

CHELTENHAM RAMBLING CLUB

MINUTES OF THE 67TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held at the Victory Club, Cheltenham, on Monday 16th November 2009

Present: *Chairperson:* Shelagh Hallaway, *Treasurer:* Angela Rice,
Program Secretary: Tony Moran *Membership Secretary:* Chris Hallaway,
Ordinary Committee Members: Bill Judge, Howard Taylor, Stephen Wall,
Club Members 36, and Harold.

Apologies: John & Joan Wesker, Norman King, Mary Harris, Dave Tomlin, Tanya & Steve Smith, Jill Byrne, Alan Parker.

The Minutes of the Previous Meeting were taken as read and approved.
Proposed by Howard Taylor, *Seconded* by Barry Powney.

Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.

REPORTS

Treasurer's report

Operating income £1070, operating expenditure £1186, loss on social activities £88.
The accounts show an overall loss for the year of £315.

Cash in the bank is £1404 and a deposit of £1275 has been paid to the hotel for the Whitby holiday in 2010.

This is at least the fourth year of making a loss and it is appropriate to look at ways of breaking even in the future. A loss will still be made in 2010 as any subscription increase agreed today will not come into effect until 2011.

Questions were asked and explanations given regarding some of the expenditure. The accounts were accepted:

Proposed: Bea Therin, *Seconded:* Don MacKenzie.

Program Secretary's Report

I have been very pleased by the support members have given me in my first year as Programme Secretary. Several new leaders volunteered walks as well as our regulars. Thank you to all our leaders – without you we would have no rambling club. Attendances have been quite varied: the maximum was 36 on an evening walk, but sadly there have been a few walks with fewer than five, and at least two walks where only the leader turned out. Three walks were cancelled, one when the leader was unwell, two for bad weather. Dave Tomlin has detailed records for evening walks, showing an average attendance of 21+ compared with 25- last year. The table below shows the number and type of walks, but excludes social events such as barn dance, BBQ, lunch, and quiz nights. The number of half-day walks is maybe lower than in previous years, but this is compensated by the increase in figures-of-eight which give a choice of morning, afternoon or full day and seem to be quite popular with members. We also had one green shamrock walk. The Minehead Holiday and Camping / DIY weekends were well attended, though there were only 5 at Kirkby Somewhere (the location is a well kept secret to avoid it becoming as crowded as the Lakes). Extra-curricular (non-club) activities are increasing, with several members arriving early or staying late for club weekends. Our socials have been popular (Barn Dance, bring and share lunch, BBQ and regular quiz nights). More mid-week walks have been suggested, especially for the winter programme which has no evening walks. The winter programme has four (including two

public holidays), and mid-week leaders for future programmes will be welcomed. Please let me have your ideas for the programme, but remember I can only schedule walks and activities for which we have voluntary leaders.

Summary of walk types by programme, with 2009 year totals

Day	Total			Half day			Full day			Figure of 8			Evening		
	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>
Saturday	16	17	17	1	2		10	13	14	5	2	3			
Sunday	10	9	9	1	1	1	7	7	4	2	1	4			
Evening	13	11											13	11	
Midweek	1	1	4	1		2			2		1				
TOTAL WALKS	40	38	30	3	3	3	17	20	20	7	4	7	13	11	-
Other	1	2													
Weekend	3	1													
	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>	<i>Spr</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Win</i>
LEADERS	31	24	20												
YEAR TOTALS	108 Walks 3 Weekends 3 Other (Malvern guide, London, Moonlight) 38 Leaders			9 Half day			57 Full day			18 Figures of 8			24 Evening		

Membership Secretary's report

CRC Membership Statistics AGM 2009

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total Memberships	228	199	195	190
Existing Renewed	197	183	170	159
New	31	16	25	31
Not Renewed	?	45	29	36
Programme by email				90

The Ramblers Representative's Report to AGM of Cheltenham Rambling Club -

November 2009

Jill Byrne was unable to attend. Her written report was read out:

There have been a lot of changes in the Ramblers in the last year, the name for one and the logo for another.

