

A CHRONOLOGY  
OF  
SPORT  
IN  
CHELTENHAM



by members of Cheltenham Local History Society

Compiled by Jill Waller



**Cheltenham Local  
History Society**

## INTRODUCTION

The theme of the annual County Local History Afternoon, to be held on 7 October 2006 by the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, was **sport**. This book was compiled to accompany a display put on by the Cheltenham Local History Society at that event.

I have to confess that at the start of this particular project my interest in sport was almost zero and it was with a heavy heart that I began my research, hoping to produce a small leaflet at the very least. However, the historian within me took over and I was soon gripped by the thrill of the chase, the triumphs and failures of our local sportsmen and women, and the sheer variety of activities that have aroused the competitive spirit in our local sporting heroes.

Much of the research for this book was reliant on secondary sources, and I would welcome any corrections or contributions that the reader feels should be included in any amended future edition. I apologise for any sports that may have been omitted or poorly represented, but it is a huge topic to cover in one volume in a fairly short space of time.

September 2006

Jill Waller

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am indebted, yet again, to Stephen Osmond for allowing me to lift large chunks from his *Chronology of Cheltenham 200BC – 2000AD*, which provided a framework for this Chronology.

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## COVER IMAGE

Cheltenham Archery' Club Shoot. Montpellier Gardens, Oct 1910. Among the competitors was Cheltenham archer Queenie Newell, Olympic Champion in 1908. The target bosses behind were almost certainly made at John Smith Friskney's sports depot at 23 Pittville Street, and were stored under Montpellier bandstand. (from Cheltenham, A History, Sue Rowbotham & Jill Waller, Phillimore, 2004)

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## ARCHERY

- 1845 **Horace Alfred Ford** first tried his hand at archery and within four years had won the title of **National Champion**. He went on to become the greatest target archer of all time.
- 19 Sep 1849 An **archery** fete and Gala were held at **Pittville Gardens**.
- Jul 1856 **Horace Ford** published his book, *Archery, Its Theory and Practice*. It became the ‘Bible’ of archers throughout the world and remained the standard work on archery for over 50 years
- 2-3 Jul 1856 The **Grand National Archery Meeting** was held in **Cheltenham** for the first time. The two-day event was held at the **Cheltenham College Ground**. Prizes to the value of **£500** were competed for to the accompaniment of the **Band of the Coldstream Guards**. Competitors included **26 Cheltonians** who became the nucleus of a new club in **Cheltenham**.
- 26 Jul 1856 The press announced the establishment of the **Cheltenham Archery Club**, which was to meet in **Montpellier Gardens**, storing their equipment under the bandstand. It was founded by **Horace Alfred Ford**, said to have been the greatest target archer of all time, winning the **National Championship** on **12** occasions between **1849** and **1867**. He was instrumental in turning a fashionable pastime into a serious sport by applying scientific principles.
- 1857 The first **Cheltenham Archers’ shoot** took place a week before the **1857 Grand National Archery Meeting** which was again held on the **College Ground**. At this meeting **Horace Ford** scored an incredible **1251** (245 hits, 28 golds) to win the **Champion’s Medal** for the **ninth** successive year. It stands today as the **unbroken record** for the Double York shot two ways with a **longbow**.
- Jun 1859 Two **Champion Medals** were introduced to inspire the **Cheltenham Archers** to practice. They were to be presented to the Lady and Gentleman who obtained **the highest gross scores** at the Prize Meetings of the club. The **Gentleman’s medal** was made out of **Horace Ford’s Grand National medals** melted down.
- May 1862 The **Cheltenham Archers** had been meeting on a **fortnightly** basis at **Montpellier** until this time. In this year the **Montpellier Gardens Company** was formed to run the Gardens and the **Archers** arranged to have a proper **Archery Lawn** laid out for their exclusive use. There were four pairs of targets, shooting both ways.
- 1865 **Archery** had been decreasing in popularity over the previous few years in favour of **croquet**, which was also played at **Montpellier Gardens**. Shooting therefore stopped until **1871**.
- Jun 1871 A three-day annual meeting of the **National Archery Society** was held in **Cheltenham**, rekindling interest in the sport. The **Champions** were **Capt. C.H. Fisher** (who went on to win the **Champion’s Medal** a total of **5 times**) and **Mrs. Horniblow** (who equalled **Ford’s** record and won the **Medal 11 times**). Both of them subsequently shot as members of **Cheltenham Archers**. Another new member was **Mrs. Piers Legh**. It was her first **National Meeting** and 11 years later she won the **Championship** (four years running). Her daughters proved to be exceptional archers.
- 6 Aug 1879 A **National Archery Meeting** began on the **Cheltenham College Ground**.
- 1880-1919 Beginning with **Mrs. Horniblow’s** win at **Shrewsbury**, the **Champion’s Medal** was won by a **Cheltenham Archer every year until 1919** (with a three-year break for the War) – an amazing run of **36 years**.
- 1881-1922 Cheltenham boasted some of the best women Archers in the country including **Alice Blanche Legh** who was **Champion Archer of Great Britain** an astonishing **23** times between these dates.
- 8 Aug 1883 The **40<sup>th</sup> annual meeting** of the **National Archer Society** was held in **Cheltenham**.
- 1885-1938 **Alice Legh’s** sister **Beata** rarely missed winning a medal in 53 years of National Competition between these dates.
- 31 Jul 1912 A **Grand National Archery Meeting** was held at **Dean Close School**.
- 1934 The **Cheltenham Archers** moved from **Montpellier Gardens**, where free public access had begun, to a ground in the **Old Bath Road** at the **East Gloucestershire Club**.
- 1936 **Miss E. Browett** was the last **Cheltenham Archer** to win the **Champion’s Medal**.
- 1939-45 Shooting stopped for the duration of the **Second World War**, after which the **Cheltenham Archers** began with only **12 members**.
- 1958 After many quiet years, membership of the **Cheltenham Archers** rose to **15**. Much of the equipment was repaired and target covers were made so that targets could be left out all year. The President of the time, **Canon Ingham**, arranged for the defunct club, the ‘**Vale of the White Horse**’, to be absorbed into the **Cheltenham Archers**.
- 1970s Membership of the **Cheltenham Archers** had increased to between **50** and **60** members.
- 1974 **Nine Cheltenham Archers** competed at the **Grand Western Championships** at **Dunster**.
- 1975 In an attempt to re-establish a link with the past, the first annual **Cheltenham Festival Tournament** was held on the **College Ground**.

- 24 Aug 2006 The **Cheltenham Archers** celebrated finding a new home at the **Cheltenham Racecourse** after an eight-year search. It was to be at **Oak Leaf Field** near the northern entrance to **Prestbury Park** off **Southam Lane**. A wooden clubhouse was planned and two storage containers to be installed. It was hoped that the work would be completed in time for the club's **150<sup>th</sup> anniversary** in **2007**.

## BOWLING

- 1720 There was a good bowling green in the town.
- Jul 1788 During **King George III's** visit to Cheltenham a timber house, complete with sash windows, was transported from the far end of town to supplement the King's lodgings at **Fauconberg Lodge**. It took 20 or 30 men six days to move it and the King prevented them from erecting it on a bowling green next to **Fauconberg Lodge** as it would have spoiled his servants' play.
- 22 Jun 1867 An advertisement appeared in the *Cheltenham Mercury* announcing that **James Paul**, Spirit, Ale and Porter Retailer, had carried out extensive alterations and improvements to the **Sun Inn, High Street**. Amongst the improvements was 'A Magnificent New **American Bowling Saloon** erected regardless of expense and fitted with every luxury, and which the proprietor is confident cannot be equalled by any in the county'.
- 1883 The **Cheltenham Bowling Club** was founded, establishing its first green next to the **Winter Gardens**, on the site of the future **Town Hall**.
- 1890 **James Kitching** took over as landlord of the **Exmouth Arms Hotel** and founded the **Exmouth Bowling Club**.
- 1917 The **Cheltenham Bowling Club** moved to **Suffolk Square**, thanks to the generosity of **Col. J.T. Ashburner**, on the site of **George and Annie Shaw's** former market garden called **Home Field** and originally part of **Gallipot Farm**.
- 1 May 1920 The opening of the **bowling green** at the **Exmouth Arms**; in its heyday it was reckoned to be one of the best greens in the county.. The **Norwood Arms** opened their **bowling green** a week later.
- 26 Jun 1920 Formal opening of the new green at the **Cheltenham Bowling Club** in **Suffolk Square**.
- 20 May 1922 The official opening took place of the new **thatched pavilion** which was presented to the **Cheltenham Bowling Club**. The **Club** also had two excellent greens.
- 30 Apr 1923 **Cheltenham Town Bowling Club** opened.
- 8 Dec 1923 Improvements were carried out in **St. George's Square** including the creation of a **bowling green** for ex-servicemen.
- 4 Oct 1924 A fountain was erected on the **Cheltenham Spa Bowling Green** in **St. George's Square**.
- 29 Apr 1928 The **Spa Bowls Club** opened.
- 9 May 1928 The **New Zealand Bowls Team** played the **Gloucestershire county team** at the **Cheltenham Bowling Club** in **Suffolk Square**.
- 9 Feb 1986 Cheltenham bowler **Tony Allcock** won the **Embassy World Indoor Bowls Championship**.
- 8 Nov 1991 **Tony Allcock** won the **UK Indoor Bowls Trophy**.
- 24 Aug 1992 Cheltenham bowls ace **Tony Allcock** won **gold** at the **World Bowls Championships** in **London**.
- 14 Apr 1996 **Tony Allcock** became **World Indoor Bowls Champion** at **Preston**.

## BOXING

- 2 Apr 1822 **James 'Earywig' Edwards** was born in **Rutland Street**. He was to become a local champion in the **prize ring** and was acclaimed nationally as the '**King of the Lightweights**'.
- 1 Mar 1825 Two men called **Connor** and **Gough** met a short distance from the town to fight, but the Constables had been informed of the event and arrested **Connor** on the spot. **Gough** managed to escape – he had frequently been in custody in the past for similar offences.
- 30 May 1825 The *Cheltenham Journal* advertised a fight between **Reid** and **Jubb** to take place between **Oxford** and **Cheltenham**. **Jubb** was backed by 'persons high in the **Cheltenham fancy**'.
- Aug 1826 **Matthew Jubb**, the **celebrated boxer**, appeared to a **summons** obtained against him by **Hugh Arundell**, a nut-seller, for throwing down his basket of nuts, breaking a quart cup and damaging his hat. The case was dismissed as there was a lack of evidence.
- 23 Jun 1828 The *Cheltenham Journal* reported:- 'A regular stand-up **fight**, to the tune of an hour and a half, took place on the **race course**, between two noted heroes of the fist, **Matt Jubb** and **Tom Lediard**, on Tuesday last. Give and take was the order of the day, and **Jubb** was declared the victor. **Lediard** was severely punished.'

- May 1829 **Thomas Lediard**, known in Cheltenham as '**The Fighting Butcher**', was induced by two young men, who promised to be his backers, to issue a challenge through the press to **Matthew Jubb**, known as '**The Cheltenham Champion**'. Although in **London** at the time, **Matt** quickly answered the challenge and the **fight** was set for the **Crown Inn**, £30 a side being agreed upon by both parties. The match had to be called off as **Lediard's** backers were unable to raise the money.
- 13 Jun 1833 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported an inquest, held into the death of **Samuel Oakey**, caused by a '**pugilistic contest**' which had taken place in a field about two miles along the **Gloucester road**. **Oakey** and a man known as '**Welsh Ned**' had come to blows at the **Crown Inn** a couple of days before, but the fight was broken up by the landlord **Mr. Marshall**. Subsequently a match between them was set up for a sovereign a side. The fight lasted three quarters of an hour and then **Oakey** was conveyed in an unconscious state to the **Dispensary** where he died a few days later. A verdict of **manslaughter** was returned against '**Welsh Ned**', and against **Samuel Davison**, **James Troughton** and **Thomas Lediard** for aiding and abetting the affray. (Whilst condemning the practice of **prize-fighting**, and calling for its abolition, the *Chronicle* continued to give it publicity for several years to come)
- 28 Aug 1834 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported on a **prize fight** held the previous Monday at the **Old Race Course** between **James Denley** of **Cheltenham** and **George James** of **Charlton Kings**. It was a **grudge match**, being fought for £10 a side, and **James** won after **37 rounds**.
- 1840 The first recorded fight of **James Edwards** took place, against a youngster named **Lippert**.
- 2 Nov 1843 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported as follows:- 'One of those **disgusting exhibitions** called a **prize fight** came off on Monday on **Defford Common**, near the **Defford Railway Station**. The combatants were **Frank Bevan**, the **Cheltenham Butcher**, and **William Moore**, whose fancy sobriquet, if he rejoice in one, we have not heard.' **Moore** was declared the victor after two hours and the *Chronicle* commented 'Are there no police in Worcestershire?'
- 1844 **James Edwards** beat **Allen** in the prize ring at **Oxford**.
- Feb 1844 **Tom Sayers** the celebrated pugilist did an exhibition bout of '**five rounds together**' with his 'friendly sparring partner' **Brown** at the **Circus** in Cheltenham. During his stay in the town he also paid a visit to his old friend **Charley Hoskins** at the **Portland Stores, Albion Street**, where he was entertained with a circle of friends and admirers. (**Sayers** lived in **Prestbury** for a while where he trained under **Tom Oliver**.)
- 1845 **James Edwards** defeated **Cherrington** of **Cheltenham** in the prize ring.
- 7 Dec 1846 In a contest at **Shrivenham**, with **Herbert 'the Mouse'**, **Jem Edwards** suffered a broken bone in his arm in the second round; **167 rounds** later nightfall ended the fight which was declared a draw.
- 1846 **James Edwards** was, as usual, declared the victor in a fight against **Stevens** of **Birmingham**.
- Aug 1847 **James Edwards** fought **Willday** of **Birmingham**, for **£50** a side, and was declared the winner after **53 rounds**.
- Apr 1848 **James Edwards** won a fight at **Newmarket, Cambs.**, for **£100** a side against **Massey** of **Manchester**. The fight lasted three hours and won him the title of **champion of the lightweights**. No-one fought him for several years after this because of his reputation for never being beaten.
- 20 Apr 1850 The licence of the **Roebuck Inn, High Street**, was transferred from **John Smith** to **James Edwards**, the landlord of the **Bell Inn, Rutland Street**. **Edwards** had earned a reputation as a prize-fighter who had never been beaten. On retiring from the ring **Edwards** retained an interest in boxing, coaching **Cheltenham College** boys among others. One of these was **Adam Lindsay Gordon**, the future poet, who did manage to knock **Edwards** out. This was only by a fluke as **Edwards** hit his head on the fireplace as a result of one of **Gordon's** punches.
- 1 May 1850 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported that **James Edwards**, landlord of the **Roebuck Inn**, was summoned for permitting disorderly persons to 'assemble and meet' in his house. **Sergeant Nightingale** reported that he had found three 'women of the town' at the bar and about **30** men upstairs 'sparring'. **Edwards** was fined **10s** with **6s 6d** costs.
- 7 Aug 1855 In a match against **Brown** of **Leicester**, **James Edwards** was again the victor despite **Brown** being two stone heavier. The fight, for **£100** a side, lasted for **58 rounds** over three hours.
- Aug 1856 Although it was thought that **James Edwards**, the undefeated lightweight, would not fight again, a match was got up against **Hall** of **Nottingham** at **Appledore** in **Kent**. The fight was inconclusive as it was interrupted by the police who bound both parties over to keep the peace.
- Jan 1857 **James Edwards** *alias* '**Earywig**' of the **Roebuck Inn** was released on bail following an appearance at the Gloucester Assizes to answer an indictment for **riot** in the **North Ward** at the late **election** of the **Cheltenham Commissioners** and for a **violent assault** on **William Boodle**.
- May 1857 **James 'Earywig' Edwards** died after six months illness. It was felt that his decline was caused by the mental anxiety he had suffered over the prosecution brought against him in the 'North

- Ward Riots' case. His funeral was well-attended by his many supporters in the town.
- 6 Jun 1857 The *Cheltenham Mercury* announced the intention of several friends of the late **James Edwards** to erect a monument to his memory.
- 27 Oct 1860 It was announced in the *Cheltenham Mercury* that a **prize fight** had been prevented. It was to have taken place in **Sturmer's Field**, 'near the ground where the **rifle contest** took place on the **Gloucester Road**', between **Henry Trapp** of **Cleveland Street** and **Thomas Silk** *alias* **Burke**.
- Jan 1861 The celebrated **pugilist Tom Sayers** fought an exhibition match against **Brown** of **Yarmouth** at the **Circus, Cheltenham** (probably in Wellington Street).
- 19 Apr 1862 **Bill Cunningham** of **Bath** 'took a benefit' at the **Golden Lion Inn, High Street**, assisted by the whole Cheltenham 'Fancy'. There were a series of bouts, one between **Jem Paul**, the **Cheltenham Novice**, and **Harry Trapp**, the **Bath-road Pet**, eliciting much applause. The final, between **Cunningham** and **Harry Davis** of Cheltenham, was a display of skilful tactics and quickness, according to newspaper reports.
- 26 Jul 1862 The following was reported in the *Cheltenham Mercury*:- "A gallant mill between **Jem Paul** of **Cheltenham** and **Roddy Leech** of **Gloucester** at **Wind's Point** between **Malvern** and **Ledbury**." **Leech** was the victor after **79 rounds**. "The gallant fellow, loser **Jem Paul**, will take a benefit at the **King's Head** on Monday week." Elsewhere in the paper the **benefit** was advertised, given to **Jem Paul** by his friends and admirers in recognition of the courage he displayed in his recent encounter with **Leech**. At the benefit **Leech** and **Paul** were to fight their battle over again; admission one shilling.
- 2 Sep 1863 The crowds attending a **boxing match** on **Bays Hill** gave cause for concern.
- Oct 1898 **Thomas Roach** and **Alfred Taylor** were found guilty of **prize-fighting** for **£10**.
- 6 Feb 1934 A **professional boxing tournament** was held at the **Winter Gardens**.
- Apr 1944 **Joe Louis**, the legendary **American heavyweight boxing champion of the world**, gave an exhibition bout, against **Bob Smith**, at **Reeves Field, Old Bath Road**. It was his first British appearance in the ring.
- 1950s After the second world war boxing matches were regularly staged at three venues – the **Town Hall, Gloscat's Gym** and at **Grosvenor Hall**. The **Montpellier Boxing Club**, run by **Ivor Wakeman**, met weekly at the **Grosvenor Hall, Grosvenor Street**.

