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Les Folies Bizarre

How the hash celebrated the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on both sides of the Manche

On the late May bank holiday weekend in 1481 Joan of Arc was burnt at the stake at the tender age of nineteen. Nearly 600 years later the same fate befell another young innocent who was also very tender. Joan of Arc was bound to a stake and surrounded by a great heap of faggots. Fluffy of Asnieres, as she will go down in history, was tied to an iron pole and slung over a pile of burning charcoal. The former was reduced to ashes to ensure no-one could claim she'd got away, the latter was char-grilled to perfection so

so that the flavour wouldn't escape. On both occasions marauders from across the Channel were responsible, the first lot led by the Duke of Aquitaine, the second by the "Duke A La France." Whether the Mouton of Asnieres will be revered in quite the same way as the Maid of Orleans is open to doubt but the little lamb sure went down a treat with the Crapauds. History doesn't record whether Fluffy died as a sacrifice to appease the gods who'd vented their anger upon the invaders with a violent storm on the day they arrived. The thunder raged and the lightning



Visite Royale

crackled in the night sky as torrents of rain lashed down on the unhappy campers. Or whether the

Crapauds were simply hungry. But what we do know is that, since the lamb was silenced

French primary school children sing a new version of the age-old nursery rhyme:



Jubilee parapluie



Silencer of the lamb

*“Mayo had a little lamb
Its fleece was white and
curly
But when those Crapauds
came to town
Fluffy met his fate too early”*

The Hash has faced many difficult dilemmas over the years. To run or stay in bed? Left or right at a check? To follow Shiggy or not? But surely none so onerous as whether to eat hog-roast or roast lamb. Or to put it another way, whether to celebrate the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee or the 600th anniversary of the birth of Joan of Arc. Tricolore or Union Jack? Red, white and blue or, err, red, white and blue? The answer was brilliant. Let’s do both. While half the Crapauds went to Poitou-Charente the rest went to Grouville Common. I say, rest ... but I mean all eight of them including a couple from the JH3 (but they too had sent an invasion force to France on a cycling weekend based at the Chateau des Ormes near Dol de Bretagne). Then of course Charity and Knickerless from the JH3 and their two daughters Also chose to join the party at the Chateau Gaillard. More of the events in east Jersey later but for now here’s what happened in France. The portents weren’t promising from the start. The Friday night ferry was delayed more than an hour. Condor blamed the fog but on the ground it seemed they couldn’t cope with the sheer numbers trying to flee the Diamond Jubilee celebrations.



L’entente cordiale



Horny couple

It didn’t stop Illegal Immigrant doing the long drive in the early hours. He left at least one Ferrari driver coughing in his slipstream as he overtook at speed. Talking of Ferraris, two

of the Hash’s fast ladies, TITS and Michelle, also went for a joy-ride, though not until the next day after they’d reached their destination. There’s a racing circuit just down the



Life boy?

road from Asnières called the Val de Vienne at Vigeant which was in action the same weekend. The two girls chatted up a pair of touring car drivers and went for a quick spin with



It’s not the size that counts



Les lièvres



Splashing time



Surf's up, dude



The thigh's the limit

with them. They also had a high-speed drive round the circuit. By the time the last of the party-goers, Charity and Knickerless, arrived, at a more sedate pace, the day was set fair for the first BBQ of the weekend with the weather even warmer than last year. But the son et lumière that followed wasn't on the original schedule. The sound was particularly heavy on the percussive side, the lighting was brilliant but menacingly erratic and they were accompanied by a downpour of prodigious proportions – so much so the local paper later lamented that the hospital at Montmorillon had been flooded and, even worse, so had Le Bar du Palais.

