

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

Run No. 2106
Date: 14th July 2025
Venue: The Waggoners
Location: Ayot Green
Beers/Cider: Marlow Rebellion IPA;
Hare/s: Monsieur X
Runners: 12
Virgins: 0
Visitors: 0
Newies: 0
Après: 0
Hash Hounds: 0
Total: 12
Membership: Revolting Peasants!



So, it came around for the 14th of July, 'Fête Nationale Française' or 'Bastille Day' as we *Rostbifs* would call it. Any excuse to celebrate on the Hash, & the Hare had prepared a few surprises for later on in the Trail, on the anniversary of when Revolting French Peasants Stormed the Bastille Prison in 1789. It was the easily stages of the French Revolution & when King Louis XVI dismissed popular Minister Jacques Necker it all kicked off!

The Bastille, a Royal Armoury & Prison, was a symbol of Royal power & tyranny, after four hours of fighting & 94 deaths the building was stormed, becoming the 'flashpoint' of the revolution. Ironically it only contain seven prisoners, there were four forgers, an Irish "lunatic", a deviant young aristocrat imprisoned at the behest of his family, & the only real political prisoner of a man who had conspired to assassinate Louis XV of France over 30 years before.

Anyhow, back to the Bastille Trail. This morning's Hare had been around early that day to set the Trail, since the day before he was partaking in the 60th Anniversary Braughing Wheelbarrow Race, where he & Moss Key Toe received the biggest cheers of the day from the on-looking crowd!

Mr X's back-pack was complete with a Bleu, Blanc et Rouge French Tricolore, which was fluttering away in the light breeze as the ~~revolting peasants~~ Pack began to arrive. Numbers were low this weekend, no doubt it being a day of Sports that had some preferring to stay at home & watch, Wimbledon & the Footie?

Anyhow, Juices Flowing & Parson's Nose, along with My Lil' had all heeded the request to wear Bleu, Blanc et Rouge, or something French on Trail. These three wore French Hash Shirts, the latter also wore a black beret which reminded some of Frank Spenser from 'Some Mothers do 'ave 'em', which brought a very accurate "Oh Betty!" from My Lil' when it was mentioned. The Hare would wear his Paris Hash T-shirt after the Trail.

By the time the calling of the Circle came around, there were just 11 present to hear Paxo welcome the Pack to the correct R*n Number, then it was over to the Hare who started off by explaining it was normal Herts Hash Markings, there could be golf balls (That was a 'hareng rouge') there were Horses out there, dog walkers, fast cyclists & a lot of old people with sticks out for a group constitutionals, this received a boo from the revolting peasants & a whack from Zingalong's walking crutch!

Zinglaong was present after a long break, for if you haven't heard? He's ~~vegan~~ slipped on his Hollibob's in Cornwall & broke his fibula! [Ouch! – Ed] he was picked up by Milf & driven to the venue, as he said he was now up for walking the Trail, in his large cumbersome looking plastic 'Fracture Walker boot'.

So, the Trail got under way with the Hash directed northward out of the dead-end of Brickwall Close, which had nice smooth tarmac & no potholes at all, for something no longer goes anywhere after the Great North Road was replaced by the A1(M) behind the Pub, & the road to Welwyn moved east of the Motorway. Back in the days before the road was moved, the WGC Golf Club had a green that backed on to the rear of the Waggoners & golfers would stop there for refreshments.

The first CHK was found on the bend as Brickwall Close comes out on to Ayot Green, only FWB was tempted to head over toward the bridge spanning the A1(M) below to the east. Everyone else was happy to head over between the old established broadleaf trees dotted about green, as an arrow was spotted on the narrow lane through the centre of the Ayot Green, then Dust was seen on the trees lining the north-western, Ayot St Peter lane from the fork in the Green.

What do you call a French guy attacked by a cat?

Claude.

On the 270 Yards to the next CHK the Pack passed by the row of quaint & picturesque village cottages, Flanders was not the only one who was unimpressed by the Porch driver who, once by the cyclists & walkers, had to put his foot down to show off his large, powerful & very noisy engine, you know what they say about men with powerful cars?

Anyhow, away from blue Penis Extensions, the Falsie off through the eastern hedgerow on the lane was found, before "On!"

was called to the west, running through a fallow field of tall grass, which seems not be we walked that much these days? The Pace on this warm & sultry morning was down to a walk, & it wasn't just that the long bent over grass was a slight trip hazard either.