## CRICKET

- 1769 The *Gloucester Journal* noted that **Cheltenham** was a centre for **cricket**.
- 14 Apr 1834 It was announced in the *Cheltenham Journal* that the **Cheltenham Cricket Club** (already well-established) would commence playing in the **Field**, near the **Old Bath Road**, on Mon 21<sup>st</sup> and proposed playing every Mon, Wed and Sat throughout the season. Subscription lists had opened at the Libraries, presumably to finance the Club.
- 14 May 1842 The *Cheltenham Looker-On* announced that 'the **New Cheltenham Cricket Club**', established a fortnight earlier, was to have started play on this day in the **Park Gardens** but the arrangements had had to be cancelled.
- Jul 1842 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported on a series of matches being played between the **Cheltenham** and **Gloucester Cricket Clubs** in the **Park Gardens**. A separate match had been organised on the same ground between the **Cheltenham Cricket Club** and the **Cheltenham Tradesmen's Club**.
- Jul 1842 Eleven **single** and eleven **married** men of the **Cheltenham Union Cricket Club** arranged a match with a prize of **22 guineas**. The parties met in a large field on the **Bath Road** with the permission of the **Right Hon. Lord Northwick**, attracting a large number of residents and visitors, and between the innings the cricketers sat down to an excellent dinner provided by **Mr. Glover** of the **Bell Inn**. The game was 'easily won by the **single gentlemen**'.
- Jul 1843 A cricket match was played between an XI from the **Wellington Club** and an XI chosen from the **worst players** of the **Cheltenham** and **Prestbury Clubs**. Not surprisingly the **Wellingtons** were the victors. The same month the **Cheltenham Club** beat the **Gloucester Club** at the **Park Gardens**.
- 27 Jan 1844 The *Cheltenham Looker-On* announced that the **Cheltenham & Gloucestershire Cricket Club** was likely to be deprived of its ground in the **Park Gardens** which was shortly to be sold for building purposes. The paper suggested that supporters might club together to 'reserve' the cricket ground.
- 30 Mar 1844 The following advertisement appeared in the *Cheltenham Looker-On*:-  
**Wellington Cricket Club** – The above Club will meet early in the ensuing week in the **Park**

**Gardens.** Gentlemen wishing to become Members are requested to call on the Treasurer, **1, Keynsham Parade**, where a List of Subscribers and Members may be seen, and all particulars relating to the Rules, &c., known.

Subscription – One Guinea. Honorary Member – Five shillings & sixpence.

- 13 Apr 1844 The *Cheltenham Looker-On* reported on the various clubs at the start of the season. The ‘senior of these brotherhoods’, the **Cheltenham & Gloucestershire Club** had opened in the **Park Ground**. It had apparently received a large number of new subscribers since being ‘resuscitated’. The **Wellington Club**, which had formerly met in **Sandford Fields**, had arranged this year to play in **The Park** where the ground was in fine condition.
- Apr 1845 Having been reorganised, the **Cheltenham Cricket Club** had arranged the use of a new field to the left of **St. Paul’s Church** called **Cook’s Folly**. The Club met here twice a week during the season, playing town’s from further afield, e.g. **Stourport** in August that year.
- 14 Jun 1854 **The Grammar School** teamed up with the **Training College** in a match against **Cheltenham College**.
- Oct 1855 The ‘young gentlemen’ of **Cheltenham College** requested the engagement of **Mr. James Lillywhite** as instructor in cricket. **Lillywhite** had previously taught cricket at **Westminster School** (1849), **Eton** (1852), **Marlborough** (1853) and the **Clydesdale Club, Glasgow** (1854).
- 1 Mar 1856 **James ‘Jem’ Lillywhite** began employment at **Cheltenham College** teaching cricket and managing 17 acres of grounds.
- 9 May 1856 **Cheltenham College** held its first inter-schools cricket match. It was against **Marlborough College**.
- 2 Apr 1859 An advertisement in the *Cheltenham Looker-On* ran as follows:-  
**Cricketing Materials. James Lillywhite** (Teacher of Cricket to the **Cheltenham College**) Address **No.6 Suffolk Parade**, Cheltenham.
- 26 Aug 1860 The *Cheltenham Examiner* reported that a match between the **Cheltenham Cricket Club** and **Gloucester** was marred by the weather and by bad manners.
- 26 Dec 1860 A Boxing Day cricket match, organised by **James Lillywhite**, was played on the ice-covered **Pittville Lake**.
- 17 Jun 1861 A three-day cricket match was played on the **College Ground** between the **United All England Eleven** and **Twenty-two Past & Present Pupils of Cheltenham College**. The **Collegians** won by an innings and 86 runs. The **England** team included **John Wisden, William Caffyn, Tom Lockyer** and **John Lillywhite** (the brother of **Jem**).
- 1862-82 **James Lillywhite** owned a sports shop in **Regent Street, Cheltenham**, supplied by the family manufactory in **London**. He was a senior partner of the firm **James Lillywhite, Frowde & Co.** in **London** by **April 1874**.
- 3 Nov 1863 The original county side was formed, named the **Cheltenham & County of Gloucestershire Club**.
- Oct 1864 First annual meeting of **Cheltenham & County of Gloucester Cricket Club**.
- 12 Jun 1866 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported a match between the county side, the **Cheltenham & County of Gloucester Cricket Club** and **Warwickshire**. It was played at the then county ground in **Hales Road**.
- 1868 The county side played for the first time at **Lord’s**, against **MCC**, and won. The side included the three **Grace brothers – E.M., G.F. and Dr. W.G.**
- 1871 The county team was renamed the **Gloucestershire County Cricket Club**.
- 18 Jul 1872 **James Lillywhite**, the popular cricket coach at **Cheltenham College** for 17 years, proposed that a county match should be played on the **College Ground** in the summer holidays. First class cricket was played there for the first time on this date, a two-day county match against **Surrey**. **W.G. Grace** captained the **Gloucestershire** side which beat **Surrey** by an innings. The match established an annual event that was organised by **Lillywhite** until 1881.
- Aug 1872 **Jem Lillywhite** invited boys from the **workhouse** to a county cricket match on the **College Ground**.
- 19 May 1874 **Gilbert Laird Jessop** was born at **30, Cambray Place**.
- Aug 1875 The **Gloucestershire Cricket Club** Committee members’ objection to ‘musical band’ playing was overcome by a single vote. **Cheltenham Town Band** played during lunch at a match against **Surrey**.
- 1876 **W.G. Grace** scored **318 not out** against **Yorkshire** at the **College Ground**. The innings remains the highest ever made for the county. **Grace’s** first-class career spanned 43 years. He was over 60 when he retired. During this time he amassed **54,904** runs and took **2,879** wickets.
- Spring 1877 **Jem Lillywhite** proposed the idea of **cricket week** to the **Gloucestershire County Cricket Club** committee with **two games** played over **six days**.





Horace A. Ford, founder of Cheltenham Archery Club



Cheltenham Bowling Club, Suffolk Square - The 'Unwin' Pavilion, destroyed by fire in 1955.

Gilbert Laird Jessop - *'The Croucher'*  
b.1874 at 30 Cambray Place



Jack Russell, wicket-keeper for Gloucestershire  
(drawn by CLHS member Brian White)

Cheltenham Town Association Football Club Second XI - February 1909



Back row: R A Lyon, A J Smith, L V Munkton, P J Morris, C P Gater, C Mills  
Front row: T W Evans, E Wheatley, E A Gater, W E Shaw, C Collier

- Aug 1877 **W.G. Grace** took a record 17 wickets for 89 against **Nottinghamshire** at **Cheltenham**.
- 19 Aug 1878 **Lillywhite** was paid £120 to organise two successive county matches on the **College Ground**. It was a ‘pronounced social success’ and the event became known as ‘**Cricket Week**’. **W.G. Grace** and members of the **county XI** were given a complimentary banquet by the Mayor, **Baron Charles de Ferrieres** at the **Plough Hotel**.
- 11 Sep 1878 The *Cheltenham Examiner* reported on a match between **Australia** and **Gloucestershire**. **W.G. Grace** played.
- Jun 1879 **Charlton Kings Parish Cricket Club** started and played at **Ryeworth**.
- 1881 The **Cricket Week Mayor’s Banquet** was held at the **Queen’s Hotel** for the first time.
- 24 Nov 1882 **James Lillywhite** died at his home, **3 Queen’s Circus** aged **57**. He was buried at the **Borough Cemetery, Bouncer’s Lane** on **29 November**. Most of the shops in town closed as a mark of respect.
- 1883 **H.V. Page** and **W.O. Vizard’s** record ninth wicket partnership of 159 against **Nottinghamshire** still stands.
- May 1883 The **East Gloucestershire Cricket Club** played its first match, against the **Berkeley Hunt**, at the new **Charlton Park ground**.
- Aug 1883 **Edwin Lawrence, Jem Lillywhite’s** son-in-law, took over the management of **Cricket Week**.
- 1884 **St. Stephen’s Cricket Club** was founded.
- 1884/5 The **county’s** second professional player, **William Woof**, took 100 wickets in his first two seasons with **Gloucestershire** before working as a coach at **Cheltenham College**. Many local people will remember **Woof’s sports shop** in **Regent Street**.
- 1885 Staff at **Arle Court** took to playing cricket in a nearby field, founding the future **Hatherley Cricket Club**.
- 8 Jun 1886 The cricketer **Walter Raleigh Gilbert** was caught pilfering in the dressing room during a match between the **East Gloucestershire Cricket Club** and a **Stroud** team. Found guilty at the Police Court the following Monday, **Gilbert** served 28 days hard labour in **Gloucester Prison**, following which he emigrated to **Canada**. He had played for an **England XI** in **1876** and in **1886** had become a professional cricketer. What makes his petty crime doubly shameful is that he was a cousin of the famous **William Gilbert Grace** and the husband of a lady of the **Lillywhite** family.
- 1888 **Hatherley cricket** moved to a field known as **Tyne Leasow** (the former **Dowty** car park).
- 14 Jun 1888 The first **county** cricket match to played at the **East Gloucestershire Ground** took place against **Nottinghamshire**.
- Aug 1888 Amid centenary celebrations of **King George III’s** visit to the town in **1788**, **Gloucestershire** beat **Australia** by 8 wickets.
- 1889 Playing at **Cheltenham**, **W.G. Grace** carried his bat throughout **Gloucestershire’s** innings against **Middlesex** while scoring 127 not out.
- 7 Jun 1889 **Hatherley Cricket Club** played the **Golden Valley Cricket Club**.
- 1893 **C.L. Townsend** took a hat-trick against **Somerset** at the **College Ground**.
- 1893 The **Hatherley Night School’s** fixture list included games against **the Pawnbrokers C.C., Sign of the Cross C.C., Unemployed Hairdressers C.C.** and **Gloucester Early Closing C.C.**
- Aug 1895 **W.G. Grace** celebrated his **25<sup>th</sup>** year as **Gloucestershire captain** by scoring 113 runs against **Nottinghamshire**, his **8<sup>th</sup>** century of the season.
- Aug 1896 The highest ever crowd was recorded at **Cheltenham** – just under **8,000** – for a match between **Gloucestershire** and **Australia**.
- 21 Jun 1897 The **Victoria Cricket Ground** was opened by **Dr. W.G. Grace**.
- 1898 **Gilbert Laird Jessop** – ‘**The Croucher**’ – captained the **county**, replacing **W.G. Grace**, until **1912**. He lived in **Cambray Place** and was a pupil of the **Grammar School**. He was regarded as the greatest hitter in the history of the game. During his career he scored **53** first class centuries, averaging **82.7** runs per hour.
- 9 Apr 1900 **Edwin Lawrence** died aged **57**, having managed **Cricket Week** for **17 years**.
- Aug 1901 **Cricket Week’s 25<sup>th</sup>** year was celebrated with matches against **Yorkshire** and **Australia**. **Gloucestershire** lost both matches by an innings.
- 15 Jun 1903 The last first-class cricket match was held at the **East Gloucestershire Ground**.
- 13 Aug 1906 Cheltenham **Cricket Week** was renamed the **Cheltenham Cricket Festival** when **three county** matches were played on the **College Ground** for the first time. The proceeds from this first **Cricket Festival** were given to **Eliza**, the widow of **James Lillywhite**.
- 1906 **C.L. Townsend** scored 214 for **Gloucestershire** against **Worcestershire** at the **College Ground**.
- 1907 At the **Cheltenham Cricket Festival** **Gilbert Jessop** hit 53 runs in 15 minutes.
- 1907 **Hatherley Cricket Club** started to play on the fields of **Alma Villa Farm** (future **Lakeside**

- Junior School).**
- 11 Jun 1907 The **Gloucestershire County Cricket XI** dismissed **Northants** for 12 runs. It remains the **lowest score** ever recorded in first-class inter-county cricket.
- 1909 **E.M. Grace**, brother of **W.G.**, retired as the **Gloucestershire Club** secretary after **33 years**, ending the **Grace family's** 40-year connection with the club.
- 3 Jul 1910 **Charles Barnett**, the **Gloucestershire** and **England** cricketer was born in **Kings Road, Cheltenham**.
- 1912 Heavy rain and poor attendance led to the **Cricket Festival** raising only **£386.13s**, half the usual takings.
- Aug 1913 The writer **P.G. Wodehouse** attended the **Cricket Festival** while visiting his parents who had lived in the town for 10 years. He chose the name for his most famous character after watching **Warwickshire** all-rounder **Percy Jeeves**.
- Jan 1914 The **Gloucestershire County Cricket Club** AGM was held at the **Cheltenham Town Hall**, the first time outside **Bristol**.
- Sep 1914 **W.G. Grace** expressed disbelief that **county cricket** was still being played against the backdrop of war.
- 1914-18 **Gloucestershire County Cricket Club** suspended play.
- Apr 1919 The **Hatherley & Badgeworth Cricket Club** was formed from the former **Hatherley Night School club**. It played its first fixture on **21 Jun 1919**.
- Aug 1919 The **Cricket Festival** resumed with matches against **Warwickshire, Worcestershire** and **Leicestershire**.
- Aug 1920 **Charlie Parker**, from **Prestbury**, bowled **Leicestershire** out for 83, equalling a record previously set by **W.G. Grace** and **Charles Townsend**. **Parker** went on to take over 100 wickets per season over the next 15 years, but oddly was only selected to play for **England** once.
- 18 Oct 1922 A dinner was held to celebrate the **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the **Victoria Cricket Ground**.
- 27 Jun 1923 The first **county** cricket match played at the **Victoria Ground** was against **Glamorgan** when **A.E. Dipper** scored 252 for **Gloucestershire**.
- Aug 1923 The *Gloucestershire Echo* published a letter asking for a portion of canvas to be removed from the perimeter of the field during the **Cricket Festival** for those men and boys experiencing hard times who 'do not share very largely in the pleasures of life'. Needless to say, the canvas remained in place.
- Jul 1924 **Lieut. Col. Douglas Robinson**, the new **Captain** of **Gloucestershire**, and local councillor **Bates** introduced the idea of a **Festival of Cricket** on the **Victoria Grounds, Benhall**, in June of July the following year, before the schools broke up and when the town would still be full of people.
- Jun 1925 **Gloucestershire** played a **two-day-match Festival** at the **Victoria Ground**, losing to **Lancashire** but beating **Worcestershire**.
- Aug 1925 A **Cricket Festival Ball** was held in the newly refurbished **Town Hall** attended by over 200 guests.
- 1926 **Cricket** at the **East Gloucestershire Club** was discontinued and the remaining **15 players** disbanded. (There were **234 tennis players** at the time.)
- May 1926 **W.C. Woof**, known as '**Woofie**', retired as coach and groundsman at **Cheltenham College**. He was replaced by **George Dennett**.
- Aug 1927 **Herbert 'H.V.' Page**, athlete and Classics master at **College 1875-1923** died. He had been the organiser of the **College** games programme, including much of the **cricket** success. He also played cricket for **Gloucestershire** at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Aug 1927 **Gloucestershire** drew against a visiting **New Zealand** team. **Charles Dacre** from the **New Zealand** team announced his intention to settle in England and to play for **Gloucestershire**.
- Aug 1928 In five days the **Gloucestershire** all-rounder **Wally Hammond** scored **362 runs** (including two centuries), taking 16 wickets and holding 11 catches.
- Aug 1928 Cheltenham MP **Sir James Agg-Gardner** died. He had been a staunch supporter of **Cricket Week** since its beginning, and a friend compared his worthy qualities to those of **James Lillywhite**.
- 1933 **W.R. Hammond** scored 231 against **Derbyshire** at the **College Ground**.
- 1934 **C.J. Barnett** and **W.R. Hammond** scored a second wicket partnership of 251 against **Sussex** at the **College Ground**. This is still a county record.
- Aug 1934 Special coaches brought **2,000 spectators** from Cheltenham and Gloucester to see **Gloucestershire** play 12-a-side against the **Cirencester & District** team on the **Colesbourne Park Ground**, owned by **Lt. Col. H.C. Elwes**.
- Aug 1935 **Gloucestershire**, led by new **captain, Dallas Page**, unexpectedly beat **South Africa** on their first visit to the **College Ground**, ending a run of 14 victories on their world tour, including a 157-run

