



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

Run No. 2038
 Date: 8th May 2023
 Venue: The Reading Rooms
 Location: Wheathampstead
 Beers/Cider The Nun's Delight (Bishops Finger) Abbot Ale
 Hare/s: Mr X
 Runners: 20
 Virgins: 1
 Visitors: 0
 Newies: 0
 Après: 0
 Hash Hounds: 1
 Total: 22
 Membership: Princely picnicking on Coronation Chicken!



The Day's Hare warned those gathered that the Trail was set the morning before, but there had been little interference from what he saw when he went out to finished off the start & the end of the Trail. It was noticed that there were a lot of groups of girls out running this morning, potential recruits as No Eye Deer & Milf handed out Hash Cards, all while our Publicity officer was still getting changed.

With Paxo calling the Circle together on the hour, the late arrivals of Flying Solo, Killer Queen & She Wolf dashed over, with scooters in hand, to hear from the Hare what the Pack could expect out there on the Trail, while Slug & 3D took a more leisurely wander over.

There were mentions of a regroup as well as short cuts available, which was music to Hot 'n' Spicee, Doeswhatshesays, Paxo, 3D & Slug's ears. The area for the picnic would be decided at the end as the weather was threatening to rain according to the morning forecast.

Without further ado the Pack were ushered away out by the side of the Bull (Miller & Carter) Pub, then over the High Street by the very busy Tea Rooms, to take to gravel drive of King Edward Place. Not too far & right before the traffic control bollards [Careful Pebbledash! – Ed] south on a narrow path that leads by the Crinkle-crankle wall for a few yards before passing through the open gate in the single lined redbrick wall. Opposite this was a small single building with a mural of local historical figures, including the Corvallenius Chieftain Catevellaunius & The Wicked Lady (Lady Katherine Ferrers) who was the infamous Highwaywoman.

Back to the rare serpentine like wall, Mr X explained that these alternating convex/concave curves of the wall provide stability, leading to greater strength than a straight wall of the same thickness of bricks without the need for buttresses. They seemed to originate in the UK by coming over to East Anglia with Dutch engineers in the mid 1600's, though there are examples of these in the Egyptian City of Aten from some 3,400 Years ago.

The Hash were now taken in to through the well-kept & ornate garden that lies within, crossing this space that is now open to the Public, to the opposite side where a blue arrow showed the way on a Tree-lined north-south earthen path beside the opposite Crinkle-Crankle wall to the grounds of St Helen's Church, coming out to a CHK in the graveyard.

Here some volunteers were carrying out a 'Big Help Out', just a couple of the some of the 6 Million people carrying out voluntary work on this Bank Holiday Monday to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III [Well done to all of them! – Ed] This led to a brief conversation between Mr X & No Eye Deer about the Hash volunteering to do a Litter-pick, or something similar to get some publicity? Anyhow, we will look at something for the future, so back to the Trail.

Flying Solo searched in vain over toward the southeast gate in the corner of old, weathered red-brick wall surrounding the Churchyard of St Helen, while a lot seemed to be standing on the CHK. My Lil' searched beyond the yew trees to the northwest & out over the adjacent Rectory Meadows Green Space, he & Flying Solo would be called



back from contrary directions, as Ian called "On!" from the footpath running along by the bungalows on the west bound path on the edge of Rectory Meadows.

The next CHK was found at the end of this path beside Ash Grove, Flying Solo may have caught up with the Pack but she was going to fall foul of the Hare's trickery as she searched over on the dead-end of the short cul-de-sac, no doubt the passageway in one corner lured her over there? The Hare arrived to see the unusual sight of Where's Wally? heading up the southward rise of Ash Grove, up where he would pick up the Trail!

As those off Trail were called back, the Hare said that he believed that after this success Where's Wally? would soon go wrong at the CHK on the T Junction with Bury Green. Again there were quite a few standing on the CHK, waiting for the Trail to be picked up & they weren't going to hear Where's Wally?'s voice calling, as sure enough he turned to search up to the west where there was no Trail.