After a couple of hundred yards the Trail left the field, taking a couple of right-angle turns to come emerge on to Ayot Little Green Lane, where the CHK set there less than 2 hours ago had been kicked out by locals, but they couldn't do that with the CHK chalked in Green on the nearby Tree.

Here Parson's Nose went wrong into the field to the south, as he searched one of the two of the three options, meanwhile Moss Key Toe was called back from the northern option on the lane, both ignoring the westward section of the Ayot Little Green Lane where the Trail was set.

FWB, Paxo, Milf & Sludge were all up with after Moss Key Toe, who had now returned & found Trail to the small triangle in the narrow road, where it joins Waterend Lane, just as a conversable Jaguar squeezed by as the Pack stood to one side.

A CHK was found on the afore mentioned Triangle & Moss Key Toe was going to be called back again as the Trail would head north by northwest following Water End Lane as it heads a hundred yards down turn to the west, on this bend the another CHK was found, right by a footpath into the wooded strip dividing the northern fields.

Sludge was quickly down the sheltered footpath, My Lil' was more hesitant as he recalled a previous Hash down this route, many years ago, & it was over grown with nettles! All of which had the Hare stating that nettles don't sting this time of year!

However, My Lil' needn't have worried as the nettles have long gone & the path was pretty clear as it descend in a shallow vale. The Pack did have to crouch at one point to get under a trunk of a fallen tree, the Hare had to remove his backpack so the Tricolour wouldn't get snagged on a branch.

The Trail would rise up & come out through more grassy fallow land to reach a CHK by the outside of the tree-line on the southern side of the Ayot Greenway, the former Railway line between Welwyn Garden City, originally Welwyn Halt, to Wheathampstead, Bedford & Luton beyond. Zingalong dropped back a bit as he negotiated the tree roots on the way up, Parson's Nose held back a bit to keep an eye on him.

Moss Key Toe would take yet another wrong option as he headed westward outside of the former railways course, he was called back as the Trail was picked up to the east, for a about 100 Yards before crossing the Ayot Way to a CHK on the edge of the wheat field to the north of the old line.

Paxo would go wrong by searching the northwest footpath through the golden brown crop, while FWB & Milf also failed in finding the Trail nor-nor-west on the outside of Saul's Wood, it was now Moss Key Toe's time to shine, for at last he found the Trail on the gravel path leading into the shade of Saul's wood.

After 200 Yards a CHK was found by where the outer footpath joins the one within the edge of Saul's' wood, before it runs to the north east. Then after a further 250 Yards the Hash would emerge out on to the Ayot St Peter Lane, where there was a CHK & here the Hare told the Pack there would be a Short Cut coming up, but before this they should take all

take a look over to the right, where they could see the picturesque 'Arts & Craft' St Peter's Church, near the junction with School Lane.

Here the Hare held back to make sure that Zingalong was up with the likes of My Lil', Milf & Paxo who were going to accompany him along the Short Cut down the Ayot St Peter's Lane to the northwest, where the old St Peter's Church ruins lie, this was third of Ayot St Peter's former Churches, burning down in 1874 & replaced with the Arts & Crafts one.

Parson's Nose, Juices Flowing, FWB & Moss Key Toe set off with the Hare on the longer Trail, which headed away to the east, passing by horse paddock's to the north & then below Greggs Wood for 340 yards, here Parson's Nose chose to run along the outside of the wood on a 'dog-walkers route' while everyone else followed the Dust within the edge of the woodland.

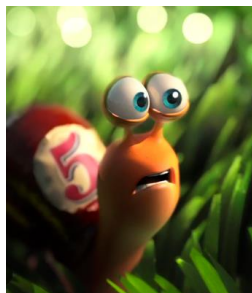
The Hare thought that the rest of the Keenies may have met up with Paron's Nose at the CHK by a Cottage, but he was nowhere to be seen, as the rest passed through the kissing-gate & out along the edge of another grassy fallow field. In the corner a CHK was located by a gate on to White Hill Lane, opposite the back of the new Estate on what was the Frythe. Along time ago the Hash were stopped by the Police here, after being mistaken for potential protestors at what was a regroup, as the Frythe used to home a famous drug company's vivisection activities. Thankfully that has all gone now.