- defeat of **England** at **Lord's**. The *Star* newspaper suggested that the entire **Gloucestershire** team should represent **England**.
- Aug 1936 Over **21,000 spectators** attended the **Cheltenham Cricket Festival** over nine days, including more **women** spectators who were, according to the *Gloucestershire Echo*, 'now genuinely interested in the game'.  
The **captain, Dallas Page**, died tragically in a car crash near **Cirencester** just a few hours after **Gloucestershire** won the final match of the season.  
**William Woof** died at home in **Suffolk Road**. He had been **Gloucestershire's** slow-arm bowler for **20 years** and the **College** cricket coach for 40 years. He ran a sports business in **Cheltenham**.
- Sep 1936 **George Dennett**, the former **Gloucestershire** cricketer and successor to **Woof** as **College** coach, did at home in **Old Bath Road** after a lengthy illness. He was described as 'a great gentleman'.
- 1937 Two **county** cricket records were set in the same match at the **College Ground**, against **Worcestershire**, which still stand – **B.O. Allen** and **W.R. Hammond's** third wicket partnership of 269 and **T. Goddard's** 10 wickets in an innings.
- Aug 1939 Nearly **9,000 spectators** lined the route along the **Promenade** and gave a warm welcome to **Rolph Grant** and his touring **West Indies** team.
- 1940-44 No **Cheltenham Cricket Festival** was held during the war.
- 14 Sep 1940 A cricket match between a **British Empire XI** and **Capt. J.W.A. Stephenson's XI** was held in aid of the **Red Cross**.
- 14 Jun 1941 A **British Empire XI** played the **Cheltenham Town XI** at cricket.
- 1948 **Tom Graveney's** cricket career began when he joined the **county side**. His brother, **Ken**, was already playing for **Gloucestershire**. **Tom** became a commentator alongside **John Arlott** and **Brian Johnston**. During his 12-year career with the **GCCC**, the last two as captain, **Tom** scored almost 20,000 runs, took 57 wickets with his occasional leg breaks and held 227 catches. He went on to even more success with **Worcestershire**, and this enabled him to establish a cricket record that remains to this day – he is the only player to have scored over 10,000 runs for **two** county sides. For **England** **Tom** played in **79** tests and even stood in as wicket keeper for the injured **Godfrey Evans** on one occasion.
- Aug 1948 The economic effects of the war gave a boost to **Cheltenham's** tourist industry as the town was more accessible from the Midlands and Wales than coastal resorts. **Cricket** was one attraction and many visitors arranged their summer holidays to coincide with the **Cricket Festival**.
- 7 Dec 1949 The **Hatherley & Reddings Cricket Club** formed a social club.
- 27 Jun 1951 The **Australian Women's Cricket XI** played the **West District XI** at Cheltenham.
- Aug 1951 Attendance at the **Cricket Festival** dropped dramatically when **2½ inches of rain** fell in the first eight days of the month.
- 28 Jan 1955 The **Hatherley & Reddings Cricket Club** agreed to move to **South Park, Chargrove Lane**. It was formally opened on **26 May 1956**.
- 14 Jun 1958 This was the **Hatherley & Reddings Cricket Club's** blackest day – they only scored 5 runs and **Broadway's J. Oliver** took all 10 wickets for no runs.
- Aug 1962 Improvements were made to the **College Ground** and spectator facilities to encourage new members and to alleviate **Gloucestershire County Cricket Club's** financial difficulties.
- Aug 1965 The **Cricket Festival** brochure included listings of all the fringe events in **Cheltenham** and surrounding area. 'State-of-the-game' details of matches were posted in the shop windows of **Cavendish House** and **The Famous** to publicise the event.
- Aug 1967 **Four matches** were played at the **Cricket Festival** for the first time. It was described as 'an experiment for purely financial reasons' since there were no additional costs in putting on a fourth match.
- 1968 **Tom Graveney** received the **O.B.E.** for services to cricket. He continued to be closely involved in the game into this century as **President** of the **MCC**.
- Aug 1968 A **Cricket Festival** match was played on a **Sunday** for the first time.
- Aug 1969 The first **John Player Sunday League (JPL)** game was played on the **Cheltenham College Ground**. At a **Festival** dance and disco **Alderman Aimbury Dodwell** organised a 20 minute 6-a-side **indoor cricket match** in the **Town Hall** between the **Gloucestershire county** players and a '**W.G. Grace**' team. The **Grace** team won by 22 runs. **Dress code** was scrapped at the dance for **600** guests for the first time.
- 1970 **Gloucestershire County Cricket Club** celebrated its **centenary** year but plummeted from the top to the bottom of the league table.
- 1970s **Tom Graveney** will be remembered by many as the licensee of the **Royal Oak, Prestbury** and the **George** in **Winchcombe**.
- Aug 1971 **Mike Bisset** was awarded the first '**Glorious Gloster**' for his contributions the previous year.

- The bronze sculpture was in the form of a hand holding a miniature flagpole from which hung a flag in the **county's colours**. It was designed by sculptress **Josephina de Vasconcellos** and cast in Surrey by **Viktor Tozer**.
- 16 Aug 1971 The **Cheltenham Cricket Festival** pleaded for extra financial support from the Borough Council.
- Aug 1972 An extra stand was erected at the Chapel end of the **College Ground**. The first ever match on the **Ground** to be televised was played.
- Aug 1975 Both Sundays were used for **JPL (John Player Sunday League)** matches for the first time, extending the **Cricket Festival** to **11 consecutive days**. **John Mortimore** made a final appearance for **Gloucestershire**, having played a record **71 matches** over **25 years**.
- 4 Aug 1975 A **Civic Society blue plaque** was unveiled at **30 Cambray Place** to commemorate the birthplace of **Gilbert Laird Jessop**, the **Gloucestershire** and **England** batsman. The occasion was witnessed by his son.
- 1976 The **Hatherley & Reddings Cricket Club** won the **Whitbread Cup**.
- 1977 **Mike J. Procter** scored a century before lunch for **Gloucestershire** against **Worcestershire** at the **Cheltenham Cricket Festival**.
- Aug 1977 **Cotswold Hospital Radio** broadcast live to patients from the **Cheltenham Festival Ground** for the first time.
- 1979 **Mike Procter** gained a **hat-trick** against **Yorkshire** at the **College Ground**.
- Aug 1979 **Cheltenham College** Old Boy **Chris Coley** ran his first **Cheltenham Festival**. He established **corporate hospitality** at the **College Ground** in business marquees for the first time, and used his marketing skills to develop sponsorship and advertising.
- Aug 1980 **John Arlott**, the legendary 'Voice of Cricket', made his final broadcast from the **College Ground** during a **JPL** match. He had reported on the Festival since **1947**.
- 7 Aug 1980 **Mike Procter** took **14-76** for **Gloucestershire** against **Worcestershire** at the **College Ground**.
- 1981 **Chris Coley**, organiser of the **Cricket Festival**, began running his own **corporate hospitality** company called '**Sporting Concepts**'.
- 1982 **Don Perry**, former cricket captain at **Cheltenham Grammar School**, was appointed chairman of the **Gloucestershire County Cricket Club**, replacing **Ken Graveney**. **Duraflex** became the first major sponsor of the **Cricket Festival**.
- 1983 **Mervyn Moore** died. He was the former **Gloucestershire CCC** president and life-long supporter, chairman of the **Cheltenham** regional committee for more than 20 years and a former **Cheltenham College** pupil.
- 1983 Young wicket keeper **Jack Russell** joined the **Gloucestershire** team.
- 1984 The **Hatherley & Reddings Cricket Club** were **First Division Champions** in the **Three Counties League**.
- 24 Jun 1984 The **Hatherley & Reddings Cricket Club's** new ground at **North Park** was officially opened.
- Aug 1985 The **Gloucestershire** player **Philip Bainbridge** was named as one of *Wisden's* **Five Cricketers of the Year**.  
**Suzee Moor**, wife of **Duraflex's** managing director, organised a glamorous **fund-raising fashion show** in the town. Players and professional models held hands as they walked down the catwalk. A highlight was **David 'Syd' Lawrence** breakdancing.
- 11 May 1986 **Gloucestershire CCC** played the visiting **Indian** side at the **Victoria Ground**.
- Aug 1986 **Don Perry**, Chairman of **Gloucestershire CCC**, became **Mayor of Cheltenham**.
- Aug 1987 **Wisteria Books** made its first appearance at the **Cricket Festival** – a small, family-run business owned by **Grenville Simons**, author of *Lillywhite's Legacy*, the definitive history of **Cheltenham Cricket Festival**. The company sells antiquarian and second-hand cricket books and ephemera. Other trade stands followed in subsequent years.
- Aug 1988 **Cricket Festival** gate receipts reached a record **£35,000**.
- Jul 1990 The **Cheltenham College** examination timetables and school term times necessitated the **Cricket Festival** beginning in **July** instead of **August**. Three days after the end of the Festival, on the day it would normally have started, **Cheltenham** recorded the highest ever temperature in the UK up to that point – 37.1C.
- Jul 1992 At the **Cricket Festival** **journalists** were given a new location on the balcony above the racquet courts, with a panoramic view over the **College Ground**. Formerly this viewpoint was only accessible by masters while the press had had a tent at the Chapel end of the ground.
- 29 Jul 1992 **Gloucestershire** was in the quarter finals of the **NatWest Trophy**. Because of a major refurbishment at the **Bristol** ground, the match against **Essex** had to be played at **Cheltenham College**. **Essex** won with 17 balls to spare.
- Jul 1993 The **Montpellier Wine Bar** had a marquee at the **Cricket Festival** for the first time and proved a popular place for players to have a post-match drink.

- 1994 **Geoff Smith** became the new head groundsman at **Cheltenham College**. He had previously worked as an engineer at **Dowty's**. He had gained experience of preparing pitches when caring for grounds at **Arle Court**.
- Jul 1994 **Astec Communications** sponsored the **Cricket Festival** for the first time.
- Jul 1995 A dinner was held at the **Town Hall** to commemorate the **125<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the founding of the **Cricket Festival**. An auction raised **£3,500** – the proceeds from the auction and the dinner were split between **Gloucestershire CCC** and **Lord's Taverners**. The impressionist **Rory Bremner** entertained 480 guests.
- Jul 1996 **Norman** and **Janet Walters** ran the **Gloucestershire CCC shop** at the **Cricket Festival** for the last time. **Norman** had had a wide variety of jobs with the club for more than **50 years**.
- 1997-8 **Gloucestershire** won all **four championship matches** and three out of four **AXA Life league** fixtures at the **Cricket Festival** over the next two years.
- 1998 **Geoff Swift**, the head groundsman at **Cheltenham College**, won the annual **England & Wales Cricket Board Cup** for preparing the best outground in England. He was to win it again on several occasions.
- 1999 A **benefit concert** was held for **Gloucestershire captain Mark Alleyne**, entitled *Gloucestershire Sport in Words and Song*. It included performances by singer-songwriter **Johnny Coppin**, **Edward Gillespie** and **Sid Powell**.
- 2 Jun 1999 A **one-armed** cricketer from **Wyman's Brook** was selected for the **Gloucestershire Under 16s** squad.
- 2 Aug 1999 **Gloucestershire** won the **Benson & Hedges Super Cup Final** – its first trophy in 22 years.
- 20 Aug 1999 **Gloucestershire** won the **NatWest Trophy**, its second trophy of the season.
- 10 Jun 2000 **Gloucestershire** won the **Benson & Hedges Cup**, creating a unique triple.
- Jul 2000 The **Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society** became the new sponsors of the **Cricket Festival**. A **Ghurka Brass Band** provided first class entertainment on the final day of the Festival with a medley of tunes including *Don't Cry For Me Argentina*.
- Jul 2001 A shopping mall of **trade stands** was set up for the first time at the **Cricket Festival**. A benefit for the **Gloucestershire** player **Mike Smith** included an **auction** of cricket memorabilia, held in the **College** gymnasium. *The Times* reported that 'No venue in the land evokes such unanimous affection, nor such protective instincts. Counties relish playing here, journalists compete for the coverage and spectators flock to the ambience of both town and ground'.
- Jul 2002 The **Cheltenham Cricket Festival** was described as 'part of the social scene, along with Ascot, Glyndebourne and Henley'.
- Jul 2003 **Chris Coley** celebrated 25 years as **Cricket Festival** co-ordinator.

## CROQUET

- 1860s Some of croquet's most influential promoters were from the Cheltenham area. Several **croquet 'clubs'** were formed, consisting of ten or a dozen families who lived within driving distance of one another and whose gardens offered the necessary space.
- 22 Jul 1865 An advertisement appeared in the *Cheltenham Looker-On* for the sale of **croquet equipment** at **Lillywhite's sports shop**.
- Mid 1860s **J.H. Hale**, of **2 Lansdown Villas**, was working on the tactics and format of croquet. He invented the **bisque** and the **Hale setting**, which remained in use until superseded in **1922** by the **Willis setting** still in use today.
- 1868 The **Reverend Law**, one of the pre-eminent players of the day, having played in the first '**Open Championship**' in **1867**, moved from **Chipping Campden** to be **Curate** at the Parish Church of **St. Philip** and **St. James** in **Leckhampton**.
- 1869 A **Croquet Tournament** was held on the **County Cricket Ground** in **Hales Road**, a site described by the *Cheltenham Looker-On* as 'an objectionable distance from fashionable quarters'. **Miss Caroline Griffiths**, one of **28 female competitors**, won the **ladies' prize**, a gold bracelet with a croquet device valued at **10 guineas**. The **Rev. Law** won the **gentlemen's** event.
- May 1869 **Cheltenham Croquet Club** was founded on a disused bowling green that formed two courts in **Montpellier Gardens**. It was initiated by, among others, the **Rev. Arthur Lillie** who had learnt the game from the **Rev. Law** of **Leckhampton**. It is now one of the three **longest-established** clubs in Britain along with **Brighton** and the **All England Club** at **Wimbledon**.
- 1876 The last recorded Cheltenham **croquet tournament** for some years was held.
- Aug 1898 After a lapse of interest in favour of **tennis**, **croquet** found renewed popularity in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and a **tournament** was staged by the **East Gloucestershire Club**, **Old Bath Road**.