Some of our tents also suffered. Most of Lower Case Triple-X's clothes were saturated as was half the wardrobe of the glamour-pusses in the 70's retro-tent. Those of us who'd booked rooms within the Chateau Gaillard had to be forgiven for the somewhat smug looks the following morning, though even there the rainwater had managed to partially find its way into the rooms. No matter, restored by a lavish breakfast including fresh croissants and boiled eggs provided by our hosts Woody and Mel, we were ready for the fray. Even the rain had backed off, although we were alarmed when one of the English expats, Matt, turned up in his wet-



Brute of a father splashes it all over.



Blour me. Sundays will never be the same



Water babes



Following the current

wet-suit, complete with life-saving equipment. At least he wasn't wearing flippers. More re-assuring however was the sight of another, more lightly-

clad, local resident, Tony, better known as Mayo, who was wearing the same T-shirt as last year. It didn't look as though it had been washed



Splash down

in-between. We soon found ourselves on the horns of a dilemma when we realised we were over-staffed in the horn section. Gigolo had his tiny squeaker, Charity revealed his much bigger instrument, but then Woody produced his monster. The only way Charity could get his lips round it was to balance the heavy end on his wife's shoulder, but to their credit the pair performed a very creditable blow job. Gigolo and Steptoe had laid the trail but they looked downcast at the prospect of having to be live hares on the assumption that the overnight rain would have washed away the markings, but in practice much of the dust had survived. The previous year we'd run from Matt's place at the Chateau D'Asnières but this time around we were clearly doing a simple loop from the Chateau Gaillard. There were only about twenty runners, heavily augmented by some of the local ex-pats including several who'd run with us last year and knew the score (ie they knew what to do with a puddle - and there were plenty of them). Several of the non-starters still busy drying out their belongings, plus there were a number of walkers including Nil-by-mouth who was crutchless. Ooh-er! I didn't say crotch-less, though she might have been for all I know. We ran down the track past Woody's pond where Illegal's son Jack was fishing, using a



More liquid



A well-laid trail



Lamb ardour



Straw dodge



The dry bit



Sheep dip?



Jack the lad



Called to the bar

can of sweet-corn as bait. I couldn't help thinking it wouldn't interest anything smaller than a shark. Then we passed Chateau Gailledrat, the home of one of Woody's neighbours, where we co-opted another English ex-pat, Cathy, into joining us, though not before she'd replaced her expensive trainers with something she could afford to wreck. Soon afterwards Gigolo called for us to 'hold the check,' which was misinterpreted by one of the younger French runners as 'hold the chick.' Either way the RA seemed happy. The hare told us that he hadn't checked whether the French hunting season was underway and advised us to run the next bit very quickly, just in case shotguns were pointed our way. We recognised the next stretch from last year as we turned left at the Moulin D'Asnières. The



Underneath the arches ... at L'Isle Jourdain

trail took us over a grassy meadow before plunging down to a dry stream bed – at least it was last year. This time around it was ankle-deep and the young ex-pats really got stuck in as we waded across. There was another meadow on the far side but this was only a hiatus before a steep and slippery mud-slide down to another river crossing. Fuzz was the

first back-slider swiftly followed by Pervey. The water this time was knee-high but we'd completely stopped caring about getting wet. At least this year it was a crossing rather than a prelude to a long stretch running along the river bed but out relief was short-lived because we were warned there was worse to come. But relief was at hand in the form of a

drinks stop at Mayo's place. Charity tried to play his horn to celebrate but someone had poured beer into it and all he could manage was a splutter. Not only were refreshments on offer but we also had the chance to cuddle a two-week old orphaned lamb. Luckily it wasn't the one we would be eating the following night – we knew because Mayo played us a video of the poor creature gambolling around before it had been sent to the abattoir. A mass outbreak of vegetarianism was on the cards. Regretfully we passed on, running back up the slope behind Mayo's farmhouse and into a field and into some dense undergrowth before we realised that we had run round the back of the house only to be greeted by our second drinks stop. It was a case of 'déjà bu', so to speak. If only it had become Groundhog Day! We left the farmhouse for the second time, well wetted inside and out, and took off across the road and into a field at the top of which Gigolo had clearly spent weeks piling up a



