

The wind-up to the wing-ding:

HOW A HASH HORROR HATCHED

What more pessimistic approach to Interhash '78 than to have the inaugural meeting on Friday, 13th May, last year? The Chairman was elected but was absent at the time and couldn't demure. And it was fun! Everyone had ideas ".....charge this round to Interhash.....", etc. and before the first meeting finally fell apart a great deal had been said, but.....

The second meeting was somewhat funeral compared with the first ebullient success. Penang, Taipei, Hunter (N.S.W.) and Jakarta had all written saying they would come. We felt we were saddled with it. Someone suggested writing again telling everyone it was only a joke..... no more bright ideas so the directors of bored slipped their thumbs from their bums and their minds out of neutral to get on with that 'Hashanathema' organization.

There were address lists, forms for registration, liaison with travel agencies, guestimates at hotel prices, numbers, pints, women..... and it was really quite revealing just how much hidden talent there was lurking behind the alcoholic vapour and bloodshot eyes of the Committee. A starchy eyed bit of fluff from the Ladies Hash turned out to be all stuff and NO nonsense. Wandsworth, hitherto thought to have been born a zombie, turned out to be half intelligent in his office of 'General' Committee Member and Lyons' share of the treasury worked the up-keep of the Interhash Committee for the year-long planning stage. When we needed paper (to write on) Sophie Chu's artists set to work on a

letter-head emitting that air of polish and distinction usually only found amongst the most professional of ladies. Eftsoons the epissals went out with INTERHASH '78 splashed right across the front.

Joking aside, we ought to mention (for posteriority) those names that did all the donkey work. Wes Parfitt, otherwise reviled as Westering Parfitt, was the Chairman and his lot was to jockey along the whole proceedings. He must have got pissed off (sometimes just pissed) when the bottles piled up. But still his mellifluousity presided.

Stuart McDouall (McTool O'Tool of the Kowloon Hash) wrote the first bunch of Epissals and compiled the address list. Between times, he wrestled with Cathay Pacific before chickening out, spending X'mas in the U.K. and refusing to come back until Easter 1978.

Sophie, a dynamic chic of the Ladies H3, printed right all those epissals, lists and forms that you got. And she even went into debt over it, not charging any interest!

Dave Lyons of H4 did more than almost anybody. First, he was the Treasurer in charge of nothing but debts, but then he also designed the fiscal year of Interhash '78 - no mean feat. As a side line, he run around the post offices collecting, sorting and delivering; making a decent stamp collection and a good messenger boy on the side.

Peter Wilkinson of the Kowloon Hash did his share of the hard graft too - cajoling and cuasing where necessary and running around like a

blue-arsed fly at the committee's behest - someone had to do it afterall.

Sharon Morrow, the only committee member always there, short handed the first seven months of meetings, turning them into intelligible minutes necessary for the sober perusal of members who couldn't remember what they'd said or decided two days before. Then Virginia Angove took over doing an equally magnificent job.

Roger Medcalf, whose claim to fame is the coining of the word 'unconvention', took over the job of Scribe when McTool threw his hand in and is responsible for the hint of finesse that crept into the epissals thereafter.

Later on, others joined in the melee and a noteworthy protagonist was Barry Griffin of the Kowloon Hash. Otherwise slanged as Bazza O'friet, he still managed to beg, borrow or steal thousands of pints of the amber fluid from San Miguel for our pleasure. Well done, Sir! H4's Rod Olsen, a powerhouse of Kiwi talent, showed totally unhash efficiency as Chairman of the finance committee and general operations manager. He is probably more responsible than anyone else for the embarrassing surplus, the Un-convention ended up with.

It was the second epissal that convinced us (and some of them) that we were going places (let me out of here!.....they're coming to take me away, Ha Ha!) as we put in a half concise address list and a most business-like booking form, which was actually nothing of the sort. It looked good and more Hashes wrote to us asking what it was all about.

By American Independence Day (the third Committee meeting), we had booked a hundred hotel rooms "....more than enough...." we thought. Any extras could kip in spare bedrooms, on sofas or with the Amah. At that time, we also suffered the first of many expansions to the committee making decisions, decisions more and more complicated. This man Cox was, however, the inside man out of C.P.A. and our roving ambassador on his regular jaunts abroad.

