

Normandy Wreck Week

17th September

Day started well...sort of. Catherine's dog Jack, went on a wander round the surfacing bleary eyed divers and chose one particularly nice smelling undersuit to raise a morning leg salute at. So off to the sink went Mark, clothes scrubbing, nice way to start the day.

Got to the dive shop early, first rib was set upon the waves, second rib, not so lucky. Not starting. Lionel looked a bit stressed but as we were all used to the joys of rib diving, we just chatted and ignored the situation until it was actually declared dead, and that a mechanic was needed. A glorious silver lining resulted from the unhappy moment where Manchester Dave dropped his Go- Pro in the waves during the upheaval. A line was formed perpendicular to the shore, waste deep in the water, and the wading started. Within 10 paces, the last body in the line, who happened to be a giant with enormous feet called Kevin, stopped and raised the Go-Pro victoriously from the waves. The joy was noisy and the hugging almost indecent! Back to the dive centre and we all split off for the rest of the day.

Our group chose Mont St-Michel. Dave and Marta also chose to go that direction but not for a few hours as they wanted to see the Mont at sunset. So we aimed to see them later. Mont St-Michel was touristy but lovely with a long, varied and interesting history. We did the tour of the abbey, my favourite bit being the giant wheel where 6 prisoners walked inside it like a hamster wheel, to raise goods from the ground level, up to the abbey. Every house should have one!

We met Dave and Marta, who for some reason had opted not to just park and walk along a road to get there, but had instead parked in a "Do Not Park Here" kind of car park, and then set off across the fields and marshland, ditch covered, mosquito filled fields and marshland, with the occasional high wire fence. Bitten and scratched they got to the Mont, and proceeded to climb up the outside of the Mont itself. The fortress has successfully repelled armies for hundreds of years. And yes, a bloke from Manchester and his Spanish friend are also successfully repelled.

A decision was made to all go and eat somewhere distant from the Mont so that we could see the sun set behind it. It was getting late and we needed to get somewhere, not sure where.

This was the point at which Derek decided to split off and walk back along the walkway to the van. If there had not been a fence between Derek and Dawn at that moment, he'd have been back in that abbey, chained to giant hamster wheel. Goodnight Derek. Teeth gnashing, we arrived back at the van and I was asked to get Derek to hurry up, he had 5 minutes.....and amazingly, he came round the corner...so close to a very messy end. Twenty



minutes later we find the “Silence Hotel”. Perfect setting, lovely sunset across fields, followed by a fantastic meal with good company.

Then we got a text from Catherine saying we had to be up by 0430...at the dive centre and sorted out by 0530. Oh my god!!!! We were still an hour from home. Half past 12, our heads hit the pillow.

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