

THE HASHLESS TIMES

We'd never seen one before. As we rounded the corner next to All Saints Church in Dunsden, during our daily walk, we came upon a parked, large, white van with the words 'Caution – bees in transit' written on the back. How unusual! A young gent with some boxes (full of bees?) dangling from one hand and an apiarist's smoker in the other alighted from the van and made his way towards a screened area at the back of the church car park, where we could just see the tops of some hives. What's the term for a group of them? A (workers) co-operative of hives? An industry of hives (to reverse the usual format)?

Now you may be asking, what on earth is he wittering on about? What the hell have bees got to do with Hashing? Well, not much. Though, like Hashers, they do perform strange rituals to indicate a route to their fellows. The point is that, during the current enforced 'social distancing' and necessity to do some form of exercise (particularly for those working at home), we have the opportunity to do and see things differently, as long as we keep safe. If Donut and I had been having the usual hectic week of working and socialising we certainly wouldn't have been out walking through the beautiful South Oxfordshire countryside on a clear and cold Spring day and finding out that there were a bunch of hives next to the church. Do you suppose the van driver only uses 'B' roads to get to the hives...



This pandemic period, though worrying, has given us more opportunity to, as William Henry Davis wrote, 'stand and stare'. For instance, WaveRider is a keen Parkrunner (despite grumping a bit when she has to get up early on a Saturday) and realised that Clayfield Copse, a nature reserve of woodland and park near where she lives would be perfect for laying a Trail with flour that could be used to Parkrun. Two circuits would just about be the 5k distance and it would be easy to keep one's distance from the few people who would be out. She and NappyRash ran it and Motormouth (my son) and I ran it the day before they did. It was most enjoyable to be in a countryside setting, no mobile, birds singing, sun shining.

Other Hashers have been inventive in their exercise ideas. The picture to the right is of Zebedee laying a Trail. Question is, who for? Perhaps it was so he didn't get lost. What you don't see in the photograph is his house, the front gate of which is 3 metres from the end of the arrow. Ah well, we all need a little help from time to time.



Additionally, we have a picture of Bomber and Posh training hard.



Bomber's choice of tippie is particularly appropriate at the present time. Let's hope he carefully wiped the bottle neck before getting his face around it! Note Posh's far more elegant method of sipping

her Louis Roederer Brut Premier (I understand it was her second bottle...).

So it's a fairly hard time at the moment. Particularly, if you or someone you know has picked up the virus. If that's true then I'm sure we all wish it is a very mild form and that recovery is quick. The other hard part is social distancing/self-isolation. We are all very sociable people and love to meet, do things and talk together. Sadly, but necessarily, we can't do that right now and It's pretty difficult for young families living in limited size accommodation with no access to a garden. Or older people, living on their own, anyone who may have lost their job, charities who are desperately trying to help with little or no funds. There's a long list and nothing one can say or do that makes the situation better quickly.

There are, though, some very positive things. Community help groups have sprung up – we have one where I live that does shopping, posts letters, walks dogs, circulates details of food delivery places and provides phone numbers of people who are willing to chat to the lonely. No doubt you have one near you.

There was a letter in The Telegraph a couple of days ago from a couple in their eighties who live in Tilehurst, next door to a young family with two little girls aged five and eight. The girls put a note through his door saying that they should ring their house phone if they needed help and that the girls would be in their garden later that day if he wanted a chat over the fence. The letter ended with the couple saying: 'I think we will survive the three-month isolation quite easily'.

Social distancing is working. New research by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has estimated that before the lockdown was introduced in the UK one positive person would infect 2.6 other people – now they infect 0.62.

Check out socially distant daily dancing in Cheshire at <https://twitter.com/i/status/1244933887660363777>

And here is an excellent, positive, uplifting and fun video which is well worth a view – enjoy.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAGbxKfNMuE>

Finally, to come back to William Henry Davis and his excellent poem 'Leisure', here it is. Sometimes, like when we are Hashing, it's good to stand and stare. Right now, we have time to do this. Let's make the most of it.

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

Keep safe everyone.

On On. [Hashgate](#).

P.S. What's everyone's favourite TV programme at the moment? Not Going Out 😊