

## **Maltesers.**

**20th- 23rd May 2012 (BG)**



### **A picture of elegance**

### **Diary of Sgt at Arms or "A fine time was had by all"**

#### **Pre-trip preparations;**

Various members of the touring team have developed pre-trip rituals to help acclimatise their bodies to the forthcoming assault on their combined digestive systems.

The senior and wiser members of the Clarke/Dymond/Curran/Kellett group favour a strictly disciplined approach to pre-trip limbering up, with their thoughtful approach of consuming a skinful of beer and a curry. Thus opening their bowels well in advance of the "sparrow-fart" airport call and it's dangerous to trust a fart.

Others opt for an early night and a farewell exchange of bodily fluids to secure and re-affirm their ongoing matrimonial bonds.

Others of us attend a pub quiz to sharpen our minds and wits. This year due to the very early start Jim had decided to stay at my place and therefore we wisely decided to "go for it" during the quiz and consume copious amounts of beer and wine, then returning to my bachelor pad it seemed sensible to have a G&T, or three, and listen to music until 2.00am, leaving us with an hours sleep. Brilliant plan.

Mike Garner (herein after referred to as Twat) spends months carefully investing funds on behalf of Lee and myself to ensure that the trip costs will be more than covered by our return on investment.

#### **Airport (f\*\*\*ing early!)**

Bleary eyed our team assemble in the check-in area looking like we are attending our own funerals, signs of life are barely visible. Our leader, "NK", plays the good

shepherd and ushers us all towards the allocated check-in desk, and glowers, as only he can, at the usual tardy arrival of Messrs Green and Khan.

I am presented in my dream like state with the dubious honour of being Sgt at Arms as I try to convince my body that one hours sleep is perfectly acceptable.

“NK”, successfully susses out the auto-check-in machine while others are not quite so successful. Jim offering his Sainsbury card number instead of passport number looks confused when the promised boarding card fails to arrive, but the fresh aubergines are bound to come in handy.

Sartorial elegance is a key ingredient of our group, and the purple trip polo shirts are teamed with an assortment of colours that purple is not complementary to. However, as most have dressed in the dark, it is to be hoped that for most that is their defence.

Damian (hereafter referred to as “21”....that’s **777**) had for once forsaken his usual camouflage jacket, which meant we could see him, and had opted instead for a nice line in ill-fitting fleece, and is suitably fined.

Mr Curran (“DC”) was dressed for a winter ski trip, and it was all downhill for him from here on (couldn’t resist that line). He was also in possession of a very gay suitcase, he was given every opportunity to say he had borrowed it off Janet, but declined this “get out of jail free” offer proudly claiming it was his. Moving to Lytham has obviously brought out his feminine side.

Mr Coleman (“Invisible”) was clearly visible, this was a new standard for him, but we were confident it wouldn’t last.

Mr Green (Scouse Git, hereafter referred to as “S.G”) started a rambling lecture about his numerous travel experiences, and went on and on and on. Leaving him talking to himself as we headed for security.

Mr Walker, (hereafter referred to as “P.G”.for Pompous Git, but as DC would say, “Yes but he is our pompous git”) then took it upon himself, as an experienced traveller, (I mean “NK” never goes anywhere does he?) to lecture us about the necessity of having the correct sized, clear, sealable bag to display our liquids in, and thus allow us to pass through security without delay. I apparently have completely the wrong size bag and so borrow a spare Tesco one from him. We all pass successfully through security, apart from “PG” who is stopped for having the wrong sized bag.



### **Bags of experience**

The sound of air being forced at pressure through his gritted teeth added a certain ambience to the vicinity. The sound of air being sucked into teeth by the rest of us to stifle laughter was equally loud.

Mr Clarke ("Yosser") also encountered difficulties and his bag passed several times through the scanner whilst he shed various layers of clothing. Nothing is found, but it was well worth it to see, and hear, his "bloody job's worth" and "what a fucking shambles" rant at the hapless official responsible. This of course made things worse and more checks of his bag were made.

We then head for breakfast, and essential intake of pre-flight fluids to prevent dehydration.

"NK" asked for "Walter" contributions to include change, as he never had enough (change we assume). When supplied with a surfeit of the required coinage he then complained loudly that he had too much change. As I wrote down my note to fine him, he told me to "Fuck off". This was quite an early bollocking, even by my standards.

Whilst passing through security Mr Childs (hereafter referred to as F.G", fat git, for obvious reasons) seemed to be in possession of orthopaedic shoes which became

evident as he removed them and placed them on the conveyor. He seemed to consider these the height of fashion, well the thickness of the soles certainly added height as he rocked to and fro whilst balanced on them.

“SG” decided that as I had dozed off (a rare and fleeting moment) he would note all potential fines for me. For which he was, of course, heavily fined.

