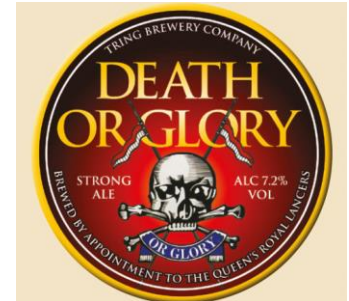


Herts
Hash
House
Harriers
Herts official Website: hertshash.co.uk

Run No.1982
30th May 2022
Venue: The Waterend Barn
Beers: Oakham Session Stout; Tring Death or Glory (Which was enough for Lemming!)
Location: St Albans
Hare/s: My Lil'
Runners: 10
Virgins: 0
Visitors: 0
Newies: 0
Après: 0
Hash Hounds: 0
Total: 10
Membership: Following a grumpy old Hector's Trail!



The day's weather was less than conducive to a Trail the Hare had set in the morning, with a down-pour of rain obliterating some of the markings, but the Hares wasn't prepared to out again resetting things. So, he was joined by the RA in the Bar for a Pint before the off.

With the schools being off, there was always going to be a low turnout but to make up for this the RA weaved his magic & the rain would pass over by the time it came around to the opening circle. After stowing his bags in Mother & Lemmings car, My Lil' was eager to get on with things as he admitted it was a long Trail out there.

As the Pack gathered outside of the Waterend Barn, it was noticeable that there were a lot of women & girls heading into the Alban Arena, all were dressed up to the nines. There was talk of whether it was a 'Chippendales' act, but some of the girls were far too young for that, & Pebbledash wasn't in the queue.

Mr X tried to see if there was a poster around the Arena of what event was being staged that night, but Mother asked one of the passing women & it turn out that Giovanni (Of 'Strictly' Fame) was performing on stage, so that was now settled.

The Hare was itching to get on with things, finally TBT OBE got to start the Circle, just as Kylie disappeared for a wee & our resident photographer wasn't pleased to come out of the Waterend Barn to find that the Pack had moved on. All that remained was a set of fresh arrows pointing the way along beside the Waterend Barn & away southward up a back passageway [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed] to emerge out on to Victoria Street, where the Pack of Tent Packer, Milf, Mother, Lemming, Mr X & TBT OBE had all turned south-eastward.

Now, the Trail markings were scarce to say the least, just some very faded bits of plasterboard scrapes that were left, so it was easy for the Keenies to go too far down Victoria Street as they failed to spot any arrows to point them over toward the Maltings Shopping centre, but it had been obliterated by the rain. Kylie was now happy that he was back with the Hare, as both crossed over to the Maltings, leaving the Keenies to play with the traffic.

Passing through the covered section, the Pack soon found themselves out into the open section of slippery paving, where the Trail turned on its way to take to the south by southwest passage that leads down to Westbourne Mews, then down the car park entrance ramp to reach London Road.

The Trail was marked by the Hare to cross to the southern side of London Road & then down to another back passage, this one leading out into the car park behind London Road. Eyes were now being strained as a few faint markings were finally spotted leading out to Hart Road, but as the Keenies set off away to the southeast on the back-road of Victorian terraced homes, the markings petered out.

The Hare & RA took an alternative route of walking down to the parallel Pageant Road, named for the fact in mediaeval times Pageants were held there when it was a field. The RA now had to listen to the Hare being a 'Grumpy old Hector' bemoaning the Trail being washed away, later Mother would ask what he meant by that, so Mr X referred to the grumpy dog in Hector's House! It was here that Zing-a-long-a-max caught up after his late start.

Down by the White Hart Tap & it seemed that the rest of the Pack had gone awry, eventually TBT OBE came into sight from Keyfield Terrace, with the rest following on as the Hare marked the way around & down on to Sopwell Lane. A few parts of Trail were now spotted on the rough kerb stones of Thorpe Road, which runs from the corner of the Hare & Hounds & drops away to the southwest.

The path was hard underfoot as it was a mixture of flagstones & cobbles, after 105 Yards more Trail was spotted to point the way to take to Belmont Hill, an area of newer builds away from the old established Victorian terraced homes, the remains of one more arrow was spotted beyond the path to the small green area in the estate but that was it.

Again the Keenies were left scratching their heads as there was no more markings & they came to a halt, then a call of "On!" was heard from the Hare as he had marked the Trail further back by the small green space & play area. Having backtracked, Mr X, Milf, Mother, Lemming, TBT OBE & Tent Packer all followed the freshly set Trail out through to De Tany Court to reach a CHK that was still intact on the River Ver Trail, being situated in the wooded area behind the homes it had survived the precipitation.

