



THE SUNTRECKERS



TRECKER ISSUE NUMBER 75

www.suntrecker's.org.uk

EDITORS COMMENTS



This Trecker is the summer edition, where a lot of rallies have been and gone and all hopefully have been enjoyed.

This edition of the Trecker has articles from members relating to the rallies they have attended or are running in 2017 if you read the last Trecker you will have noticed an updates page well this edition we have updates on the updates (things never stay the same).

There is also an article from our roving diarist Fritz.

So, have a read and enjoy all the articles.

Talking about submitting articles please when you do can you send them in A5 format and any photographs in JPEG format.

Oh by the way no one sent in a photograph that they would like to have been placed on the front of the Trecker so you are stuck with one of mine again.

IF ANY OF YOU WANT A PHOTOGRAPH TO BE PLACED ON THE FRONT OF THE TRECKER THEN PLEASE SEND THEM TO ME. THEY SHOULD BE ON A NATURIST THEME, FOR EXAMPLE, PICTURE OF YOURSELVES, FRIENDS ETC WHO HAVE GIVEN YOU THEIR PERMISSION OR OF A NATURIST SITE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN TO ETC.

Please let me have for the future Treckers any articles and photographs of your rallies and experiences with Suntreckers please email your articles photographs etc to: ppo@suntreckers.org.uk.

Steve Wagstaff
Part Time PPO

(Cover photograph is of members arriving and having arrived at the Gala Rally at Nunnery Farm)

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Hi Treckers

As I write this Ann is sorting out the plants in our little garden as the summer may be coming at last.

All seems to be going well for the Gala Rally, have you booked in yet?

Again, this year we have had to cancel a number of rallies due to lack of rally officers or low numbers. Please come forward and help run rallies.

Tropicana our elderly Holdsworth Camper has passed her M O T again with flying colours, and we are off to Dorchester to rally number 42, from Friday pm to Tues am. We are hoping to meet some old friends there and celebrate my 75th birthday with them, (*am I really that old*). Yes, you are...Ed

Ann and I are looking forward to seeing what new ideas and creations you come up with for the theme of "Circuses" at the AGM Gala rally. Remember it is your AGM and your annual Gala rally and that it is your attendance and input that makes it work.

After the Gala rally, we are driving down through France in September to join in with continental rally number 77. We enjoyed the Luxembourg rally last year, and are really looking forward to staying at La Toquette, this year, and arriving just a couple of days after our 29th wedding anniversary, (*did not realise how time had passed.*)

By the way, we do need some new people to fill vacancies on the committee, such as a Publicity officer and an Equipment officer, the job description of the officers will be on display at the Gala Rally. We hope to see you there and at other rallies during the rest of the year.

Just as an aside we spent the weekend at South West Outdoor Club, went well, weather was fine and the Midsummer meal was enjoyed by all. In fact we were made very welcome.

Safe travels all of you and enjoy your trekking and hopefully good weather.

Ron Twining
Chairman



RALLY ORGANIZERS COGITATION

The months are ticking over and summer seems to have arrived with record breaking temperatures with the usual British moans regarding the weather, "it's too hot, we need rain to settle the dust etc, etc" where we would we be without our fixation about the weather, mind you it helps not to wear clothes if you are trying to cool down just be careful of the hole in the ozone layer and wear plenty of high factor sun cream.

From the feedback, I have had the rallies so far attended have been enjoyed (thanks in the main to the hard work of the rally officers). We have cancelled several rallies due to lack of ralliers and I will have a hard think about why members aren't attending and what I and your committee can do about it.

That's the lot from me but before I go make sure you have sent your booking forms in for the Gala rally it's the main one of the season, it's your rally and your fees help pay for it, so come along and enjoy, it's your attendance that makes it a great rally.

Go on make the decision to come along you know you want to.

THE GALA RALLY BOOKING FORM IS IN THE YEARBOOK BUT IF YOU CAN'T FIND IT THEN JUST EMAIL OR PHONE ME AND I WILL BOOK YOU IN TO THE GALA RALLY.

Look forward to seeing you all.

Steve Wagstaff
National Rally Organizer

PS...ALL OF YOU WHO HOLD RAFFLE TICKETS AND ARE NOT COMING TO THE GALA THEN CAN YOU POST THE MONEY AND THE STUBBS OF THOSE SOLD TO ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE OR IN ANY CASE BEFORE 14/07/17.

A MESSAGE FROM THE WEBMASTER



I am pleased to say that since my last report all has been running well with the website. A few members have signed up and requested website access which is good. While on a recent rally I was asked by a Suntrecker if they had access to the web as they could not remember their username and password. This got me thinking are there other Suntreckers in the same position. If you don't know if you have a username / password and want to check then please contact me. webmaster@suntreckers.org.uk.