Mr Fartbroter (aka Jim Boy hereafter referred to “JB”) was fined for peaking too early, as the sun hat he was wearing (essential in an airport lounge) had a peak of considerable length, which thankfully hid most of his early morning face.

“FG”. was seen carrying a "man bag" of some sizeable proportions, into which he would no doubt cram numerous purchases as he hadn't been shopping for nearly an hour. He was fined for having a tart's bag, and exchanged fleeting glances with” DC” as they shared their metro-sexual luggage empathy.

“Twat” was having trouble with his knob and “S.G” suggested he twist it harder. With the benefit of hindsight, and knowing what we know now, there would have been no shortage of volunteers to carry out that action forcibly for him!

“PG” commenced a long winded, (does he know any other way), diatribe about the validity of the statement, "buy one get one free" and its semantic inaccuracy. He was thanked warmly for his input by Russell (Mr Dymond to you) with the helpful phrase, "You do talk a load of crap at times Alan". “PG” carried on unabashed, of course.

“S.G” then expounded on his theories about people who didn't speak properly and who seemed unable to understand him at times. I have to say this sort of input is priceless and like manna from heaven, I mean how can anybody not understand Scouse?

Gin and tonics for some and real ales for real men are consumed with dignified restraint.

The breakfast arrangements seemed to get very complicated and so toast from behind the bar is selected by most and arrives surprisingly quickly and efficiently and well before” FG” has returned from his full breakfast. Much needed as he had only had coffee and toast before setting off from home, which was nearly an hour ago, he was understandably feeling peckish. Plus he needed extra strength to carry his man bag which is now crammed full with magazines and "stuff".

Mr Khan (aka “Sleepy”) had dozed off quietly in the corner.

So we haven't left the airport yet and it is clear that the coffers of the "Walter" are going to be swollen substantially by a substantial input of fines as the days progress.

As I recall the flight was fairly uneventful, well it was for me as I was asleep.

### **Valetta (are you better, are you well, well, well)**

(This song "worm", stirred by of my memory of an old Alan price song, locked in my head every time Valetta was mentioned)

We arrived and disembarked without too much disruptive behaviour and found our mini-bus driver and eventually boarded the mini-bus and headed to our hotel. The location of which couldn't be faulted as we were "on the front" overlooking the sea, well those of us with sea view rooms were.

Kellett's bar was soon located and the cooling Cisks were ordered in quantity.



### **The golden liquid**

Our bar was called Time Square, which I never really found a reason for. But it had all the key ingredients we look for;

- 1/ Beer.
- 2/ Location in warm sunshine.
- 3/ More beer.
- 4/ Cheap beer.
- 5/ Proximity to our hotel.
- 6/ Beer.
- 7/ "NK" approved.
- 8/ Beer.





### Exotic foreign drinks

Actually we secured a "buy one get one free deal" (see earlier note and ask "PG" to explain if you are still unsure of the validity of this claim). Certainly BOGOF was seamlessly integrated into the conversation in relation to "PG's" repeated explanation. For some reason the offer of a free St George's "T" shirt excited Russell (Mr Dymond to you) and he pestered the waitress/owner incessantly until she could ignore him no longer, and she really did try very hard, and the promised "T" shirt arrived, childrens' size 4, and proved a perfect fit, well up to his 6 pack (12 pack) where it's hem sat neatly atop his protruding abdomen. A perfect representation of a Brit abroad, Well what else should we expect from a blue collar worker.



A perfect fit

Whilst Cisks were consumed in quantity “21” had been hard at work negotiating our European community transport subsidy redemption. He had secured a deal so good they were almost paying us to use their “Round the Island” tour buses. Even “N.K”. was impressed. Well any mention of bus travel gets him excited, and despite “21” usurping his transport supremo role, he agreed that funds from the “Walter” could be spent on this discounted trip. The rest of the touring party kept their celebrations under control, with useful phrases like;

“Couldn’t we just get a taxi or two?” (Immediately followed by “Fuck off Peter” from NK). That’s twice I have received the standard response and it is only 12.45.

“Anyone want another beer” (generally repeated every 10 minutes or so)

“I need a dump” says “FG” (generally repeated every 10 minutes or so)

“Sleepy” was well asleep again by now.

“Invisible” was invisible. But remarkably appeared long enough to refuse the second beer, and was of course heavily fined for being a lightweight.

“JB” was hungry, and wanted to know which restaurant we were visiting first.

“Fuck off Jim!” “NK” intoned, “We have a bus to catch”.

“Twat” asked if he could smoke....”We don’t care if you burst into flames came the reply”. .....Oh how true!!

“Yosser” had a contented grin on his face at this stage and he turned to me and said “Well here we are again, absolutely magic”. I concurred.

Getting wind of our potential departure, well I think that’s what it was, the waitress/owner then produced various high class snacks to ensure we would stay longer and drink more beer. She of course secured a resounding victory with that move and the onomatopoeic “chink” of the next round of Cisks arriving filled the air.

