Herts
Hash
House
Harriers
Herts official Website: hertsHash.co.uk

Bus Driver Interview:
"Sorry I'm late."
"You're Hired."

Run No. 2098
Date: 20th May 2024
Venue: The Chequers
Location: Stotfold
Beers/Cider: Woodefordes' Wherry
Hare/s: No Eye Deer [With a little help from DWSS! – Ed]
Runners: 21
Virgins: 0
Visitors: 0
Newies: 0
Après: 0
Hash Hounds: 2
Total: 23
Membership: Diverted by Roadworks.

A hot & bright early evening awaited the arrivals at the venue, though the roadworks right outside on Queen Street, obstructing access to Mill Lane & Rook Tree lane threw a bit of a 'spanner in the works' with some not realising that there was still a small gap up the kerb to allow access to the Pub's car park, this was no issue for Sludge's Range Rover, but others baulked at risking a sump & safely parked in the side street before walking up to the Circle that was called at the far end of the car park.

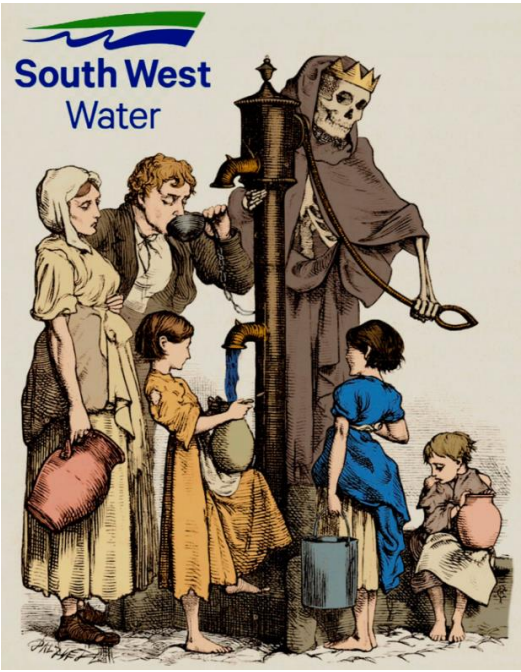
There was some concern that the Hares had arrived in separate vehicles, No Eye Deer had brought Cou-cou & Sophisticated Lady from Letchworth, while Doeswhatshesays had brought Mr X over from Arlesey Station, & there was more worry as Mr X was on his own, after My Lil' couldn't make it to the Train in time, so My Lil' ended up driving over on his own, to make it in time for 'the Off!'

On the way out to start the Trail, the RA thought that he saw Des Res shoot into the Pub, probably to use the facilities, before there was some shock & horror as My Lil' was less than impressed after discovering that No Eye Deer had just set a CHK in the southern end of the Pub grounds, his aversion to such things was certainly rubbed the wrong way [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed] as the rest of the Pack began searching in all different directions. Mr X being the only one to search up the back-passage at the end of the short Chequers Close [Calm down Pebbledash! – Ed].

Mr X found the Trail, then as he emerged from the short ginnel he picked up a CHK in the grounds of St Mary's Church, a Norman building from 1150 of Flint & Ashwell Clunch Stone, that more than likely was built over a Saxon wooden structure.

From here Mr X would go wrong when he looked for Dust on the longer Jigger away from the eastern corner of the Churchyard, he would discover a T just before it comes out to Rook Tree Lane, just beyond the end of the orange barriers for the utility works.

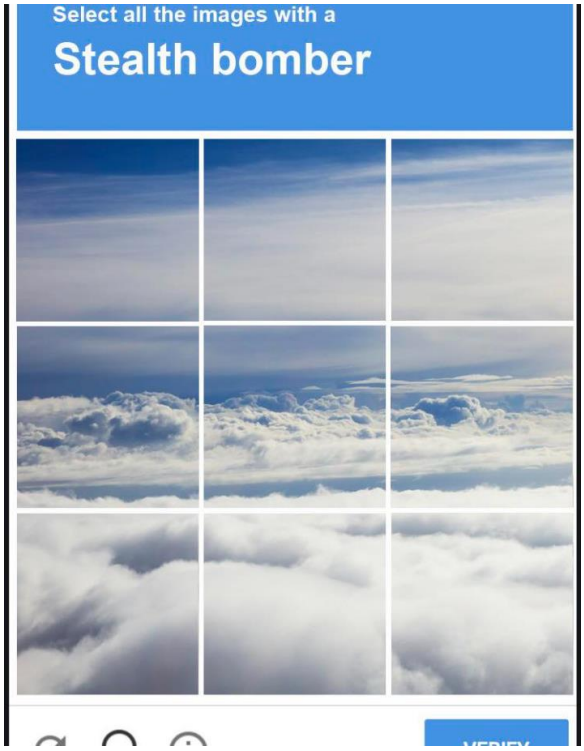
Naughty Ways, Sex Tourist, Diamond Geezer & Moss Key Toe all called "On!" from the way out of the north-western corner of the Church Grounds & made their way beyond the grounds of the 'Academy of Central Bedfordshire' along Church Road to the northwest, which answered Moss Key Toe's question about whether the Hash was in Herts or Beds! Stotfold may lay in Bedfordshire, but it does have a Hertfordshire Post Code for Hitchin, no doubt to confuse the likes of Sparky?