Parson's Nose rejoined the Pack, as he came trotting along the lane, just as Moss Key Toe searched out over toward the Frythe, but they were both wrong as the Hare dropped a heavy hint to FWB & Juices Flowing that the Trail moved away from the lane, down the edge of the fallow field, which for those partaking in the Great Butterfly Count had a lot of Flutterbys in earlier, the path led down into the valley to edge of Rectory Wood.

The FRBs would now climb up through the dark dense broadleaf woodland, here Juices Flowing had to stop to scare the Squirrels, Parson's Nose remained behind with her, while the Hare made sure the next couple of sections of Trail were well marked so

I can understand why French bakers hate me.

I feel their pain.



“Why do French people eat snails? Because they don't like fast food”

I asked a French man if he played video games.

He said, “Wii!”

they could catch up by the Held CHK. The Hare claimed that this would be the only & last climb up hill of the Trail, & this was noted by some of the Keenies!

After a gentle, but long 240 yard climb the Trail reached School Lane, where a CHK was found opposite the gated entrance to Ayot Bury House, here the Trail was picked up by FWB & Moss Key Toe as they set off away to the south for a few yards until double green chalk arrows pointed the way in through a gate in the high hazel hedgerow.

The Trail would cross over a paddock in a south-westerly direction, before passing through a five bar gate & there was a turn to west by south west, to pass through by the small orchard to come out on to Ayot St Peter's Lane again. On the way the FRBs passed a, older guy walking his Labrador, he asked what the hash were up to & why the French Flag? Once it was explained it was Bastille Day, he replied that it took place in 1789! He was correct with this

date, the Hare believed that he was from an age when school kids used to have to recall famous dates, 1066 & all that! He was also warned that a few more revolting peasants were also on their way!

Here the Trail was marked straight across the lane & up into the larger, enclosed crop field of wheat for a straight as a die 320 Yards trot to reach the Ayot St Peters lane for a third time this day,

after its U-shaped loop around from the ruins & graveyard of the old St Peter's Church.

A turn to the left & a short trot along the lane to reach an impressive wrought iron gates of the gate house to Ayot Mountfitchet house, a Grade II listed Tudor hall which dates from 1485; with Jacobean & later additions. A picture stop at the regroup in front of the gates, a passer-by did the honours instead of our missing Kylie, so we could get the whole Pack in, once Juices Flowing & Parson's Nose had caught back up.

At the regroup some asked where the Sweets were, but the Hare said that was to be later on, for he knew there was alcohol to be involved! Also with the pace of the Pack being pretty slow, the Hare wanted to get everyone moving so he could offer up a big short cut, as he explained that once the Trail reaches the former railway that those not wanting to do a loop should turn left & head up the railway! [Simple you'd think? – Ed]

So, the Pack moved on, passing through one door in the left-hand red brick gate house, then straight out of the other wooden door after the immediate 90° turn, to exit & follow the Trail along the tree-lined tarmac avenue drive way to the south.

The grounds were picturesque, with a red-brick wall & small tower over by the moat, then the Trail changed direction around on to the footpath that follows the shaded, gated, narrow driveway that turns south-westward. There were plenty of 'Private Property' signs attached to the wrought-iron fence to the left, behind which the ornate House & Gardens sit.

The route would come out from under the tree-canopy, where double arrows pointed the way out through the hedgerow & in to another wheat field, this one being to the south of the grounds of Ayot Mountfitchet. The dead straight 140 Yard path would lead over to the northern hedgerow on the side of the Ayot Way, & as the Hare caught up he saw that everyone was heading straight across through the opposite tree-line & not turning left! [Sacre Bleu, it's like herding cats! Ed]

So, the Knitting Circle were called back from the hedgerow gap & pointed eastward, while Moss Key Toe, FWB, Juices Flowing & Parson's Nose did carry on along around the loop, as they said the Hare had gone to all the trouble this morning of setting the Trail they felt obliged to complete it all.

The FRBs all set off to the west, along the outside of the Ayot Way as it bends down to the southwest on a long arc, the level of the crop field would descend to reach 'Hunter's Bridge' here the Trail would turn to the right to pass underneath. A CHK

was found by the bridge, but it wouldn't take much to realise that the Dust would be found above them upon it, & the Keenies would soon be heading the 390 Yards that they had taken on the outside of the railway line. On the way back they found the arrows at the earlier crossing point had all been changed to point the way up the Railway.