“21” used this delay to further improve our bus trip deal by explaining to the tour sales guy that our reticence to move was because our party still thought 5 Euros per head was too expensive.

The tour guy then played his trump card and sent over a very attractive assistant to secure our undivided attention, her request of “Gentlemen please walk this way” was of course the prelude to numerous gay walking routines. But she was very fit and therefore sheep-like we obeyed.

“DC” liked the idea of her and a sheep, not necessarily in that order.

We were actually then crammed into two very small mini-buses; maybe “21’s” deal hadn’t been quite the bargain we had in mind. Hot, sweaty and unpleasant, and the buses were pretty warm too.

However, we were turfed out at the harbour area and ushered into an open topped tour bus and our tour of the island commenced.

I said something about “wanting me dinner” and “NK” thought I said I wanted to go to Mdina, so that is where it was decided we should stop off at first.

“SG” then said we were pronouncing it wrongly and that the “d” was silent in Mdina, or maybe it was the “m”. I pointed out that as it was known of as the “Silent City” then all the letters shouldn’t be pronounced.

“NK” slapped me on the head. Is that better than being told to “fuck off”?

This led to ten minutes of reasoned debate about names with letters missing or silent, would this then make him “SG”, ‘Ike Green, and Damian would become Da’ian or ‘A’ian, dependant on the number of letters unspoken.

Jim would become Ji’and so on.

Kevin (aka “Ginger”) was looking panicky, he had failed to follow Pennell’s rule No 2 and not gone for a piss on leaving the bar, he was now feeling the pressure. Having established we would be getting off at Mdina, (Saying that word was a bit like saying Crackerjack as once more everyone started talking like Klingons and adding extra “m’s and d’s to their words). “Ginger” Mdidn’t care, he was getting off at the Mnext stop and would Mmeet us in Mdina by catching the Mnext bus (stop, stop this is far too hard to type!). He leaped off the bus and was seen hurriedly searching the streets for somewhere to release the contents of his bladder whilst the rest of us shouted words of encouragement from atop the bus.

“Told you to go before we left”

“Never seen you move that quickly before”

All greeted by a cheery, two fingered, wave from the scurrying “Ginger”.

### **Me-dinner in Medina**

The picture that follows leads to interesting observations;

(DC’s legs suggest catching a pig in an alley might prove quite a challenge, or was he just trying to get down to Russell’s height?)

When this picture was taken “Invisible” was between “Yosser” and the white van on the left, if you can see him then you win the where’s Wally prize!

“SG” is just out of shot loosening the wheel nuts on the nearest van just to make himself feel at home.



Russell (That's Mr Dymond to you) has now shed his treasured "T" shirt and is wearing it casually over his right shoulder, adding a splash of much needed colour to enhance still further his fashion icon status.

"NK" is missing from the shot as he is still collecting bus numbers in the square.



### Hi Ho

So soon we started wandering aimlessly, and after a few beers I apparently said we were "wanderously aiming", but I am sure I wouldn't have made such a schoolboy error. My fines record, however, confirms that I did and that I repeated the crime in Valetta the next day.

We still hadn't had lunch, apart from, in my case and a few others, slightly sweaty sandwiches at the coach park on arrival in Mdina. There is something about a warm sweaty sandwich that brings out the intrepid traveller feeling, braving the local

delicacies, lukewarm bacon and lettuce limper than a handshake from David Ham (and that is pretty limp!).

So “JB” and “FG” were starting to waste away, as was “PG”, well we certainly had time our side there before that would be noticeable.

I broke off briefly to engage with some more local culture outside the museum, and taught her a new dance routine.



### **Shall we dance?**

Eventually having soaked in the warm sunshine and admired the view from the top of the hill, and made sufficient touristy type noises, we found a bar clinging to the hillside.

Beer and pizzas were ordered and banter ensued with a Yorkshire couple hoping to have a quiet meal together. To the tune of Dvorak's The New World symphony ( the Hovis song) hummed by our mass choir, the poor husband, ironically called Walter, tried to banter with us and launch his new business idea to me Dragon's Den style.

“DC” said he was wasting his time talking to me about business unless he wanted to lose money. It is touching the support one gets from one's fellow companions at times like these.

Walter carried on regardless, which his wife, in a resigned manner indicative of many bitter years of experience, informed us he would, so we ignored him completely and tucked into our long awaited lunch. He then thought we were being ironic and started laughing, and claimed this was the most fun he had had on the whole holiday, His wife was ecstatic to learn that.

“DC” insisted that SG” should get a refund out of the “Walter” for acting out of character as he took some of Russell’s (that’s Mr Dymond to you) pizza, “with permission”. “DC” claimed he should have waited until his back was turned and then nicked it.

More aimless wandering followed until we rejoined the bus to head for a large dome somewhere. This large dome was in a large church type place, and was very impressive.”DC” and “Yosser” spent time, architect to QS, discussing how many bricks had been used and how this enormous roof structure was supported by various forces to seemingly defy gravity.