After just 160 Yards a CHK was found by the first of a couple of Snickets away in a nor-nor easterly direction, this one being by the side of the start of the row of homes on the northern side of the now urban road, there was no Dust up there as Ketchup & Prince Garmin would discover.

Back on Church Lane, Sex Tourist, Naughty Ways & Diamond Geezer had found the Trail leading another 90 Yards to the next CHK beside the second back-passage of Oliver's Lane, away to the nor-nor-east. They quickly dealt with this too, no proper Trail up this option either, one that had been utilised for a route on our last stagger around these parts.

Another 100 Yards was run toward the end of Church Road, here the next tempting CHK was found by another of the multitude of passageways in Stotfold, again there was no Trail up this nor-nor-easterly choice. All of these tempting choices kept the Keenies together, with No Eye Deer on hand just to keep an eye on them as they ran the 280 Yards around on to Regent's Street & down to a CHK at the junction with the High Street, the Arlesey Road & Hitchin Road.



Moss Key Toe, Ketchup & Mr X were all lured over the High Street to search the enclosed footpath that runs beside the Stotfold Methodist Church, but this proved to be a Falsie. As they returned a helpful local, out walking, asked "Are you looking for other runners? If so, then they ran down the High Street!"

The rest of the FRBs, who were now out of sight, had picked up the arrows down the south-easterly High Street for about 300 Yards, crossing over to pass behind the local Toilet block, we do get to visit all the best places on the Hash!

Arrows now changed the Trail direction from south-easterly to westerly, on to Brook Street as Ketchup, Prince Garmin, Moss Key Toe & Mr X all made their way down toward the Stag Pub, on the way there was an anomaly of one arrow pointing up into a garden of the home on the corner with the Mixies, but there was no access!

The Stag Pub was, at one point, supposed to be the evening's Hash venue, but later relations broke down over this & it was abandoned in favour of returning to the Chequers. It was here that the FRBs would catch up with the Knitting Circle as now pass by 3D, Slug, Sally, Paxo, Milf & My Lil' as they left a CHK just beyond the Stag.

By now the Pack were becoming very accustomed to the rabbit warren of ginnels, jiggers & alleyways that link the various back-streets of Stotfold, of which they are many more these days as the Trail advanced southward, from the established village & in to the new Fairfield estates, that seemed to have expanded at a rapid rate since out last trot around these parts.

The Trail would progress southward down Sorrel Drive, with homes on the east & to the west a long green strip of grass where one of the branches of the Pix Brook flows. Trail continued along the edge of the new estate with the side roads all named after native wildflowers.

After running down Cornflower Crescent, the Hash would eventually cross the Pix, via a wooden footbridge by a playground, this linking one side of the long green strip to the other, before making its way westward out through Howard Close.

It was here that Mr X & Des Res went wrong, before realising their mistake in this slightly old area of town & coming back to find No Eye Deer marking the Trail further westward through the back streets toward the Hitchin Road, behind them Coucou & Sophisticated Lady.

On the way Mr X spotted one front garden with a six gnomes lined up, one short of being the seven dwarfs, with the end one looking rather like Grumpy, leaning on a barrel, but as he moved on it became clear to the RA that this Gnome was leaning on a barre of Scrumpy! [At last a Gnome that makes sense! – Ed]

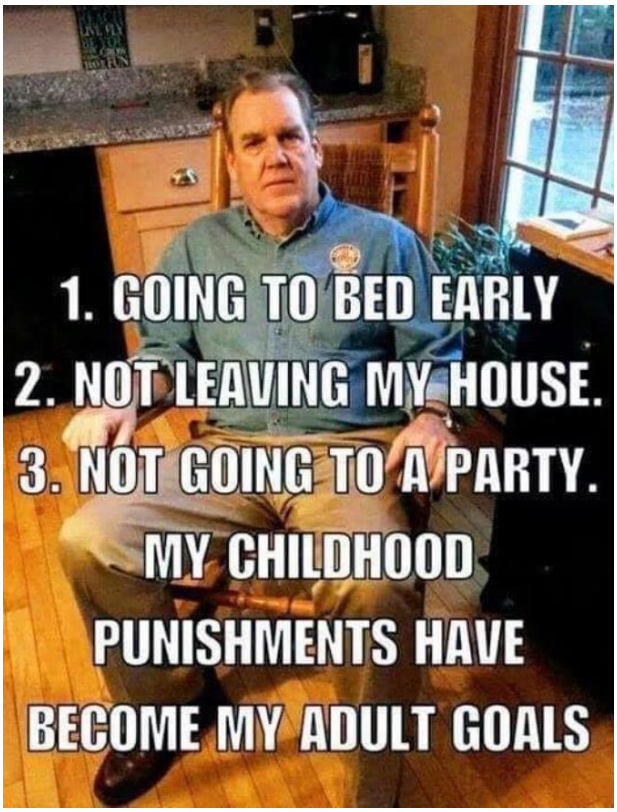
Arrows looped around to the new builds & to the start of Valerian Way, Des Res & Mr X now caught up with Sis, Fliptop & Teddy, where they had a quick discussion of how they remembered the days when this area was open fields! Yes, the village (or is it now a Town?) has certainly has grown in all direction with it seemingly only hemmed-in by the A507, arterial roads & the River Ivel. The 2021 census put the population of the Parish at 9,014, with the new builds this has risen to 12,310.