Pizza in the piazza



No track but still loco

mound of boulders so he could make a chalk mark visible. We all had a rest to admire his handiwork. As we ran back down the slope we came across a pig-house in which Gigolo took shelter prompting speculation that Mayo might be interested in trying out rare breeds on his farm. At the bottom we found another river. It was either the Blour or the Blourde but it was all a bit blurred by that stage. This time the water was much deeper, reaching the same parts as Heineken. The river bed was quite treacherous and it was no surprise when Steptoe fell full-length into the murky brown stuff. At least there was no dead sheep this year to spice it up a bit – that would come later! Charity also took the plunge but it was his daughter Victoria who was to blame after the pair had tussled in mid-stream. We pulled ourselves out of the water and utterly bedraggled ran for home and a towel. A great run, even better than the previous year's.



They heard it on the grapevine



Dining out at Chateau Gaillard

Curtain call

A BBQ lunch followed where we were joined by local ex-pats and even a few natives who'd come to watch the proceedings. First the youngsters were punished for having far too much fun – Caleb, Paul, Anastasia, Manon and Josie. Then there was a birthday quartet comprising Holly, Catherine, Anya and Walkies. More bizarre was the next set of innocents who'd never been anywhere near a hash, nor did they have birthdays to celebrate. I'll give you a clue – they were the Tin Man (from the Wizard of Oz), the Woodcutter (from Little Red Riding Hood), the Mad Hatter (from Alice through the Looking Glass) and Violet Elizabeth Bott (from the Just William books). They'd all performed in the local Christmas panto and it was only fair that their sins against the performing arts should be recognised. Miss Bott gave us a taste of her 'I'll squweem' repertoire – she'd clearly had a lot of practice. The hares were next to be punished and Gigolo



Synchronised barrel surfing

and Steptoe were joined by Illegal for his heroic performances in the BBQ pit as well as being responsible for a lot of the work setting up things for the big event including the rather splendid refectory table and the awning above it. It was also Gigolo who dug the outdoor shower facility and toilet pit which made a big improvement on last year for the campers. Our hosts were next, although this year

Woody was spared the yard. The sumptuous breakfasts will be long remembered quite apart from the many courtesies they extended to all of us, always with a gracious smile, no matter how irksome the inquiry. A naming ceremony was also held for two of our most enthusiastic ex-pat runners, Matt and Mayo. After long deliberation it was decided that Mayo, being of Welsh origin and a sheep farmer, should become 'Sheep-

shagger' and that Matt would be 'Only Way,' which is a bit obscure, I grant you, but no-one could mistake his origins and the full "The Only Way is Essex" seemed a bit of a mouthful. If all that wasn't enough we finished with an all-comers down down challenge race. There were three contestants – Illegal, SOS and Knickerless and the result was so close we really needed a slow-motion camera to pick



The tots with their tots



Anniversaire waltz

the winner. By general acclaim Illegal just shaded it from Knickerless with SOS a split-second behind, although she called for a steward's inquiry on the basis of her husband's spillage. There was very little time to relax before the next BBQ was upon us, with roast duck on the menu. Afterwards we indulged in some fun and games and thanks to the younger hashers we took part in what could become a new Olympic sport – barrel surfing. It involved lining up four big plastic barrels at the top of a slope and competitors taking

turns to run and dive on top of them with marks given for artistic merit as well as distance achieved. The landings were rarely soft or dignified but kept everyone amused until bedtime. There were some sore heads around the following day and the sorest of them all should have belonged to Gigolo but there he was bouncing around the next day, cajoling us to get on the bus for the walk he'd planned, except that he had to use sign language, having lost his voice. How that man puts away so much alcohol without collapsing needs to be investigated by medical science.