COME ALONG TO THE EVENT OF THE YEAR

THE GALA RALLY

I have spoken briefly about the gala rally, those of you who regularly attend the gala know how we arrange the days, the informality of the week and the enjoyment you gain from it, but those of you who are thinking of coming to your first gala the following is what happens (when everything goes to plan) the theme for this years' gala is 'the circus'. I entreat you to smell the sawdust of the ring let your imagination run riot use your skills for the fancy dress parade and the caravan / motorhome decorations.

For this years' entertainment, we have excelled ourselves with a trio of ladies



singing all your favourite songs from the 50's & 60's right up to the modern era with a fantastic repertoire of songs ranging from the Supremes, the Rolling Stones, Manfred Man and even Amy Winehouse so make the effort to book your place at the gala. The Lovettes are made up of some of the very best female musicians in the

UK, with a long and trusted reputation touring with the likes of Florence and the machine, Gary Barlow and Andrew Lloyd Webber.

They look great and they sound fantastic and we have them for most of Saturday night but that's not all, the whole of the gala will be games, centered around the circus theme, some of those games will involve a certain wetness to those who take part. of course, there will be the hard-fought boules competition which will take place over two days and my usual easy to do round the caravans' quiz and general quizzes.

Liz will be running her yoga sessions but asks that you all bring a mat to lie on (I would have thought it would have concentrated your minds more lying on a bare floor with a nail sticking in your back. But then what do I know).

Don't forget to bring your raffle tickets along, together with items you want to sell at the auction and of course items you may wish to donate for the raffle.

The main raffle prizes this year as in all previous years are fabulous so dig deep into your pockets and purses and buy several tickets, don't forget you have to be in it to win it.

MAIN RAFFLE PRIZES



2 DIRECTOR CHAIRS



SAMSUNG GALAXY TAB 7"

LIGHT STREAM – 60 COB LED



RALLY 14 EASTER RALLY AT KINGFISHER FARM

This rally attracted a total of fifteen units – the greatest number since rallies were first held at this site several years ago. This number caused some creative electrical engineering solutions to be employed on the part of the rally officers and the site owner in order to provide an EHU connection for each unit but it was achieved.

One unit announced their arrival with a very loud exhaust sound. A benefit of this site is though the availability of the site owners motor engineering skills which enabled a far better exhaust system to be fabricated and fitted for the homeward journey.

This is also a site where well behaved dogs are welcome. This policy was tested by in addition to the owner's dog there were four others brought along by members. All behaved themselves impeccably and did not cause any problems.

On the Sunday morning Terry, the site owner brought out and put on display his self-built monster Trojan car and also his restored 1913 Austin Lorry. The huge pantehnicon he was building when we visited at the New Year was also on view in its finished state. This has a second engine installed within the chassis and the whole cavernous body tilts. This in conjunction with a drop down tailgate forms a



ramp up which the Austin lorry can be driven inside for transporting to Beamish and other shows. A special ramp is also provided to enable his dog (and Chris) to access the cab. All these unusual vehicles provided an excellent photo opportunity for members. (Examples attached).



At various times Typhoon and Eurofighter aircraft overflew the site on their way to/from their base at nearby RAF Coningsby. In addition, on the Bank Holiday Monday Members at the site gate had as good a view as those at the adjacent East Kirby Aviation Centre of an all too short aerial display by a Spitfire.

The weather was generally kind with mostly sunshine but a chill wind deterred all but the hardiest from stripping off. There was though always the warm upstairs room in the barn for socialising. Excellent live musical entertainment was provided one evening courtesy of Liz and Graham and on another evening a musical quiz based on songs from musical shows was held.

There are two further opportunities this year to visit this excellent site for Suntrecker rallies viz in August (Rally66) and at the New Year. Previous attendees and members who have yet to visit the site are all equally welcome. The Rally Officer team await your contact.

Gill and Les C12729 Eric and Norma C12822

NB: Should anyone have a CD / Tape music centre surplus to requirements but in working order then its donation to the site would be much appreciated. The existing unit is long past redemption no matter how frequently it is thumped!!

GROUP SHORT BREAK TO ERDING SPA

It's easy to summarise the spa break in one word – Wow!

To say a bit more about the short break holiday though, and to do the experience justice, let's start at the start. I was looking for a 'special' treat for my 'special' wife, Maureen, as it was a 'special' birthday for her in January which is never a good time of the year to plan these things, but after a chat with several Chalfont staff they suggested the Erding break. So, an extra day was booked to give us a chance to get a flavour of Munich as well as the spa experience and all this was kept a secret from Maureen until I gave her the travel itinerary on her birthday.