Sludge, Paxo & My Lil' led the Knitting Circle the whole 850 Yards until the section where there is no longer a bridge over the Ayot St Peter Lane, though half along Sludge did make out he was going to go off into Saul's Wood once again, at the point where the out Trail had earlier crossed over the former railway line. To be safe, the Hare changed the markings on the CHK & added large arrows to point the way on to the Held CHK.

Mr X now set up a mini picnic stop, for there were would be a veritable bounty of Croissants, Chocolate Brioche Buns, French Fancies & some Pastis to wash it down. Looking back down the line & Zingalong was spotted on his way, with Des Res accompanying him, then Des Res disappeared out of sight as Zingalong continued his approach.

After around 5 minutes it was noticed that a head popped up from behind some of the line-side bushes, was it a Bear doing what Bears do in the woods? Nope, it was Des Res & this was made more obvious with him wearing his distinctive red Herts T-shirt, perhaps as it was a French Themed Trail he was having a Crepe?

Everyone regrouped to enjoy the French themed snacks stop, though there wasn't any gluten free or vegan as in their cooking the French tend to use more artery clogging butter than James Martin! Anyhow, the treats were polished off, as well as the Pastis, which was drunk in a traditional way with water to make it turn opaque.

There were quite a few cyclist on this last leg, who all seemed to not realise that there is a side ramp for them, so the gathered Hash had to alert them to avoid the steps at the end.

*Anyone can use my French Revolution joke.
It's royalty-free.*

I once thanked a French guy to death.

It was a merci killing.

What happened after an explosion at a French cheese factory?

All that was left was de brie.

Again an older chap, out walking with his Niece [Steady Pebbledash! – Ed] asked about the Hash & when it was explained who we were & that we were celebrating Bastille Day, he too said that this was in 1789, proving Mr X's educational theory to be correct!

Time for the revolting peasants to move on & the Hash descended the steps, where Parson's Nose moved a rubbish bag & the awful odour of dog-poop bags filled the air, & the lungs of the Hare behind, who now decided to drop of the rubbish back at Ayot Green!

Having crossed the old lane, then to rise up the opposite flight of stair cut into the embankment, the Pack would continue along the next, short, 175 Yard section of the former Railway to reach a small car park, here the final CHK was found & it threw most off, or was that the Pastis that had been consumed?

My Lil', Sludge & Flanders had no issues as they were soon off over the uncapped stony drive to the car park & through the kissing gate into the crop field on a path leading back to Ayot St Peter's Lane, for the very last time of the day! It seems that the Pastis may have had an effect already, for behind him, the Hare could hear a lot of giggling & calling out of "Kissing gate!" as the rest of the Pack seemed to lose their heads as they passed through the swinging metal gate, giving & receiving each other a smacker on the cheek!

The On Inn was passed before the Trail came down the few steps in the hedgerow & back down to the lane, where the Pack headed up to the south, where Parson's Nose mentioned that this was short, slight uphill climb after the Hare had claimed that earlier about the last uphill section of Trail!

With the day being fine, in patches, as there was the odd cloud passing over & cooling things down, the Pack sat outside over the road from the Pub's front, as the Waggoner's rear garden does suffer from a little noise pollution from the A1(M) below the bottom of the garden.

The gourmet section of the Hash had to go in early for their reservation, leaving the final Circle to be called a bit later than expected, but the French Tricolour did catch the attention of a French civilian Lady, who came across to see what the Hash was about, she took a picture of the Pack resplendent in French Hash Shirts & her fluttering National flag. She didn't need asking when the storming of the Bastille was!

After luncheon, the renaming Hashers formed a Circle at Paxo's bequest, the Hare was rewarded for what the Pack thought was an excellent Trail [Who wouldn't if plied with Pastis? – Ed] Anyhow, Mr X went on to welcome everyone to what was almost the anniversary of the Beatles Worldwide Telecast to approx. 400 Million on 'Our World', the world's first Television Satellite Link-up on 25th June 1967.

The Broadcast is famous for the premier of 'All you need is love' & that all the French viewer stood up & put their hands over their hearts as the intro of the song is the start of 'The Marseillaise'! Better still they were all left standing bewildered as the music progressed away from what they thought was a full rendition of their National Anthem!

Back to the Down-Downs & next up was Des Res for doing what Bear's do in the Woods, Zingalong was called out for wearing a 'New Boot' on Trail! A great day was had by all. Vive la Révolution! Citizen X

Q. Why do the French make omelets with only one egg?

A. Because in France one egg is un oeuf.