La Comédie Francaise

Diamond dogs



A grand total of eight hashers gathered in the cold and damp of the Longbeach car park prior to the weekend's Jersey-based hash, hared by Rentabed. Saaab and Madame Bodypump were there representing the JH3 ... and the red, white and blue dress code! The assembled multitude got very excited that they might make it into double figures when another car turned into the car park, but sadly they were too old even for a hash. Popeye said it would be all right to abandon him if he got too far behind, so that's exactly what happened as the youngsters sprinted off and he wasn't seen again until they got back. Jacko, having arrived late, was in lively form and couldn't stop himself at the front to the extent that he was barely seen either and managed to miss the culmination of the run. Over the hill and far away they went, via the dolmen and out to little St. Catherine's then back along the coast. After much consultation of the tide tables it was decided that they could make it around the outside of the Gorey harbour arm, and to the great relief of the harriettes they rounded the pier head and set off back to the finish where they joined the festive celebrations on Grouville Common with pints of John Smiths and a hog roast roll, plus the Boy Scouts marching band for entertainment.

At least they wouldn't have to pickle his body. The weather was much kinder now as we trooped on to the bus for the short journey to L'Isle Jourdain, a pretty town on the river Vienne. We were dropped off at a former railway station (we knew it was dis-used because they'd built a new parish hall across the track-bed)

bringing back memories of last year's velo-rail antics, but this time we stayed on our feet. Within five minutes of the start the children were singing 'are we there yet'. Soon afterwards they broke into 'we know an irritating song and this is how it goes' before a final chorus of 'Josh is drunk'. We trundled across the viaduct over the



Gigolo's got a big chopper



The brain drain



The 1st International All-comers Down Down contest



RAPIDLY RECEDING HARE-LINE

RUN #1194
DATE: 17th June
HARES: Frisco
ON DOWN: TBC

RUN #1195
DATE: 24th June
HARES: TBA
ON DOWN: TBA



La Duke à La France Mis-management committee

poor Fluffy for his starring role with a metal pole rammed from one end to the other and the carcass tied up with steel wire before being hoisted over the smoking coals to warm his loins. "I keep poking him but nothing's coming out," said Sheep-shagger. Meanwhile, promptly at 6pm (or 6.25pm HMT, Hash Mean Time) there was a champagne toast for HRH Queen Elizabeth. Much to our delight the good lady and her consort, the only Greek who's not feeling the pinch at the moment, made a brief appearance in bar at Chateau Gaillard and thanked us for our well wishes. It gave a right royal flourish to the day. The roast lamb was a triumph as was the whole weekend.

On on



Where's it all going to end?



**HASH
 HA
 HA**

The Titanic was about to sink. The passengers were shouting, crying, running and praying to God. One of them found the captain and asked him how far away was the nearest land. The captain said " Two miles...

The passenger smiled: "I reckon I can make that easily. Which direction?" The captain replied: "Downwards..."

Being told that there is a cure for dyslexia is music to my arse

The boys' night out was going really well. Tinky Winky was dancing on one of the tables. "Amazing legs," commented a bloke at the bar. The GM giggled and asked with a smile: "Do you really think so?" "Definitely," replied the man at the bar. "Otherwise that table would have collapsed by now."

A British engineer has just started his own company in Afghanistan. He's making land mines that look like prayer mats. It's doing well. Apparently prophets are going through the roof.

Vienne which boasted great views upstream and downstream but not bungee-jumping (which apparently only takes place at weekend) which was probably just as well really. At the end of the viaduct we slipped down some steep steps and found ourselves heading into the town and all too soon the walk concluded in the town square at the Peace Bar. At 12 euros a head the plat du jour proved to be a winner, although the not so angelic choir were happy with pizzas. We ate our fill and gave a generous tip, Smuggler even chipping in ten cents. The bus whisked us back to Chateau Gaillard where we prepared for the evening's entertainment and our version of the diamond jubilee celebrations. Sheep-shagger and Only Way set up the roasting spit and prepared