So, at 5 o'clock one morning a taxi met us and whisked us off to Birmingham airport. It's quite disconcerting how impersonal all the automated check in, boarding pass, and passport control procedures are if you haven't flown for a while. But Lufthansa soon found Munich below the clouds and landed us safely at the airport where it was even more daunting to purchase the correct ticket for train/bus/underground travel for 2 people for 4 days, again only available from a machine that wasn't too happy about accepting an English credit card. We must have got it right as we weren't arrested during our stay!

We easily found our hotel, which was near the main station right in the middle of the city. After an hour's snooze, a cup of coffee and toasted sandwich we set off to look around the Olympic park. (Our go everywhere ticket again proving its worth) We couldn't do much more than get a feel for the place but it was great area to see and the view from the top of the tower was amazing, even though quite hazy.

We knew that Erding Spa had a textile half with slides etc. so I had bought a pair of swimming trunks earlier in England. It was when we got to the Olympic pool that I realised that my trunks were still in my draw at home. Fortunately, there was a sale on at the Olympic shop, so I bought another pair. Then on our way back to the tube station we called in at the BMW museum with a chance to sit in many of the cars on display.

That evening we had a fairly early night after an excellent typical Bavarian meal in a local bar/restaurant washed down, of course, with a couple of glasses of local beer.

Friday morning, after a buffet breakfast in the hotel we walked to Marrienplatz square for 11 o'clock to see the famous glockenspiel perform. An American sounding local guide was explaining to his group details of the history, architecture etc. of the place which we were more than happy to listen to finding it very informative. After a wander around the area, looking at the buildings, shops etc. we made our way to the train for Erding. Again, a challenge to get on the right train going the right way, but we did it!

Knowing that Erding was the last station on the line and we had $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour we could afford a little doze. Followed by our only real foe pa of the weekend.

We looked out of the window and saw we had arrived at 'Altenerding' with the German loudspeaker system giving out lengthy instructions – so we got off. Noticing there were still people on the train, trying to decide 'should we get back on?' the train set off again in the same direction. I think we both said something like 'Oh dear' but aren't mobile phones great. A quick call to Andy and Patti (our host and guide) to say we're on our way but will be a bit later than planned.

How wonderful to meet up at our next hotel to find a taxi was planned in about half an hour to take us all to the Spa for a couple of hours or so of chilling out. Music to our ears.

Erding Therme. The Spa

Being English speaking you will probably have to reassure the receptionist that you understand the spa areas are naturist and that the water park area isn't. So, the Spa area: -All you need to take in with you is a towel, obviously for sitting on and visitors are expected to be 'covered' when walking around. We found a dressing gown useful too as the outside areas were very cold (probably about -1 mid-day!) and handy for sitting at the food bars etc. To keep payment simple, we found it easiest and cheapest to pay up front for 2 hours. Then any extra time, food or drinks bought inside are recorded on the electronic chip on your wristband and you pay when leaving.

Maureen and I quickly found a steam room and chill out pool where we spent some time thawing and chilling. Then a wander around was called for and we discovered a wide selection of saunas, showers and quiet rest areas spending and enjoyable time in each. After a delicious hot chocolate and slice of Bavarian gateau we explored a little more and found a steaming outside pool. From indoors we could enter the pool through a small airlock consisting of clear plastic strips. Outside in the pool were a couple of powerful massage jets and a row of underwater Jacuzzi 'beds' – just what the doctor ordered. That was quite enough for our first session, so we changed and waited for the rest of the group in the large foyer, looking at the various shops and stalls. As the taxi was not available we caught the bus back to the hotel and we were delighted to find that although our UK bus pass was not acceptable, our go everywhere ticket was! (Saving us all of 1.50 Euro each)

That evening Andy and Patti took us to a very friendly restaurant where the food, beer and company were all excellent making a fitting and enjoyable end to the day.

The next day, Saturday, after a typical Germanic buffet breakfast, we explored Erding town centre. A lovely little square with a varied selection of shops to browse. Then google maps showed us how to walk to the spa in about half an hour using pleasant tracks and footpaths. We wanted to visit the water park pools so we donned our cosies and exited the changing area through the 'other' door. The immediate impact was the same – WOW! So much to see and do, so big and so many people enjoying it all. The only thing we tried was the lazy (or not so lazy) river. Again, this went from inside to outside, with various side pools you could swing into. One even had a covered bar area. And how on earth they managed to create eddy currents half way round where you found yourself going backwards for a while I'll never know.

So, we said good-bye to the slides and wave pools and using our wrist bands to open a turnstile were able to walk through into the sauna area. Access being freely available either way meant that integration between the two areas was easy but deliberate.

