

CHELTENHAM RAMBLING CLUB

80th ANNIVERSARY

1942 – 2022



The club's founder Harold Chipp (centre) and companions resting at the Buck Stone in the Wye Valley

Introduction

The Cheltenham Rambling Club is 80 years old in 2022. The club was founded by Harold Chipp as part of the "Holidays at Home" initiative, with the initial club walks held in October 1942. Trains were used for transport and the walks were 12 miles and above, and often involved taking a packed tea as well as lunch! See below for a copy of the first club programme, followed by an excerpt that was written following the death of Harold Chip in 1972, which explains a little about the early walks.

On Saturday 20th August the club celebrated this 80th anniversary by three simultaneous walks of varying lengths, all starting from the Witcombe and Bentham Village Hall. 61 club members joined one of the three walks. This was followed by a party at the hall attended by about 100 current and past members.

Mary H kindly prepared some boards of past club photos for the party, and copies of those are included. The last three pages include photos taken during the 80th celebration day. (And thanks to those who sent them for publishing.) We thought it might be nice to share all of these with you.

COPY OF THE VERY FIRST PROGRAMME

CHELTENHAM RAMBLING CLUB

PRESIDENT - THE MAYOR OF CHELTENHAM

Rambles for three months commencing October 1942

(All these rambles will be led by Mr. Harold Chipp,
Leader and Chairman)

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 7th

WYE VALLEY AUTUMN RAMBLE

8.30 am. train from St James' Station to Chepstow. (New fare estimated 8s.6d.) Walk via Tidenham Chase and Devil's Pulpit to Brockweir for lunch (bring sandwiches); visit Tintern Abbey and after tea return over The Wyndcliff to Chepstow, arriving Cheltenham 9.5pm. Walking distance about 12 miles.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 18th

WITHINGTON AND COLESBORNE

Meet at Charlton Kings (Station Bridge) at 9.45 am. Walk to Withington via Hilcot, for lunch (bring sandwiches) then through Chedworth Woods to Colesborne for tea (bring sandwiches for this meal also), returning via Chatcombe Wood, arriving Charlton Kings about 7 pm. Walking distance about 14 miles.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 15th

FORD AND BROADWAY.

10.40 am. train from St James' Station to Hailes. (Take return ticket for Broadway - new fare estimated 3s.6d.), walk through Farmcote to Ford for lunch (bring sandwiches), then via Cutsdean and Snowhill to Broadway for tea (tea served here). Returning by train, arriving in Cheltenham 8.38pm. Walking distance about 12 miles.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 20th

HOBNAILS AND PRESCOTT.

10.40 am. train from St. James' Station to Bishops Cleeve (single fare) walk via Gotherington and Alstones to Hobnails for lunch, then by Far Stanley and Prescott to Cleeve Hill for tea, returning to Cheltenham on foot or by bus, (bring sandwiches for lunch and tea). Walking distance about 12 miles.

Members are reminded that they must let leader or Hon. Secretary know as soon as possible and not later than two days before that they wish to attend a Ramble.

The Committee hope to arrange a Social Evening for Members and friends during the Winter Season. An announcement will be made later.

Leader and Chairman

Harold Chipp,
83, Winchcombe Street.
CHELTENHAM.
Telephone. 3257

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer.

W. J. Eynon,
"Countryside",
Priors Road,
CHELTENHAM.

Except from an address to members by Ralph Allsworth (club president) in the Jan-March 1972 programme

The death of our founder Mr Harold Chipp has left a gap in the lives of many of our older members who enjoyed his friendship in the days when he was leading the early rambles. It all began with an advert in the "Echo" as part of the war-time "Holidays at Home" movement. It invited anyone interested to be at the station on Sunday morning, when Mr Chipp would be there to lead a ramble. Harold expected that maybe half a dozen might turn up. Instead he was greeted with a platform packed with would-be rambles. Most had never done a country walk in their lives. He walked them 14 miles or so and they loved it, nursed their blistered feet and asked for more. Those were the days when British Rail actually wanted to run trains and welcomed passengers. They stopped the London express for us at wayside halts, and once when we missed a connection in the Wye valley they even put on a non-stop special when Mr Chipp turned on the charm with the station master. On Sundays there was a good rail service to the Wye and Stroud valleys and all parts of the Cotswolds, but the trains left around 8am so we started early and had time to take things easily and have a rest now and again while Harold related local Cotswold legends, such as his famous Bisley boy one. He once, when food rationing was at its tightest, took nearly 100 to Broadway where we found a better tea waiting for us than one sometimes gets today. I thought it was the greatest miracle since the feeding of the five thousand.

Photos that include the last eight club chairs



Photos of Club Walks / Events





Risk Christmas 1978
Piney Hills walk



Three Castles walk 1993 - Growth Trip -



The 12 mile
southern circuit
Village Feb 94



WHITTINGTON RYE
2011 2011
LANZAROTE
2015



Saturday 20 August 2022

The A Walk



The B Walk



The C Walk



CRC 80th Party Saturday 20 August 2022





6 past or present club chairs (Jenny, Dave, Shelagh, Carol, Steve, Ivor)



Harold, the club mascot