



Herts
Hash
House
Harriers
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A short story about decisions 😊

Run No. 1973
27th March 2022
Venue: The Olde Bulls Head
Beers: Theakston's Best, Old Peculiar
Location: Ware
Hare/s: Paxo
Runners: 14
Virgins: 0
Visitors: 0
Newies: 0
Après: 0
Hash Hounds: 1
Total: 15
Membership: Old Mother Paxo's Mother's Day Trail



For some, like Mr X & My Lil' the day began with a stop off at 'Ware to Eat' for a bit of breakfast, they would be joined by No Eye Deer & Whatevershesays who had a cup of coffee there, before all of them walked the few yards beyond the Olde Bulls Head to the public car park where the Hash were meeting this morning.

The HGM was on hand to do the honours for the Welcoming Circle, but almost immediately into his first few lines of his oratory he began digging a big hole for himself by mentioning that he knew 'Old Mothers' turning out for Paxo's Old Mother's Day Run, Sis & a few more looked on in distain, no words were needed! [If only Mother was there! – Ed]

So, Fliptop rapidly cut things short & brought the Hare into the Circle in a failed attempt to divert any attention! Paxo would mention normal Herts Hash Markings, there would be a short cut, as well as such treats as a sweet stop, a large tree to hug, a waterfall & a view point. Then the FRBs were ushered away out of the car park & over to the west side of the Watton Road Roundabout to head northward up beside the local Fire Station to run along the Wadesmill Road.

Where's Wally? Tent Packer, Mr X, No Eye Deer & Miif all passed by the area that was once all Maltheuses on the 1884 Ordinance Survey Map, & latterly the former Hotel where the Herts Hash May Ball weekend was held, it's now a Care-home & thankfully the senior members among the FRBs managed to get by this unscathed, but some wondered if it was Teddy stopping for a sniff that slowed up Fliptop's progress or it was the opposite of the Child Catcher almost netting him?

Meanwhile Paxo led My Lil', Whatevershesays, Sludge, Flanders, Kylie, Sis & TBT OBE away down the Watton Road to the west, but there would be a change of mind from TBT OBE as he turned back after a few yards, taking up the challenge of the longer Trail.

For the Keenies, & now TBT OBE, they would have a 375 Yard trot along the slightly rising, busy road out of Ware, before they reached the First CHK, Where's Wally? searched off to the West into Funzese Park but was soon back as No Eye Deer found the Trail still on the Wadesmill Road as it turns in a nor-nor-west direction for 150 Yards until reaching the another CHK where Poles Lane breaks away to the northeast.

The major consensus of the Keenies was to take to Poles Lane, an old route of a single track lane with ancient established hedges on either side, it was very obvious that along with the daffodils & hedgerow plants brightening things up, that there were a lot of black discarded dog-poop bags.

Some commented on the locals' behaviour in just dropping the pets waste as the lane begins to snake its way around to the north & more had to be avoided. The Hash wouldn't get as far as that turn in the lane, for an arrow directed them off through the hedgerow beyond the local Scout Hut, while avoiding more poop-bags, to then turn southward on to the dead end of the cul-de-sac of the Pastures, before crossing a stream & taking to the footpath within the treeline behind the homes.

For Fliptop a few memories came back, as he once had one of his former residencies in this area of Ware, off of the Pastures. TBT OBE caught up with Mr X, who had to keep stopping every so often as he was still feeling the after effects having Covid. TBT explained that he had a change of heart & now wanted to stretch himself [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed] & put his knees & hip to the test. He certainly would try out his joints as he, like the others had to avoid slipping on more loaded, tied & cast-off dog-poop bags.

At the end of the footpath the Keenies came out on to Wulfrath Way, a road named in honour of the twinning of Ware with the German area which was one of the first settlements in the Angerbach valley in Germany. Arrows pointed the way over at an acute angle, to cross the road & take to the footpath that was signposted to run from the entrance to the Ware Cemetery.

It was a sheltered trot along between the burial grounds & Chapel by way of an old Tree-line that heads due south for 200 Yards, emerging out on to the Westmill Road & then down & across to the start of Wengeo Lane, another ancient route.