It was Ian who picked up the Dust as he searched to the east, down the hill & on to a short cut-through behind the old Chapel which is now home to the Universities Federation for Animals. Just a few yards & the Hash were soon on to the edge of Church Street, being pointed away from the centre of the village & over the road to lead up to a CHK by Wick Avenue, where Church Lane becomes Brewhouse Hill. Again Where's Wally? surprised the RA [& No doubt himself? – Ed] for he continued up Brewhouse Hill to spot the Dust semi-hidden, just under the edge of the flower filled wooden planters outside of the Coffee Shop that was one the local Malthouse & Hope Brewery from 1781.

While Ian, Flying Solo with Killer Queen & She Wolf, Tent Packer & his daughter Charlotte, My Lil', No Eye Deer, Milf & Moss Key Toe all followed on up the hill, the Hare hung back to mark a short cut which saw 3D, Slug, with Sally, follow on behind Hot 'N' Spicee, Paxo & at the front of the Knitting Circle Doeswhatshesays on his way up Wick Avenue.

A slow steepish climb up the residential hillside to a point where a CHK was found by two alleyway where a footpath cuts across the road, while the Knitting Circle would set off to the eastern section of the footpath, the Hare went back on the western section to meet up with the FRBs all the way over near the top of Lattimore Road, where he had a little wait.

The FRBs had made their way up the Steep Brewhouse Hill, crossing from east to west where the pavements ran out & then returning to the east at the junction of the start of Butterfield Road, where a CHK was found. Now, My Lil' is usually pretty good a second guessing the Hare, since he's been on over 1,500 Herts Trails, but all of his experience wouldn't help now as he was lured to search further long toward the local School, where he knew there is a footpath leading out to Nomansland Common & mistakenly thought the Trail would take that route.

It was Flying Solo, She Wolf & Killer Queen who did pick up the Trail to the northeast on Lattimore Road, where they found the Hare waiting, all resplendent in his bright orange UK Nash Hash Hare's Shirt, by the start of the footpath to the east. He warned that one of the scooters could struggle on the rough old tarmac path as it heads out along the bottom end of a green space, reaching a CHK by an fenced-in alleyway to the north.

Where's Wally?, Ian & others were tempted to searching this short back-passage out to Barton Road, while Flying Solo continued to look to the east, where she disappeared in to the next fenced-in section of the footpath. Here she found the Trail & led the way to the CHK at the end on Wick Avenue. Here the Pack began to bunch up again, with Flying Solo going wrong as she & My Lil' headed up to the south, before someone searched the shorter last section of the east bound footpath, which led down to edge of 'The Hill'.

Once down on the shorter right fork there was a temporary stop by a barrier on the edge of the busy road. The Pack took care to cross the sometimes busy main road in to Wheathampstead from Sandridge & St Albans, although most only had to contend with three cyclists vigorously peddling in high gear & slowly making their way to reach the top, as Mr X said to the lead cyclist "I can't see why this road is named 'The Hill'!

Once on the eastern side of the Hill, there was a CHK by opposing wire safety barrier just a few feet up from the west side. "On!" was called by the Keenies on the next footpath that passes between the fenced-off back gardens for 100 Yards until it reached a T-junction, where a CHK was found by the north south alleyway.

Trail was found around the southern bend & this dragged the FRBs out to a T on Saxon Road, they all came trudging back to find the Trail now marked on the short northern section out on to the end of Caesars Road, here Dust was spotted on the trees lining the edge of the small park to the north of Caesar's Road, those with decent eyesight now caught a glimpse of the Knitting Circle up head just beyond the Play Area, complete with wooden Fort, Zip-wire, Swings & other play furniture, unusually none of the Hash had a go on the zip-wire.

The Hash would now undertake a 500 Yard stretch, passing the ends of such side roads as Offa's Way, then Conquerors Hill to reach an area of freshly seeded grass to reach the ancient Dyke Lane. All of the roads in this area of Wheathampstead are named after the Belgic invaders, who settled the area in 50 BC. Mr X would now explain that the giant ditch on the opposite side of Dyke lane was man-made, it was one side of the defences all dug out by hand when it was used to surround the Celtic settlement of the Catuvellauni Tribe.