The consensus was to follow the meandering earthen path away to the west, this wide route proved to be correct as Dust was spotted on the established broadleaf trees as the way mimicked that course of the River Ver, snaking its way from Holywell Hill against the waters flow [Whoa Pebbledash! – Ed]. The Pack crossed the Ver, via a narrow metal footbridge, then after 300 Yards the Pack found themselves out at the bottom of Holywell Hill by the old red-brick bridge.

Tent Packer, Zing-a-long-a-max, Mother, Milf, Lemming & TBT OBE all headed away from Holywell Hill in a south by southwest direction, but there was no CHK or any other markings. Mr X was the only one to search back toward St Albans City Centre on the bridge over the Ver. Kylie arrived, as did the Hare & My Lil' marked the Trail straight over the road & on to the north-eastern corner of the green space of the Westminster Park section of Verulamium Park.

Once over the wooden footbridge over the Ver, the Dust was found as it led over the grass in a Southwestern direction, cutting diagonally over to the drive into the Westminster Lodge Sports Complex. Mr X led the way, with Tent Packer & then Milf as the Trail moved on toward the car parks between the Leisure Centre, Theatre & the Athletics section in the west.

Dust could be seen on the trees along the way, but upon reaching the top of one northern section of the small Golf Course, things changed rapidly. While Kylie followed the Hare on a Short Cut by the Athletics Track to the main section of the Old City of Verulamium, the Keenies attempted to run the Trail, but this would soon end up as a confused walk.

For TBT OBE wandering aimlessly around a Golf Course is nothing new, since he does this on a monthly basis with the Herts Hash Hackers, but for the non-Hackers in the Pack it was something they are not used too. Zing-a-long-a-max & others like Milf were relying on Mr X to know the way, with his 'local knowledge' but as Mr X said, he normally avoids the footpath over the fairways as there are always golfers out there getting in the way.

With a bit of a hit or miss meandering through several of the short paths through the multitude of sections of wooded strips that keep these short course holes separated, the Pack made their way over to the northern top on the western side of the athletics track to find Trail out by London Gate, the remaining foundations of the old stone gates to the Roman City of Verulamium.

Verlamion, or Verlamio, was the original name of the Ancient Britons town, Uerulamos meaning 'Broad Hand' in Brittonic, then it was Romanised after the invasion of AD43. Verulamium itself survived until it was sacked by Boudicca in 61 AD, the burnt remains being excavated more recently to back up the History.

Ahead of them, the FRBs could now see My Lil' & Kylie wandering up through the Park, away to the north, moving away from the solitary building that is home to the mosaic floor of the surviving hypocaust, an underfloor heating system.

A cut across the grass to reach the tarmac path running up by the Verulam Park Play Area & the Beach Volley Ball Courts. Kylie was sceptical that these were used in the 2021 London Olympics, it turns out that the Sand for these courts came from the 2012 Olympic Games that were held in Horseguards Parade! After 670 Yards the FRBs reached not one but two CHKS still in plain to see, were found by the car park to the Verulam Museum & St Michaels Church.

While TBT OBE went to search the car park, Mr X went in to the grounds of St Michaels but neither found any Trail as they joined up & both made their way in to St Michaels Village, where two guys were trying & failing to start a car. TBT OBE parted some advice to them to test the fuses, as from experience he had an issue that prevented one of his old cars from starting. Mr X was not sure whether these two heeded TBT OBE's advice? Judging by their faces when he looked back, & the endless starter motor turning over, he came to the conclusion that they did not.

No calling was heard from behind these two, so they continued along through the quaint olde worlde 'Village', complete with Pubs, Mill, School & cottages, where by the old iron gates they would stumble across Dust that was spotted on the trees running by the Ver into Verulamium Park again.

So, TBT OBE & Mr X went, starting on a long 700 Yard trot between the River Ver & the Lake, the lake being once part of the old 'Fishpools' used to supply the Monks at the Abbey with their 'Fish on Friday'. Dust appeared lost at one point, but TBT OBE soon spotted a splash of flour on a bin & he went to touch it to see if it was flour, however a splash of dog-wee put him off of doing a 'Sparky'.

These two carried on to the southern end of the lake, where TBT OBE was disappointed to see that the iron gates were closed across the doors of the public toilets, for he was in need of reliving himself [Pebbledash! – Ed]. Mr X suggested that they go for a drink in Ye Olde Fighting Cocks, with its fresh new pub sign & then use the facilities there.

