

Words for Wednesday 27 December Venue: Ashburton Arms, West Charleton.

Despite this run falling between Christmas and the New Year there was no lack of hashers turning up. In fact, quite the opposite as we had several visitors, including some from Teign Valley, plus a virgin from London. Hatrack made all welcome in the absence of our GM who was “ooh la la-ing” in la belle France.....The hares, Tosser and Gump, stepped forward to describe the trail to us, but why were they grinning? Then off we went, uphill through the assortment of housing behind the Ashburton Arms. No sooner had we reached the top of the first hill than Piddler started the usual complaining, but this time it was against his own son. “Don’t go running off like that,” he gasped and panted. “Stay with me,” he wheezed. His son, Nat, is a quarter of Piddler’s size being only 7 or 8 years old and poor old Piddler just cannot keep up any more. Too much Christmas pud!.....After circling the houses, the trail rejoined the main road and had us guessing for a while at the checks since our inclination was to run towards the river. Floury Tot and I found ourselves alone in the meadow having failed to hear the calls of “On back!” from anybody. Did you lot call? Why did one of the hares not call us back?.....Then it was across the main road again and uphill, all along the route of the Primrose run. I was at the back at this point, having just returned from the meadow, and as I ran along a stony track I heard lots of voices and thought, “Oh good, there’s a mince pie stop coming up.” I was just about to run up the drive to the house when I heard a voice say, “Lovely evening, Darling. Thank you so much for your hospitality.” “Hang on,” I thought, “that’s not hash-speak.” Had I run another couple of steps I would have gate-crashed a private party, dressed in skimpy clothes with a dirty great fog-light on my head.....Continuing to run along the stony track, I caught up with Big Buoy, he of knitting circle fame, for which he was duly awarded a down-down later. Surely it should be a crochet circle if there is only one of you? I understand he had been caught up earlier by the late-comers, Ging-Gang and Goolie, how did they manage that? And where were the hares to guide them in the right direction?.....As you all know, the nice level stony track enters a nice level field and runs along a nice level valley bottom. (PS.-We were never allowed to use the word “nice” at school so I’m using it lots here as there’s no teacher to mark these words! Hee Hee!) [PPS.- We also weren’t allowed to use the word “got” either so here come some “got” words in a moment. ☺].....The trail went from the nice level valley bottom right up a one-in-one hill where lots of poor overfed and exhausted hashers were crawling on all fours to the top. I’ve a feeling, oops I’ll rewrite that, I’ve GOT a feeling that they included Floater, Rabbit (don’t you think that sounds nicer than Rabid? I’ve GOT to say that I do), Doris, Four-Eyes and others. Once at the top, we climbed a stile and turned right onto the road. A short way along we turned left into a track which led to a long-short split. All the people I’ve mentioned so far gamely continued on the long, so if nobody ran the short how come so many GOT home before me? What’s the hare GOT to say about that? In fact, where had those hares, Tosser and Gump, GOT to? (I’m sick of the GOT word now so I’m never using it again, GOT that?).....Four-eyes and I ran the rest of the trail together, along the Bow Bridge, across Bow Creek via the stone footbridge and then back up the other side of the one-in-one ridge. We were happily admiring the stars above and out towards the estuary when suddenly a group of yellow stars broke away and came straight at us. I didn’t have my glasses on (having left them at Ging-Gang’s house the day before) so I ran on towards these unusual stars thinking how pretty they were when Horror, HORSES, coming at me! with stars in their eyes! In my haste and panic I managed to cause Four-eyes to jump over the fence with me to get away from these scary big creatures. I have to say that Four-eyes took it all very calmly, other than asking if we were in the right field. As I thought we were I confirmed this, so on we ran until we were boxed in at the corner of the field. However, after a bit of hedge-bashing and gate-climbing and barbed-wired disentangling we were soon back on track again.....From there it was an uneventful run down the road, past the church and into the village. Here, we caught up with Piddler, whose only method of keeping up with Nat was to keep hold of his hand on the run in. I don’t think Nat’s habit of racing across main roads looking for marks and not cars had anything to do with it. Do you?.....

ON DOWN.....The staff at the Ashburton Arms were very cheerful and welcoming. Srewloose arrived a little late. As she lives just nearby she’d been home for a shower, and she also does a stint or two behind the bar during the week so that’s handy. However, much to all the hashers’ surprise, when they arrived in the pub, who should be propping up the bar, and had been for the past hour but our two hares, Tosser and Gump. No wonder they had been grinning at the start as they had waved us forward to do the trail.....Later in the evening, Ali G and Heather appeared, welcome back, did you have a good holiday, yes we did thank you. Etc etc. Actually, Ali G is going to set us a super Valentine’s trail on Wednesday 14 February at the George Inn, Blackawton, so start getting your red hearts ready now.....Amongst others at the bar were Compo, in deep discussion with Tosser and Gump so I hope he was telling them what hares are supposed to do on the trail, not prop up the bar. Then there were Orable and Owen, discussing next week’s run (today’s as you read this) and some of you may not know but that young man Owen has been a loyal hash groupie for over a year now. He just seems a bit shy about coming on a real trail. So let’s make an effort to encourage him along.....Lastly, there were the down downs, and doesn’t Goolie do a good job at this. He goes round collecting notes, asking all and sundry for what they’ve seen, does a great job of calling out all the wrong-doers, but then just seems to get it all muddled up! No wonder Poacher nearly got arrested for GBH, poking poor old Goolie repeatedly with his car key as he emphasised that he “Did NOT short cut and DID call out all the way round the trail. Since that facts by now were all confused, I can only say that I think Tosser and Gump received down-downs for a lovely trial, oops, trail; Em from Teign Valley as a visitor; Knee Trembler because Goolie tried to name him when he already had a name (bestowed upon him by Drake Hash many a while ago); Orable but I don’t remember why and some others. The landlord’s generosity with the down-downs was applauded and it was ON ON to next week.....Byee, HTT.