The Oppidium fortifications surrounded their capital of Verlamion, which would lead to the creation of Verulamium when the



Romans invaded. There are further earthworks much nearer to St Albans itself. Mr X also explained that the some 600 Yards to the east of the 'Devil's Dyke' is the *Slad*, the second section that remains sits in Private Land so has never been run. The Belgaeic Tribe were a thorn in Caesars side, until he eventually had enough & defeated them on his second & more successful Invasion of Britain in 55/54 BC.

No Eye Deer was correct when she asked if this was where Fartin Martin tripped over on a run through the Shiggy bottom, a drop of some 36 feet drop, though they were both more concerned that Hot 'N' Spicee didn't fall down the steep drop! The CHK here caught a few out, but the Trail would continue southward along the top of the embankment lined with hornbeams & holly bushes for a further 130 Yards before cutting back out of the hedgerow & over Dyke Lane to Tudor Road, which still had the Union Flags & Coronation bunting hanging up across the dead-end road.

Milf asked for everyone to stop & have a group photo under the bunting, which once finished with saw the Keenies all head off to the dead-end of Tudor Road, where a footpath descends beyond the alleyway to the west, & straight down a Shiggy path in the tree-line between the houses to the Marford Road, where a left-hand turn would lead to along the Marford Road to a Held CHK at the junction of the bottom of Conquerors Hill.

The FRBs didn't have to wait too long before Hot 'N' Spicee arrived, but just on case & to relieve any boredom Flying Solo produced a packet of Wine Guns to keep not just Killer Queen & She Wolf happy, but the FRBs as well! The Hare now explained that there Pack would all cross over the main road, then at the bottom of the long u-shaped Necton Road a Short Cut would be coming up.

So, the Hash all advanced northward, through the narrow street of small terraced houses, then on to the shuttered in footpath at the bottom of the U, to come out to a CHK on the drain cover at the southern end of the sports Park. The SC was marked to the Northwest, where over the raised pitches the Knitting Circle could follow Paxo down by the Scout Hut & back to East Lane.

Meanwhile the rest continued with the Trail, as the Hare said there was only about another 15 minutes of staggering until the FRBs would be finishing the Hash. So, the Keenies found the Trail on the east bound stony old footpath, to make their way between the horse paddocks, with their electric fences, to the north & the large area of allotments behind wire fencing to the south.

A CHK would be found after 190 Yards, but there was no Dust on the northbound footpath heading between the equine fields. While everyone else who went wrong down there came back, there was one exception & that was My Lil' & he must have thought he'd gone too far & knew a right turn would take him back to common area near to East Lane, this would also keep him safe from any potential water crossing!

Mr X caught up with No Eye Deer on the next, 160 Yard remaining section of the footpath, though this bit had Hasher straddling the sides of said path as Shiggy puddles covering almost the whole width near to its end when it comes out between the cottages on Sheepcote Lane, where a left turn to the north would lead down by the old Mill & the ford in the river Lea, this is where the old Sheepcote was, it was a medieval area for dipping sheep.

On the way to the river Lea, No Eye Deer spotted the House Martins up on the power lines by the old Farm outbuildings been restored, complete with Bird Boxes & Bee-homes. The water was higher than normal at the ford, but not high enough to run over the floor, as the Pack made their way over with dry feet toward the parking area for the Verulam Angling Club's car parking area on the uncapped section of rough track.

Once over the stretch with deep water filled pot-holes, Mr X & No Eye Deer saw the rest of the FRBs up beyond the bridge supporting the Cory-wright Way by-pass, it was only when they reached the footpath off to the left hand-side that the Hare realised that the CHK had been destroyed. No Eye Deer now had an advantage as the Hare marked the Trail up the embankment & then called the others back!

Where's Wally? would have the words of "Short Cutter!" ringing in his ears after he took to the steep steps cut in to the embankment to reach the same footpath at the top of the gentle slope as it turns to run between two fields of lush green grass, that have placards to declare as being the grazing place of Chapman's Butchers, something of interest for TBT OBE (If he was there) for he devoured their delicious sausages, no less than six times, at the 'Chipping Sausage Tossing Festival' a few years ago, when he was starting out with his very successful veretarian diet.

There would be a 500 Yard trot along the level, with a slight drop down once through the second gate to reach the next CHK on the opposite side of the River Lea to the River Park. While Tent Packer was called back from the right-had option by Charlotte, as others took to the riverside left-hand choice, the Hare then said it mattered not as both would to the western end of this green space.

There was going to be a river crossing, but the lenient Hare opted out of this as the favourite place to wade through the Lea, well before the footbridge, was pretty much waist height on him. The River Lea here marked the boundary between the edge of the Saxon Kingdom on the west & Dane-law to the east, before Alfred the Great won a decisive battle here & out the Viking invasion down.

The Trail now led on to the footpath behind the footbridge over the Lea, then over to run behind Dawes



Meanwhile Pebbledash gets sacked from Grounds' Work Team in genteel Bath

Lane & the new constructions hidden by the hoardings to the south, then after passing between the new white gates that give a country feel to the cycling restricting furniture.

A northbound turn up to old Waddling Lane, this short trot led up to the Codicote Road, where arrows directed the pack up a set of steps, in need of repair, to go in to the tree lined ridge. Having scaled the steps the Pack found they were at the old former Wheathampstead Railway Station, where they could have pictures taken, read about its history, sad demise & as Tent Packer alerted everyone to, the fact it transport Elephant dung to be used on local farm land! The absent, through being asleep, Hare Raiser would have loved this Heritage break at the end of the Trail.

After sitting on the kids play things, or with the carving of George Bernard Shaw under the single platform shelter, he used to catch the Train from here, after cycling down from Ayot St Lawrence, leaving his bicycle with the Landlord at the Station Hotel for 6d a day, it was time to move on with a decent of the western steps.

Back down to the Roundabout on the old road to Luton, where the On Inn was found just before the start of the High Street, on the way back southward, Mr X pointed out the Tudor Archway set in the old red-brick wall, then landing steps beside the bridge over the river Lea.

Mr X went on to explain that this was where a very wet Hash, many, many moons ago, emerged from their long wade some 150 yards upstream through the river, after *starting* a Billy Bullshit Trail from the East Lane car park! The Pack that day went in, right about where this day's picnic was going to be in the corner of the car park.

The plan to have the food up at the secluded platform was soon changed, for there was a light precipitation in the air, the blue, steel pagoda in the corner of the car park was just about big enough for the Pack to squeeze underneath.

A veritable bounty of food the Pack had brought along was set out, fortunately the drizzle didn't last & the Pack remained dry all Trail. Which was handy as Doeswhatshesays could stand outside, for every time he came in under the pagoda the skis he must have been wearing kicked the biscuit tins, which were placed safely under the table. These no longer contained Flying Solo's excellent Flapjacks & Rice Crispie Cakes.

There were a lot of Coronation Chicken sandwiches, even Coronation Chicken pasties, sausage rolls, mini scotch eggs, a veritable feast which the absent TBT OBE would have loved, there was even diced veggies & fruit, but no Coronation Quiche. Of course Hot 'N' Spicee brought along some extra hot Bombay mix, something that 3D took a shine too. Even Slay had a few of the mini scotch eggs that were knocked on to the floor.

The Pack enjoyed the food & the craic there, so much so they didn't bother heading up to the Reading Rooms, which was lucky as it didn't open until 14:30Hrs. Mr X mentioned that in the river Lea behind them, earlier he spotted some very large chub, as well as some unusual ducks, which turned out to be the American 'Cayuga Duck' with its dark black plumage & iridescent 'beetle-green' head. There was also a Welsh Harlequin Duck [Tidy! – Ed] & of course a Heron standing perfectly still just down-stream, no doubt eyeing up the small fry.

All agreed that the Trail of just on the hour was good one, & that the Hare would get his rewarding Down-Down the next Week as he, like the rest, was pretty much stuffed by now. There were also some, like the 'Right Honourable Paxo' who were not wanting to get beer or Spicy mayo stains down their new Royal Blue Coronation Hash polo-necks the Haberdasher has come up with for the Coronation Trails.

