

Nile swim easy compared to 'Ramses' Revenge' Lynne Cox finds Egypt an experience

"Many of the Egyptian people had never seen a white person. They were real friendly, but we sure got stared at a lot. They wanted to know if we believed in God." — Lynne Cox.

There she was, the famous channel swimmer, stroking down the waters of the Nile where Cleopatra once drifted rapidly into the arms of Richard Burton.

But the waters, like Liz and Dick and other great legends, have lost their magic in two thousand years.

"It was an experience," says Lynne Cox, who was accompanied by her brother Dave when she went to Egypt to compete in last week's annual Nile River swim.

"Dave said he saw a dead chicken floating in the water, a couple of dead rats and a dead dog. There were live snails swimming all around. The water's about three feet deep and you're scraping along the bottom in the mud. It was a neat swim."

A report preceding their return said that their hotel had been partly bombed out by the Israelis.

"No," said Lynne, "but the airport was."

"The hotel just looked like it," said Dave. "I was in the bathroom one night and she was asleep on the bed when we heard a big crash. A piece of the building had fallen off onto a landing outside our window."

LYNNE AND DAVE spent a lot of time in the bathroom.

"We ate a total of about six meals and we were there two weeks," he says. "If we'd have eaten more we'd have been even sicker than we were. They said the water was all right to drink, but..."

"I kept drinking the water," Lynne interjects, "until one day I looked in it and saw these little things floating around. Then I realized why I was sick."

"The American coach called it 'Ramses' Revenge,'" Dave says.

They spent part of the time with relatives of Fahmy Attallah, a Long Beach psychologist, who has made six unsuccessful bids to swim the English Channel.

"Everyone seemed to remember him because they make a big deal of their long distance swimmers," Lynne says. "His relatives and the people in their swimming federation were all very nice to us."



DAVE, LYNNE AND FRIENDS



RICH ROBERTS

THERE WERE a few bad moments when Dave and Lynne arrived in Cairo a day ahead of schedule and found only soldiers with submachine guns to greet them.

"Our first impression was to turn around and fly home," she says.

But the political climate was better than they might have anticipated.

"We were the only Americans there," Lynne says. "We went shopping one day in Old Cairo and many of the people had never seen a white person. They'd see us and say, 'English?' and we'd say, 'No, American.' Some of them would look surprised."

"At first they ask you about the war and why the U.S. is helping Israel. You just try to stumble through it."

"They had the impression that there aren't any Christians in the United States, and that we don't drink water — just beer and whiskey — because that's what they see the tourists drink. They want to know if we believe in God."

SOME OF THE ABOVE exchanges occurred in simple teen-age rap sessions with Attallah's relatives and friends.

"Some of them think," Dave says, "that everybody in the U.S. over 14 is hooked on heroin."

"But many also say, 'We like the Americans very much and we want to be good friends.'"

"They sure like (Henry) Kissinger over there."

memorable. Ill and weak, she failed to finish. Lynne didn't know what she was getting into when the invitation arrived at her Los Alamitos home.

"I guess they invited me because I had the record for the channel," says the 17-year-old high school junior. "It was an entry form, with one side in English and the other in Arabic. They said they'd pay my way from London to Egypt and back and I could bring a coach, so I took my brother."

Dave, 18, attends Brigham Young University and last fall set the record for the San Pedro Channel (8:50).

"We had heard it was supposed to be nice there," says Dave. "My coach at BYU had been there eight years ago, but it seems things have changed, they've put so much money into the war."

The Coxes came home with vivid impressions of modern life in Egypt: a "grayish, gone-to-pot" Cairo, so jammed with 7 million people that they hang all over the city buses; a man riding a bicycle with a huge box of bread balanced on his head; curious peasants staring, begging.

says Lynne. "We were there right after he was. They all talk about him and his great achievements."

Until she learned that Americans were curiosities in Egypt, Lynne thought the natives were intrigued more by the leashes on her teeth.

"I didn't know what was wrong, so finally I asked. But I also was told that there are only two orthodoxists in the whole of Egypt."

BETWEEN SIDES of Ramses' Revenge, Lynne and Dave went sightseeing.

"We went to the pyramids and the Sphinx and got an some camels," Lynne says. "The camels weren't too thrilling."

Dave adds, "Some of the places don't go over too big when you're feeling like we were."

For a time Lynne did a good imitation of the Sphinx.

"I lost my voice, so I'm whispering in Dave's ear and he's relaying it to the guy from Egypt and he's trying to translate it. It got kind of funny."

When Dave called home Lynne couldn't talk, but it didn't matter because the phones were monitored, anyway. All mail in the United Arab Republic is censored coming and going.

"They took me to an Egyptian doctor who gave me some medicine," Lynne says, "but it didn't do anything."

THE DIRECTIONS and ingredients were in Arabic, and the situation didn't improve when it came time for the race, which was to be 23 miles, twice around islands in the Nile.

"They said 'go' in Egyptian and I didn't know what was going on," Lynne says.

Going upstream, she had to swim close to the bank to avoid the current, and after covering about 14 miles in six hours, the 90-degree bend, 70-degree water, snails and Ramses' Revenge all combined to do Lynne in.

"When we pulled her in," says Dave, "she started breathing fast and shallow."

She was taken to a hospital and given oxygen, but still was feeling the effects of it all when she returned home a few days ago.

Dave says, "I felt a lot better just sitting in that plane."

Lynne sighs again, "It was an experience."

'Major tourneys when I need him most'

Caddy police irks Miller

By DOUG IVES Staff Writer

RANCHO LA COSTA — Outspoken Johnny Miller has a gripe with the PGA policy board.

There are too many tournaments where I'm not allowed to take my own caddy," said the U.S. Open finalist at the MONY

blonde Bay Area resident. "If we had an important meeting, I bet not 10 guys would show up. But if you polled them individually, everyone would vote to have his own caddy."

Miller thinks that Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer have been "too

into contention for the T-able year. He has played in 12 tournaments and missed the cut in 11, winning only \$25.

The pride of Boone, N.C., will win no less than \$3,000 at La Costa. Even the last-place finisher is guaranteed that amount.

Adams qualified for the T of C by winning the

Lynne Cox in Egypt, 1974

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