The rest of us just went “wow!”.

Getting back to the hotel proved tricky as the tour buses were full so only half our party could get on. I said not to worry we will get a taxi back. These proved to be non-existent, (“NK” was seen to be punching the air in celebration as he passed by on the bus). The remaining 50% of us then found our only way home was to do the other half of the island tour, this took over an hour and a half and we got freezing cold. The earlier group were already gathered in Kellett’s bar as we shivered back into town.

“J B” and myself went off to bed together (yes I know that phrase was bound to cause a “Carry On” film response, but it was worth the cheap laugh).



**What a gay day**

“JB” seems to be hiding something or someone up his shirt.

To quote a phrase for, many years ago, medium sized shirt, extra large frame.

We overslept and missed the early festivities, and complained that nobody had called to tell us meeting times etc, "Oh what shame" they said, having enjoyed our share of the "Walter".

"NK" made suggestions for the following day, and was heavily fined for being subtle, he normally just tells us what we are doing. The day was to consist of a trip to Valetta (Are you better are you well, well, well) and a boat ride around the harbour. Apparently this was phase two of "21's" transport deal, and so that was deemed to be a good plan.

The evening descended into its usual chaos of food and drink and, for a number of us, a search for a late night club. The club was located across the road from the hotel and "Twat" very generously decided to buy us all cocktails. How fortunate he was to be flush with cash, a sign of prosperity that his investors were re-assured by.

"Twat" and "FG" had also visited a dancing club full of Poles, at some stage to practice their cha cha cha. (Whatever euphemism that represents insert as you think appropriate). Apparently it was a Maltese custom that all the dancers had to be fully clothed at all times, the boys appreciated this greatly.

The cocktail bar had certain distractions and they clearly distracted me from challenging what "Twat" was doing with "his" money and why he was being **SO** generous.

As you will see the staff were of eastern European extract and offered a choice of blonde or brunette, how thoughtful.

They may well have offered other choices but we were so cool we didn't of course try to find out. Well I might have in a moment of weakness, but that's because I am shallow, oh yes and single!



### **Distractions**

I fell out of the lift back at the hotel at 3.00am, “SG” let me fall and thought this was hilarious. I couldn’t get my key to work so had to wake “JB”. He didn’t seem to see the funny side of this happenstance, and my apologetic giggling didn’t seem to help. I had now been awake for just under 24 hours!

### **Tomorrow is here already**

I did make it down to breakfast on time as the responsibility of the need to collect fines weighed as heavily as my hangover on my person.

“SG” and “Sleepy” were very late, for “SG” that was vaguely understandable as he had been up with me until 3.00am, but “Sleepy” had already slept most of the previous day and had gone to bed at 10.00pm the night before.

“Invisible” had been down to breakfast an hour before everyone else having adjusted his phone’s alarm time in the wrong direction. Fortunately nobody saw him.

“Yosser” looking well in the early morning light.



**Oh what a beautiful morning**

We assembled on the prom in the warm sunshine, for the morning's fine session, and as ever displayed a range of sartorial elegance that the rest of Europe simply can't match.



Firstly “FG” had tested his orthopaedic shoes still further with a “mud walk”, and had splashed the contents of the only puddle on the island up his cream trouser legs, effectively portraying a man suffering from a bowel discharge.

“Invisible” had sensibly decided to wear sunglasses in the bright glare of the sunshine. His ‘avant garde’ approach to styling was eye catching.



### **Covering all weather options**

The fact he carried off this look almost as if he hadn’t noticed was impressive!

“Ginger” complained that he hadn’t been fined enough, he had now!

“21” was wearing yet another fleece on this lovely sunny morning.

“PG” was wearing Jesus sandals in honour of David Lumb.

Russell (that’s Mr Dymond to you) observed how small he looked stood amongst the rest of us, wow it’s only taken him 20 years to spot that, impressive.

We headed for the harbour and were soon aboard a boat that was basically going to take us back to where we were.

It was getting chilly on the boat as those without jackets were beginning to notice.

“21’s” fleece was maybe not such a bad idea.

The harbour was a very impressive sight with its steeply banked sides and shimmering blue waters. Historic buildings filled the city and spoke of wars and struggles to secure the island against marauders and vagabonds.

I was lost in admiration and awe.



### **Sweet dreams**

Disembarking from the boat “NK” guided straight back onto a ferry to take us back to exactly where we had just been. He just loves travel. On landing we hatched a plan to spend time in the city “wanderously aiming”, our specialist skill. However, we hadn’t made allowance for “PG’s” knowledge of the city, (he had been before many times) and his mental “sat nav” of the narrow streets and alleyways of Valetta (are you better are you well, well, well), so instead of “wanderously aiming”, we were to be given a guided tour.