- Mar 1901 The Committee of the **East Gloucestershire Club** recorded that the recent increase in its membership was largely due to the popularity of the **croquet**.
- Nov 1902 A meeting was held at the **Queen's Hotel** by those members of the **East Gloucestershire Club** who were interested in forming a **croquet club**.
- 1905 The **Cheltenham Croquet Club** hosted the **Croquet Association Gold Medal competitions**, the first time that the event had been held outside **London**. The club went on to host many more **Croquet Association** events.
- 2 Mar 1904 The first General Meeting of the **East Gloucestershire Croquet Club** was held. An agreement was drawn up two months later for the **East Gloucestershire Croquet Club** to lease land from the **East Gloucestershire Club** (which was rented from the **Charlton Park Estate**).
- 1908 The **Croquet Club** leased additional land to the south of courts 1 to 8.
- 1909 At the AGM it was agreed that the name of the club should become **The Cheltenham Croquet Club**.
- 1913 The main pavilion at the **Croquet Club** was built by **E. Saunders & Sons**, and still stands today. **Capt. Lock** presented the club with all the furniture for it at the opening.
- 1916 As part of the War effort **sheep** were placed on the top four **croquet courts** that were lying fallow. There were already pigs on the nearby allotments at the eastern end of the ground.
- 1920 Land for the present courts beside the **Old Bath Road** was purchased for £800.
- 1923 Membership of the **Croquet Club** had increased so much after the War that it was proposed to limit the membership to **100 members**. The figure was amended to **120**, but still defeated. Ironically membership then fell throughout the rest of the 1920s.
- 1925 The second **Test Match** of the international series was played at the **Cheltenham Croquet Club**.
- 1928 The lawns at the **Croquet Club** were publicly acknowledged to be the **best in the country**.
- 1931 A '**country membership**' was introduced, open to people living more than **30 miles** from **Cheltenham**.
- 23 Jul 1934 The **annual open tournament** of the **Cheltenham Croquet Club** began.
- 1937 **Cheltenham Croquet Club** again hosted the second **Test Match** of the international series.
- 1939 The **Croquet Club tearoom** was built. Before this, tea had been prepared in a shed behind the pavilion.
- 1950 It is rumoured that government official **Edgar Jackson** chose Cheltenham as the new site for **GCHQ** because he was impressed by the town's croquet club.
- 1950s The Second World War had seen a serious decline in membership of the **Croquet Club** that continued throughout the 1950s.
- 1953 The **Cheltenham Croquet Club** was effectively bankrupt and a **Recovery Fund** was launched at the AGM.
- 1955 **Cattle** broke into the **Croquet Club** grounds, causing extensive damage. They did this again in **1969**.
- 1957 **Electricity** was installed in the **main pavilion**.
- 1963 It was reported that 'only about **30 club members** could honestly be called tournament players'.
- 1964 **Green fees** were introduced to help the finances of the struggling **Croquet Club**. It was one shilling per day regardless of how many games were played. Tournaments, practice and, strangely, morning play were exempt.
- 1972 The **Club** has hosted the **British National Championships** every year (except 1983) since this date, and has been one of the principal venues for international matches.
- 1974 The **Croquet Club** hosted the third **Test Match** between **Australia** and **New Zealand**.
- 1976 The **Croquet Club** hosted a match against players from **South Africa**, though it could not be described as a Test Match owing to political sensitivities at the time.
- 1977 The **clock** that straddles the gap between the pavilion and the tearoom was bought out of the **legacy** of **Lord Parmoor**. He had been a member in the **1960s** before moving to **London** in **1969**.
- 1980 The **green fees** were done away with and subscriptions increased to cover the loss in income to the **Croquet Club**.
- 1984 Membership of the **Croquet Club** passed the **200 mark**.
- 1986 **Great Britain** played **New Zealand** at the **Cheltenham Croquet Club**.
- 1988 The **Croquet Club** hosted the first contest between **Great Britain** and the **United States** for the **Solomon Trophy**.
- 1989 Members' generosity in raising capital enabled the **Croquet Club** to buy a new **triple-cutter mower** at a cost of **£12,000**.
- 1996 The **Cheltenham Croquet Club** was the venue for the final round of matches when **Australia** played the **United States** and **Great Britain** played **New Zealand**.

- 2000 The staggering sum of **£44,000** was raised in loans and donations from members of the **Croquet Club** to allow **improvements** to courts 9 and 10 and George's Lawn to go ahead.
- Mar 2001 An **arson attack** occurred to the **Croquet Club 'bridge room'** (named after the game of bridge). After this the **Croquet Club** was refurbished to become the **national headquarters** of the sport.
- 2003 The **Cheltenham Croquet Club** ran the **National Open Championships**.
- Mar 2004 The **Cheltenham Croquet Club** celebrated the **centenary** of the first tournament to be held on the present site.
- 2005 The **World Individual Championships** were hosted by the **Cheltenham Croquet Club**.
- 2006 The **Cheltenham Croquet Club** is the premier club in the country, staging more tournaments, including internationals, than any other. It is also the largest with **11 lawns** and **220 members**. It has been home to the national headquarters of the **Croquet Association** since **2002**.

## FOOTBALL

- 1606 A "**Football Close**" existed. It was a small close of arable land west of the **parish churchyard** and probably just north of what is now **Chester Walk**. Presumably football was played on the land at one time. The name was retained until at least the **1770s** when the Manor Court Book records that the land was transferred from **Daniel Cooke** to **Ann Travell**.
- 1887 Although Association Football was popular in other parts of the country from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onward, the preferred sport in much of the West of England, including **Cheltenham**, was initially **rugby union**. Evidence has recently come to light that football was played in the town as early as **1887** – a programme from the **1933 FA Cup match** between **Cheltenham Town** and **Blackpool** stated that the sport was introduced to **Cheltenham** by **Mr. Albert Close White**, a Cheltonian who came into contact with the game while a student in London. Upon returning to the town to become a teacher, he organised trials for prospective players at the **East Gloucestershire Club** and a team was formed. This team evolved over time into what is now **Cheltenham Town Football Club**. Many of the early players were men associated with the Parish Schools and the local churches.
- 26 Dec 1890 A **Boxing day** football match was played between **Cheltenham Town** and the **Bristol Hornets** in **Montpellier Gardens**.
- 12 Mar 1892 **Cheltenham Town FC**, an amateur side, played its first game against **Dean Close School** at **Prestbury** and was defeated 4 – 3.
- 1894 Former **Derby County** player **W. Haden** advertised for prospective players and a meeting was held at the **Great Western Hotel** with a view to taking **Cheltenham Town FC** forward. This was the first year that the club appeared in the **Gloucestershire Football Association** records. Some of **Cheltenham Town's** opponents at this time were **Cheltenham United, Cheltenham Engineers, Cheltenham Parish Church, Cavendish House, The Grammar School** and **Dean Close School**.
- 1896-7 **Albert Close White** became instrumental in setting up the **Mid Gloucestershire League**, the first organised football competition in **Gloucestershire**. **Cheltenham Town** were the **Mid-Gloucester League Champions** that first season.
- 1899 The **Cheltenham League** was formed and **Cheltenham Town** entered a **second team**. The early grounds used by the teams were situated in **Eldorado Road (Grafton Cricket Ground)**, the **Victoria Cricket Ground** and **Agg Gardner's Recreation Ground** in **Pittville**. The **Gloucestershire** and **England** cricketer **Gilbert Laird Jessop** also played for **Cheltenham Town** in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Other early players of note were **Charles Barnett**, the cricketer, and **Mr. Phil Bach**, who later played for **Sunderland** and became one of the only two players to graduate from **Cheltenham Town** before going on to play for the full **England** team. (The other was **Tim Ward** in the **1930s**.)
- Oct 1900 The annual meeting of **Cheltenham Town FC** was held at the **Prince of Wales Hotel**.
- 1901 **Cheltenham Town FC** moved to the first of its more permanent grounds at **Whaddon Lane**, on the corner of what is now **Cleeve View Road** and **Whaddon Road**, with its headquarters at the **Prince of Wales Hotel** (later the **Cotswold Hotel**, then **Stanford House**).
- Oct 1901 The annual meeting of the **Cheltenham Town Association Football Club** was held at the **Prince of Wales Hotel**, as in previous years, chaired by **Mr. A.C. White**.
- 1902-3 **Cheltenham Town** were **Gloucester & District League Champions**, and again in **1905-6**.
- 1903 **Cheltenham Town FC** started to play in **red** jerseys. Prior to this they had played in **ruby**-coloured jerseys and had been known as the **Rubies** or the '**Garden Towners**'. (They gained the nickname '**The Robins**' some time in the early **1930s**.)





Cheltenham Open Badminton Tournament, Winter Garden 25th & 26th February 1909. Miss H Hogarth and Miss M Lucas, winners of the Ladies' Championship Doubles.



Right Hon. A J Balfour 24th September 1909 at Cleeve Hill Golf Links. Partnered by Hon. Guy Charteris (in white)



Polo at Prestbury Park



30th April 1927 Push Ball tournament on the Athletic Ground. Old Pats v. Ambulance Team



Baker Street YMCA Boys' Club - Cheltenham Table Tennis champions in 1944



Meet of the Cotswold Hounds

- 1904-5 The **Cheltenham Town FC** was disbanded briefly between these years, but was revived by a **Mr. Andrews** and returned to league action in **1905**. A ‘revival’ friendly against **Aston Villa Reserves** also took place at the **Old Pats Club**. The club played at **Woods Field in Cemetery Road**, then **Carter’s Field on Prestbury Road**, part of which is now the **Marchant’s Coach depot**. Apparently **Carter’s Field** had a poor pitch and spectator facilities were basic. Seating was even borrowed from the **Gloucestershire County Cricket Club** in the winter.
- 1907 The annual meeting of the town **Association Football League** was held at the **Lamb Hotel**.
- Jul 1907 **Mr Grove** chaired the annual meeting of the **St. Paul’s United Association Football Club** at the **St. Paul’s Training College Practising School**.
- 1910-11 **Cheltenham Town** became **Cheltenham League Champions**, and again in **1913-14** when they entered two leagues.
- 1913-14 Following a successful season during which they became **Cheltenham League Champions** and **North Gloucestershire League Champions**, **Cheltenham Town FC** disbanded for the period of the First World War, reforming again in **1918**. The **FA Cup** was entered for the first time in **1914** but **Cheltenham Town** withdrew before playing a game.
- 1917/18 Four acres of the **football ground** at **Cheltenham College** were given over to the production of **vegetables** to help with the **war effort**.
- 1919 **Cheltenham Town FC** played its **first FA Cup match**, against **Chippenham Town**, losing 4 –0.
- 1922 **Cheltenham Town FC** gained acceptance to the higher standard **Gloucestershire Northern Senior League**.
- 1927-8 **Leckhampton** won the **Junior Challenge Cup (Glos. North)**.
- 1927-8 **Reg Smith** scored a **Cheltenham Town FC** record (amateur years) of **63 goals** in one season.
- 1928-9 **Cheltenham Town** became **Gloucestershire Northern Senior League Champions**. The Reserves won the title in **1932-3**.
- 1929-30 **Cheltenham Town** won the **Gloucestershire Northern Senior Amateur Cup**, and again in **1930-31**. The Reserves won the same Cup in **1932-3**, **1933-34** and **1934-5**.
- 1929-30 **Sunningend** won the **Junior Challenge Cup (Glos. North)**.
- 1931 **Cheltenham Town FC** moved to the **Cheltenham Original Brewery Sports Ground** in **Whaddon Road**, which remains its home today. The present car park had been **kennels** for the **Cotswold Hunt**.
- 1931-2 **All Saints Old Boys** won the **Junior Challenge Cup (Glos. North)**.
- 1932 **Cheltenham Town FC** turned **professional**, joining the **Birmingham Combination**, and appointed its first proper ‘**manager**’, **George Blackburn** (formerly of **Aston Villa** and **Cardiff**), although he had the title of **club captain**. Between **1932** and **1999** the club’s teams consisted mainly of semi-professional players who earned money from both playing football and day jobs. Local amateurs and the occasional full professional player or manager also appeared.
- 1932 **Carlisle United** were defeated **2-1** by **Cheltenham Town**, the club’s only win over a **Football League club in the FA Cup** as a non-league club.
- 1933 **Cheltenham Town** goalkeeper **Frank Davis** won an **Amateur international cap** for **England v. Wales**.
- 1933-4 **Bishops Cleeve** won the **Junior Challenge Cup (Glos. North)**.
- 1934-5 **Cheltenham Town** won the **Leamington Hospital Cup**.
- 13 Jan 1934 The legendary **third round cup tie** was played at the **Athletic Ground** between **Cheltenham Town** and **Blackpool**. It was held here for capacity reasons. The roar of the 10,000-strong crowd could be heard at **Dean Close School** (where the **rugby club** was playing **Penarth**). Although **Cheltenham** took the lead with a goal from **Payne** within five minutes of the start, **Blackpool** won 3-1.
- 1935 **Cheltenham Town FC** joined the **Southern League** with whom it remained for **50 years** with relatively little success apart from a **Southern League Cup** in **1958** and a runners-up spot behind **Guilford** in **1956**.
- 1935 **Cheltenham Town** achieved their record win, 12-0 against **Chippenham Rovers** in the **FA Cup**.
- 1935 **James Currier** transferred from **Cheltenham Town** to **Bolton Wanderers**.
- 1935-6 **Charlton Kings** won the **Junior Challenge Cup (Glos. North)**. They won again in **1963-4** and **1973-4**.
- 1937 A limited company was formed - **Cheltenham Town Association Football Club Limited**, with 412 shareholders paying 10 shillings each. Among the first shareholders were club secretary **Charles Tortonese**, **George Dowty**, **George Bence** (the **Bence** company is the present **shirt sponsor**) and the infamous **Captain Butt** of the **Haw Bridge murder** mystery.
- 1937 **Tim Ward**, from **Charlton Kings**, transferred from **Cheltenham Town** to **Derby County**. He made **238** appearances and won **2 England caps**. (He was one of the only two **Cheltenham**

- Town players to progress to the full **England** team.) He later played for **Barnsley** and managed **Derby County**.
- 1937-8 **Charlton Kings** won the **Senior Amateur Cup (Glos. North)**. They did this again in **1946-7, 1947-8** and **1948-9**.
- 1937-8 Two **Cheltenham Town** players transferred to **Football League** clubs – **Cliff Thorley** to **Bristol City** and **Jack Wheeler** to **Birmingham City**. Other players who moved to **League** clubs during the **1930s** were **Jack Haycox** and **Roy Hill (Newport County)**, **Reg Watts (Bristol City)**, **Jimmy Heal (Doncaster Rovers)**, and **Jack Bowles (Stockport County)**.
- 1939-45 **Cheltenham Town FC** was disbanded due to **World War II**.
- 1945 **Cheltenham Town's** ground and the neighbouring **bowling club** were given to the **Borough Council** by the **Brewery** as a **VE Day** gift. The site was renamed the **Victory Ground**.
- 1946-7 **Dowty Equipment** won the **Junior Challenge Cup (Glos. North)**.
- 1947 **Cheltenham Town** was defeated 4-2 at **Hull City** in the **FA Cup second round** before a crowd of **21,000**, the biggest crowd for a **Cheltenham Town** game until **1998**.
- 1948 **George Tadman** scored a **Cheltenham Town FC** record of **six goals in one match** as the club defeated **Gravesend** and **Northfleet** 8-0.
- 1949 **Bishop's Cleeve**-based striker **Peter Goring** was sold by **Cheltenham Town** to **Arsenal** for **£1000**. He played for **Arsenal** until **1958**, making **220** appearances and scoring **51 goals**.
- 1951 **Floodlights** were installed at the **Whaddon ground**. The first floodlit match was a 3-3 draw with **Wolves** in a friendly.
- 1951 **Roy Shiner** was sold by **Cheltenham Town** to **Huddersfield Town** for **£1,250**.
- 1951-2 **Baker Street YMCA** won the **County Youth Shield** in **1951-2, 1955-6, 1957-8** and **1958-9**.
- 1952 **Cheltenham Town FC** suffered a record defeat – **10-1** at **Merthyr Tydfil**.
- 1952 **Peter Rushworth** was sold by **Cheltenham Town** to **Leicester City** for **£1,500**. **Peter McIlvenny** transferred to **Bristol Rovers**.
- 1955-6 **Cheltenham Town** finished runner-up in the **Southern League**.
- 1956 There was a record crowd of **8,326** at **Whaddon Road** for an **FA Cup tie** against **Reading**.
- 1957-8 **Cheltenham Town** scored a record **115 goals** in a league season.
- 1958 **Cheltenham Town** won the **Southern League Cup**. The same year **Peter Cleland** transferred to **Norwich City**.
- 1959 **Cheltenham Town** were founder members of the **Southern League Premier Division** and won the **Southern League Championship Cup**.
- 1959 **Mike Summerbee**, the son of former **Cheltenham Town** manager **George Summerbee**, joined **Swindon Town** from **Cheltenham's Baker Street YMCA** team. He later moved to **Manchester City**, where he enjoyed great success and won **England caps**, then played for **Burnley, Blackpool** and **Stockport County**.
- 1959-60 **St. Mark's CA** won the **County Youth Shield**. They won it again in **1973-4**.
- 1960 **Roger Thorndale** played the first of his club record **702 games** for **Cheltenham Town FC**.
- 1961-2 **Whaddon Boys Club** won the **County Youth Shield**.
- 1962 **Cheltenham Town** was relegated to **Southern League Division One**.
- 1962 **Cheltenham-born Ken Skeen** joined **Swindon Town** and later played over **200 games** in the **Football League** for **Oxford United**.
- 1963 The current **main stand** at **Whaddon Road** (now the **Evans-Halshaw Kia Stand**) was built at great expense to the club.
- 1964 **Colin Boulton**, who had played for **Charlton Kings**, went to **Derby County** where he played under **Brian Clough** and made **272** appearances. He later played for **Southampton** (loan), **Tulsa Roughnecks**, the **Los Angeles Aztecs** and **Lincoln City**. **Nigel Cleevely** also went to **Derby County** in **1964**, where he spent four years making **16** appearances and scoring **3 goals**.
- 1963-4 **Charlton Kings** won the **County Youth Shield**.
- 1964-5 **Bishops Cleeve** won the **Senior Amateur Cup (Glos. North)**, and again in **1968-9** and **1986-7**.
- 1964 **Cheltenham Town** was promoted to the **Southern League Premier Division**.
- 1968 **Gloucestershire County League** was formed with **Charlton Kings** as founder members. **Cheltenham Sunday League** was formed the same year.
- 1968 **Joe Gadston** of **Cheltenham Town** was sold to **Bristol Rovers** for **£1,500**.
- 1969 **Cheltenham Town** was relegated to the **Southern League Division One**. The same year the club took part in the first season of the **FA Trophy**, beating **St. Blazey** 8-0 in their first match.
- 1971 **Cheltenham Minor League** was formed.
- 1972 **Cheltenham Junior League** was formed.
- Oct 1973 Two youth football teams from **Gottingen** visited as guests of **St. Mark's AFC**.
- 1974-5 **Smiths Industries** employee **Dave Lewis** scored a **Cheltenham Town** club record (professional