For the Keenies the Trail would now run the full 750 Yards as the old by-way makes its way around the outside of the Chauncy School grounds, running behind the homes to the west of the School playing fields before coming out on to Park Road, where the next CHK was found, by the time Mr X arrived here this Circle had been marked through by Paxo as he & the SCBs had already passed by this way.

Now, even Where's Wally? could see the bright chalk markings on the CHK, but as Mr X arrived he could see TBT OBE was heading off course, southward down beside the large Glaxo Building, so TBT OBE was called back to join the rest on heading westward to the rest of Park Lane.

The lane narrowed as it headed away to pass by the Lodge, here the SCBs were caught by the FRBs by the old Lodge, just as the Trail crossed the A10. My Lil' was overheard to moan that the Trail was going the wrong way, adding that 'Paxo's better at setting 'Live Trails' than the day before!"

On the west of the motorway Sludge & Flanders now broke off to head southward down toward the River Lea Navigation, while the rest continued into the grounds of Ware Park, it was a long 730 Yards on the dusty uncapped farm drive, Paxo said that the Pack were lucky it was dry as there can be a lot of large puddles in the large worn out hollows.

The Hash would stop once they reached the Arboretum, south of 'The Wilderness' area of the park, near to Pampuss Mews Cattery, for here was the Held CHK & the sweet stop, in the former ground of the Ware Sanatorium. *On 20th June 1920, the council were asked to approve the purchase Ware Park mansion, 112 acres to be used as a sanatorium for 132 TB patients, with improvements in health care mean that the Sanatorium closed in the 1970's.*

On 24th September 1940, a parachute mine fell just over 100 metres from the sanatorium. It became entangled in a tree and failed to explode. The patients were evacuated while the mine was made safe by the Royal navy. Someone suggested that if the mine was displayed in the Priory grounds, it could be used as a showpiece to raise money for the "Ware Boys at The Front" fund so it was taken there by council workmen.

It remained there for 5 days until a passing serviceman said it had not been fully diffused. This caused a panic, it was quickly moved to Brazier's gravel pit in nearby Watton Road (where the Vicarage estate now stands). Despite its proximity to houses, the mine was exploded on 30th September! A large crowd gathered on Widbury Hill to watch. The explosion caused considerable damage; one house was totally destroyed, three more had to be demolished! Several houses in Watton Road lost their roofs, with 300 more had varying degrees of damage. It turned out that the mine had been part of a raid which had killed three people in Hertford.

Photo's were taken of the Hash beside the large Red Wood Tree in the Arboretum, but this wasn't the largest of the established trees, for a sad looking mighty old Oak sat over in the opposite corner that was away for the footpaths. Sweets were distributed, My Lil' pulled faces at the very thought of a Sour Sweet & without even sucking on one [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed]

When the Trail resumed, My Lil', Mr X & Where's Wally? all clambered the stiles & searched in the small fenced-in Arboretum, while Fliptop & Teddy took to the easier route of the drive, at the southwestern corner of the arboretum Dust was spotted by Mr X on the woodland track that turned to drop down the southwestern hillside.

After 300 Yards through the 'Kennel Corner' of the woodland & then down on the Drive for a few yards to a CHK by a footbridge over the River Rib, a footbridge over a weir is marked there on the 1887 Map! Two T's were found at the end of the footbridge, but Sludge had already turned back!

While Where's Wally? searched the rest of the drive, No Eye Deer chose the correct option on the tarmac narrow lane back for the CHK, running south-eastward as the Dust was picked up where the lane turns eastward to run below Warepark Mill. On the old OS Map yet another Malthouse was situated beside the Mill.

Here by an elbow where the old River Lea joins the River Lead Navigation, a view stop was to be had. It was here that peering through the Iron Gate in the wall, the waterfall could be seen. On either side of the former feed for the water-wheel are two 'Tommy' First World War silhouette figures could be seen, marking the Remembrance Day there were union flags still on the bridge in this little garden on the former ground of the now demolished Mill building.

The Trail continued along to the east, making its way back away from the Navigation to run behind some local allotments, looking out over the waterway the buildings of Gauge House & Balance House can be seen, their names are in respect of the purpose each are involved with in regulating the water flowing in the River Lea Navigation, & to the south that supplying the New River from the flood plains of the Kings Meads.

