



## English in England in April 2011

A trip as part of a course module in English at the Åland Maritime Academy, Finland



**Departure from the London hostel near King's Cross**

### **Introduction: why traveling, who we are, etc**

In beginning of April 2011 a trip to England was done as a part of the course Technical English 3. On the trip we were 8 students studying mechanical engineering, 8 students studying electrical engineering and 2 Spanish exchange students. With us on the trip was also as a guide and support English lecturer Erik Hemming. The purpose of the trip was to learn about English shipping, English culture and of course practice our English in social situations.

### **Thanks to our sponsors!**

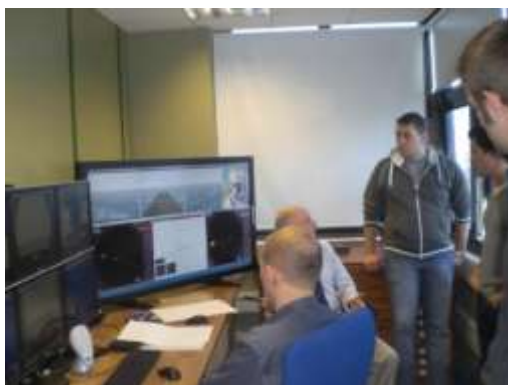
Without the generous help by our sponsors it would not have been possible to make this trip.





## **WMA training and facilities**

At the Warsash Maritime Academy we were guided by first year students around the campus area. They told us about how it was to study and live at the WMA. They also showed us their training and campus facilities at the campus area.



**There are a number of bridge simulators at the WMA**

Some of the WMA campus facilities are accommodations for the students, library, gym, water sports centre, restaurant/cafeteria and the popular Mariners Café Bar where it felt really nice to have a beer in the sun with the students after our presentations.



**Superior facilities at the WMA**

Some of the training facilities they have are an engine room simulator with different operations, a bridge simulator, radio communications centre, fire fighting area, engineering workshop where they train to use machine tools, to over haul diesel

engines, electrical appliances and other mechanical work.



**Fire-fighting training with real diesel oil**

Also they have a seamanship centre in which students can develop skills and understanding in practical seamanship, a safety centre with life boats and davits and a ship handling centre where they train maneuver models of real vessels in a lake. The small copies are about 4 meters and one or two persons aboard.

## **The students at the Warsash Maritime Academy**

...made us feel very welcome during our visit. It didn't take long before we were having interesting conversations with the WMA students. One of the interesting parts of their studies that we talked about, is that some of them might have a different education, depending on what skills their employers want them to have after they have graduated.



All dressed up and nowhere to go

We liked this idea of studies since they are already employed, the company pays for their studies and gives them salary as well. In this way they have to perform to improve for their employers that they are serious with their chosen work career.

## **Presentations at the WMA**

After a very interesting introduction to the WMA and the studies given by John Bazley, the Head of School, and the tour of the campus with some local students (see below). It was time for our presentations, the thing we most of all wanted to get over...



The room filled up with masses of students and then John Bazley said some words and then our teacher Erik invited all the students to the school pub later in the evening for social events. Then it was time for our presentations!

They went really well, and the topics were for example Ice and Ice Breakers, An auto-pilot project, The Winter War of 1939, Our Engine Room Simulator, Finnish and Swedish Culture, Sauna, Snus Tobacco, Hi-Fog Fire Extinguishing, and the Metric System....



Sometimes we forgot to look straight at the audience...

Lucky for us, the students that had volunteered to listen to our presentations were very polite and forgiving. At the end of the presentations they even claimed that it was easy to understand us and that the presentations had been interesting!

## **Sitting in at tutorials at the WMA**

After lunch in the refectory we were split up in small groups to sit in at different classes taught by local teachers. The classes were Navigation, Orals Prep Session for an exam at the national authorities that students have to pass, and Instrumentation and Control. The teachers were very good we thought, although the contents weren't that very difficult. We also had time to relax on the terrace overlooking the river Hamble and the Solent, with ships on their way to Southampton.



