

Hash 212 - The Plough, Shalbourne - 5th February 2006

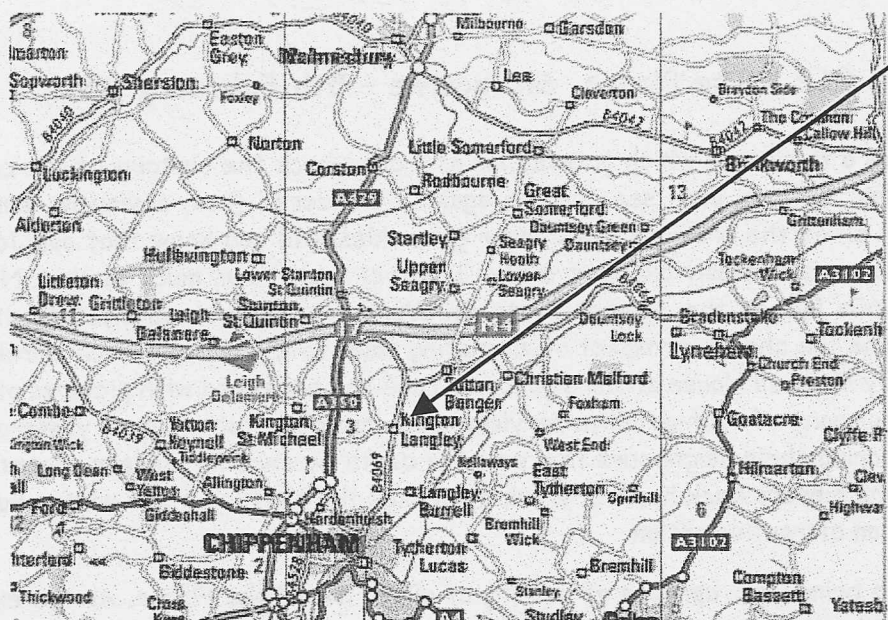
It was a thick mist which greeted me as I drew back the curtains at the crack of 9.30 on Sunday. Will we ever see the sun again, I wondered [yes, obviously, numbskull], having spent all of the previous week under grey skies. Did you know that our January sunshine allowance is a measly one hour a day? I marvel that it's as much as that. No wonder 1 in 5 over-60s live on the Spanish Costa del Worthing - a fairly grisly fate, it seems to me. Imagine the ghastly prospect of zimmering down to the harbour each morning for a cup of watery Maxwell House at some gimcrack café-bar bedecked with pictures of Princess Di, in the company of half-a-million terylene-clad crumbles tutting over yesterday's *Daily Mail* and boring their neighbours to a welcome death by showing endless photos of our Doreen and the nippers back home in Worksop. Makes the KVH³ on a wet winter Sunday seem like quite an attractive option.

Which brings me, apropos of nothing at all, to Mad Mike Fisher. As the executive Skoda swept in stately fashion into Shalborne and past the Plough, there was a chap stood outside who reminded me strongly of him. It couldn't have been Mike, of course, because this chap was sensibly clad in tracksuit bottoms, two T-shirts - one of which had long sleeves - and a woolly hat. But there was no-one else in sight. Was I late? Remarkably, no. Had Pete and Maureen, land lord-and-lady respectively of the afore-mentioned pub, come out in sympathy with other Wiltshire publicans and told us to push off? Again no. The answer was more prosaic: the Runners and Walkers were in fact gathered round the back, waiting eagerly for the off like greyhounds in the slips.

As R&W set off in opposite directions, it was the young pup Kevin who gave the best greyhound impression, unerringly sniffing out the right trail at each circle and double-arrow, and haring off almost out of sight. He loped effortlessly up the hill towards Bedwyn, and by the time the rest of the pack had staggered up, he had shot off back down again towards Ham. Pausing only occasionally to cock a leg against a tree, he was so caught up in the excitement of the chase that he quite forgot to tell his fellow hounds that he was on trail. Eventually older, wiser heads caught him up, and it was MMF who whipped him into line as we caught up with the Walkers.

Upon entering Ham, it was a great surprise to observe that the pub - outside which MMF & I have sat on many a pleasant summer's evening over a beer or two - has turned into the Star of Karma Sutra Nepalese Tandoori Balti Garden Genuine Indian Curry House. Is nothing sacred? Confused no doubt by the scent of coriander, Kevin dropped back as GOM swept past him into his rightful position and led us back to Shalbourne. Unfortunately, Mike's calculations were slightly awry and it was **3 MINUTES** over the hour before we reached the pub. On the other hand, perhaps we are just getting older and slower...

Many thanks, Mike!



213 - 19th Feb - The Who'd a Thought It, Lockeridge - The Late Keith
214 - 5th Mar - The Hit or Miss, Kington Langley - Margaret & Dave
215 - 19th Mar - The Buggers Arms - Steve
216 - 2nd Apr - The Prince of Wales - Andrew & Steve2
217 - 16th April - The Buggers Arms - poor old Mike again!

If you want to have a bash at a Hash, or find out where The Bugger's Arms is please ring GOM Jeremy on 01672 521064; email jer@xyz.port995.com or the late Keith Mitchell on 01672 511530 email keith@griffins.co.uk - website kvhash.mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk