



Hash 241 - The Swan, Swinbrook nr Burford - 4th March 2007

Well it was like this...

It was the Saturday night before Keith's Hash; about 10.45, maybe 11pm. There I was, on all fours, loping easily down Faringdon High Street, the brilliant white light of the full moon glinting on my glistening fangs, the thick fur on my back and haunches protecting me from the chill night air. I was *WEREWOLF*, in search of a virgin: an unlikely quest in Faringdon, I know, but at this time of the lunar month I just have to obey my strange, overpowering compulsion. There were a few gaggles of revellers who drew back in fear and drunken disbelief - but then I smelt one, my virgin, tripping down the road arm-in-arm with her mates. They ran off, screaming, but she just stood there, transfixed. My victims always do. I padded towards her, holding her in the baleful gaze of my blood-red eyes. I paused, poised to spring upon her throat. I threw back my head and bayed at my master the moon. I coiled myself, claws scrabbling for purchase on the paving stones....

..and then someone turned the moon off. Just like that. One minute I was the *Steppenwolf*, Ruler of the Night; the next, I was a naked, balding old git, stupidly trying to cover his manhood with a discarded Macdonalds carton, blinking spec-less in the dim glow of the red-lanterned moon. The eclipse! Why had I not remembered?

Of course the police did not believe a word of it. I was thrown roughly into a cell, wrapped in a blanket, in the company of three distinctly hostile drunks. It took four hours before I persuaded the officer on duty to let me phone my solicitor - but MMF was in the clutches of a fearsome bout of the 'flu, and uncertain as to which of us was hallucinating. It wasn't until 4a.m. that I was able to talk an extremely hostile and unforgiving Katrina into coming to bail me out....

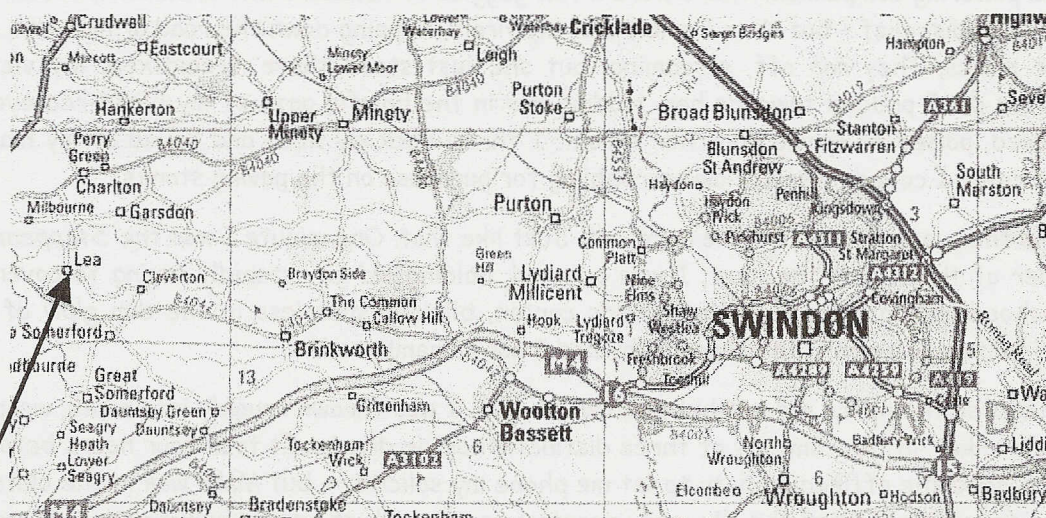
And **that** is why we were four minutes late in parking the yuppy 4x4 Škoda Chelsea Tractor on the grass verge in Swinbrook...

Now, as you probably know, I don't Hash in the rain, but the windscreen wipers, which had been battling manfully against a Biblical downpour all the way there, suddenly found themselves scrabbling against a dry screen. The rain had stopped. The God of KVH³ had listened once again, and smiled his (or her) watery smile...

K2 apologised profusely for laying most of the Trail along roads, but explained that his original track was 3 feet under water (shades of Steve's Trail From The Crown At Cerney Wick In The Winter Of 2000), and the flour kept floating away. No matter. Swinbrook proved to be one of those irritatingly beautiful Cotswold villages where none of us can

afford to live - all biscuit-brown stone and mullioned gables. Or possibly gabled mullions. In the absence of GOM, Rew (who had driven all the way from Wolverhampton in the vain hope that his F-I-L would buy him a beer) led us round the trail, complete with stunning views. Not far behind was Brian the Bold, who after humouring the back-markers for a while, picked up his heels and stormed off. After running alongside the very full Fulbrook on the River Windrush, we eventually wound up in Burford, the twee-est town in mainland Britain. We fought our way through hordes of horsey-scarved women and Range-Rovered berks in Drizabone raincoats, past Mrs Bumbles Jam Shop ferchrissakes, to emerge into the sanity of the misty moisty countryside. A brief twist through the medieval village of Widford, and it was back to Swinford just as the Heavens opened.

The Walkers - and K/Carl, who turned up in time to run the Short leg - had just beaten us (well, me, anyway) back to the pub - a limed-oak, newly-flagstoned gastro-pub ['gastro-' as in 'enteritis'], which served ~~pissy~~ Hook Norton bitter, and was full of Ruperts and Fionas and their loathsome, well-spoken brats; and also haunted by the shades of the equally loathsome, aristocratic and entirely loony Mitford sisters - a ragbag assortment of communists, fascists and failed writers - who were dragged up in a stately home nearby. Apart from that, it was quite a decent pub. Rew & I were deep in our pints at the bar, and so missed the speech of praise from.. erm...Brian? But K2 deserved every ounce of our appreciation for struggling through the rain to lay a wonderful trail. Many thanks, Keith!



Second Coming Hash Runs

- 242 - 18th Mar - [TLK's birthday] The White Hart, Oare - GOM
- 243 - 1st April - The Rose & Crown, Lea nr Malmesbury - Brian the Bold
- 244 - 15th Apr - The Buggers Arms - Katrina
- 245 - 29th Apr - The French Horn, nr Pewsey - Steve & Lady Margaret

If you want to have a bash at a Hash, or find out where The Bigger'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 kvhask.mysite.orange.co.uk