So, for us, more of the same really. We did explore 'outside' and came across a large circular sauna, which was rapidly filling with people. We were luckily just in time for a flag experience! (No, we didn't know about it either) when a fit employee pours ice and water onto the hot rocks then waves a huge flag round and round spreading really hot air at us all, making corny comments in German. (Well we think that's what he was doing – he could have been taking the micky out of the English!)

My two favourite experiences were the heavy waterfalls we found immediately after this and a salt sauna we found later on. Probably the coolest sauna we experienced but having rubbed salt all over, then a good sweat followed by a powerful shower – I felt lovely. (No, I'm not boasting!)

Maureen's favourites were the wet things. The steam room and the two pools, one just floating and chilling with float aids and the really warm outdoor experience with the Jacuzzi bubbles.

Being Valentines weekend finding a restaurant with free tables was tricky, but just a little way out we again enjoyed the company, food and surprise, surprise the beer.

Sunday, Andy and Patti wanted to get away sharp as they were driving their motorhome back to the UK. Maureen and I caught a direct bus back to the airport, rather than using the 'suggested' train route via Munich centre. It was considerably quicker, even if not so frequent. At the airport, we again commented on the lack of inter personal contact, but managed to successfully negotiate all the electronics, and after a very pleasant meal made out way to the boarding gate. Thank you, Lufthansa, for a smooth flight back to a wet Birmingham where we were met by our daughter and future son-in-law.

Would we go again? You bet. For a few years now we have gone around Munich detour to Erding for a night or two's stopover. Thanks to all at Chalfont for making it happen and to Andy and Patti our guides in our motorhome on our pilgrimage to Croatia. Next time we hope to

Thanks to Malcolm and Maureen Burland...Ed

BN NATIONAL PETANQUE TOURNAMENT 2017

Suntreckers were again represented at this tournament which was held at Blackthorns Sun Club on 28th - 30th April. Unfortunately, only four Suntrecker teams made it this year and we missed retaining the team trophy by just three points (211 - 214).

Congratulations must go to Ken Vogl & Rae Argent who, having won last year's tournament, again made the final but missed out at the last hurdle. They retain the Reg Welling Shield for being the highest placed Suntreckers. Our members Phil Boarder & Marion Halsey took third place so we had two teams right at the top. Well done. Both these teams have qualified to represent British Naturism at the INF-FNI-EUNAT tournament in Holland later in the year.

As usual, it was a great weekend enjoying the games and socialising with old friends and new. Blackthorns always make us most welcome and the meals and entertainment provided were excellent.



The placings out of 24 teams taking part were:

Ken Vogl & Rae Argent	2 nd
Phil Boarder & Marion Halsey	3 rd
Colin & Avril Gorham	16 th
John & Lyn Furley	20 th

Some of us are getting a bit old and we need some younger members to take part if we are to retain the Suntrecker reputation at this annual tournament. If you are interested and/or unsure of what is involved, please have a word with me at the Gala Rally.

Colin Gorham
(Club Petanque Captain)

FRITZ OUR VERY OWN ROVING DIARIST

Penang – some thoughts

I first came to Penang in the early 1990s as part of a back-packing trip around Singapore, Malaysia and southern Thailand. I came again a few years later where I confined myself to Singapore and Malaysia. Since 2002 I have spent 2-3 months every year in Batu Feringhi, on the Island of Penang, always staying in the Sri Sayang Service Apartments which look out over the beautiful bay to the National Park in the west.



The view across the bay at Batu Feringhi from the 28th floor balcony in the Sri Sayang



The Sri Sayang.... outside



..... and inside

It was sister-in-law Maisie who first introduced me to the island, her home town and it was she that recommended (told me about) the Sri Sayang. My early two trips had been fleeting visits, when I stayed in somewhat dingy back-packer hostels in Georgetown, the capital of the island. But I was immediately attracted to the vibrance of the place, the friendliness of the people, the great weather, the tasty food, and, to be honest the low cost of it all. All these plus points remain and the Sri Sayang and Penang have now become a home from home.

At various times, I have shared my apartment with Alison, Chris, Dorthe, Maisie, the odd chum from England and now with Maria. But mainly I have lived here alone high up in the sky (28th floor) save for the small birds which flit from balcony rail to window ledge and the graceful brown-winged sea eagles that glide effortlessly in the warm thermals over the bay.

But you are never alone in Batu Feringhi. Right from the start there has been a sizeable group of residents who live here permanently and an equal largish number of visitors who, like me, come for their winter warmth each year. Of course both these groups change gradually. Individuals and couples drop by the wayside and new ones take their place, but there has always been a core of residents and visitors who one can call friends. And their number is quite large, even larger when you include the locals who live here permanently, or the surrounding towns, and make their living servicing us. To put it in some context I am on speaking terms with a far more people here than I am either at home (in Matlock or Croydon) or when I go camping with my friends in Europe.