So we walked up a steep hill and then like the Duke of York and his men walked down again. The hill was very steep and put a severe test on several members’ cardiovascular systems. Still as it was clearly to a well-directed purpose walking back up the same hill, but two streets along, was seen for all its benefits. We were heading for the bar where Oliver Reed had died, if we faced any more hills we may have needed a similar memorial for one of our own team. Still “PG” pressed on back down the next hill and then headed up again to the main square, which we had passed by the side of two hills ago.

Murmurings from the group, well those that could, and for others it was more short, sharp gasps of breath, about needing any bar went unheeded.

Yosser concerned about his health and breathlessness went in search of tobacco, and actually managed to blag a cigar off a complete stranger.

“Sleepy” was staring intently (yes his eyes were open briefly) at some metal studs embedded into the cobbled streets. Others gathered around to establish the purpose of these studs.

We shouldn’t have wasted time wondering because “PG” knew, these were parking bays for the city’s inhabitants during the working week.

“Sleepy” studied the sign on the post at the head of the street “No vehicular access except in the case of an emergency”. “Ginger” therefore felt confident to say we hadn’t solved the mystery. “PG” made that noise, you know the one, written

phonetically it is something like “pfffwoorr, accompanied by the sound of wobbling jowels. It was a sound we were all to grow to love and cherish.

“JB” had disappeared into a music shop to find some obscure Maltese folk music to add to his collection of cds that have never been opened .

“FG” had disappeared into a variety of shops.

“SG” disappeared into a jewellery shop, he was checking the alarm system, just out of professional curiosity.

“Sleepy” had found a bench for a quick nap.

“DC” and “Yosser” had disappeared into their professional world and were admiring the external wiring on most of the shops, this is something they always do, muttering comments like, “unbelievable”, “how do they get away with it”, “look at the fire risk” etc,

“Invisible” had disappeared.

“Twat” unfortunately was still with us, the hills hadn’t quite finished him off, a bit like the ladies in the pole dancing club.

Russell (that’s Mr Dymond to you) and DC then somehow got lost.

Eventually the rest of us found a suitable square, (no,no not “NK”), and assumed our correct order, sitting around drinking beer, all was once more right with the world.

Being the mature adults we are we soon hit on the idea of building a tower of empty beer cans. Several attempts were made that proved somewhat unsuccessful as empty cans tumbled to the floor, hitting the cobbles and adding a touch of class to the ambience of the ancient square. Bringing with it welcoming smiles from other guests nearby who clearly relished our contribution to their quiet lunchtime.

Fortunately at this point “DC” arrived so I asked him for his advice on constructing a successful high tower type structure out of the components we had available.

He brought to bear the full knowledge gained over 40 years of honing his architectural prowess and declared;

“Well start with a lot at the bottom and put les on the top”

Success was assured.



### **The leaning tower of Cisk**

“PG” complained about the quality of beer on offer, and made that noise, several members echoed the call. Much giggling ensued. We are easily pleased.



It was noted that “Invisible” was dressed as “Where’s Wally”, thus adding to the challenge of that particular game.



### **Where’s Wally?**

“SG” then jumped up scared by a pigeon, which he claimed to have an aversion to.

Russell (that’s My Dymond to you), also jumped up but nobody noticed.

“Ginger” and “21” were both still wearing their fleeces in the hot sunshine and were suitably fined for over-playing their “weren’t we sensible to bring our fleeces card” which they had played so well on the boat.

Food was ordered at an agreed rate from the “Walter”. But “NK” was fined for going off piste and ordering a pudding.

“Sleepy” was fined for being healthy and ordering a Cesar salad to maintain his sylphlike figure.

There then followed a Chinese whispers conversation across the table between “Yosser” and “SG”, “Yosser” said, “I believe you have sired two kids”

“SG” thought he said “I believe you have shagged two kids”.

“Yosser” collapsed into a fit of giggles and “SG” sought legal advice from “Jim Boy”

The beer flowed and the sun warmed us, life was good..

### **Oliver's army**

Post lunch we set off to find Oliver's bar and were soon entering the location of his final watering hole. Greeted on arrival by The Who's greatest hits, I behaved impeccably on hearing this.

"DC" broke ranks and ordered a coffee, the ultimate insult to Ollie's memory.

"PG" engaged an Australian sailing chap and a very attractive lady, who were sat at the bar, in tales of his extensive semanship (I couldn't resist that malapropism). The conversation hit a high point when he enquired of the young lady, "Had she worked her passage".

Make up the various replies offered yourselves!

There was a conversation about the sweater the sailing chap was wearing, being Australian would it have to be called a "jumper". This seemed funny at the time, but writing it now it does seem to have lost something in translation.

The literature in the bar describing Oliver Reed's drinking exploits was quite astounding, and his capacity remarkable.

The bar itself was quite unremarkable and unassuming, but very English, so I suppose it was a home from home for him.