- years) with **53 goals** in one season. He scored a total of **273 goals** for **Cheltenham Town** during his time with the club.
- 1970s **Roger Thorndale** made a **Cheltenham Town** record **701 appearances**.
- 1970s-1992 **Ted Croker**, WW2 fighter pilot, **Charlton Athletic** player and **FA Secretary** lived in **The Park**.
- 1976-83 **Dowty Staverton** played in the **Hellenic League**.
- 1977 **Cheltenham Town** were promoted to the **Premier Division**.
- 1977-8 **St. Paul's College** won the **Junior Challenge Cup (Glos. North)**.
- 1978 **Charlton Kings** were relegated from the **County League**.
- 1979 The special Saturday-only football "green" newspaper, launched in the early **1930s**, ceased publication.
- 1979 The former **Southampton** and **England** legend **Terry Paine** had a brief spell as manager of **Cheltenham Town**.
- 1979-82 **Cheltenham Town** was effectively relegated twice due to the re-organisation of non-league football.
- 1981-7 **Dowty Ashchurch** played in the **West Midland (Regional) League**.
- 1983 **Cheltenham Town** won the **Southern League Midland Division Championship** and was promoted to the **Premier Division**. The same year winger **Paul Tester** was sold to **Shrewsbury Town** for **£10,000**.
- 1983 **Bishops Cleeve** was promoted to the **Hellenic League**.
- 1984-5 **Cheltenham Town** won the **Southern League Merit Cup** (for scoring most goals in the league).
- 1985 **Cheltenham Town** won the **Southern League Premier Division Championship** and was promoted to the **Football Conference**. The club was managed at the time by **John Murphy** a **GCHQ** employee who played for **Cheltenham Town** for many years.
- 1985 **Paul Collicutt** captained **Cheltenham** in the **Southern League Championship**. He had been the youngest player ever to appear in the **Cheltenham Town first team** when aged only **15**, before joining **Swindon Town** and then **Trowbridge Town**. He is currently (2006) manager of **Bishops Cleeve FC** and runs his own meat business in the town.
- 1985-6 **Cheltenham Town** won the **Midland Floodlit Cup** in this and the following **three** years.
- 1986 The **Cheltenham Saracens** were promoted to the **Hellenic League**.
- 1987 **Keith Knight**, from **Shurdington**, played for **England Schoolboys**. The following year he was transferred from **Cheltenham Town** to **Reading**.
- 1987 The future **England** striker **Steve Bull** scored his first professional hat-trick as **Wolves** defeated **Cheltenham Town** 5-1 in the **FA Cup**.
- 1987-8 **Cheltenham Town** won the **County Youth Shield**, and again in **1990-91**, **1991-2** and **1995-6**.
- 1988 **Bishops Cleeve** entered the **FA Vase** for the first time.
- 1988-9 **Cheltenham Town** players **Peter Shearer** and **Steve Brooks** were selected for the **England** semi-professional team. **Phil Williams** was selected for **Wales**.
- 1989-90 The former **Scottish** international and TV pundit **Andy Gray** played for **Cheltenham Town**.
- 1990 The **Bentham five-a-side** facility opened.
- 29 Aug 1991 The **Cheltenham Town Football Club** manager placed every single player on the **transfer list** in an effort to raise cash for the club.
- 1991-4 **Dowty Dynamos** played in the **County League**.
- 1991-8 **St. Mark's CA** played in the **County League**.
- 1992 **Cheltenham Town** was relegated to the **Southern League Premier Division** and reached the **FA Cup fifth round**.
- 1992-3 **Endsleigh** won the **Senior Amateur Cup (Glos. North)**, and again in **1995-6** and **1996-7**.
- 1992-6 **Smiths Athletic** played in the **County League**.
- 1993 **Endsleigh FC** played in the **County League**.
- 1993-4 **St. Mark's CA** won the **Junior Challenge Cup (Glos. North)**.
- 1993-6 The Cheltenham-based insurance company **Endsleigh** sponsored the **Football League**.
- 1994-8 **Endsleigh FC** played in the **Hellenic League**.
- 1995 **Cheltenham Town** had a record outgoing transfer as **Chris Warren** joined **Southampton** for **£60,000**.
- 1995 **Endsleigh FC** entered the **FA Vase** for the first time.
- 1995 **Bishops Cleeve** were forced to leave **Stoke Road** when the land was sold for housing.
- 1996 **Endsleigh FC** entered the **FA Cup** for the first time.
- 5 May 1997 **Cheltenham Town FC 'The Robins'** was promoted from the **Dr. Marten's League** to the **GM Vauxhall Conference League** under the managership of **Steve Cotterill**. The club reached the **FA Cup** third round. (**Cotterill** had begun his career with **Cheltenham Town** and also played **Sunday League** football in the town for his grandfather's team, **Stretton**. He left **Cheltenham** to

- play for **Alvechurch** and **Burton Albion**, then played in the **Football League** for **Wimbledon**, **Brighton & Hove Albion (loan)** and **AFC Bournemouth**. He managed **Sligo Rovers** in **Ireland** before taking **Cheltenham Town** into the **Football League**. He later managed **Stoke City** and was assistant manager of **Sunderland**. He is currently manager of **Burnley**.)
- 1997-8 **Cheltenham Ladies** won the **County Women's Cup**.
- 1998 The **Minor League** and **Junior League** amalgamated into the **Cheltenham Youth League**.
- 16 Mar 1998 Hundreds of **Cheltenham fans** were involved in clashes at the '**Robins**' **FA Trophy** match against **Hayes**.
- 17 May 1998 **Cheltenham Town FC** won the **FA Trophy** – the **Umbro Cup** - at **Wembley**. 17,000 fans made the pilgrimage from **Cheltenham** to watch them play.
- 1998-9 Six **Cheltenham Town** players were selected for the **England** semi-professional team against **Holland** – **Steve Book**, **Jamie Victory**, **Lee Howells**, **Chris Banks**, **Mark Yates** and **Dale Watkins**.
- 1999 **Cheltenham Town FC** embarked on **full-time professional football** with a squad of players and management staff employed solely by the club.
- 23 Apr 1999 **Cheltenham Town FC** won the **National Conference League** and gained promotion to the **Football League** for the first time in its history.
- 7 Aug 1999 **Cheltenham Town FC** played their first match in the **Nationwide Football League Division Three**.
- 2002 **Cheltenham Town FC** were promoted to **Division Two** (now **League One**). That year the club had its best ever **FA Cup** run – to the **fifth round** with 'giant-killing' wins over **Oldham Athletic** and **Burnley**.
- 2002 **Michael Duff** became the first **Cheltenham Town** player to win a **full international cap** when he appeared for **Northern Ireland** against **Poland**.
- 2002 **Bishops Cleeve** opened a new ground at **Kayte Lane**.
- 2002 The new **2000-seater Wymans Road stand** (now the **In2Print Stand**) was built.
- 2003 **Cheltenham Town** was relegated to **League Two**. The same year the club broke its transfer record with the signing of **Grant McCann** and **Brian Wilson** for **£50,000** each.
- 2003-4 **Warden Hill United** won the **Senior Amateur Cup (Glos. North)**.
- 2003 & 2004 **Cheltenham Town** reached the **FA Cup third round**.
- 2004 **World Cup** winning legend **Sir Geoff Hurst** bought a property in **Cheltenham**.
- 2004 **Bishops Cleeve** entered the **FA Cup** for the first time.
- 2005 The new **1000-seater Whaddon Road stand** (now the **Carlsberg Stand**) was built.
- 2006 **Bishops Cleeve** were promoted to the **Southern League**.
- 2006 **Martin Devaney** currently plays for **Barnsley** in the **Coca-Cola Championship**. He is a winger who was on **Coventry City's** books as a youngster, although he made his name with his home-town club **Cheltenham Town**.
- 2006 **Cheltenham Town FC** reached the **FA Cup fourth round** and were promoted to **League One**. During the season they played a live **televised FA Cup** match against **Newcastle United**.

## GENERAL SPORTS

- 1500s In Tudor times **Cheltenham** labourers were encouraged to develop useful skills such as **archery** or **artillery practice**. Laws regulated against **games of chance** and sports such as **tennis** and **bowls**.
- 11 Aug 1741 A **cudgel match** was advertised, to be held outside the **Plough Inn**. "He that breaks the most heads in three bouts, and comes off clear, to receive a good hat and a guinea in money." A note added that 'twixt the hours of 10 and 2 there will be a gown **jigged for** by the girls'. **Bull-baiting** with **dogs** was also advertised at this time.
- 1 Aug 1757 A **cock fight** by subscription was fought in **Cheltenham Street** by the '**Gentlemen of Gloucestershire**'.
- 1768 The first noted reference in **Cheltenham** to a **skittle alley**. It was situated in off **Albion Street**, approximately at the rear of the present **Marks & Spencer**.
- 13 Jul 1809 A **cock fight** was advertised in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* to be fought at a **private cock pit** near the **Shakespeare Inn**. It was to be 'a **main** of 19 battles, and 10 byes, at **one guinea** each battle and 25 guineas 'the odd' (winner), between the Gentlemen of **Cheltenham** and the Gentlemen of **Tewkesbury**.
- 28 Mar 1811 The following advertisement appeared in the *Cheltenham Chronicle*:- 'On the **16<sup>th</sup>** day of **April** next, at **Mr. Thomas Newman's, Cross Hands**, near Cheltenham. A Capital Well-bred **HORSE**,

- value 32 Guineas, will be fought for by Subscribers of 2 Guineas each, a long **Welch Main of 16 Cocks**; none to exceed **4lb 10oz**. The Winner of the **Horse** to give the **Second-best Cock 5 Guineas**. Gentlemen wishing to become Subscribers are requested to send their Names to **Mr. Newman**; where their Cocks must go to scale, and Subscription to be paid on Saturday April 13<sup>th</sup>. N.B. A good Dinner will be provided, and every Accommodation for Gentlemen.'
- 23 Jul 1812 The following disapproving, sarcastic piece appeared in the *Cheltenham Chronicle*: - '**Badger-baiting** is now become an amusement patronized by *fashion*. On Monday a bait took place near this town, at which a numerous company assembled. The animal was nearly killed, but such was the *feeling* of several *gentlemen* present, that they wished to continue the contest, a contest in which savage ferocity was put in action by inhuman folly and kindled by the illiterate wealthy.'
- 30 Jul 1812 Another piece on **badger-baiting** appeared in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* the following week:- 'The *honourable* sport of **Badger-Baiting** was renewed on **Saturday**, near this town, under the guidance of fashionable amateurs; a great number attended; some, *grey* as the poor animal, in the service of **vice** and **cruelty**, were present at sanguine exhibition.'
- 6 Mar 1826 The *Cheltenham Journal* advertised that a 'Grand Main of Cocks' was to be fought in the town on this date and the three following days, between **R.F. Benson, Esq.** of **Shropshire** and **A.F. Berkeley, Esq.** of **Sussex** for 10 sovereigns a battle. As was the tradition, the **Feeders** (i.e. those who had raised the cockerels) were named, in this case **Bourn** for **Benson** and **Nash** for **Berkeley**. The match resulted in '**Nash** for **Berkeley** being five-a-head in the main, and two-a-head in the byes.
- 30 Oct 1826 The *Cheltenham Journal* reported that **Skipper**, the **pedestrian**, had begun to walk **1,200 miles in 20 days** (Sundays excepted), although he was prevented on his second day by 'magisterial interference'. He intended to walk a measured 10 miles, from the **Lamb Inn, Cheltenham** to the **White Hart, Gloucester**, and back again, three times a day. He was depending on public contributions as the reward for his success.
- 14 Jun 1827 Two **cockfights** were advertised in the *Cheltenham Journal* – one at **Cheltenham Races** and the other at **Bridgnorth Races** – between the 'Gentlemen' of Gloucestershire and Shropshire. The fight at **Cheltenham** was to take place at the **New Circus, Regent Gardens**.
- 19 Apr 1834 **Thomas Prosser** undertook to walk **two miles in 18 minutes** for a wager of £50 a side. He walked from the first to the second milestone on the **Shurdington Road** and won the bet by completing the distance in 17mins 57secs.
- Apr 1842 The celebrated Kentish pedestrian **Robert Sutton** undertook to walk **50 miles within 12 hours**, half of which was to be performed **backwards** in the **Norwood Arms Tea Gardens**.
- Sep 1842 A wheelchair man named **Tovey** undertook to push a wheelchair, containing a man named **Hughes** who weighed upwards of **10st 12 lbs**, from the **Greyhound Inn** to the **Kings Arms** in **Prestbury** and back again in **38 minutes**. The journey was performed in **32 mins 10 secs**.
- 10 Nov 1848 **Mr. Thomas Brown** of the **Hen & Chickens** public house died aged 80. He was reported to be one of the 'most noted **cock-fighters** of his time.
- Aug 1843 A **walking match** of £20, for £10 a side, took place between **John Mountjoy**, the celebrated **London pedestrian**, and **James Hall**, fly man of **Cheltenham**. A 'vast concourse of spectators' assembled opposite **Mr. Hurlston's** at the **Kings Head Inn, High Street**, to witness the start. The course was from there to a spot near **Piff's Elm** on the **Tewkesbury Road** three times and back, a distance of **20 miles**. **Mountjoy** won, completing the race in **3½ hrs**.
- Sep 1843 **John Mountjoy** the **pedestrian** covered 60 miles a day on six successive days, walking from the **York Hotel** in the **High Street** to **Northleach** and back twice a day.
- 21 Mar 1849 A **pigeon-shooting** match was held in **The Park**.
- 4 Feb 1852 A meeting was held which led to the establishment of the **Rifle Club**.
- 22 Oct 1853 **Cheltenham College**, founded **1841**, held its first school sports.
- Nov 1854 The **Annual Greenway Coursing matches** (Greyhounds) took place.
- 6 Jun 1857 A correspondent informed the *Cheltenham Mercury* that he had caught **three brace of dace** and **one trout** near **Mr. Perry's mill**. He had also observed some **fish** weighing between a quarter of a pound and one pound in weight in a different part of the **Chelt**.
- 15 Nov 1859 **John Goulder**, aged **84**, and **Samuel Page**, **82**, shot a **pigeon match** at five birds each, the younger man being declared the winner. The match took place at **Clayton's Field, St. Peter's**. **John Goulder** was born at the **Eight Bells** and worked as stud groom to the **Duke of Gordon** who presented him with the gun with which he shot the pigeons. His opponent **Page** had served under **Nelson** and had seen action against the French in **Boulogne Harbour** in **1801**.
- 1860s The **Rifle Volunteers** held an **annual shooting match** at **Seven Springs**, which remained a rifle ground until the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it moved to **Pegglesworth**.