August went by with the formation of a dozen sub-committees - we were breeding like rabbits - which all went scurrying around the Colony sussing out run locations, fixing up logistics, etc. Neighbouring Macau sounded a good bet but the problem of getting there and back proved insurmountable. Then we reckoned a couple of promising island locations wouldn't be able to hack the Hash in bulk and we even thought it might be frowned upon, if seven hundred loud mouthed dirty all-sorts crusaded through the posh Peninsula and Hilton Hotel of H.K. The sub-committees continued the search. Meanwhile Committee fingers were getting stuck into little fertile pies: the catering business, brewery outlets, airlines, tailors, printers and bladder makers (we thought a game of footy at an On On.) Some took a lot of persuading, but our tame Police interrogators (Hashmen on the side) saw to it that there was always co-operation with the Hashia organization. Discounts began to roll in: 50% from Cathay, Umpteen barrels of grog "on the house" from San Miguel, rock bottom curries from the army....Army rocks from curried bottom....rock curries from the Army bottom....bottom curries from.... Inexorably tempus did fugit and by the end of September (eighth Committee meeting) a deadline for joining the INTERHASH '78 movement was fixed for December 1st. Now we may as well tell you that there was never any intention to enforce it; just spur everyone on; We also had an outline of a programme but only one aspect of which came to pass: "Sunday (25th) will be an all-day affair, others will probably be mid-afternoon through evening". All the plans/dreams of triple-decker ferries, Hilton ballrooms and Chinese Night Clubs, went out the window later.

Come the tenth meeting and the end of October, the Committees were getting to know each other quite well:-

"Don't I know you?...."

"Hello, Bob here...."

"Call me Rogers."

"Fucking hell! THE Rogers...."

"I'm Stuart."

Etc.

Significant things were happening then, such as the first \$50.00 HK registration fee from Jim Raper of the Surrey Hash, U.K. This was altogether unexpected, however, as we estimated there were 143 definites at that stage. Something that still hadn't happened unfortunately was the design of a 'T' shirt - an all time great to celebrate INTERHASH '78. Plenty of artistic ideas were expounded but nothing done about them as usual - well, that's Hash for you!

On the subject of the \$50.00 HK registration fee, as we called it, we may as well mention its whys and wherefores. The telling factor was, of course, that we'd no previous experience of an Interhash to draw upon. Would we impose a levy of \$50.00-HK (after all that is only \$10.00-US) if we were to do it all over again? Yes, in the light of experience, a levy - call it what you will - is necessary though perhaps not as much (we are handing over a few thousand dollars H.K. in surplus funds to the next INTERHASH organisers).

In the first couple of months, each of our three host Hashes had to inject \$500 HK into a common fund and even then we still owed printers several hundreds bucks not to mention fears that deposits on hotel bookings, public transport contracts, etc., would be required. And the Hong Kong Hashes are not rich! So we decided ready cash was needed to tide over deposits, to cover mounting expenses in the admin' field and to take care of running expenses incurred over and above our estimates during the Fiesta itself. Furthermore, we thought then, and still believe now, that money is the non-committed and vacillating Hashman's greatest incentive to action; to fill in his name (those damned forms) purchase the tickets, persuade the wife.

Of course, we got some flak - one noble chapter of the Hash were particularly anti - but I think everyone who did turn up to INTERHASH '78 realised the necessity for the registration fee. Kuala Lumpur H3 wrote to us saying "...whenever we have held a major celebration run, we have borne all the costs of entertaining our guests ourselves, not un-naturally, our members are concerned that before they consider committing themselves to your H.K.\$50 levy, they should have full details...." K.L.H3 have in fact hosted as many as 500 people

before on celebration runs but they have never been put to all the organization necessary for an influx of nearly 1,000 strangers in a setting such as Hong Kong's where fleets of coaches had to be organised, Hotels booked, etc.

Perhaps the height of ambition was to be the towel vendor at Auschwitz Public showers, or the nappy cleaner to Idi Amin's S.S. guard but hundreds still came (to the sound of music) and gate-crashed Hong Kong as the climax of their career in Hashing. That was my impression.

The runs that I went on were particularly poignant examples of modern hashing. On the Lam Kam Road (near the Fire Service's depot) run to Sek Kong (Monday 27th.) there was plenty of the most excellent observance of Hash etiquette. What I mean was that forerunners were sitting on blatantly obvious checks waiting for the vanguard to turn up on the horizon before bawling the 'ON ON' over the rolling hills and dales.

That was a good interesting run of decent length. Not so fortunate were the hapless bastards that boarded the buses headed for route TWISK. A hard grind from start to finish (reminiscent of a cheap whore) was all their reward for coming.

At the Sek Kong Airstrip, 500 Ladies and Hommes converged from all points of the compass on the drink wagons. Some went to flop on the grass and others, after assuaging raging thirsts, played touch rigger. A few photographers even climbed on top of a San Miguel lorry parked there to capture semi-serial immortalizations of the degenerate crowds below.

Then Maunsell-Ward (Jelabi-What?) of Kowloon Hash announced that half a dozen Army Cooks were coming and the decks were cleared for action! One of the most prolific curries ever witnessed was majestically tipped out of the back of a ten ton truck and an orderly queue began to dip their plates in.

Whilst the curry and beer amalgamated in the most deadly of 'morning after' conspiracies - the shits - major remnants of the run set to a chorus of songs led largely by Arch-Bish Dave Walker, a heathen bard of many parts, from the Kowloon Hash. At some suitable juncture in the night, people groped their way on to the buses again, returned to the red lights of Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon and continued the revelry.