The sunny terrace

## Relaxing at the Rising Sun, including a pub dinner

After the school duties were fulfilled we walked along the shore to the docks outside a pub. There were many other people there and we got to talk with them. Some kids even took a swim in the dirty water....



Dog owners always pass the pub



Early summer in England

## Social evening at the school pub and in the village of Warsash

We had promised to offer some Finnish special products at the school pub in the evening, so we offered *salmiak vodka* shot from a tray to the locals. They liked us a lot and we were invited to join them to the local pubs in the village.



It was warm enough to sit outside

## HMS Victory at the Royal Navy Museum in Portsmouth



A magnificent sight

On Friday afternoon in Portsmouth we did a study tour on the museum ship HMS Victory. This was Lord Nelson's flag ship and also the ship where he died at the battle of Trafalgar on 21<sup>st</sup> of October 1805.

HMS Victory was built in 1759 and departed for her first mission in 1765. With her 104 guns and a length of about 70 meters, she was First-rate class, which means she was one of the biggest in the Royal Navy.



HMS Victory was placed in a dry dock in Portsmouth where she still rests. She is now the oldest commissioned warship in the world, she still attracts about 350 000 visitors every year.



Chilling on “sun deck” on the Victory

The tour on HMS Victory was really interesting and gave a very good insight to the conditions of those who lived and worked onboard warships at that time period. We were also very impressed of the condition of the ship, because although she is 250 years old, she is still in mint condition thanks to good restoration work that started as early as 1922 and is still ongoing.

## ***Accommodation***

### **Etap Hotel**

The first two nights we spent on Etap Hotel in South Hampton. The hotel lobby was fairly pleasant and fresh. Same goes for the rooms, however the design and planning of the shower/toilet was interesting. The toilet and shower each had their own separate small room. And the sink was placed in the main bedroom. The breakfast was not very impressive, OK to eat but not much to choose from.

### **Ibis Hotel**

In Portsmouth we stayed at Ibis Hotel. When we arrived we entered a beautiful lobby with a nice bar and pretty girls standing at the counter. The

rooms were very well planned and the interior was fresh. Breakfast was pretty good as well, good food but not an overwhelming range.

### **Clink**

Being an old prison complex, one did not expect much. The hostel was a real cheap one with small, ill-smelling rooms, located deep underground. The rooms consisted of eight, closely packed bunk beds. One did not have to feel alone during the night. Breakfast was dull with not too much to choose from. We got what we paid for.

### **Connect Hotel**

On the way back we stayed at Connect Hotel in Skavsta Sweden. The lobby was surprisingly big and open, you could see all the way to the top floor of rooms once you got inside. Rooms were OK, very quiet and peaceful but the ladders leading to the upper beds were loose and dangerous. Another downside was the lack of toilets in the rooms - there were one for females and one for men in each corridor. Breakfast was traditional with all you could expect from a Swedish hotel.

## ***English Culture***

### **Impressions of England in general**

England is not that far away but still different from Scandinavia in quite many ways. The houses are often built with bricks and shaped differently from here, they also in general have small gardens and the houses is built close together.

The Pub culture is a social thing that we should imitate. After work you go to the pub to take a beer, talk about your day and maybe have something to eat. Also several pubs offer board

games, dart and pool for use between the beer drinking.

The food in England we would like to call junk food. After a few days we got tired of it and ordered the alternatives in the restaurants.

### The UK plug

BS 1363 has been the standard for the UK electrical plug since 1947. A BS 1363 plug has two horizontal, rectangular pins for phase and neutral, and above these pins, a larger, vertical pin for an earth connection.



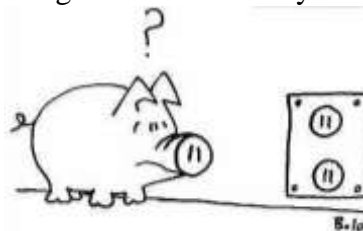
The plugs have some things in common. Both have a phase, neutral and ground connection. The design separates them as seen in the picture below.