- Feb 1860 **Cheltenham College's Boat Club** was formed. The first boat race was held the following year, against **Shrewsbury School**.
- Dec 1860 In a wager of **£50** between **Mr. Edward Griffiths** of **Marle Hill** and **Mr. Clutterbuck**, the latter undertook to drive his pony and gig from the **Plough Hotel, Cheltenham**, to the **Mitre Hotel, Oxford** in **five hours**, a distance of nearly **40 miles**. Members of the **Cotswold Hunt** accompanied **Mr. Clutterbuck** for much of the way and he won the bet with half an hour to spare.
- Oct 1861 **Anna De Lancey** gave prize money and paid the fares for contestants in a **rifle match**.
- 1862 The **Cheltenham College Rifle Corps** was formed.
- 26 Apr 1862 At the **College Athletic Sports** a serious accident occurred to one of the pupils, **Laurence Garnett**. He was **pole-vaulting** and, having already topped a height of 7ft 11in, his pole broke on his next attempt. He landed on his back and sustained such a severe spinal injury that 'for some time his life was despaired of'.
- 5 Mar 1864 The *Cheltenham Mercury* reported on a **running race** along the **Lansdown Road** between **Henry Jeanes**, from the **Bath Road**, and **W. Francis**, 'an experienced pedestrian'. Bets were laid and the match was won by **Jeanes** in front of 300 people who had gathered to watch.
- Feb 1866 A **foot race** of **150 yds** for **£10** held on **Hewlett's Road** between the **Greyhound** and **Hewlett's Inn** between **James Carr** and **Reuben Prosser**. Although **Prosser** was the favourite, **Carr** won by three yards.
- c.1868 The first **bicycle** appeared in Cheltenham ridden by **Martin Rucker**, a pupil of **Cheltenham College**. In **1869** he won his first **cycle race** astride a 36in boneshaker. Six years later he was elected captain of the **London Bicycle Club**. He was quite an all-rounder as he also became captain of the **Croydon La Crosse Club**, the **London Athletic Club** and **cricket** and **football** sides.
- 1868 A **cycle contest** took place between two **Cheltenham bicycle manufacturers** – **Alfred Miles** and **Mr. Davies**. The rode boneshakers, with wooden frames and iron tyres, on an uncomfortable seven-mile course between **Cheltenham** and **Gloucester** that took two hours.
- 13 Apr 1868 **Cheltenham College** took part in the first **Public Schools Rackets Competition**. They were beaten by **Eton** in the final.
- Oct 1869 The old **Town Hall** in **Regent Street** was fitted up for **bicycle riding** and the lessee, **James Lillywhite**, a member of the famous cricketing family, ran a '**velocipede school**' the following year.
- Dec 1873 It was announced that Cheltenham was to have its own '**American**' **roller skating rink** at the **Town Hall** in **Regent Street**. It was one of the earliest in the country and **James Lillywhite** became the manager later the same month.
- Jan 1874 The *Cheltenham Examiner* reported on a **pigeon-shooting match** at the **Fox & Hounds, Prestbury Road**.
- Jan 1875 A special **Skate dancing** event was held at the **Town Hall** in **Regent Street**, attended by **150 guests**.
- Feb 1875 The **skating rink** in the **Town Hall, Regent Street**, was visited by **Mr. James Leonard Plimpton**, an American furniture maker who invented and patented the first skates with two pairs of steerable wheels which became popular world-wide.
- c.1883 The **East Gloucestershire Club** was formed, initially as purely a **cricket club**. In the following decades **archery, croquet, hockey, lacrosse** and even **baseball** were played on its hallowed turf.
- Oct 1889 **Cheltenham Chess Club** was formed.
- 1894 Cheltenham hosted a **100-mile cycle race**. It ran from the **Norwood Arms** in **Bath Road** to **Gloucester, Worcester, Evesham** and back to **Cheltenham** via **Marle Hill** to finish at the town's **football ground**. The winner's prize was a silver cup valued at seven guineas.
- 1894 12 acres of land near **Christ Church** were purchased by the **Ladies' College** for use as a 'playground'.
- 28 Mar 1896 A meeting of **pigeon keepers** met at the **White Swan, Call Lane, Leeds**, to form a **Homing Union**, which in turn became the **National Homing Union** and eventually it became the **Royal Pigeon Racing Association** which now has its **headquarters** at the **Reddings, Cheltenham**. Among its members is **Queen Elizabeth II** whose **Royal Lofts** are well established at **Sandringham**.
- 1897 The annual **Ladies' Bicycle Gymkhana** was held in **Pittville Park**.
- 1899 The **Athletic Ground** in **Albion Street**, formerly **Hampton's Gardens**, had been laid out by **James Roche**. It incorporated a **cycling track, stables, stand, changing rooms** and a caretaker's residence. After **Mr. Roche**, the ground was taken over by '**Bill**' **Bailey**, a well-known local **golfer** and sportsman.

- 25 Apr 1900 Cheltenham was 'invaded' by **motorcars** taking part in the **Automobile Club of Great Britain & Ireland's 1000-mile Trial**. The town was chosen as a convenient stop-off point midway between Bristol and Birmingham. Drivers of the **83** vehicles, 10 per cent of all the cars in the country, had lunch at the **Queen's Hotel**. Only **48** starters completed the course and the fastest time en route, **37.63 mph**, was recorded by **Sir Charles Rolls**.
- 22 Oct 1904 A **rifle range** was officially opened at the **Charlton Kings Working Men's Club & Institute**.  
 May 1907 The **Motor Cycle Club** held its first **non-stop reliability** run held over **70 miles**, finishing at **Arle Court**.
- 25 Feb 1909 A two-day open **badminton** tournament was held at the **Winter Gardens**.
- 29 Apr 1910 Competitors in the **Automobile Club of Great Britain & Ireland 1,000-mile Trial** stopped at the **Winter Gardens** for lunch.
- 30 Apr 1910 The opening of the new **cricket** and **football ground** at **Leckhampton**.  
 1911 **Cheltenham Racecourse** was home to **polo** by this time. It was played there for many years at what was said to be 'the best **polo grounds** in the west of England'.  
 1913 The **British Chess Championships** were held at the **Town Hall**.
- 21 Jul 1915 A **Gymkhana** for wounded soldiers in local hospitals was held at **Montpellier Gardens**.
- 4 Jul 1918 A **baseball match** was played on the **College Ground** with American soldiers to celebrate **American Independence Day**.  
 1920 The **10 acres** of grounds that had been leased by the **East Gloucestershire Club** from the **Charlton Park Estate** were up for sale for **£10,000**. The money was raised and the land purchased.
- 17 Jul 1921 The **Gloucestershire Aircraft Co.'s Mars I/Bamel** entered and won the **Aerial Derby** at **163.3 mph**.  
 Nov 1921 The **Cheltenham & County Cycling Club** was formed. It operated as a section of the **Cheltenham Harriers** for the first couple of years.
- 6 Aug 1923 The **Mars I/Bamel** won the **Aerial Derby** for the third successive year, at **192.4 mph**. Later that month it went on display in a large marquee at the **Cheltenham Cricket Festival**.  
 1927 The **Cheltenham Original Brewery** opened a **sports ground** and neighbouring **bowling green** in **Whaddon Road** on the site of the former **Cotswold Hunt kennels**.  
 1927 **Pate's Grammar School for Girls** took possession of its new **playing field** behind **Wellington Square**.
- 30 Apr 1927 A **Push Ball** tournament was held, using a 6ft diameter ball, at the **Athletic Ground**.
- 23 Jun 1928 A **motorcycle football match** against **AJS Wolverhampton** was held. These matches were popular throughout the **1930s** and were attended by up to **10,000** people at a time. Teams of six-a-side, including the goalie, raced round the pitch on motorbikes kicking a standard-sized football. They played for 30 minutes each way to standard soccer rules, although no-one worried about the off-side rule. The sport dwindled in the **1940s** when it was transferred to **Whaddon**.  
 1929 The **Gloster Aircraft Co.'s Gloster VI (Golden Arrow)** achieved a speed record of **363.3 mph** that was increased by the **Gloster S6** to **357.7 mph**.  
 1929 The **Gloster 'Grebe'** won the **King's Cup Air Race** at a record average of **150.3 mph** over the 1160-mile course.
- 16 Dec 1929 The **Athletic Ground** in **Albion Street** was purchased by the **Corporation** for the town for **£5,000**. (Now the **Tom Price Close** development.)  
 1930s **Cars** and **motorcycles** regularly raced up **Leckhampton Hill**. The **Colmore Cup Trial** was one of these events which took place in the Spring, where competitors faced public roads between special **hill-climb** stages. In one such stage competitors had to ascend the steep '**Middle Jinny**' section of **Leckhampton Hill** that runs from the bridge at **Daisybank** up to the old lime-kilns. Another stage was **Mill Lane, Prestbury**, which ended as a steep rough track up onto **Cleeve Hill**.
- 1 Aug 1932 Cheltenham's new sport, **motor rodeo**, was held at the **Athletic Ground**.
- 22 May 1933 The **Maharajah of Jaipur** ('**The Last Maharajah**') brought his **polo team** to play the **West of England** team at **Prestbury Park**. He did this several times throughout the 1930s.
- 22 Jul 1933 The **Gloucester & Cheltenham Greyhound Stadium** opened at **Longlevens**. It survived until **1982** when it was closed and the site sold for housing.
- 9 May 1934 **Polo** was played at **Prestbury Park** every Wednesday during the season.
- 1 Aug 1934 The **Cheltenham Polo Club's** annual summer tournament was held at **Prestbury Park**.  
 1935 **100 entrants** contested the **Colmore Cup** motor vehicle **hill climb** up **Leckhampton Hill**. Only a quarter managed to complete the course.  
 1937 Plans were proposed, but not approved, by the **Cheltenham Motor Club** to create a **speed hill climb** at **Leckhampton** to rival the **Bugatti Owners' Club** course at **Prescott**.



- Jan 1940 The **playing fields** on the **St. Mark's estate** were ploughed up for potato-growing as part of the war effort.
- 17 Oct 1940 **Smiths (Cheltenham) Ltd** formed an **Athletic & Social Club**.
- Jul 1941 **1,000** competitors took part in the Cheltenham **Elementary School sports**.
- 1942 The **Cheltenham Rambling Club** was formed.
- 1948 **Audrey Williamson**, a former pupil of **Pate's Girls' Grammar School**, took **silver medal** in the **200 yards sprint** in the **Olympic Games**.
- Jun 1948 The **Beeches Sports Ground** was restored from war-time allotments.
- 10 Jul 1954 A new **clubhouse** was opened at the **Smiths Industries Sports Ground**.
- 23 Sep 1955 The **Victory Club's skittle alley** was opened by the club's founder, **Miss Clara Winterbotham**.
- 1966 During the 1960s the **Athletic Ground** was a popular venue for pop concerts. This year **The Yardbirds** and **The Who** played there.
- 11 Jun 1967 Cheltenham beat **Leamington** in a **BBC 'It's a Knockout'** competition.
- 7 Jul 1967 Cheltenham competitors attended the first seven-day **youth sports exchange** against **Gottingen** who were their hosts.
- 20 Aug 1967 Cheltenham represented **Great Britain** in '**It's a Knockout**' at **Blackpool**.
- 12 May 1968 The Cheltenham team competed against **Worthing** in '**It's a Knockout**', televised at **Pittville Park**.
- 20 Jul 1968 Fifty-five competitors from **Gottingen** took part in a return **seven-day sports exchange** in Cheltenham.
- 29 Aug 1968 Cheltenham's '**It's a Knockout**' team took part at **Seigen, Germany**.
- Jan 1972 At the **East Gloucestershire Club** two **squash courts** were opened, followed by two more in **1980**.
- 29 Mar 1979 The **Borough Council** approved the building of a **sports complex** costing about £2.M.
- 28 Jul 1980 A **squash courts** scheme at **Pittville** was given the go-ahead.
- 1981 The biggest **athletic event** so far in Cheltenham occurred when **1,000** runners took part in the **People's Half-marathon**.
- 18 May 1981 **500 runners** took part in the **Gloucestershire Echo-sponsored Fun Run** in **Pittville Park**.
- 2 Sep 1981 The **Prince of Wales Stadium** opened with a floodlit **cricket match**, **Gloucestershire v. Australia**. The stadium was the second phase of the **Cheltenham Recreation Centre** development. It housed a six-lane 400 metre floodlit all-weather track and became the home for the **Cheltenham Harrier's Athletic Club** and the **Cheltenham Rugby Club**.
- 13 Sep 1981 Cheltenham's biggest athletic event occurred when **1,300** runners took part in the **Crack Cancer Half-marathon**.
- 1982-4 A housing development was built on the **Athletic Ground** and **Tom Price Close** was opened by **Tom Price**, the second **Cheltenham** rugby player to play for **England**. His career spanned over 20 years – he started playing with **Gloucester** before moving to **Cheltenham**. He gained 20 **England Caps**. The **Cheltenham Rugby Club** decamped to a new home at the **Prince of Wales Stadium** when the **Athletic Ground** was sold.
- Spring 1982 **Six squash courts**, a cafeteria and bar opened at the **Prince of Wales Stadium**.
- 18 May 1985 The **East Gloucestershire Sports Club** celebrated its **centenary** at the **Golden Valley Hotel**.
- 22 Feb 1988 Cheltenham plasterer **Eddie 'The Eagle' Edwards** was allowed to participate in the **90-meter ski jump** event at the **Winter Olympics** in **Calgary, Canada**. He finished well behind the field.
- 17 Aug 1988 A **table tennis** group from Cheltenham competed in **Gottingen**.
- 1989 The **Royal Pigeon Racing Association**, which has its **headquarters** at the **Reddings, Cheltenham**, estimated that its total membership was **60,000**. It was described as a thriving business with over **30 employees**, an annual turnover of **£1,2 million** per year and assets which included office buildings at **Welshpool** and **Cheltenham**.
- 1992 Brothers **Peter** and **Dave Tatham** created the sport of **mountain-boarding** – a hybrid of snow-boarding, downhill mountain-biking and skateboarding. **Dave** and **Pete** set up a business in **Lansdown** called **no-Sno**, designing and selling **mountain boards**. They began the sport on the slopes of **Cleeve Hill** where speeds of up to **40 mph** were often reached.
- 1995 & 1996 Teams from **Swaziland** were sent to the **Wheatsheaf, Leckhampton**, to compete in the **annual Shove Ha'penny World Championships**.
- 1997 **Cheltenham College** won the **National Senior Schools Polo Championships**. They won again in **1998, 2004** and **2005**.
- Sep 1997 The **all-weather running track** at the **Prince of Wales Stadium** was closed as it was found to be dangerous in wet weather. It was re-opened on **1 Oct 1999** after a new surface had been laid.
- 2 Jan 1999 Former **Cheltenham College** pupil **Nick Bourne** became the first person in the world to **run** the length of **Africa**. He trained for the **6,800-mile** marathon by running up **Cleeve Hill**.



1909 Western v. Southern Counties at Cheltenham



20th March 1909. Cheltenham College v. Marlborough College at Cheltenham



Adam Lindsay Gordon, educated at Cheltenham College - Champion Amateur Jockey and Australian poet laureate.



George Stevens, well-known Prestbury jockey



H Woodman and J Bethell of the Parish School XV - played for England v. Wales at Leicester, 1st March 1913



Cheltenham North 8 points  
Stroud A Nil  
14th March 1926

- 2006 **Cheltenham College** won the **National Senior Schools Arena Polo Championships** for the **third consecutive year**.
- Aug 2006 **Peter Tatham** returned to his **Market Street** home after successfully defending his world **mountain boarding** crown. He had fought off competition from 15 countries to win the **World Championships** in **Cortina, Italy**.

## GOLF

- 6 Mar 1891 The elite **Cheltenham Golf Club** was formally started at a public meeting held at the **Queen's Hotel**. The early course, on **Cleeve Hill**, may have been designed by **Tom Morris** of **St. Andrews**.
- 12 Feb 1902 The arrival of the electric tram allowed many more people access to **Cleeve Hill**. The **Cheltenham Town Golf Club** (later to become the **Cotswold Hills Golf Club**) was formed, founded by **Harold Webb**. He negotiated an agreement with the **Cheltenham Golf Club** for using the same course on **Cleeve Hill**. The venture proved popular, attracting more than 100 members in the first couple of years.
- 1906 The **Cotswold Hills Golf Club** was the largest in Gloucestershire and attracted exhibition matches from the top golfers of the day, such as **James Braid**, **Harry Vardon** and **J.H. Taylor**, all **Open Champions**.
- 1909 The **Conservative Prime Minister Arthur Balfour** accepted **Harold Webb's** invitation to play at the **Cleeve Hill** golf course (despite **Webb** being a founder member of the **Labour Party** in Cheltenham).
- Autumn 1910 The *Gloucestershire Echo* reported that **A.J. Hobley**, the professional at **Cheltenham Golf Club**, had selected various holes on a course for a proposed **new golf club** at **Leckhampton**. It was to become the **North Gloucestershire Golf Club** with a course laid out on the former **Black Hedge Farm** estate, **Leckhampton**.
- Apr 1911 The links were open at the new **North Gloucestershire Golf Club** and potential members wishing to visit were advised to take the tram to the **Malvern Inn** and then walk along **Leckhampton Lane**. The **Clubhouse** stood at the corner of **Leckhampton Lane** and **Crippetts Lane**. (It was later known as the **Red Bungalow** and currently as **Greenacres**.)
- 1916 The First World War had begun to affect the prospects of the **North Gloucestershire Golf Club** and 100 acres of land were put up for auction. The rest was sold off over the next few years during which the **Clubhouse** had become a private dwelling.
- 1919 Attempts were made to revive the **North Gloucestershire Golf Club**. A committee was formed and an advertisement placed in the *Gloucestershire Echo* inviting membership and announcing that nine holes of the original course would be opened on **August Bank Holiday**. The Club continued in existence until **December 1922**.
- 26 Jan 1922 The **Lilleybrook Golf Club, Charlton Kings**, was formed and formally opened on **6 Oct 1923**.
- 1935 At the end of the year the **Cheltenham Golf Club** went into voluntary liquidation. Many of its members joined the **Cotswold Hills Golf Club**. The rise in membership numbers at the latter meant that a new **clubhouse** was built at the edge of **Cleeve Hill Common** near **Wickfield Quarry**.
- 8 May 1953 The **Approach Golf Course** was opened at **Marle Hill**.
- 1971 The **Cotswold Hills Golf Club** bought 150 acres of farmland at **Ullenwood** and built their own course and clubhouse. When the Club moved into its new (and still present) home three years later, **Tewkesbury Borough Council** took over the **Cleeve Hill** course where golf is still played today.

## HOCKEY

- 1897 **G.F. Robinson** was born. He captained the **town hockey team** and played for the **county**. He was earmarked for an **England Cap** but his career was interrupted by the Great War.
- 1898 Men and women's **hockey** was first played at the **East Gloucestershire Club** in the **Old Bath Road**. The women were regarded as pioneers as female hockey players were such an uncommon sight at that time.
- 1904 **Mrs. Barbara Kelly** was selected to play for the **England (Women's) Hockey Team**. She was the first of **19 hockey internationals** to be produced by the **East Gloucestershire Club**.
- 1907 **Cheltenham College** played its first **hockey match** against **Marlborough College** – said to be

- the very first schools' hockey match ever played in England.
- 1913 **Margaret Lidderdale** was selected to play **hockey** for **England**.
- 12 Mar 1927 The final trial of the **England Men's Hockey Team** was held at **Dean Close School**.
- 8 Nov 1941 The **St. Mary's Training College hockey team** played the **Cheltenham & County Harrier's team**.
- 1961 **All-weather hockey pitches** were opened at **Dean Close School**.
- 27 Sep 1991 Four **Cheltenham Ladies' College** pupils were taken to hospital after a bolt of **lightning** struck the pitch while they were playing **hockey**.