Paxo now put on a spurt of a run, for he wanted to catch Where's Wally? as he (correctly predicted) that Where's Wally? would go wrong, Paxo had needn't have worried as Where's Wally? had eased up & was found scaring squirrels in the hedgerow (& a little later Milf) just beyond the CHK.

The Trail would take to two sides of a triangular set of paths, firstly heading north-eastward up behind the area of the Backs, before reaching the south bound footpath that Flanders & Sludge had already walked down. The Trail now led down along below the west side of the A10, at the start of the rising fly-over that spans the Lea Valley, a turn to the east would take the Pack underneath the noise of the rumbling road above.

As the FRBs passed graffitied pillars, Mr X said that on the Southern side of the fly-over there was a King Fisher painted on one of the pillars that looked like a real painting, which he had spotted earlier from the bus down the hill from Hertford.

Away from the A10 & the Trail would lead into the local Sports Park of Allenbury's Sports Ground, as the Hash made their way around the outside of the football pitch, one of the soccer players swore so much that Mr X asked if TBT OBE had dropped a heavy chair on his foot? TBT OBE was not impressed! On beyond the Tennis courts & Mr X pointed out to TBT OBE that he was about to run on to the path he had been called back from earlier & that he would have missed out on the woodland, old mill, waterfall & the nice view out over the meads!!

The Trail would now take the Footbridge over to the southern bank of the Navigation, where after a 300 Yard run along the tow path & around its elbow the Trail would lead up to the Ware Lock & weir in the Lea. Here the Hash would cross back over to the north side & then make their way Along Priory Street for a short way.

Mr X commented on how he used to visit the (Long gone) Mill Stream Pub here, before following the trail away for the Lido & up through the Bury Fields Park, named so as '*Human Remains Found*' is marked on the 1884 Map, then it was out to the roundabout on the Watton Road.

Now, we all know that the Hash is non-competitive, but TBT OBE had to out on a spurt of speed to overtake Mr X, who in turn ran by TBT, which forced TBT to go a bit faster but Mr X warned that he should stop before reaching the end of Baldock Street! Thankfully TBT OBE didn't get run over, but as he broke away toward the Car Park, Mr X pointed out that he should have turned right & he disappeared into the Pub!

The Olde Bulls Head was a little on the busy side, what with it being Mother's Day there were a lot of meals being served. With the Hash congregating around where Sludge & Flanders were sat, the passageway of the main route became congested, the Landlord asked if the Pack could move & Fliptop took umbrage to this with a "Well, we are not welcome!" right by the Landlord, who said that we were "Very Welcome!"

Anyhow, the Pack moved outside to the garden, thankfully it had a wall to the back of the seated area & this cut down the wind, also it allowed the Pack to become a bit more raucous while recounting the previous week's Herts Christmas Weekend. Though TBT OBE was more concerned about the Beer he was drinking, by the lighter colour it certainly wasn't the excellent Old Peculier. The name pays tribute to the unique ecclesiastical status of Masham (where the Brewery is), as a 'Court of the Peculier' (which is like a Council) it is also reference to the strong characteristic of the beer! For many years it was affectionately referred to as Yorkshire's 'Lunatic's Broth'. TBT OBE's pint was far lighter than those around him & he wasn't keen, maybe having half of it being made up of lemonade could have accounted for the taste?

Time came around to the Circle & Mr X called on the Pack for their thoughts on the Trail, the reaction was a positive one as Paxo stepped forward to accept his Down-Down. Then there was a series of Hash Awards to hand out, with Flanders finally receiving her belated 100 Herts Run Glass goblet. While Tent Packer lived up to the tradition of the Herts Haberdashers & having completed 300 Runs he would have to wait for his order of 300 Run jackets to come in!

My Lil' was called out for his doubting Paxo's (New Found) ability to set a decent Trail that wasn't a live one! While Fliptop was out for his 'Not Welcome' comments beside the Landlord. Strangely enough the Landlord said that the Hash was always welcome as the last ones left, it was just a busy day, as they discovered at the Waterside Inn where there was a huge queue from the door to the bar! Mr X commented that at least Sparky wasn't trapped like a bluebottle in the emergency exit!