The UK plug includes a fuse. This is because they only use 30 A or 32 A fuses for main breaker. The included fuse should be rated for the appliance that it connects. Fuses are available in 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, and 13 ampere.



The wall sockets both delivers 240 voltage AC current in 50Hz. The big

difference is that the UK wall socket has power switches built in. If you're planning to go to UK don't forget to bring a converter with you.



Something to think about... The Europeans have pigs in the wall but what do they have in UK?

### Night life in London

As one of the main capitals of Europe, London offers one of the most attractive night life, not only because of the big party but because of the multi-cultural and diverse activities to join.



Saturday afternoon in Camden Town

There you can find the place that matches better with your preferences. In the evening and night that we spend in London, each one found their own ideal place.



**Very nice and flowery**

Some opted to go to one of the hundreds concerts in London, others chose for going to city center and go to different pubs, also a good chosen option was stay chilling on a typical English Pub in front of the hostel, or others just stay on hostel's pub exchanging experiences with other travelers. And finally one of the best parts of the night is talking next day with your mates about their night and sharing experiences.

## **English Foods and drinks**

The food in England was a bit different that our food here in Finland. They like very much fried food, such as fried chicken, fish and potatoes. In Camden town, London there were a lot of small stalls, offering different kind of food from all over the world, for example Indian, Chinese, Mexican and of course English Fish and Chips. In England it was very hard to find “good old” house made food. The Englishmen like to have an after work beer and goes to the pub to talk and have fun.



**“The carpenters” was a typical English pub.**

## **Camden Town**

Right after we had arrived in London and got our rooms at the Clink Hostel, we went to Camden Town to visit the markets over there. As we are from the north and not used to so crowded places, we were all surprised by the huge amount of people walking the streets and markets.

There are lots of stands with food from around the world to choose from and, of course, many tents with clothes, souvenirs and stuff to look through. After a while wandering around, we were satisfied and went back. It was, however, an interesting and exciting trip.



**Plenty of cool things to see at Camden**



This type of foot massage was new to us

### Sightseeing in London

We started our last day in London by taking a look at the famous Tower Bridge. After that we decided to go along the river Thames towards the old center of the city and explore London by foot. We saw the warship HMS Belfast (C35) which is a museum ship today and some of us visited the ship.



HMS Belfast, moored in the Thames

HMS Belfast was a British warship in World War II as and it was really interesting to look at.



River Thames

We passed by quite a lot of bridges and different kinds of buildings. The sight was very delightful. When we came to the Palace of Westminster (the one with the Big Ben) we took a turn and went in to the St. James's Park. There we enjoyed the green zone and quite a garden in the middle of the rushing city!



St. James's Park

While passing the Buckingham Palace we ran into the change of the guards, where the military orchestra was performing music by the Beatles.



Guards!

All in all there is a lot of things to see in London and the weather was on our side.

### Heavy metal gig in London

Two students went to see a Heavy metal gig in Kentish Town, London. The place was called HMV Forum. There were a whole lot of people so we had to stand in a line for about half an



hour before we got inside. Four bands were playing that night:

- Machinae Supremacy
- Ensiferum
- Amon Amarth
- Children of Bodom

About 2200 people were there to watch the bands. The bands performed really good and it's a nice memory from the whole trip. If you ever find yourself in Kentish Town, you should really consider a visit to the HMV Forum.



English and Scandinavian Engineering Students



Children of Bodom at the HMV Forum

## Conclusions

The trip home was easy since we stayed at the Connect at Skavsta Airport overnight after we landed there at eleven p.m.

All in all it was a great trip and we practised English a lot in many different situations. We'd like to thank our sponsors for their generous contributions that made the trip possible!

*Thank you for your support:  
The Finnish Engineers' Association,  
Eckerö Line, Birka Line, Gustaf Erikson's Foundation, Godby Shipping, and the Åland Engineering Student Association*