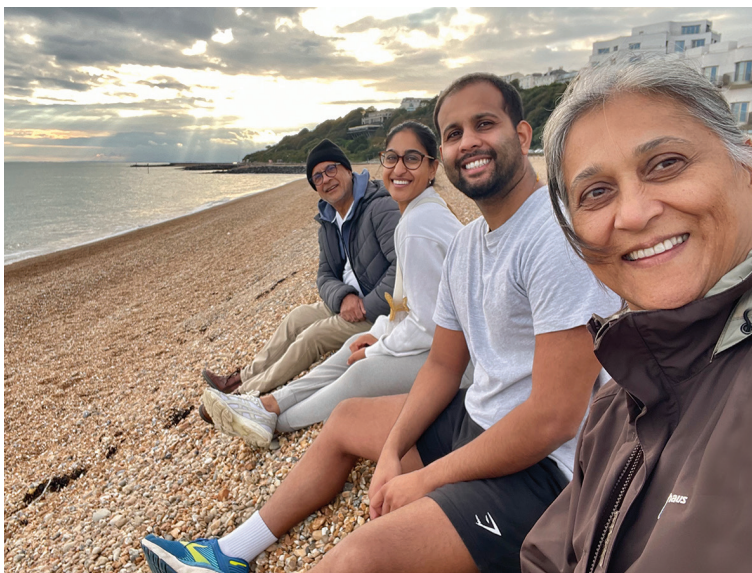




Channel deep, mountain high



Beach to beach: Prem Pattani is supported by his family ahead of his Channel swim, left, before entering the water at 2.45am and arriving at the French coast 13 hours later

Prem Pattani, whose family business Pristine Curtains Blinds Upholstery has been serving East Finchley from Viceroy Parade, N2, since 2004, became the 35th Indian male in history to swim solo across the 40km Channel between England and France in September. Here he recalls the experience and why he did it.

More people have summited Mt Everest than have successfully swum the English Channel. In the four days leading up to my swim, over 10 experienced swimmers failed to make it to Cap Griz-Nez, France. It's a challenge that called me. Testing my mental and physical stamina, representing my Indian heritage, and doing what I love: adventure.

After a final pep talk with my coach, I plunged into the sea near Dover at 2.45am. It was pitch black, with only a

torch fixed onto my goggles and one on my Speedos so my crew could sight me. And yes, it was a non-wetsuit swim. My only protection from jellyfish, ocean debris and extreme cold waters was a layer of Vaseline spread over my 93kg frame.

Freestyle the entire way, except for pit stops: 10-second windows where I'd flip onto my back, continue paddling one-armed to stay on track, and chug 150ml of lukewarm extreme carbohydrate solution. The pit stop happened every 30

minutes. Among other rules, the Channel Swimming Association stipulates swimmers are not allowed to touch the boat or use any buoyancy devices whatsoever.

After 13 hours and 8 minutes, I stepped onto French soil. My 18-month training regime, up to 12 hours swimming per week across multiple countries under the expert guidance of Red Top Swim London coach Tim Denyer, had paid off.

The English Channel mis-

sion was cool. The BBC interviewed me and I was grateful to be sponsored by the likes of: Pepe's Piri Piri, David Lloyd, Adler Shine and DoubleTree Hilton.

But my project is far larger than the swim. In 2020, I founded The Stamina Club to become a global architect of human and organisational mental stamina. Today's society glorifies surface-level goals with diminishing marginal returns: cosmetics, cars, watches, social media, drugs,

fashion. These vices can be dangerous. My own mental health challenges taught me that real wealth isn't external, it's internal.

So I coined the 'Stamina Stack', five scientifically grounded tools proven to build human mental stamina: visualisation, meditation, breathwork, nutrition and exercise. What is your 'English Channel'? Tough life obstacles, ambitious goals. Mental stamina is a common denominator ingredient. Invest.

Monday Club is 20 years young



Birthday bash: Maureen Clemetson celebrates 20 years of the Monday Club. Photo Mike Coles

By Diana Cormack
The Monday Club, East Finchley's social for young people, celebrated its 20th birthday on Friday 31 October. The wet weather that day contrasted with the foggy Hallowe'en night of 2005, when the youth club was launched by local mothers Maureen Clemetson and Maureen Antoinette.

As those first youngsters trickled into the High Road's Methodist Church Hall, no one could have imagined that some of their own children would be attending the club in 2025.

But they are! In the form of what Maureen Clemetson refers to as her 'third generation' they come to Tarling Road Community Hub for the Monday Club and its spin-off for under-12s, The Friday Club. The Hub was the venue for

'Maureen's 20th Birthday Bash' with members past and present invited to join in the celebrations. Along with the Sugarlane Sound System and a huge birthday cake there was plenty of food and drink, much of it served by Mehmet Cabat who has regularly helped with the club since it started.

Maureen told *The Archer*

that the Mayor of Barnet had popped in to offer his best wishes. A past recipient of a Barnet Civic Award for her work with the youth club, Maureen is strong in her condemnation of the lack of provision for young people today and feels that the government and local authorities need to do much more.

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