## HORSE-RACING

- 12 May 1814 An advertisement in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* announced that upwards of **£350** had already been subscribed towards the establishment of **annual races** in the vicinity of Cheltenham. It was proposed to form a committee of 12 gentlemen from the principal subscribers to plan the races and to choose **Stewards** for the present year. People were reminded that subscriptions had to be paid before the **Races** could be advertised or the **Course** and **Stands** prepared and erected. 'It is hoped and expected that the **Inhabitants** will come forward liberally, as their Interests are materially connected with the success of the *permanent* establishment of **annual Races** at this celebrated place of fashionable resort.'
- 1815 Cheltenham horse **races** took place on **Nottingham Hill**.
- 25 Aug 1818 Horse racing moved to **Cleeve Hill** for an event organised by **Mr. E. Jones** of the **Shakespeare Inn, Lower High Street**, possibly to show off the prowess of his own horse, a five-year-old mare called '**Miss Tidmarsh**', who won the mile-long flat race.
- 23 Aug 1819 Three-day horse racing was established on **Cleeve Hill** under the patronage of the **Duke and Duchess of Gloucester**, who subscribed **100 guineas**. A three-mile course was opened on **Cleeve Hill** with an impressive grandstand that was visible from the **Promenade**. **Col. William Fitzhardinge Berkeley** was a generous benefactor giving £1,000 towards maintaining the races as a regular event.
- 1819 The first **Cheltenham Gold Cup** race, a weight-for-age 3-mile flat race, took place with a substantial prize of **100 guineas**, won by **Mr. Brodenham** on his horse '**Spectre**'.
- 1823 The lease for the **Cheltenham Steeplechase course** dates from this year.
- 1823 The firm of **Martin & Co.** supplied the **Gold Cup** and has held the permanent contract to supply the **Gold Cup**, with other racing trophies, since **1933**.
- 1825 Attendance at the races on **Cleeve Hill** was around **50,000**. A large **grandstand** had been built over-looking a figure-of-eight course.
- 24 Jul 1826 The *Cheltenham Journal* reported that an estimated 40,000 people attended the first day of the annual races on **Cleeve Hill**, the 'downs' being covered with 'a countless multitude of equestrians, charioteers and pedestrians'. A large number of the aristocracy was noted to have attended. On the down side, a police officer was slightly injured while trying to arrest a notorious pickpocket. Also **Lady Sherborne** had notes to the value of £13 stolen from her 'reticule', taken out of her carriage while she was standing up to view a race.
- 17 Jun 1827 The **Rev. Francis Close's** sermon "*The Evil Consequences of attending the Race Course Exposed*" sparked lively discussion over horse racing which subsequently split the town.
- 1829 Following the damning sermons of the **Rev. Francis Close**, who railed against horse racing, mobs threw rocks and empty bottles at horses and riders.
- 23 Jul 1829 It was announced in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* that the 'splendid **Gold Cup**, value 100 sovs., which is one of the principal prizes for Thursday's race, was manufactured by **Mr. S. Martin**, jeweller of this town'.
- 23 Jul 1829 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* expressed concern at the number of **gaming tables** that had been established at several 'respectable houses' in the **High Street** since the start of the **Races**. Men stationed at the doors were inviting passers-by to enter these dens of infamy by exclaiming "Walk in gentlemen, rouge et noir! Hazard! Pray walk in and try your luck! The rooms are filled with heavy players!"
- 1830 The great **grandstand** on **Cleeve Hill** mysteriously burned down.
- 19 Jul 1831 Two-day **Cheltenham Races** were held for the first time at **Lord Ellenborough's Prestbury Park** where a temporary course had been set up.
- Jul 1832 The **rules** of the **Cheltenham Races** included one that stated "All **dogs** found on the Course will be **shot**, by order of the Stewards".
- 1834 Undaunted by **Francis Close's** discouraging admonitions, the organisers staged the first **Grand**

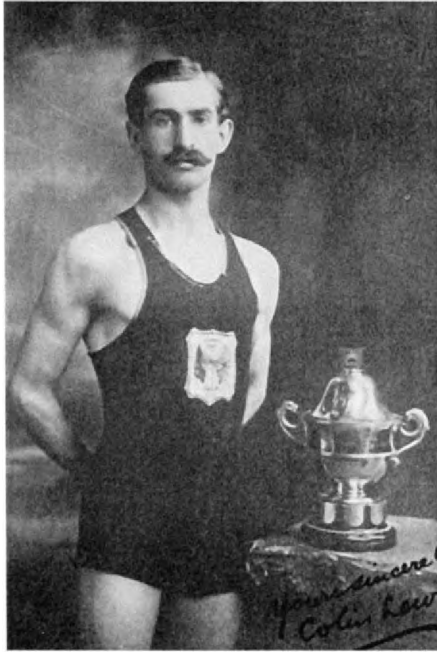
- Annual Steeplechase at Prestbury Park**, hosted by **Lord Ellenborough**.
- Aug 1834 An extraordinary **race mare** called **Pincushion** or **Creeping Jenny** was exhibited in the **Market Place, Cheltenham**, advertised as the **Greatest Living Natural Curiosity in the known world**. The horse had **seven legs** ‘and an **eighth** fast approaching to perfection’. She stood on four hind feet and two fore feet. In 1822-3 she had won the **City Plate** at **Canterbury** and the **25 Guinea Stakes** at **Newmarket**. She had also frequently performed at the **Royal Circus, London**.
- 14 Jul 1835 Horse racing was re-established on **Cleeve Hill** where the turf was considered to be better.
- 31 Mar 1836 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported on the **Steeplechase** that was held at **Andoversford**. The course began in a field to the left of the **Withington road**, ran alongside it to the hovel or barn of **Mr. Bennett’s seed piece**, continued across the old **London road**, on to **Mr. Smith’s farm**, across the land leading to **Andoversford**, then round to **Mr. Arkell’s barn**, leaving it to the right, and down to the **London road**, round the **Inn**, and up to the **Stow road**, alongside this to finish in a large field, &c., &c. **Tom Oliver** (who became a famous jockey and won the **Grand National** 3 times) raced in the steeplechases held around **Andoversford** and also promoted racing at **Cheltenham**.
- 10 Feb 1837 The well-known **jockey Mr. H. Brown** died at **Prestbury** after a long illness.
- 26 Mar 1839 The *Cheltenham Looker-On* announced that, although no longer as important as they once were in the eyes of ‘the Turf’, the **Cheltenham Spring Steeplechases** were to be celebrated under the auspices of the members of the **Assembly Rooms** and **Imperial Clubs** and the stewardships of **Messrs. Cregoe Colmore, Lettson Elliot, Dixon and Watson**. Three races were announced, to be run on **Cleeve Hill**.
- 7 Jul 1839 The **Turf Club** held a public meeting to raise funds to continue racing on **Cleeve Hill**.
- 31 Dec 1839 A **Grand Amateur Steeplechase**, by horses belonging to members of the **Berkeley Hunt Club**, was arranged – a **Handicap Sweepstakes** of five pounds each, with **Col. Charritie** as umpire, the gentlemen of the Hunt themselves to ride, thus excluding all regular Steeplechase riders, confining the selection to amateurs.
- 1840s There was a decline in **flat racing** in **Cheltenham**, partly due to opposition from **Francis Close** and his supporters. Interest in **steeplechasing** continued, however, with the support of the hunting fraternity.
- 21 Jul 1840 The **Cheltenham Races** were renamed the **County of Gloucester Races** and its first two-day meeting took place on the old **Cleeve Hill** course.
- 25 Aug 1842 The *Cheltenham Chronicle* announced that the **Grand Stand** on **Cleeve Hill** was to be sold by auction, and to be removed before the **29<sup>th</sup> September**. Races were to be discontinued on the hill.
- 17 Mar 1843 A **Steeplechase** took place over a line of country on the left of the **London road** from **Puzedown** (*sic*) to **Andoversford**, passing behind the **Inn** and having the winning-post in a field nearly opposite **Sandywell Park**. Eight horses entered but only three started, of which **Oliver** won on **Mr. Bliss’s The Page**.
- Jun 1843 A **trotting race match** for **£5** a side took place between a **pony** of **Mr. Glover** of the **Bell Inn, Cheltenham**, and another **pony** belonging to **Mr. Blake** of **Cirencester**, both ridden by their respective owners. The race was ‘admirably contested’ and was won by about half a neck by **Mr. Blake, Mr. Glover’s** pony having broken into a gallop.
- 14 Apr 1847 The **Grand Annual Steeplechase** moved back to **Prestbury**. The course, mapped out by **Col. Berkeley**, ran from **Knoll Hill House** to the **Hewletts** via **Noverton Farm**. It was won by **William Holman** on ‘**Stanmore**’ and **William Archer** finished second on ‘**Daddy Longlegs**’. The race was immortalised by **Adam Lindsay Gordon**, the future poet laureate of Australia, in his poem *How we Beat the Favourite*. The steeplechase was never held over this course again as it was felt to be far too difficult for even **Prestbury** men and horses.
- 1853 After this date the races occupied various temporary sites, including the old **Gloucester Road** near **Fiddler’s Green**.
- Mar 1853 The **Cheltenham Spring Steeplechase & Race Meeting** included the **Hunter’s Stakes** of 10 Sovs. each, for horses the property and to be ridden by members of the **Berkeley Hunt, Cheltenham Stag Hunt** and members of the **Plough Club**, which had been hunted during the season. No horse was to have been in any public training stable within 12 months of the day of running; a winner of any previous race to carry 7lb extra; &c., &c.
- 5 Apr 1853 **Grand Steeplechases** were held at **Prestbury Park** and so many visitors came to the town for the event that there were considerable problems in accommodating them all.
- 24 May 1853 **Prestbury Park** was sold for **££19,600**.
- Jan 1855 **Prestbury Park** was bought by **Mr. Dodson** of **Rose Hill** who was determined to end racing in **Cheltenham**. Consequently the **steeplechase** moved temporarily to **Bibury**.
- 28 Jun 1855 Two-day **Cheltenham & City of Gloucester Races** were held on the old course on **Cleeve Hill**

- in an attempt to revive an old tradition and also because the new owner of **Prestbury Park** refused to allow his ground to be used for the purpose.
- 1856<sup>++</sup> **George Stevens** won the **steeplechase event** this year and on four other occasions – 1861, 1864, 1869 and 1870. He was one of four well-known jockeys from **Prestbury**, the others being **Tom Oliver**, **William Holman** and **William Archer** (father of **Fred**). Between them these four jockeys won the **Grand National** 12 times. They were mentioned in the poem “*How we Beat the Favourite*” by **Adam Lindsay Gordon**.
- 19 Apr 1856 The **Grand Annual Steeplechase** returned to **Cheltenham** and was run along the **old Gloucester Road**.
- 1857 The **Grand Annual Steeplechase** was run around **Andoversford**.
- 11 Jan 1857 **Fred Archer** was born at **St. George’s Cottage, 43 St. George’s Place**. He became one of racing’s most successful jockeys. The following year his father, **William**, also a steeplechaser, became landlord of the **King’s Arms, Prestbury**.
- Apr 1858 The **Cheltenham Annual Spring Steeplechases** were held near **Andoversford**. The report in the *Cheltenham Looker-On* was discouraging – the races were described as ‘indifferent’ and the assembled company as ‘passive and listless’.
- 24 Jun 1858 **Josiah Ballinger** died, a **horse-dealer** who had been well-known in Cheltenham for the previous 40 years. His funeral was attended by many racing personalities including the steeplechase jockeys **Tom Oliver** and **William Archer**.
- 2 Apr 1859 The *Cheltenham Looker-On* reported that the **Cheltenham Spring Steeplechases** were held on the table land of **Cleeve Hill**.
- Nov 1861 **William Holman**, the owner and trainer of ‘**Bantam**’, was subjected to much abuse in the sporting press, including accusations of foul play, because his little horse did not win at **Liverpool**. It was ridden by **George Holman** who found his weight was too much for the horse, but he refrained from beating the horse to speed up.
- 1866 **Prestbury Park** was closed to racing but local landowners took turns to provide **steeplechasing** races. At **Kayte Farm, Southam**, the grandstand collapsed and many of the **200 spectators** were injured. The organisers were sued and costs of **£2,500** were awarded.
- 10 Feb 1868 **Fred Archer** was apprenticed to **Matt Dawson** at the **Heath House Stables** in **Newmarket**.
- 1870 **Fred Archer** rode his first winner aged 12 when he weighed just **4st 11lbs**.
- 1870 **George Stevens** won the **Steeplechase** for the **fifth** time, despite not having raced since the previous year and carrying a 19lb penalty. **Stevens** was a national sporting star and after each of his **Aintree** triumphs he would arrive home to find blazing beacons on **Cleeve Hill** to greet him.
- 1870 **Adam Lindsay Gordon**, educated at **Cheltenham College**, shot himself in **Australia**, where he was **Champion Amateur Jockey**.
- Jan 1870 **Charles Archer**, the youngest brother of **Fred**, met with a serious accident on his way to a meet of the **Cotswold Hounds** at **Dixon**. A horse belonging to **T.W. Potter** of **East Court, Charlton Kings**, kicked out at the **Charles’** pony and stripped the flesh from the boy’s knee to his foot. He was conveyed to the **Crown Hotel** and attended by **Mr. S. Onley, junior**.
- 1874 **Archer** became **champion jockey of England** at the age of 17, having won **147 races** from **530 rides**. He became **Lord Falmouth’s** jockey, winning **three Classics** in his first season with him.
- 29 Nov 1876 It was reported that **Fred Archer** had ridden 206 winners in one season. His diet, when racing, consisted of a tablespoon of castor oil and half an orange for breakfast, and a glass of champagne and one sardine for dinner.
- Mar 1878 **William Hayward Archer, junior**, a **jockey** and elder brother of **Fred**, died of injuries received on **Prestbury racecourse** (in the Selling Hurdle race). His horse had fallen heavily on top of him
- 31 Jan 1883 **Fred Archer** married **Helen Rose Dawson**, known as **Nellie**. The wedding was the main social event of the year at **Newmarket**. Tragically **Nellie** died the following year while giving birth to their daughter. **Archer** never recovered from the trauma.
- 1884 Following the death of his wife, **Fred Archer** went to **America** for 4 months. He was very popular and successful, especially on his return to England.
- 1884 An example of the hero’s welcome that **Fred Archer** inspired occurred in **Thirsk, Yorks**. HE was engaged for two rides and his arrival was signalled by the town crier, **George Gill**: “At **Thirsk Races** this afternoon, the greatest jockey of this or any other age; in England, Scotland, Ireland or them there foreign parts, - Mr **FRED ARCHER** – will positively ride. **Mr. Archer** has arrived in **Thirsk Toon**; so there’ll be no disappointment whatsoever. So God Save the Queen and **Mr. Fred Archer**.” There was no disappointment – **Archer** won on both his mounts.
- 1885 **Fred Archer** rode 246 winners during the season. He was 5ft 10ins, tall for a jockey, and his natural body weight was over 10 stone. Consequently he fought an increasingly desperate battle to keep his weight down. He resorted to a starvation diet and a “disgusting purgative” known as