Penang was (is?) called the Pearl of the Orient and was once amongst the most attractive places to travel to. This is no longer the case, but it still comes near the top of the list of places to retire to. This is based on factors such as food, healthcare, stability of government, climate, accessibility, quality of housing and general 'value for money'. It has lost its place as a top tourist destination as it is quite scruffy round the edges and has lost its Free Port status in favour of Langkawi. True it now attracts large cruise ships and still has hotels to rival the best but outside these cocooned environments it can be quite hard work and is far from luxurious. Back-packers still come in large droves, but you get the impression that they are on their way elsewhere.... which of course they areand they do not leave sufficient money behind to tackle the renovation works required to restore the World Heritage Site that is Georgetown, back to its former glory.

There are still plenty of visitors to Batu Feringhi, not only the local Malays, Indians and Chinese who pack the place out at the frequent festival times but also increasingly visitors from the former (communist) enclaves of eastern Europe and from China itself. Penang has also been a favourite for Australians looking for tropical excitement in Bali, Thailand and other 'oriental' places. So, we have a good mixture of visitors from here there and everywhere and, thankfully, because it was a former British colony, English is widely understood.

Since I first started traveling here it is noticeable how much has happened in terms of the physical, social and economic development of Penang and not all for the good. Most obvious are the physical changes. When I first arrived, I came by the old ferry, the only link with the mainland. Now there are



The ferry crossing takes 30 minutes



The bridges bring more cars

two bridges, both amongst the longest in Asia and more are proposed. The traffic (largely as a result of the greater accessibility) has increased x-fold to the extent that there are frequent gridlocks and the journey to and from the airport during 'rush-hour' can take anything up to 3 hours compared with 45 minutes in the old days. It is not only the greater accessibility that has created the extra traffic but also the greater wealth of the population which is reflected in a higher level of car ownership as the Islanders move from motorbikes to cars. Unfortunately, with so many inexperienced drivers on the road, traffic and pedestrian safety is a big concern.



Frequent Grid-lock



An efficient service



Death trap polluters

One major improvement though has been the introduction of a first-class bus service. No longer are we at the mercy of the cowboys who ran what was left

of the Hin company fleet, old decrepit and downright lethal wrecks of vehicles. Now we have modern buses which generally arrive every 10 minutes or so and are a pleasure to be on as they snake down the curvy coast road into Georgetown. There is the odd exception of course when the bus is driven by a boy racer who is oblivious of the fact that his 'customers' are hanging on for dear life!

Despite the horrendous (and unsustainable) levels of traffic the island continues to be developed at a rapid rate of knots. Each year brings the completion of one mega development and the announcement of others to follow. Well the northern and eastern part of the Island is being developed, the mountainous interior and the west coast have so far largely been spared. Kampong after kampong (village houses) as well as steep hillsides and jungle have been cleared to be replaced by high rise condominiums and luxury housing. The cry, as elsewhere is for more affordable housing for locals displaced by the bulldozer but evidence of the developers' greed remains. And such new development stays largely vacant. Vast complexes remain dark at night as absent owners living in Singapore, South Korea, China and elsewhere in SE Asia buy up the accommodation and mothball it as an investment.



The rise and rise of Georgetown



Hillside development

The powers that be have to get the balance right, they are a long way off. It is not for me to demand that the Island remains an untouched jungle paradise just for my enjoyment, but the impression that Penang is selling its soul for the developers shilling is hard to eradicate. And those that are building the new Penang are not local workers but cheap labour brought in from Myanmar, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

Wednesday 8th February

We went to Tesco's today as Maria had spotted some skirts which she wanted to buy. Tesco's is a bit of a misnomer as it is only the anchor store in a 3-storey shopping complex.

Others, particularly Maisie, always recommend shopping in the local wet/dry markets where prices are generally cheaper and the produce far fresher. However, the supermarket does allow comparison shopping and the prices are clearly marked. I find haggling over strange foods in a strange language something of a challenge!

Having done our shopping and Maria having bought no fewer than 3 skirts we sat down in the large food hall for lunch. What was evident was the rich mix of nationalities that were being catered for. Malays and Chinese were the dominant races but there was a goodly number of Indians and a sprinkling of (largely) elderly whites. All food tastes were catered for at the various food stalls which surrounded the hall, but there was no alcohol on sale although Tesco's was selling crates of the stuff in their store.