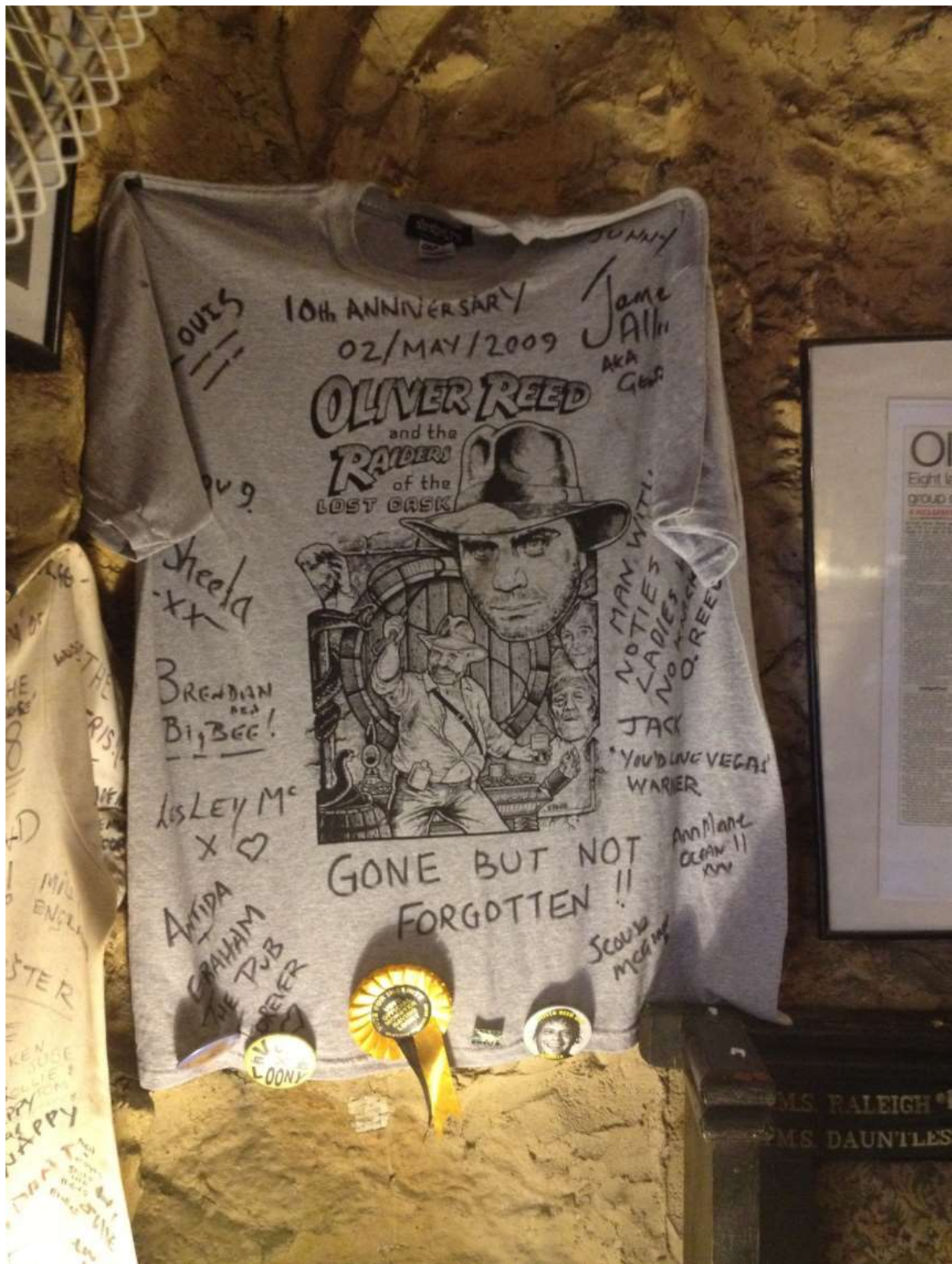
The loo and upstairs room were notable only for how unloved they appeared.

"PG" was now engaged in conversation with another sailor, the previous recipients of his bon homie having fallen asleep on the bench seat next to "Sleepy" who had assumed his normal status.

We toasted Ollie's his memory with suitable libations.







### A legend in his own extensive lunchtimes

Time to wander back to the ferry, this time, learning from our previous meanderings we chose a direct route straight down to the harbour.

Exhausted from nearly ten minutes walking we soon found a bar by the ferry terminal. That makes both the bar and terminal sound impressive, neither were.

“FG” had disappeared into a chemist shop, trouble with his “Chalfont’s” we learnt.

“21” went missing completely, no doubt looking for a new fleece, or cheaper ferry deal.

“NK” tackled his crossword. He was looking for another word for irritating, the loudly proclaimed answer of “Owen”, seemed to tickle him.

Russell (that’s Mr Dymond to you), following a similar theme, suggested “hook nosed bastard. “NK” thanked him but pointed out it was only a one word answer that was required.

