers. "A lot of money will be spent on St Helena by the yacht people that come here, as well as their families, which come down on the RMS. So, you know, if [businesses/clubs etc] can offer a variety of services, it takes the weight of us a little bit and plus it benefits St. Helena bringing in money for businesses here." This year's announcement comes a bit later than usual and Elizabeth says the reason for the delay is the clubs problem was finding sponsorship. "We weren't sure where we were standing, I think it was just an assumption that funding was always going to happen. It was not clear if there was a sponsor and then we had to try hard to be able to get the money. Eventually once we knew we had something to start on we'll just carry on from there."

The Club is currently in the process of recruiting the team that will represent the Island in the race in December.

Visit the official website to find out the latest on this years race starting on the 28th December.

www.thegovernorscup.com

References:

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The Governor's Cup 2002 official brochure published by Anchor Marine Racing & associates.

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St Helena Herald: Nov & Dec 2002, Oct, Nov & Dec 2004 Jan 2005

Results of races have been cross-referenced with the official governors cup website - www.thegovernorscup.com, official race merchandise and newspaper reports of each race. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this article is accurate.

The Race of 2006

Celebrating a Decade of Sailing

Timeline:

1996: THE START OF A DREAM

15 yachts entered the inaugural race – the winner was *Nina*, which completed the race in just 9 days

1998: FIRST ST HELENIAN TEAM

22 yachts entered the race and 20 finished it

First 10 Saints to take part were: Andrew Greentree, Tara George, James Herne, Donny O'Bey, Jonathan Herne, Delicia Thomas, Dorian Caswell, Denny Leo, Andrew Moyce and Troy Bennett.

1st – *Merlin* 8 days, 23 hours, 05 mins & 40 secs.

2nd – *Nina* 8 days, 23 hours, 11 mins & 31 secs.

3rd - *Group 4* 9 days, 17 hours, 53 mins & 13 secs
with Saints Donny O'Bey and Dorian Caswell onboard.

Sprint, the second yacht with a saint crew onboard finished in 11 days, 05 hours 17 minutes and 55 seconds. With a handicap of 6 and came in 6th place.

2000: SAINTS SET NEW SPEED RECORD

16 entrants - 12 yachts finished the race,

1st – *Gladeye* 10 days, 09 hours, 41 minutes and 58 seconds

2nd - *Beluga* 8 days, 00 hours, 02 minutes and 04 seconds
Onboard were St Helenian crew Andrew Ellick,
Anya Richards, George Furniss and Leroy Caswell.

3rd – *WSP Lapwing* 10 days, 04 hours, 37 minutes and 10 seconds

2002: SAINT CREW COME IN FIRST PLACE

19 entrants - 14 yachts finished the race

15 saints traveled to Cape Town for sail Training, They were: Malcolm Maggott, Andrew Ellick, Leroy Caswell, Leroy Stroud, Tara Thomas, Helen Crowie, Aaron Legg, Oscar Thorpe, Adrian Joshua, Raymond Young, Nola Henry, David Williams, and Aaron George

[Elizabeth Thomas and Donna Clingham went for sail training only]

Of the fifteen on sail training, 13 along with Tristanian Norman Glass participated in the race.

1st - *Our Dianne* 10 days, 02 hours, 26 minutes and 55 seconds
Onboard were Saints Raymond Young, Nola Henry and
David Williams

2nd – *Jika* 10 days, 14 hours, 49 minutes and 50 seconds

3rd - *Beluga* 8 days, 22 hours, 02 minutes and 53 seconds
Onboard were: Tristanian Norman Glass and Saints
Malcolm Maggott, Andrew Ellick, Leroy Caswell, Leroy
Stroud, and Tara Thomas on board.

Solitaire 10 days, 23hours, 47minutes and 23seconds
Onboard were: Helen Crowie, Aaron Legg, Oscar Thorpe
and Adrian Joshua.

*Woolworth's
Rotary Scout* 12days, 18hours, 21mintues and 35 seconds
Onboard was St Helenian Aaron George.

2004: RECORD BROKEN

13 yachts finish the race

The 10 Saints participating were: Rosie Bargo, Jackie George, Tristan Legg, Sadie Legg, Oscar Thorpe, Leroy Caswell, Andrew Ellick, Stephen Ellick, Jolene Sim and St Helenian Skipper Malcolm Maggott.

1st - *Our Dianne* 9 days, 11 hours, 18 minutes and 27 seconds

2nd - *Southern Isles* 11 days, 06 hours, 28 minutes and 0 seconds

3rd - *Beluga* 8 days, 03 hours, 57 minutes and 26 seconds

This was the first time in the races history that all ten
Saint's crewed on the same yacht.

The record was broken for fastest time from Cape Town to St Helena by the yacht *Bossanova* in a total of 7 days, 20 hours, 24 minutes and 19 seconds. [This yacht was not a part of the Governors Cup race]

2006 - Names of this years participants will be announced soon