

BH7 goes to France otherwise known as The Funny French Weekend(s). An account from Spreadsheet with assistance from Bouncer.



NOSTALGIA CORNER

“The Funny French Weekend”

As with a Hash one can only start at the beginning. BH7 had been making annual sorties to Monreuil since 1993. The following account covers recollections from the post 1999 period.

Our MC Niel “Robbo” Robinson, perhaps better known as Greyhound and late of this Hash and now on a free transfer to Otter Valley Hash, Devon, had established a foothold in France back in the early 1990’s. Some might say it was a *pied a terre* which roughly translated means foot in the soil, quite appropriate for a dedicated Hasher like Robbo but we were to know it as Number 10.

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Number 10

It was a small house in the Rue Victor Dubourg, Montreuil-sur-Mer. After years of slavish effort getting it into a suitable shape to invite guests he and his wife Candy, took a chance of suggesting the Brighton Hash House Harriers might set a Hash over a weekend based around Number 10. So started the traditional away Hash in Montreuil held in the last week of September each year. This was to be known as the Funny French Weekend. One never knew where the emphasis was to be placed but it was very French and it was always very funny.

The Invitation

LE HASH WEEKEND IN LA BELLE FRANCE

Arrive at chez Robinson :-

10, Rue Victor Dubourg, MONTREUIL S/Mer

" Rolling " Buffet lunch will be available from [approx.] 12.00pm. to 2.00pm. -- this will include wine , beer, and soft drinks.

HASH [departure time 4.00pm.] will start and finish @ Neil's.

POST - HASH beverages [as above] will then be available to restore the runners. A per capita charge will be made to cover the cost of catering and ensure that Tony and Chris can afford to buy themselves a small drink in the evening !

For details of the evening meal @ Hotel Bellevue [estimated cost per head 150 F.] please see David " spreadsheet " Evans.

*SUNDAY is pretty much what you make of it :- some talk of running, some of Boules, some of going out for lunch and so ON
ON -----*

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Logistics

I feel sure some will want to know about the logistics of getting the Hash over the channel. In order to satisfy those thirsting to know, the annotated map below shows that there are or rather were various options open.

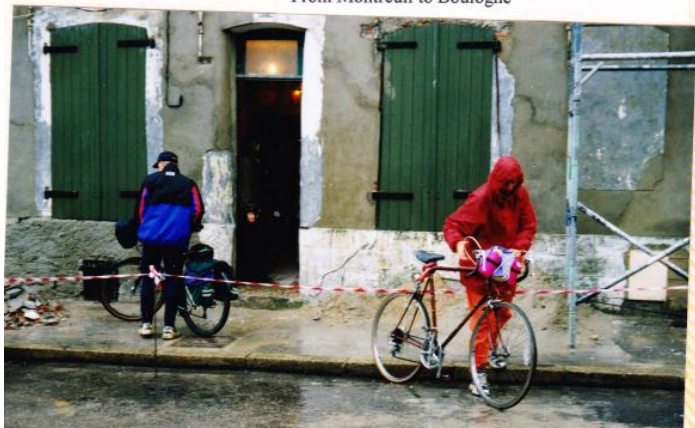
Possibly the most energetic was that adopted by Gabby who with Ian can be seen here about to make the return trip to Brighton via Boulogne on the 1999 weekend. Gabby seems to be travelling rather light. I think she has delegated the kit transfer to Ian.

Bouncer has provided more details of the journey he made with Gabby, and Ian and Brenda Essex. *Our ride to Newhaven and from Dieppe was very pleasant with the slight irritation of Ian being the more experienced cyclist literally sitting one inch behind my rear wheel protesting that's what they do in France on Le Tour and he was wise enough not to crash into me. Which of course failed to take into account my own nervousness at his proximity which distracted from the enjoyment of the ride.*

