

Janice – March 2019



04.03.2019

While *Excelsior* is out of the water, the main jobs are getting the hull prepared for the upcoming season; which means the majority of my time has been spent crawling around underneath the ship, usually getting more paint on myself than the hull.

I'm actually super pumped today because we've almost finished the hull!!! We only have one more coat of antifoul to put on and then below the waterline is ready to go. One of my jobs today was to help Karol, the ship's husband, to tape along the waterline, where the red antifoul meets the black paint of the top of the hull (and if I mess up and the line isn't fair the ship's gonna look naff all season, so no pressure!!).

05.03.2019

My tape came off the the waterline and looks great!!! I'm soooo relieved!! The hull is essentially painted now, the difference in the ship between last week and now is massive!!! And it's really pleasing we can see so clearly that all the effort that's gone into painting the hull has been SO worth it.



06.02.2019

Still painting, inside now. It's getting slightly boring but it's insanely satisfying how a wee bit of paint makes the cabins look brand new!



07.03.2019

We're going back in the water todaaaayyyy!!

We had a busy morning, generally cleaning up all the mess we've made in the yard. We hoisted all the stuff we had transported to the yard onto deck, which is now a little bit like an obstacle course, and we rigged the emergency tiller, which is a good way to test it for the upcoming season and also a fantastic opportunity for me to see how it's rigged!!!

The cradle gets lowered into the water at low tide, so it doesn't have to battle as much water resistance, so at about 1600 we got onboard and prepared to be lowered. We were expecting a gradual, gentle, trip down, the same as coming up. Buuuut apparently the guys in the yard had other ideas, and released the brake causing us to kind of hurdle down the track in about 10 seconds, which was really cool and SO MUCH FUN!

And now we have been sitting on *Excelsior* for 4 hours eating crumble and waiting for high water at 10pm, when Jim's going to take control as Skipper of *Excelsior* for the first time, and I'm sooo excited to see him absolutely smash it! (smash the skippering job, not the literal ship.)

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08.03.2019

We came alongside last night, and it was pretty uneventful, but it's totally thrilling to move the ship and actually see her in action (even if we did only move about 20m!)

Today we have had the amazing job of clearing all the pitch and general boat-gunk from the tracks in the yard, and clearing all the tools etc. off the deck of *Excelsior*, and doing a big deck wash!!! I got to start the 'donkey engine' which uses a hand crank, to operate the fire hose (super cool although kind of terrifying!).



We then had a little visit from a newspaper reporter, who spoke to Jim about what we do on *Excelsior* and then got to pose for lots of photos (yay.)

17.03.2019

I was off *Excelsior* last week to go and do my pre-season training onboard *Royalist* with sea cadets!!! It was WONDERFUL!

Much as I'm enjoying refit onboard *Excelsior*, it was sooo much fun to get out actually sailing!!! Not to mention I got to climb masts and stuff because that is literally what I live to do!!



We spent the week in and around Gosport, and did loads of cool stuff like bending on square sails (which I've never done before!), I learnt more about anchoring and basically bosun-ing, which was brilliant!!! We also almost did a hi-line exercise with the Solent coastguard, where they would have lowered a member of their crew from the helicopter to our deck, as would be done if someone was being airlifted, but we didn't get to do it in the end as we were anchored, but moving with the wind a bit too much.

This week has gotten me SO excited for the sailing season to start, not too long before we'll be out on *Excelsior*!!!!

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21.03.2019

This week has been painting, painting, PAINTING!!! Most of the big jobs are now done on the ship and we have been painting, cleaning and generally making her look beautiful for the season beginning! I'm getting more and more excited every day for the season to begin, and it's lovely to see the ship taking shape!!! I spent a day focusing on painting the capstan. It looks soooo good right now, and the crew took great delight in telling me that the first time a rope is put round it, most of the paint will come straight off, so I guess I'll have to appreciate it now, before it gets used!!!



30.03.2019

I abandoned *Excelsior* again this week to go back to do another week onboard *Royalist*. I was kind of sad because this is the week the sails are being dressed and the re-rig has begun, but I was also soooo excited to go sailing!

I had a fantastic week, during which I was able to further my *Royalist* training and get signed off as a bosun on the ship, which has literally been my DREAM since I was about 15!!! I also learnt a lot from their crew which I think will benefit me greatly onboard *Excelsior*!

We began the week in Gosport, visiting Cowes, Weymouth, Southampton and Poole, and had amazing sunny weather (albeit no wind!). I caught up with Matt over the weekend, and we sailed past *Jolie Brise*, on the Sunday. It was awesome seeing her with all her sails up, she really is beautiful!

As this is the first week I've actually done sail training with kiddies since September, it's totally re-ignited my excitement to get the season started and share my love for what I do with all the trainees and guests onboard *Excelsior* this season!!

Arriving back at *Excelsior* was weird; it looks like a different ship since I left!! She has her topmast back up, sails rigged, and everything on deck is painted and absolutely beautiful!! I'm so excited for our shakedown sail on Wednesday and to finally begin the season on the 13th of April!!