I am coming to the end of my second year as Area Footpath Secretary for Gloucestershire and my third year as acting footpath secretary for the North Cotswold Group of the Ramblers. There is the usual problem to get volunteers for group footpath secretaries and to be members of the group footpath sub-committees each year. At the round of AGMs in 2008 four new group footpath secretaries were needed, and we did get them eventually. This year two are needed and we have one so far in the South Cotswolds.

The number of footpath orders issued this year has been less than usual due to the secondment of rights of way officers at Shire Hall to other work, notably flood relief and travelers' sites. In light of the financial restrictions officers retiring are not being replaced. As there is already a backlog of orders on paths this will increase the problem. The footpath secretaries of the Ramblers had their usual meeting with the Public Rights of Way Officers at Shire Hall at the end of February. This is a good chance to meet and discuss general footpath problems. The asset survey of the 3,500 miles of the county's rights of way was completed by these officers by mid 2008. Although they claim to have walked them all, I am aware of several that are still so obstructed that they could not have walked them. However it is easier for staff at Shire Hall to check on a computer screen when complaints are made about broken stiles and overgrown paths.

Work on the Cotswold Way National Trail is continuing and in May a new route around Cleeve Common and by Postlip Hall was opened with a length of footpath up through Breakheart Plantation. This is now the official route, but the old one across the Common can still be used as it is on access land. It has taken six years to achieve. In several other sites there have been small diversions on to the walked path as a national trail must be on rights of way. We are still waiting for the new route from Crickley Hill Country Park to Ullenwood, which will have access for the wheelchairs from the Star Centre.

This year the Ramblers have had to make stringent economies in May when it was discovered that they were heading for a financial loss. They have closed both the Welsh and Scottish offices and made about twenty staff at central office redundant. All Area and Groups have been asked to make a 25% reduction in their budgets for next year. This is difficult for all members but especially for group footpath secretaries who need to travel to site meetings.

I attended one public inquiry this year, where the parish council of South Cerney had applied to the county council to have a path in Upper Up in the village added to the definitive map. There was plenty of user evidence that the path had been used for over twenty years until it was completely obstructed in 1998 and The Ramblers were not involved, but the Cirencester group footpath secretary and I attended as one learns a great deal at these events. The inspector confirmed the order. This will enable school children to walk a largely traffic free route to school. Sometimes the matter is decided by an inspector having the relevant papers and doing a site inspection without

the public being present. There are several inquiries coming up shortly when members are involved, one is at Sudeley Castle which should produce a lot of local interest in Winchcombe, and the other in the Forest of Dean where the Ramblers are not involved. There will be another in February next year about a bridleway being added to the definitive map. I have been on a footpath committee for about eleven years and am very aware at the amount of time it takes to sort out these path problems and the need for adequate committee minutes in cases of law. As Area Footpath Secretary I am getting a feel for the size and complexity of our footpath network and the importance of the Ramblers' defense of it. We should be grateful for the devoted work to our county's rights of way given by Tony Drake over the 58 years that he was the Ramblers' Area Footpath Secretary.

I should like to encourage walks leaders to report broken stiles and other dangers that they encounter on walk overs to the Public Rights of Way team at Shire Hall, Gloucester. You may well not get a reply but hopefully the complaint will be logged and dealt with. Carrying secateurs to clear stiles of overgrown vegetation is also helpful.

Publicity

Chris West, our Webmaster, reported as follows on the second year of the website: 2009 has already shown an 18% increase in unique hits up to the end of October. Monthly hits are now regularly above 400-450, and in 2009 the website visits were particularly high at the start of the year and in Spring. From the start of the site in 2008 there has been a steady increase in interest, but 400-500 is now the level we are getting and hope to maintain. The site is bringing in a steady stream of enquiries, some becoming new members. The cost of the website hosting and the domain is £34.98 per year.

Chris thanked members for the photographs they had sent him, and asked for more, as he is always keen to give the site a fresh feel. Thanks also to Tony and Howard for their role in giving out publicity with the posters. This is particularly valuable on notice boards with large workforces.

