

# May 2019 Windsor Knots



Graham and Fee are taking Don and Liss on a weekend trip to Windsor travelling at 5 Knots and including an overnight stay on the boat - this will be a first.

By the way, in case anyone is wondering, this is how you tie a Windsor Knot

## Windsor Knot Directions



Thursday 16th May

Don, Liss and Graham meet in the 'office' to make up the food plan for the weekend ahead.

Fee is having a tough time at work so settles for a quiet night in.

However, before doing so, she provides a comprehensive 'starter for 10' list.

All will sort out their own breakfasts on Saturday morning.

We will head off at approximately 10am.

We will eat lunch on the move and then have snacks and a heartstarter on arrival at Windsor.

We will eat dinner at GoGo's.

On Sunday we will have a cooked breakfast on board before heading back downstream.

Again, we will eat lunch on the move, or maybe stop at Runnymede, depending on the time.

Well . . . that's the plan, anyway !

## Friday 17th May

Don and Graham take a trip to Waitrose to stock up on provisions for this epic journey and manage to fill a full deep trolley.

We certainly won't be short of food and drinks, with a 40/60 split . . . or maybe a 30/70 split 😂

We also have our checklists of things to take ranging from essentials like pillows and sleeping bags . . . to a Nespresso coffee machine !

The boat fridge is switched on and we are all set for tomorrow.

## Saturday 18th May

At 8am Graham and Don take the first load down to the boat, put the canopy down and then return home to pick up the ladies.

At 9:45, we all head down to the marina and after loading the remainder of the cargo we set off on schedule.

Liss takes a turn at the helm.



We arrive at Shepperton Lock where the lock keeper greets us with a smile and open gates.

Fee and Graham take us through the lock, closely observed by Don and Liss who are on their first day of training.

As we pass through Chertsey Meads, we are joined by a boatload of day tripping lads on board a small vessel called "Muggins".

This proves to be aptly named as they fail to get through Chertsey Lock in any kind of control.

But they are pleasant enough chaps and we have the pleasure of their company through the next few locks.



Penton Hook Lock, like Chertsey Lock before it, is Self Service (No lock keeper on duty).

Fee offers her expertise in Lock Management while Don has his first practical session on "Line Management".

After successful negotiation of the lock, Don has earned his first star.

From then onwards, he is assigned full time responsibility for the aft lines.

After passing through the wonderful "Staines-Upon-Thames" as quickly as possible, we get through Bell Weir Lock and then enjoy the more pleasant scenery of Runnymede with a relaxed Don at the helm.



As we are arriving at Old Windsor Lock, the gates are just closing in front of us.

The lock is self-service and the inconsiderate people in a small day boat had decided not to wait for us. A\*#\$holes !

Graham strides up to the lock in a truly passive aggressive manner.

Or, as Liss politely puts it, "Graham is on a mission"

After an uncomfortable wait, and Graham providing minimal assistance to the other boaters who dare to impede our progress on OUR river we are finally able to enter the lock.

Once again we are joined by "Muggins"

By now, alcohol has taken its toll on their crew and with great amusement we watch them first try to tie up on their starboard side then, when that fails, the port side.

Then they are positioned at right angles across the lock, then finally they tie up on their starboard side.

Bless them !





We pass alongside the Crown Estate land opposite Datchet where we manage to get some photos of Frogmore Cottage, the new home of “Harry and Meghan”, without being arrested.



We pass through Romney Lock where Liss is just happy to hold the aft line whilst Don has been promoted for front line management training . . . with his usual relaxed approach.



Having passed under Windsor Bridge, we all feel the need to pass water so we moor up on the Eton Bank and walk into Eton where we find a pleasant pub, the 16th century Watermans Arms, within 100 yds, which is as far as we are prepared to walk before going to the loo and then ordering our drinks.



### Checks and Balances

Fee says that Graham's pint of Proper Job looks like a medical sample - Graham checks !

Paddington watches on as Graham balances a 10p coin on a beer mat - such skill and control !



Having enjoyed the short break, and acquiring a Paddington Bear 50p Coin, we head back to the boat for the final leg of our upstream journey



Fee phones ahead to find out which berth we have been allocated at the marina.

It is H4 opposite “Lady Di” so we are to be in good company !

We pass through Boveney Lock with great ease, mainly due to the brilliant competency of our newly trained crew!

As we go through the narrow, winding approach to Windsor Racecourse Marina, we are welcomed and guided along by a beautiful kingfisher.

Unfortunately he his too quick for anyone to get a photo, but a wonderful sight nonetheless.

We approach H4 where Lady Di awaits us, as does the marina manager to greet us to our pontoon.

No pressure on the mooring Graham !!!

Time to relax and open a bottle of fizzy stuff.

But not before Liss has learned to tie a Bowline - no bowline, no wine !





It's 7 o'clock and time to walk to GoGos for pre-dinner drinks.

It's very noisy in the bar, mainly due to a group of mostly ladies celebrating Laura's 40th.

Laura asks for two people, enjoying a quick drink before their meal, to be removed from one of 'her' tables even though half the guests haven't arrived yet.

Laura orders another bottle of prosecco.

"Sorry to be a pain but can I have another two glasses"

Yes Laura , you are a pain !

Graham suggests he goes up and say

"Hello, you must be Laura, congratulations on your birthday. I must say, you look very good for 50"

Fee says " you dare !!!"

Graham doesn't





It's a miracle !

Liss decides to pour herself another glass of Rosé.

No Liss, that is your water glass !

Are you turning water into wine ?



We have a lovely window table in GoGos for dinner.



After the excellent meal, kindly paid for by Liss, we return to the boat for a game of Yahtzee.

Don has never played before and Liss plays by Norwegian Rules - this proves to be most entertaining.

After much confusion and controversy and laughter , Don is declared the rightful and deserved winner.

Wait a minute !

Tonight is Eurovision - we wonder who has won ?

It's not finished yet- there is more voting to come.

So, without having listened to any of the songs, we are mesmerised by the strange voting system which results in a public vote completely overturning the "professional" judges votes thereby giving victory to the Netherlands.

Time for bed.

Sunday 19th May

We awake to a rather overcast day.

It's not raining, but it's not sunny either.

To get us ready for the journey back downstream, Fee prepares a delicious breakfast.



We head off about the same time as we had done on Saturday - about 10:30

Once again, the river is very quiet with surprisingly few boats - going either way.



By now we have a fully competent crew, with Don now fully promoted to front line management while Liss takes a stern line.



Having our new crew is excellent as it frees up Fee to be acting Lock Keeper.

It's early in the boating season and most of the locks today are unmanned.

It's surprising how many boaters are reluctant to help with the locks when they are in self- service are either scared or lazy or both.

Anyway, Fee keeps everyone in their place and we make good progress back down towards Walton.



Don takes a well earned rest up front before tackling the next lock

Paddington keeps an eye on him.

The journey back is achieved in record time.

All the locks are ready for us as we arrive at them and there are very few boats, often just ourselves in a lock.

So it is all very relaxing.



Having got back so early, we decide to have a de-briefing session in the Jolly Farmer.

This is followed by a meal in La Casa where we recall some of the colourful moments of our trip together, including those not fit for publication here.

By the end of the night our eyes are dry - all moisture lost through tears of laughter.

What a wonderful trip, all in great company.