Malaysia prides itself on being a multi-cultural society and Penang, which has a predominance of Chinese, is at the forefront. The place abounds with temples, churches, mosques and other religious buildings. Newspapers appear in Chinese, English and Malay, all having to toe a quite strict line in what they are able to print. Government, both national and local comprises of representatives of all the major nationalities. There are clearly tensions between the various ethnic groups in political terms and the communities tend to live and socialise within their own groups, but day to day life in the streets is relaxed with festivals tolerated and celebrated in harmony.



Buddhist Temple



The Floating Mosque



Anglican Church

Thursday 9th

Thaipusam is a Hindu festival which attracts vast crowds to the Island. For over 100 years there has been one golden chariot which is dragged from the temple in Georgetown to the temple in the botanical gardens. This year there were two chariots as there were accusations that the organisers of the original golden chariot had been on the fiddle. Maria and I joined the throngs of people enjoying a festive day out. It was very crowded and very hot but nonetheless most pleasant.



Devotees



In all their finery

Friday 10th

Today we headed for the fishing village of Teluk Bahang, a peaceful backwater some 15 minutes away by bus. We walked into the national park and found ourselves a deserted beach in an idyllic location. We imagined we were Robinson Crusoe, except that not far away we could see the fishing boats bobbing around near the jetty and pleasure craft 'pleasuring' in the distance. Far away we could see the hazy outline of the mainland.



Teluk Bahang old jetty



Playing Robinson Crusoe

A monitor lizard (all 7ft of it) waddled slowly past with a wriggling fish clamped firmly between its teeth. And then its mate came along at a faster rate of knots. We were obviously encroaching on their territory so we made a tactical retreat back to civilisation where Maria found a roadside stall serving fish.



Idyllic



Oi we live here!

Whilst Teluk Bahang is a sleepy backwater building works began last year on a massive new 'well centre' (whatever that might be) complex. Little but the foundations have been completed in the intervening year but if development is completed it will totally transform this part of the island.



Shangri-La



No longer.....

Sunday 12th

Sunday buffet lunches now take place at the Bayview hotel at the western end of the Batu Feringhi strip. The food is better, and more varied than the Flamingo, our previous watering-hole and the surroundings are most agreeable. All the big hotels put on a buffet for Sundays, easier to cater for with less cooking staff (as opposed to waiting staff) required. Some of the hotels reduce the price for 'seniors'. At £7.50 the price is more than acceptable. Our table is booked in the name of Mr Hiring which amuses one and all!

Maisie, Maria, Tony & Doreen (from Meopham) John & Norma (from Margate), Mr Hiring, Pik Tee



Monday 13th

Chinese fishermen built themselves houses on stilts out into the sea as beaching boats was difficult due to the mudflats. These new communities were populated by people from the same clan. Now 6 'clan jetties' remain, though much improved since the days of huts with bamboo leaved roofs. They are a popular tourist attraction. On an earlier visit, Maria found some very colourful native skirts and she wants to take some back as presents for her friends. So, we visit the jetties again and combine our trip with a tour of the Penang museum, and other reminders of Penang's historic past, which are conveniently clustered together in the north-east corner of Georgetown.



Clan jetties on stilts over the sea



On the walkways



Penang Museum



Fort Cornwallis with some of its many guns

Wednesday 15th

The papers are full of the news of the murder of Kim Jong-Nam, the half-brother of Kim Jong-Un leader of North Korea, at the airport in Kuala Lumpur. Everyone immediately assumes that it is an assassination ordered by Kim Jong-Un and there is plenty of speculation as to the possible reasons. When they want to the Malaysian police can find criminals very quickly and already by the next day they had rounded up some suspects, but it appears that the real people behind the murder have already flown back to North Korea and the authorities are left with a few 'bit players' who will face the death penalty. The North Koreans of course are keeping stumm, but their ambassador is berating

the authorities for not handing over the body WITHOUT an autopsy immediately. The police quite rightly say, 'all we have is a dead body, we have no proof of who he might be and he died in suspicious circumstances.....next of kin please contact us'. Next of kin of course are in hiding fearing they might be next? Why do I think of Putin and Litvinenko when I think about these things?

News also of a group of youngsters 'loitering' around on their push-bikes near the entrance/exit of an expressway being mown down by a car. Of the 16 youngsters 8 were killed and several seriously injured. Before jumping to conclusions, next day you read that this all happened in the early hours of the morning and it has become a habit that groups of youngsters to ride the streets all night



RIP young bikers

(8pm-5am) seeking to ape the elder youths (Mat Rempit) racing around to the serious annoyance of many. For these young boys, their families and the driver.....so, so sad.

