



KENNET VALLEY HASH HOUSE HARRIERS

No 100 - 2nd December 2001 - Cross Keys @ Bedwyn

So, this is it. The end of an era. The reign of the fisher king has come to a conclusion. The fluff under the bed of time has clogged up the vacuum cleaner of history, and the white dot of fate has disappeared slowly down the television tube of eternity. Now read on.....

A beautiful, cold morning was celebrated by a seething throng of runners and walkers - many of them scum from North Wilts and Churn Valley - outside the Cross Keys. Navy Mike was fussing around as usual, but his plans for a prompt start were thwarted by - no, not Keith, who was only the normal 5 minutes late - but by the lovely Annie, purveyor of muffins and punch, who arrived a full 20 minutes after the appointed time. Among the assembled populace it was good to see long-absent friends Richard and Napoleon with their other halves - walking on this occasion, but hopefully soon to be running again.

The cockles of GOM's heart must surely have been as warmed as the coffers of the landlord's till by the sight of the crowd which turned up in tribute. And he did not let us down - the cunning old ~~geat~~ fox laid as devious a trail as ever, through the familiar surroundings of Bedwyn Common and the Kennet & Avon canal - our spiritual home. A twist uphill here, to be followed by a quick traipse back down again, sadly pandering to the North Wilts rabble by leading the runners through the River Dun, then over the canal to find refreshment in the form of chocolate coins. Up to Bedwyn Brail then down to the canal bridge and refreshments - the long-awaited cakes and punch. The runners came across walkers on the ideally scheduled two occasions, and although some walkers - gasbagging as usual - missed the short way back, all too soon we were back at the pub thawing out in front of a roaring fire.

We repaired to the back room of the hostelry, where photos of previous hashes were on display. GOM paid his final rambling tribute to the hare - himself - and in a poignant valedictory speech, presented various Kennet Hashers - some deserving, some (me) less so - with those rare and prized artefacts - 50th Hash t-shirts straight from Sotheby's. Finally, he anointed the richly deserving Margaret as the new Grand Old Mistress - or, as one of the North Wilts oiks put it - Grand Old Mattress. Who, from our noble band of brethren, could be a better choice to carry on the traditions established by Navy Mike?

Our wonderful GOM was duly presented with a gift from the Kennet Valley Hashers - an antique French hunting horn - and a short poem (see below).

In all seriousness, we all - runners and walkers alike - have had many wonderful Sundays in beautiful parts of Wiltshire, and sat in and outside excellent pubs - and almost entirely due to Mike's vision and determination in starting up - and keeping going - the Kennet Valley Hash. We owe him a huge debt of gratitude, and equally, we look forward to his tradition continuing in Margaret's capable hands.

When I was a lad I slacked at school
And smoked Players Weights behind the bike shed wall.
I drank Red Barrel & Worthington E
And chased after girls with great alacrity.
Now at that kind of running I cut such a dash
That I became Grand Master of the Kennet Hash!

I joined the Navy and wore long blue bags
And drank cheap whisky and smoked NAAFI fags
I sailed on a ship the whole world round
And ran up a mess bill of a thousand pounds.
At running up that mess bill, I made such a splash
That now I am Grand Master of the Kennet Hash!

I took to the law as an articulated clerk
And at running up clients' bills I made my mark.
I ensured that each case dragged endlessly on
And soon became known as Michael Marathon.
And that kind of running made so much cash
That I became Grand Master of the Kennet Hash!

Now I've reached the end of the Hashing race
My poor old maker only just keeps pace.
My knees are cracking, and I've had enough
And at *almost* everything I run out of puff.
Just jogging (horizontal) I'll stick to with panache -
I'm the shy, retiring Master of the Kennet Hash!

Fifthcoming Hash Runs

101 - 16th Dec - The Wheatsheaf at Chilton Foliat - Steve

102 - 30th Dec - The Freke Arms at Hannington - Paul

103 - 13th Jan - The Wagon & Horses at Beckhampton - Ray

104 - 27th Jan - tba - Keith

If you feel moved to organise a Hash run, please ring
GOMargaret on 01793 703744

An Addition to the Normal Mag.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mike for choosing me to follow him as GOM, it is in deed an honour but he will be a hard act to follow.

Many of us would not be hashing if Mike had not set up the Kennet Valley Hash on 1st March 1998. We were small in the beginning and Mike ended up organising a lot of trails & writing a lot of mags.

Thanks to your perseverance KVH has grown and is well supported today.

I am delighted to inform everyone that Mike will continue to support the KVH as a walker. So those who lay trails will have a greater challenge to attempt to loose the walkers now.

Thanks to everyone who supported the 100th hash, it made Mikes final hash so memorable. Finally, a great big thank you to Mike for making the KVH what it is today.

Margaret.
(Grand old Mattress)

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