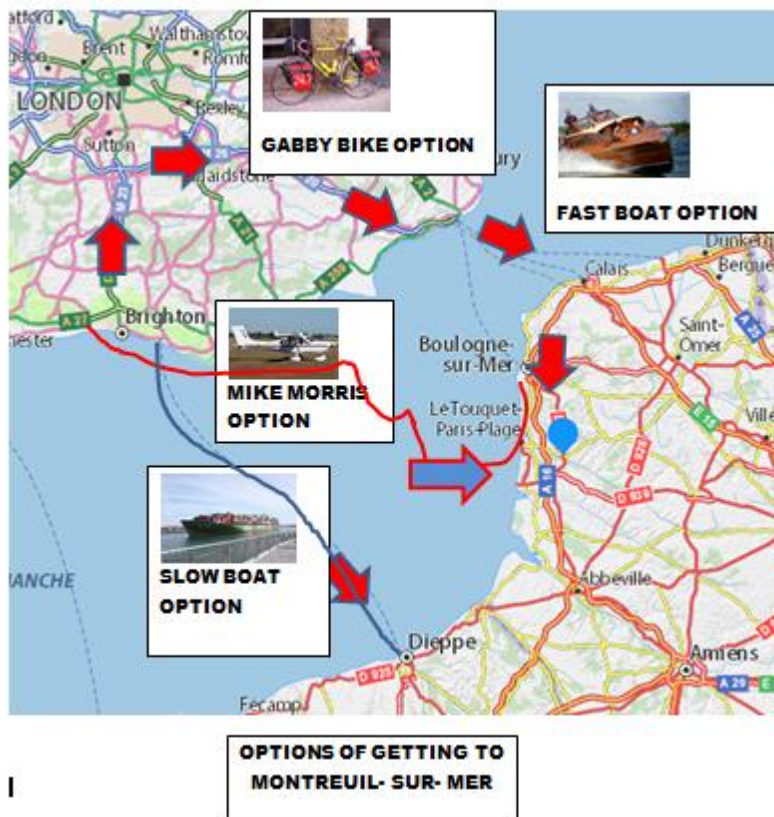
This being October 1999, Angel was in fact over 4 months pregnant with Crackerjack when we undertook the ride, so his first trip, albeit in utero! She'd been having a bit of trouble with her brakes on the outward journey, but the wet return to Dieppe on the Sunday was nothing short of bloody dangerous, knowing as we now know that she had a brake block missing, so extreme caution was taken on the downhill particularly.

We made it home to Hove where we were living at the time, to be greeted by our landlady (incidentally the indomitable Alix from the Jog Shop) waving at said brake block under our noses, saying "is this something to do with you?". She'd found it on the doorstep soon after we set off and this being before mobile phones were common hadn't been able to communicate with us that we were missing an important part of our equipment!

26 Sept and in torrential rain Ian and Gabby set off
From Montreuil to Boulogne



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Some took the slow boat out from Newhaven and others the Dover ferry or the tunnel.

But for sheer panache nothing could beat Mike and Maureen Morris who flew in courtesy of Mike and Elizabeth Woodroffe in their light aircraft from Shoreham to Le Touquet where they were collected by Robbo.



The Hash outside the neighbour's garage at Number 14 circa 2000

(Back Row) Tony, Bouncer, Mike, Don, Mike M, Bob., Peter B, Steve, Chris, Caroline, Candy

(Middle Row) Lin, Ann, Pat, Teresa, Wiggy

(Front Row kneeling) (in pram Kieran) Gabby, Ellie, Dave Spreadsheet, Callum, Oliver, Callum, Niel ,Helen, Richard.

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Number 14



Number 14 Photo a la Google May 2019 sans Hash

Accommodation

As can be seen the turnout on these Hash weekends was big. My spreadsheets show 41 on the 2000 event and 44 in 2001.

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Sometime after 1995 and having restored Number 10, Niel (Robbo /Greyhound –oh do keep up) purchased number 12 and commenced a similar restoration. Despite the additional increased accommodation afforded at Number 12 with about 10 staying there, the main body of Hashers were directed to stay at the Bellevue.

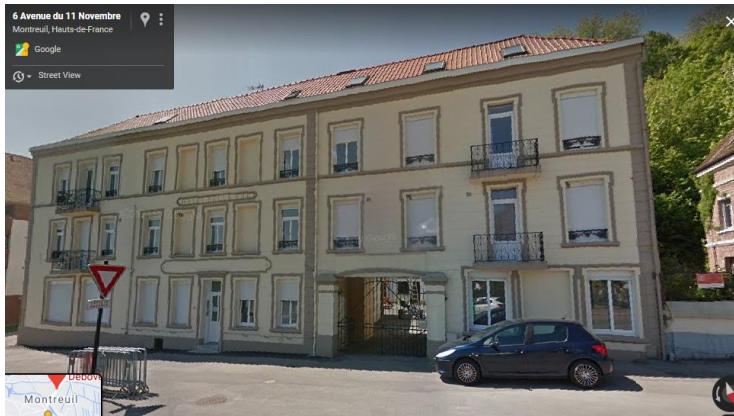
Mein host or should that be mon hôte was the irreplaceable Monsieur Paul Eric DuPont supported (in more ways than one) by the lovely Sabine.