“Oh in that case just put down c\*\*\*t” instead”.

“J B” complained of having a sore eye. “DC” suggested he should “maybe leave it alone for a while”.

### **The evening meal..... patience is a virtue**

The restaurant scouting party, “JB” and “FG” had selected a venue that “FG” had stumbled across on his way to pole-land. A long table had been organised and the assembled masses settled down in anticipation of food.

I was fortunate to be seated opposite “PG” and “21”. As my knowledge of foreign food is limited and my knowledge of wine even poorer, so I was able to get the full benefit of “PG”s expansive description of each item on the menu and followed by his limitless knowledge of wine as he explained to “21”. The expression on “21”s face clearly showed how impressed he was by this knowledge. Laughter was filling the air from rest of the table, it was almost as if we were in a different room.

The one thing missing from the evening was food as we waited and waited. Fortunately there was an impromptu floor show as a married couple by the bar were enjoying something of a lively and noisy discussion. The female of the two disappeared off to the toilet and didn’t re-appear, it seems she had had another argument this time with the toilet door. Such a heated argument then ensued between the bar staff, her and the husband that the police were called to escort them away. This argument had put the toilets off limits for a bladder straining amount of time. Russell (that’s Mr Dymond to you) was the first to visit the scene of the crime.

Fortunately due to his expert joinery knowledge he was able to provide a clear and precise description of the damage that the irate wife had done to the toilet facilities.

“The door is fucked” he told us with that expert precision.

Whilst waiting for the still missing food many of the party attempted to drink the UK's share of the European red wine lake.

Only Russell (that's Mr Dymond to you) opted for the white option, this securing himself a full bottle.

Food arrived, well some of it.

The mussels were plentiful and declared good.

"NK's" soup and salad option seemed to be a success.

The red snapper was equally pronounced to be good.

The steaks were cremated, and arrived, in various forms, and to all the wrong recipients, and some short.

My swordfish was excellent.

The mixed grills never arrived, much to "Ginger's" dismay and he insisted on waiting for the correct fare to arrive.

The meal ended with complimentary drinks just as "Ginger's" mixed grill finally arrived, unfortunately by now there were no chips left, he was not happy.

He was suitably fined the next day for keeping us all waiting.

Everyone enjoyed their complimentary glass of fiery liquid, Russell (that's Mr Dymond to you) received a complimentary bottle, no doubt to thank him for his joinery advice.

Many of the party have no recollection of leaving the restaurant, or any memory of their journey back to their bedrooms. "Sleepy" being particularly ignorant of any of the post meal events.

Stepping outside into the fresh air seemed to destabilise "JB" in particular and I had to point him in the right direction on numerous occasions.

The more intrepid of us headed back to either Kellett's bar, or to the cocktail bar.

Russell (that's Mr Dymond to you) opted, surprisingly for the cocktail bar. This followed his consumption a full bottle of white wine and a full bottle of complimentary spirit. He was in a good mood.

The cocktail staff were thrilled to see him arrive.





**“Oh no not Mr Drunky”**

The following picture is for “JB’s” benefit as he has no recollection of being here.



**Yes he was there. Plus Where's Wally and Twat.**

And further proof, about 40% proof, that "21" doesn't always wear a fleece and knows how to enjoy a screaming orgasm. Something many can't remember so this is what one looks like.



**Ooh that felt good**

(Not sure why he is wearing a Liz Hurley tribute shirt, but hey each to his own)



## **Sunday, bloody Sunday**

Breakfast is quiet, interrupted only by “NK” suggesting I should do the fines before I fell asleep.

We assemble once more on the prom in very bright sunshine.

We are treated once more to sartorial magnificence.

“NK” and “DC” in matching outfits score particularly highly in the best dressed look of the day competition.



**“DC” hides an awkward stain, “NK” had already seen it.**

“21” offered to rent out his fleece during the day if it got chilly, and once more his words were to prove prophetic.

“Invisible” had somehow managed to find another “Where’s Wally” outfit.

We set off for a long stroll and soon find a bar.

“FG” tries to look cool with his New Orleans jazz band member look, but just looks like a fat guy wearing a baseball hat backwards.



**“Hey man, I is a cool dude”**

“JB” explains the intricacy of the law with regards to my fining policy, I explained that I used the sound principle of “guilty until proven innocent”. It is a winning argument as I, for once hold unchallengeable power.

“Invisible” is seen drinking tea, presumably to match the character of his outfit.

Once again I, and others, were fortunate to receive more words of wisdom from “PG”, this time on the proper way to drink beer. We were all appreciative of this advice as most of us were relatively new to beer drinking.

“Sleepy” was looking very cool in a khaki green T shirt and shorts combo, complete with Jesus sandals, but correctly worn without socks. As this looked vaguely like camouflage gear “21” tried to trade his fleece in exchange for “Sleepy’s” outfit. But too late as “Sleepy” had dozed off before the deal was done.