Thursday 16th

We revisited the national park hoping to see the monitor lizards again and to walk for longer than on our previous visit. But we quickly found that the paved path soon petered out and we were faced for some 'real' hiking over difficult terrain for which our flimsy footwear was unsuitable. We did however spot a monkey trying to eat something out of a plastic bag. He gave up in disgust, throwing the bag away and rudely turned his bum at us! Snap, snap, snap went the camera.

The local paper, the Star, carried an uncritical article on the public consultation exercise into the new Penang Transportation Plan. It told us that after a month the exhibition of the Plan had been visited by 70 people who had made 13 written comments - WOW. That works out at around 2.5 visitors a day; if that's not apathy I don't know what is. Transport is one of THE major issues facing the Island and nobody can be bothered to even look at the plans and the press find nothing strange about this. Perhaps too many unfulfilled plans have been presented before and the lazy press just copy what comes in the hand-out.

Monday 20th

We are into our last week and are busy thinking what to take home with us, both for our own use and as presents. I normally bring back spices and curry pastes, but I find that I still have plenty from previous trips so this year I will take back some local coffee or kopi as it is known here. Apparently instead of roasting the beans they toast it, mixed with margarine and sugar, which sounds ghastly but tastes good if a little strong. It works out at £1.10 for a kilo which is extremely good value. Maria has been busy buying up all the salted fish on the Island, a delicacy much appreciated by her friends in Grunberg. She also has a range of colourful wrap-around skirts (or longyi) - 'which will make nice tablecloths' – small measuring pots, and some palm syrup. She has a lot of friends!

Colourful longyi



Kopi as served in a coffee shop

Dried fish



On Monday evenings, it is our habit to visit the 'night' market at Teluk Bahang. It's a funny little market full of locals enjoying the warm evening shopping and just strolling. Everyone seems to buy something, unlike many markets (both here and in Europe) where they just seem to be for 'show', something to walk around, see and be seen and to gawp. French markets in particular have become expensive compared with supermarket prices unlike here in Teluk Bahang.

Motorbikes are much in evidence with whole families arriving on one small machine and little boys 'borrowing' their older brother's machine. And there are still plenty of old fashioned bicycles on show as the village is quite spread out both along the coast and inland. The locals are Muslim, but there is no sign of any burkas let alone face veils. Female heads are covered by hijabs,

but I would estimate only some 60% or so. There are plenty of jeans and shorts and colour abounds. A peaceful, friendly scene. We eat Beehoon (rice vermicelli) Singaporean style at a roadside stall washed down by kopi and watch the world (well Teluk Bahang) drift by, as the last of the sun's rays disappear behind the jungle clad hills and the electric bulbs take over. We bump into some Dutch acquaintances; they have been coming here for some 25+ years now. They depart for home on Sunday, we follow shortly after, a sure sign that our winter hibernation is drawing to a close



All aboard



Beehoon



The lights come on



Mother and daughter discussing the finer points of nuclear fission!

SUNTRECKER FACEBOOK GROUP

I have been volunteered to write a piece for the Trecker about the Facebook Group:

As there are only 31 members on the Suntrecker Facebook Group we were wondering if there are members who are fairly new to the club who do not know about the group.

It is a closed group so members can only join by invitation. It is also a secret group so would not be found in a search.

This is a really good way to communicate with other members and pass on information quickly. You can post photos of rallies you attend (don't forget to get the permission of anyone in the photo) and let everyone know what a good time you had.

If anyone would like to join the group please contact either Steve Wagstaff or myself and we will make you our personal friend and then we can enrol you in the group.

Once done we can then defriend you on our personal pages.

My email is di.david14@yahoo.com

Let's see if we can get lots more members posting on the group.

Diane Howard.

I have let this article run for this Trecker so please sign up Ed

TWO RALLIES THAT WEREN'T

Having enjoyed 3 seasons of rallying with someone else doing the work, we decided it was time to do our turn as RO. Steve put us down for 2 May rallies that conveniently ran one on to the other, so we were looking forward to lots of fun in beautiful surroundings. But, look forward as much as we might, the support just wasn't there; one other unit for Tything Barn, the same for Western Sun Folk. We had a telephone 'booking' for both and were inclined to run with just 3 units but when he backed out there was nothing for it but to cancel both. It was partial cancellation, though - in discussion both units agreed to meet as planned anyway, just not formally rally.

Just for your info Tything Barn has new managers the old managers have set up a new naturist campsite also in Wales so there is now a new website address for Tything Barn which is: tything-barn.co.uk Tything Barn is still a

fabulous place so use it or lose it.

So, despite the lack of numbers we enjoyed a week of often-lovely weather in Pembrokeshire; made new friends both in and out of Suntreckers and have found a new favourite place. I had been concerned that my little mobility scooter wouldn't be up to the terrain - I shouldn't have; I explored most of the site, limited only by battery capacity. We're looking forward to returning - soon.