It was evident that the Bellevue in terms of maintenance was in need of significant attention but in terms of welcome and enthusiasm, that extended by Eric and Sabine could not have be bettered.



The 'otel is no longer an 'otel but now converted to apartments (Google May 2019) but it retains all its memorable features.

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I have clear memories of visits when Tim (Dr Lurve) and I visited, accompanied by Julia and Sasha with Eric at his selectively attentive best. On seeing our young lovelies he gesticulated to Tim and me that our rooms were to be found in the main hotel. He pointed to a steep and narrow steep staircase and told we'd find Room 7 at the top. He then abandoned us and proceeded to give the girls his full attention carrying their bags and guiding them across the courtyard to a modern extension to the hotel which I am told was fully equipped. What sorts of equipment we will never know since neither Julia, Sasha nor Eric divulged. Save to say that he was away from the reception desk for a considerable time.

Early on Eric loudly announced that he had just finished fermenting his 'special' Calvados and suggested it was now time for a tasting. Huge glasses were produced and filled to the brim. Sadly one hasher, no name, after several samplings and on an empty stomach became a little bit unwell and was forced to retire for a few hours. After his retirement he confirmed to Eric that it was the very best Calvados he had ever tasted.

Somewhat disarmingly and on arrival, Eric would ask, what would we like to eat that evening adding with a Gallic gesture that we could have anything. Without giving us time to think and dither he then reeled off suggestions of rabbit, game, venison and champignons. With an expected list of over 40 diners most of us found this a tad disconcerting with only hours to go before dinner. However his offering, of what we might call in England "A stew", sounded marvellous and we told him it sounded marvellous and off he went with the stub of a Gauloise hanging from his lips and away to the kitchen.

As can be seen from the Invitation we were expected to arrive in Montreuil and find our way to Number 10 for a light lunch at around noon.

This was yet another memorable time with large quantities of ham and cheese and quiches and baguettes with some decorative greenery and of course wine and beer.

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Hashers arrived in a steady stream warmly welcomed by Neil and Candy and told to fight their way through the other guests to enjoy all that was on offer.

Lunch over and free time to explore the town and this is a town with bucket loads of things to see and enjoy. It is the town which features in Victor Hugo's novel "Les Misérables" and the character Jean Valjean, an ex-convict in 19th-century France who on release from prison creates a factory in the town and makes good. In more recent times Field Marshall Haig established his office and cocktail cabinet in Montreuil during 1914-18 war. A statue of him on his horse adorns the main square. During this time off-duty soldiers levelled and constructed a tennis court within the moat. The town's history as a defensive citadel and all the military architecture of Vauban make it a joy to explore and it's is a great place to set a Hash.



1995 with Tim (Simon Brown hiding)
Felicity and Eleanor.

1996 Julia and Sasha exploring.



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1996 Julia and Sasha with a little French tarte.



1998 The Hash assembling at Number 12 prior to the run.



1999 En route to Montreuil and a visit to the V2 Rocket launching site at Eperlecques

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2001 or was it 2003. Hash assemblage outside Numbers 12 and 14.