“Ginger” managed to finish his first pint before the rest of us had even been served, thus ensuring he got another pint. Very impressive, and of course he was heavily fined for abuse of the “Walter”.

For some reason “SG” accuses me of gay dancing, well he should know.

A empty tray left lying around from bringing “Ginger” his drinks, inspires the idea that this could be as a “wobble” board and great hilarity ensues at my expense as Rolf Harris songs follow.

“FG” gets over excited banging his can of Diet Coke on the table in time to “Tie me kangaroo down sport”, and then needing to take a much needed drink showers himself completely in the suitably over fizzy mixture this has created.

“Yosser” suggests that next time “FG” should get the waitress to open his can for him. “DC” chuckles at what he perceives to be an excellent euphemism.

Russell (that’s Mr Dymond to you), spies a young lady wearing tight fitting short shorts, and says “that reminds me I must buy a new cheese board”.

Once more cultured debate has been engendered and we while away a happy couple of hours talking utter nonsense. Perfect.

I suggest I could do with a kip, and JB says “I’d like to get my head down as well”, again the replies are varied.

“21” is spotted filming various young ladies sunbathing on the beach below us, he had obviously forgotten he wasn’t wearing the usual camouflage gear he wears when doing this back at home.

“Ginger” finishes his fifth pint.

Lunch is discussed, and as ever this features two key players, “JB and “FG”. “JB” finds a restaurant with lunch at 30/40 Euros per head, for once “FG” sees an economic argument against this extravagance by declaring “I could get two dances for that”.

We eventually end up in a sports bar.

### **Some people think it’s all over.**

It wouldn’t be the same if part of the day wasn’t spent “wanderously aiming” so we embark on this very task and drift in and out of St Julien’s Bay, we passed more semi-clad ladies and “21” is back in filming mode almost instantly. the other 13 of us blend in inconspicuously.

Having wandered down to the bay this isn’t considered suitable and anyway “Twat” wants to watch United clinch the title by slaughtering Everton, so we need to find a sports bar.

We enter one half way up the hill and all walk into it like a primary school walking bus snake, and all walk out again as it smells. Various members advise this is due to it being a Dutch bar and “whacky baccy” leaves a lingering smell, quite a few of us made our contribution to the atmosphere on our way through. Maintaining our tradition we walk back up the same steep hill we have just walked down.

More heavy breathing ensues, but that is just “FG” emerging from an “adult shop” he had stumbled into by mistake.

Eventually a suitable bar is found and beer is ordered in quantity. The menu appears suitable, burgers and chips, pizza and other exotic delicacies. Yet again we benefit from a BOGOF deal and get 50% off the bill.

United go two up and I go outside to control my excitement. Forgetting of course that “Twat” being a smoker also keeps popping outside for a fag and to update me on the score..”21”seems equally happy to share this news with me.

“NK” and “Yosser” join me to escape all this joy.

“Twat” compounds this abuse by buying a “Come on Woves” T Shirt.

“DC” asked if this was an instruction in bestiality.

Everton score,

United score again.

Everton score again, and again, and again.

Oh what a shame!

You can just hear in the future if you listen very carefully “Aguerooooooooo!!!!”

### **On tour AGM**

As is traditional on our last night away we try to hold a tour AGM, so the restaurant adjoining the cocktail bar are willing to accommodate us and provide a suitable private dining area and suitable waitress (a close friend of Mr Drunky).

She is proves very capable of wit and humour and this makes the evening go very well. Various bits of spurious business are dreamt up to pass the time and a very enjoyable evening is had by all. “PG” as Chairman behaves himself and joins in wholeheartedly with the banter that inevitably flows in his direction.

This culminates in a ‘round the table’ set of impressions of our Chairman and his “pfffwoorr” sound. This is accompanied by vigorous jowel shaking by all, particularly by “NK”, who had initially frowned on my idea to do this, he seemed to conquer his reservations! The poorest impression came from the Chairman himself and he came last.

This then culminated in a 1,2/3 countdown and an en masse “pfffwoorr”.

A brilliant end to the last night on a brilliant trip.

### **Conclusion**

Any resemblance to persons living or deceased contained herein is purely coincidental and the publishers accept no responsibility for any such similarities.

Any offence caused herein is purely intentional and anyone not offended clearly wasn't trying hard enough whilst we were away and must do better next trip.\_

I hope this will have stirred some happy memories and that it will have put you in the mood for trips to come.

Final thanks must go to “NK” without whose tireless effort these trips would not take place.

### **And finally**

Roy Davies (the Welsh Git) was asked by his friends in Spain what our trips consist of and he summed it up perfectly.

“We drink beer, wander about aimlessly, sit in the sunshine and hurl abuse at each other”.

I couldn't have said it better myself.

Here's to Tarragonna.

Cheers

Peter