Election of Officers and Ordinary Committee Members

All existing officers and committee members had agreed to serve for another year, ie *Chairperson: Shelagh Hallaway, General Secretary: Tanya Smith, Treasurer: Angela Rice, Program Secretary: Tony Moran Membership Secretary: Chris Hallaway, Ordinary Committee Members: Mary Harris, Bill Judge, Howard Taylor, Stephen Wall.* It was proposed that Keith Gyseman, Doug Sinclair and Gill Parker be elected as new Ordinary Committee members. The above was Proposed by Bea Therin and seconded by Sue Brooks.

The Officers and Committee members were elected en bloc by a unanimous vote.

Other appointments

Chris Web will continue as Webmaster.

The Treasurer reported that Chris Jones has agreed to continue as Honorary Examiner.

Whitby May Bank Holiday

Kathy and Simon Slee gave an update on the planned visit to Whitby which is proving very popular. There are only four twin rooms and some single rooms remaining. Members were reminded that bookings need to be made by 6 December and the balance has to be paid to the Hotel in March, before the holiday commences. The Club has no cover in case of problems and members were reminded to take out their own insurance.

Motions

Motion 1_ *Proposed* Angela Rice *Seconded* Chris Hallaway

For 2011 income is augmented by

i. an increase in annual subscriptions for all members of £1.00 to £5.50 for single membership and £1.50 to £8.25 for family membership

AND

ii. An additional annual charge of £3.00 is paid by those members receiving programmes by post. (this just covers printing and postage costs)

The motion was discussed

VOTE: In favour 20 Against 18 Abstain 3

Motion 2 was therefore withdrawn

Motion 3 *Proposed* Moira O'Connor *Seconded* Paul Birchall

RA Donation: In spite of the club's need to economise I think we should still make a donation to RA as we will continue to benefit from their footpath campaigns. (amount to be decided at the AGM)

VOTE: In favour 25 Against 14 Abstain 2

The amount of the donation was discussed and Moira proposed that the donation should be £100

VOTE: In favour 5

Tony Moran proposed and Guy Vowles seconded that the donation should be £50

VOTE: In favour 24

A cheque was therefore to be drawn for £150 to cover this £50 donation and the £100 donation which had been agreed at the 2008 AGM but was not actually paid last year.

Motion 4_ *Proposed* Stephen Wall *Seconded* Tanya Smith

Additional Officer: The Officers of the club should include a Vice Chairman. The duties to include supporting and deputising for the Chairman, in view of crucial responsibilities regarding co-ordinating the activities of the club

Stephen spoke in favour of the motion. David Pinkard proposed an amendment as follows: '*The Committee may appoint a Vice Chairman from within the Committee if it so chooses*'. Bea Therin seconded the revised motion.

VOTE: In favour 27 Against 13 Abstain 1

Motion 5_ *Proposed* Barry Powney *Seconded* Ivor Francis

The AGM is requested to review and adjust the mileage rates, especially for the more distant walks where the high cost is putting off walkers

Barry spoke in favour of the motion and, without a vote, it was decided that the program should be amended to include the word 'recommended' in the program so that the driver had discretion to suggest a lower amount. The Program Secretary agreed to do this.

Any Other Business

The Club's 70th Anniversary

Tony Moran reminded the meeting that 2012 is the 70th anniversary of the Club. Several suggestions have been made for events to celebrate the event. These include a relay along the Cotswold Way using the Club mascot as a baton, a visit to Gottingen (Cheltenham's twinned town in Germany) for a walking holiday, and a meal. Tony asked for comments or suggestions to be given to the Committee

Footpath maintenance

Des Fry reminded members to report broken stiles and problems with rights of way to the County Council. It can be done by going to <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=18463> which is easy to use. The minimum information needed is a description of the problem and its location.

The other useful web page for describing the location is:

<http://prow.gloucestershire.gov.uk/website/ppp/viewer.htm> This is known as the Web GlosMap and can be used to check rights of way and to obtain path numbers. If anyone needs guidance to its effective use, they are welcome to contact Des.

The meeting closed at 9.35