

KENNET VALLEY HASH HOUSE HARRIERS

Mag No 288 - 23rd November 2008 - The Carpenters Arms South Marston. Scribe - Mike

I peered out of my bedroom window this morning at the icy gale blowing torrential rain horizontally across the landscape and wondered briefly whether it would be more sensible to go back to bed. Hashers of course do not worry about that sort of thing and so pulling on shorts and running vest I set off confident that everyone else would be there. But where was 'there'? The pub at the top of this page is the Carpenters Arms but in the event nobody went near the place. Many of us will remember the last time we tried to run from there; the landlord told us to clear off because we were cluttering up his car park with cars and we have been unenthusiastic about him ever since. Our hares Pauline and Clive nonetheless generously decided to give the miserable sod another chance - until it seemed that he was going to do it again and so they very wisely changed the start to Nightingale Wood car park and the après to the Country Club. It never rains on our hash as you know but it was nice to see, as if to prove it to us, that the rain stopped, the wind died away and the sun came out just before 11 am.

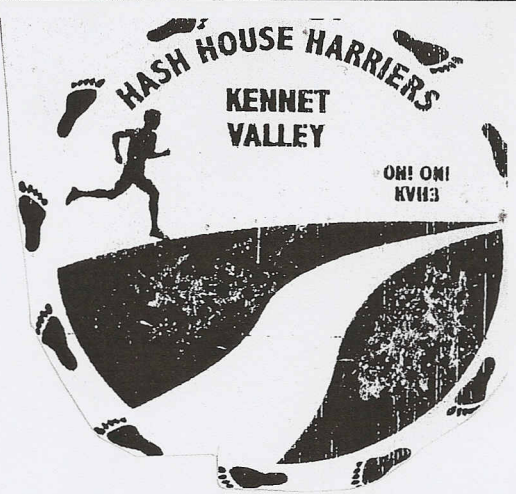
Seven runners and six hardy walkers, including young Ian and Laura back from their world travels, hopped around rubbing cold hands at the start (not raining but not warm either) so no hanging around. Clive gave the shortest brief ever ("On On that way") as he was frozen - and we were off just after 11 with me in the lead - for about 50 yards. Ian and Jeremy soon steamed ahead with Keith P not far behind them and Ray (who has terrible knees at the moment) and Jacky and Margaret and me trotting along at the back. The trail wound its way round the Roves Farm grounds with plenty of false trails which kept everyone occupied but we then ran along a road which seemed to go on for ever and we were all strung out. Eventually we turned off across very muddy fields towards South Marston where Pauline joined us and after we had been running for about an hour I asked her if we were nearly there yet. She said that we were probably about half way. For someone who has campaigned for years on the merits of the one-hour hash this was a little discouraging but as we arrived back in South Marston Pauline very kindly said I could miss out the last two mile loop if I liked and take a shortcut back to the car park. I accepted her offer gratefully and old age pensioners Margaret and me and Ray with knee trouble trotted back on the short cut and arrived back in an hour and fifteen minutes. The front runners took a bit longer than that and poor Late Keith (who had arrived 20 minutes late) took so long that we had all gone home before he got back. The Nightingale is a huge cavern of a place with nobody in it and we sat huddled together for warmth in the middle of the emptiness as GOM Jeremy thanked the hares and welcomed the prodigal Ian and Laura back into the fold. Better than the Carpenters Arms though. Thank you Pauline and Clive for an excellent and eventful hash and for dealing so well with a difficult situation.

ON ONs

289	7 th Dec 08	The Horseshoe at Mildenhall	Mike
290	26 th Dec 08	The Keepers Arms at Quennington*	Margaret and Steve
291	4 th Jan 09	The Red Lion at Baydon	GOM
292	18 th Jan 09	The Black Horse at Wanborough	John and Vivien

*Boxing Day Special hash. Please bring all your relatives and wear a silly hat

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The Late Keith

You will all have heard the awful news that that great loyal stalwart of our hash and the world's most lovely man the Late Keith has died. He died from a heart attack while he was out running last Thursday and is no more. He was a close friend of mine and I admired and loved the man. I want to pay him a brief tribute in the magazine of the hash that he cared passionately about.

Keith joined the hash on run number 21 from the Bear in Marlborough and he ran on most of the 267 hashes we have had since then. He was not the fastest runner in the world and almost invariably trotted along at the back - but he always ran with a stoical determination and revelled in the odd occasion when he chose the right trail and found himself at the front. When he first joined the hash he announced that he only ran in the dry - no fun in running in rain and sleet he said - but soon after that he set the trail that is now famous for being the wettest hash ever - from Oare I think it was. As we arrived in the pub car park there was Keith, covered in mud and soaked to the skin, but delighted at his achievement and pleased and surprised that everybody had turned up for his hash. From then on he was there whatever the weather. He was such good company both as we chatted on the trail and in the pub afterwards and very much at the heart of our hash dinners and celebrations with his remarkable speeches and poems. He will be remembered too for writing those brilliant hashmags. Keith was highly intelligent and well read and he had a remarkable command of the English language. This combined with his humour and self deprecating wit produced some absolute gems. I remember one mag for example where he was describing various misfortunes that had befallen him and went on "I then slipped on the mud at the top of the bank and fell backwards for several feet - fortunately my fall was broken by a barbed wire fence". It is not often you laugh out loud at something you read but I did then.

We will all miss Keith very much but he will always be a part of the Kennet Valley Hash