Name	E Mail address	Telephone no	No.	Confirmed	Room at Bellevue Hotel	Hotel nos	Dinner numbers	Dietary peculiarities	Dinner cost	Room Costs	No. of rooms
David Evans	krodbe@smtp.ntrust.org.uk	01273 473622	1	yes	Share with Tim	1	1	none	This was 150FFr in		
Tim Carter	tim.carter@wsha.nhs.uk	01903 684469	1	yes	Share with David	1	1	none		4/5 pers rm 1 double bed 3 singles+ bath+toilet at 490FFr	1
Sasha Pyatt		01273 479200	1	yes	Share with Julia	1	1	vegetarian		3/4 pers 1 double bed 2 singles	3
Julia Madigan		01273 479200	1	yes	as above	1	1	vegetarian		3 pers 1 double bed 2 singles + bath+toilet @ 420 FFr	6
Richard Newton Price and Caroline Welch	salsa@welch.demon.co.uk	0208 6628482	2	yes	Share	1	2	none		Dble rm shwr+toilet @ 320	4
Jo Walters		0488842511	1	yes	Share with Theresa	1	1	none		Dble rm shwr no toilet @270 FFr	3
Theresa		01273 385637	1	yes	Share with Jo	1	1	Veg/flash			17
Don Elwick		01273 385637	1	yes	Share	1	1	none	Nos	Rm sharing and allocations	Costing FFr
Mike and Maureen Morris		01273 502837	2	yes	Share with Maureen	2	2	none	2	Julia and Sasha	320
Mike and Elisabeth Woodroffe		01273 502837	2	yes	Share with Elisabeth	2	2	none	2	Tim and David	320
Ann Ungood		01273 502837	1	yes	single room ?	1	1	none	2	Jo and Theresa	320
Phil and Pam Mutton		01273 509958	2	yes	Share with Pam	2	2	none	2	Richard and Caroline	320
Mr and Mrs William Mutton		01273 509958	2	not yet	Share	2	2	none	2	Mike and Maureen	450
John and Gabby plus baby Callum		01273 592885 or 792750	3	yes	Family room to include cot	3	2	vegetarian	2	Mike and Elisabeth	450
Chris and Pat Dauncey		01273 554148	2	yes	Not staying at hotel	0	2	none	2	Phil and Pam Mutton	420
Tony and Helen Fallowfield +Ellie and Callum		01273 385755	4	yes	Not staying at hotel	0	4	none	2	Mr Mutton jnr and wife	420
Nell and Candy Robinson		01273 542276	2	yes	Not staying at hotel	0	2	none	3	John Gabby and Callum	420
Rebecca Robinson and John		01273 542276	2	yes	Not staying at hotel	0	2	none	2	John and Adrian Scott	420
Lorna Robinson and Dave		01273 542276	2	yes	Not staying at hotel	0	2	none	2	Ian and Brenda Essex	420
John and Adrian Scott		01273 493676	2	yes	Share	2	2	none	4	Pete Marie and 2 daughters	450
Ian and Brenda Essex		01403 710311	2	yes	Share	2	2	none	2	Don Elwick	420
										Ann Uncred	270
Pete & Marie Eastwood plus 2 children		01273 845329	4	yes	Share family room	4	4	none	2	Lin and Michael	490
Lin McCullum Stewart and Michael		01273 502869	2	yes	Share	2	2	none			
Total to date			43		Provisional nos:	30	42		31		
Notes:											
Hotel Bellevue -Monsieur Paul-Eric Dupont	BELLEVUE2@wandadop.fr	0033 3 21 06 04 19									
Hotel Bellevue -Fax		0033 3 21 81 01 94									
NB: Chris and Tony will collect the 150FFr per head for the dinner on the evening. Please make sure that you have this in FFr											
The usual invitation is extended for lunch at No 10 rue Victor Dubourg and a charge will be added to the above to											

The 2000 Spreadsheet with 42 attendees shown.

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2001 and the big guns Peter and Steve exploring en route to Montreuil.



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2001 . Gabby's boys insist it wasn't them who'd put Fairy Liquid in the town pond and fountain.



Spreadsheet relaxes as his duties have bene discharged, with Gabby and Bouncer.

This year we dine at the
Taverne de l'Ecu de France.



(Left side) Rosemary, Ann, Helen, Callum, Tony, Bouncer, Gabby,

(Right side Right to left) Maureen, Mike M, Mike, Chris, Pat, Rebecca and John.

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Sue enjoying a tête et tête.

Wiggy as attentive as usual.



As can be seen from this aerial view, Montreuil is made for great Hash routes. The network of streets akin to a maze and the ramparts circling the town with historic entrance gateways into the citadel and links down to the river and woods all made for some great Hashes stimulating a thirst and an appetite. Most of the locals must have been fully convinced that we were all 'Mad English' running around and for some reason shouting 'On On!'

After a wash and a brush up we regathered at whatever restaurant had been selected for the dinner. The demise of the Bellevue with all its quirkiness and of course Eric's Gallic flair was a sad turn of affairs but we had no difficulties in finding new restaurants in this small town which boasted numerous such places.

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Readers might ask “were there speeches” after the dinner?

I feel sure I recall a vote of thanks to Neil and Candy for their hospitality over at least 8 years but I’d have to say that the memory of any lengthy speeches is somewhat blurred save to say we all had a jolly good time.

I will end with the traditional Hash good wishes of extending an ON ON to you all.



Rue Victor Dubourg, Montreuil-sur-Mer.

The end.