As they went to cross the River Ver by the Old Mill, a CHK was found on the old stone bridge, by this point they had realised that they had missed out a part of the Trail, this prompted Mr X to quote our very own Hash Sage of Sludge "There wasn't a T or a Bar CHK to stop me!" so they entered the Pub to quaff an Ale in one of Britain's oldest Pubs, which has recently been saved from closure.

While Mr X & TBT OBE soaked up the Ale & the History of Ye Olde Fighting Cocks, they thought the rest were off on a loop, but it was far more than that! For the FRBs & Kylie had moved down behind St Michaels Church & along the Hemel Hempstead Road to cross the roundabout, Ketchup had now caught up with the rest on Batchwood Drive as the Trail crossed over to the footpath up through the edge of the broad bean field, which runs beside the Drive to the Club House of the Golf Club & Batchwood Hall.

The Trail would cross the driveway & now take to a footpath that would take in more fairways, this time TBT OBE was far away, safely in Ye Olde Fighting Cocks & saved from another aimless wandering around a full sized golf course, he gets enough of that on the Herts Hash House Hackers Days. Eventually the FRBs would reach the eastern section of the Drive from Batchwood Hall.

After a bit of searching, the Keenies would pick up the Trail heading back down toward the Townsend area of St Albans, at the end of the drive the Trail would head south-westward, this would be the start of a long section with some CHKs missing, others a pale resemblance of their former selves before the deluge. One of these CHKs was by Ladies Grove, from where the Trail would take to the old by-way of Everlasting Lane, running between the back to back homes in this area.

Everlasting Lane doesn't quite live up to its name, as it does finish where it reaches Verulam Road to the south by southwest, a slight twist at the end of this & the Trail would make its way down to St Michael's Village once again, this being via the end of Fishpool Street, this would lead beyond the Pudding Stone & Mill around to the gates that TBT OBE & Mr X had been through much earlier.

By the time the Pack reached Ye Fighting Cocks, the other two had supped up & moved on, following the Trail up toward the St Albans Cathedral that sits prominently on the top of Holywell Hill. Mr X pointed out the grotesques along the top of the Cathedral, one of which has glasses & this is Robert Runcie, former Arch Bishop of Canterbury & of St Albans, it is not Eric Morecombe. These figureheads are grotesques & not gargoyles, as gargoyles have a spout to dispense water, usually through the mouth.

The Trail would head through the archway by the red-brick restaurant & bookshop which are sympathetically designed to fit in, but there is a large bland grey concrete chimney next to this that just looks out of place. The Trail would now head around the south-eastern end of the Cathedral to move up on the cobbles around by the red-brick walled Vintry, where the Monks would grow grapes for their wine making.

On through the old row of shops in the small ancient colonnade & out toward the Curfew Tower, most people think this is a Church tower but its from the days of the walled city when a curfew was in place to get people back safely behind the walls.

One final loop lay ahead, this was around St Christopher Place, a small Shopping Centre to the west of the old Market Place & then on to the end of Chequers Street, heading northward as the main thoroughfare of shops becomes St Peters Street, to cross over to the On Inn.

The Pack all regrouped in the Marlborough Suite end of the Waterend Barn, known to the regulars of the Pack as the place of 'Sparky's Bones' where he once gnawed away at a bowl of old discarded ribs the previous diners had finished with.



Waterend House, with one of the Barns that make up the current buildings

The Waterend Barn was constructed around 1610, next to a ford on the River Lea north of Lemsford & Brocket Hall, by Sir John Jennings, the St Albans MP between the years of 1628 and 1642. The barn was built at the same time as the Water End Farm, a family home for the Jennings family, including his daughter Sarah Jennings who married John Churchill, & became the Duchess of Marlborough.

The Water End Farm can still be found in this location, however the 1,200 timber frame, aisled barn was dismantled in 1938 to be re-erected in the middle of St Albans & went by the name the Waterend Barn restaurant. In 1964, it was enlarged by the addition of a smaller barn from Little Horstead. It is presumed that this

barn dates back to the sixteenth century. It wasn't until 17th February 2005 that 'Spoons took over from Simmonds of the running of the buildings as a Lloyd's No.1, which no longer seem to exist & it just comes under the 'spoons banner.

The Circle was called, since the Pack had this small old end barn to themselves, after the staff placed child's high-chairs in the entrances. The Hare was rewarded for a long but good Trail, while Mr X & TBT OBE had theirs for getting back 30 minutes before the rest & missing out on the treat stop! Finally Mother for her fetching Mr X & My Lil's bags & coming back looking like a Pack-mule!



Wetherspoons eye a potential new London Venue