The Hash would now be led along the start of the long Valerian Way, named after the sedative, cow-parsley like herb that grows wild around these parts, normally near waterways. Used since Grecian times, it is said to promote sleep, used in Medieval Sweden on Bridegroom's clothing to ward off 'The envy of the elves'? Also known as Setwell, or All-heal, it is said to cure or relieve a multitude of ailments from Insomnia, Restless-leg, Plague & even to enticing your pussy with its 'cat-nip' like lure [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed] However, due to its effects on the central nervous systems, it should not be used in conjunction with *Alcohol* or any depressant or anti-histamines! [Not to be sneezed at! – Ed]

The Trail would lead below the bottom of the playground from earlier in the Trail. It was here that the Hash would pass by the 'Howard 100 Homes', looking nothing like the original 1911 cottages that Ebenezer Howard proposed for Letchworth, but each one of these small abodes bears a plaque of Howard Cottages 1911-2011. Bet they don't sell for the original asking price when Howard's cottages were originally built in Letchworth.

The Knitting Circle seemed to be on their own route intersecting the Main Trail via the connecting green strips, with DWSS marking these Short Cuts for the use of Paxo, My Lil', Milf, Slug, 3D, Sally, Sis, Fliptop, Teddy, Flanders & Sludge, if they needed them?

With no regroups along the way, [Wot no sweet stops? – Ed] Naughty Ways, Sex Tourist, Diamond Geezer, Ketchup, Prince Garmin & Moss Key Toe broke away from the rest to run the whole Trail. Yes, there were sweets in one of the Hare's Cars, but there remained back in the car park, under lock & key as there was no stopping for the Pack to enjoy them.



It had been a long day for some & with the heat a few were slowing up with all of the 'street pounding'. Mr X was one who was finding it a long old slog by this point, but he followed on behind Des Res, who was with No Eye Deer just ahead of him, & it didn't go un-noticed that the Hare was seen using technology on the Trail, as she double checked that *Her Trail* would go off down Speedwell Way.

A small diversion around to Campion Way & then out on to the south-western corner the edge Greenacres Park, here there was a chance to get off of the tarmac by running over the grass sections to make their way from Tansey Avenue to the Norton Road & then up to the Baldock Road, here a Short Cut was marked back up to Queens Street, the last loop of the Trail.

The Dust would take the Keenies out to the footpath that runs behind the homes & along by the Ivel on the green space of Stotfold Mill Meadows. There is still a working Watermill there, in the Doomsday Book there are four mentioned, its 4.4 Meter wide 'overshot wheel' is the widest in the Country!

No doubt DWSS had reservations with this end of this section of Trail, for once around behind the homes, it would weaves its way back through Prince Charles Avenue, off of which are Prince Edward Way, Prince Harry Close & (Cough!) Prince Andrew Drive [Please no jokes about 16 Year Old Escorts! (Other Cars were available) – Ed]

The RA arrived back to find all of the Knitting Circle, plus the break-away FRBS were either siting outside in the Pub's large garden, or inside out of the now cool breeze, & that they were all supping away after completing an under the hour Trail.

There was no cloud cover this evening, so the Pack all decided to move inside to keep a bit warmer. The Down- Downs were put off for a week, as some left early [Including the Beermaster! – Ed] & also with the food kept coming out in sporadic intervals there wasn't much of an opportunity, it was fairly busy for a Monday Night & nice to find a Pub that is these days, & more unusually the RA was flagging around halfway & may have missed out on some misdemeanours. This will be remedied when he consults the Oracle of Delphi.

There was some irony on one of the Pub walls, which had the population of the village at the time of the Doomsday Book, *Stotfalt*, as being 200, its name being derived from the use of Cattle Drovers stopping there on their way along the A1 Great North Road at what was an ion-age settlement, this explains why there is a Bovine on the Town Council Coat of Arms. [No idea why there is a Lion Rampant, a bird of prey's talons but the ear of wheat must represent the local farming? – Ed]