Straight on to Western Sun Folk facing a gruesome forecast. The Furleys rang to say they'd be coming for the weekend so now we'd be 3. True to forecast it was wet and windy but we managed a boules match, boys v girls, ending in an honourable draw (why were none of us prepared to get a soaking to play a decider?). Nothing for it, then, but to split the prize, a bottle of cava, at the Sunday evening barby for which, miraculously, the sun shone and we found some shelter. We have to thank Pete and June for their hospitality in the evenings for some riotous games - much more cosy than the deserted clubhouse. We made good use of the fantastic new pool enclosure, too. It was great to be in there in the warm while the rain pelted on the roof.

Our abilities to run a rally weren't tested and all Steve's efforts were wasted. Such a shame and one has to ask why?

Distance might just be an issue with Tything Barn but not with Western Sun Folk.

Was it new, unknown RO's?

Is it as fundamental as price?

There's certainly a problem - too few RO's resulting in too many rallies cancelled before publication of the yearbook, then more cancelled due to lack of support.

Pat and I won't be able to attend the Gala or AGM this year, not even for the day; but I'd be interested to hear what the members have to say. Mind you, that element of the membership won't be there!

Best regards to you all,

Eddie Silk

RALLY UPDATES

Rally 75 – Telford Naturist Club – The dates in the yearbook are incorrect they should read: *Friday 1st Sept – Wednesday 6th Sept.*

Also, the mobile telephone number in the yearbook for the rally officers is incorrect it should read: 07875 430221. Their home number is correct.

Lower Poulza Post – The rallies for this year have been cancelled due to the uncertain position of its possible closure due to the site owners' health, I have recently been informed that the site is open and would welcome Suntrecker members visiting.



ITEMS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE A little help goes a very long way



It's a new year, new season and many of you will already have made plans for the time ahead. I would like to suggest that part of those plans should be consideration for the future of Suntreckers. As is the norm, at the AGM this year the membership will be looking to elect new committee members.

Although the date for putting your name forward has passed we can still ask you to join the committee. Currently there are vacancies for PPO, Equipment Officer and General Member.

So, could you do any of these roles? Do you know someone who could? Maybe you or they just need a bit of encouragement to volunteer.

ITEMS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE – Cont

A discussion item at the last committee meeting and is an ongoing discussion item, explored the reasons why members were not rallying as much as they used to. Certain suggestions were put forward for example the cost of fuel was important when travelling to those rallies not in your area, the cost of rally fees and maybe they could in some way be reduced or perhaps shorter rallies, the committee would very much like your views so please email, write or telephone the national rally organizer or any member of the committee with your suggestions, they will then be put to the committee.

WINTER RALLIES 2017/18



ALL VENUES HAVE BEEN
CHOSEN FOR THEIR
SUITABILITY AS A WINTER
GET TOGETHER.



Modern vans are really cosy so come on - join us

We now have dates for all the winter rallies, although there are still a few details to be sorted. You will see we have many of the usual 'old favourites' a couple of new venues and a welcome return of Liverpool Sun and Air.

October 13 – 16 Geoff and Eileen are investigating a couple of venues in Oxfordshire for this weekend. Saturday you'll should have the opportunity to join Didcot swim if you want.

November 4 – 6 We return to Fortway Farm in Stoney Stanton to perhaps see a firework display, join in a fish supper etc.

December 1 – 4 sees our return to Greenhill Park for our annual pre-Christmas get together in the beautiful refurbished "chicken shed.

Dec 29 – Jan 2 A choice of 2 nude year parties, either at Kingfisher Farm or Liverpool Sun and Air. Both guarantee a good time.

January 19 – 22 Back to Liverpool S & A for a Burns Night Supper

February 23 – 26 The ever popular Baston Fen rally complete with cabin for our coffee mornings and evening get togethers.

March 16 – 19 Smeaton Lakes, another new venue near Newark. We have booked to hire room for our get togethers anticipating lots of members will want to check their vans for the coming summer season!!!!

**More details will put up at the gala rally.
(Another reason why you should be coming - so book now)**

SAD NEWS

For those of you who may not be aware, one of our long-time friends who have welcomed Suntrecker rallies for many years and is a firm favourite to a lot of you, I have to pass on the sad news that Max from Maxs Garden died on Wednesday 17th May 2017. His funeral unfortunately took place prior to this issue of the Trecker being published.

*With thanks to
Malcolm and Maureen
and their team
for Printing & Distributing
the paper version of Trecker.
Thanks to John for sending out
the electronic version.*