- Archer's Mixture** which got him down to a racing weight of just over 8 stone, but to the detriment of his health.
- 8 Nov 1886 Aged 29 **Fred Archer** took his own life during a depression induced by typhoid fever. His funeral was a national event and the whole sporting world went into mourning. During his career he had won 2,148 of his 8,004 races, including 21 Classics. He was **Champion Jockey of England** 13 years in succession, had won the Derby five times, the St. Leger six times, the Oaks four times, the 2,000 Guineas four times and the 1,000 Guineas twice. Overall **Archer** had won **30 per cent** of the races he entered.
- 1898 Racing returned permanently to **Prestbury Park**. **Mr. Baring Bingham**, the new owner, re-established the racecourse, rebuilding the Grandstand and marking out the course with rails.
- 9 Apr 1902 **Prestbury Park** held its first two-day **National Hunt Festival**, which included jump racing, gambling and drinking.
- 1908 The **Cheltenham Steeplechase Company** was formed and the first Secretary was **Mr. Cathcart** who was already the first Secretary of the **Cheltenham Steeplechase Club**. Racing became more professional and racing stables proliferated in the areas surrounding the racecourse. Nationally **Pratt & Barbrook's** were responsible for the efficient operation of many racecourses, including **Cheltenham**, and took entries for races at courses in England and abroad.
- May 1908 The **Grandstand** and **Club House** were opened at **Cheltenham Racecourse**, with its own private lawn.
- 24 Oct 1908 A new **Tattersall's Stand** was opened at the racecourse.
- 6 Mar 1911 The **National Hunt Steeplechase** returned to **Cheltenham** where a new racecourse layout had been completed and where it has remained ever since. The press were afforded the hospitality of a lunch and viewing from a private lawn. The local press were joined by the *Birmingham Daily Mail*.
- 1912 The **Racecourse railway station** was opened, bringing spectators directly to **Prestbury Park**.
- 11 Mar 1914 A newly-completed racecourse stand was used for the first time at the **National Steeplechase Day**.
- 1914 **Cheltenham Racecourse** was used as a **Red Cross Hospital** for troops injured in the First World War. Patients were nursed in the Ladies' Drawing Room and the Luncheon Rooms. The jockey's dressing room was used as a kit room and the Weighing Room became an office. Racing continued on a reduced basis, and provided entertainment for the patients.
- 1920 Racing became even more popular after the War. **Ernest Robinson** became **Clerk of the Course**, with responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Racecourse.
- 1922 **Tim Hamey** won the **Gold Cup** on '**Koko**'.
- Mar 1923 The **National Hunt Festival** at **Prestbury Park** was extended from two to **three days**.
- 1924 **Letheby & Christopher** were given the contract for catering at **Cheltenham Racecourse**.
- 12 Mar 1924 The **Cheltenham Gold Cup** weight-for-age **steeplechase** was run for the first time, won by '**Red Splash**' with prize money of **£685**.
- 1927 The **Champion Hurdle Challenge Cup** was run for the first time, over two miles.
- 14 Mar 1928 '**Cryptical**' won the **National Hunt Steeplechase**.
- Mar 1931 The **Cheltenham Gold Cup** was cancelled due to hard frost.
- 1934 '**Golden Miller**' became the only horse ever to win the **Aintree Grand National** and the **Cheltenham Gold Cup** in the same season.
- Mar 1936 '**Golden Miller**' won his **fifth** consecutive **Gold Cup**, a record that has never been equalled.
- Mar 1937 The **Cheltenham Gold Cup** was abandoned due to heavy snow.
- 1939-45 During the **Second World War** the Racecourse was used as living and training quarters for troops waiting to be dispatched. The **Gold Cup** was run every year except **1943** and **1944** when all **steeplechasing** in England was cancelled.
- 21 Mar 1942 Because of the War the **National Hunt Meeting** this year was the last one to be held until **1945**. '**Frenchie**' **Nicholson** won the **Gold Cup** on '**Medoc**'. He went on to become a famous local trainer and established his **Jockey's Academy** at **Prestbury**.
- 6 Jan 1945 Racing was revived at **Prestbury Park**.
- Mar 1945 Prize money was much reduced during the War. The **Gold Cup** winner, **Davy Jones** on '**Red Rower**' won only **£340** for his owners, less than half of the **1924** prize.
- Mar 1946 The **Gold Cup** prize money was worth **£1,300**.
- 6 Mar 1948 The **Cheltenham Races** were filmed for the first time by the **BBC newsreel**.
- 9 Mar 1950 '**Cottage Rake**' won the **Gold Cup** for the **third successive** year. **Vincent O'Brien's Gold Cup** success with '**Cottage Rake**' helped to establish the Festival's popularity with **Irish punters**.
- 1951 '**Hatton's Grace**' won the **Champion Hurdle** for the **third successive** year.
- 1954 '**Sir Ken**' won the **Champion Hurdle** for the **third successive** year.

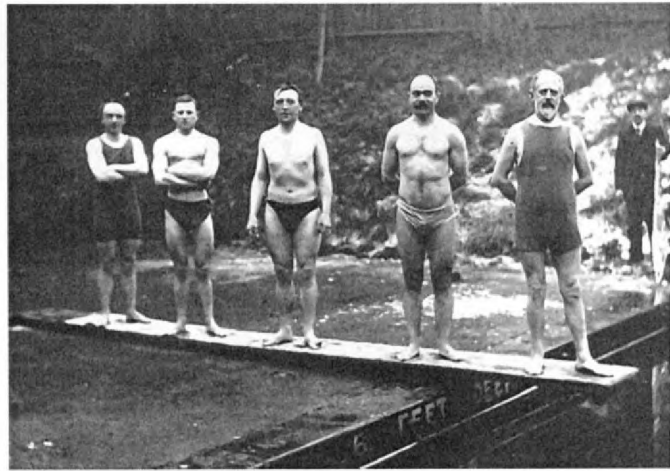
- 2 Mar 1954 **Lester Piggott** rode his one and only **Cheltenham Festival** winner.
- 2 Mar 1954 The first full **television coverage** of the **Cheltenham Festival** took place with **Peter O'Sullivan** as commentator.
- Nov 1957 The first **sponsored race** was held at Cheltenham – the **Hennessey Gold Cup**.
- 1958 **Tim Hamey's** house and stables in **Prestbury** were subject to **compulsory purchase** so that the adjacent Racecourse could be extended to widen the course.
- 1959 The **two-mile Champion Chase** was added to the racing fixture list.
- Nov 1960 The **Hennessey Gold Cup** became known as the **Mackeson Gold Cup**. Also a new grandstand was opened at **Prestbury Park**.
- 1963 The **Massey-Ferguson Gold Cup** was added to the Cheltenham racecourse fixture list.
- 1964 There were fears that **Cheltenham Racecourse** would be sold off for building purposes, and rumours that the **National Hunt Festival** would be moved to **Sandown**. The **Racecourse Holdings Trust Consortium** was formed to purchase (for **£240,000**) and protect the **Prestbury racecourse**. The **Consortium** was headed by **John Henderson**, father of trainer **Nicky Henderson**. It was a non-profit-making company with its shares held by the **Jockey Club**. The **Trust** then went on to purchase other racecourses and ran them on the same lines.
- 17 Mar 1966 '**Arkle**' won the **Gold Cup** for the third successive year. The **Irish** horse wore shamrocks for luck. In this third winning year an aeroplane flew over the course after the race and dropped half a ton of **shamrocks** on the course to celebrate.
- Mar 1970 Spectators for the **Cheltenham Festival** reached **60,100** over three days, up 10% on **1969**.
- 19 Mar 1970 Shopkeeper **Philip Delaney** began a tradition of welcoming **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother** to Cheltenham on **Gold Cup Day** when passing his shop in **Leckhampton**.
- 1971 **Lord Vestey** began working as a **Steward** at **Cheltenham Racecourse**, and a **Director** from **1976**. He was responsible for the condition of the buildings (including the toilets, which he personally had to check) despite being the owner of many racehorses.
- 1976 '**Royal Frolic**' won the **Gold Cup** at **500-1**.
- 16 Mar 1978 The **Gold Cup** race was postponed, along with the **Triumph Hurdle** until **12<sup>th</sup> April** due to the heaviest snow of the winter. Inevitably some of the original entrants were unable to take part due to injury. The **Gold Cup** was won by **John Francombe** on '**Midnight Court**', and the **Triumph Hurdle** by **J. Burke** on '**Connaught Ranger**'.
- May 1978 A **woman jockey** won at the Cheltenham races for the first time.
- 13 Mar 1979 **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother** unveiled a new **£1.5M grandstand** at **Prestbury Park**.
- 29 Mar 1979 The first **Cheltenham Gold Cup** (weight-for-age steeplechase) of **1924** was sold at auction for **£2,600**.
- 1980 **Edward Gillespie** was appointed **manager** of the **Cheltenham Racecourse**.
- 13 Mar 1980 The **Champion Chase** was renamed the **Queen Mother's Champion Chase**.
- 18 Mar 1982 **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother** made a detour to visit grocer **Philip Delaney**, now working in **Prestbury**, in order to receive her traditional annual present before attending the **Gold Cup** meeting.
- 18 Mar 1980 '**Master Smudge**' won the **Gold Cup**. His trainer had bought him from a local pig farmer six years earlier, after seeing him running in a field as a two-year-old.
- 1982 **Cheltenham Racecourse** was presented with the **Racecourse of the Year Award**.
- 15 Mar 1983 **Miss C. Beasley** was the first **woman jockey** to win a **National Hunt Festival** race. The same day **Mrs. Mary Rimell** became the first **woman trainer** of a **Champion Hurdle** winner.
- 17 Mar 1983 Trainer **Michael Dickenson's** horses took the **first five places** in the **Gold Cup**, a unique accomplishment. On the same day a **streaker** from **Canvey Island** raced the final furlong of the last race to the cheers of the crowd.
- 17 Mar 1984 **Mrs. Jenny Pitman** became the first **woman trainer** of a **Cheltenham Gold Cup** winner.
- Apr 1986 **HRH Princess Anne** rode two races at the **Cheltenham racecourse**.
- 17 Mar 1987 Over **37,000 race-goers** attended a record opening day to the **National Hunt Festival**.
- Mar 1988 A male **streaker** was a late finisher at the **Cheltenham Gold Cup**.
- 1989 '**Desert Orchid**' won the **Gold Cup**, the first time it had been won by a grey. '**Desert Orchid**' had previously recorded four **King George** victories at **Kempton**, a **Whitbread Gold Cup** and an **Irish National**. He had had five previous years' appearances at the **Cheltenham Gold Cup** but had never won.
- 1989 A **£5 million grandstand extension** opened with standing room under cover for **2,000** people and seating for an extra **300**. There were also restaurants, boxes and entertainment rooms. Later the same year a **£1 million stable block** for **160 horses** was completed at the racecourse entrance.
- Mar 1990 '**Norton's Coin**' won the **Gold Cup** at **100-1**, a rank outsider.





Colin Lewis, founder member of the Cheltenham Swimming & Water Polo Club, competed in the 100m backstroke at the 1908 Olympics in London.

Members of the All-year-round Club at Alstone Baths, including Harold Hands (second from left)



Cheltenham Ladies' Water Polo Team 1923.

Back: Miss Richards, Mrs Stevens, Mrs Pilkinton.  
 Standing: Miss Vera Stevens, Miss E Dodwell, Miss Scott, Mrs A Waite, Miss P Wesley, Miss P Keen.  
 Seated: Miss M Usher-Somers, Miss Hilda Fryer, Miss M Holborow, Miss Elsie James, Miss B Holborow.  
 Front: Miss Vera Kirkham, Miss E Usher-Somers.

Members of Cheltenham Swimming Team setting off from Clarence Parade on tour in the South of England, August 1933  
 The Austin car was owned by Mr Nash.



- 1991 The **'Park Course'** opened at the **Cheltenham racecourse**.
- 1992 A new **parade ring** opened at the racecourse with **25 open boxes** and facilities to accommodate up to **1,000 spectators**.
- 29 Jan 1993 Cheltenham racecourse's **'Hall of Fame'** was opened by the **Duchess of Westminster**. It remains the only exhibition dedicated to **National Hunt** racing in Britain, featuring a gallery of **Gold Cup** winners including the multiple winners **Eastern Hero, Golden Miller, Arkle** and **L'Escargot**.
- 7 Oct 1994 Cheltenham won the **Racecourse of the Year** award.
- 30 Nov 1994 One of racing's greatest mysteries was believed solved when workmen stumbled upon what were thought to be **Shergar's** remains at Cheltenham racecourse. Tests revealed it was a working pony.
- 14 Mar 1995 The **National Hunt Festival** became a **four-day event** for the first time in its history.
- Nov 1996 The Cheltenham **Mackeson Gold Cup** was redesignated the **Murphy's Gold Cup**.
- Feb 1997 The **£10 million Tattersall Grandstand** at **Prestbury Park** was completed.
- 13 Mar 1997 A record crowd of **59,488** attended **Gold Cup Day** at **Prestbury Park**. The **Irish** had **seven** Festival winners.
- 1 Jan 1998 The **Sporting Index Select Steeplechase** was introduced as a new event to celebrate the racecourse's **centenary year**.
- 12 Mar 2001 The *Guardian* reported that at least **25,000 Irishmen** headed to the **Cheltenham Festival** race meeting annually. This year the event had to be cancelled, for the first time in 50 years, because of **foot and mouth disease**.
- 2002-2004 The **Gold Cup** was won three years in succession by **'Best Mate'** ridden by **Jim Culloty**. Unfortunately **'Best Mate'** collapsed and died during the race in **2005**. His ashes are buried at **Cheltenham Racecourse** and a statue of this famous horse was unveiled at the course in **2006**.
- 2004 The multi-million-pound **Centaur Centre** was completed in time for the **National Hunt Festival**. It included a 2,200-seat arena and added another 4,000 to the capacity of 50,000 at the racecourse. The centre also provided **Cheltenham** with an arena big enough for pop concerts to be held before **6,000** people.
- Mar 2005 **Gold Cup Day** was moved **Thursday** to **Friday** for the first time. **Irish-trained horses** won the **Gold Cup**, the **Champion Hurdle** and the **Queen Mother Champion Chase** at **Cheltenham**.
- 28 Aug 2006 Retired trainer **David Nicholson** died.
- 2006-2007 This season over **5 million** pounds in prize money, mostly raised through sponsorship, will be awarded, **3 million** at the **Gold Cup Festival**, a 10% increase on the previous year. Crowd numbers will be limited to **55,000** on the first three days and **65,000** on **Gold Cup Day**.

### Some of the famous names associated with Cheltenham Racecourse:

**Trainers:** Terry, Biddlecombe, Michael Dickinson, Josh Gifford, Tim Hamey, Nicky Henderson, P.J. Hobbs, Henrietta Knight, David Nicholson, P.F. Nicholls, 'Frenchie' Nicholson, Jonjo O'Niell, Martin Pipe, Jenny Pitman, Richard Pitman, Tom Rimell, Nigel Twiston-Davies, Fulke Walwyn, Gerry Wilson, Fred Winter.

**Jockeys:** Fred Archer, Terry Biddlecombe, Richard Dunwoody, Jim Culloty, Mick Fitzgerald, John Francombe, Tim Hamey, Richard Johnson, Davy Jones, Carl Llewellyn, Tony McCoy, Timmy Murphy, David Nicholson, 'Frenchie Nicholson', Jonjo O'Niell, Richard Pitman, Peter Scudamore, Steve Smith-Eccles, Billy Speck, Billy Stott, Robert Thornton, Andrew Thornton, Ruby Walsh, Norman Williamson, Gerry Wilson,

## HUNTING

- 1086 It was recorded in **Domesday Book** that in the time of **Edward the Confessor Cheltenham** was to supply 3,000 loaves annually for the king's dogs, suggesting a connection with royal hunting in the area.
- 1136 **John, Bishop of Hereford**, had formed **Prestbury Park** as a hunting park by this date.
- 1262 Poachers bound the keeper of **Prestbury Park** and made off with his game.
- 21 Nov 1809 The **Cotswold Hunt** was established at the **Plough** by **Col. William Fitzhardinge Berkeley**, a great social leader in Regency **Cheltenham**. He brought his hounds from **Berkeley** to **Cheltenham**.
- 17 Sep 1810 A **Cheltenham butcher** named **William Taylor** was convicted of killing a **fallow deer** whilst poaching in **Charlton Park**.
- 1815 The **Cotswold Hunt** (foxhounds) separated from the **Berkeley Hunt**. **Col. Berkeley** established

- the **Hunt kennels** in **North Place**. They later moved to **Whaddon Lane**.
- Nov 1829 The **Cheltenham Subscription Pack of Harriers** (set up for hare-coursing) met at **Andoversford** when a **red deer** was turned out. It was one of several which had been purchased by the subscribers to 'enhance the sport of this celebrated pack'.
- Oct 1830 A **hare hunt** by the 'crack pack' of **Cheltenham Harriers**, which met at **Battledown**, finished with the **hare** being taken in a **shop** in the **High Street**.
- Jan 1834 The **Cheltenham Harriers** were advertised for sale, but saved by an increase in subscriptions.
- 1836 At a social gathering of the **Cheltenham Harriers** it was suggested that the pack be reorganised as **Stag Hounds**.
- 11 Jan 1837 The **Berkeley family** proposed setting up the **Cheltenham Stag Hunt** in the town with a dozen stable-reared **red deer**, supplied by **Lord Segrave** (later **Earl Fitzhardinge**). His brother the **Hon. C.F. Berkeley, M.P.** was elected the first **Master of the Hounds** at a public meeting held on this date. The sport remained popular until **1858**.
- Apr 1837 The **Cheltenham Harriers**, consisting of **14 couple** of hounds (hounds were usually reckoned in couples) were advertised to be sold at auction, a preliminary to the setting-up of the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds**.
- Oct 1837 The first meeting of the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds**, consisting of **13 couple** of hounds, took place with a meet at **Beech Turnpike**. It was a private meet to try out the hounds – the experiment proved successful. (The aim was not to kill the **deer**, but to enjoy the thrill of the chase. When the hounds had cornered their quarry they were pulled off and the deer carted back to **Cheltenham** for another day's hunting.)
- 4 Nov 1837 The following is a typical entry in the *Cheltenham Looker-On* at the start of the season:- '**Lord Segrave** and his brother, **the Hon. Grantley Berkeley**, arrived on Tuesday at **German Cottage** from **Berkeley Castle**. His Lordship's crack pack of **Fox Hounds** reached their **Kennel** at **Prestbury** on the same day.' (The kennels were in **Whaddon Lane** at this time. **Lord Segrave**, later **Earl Fitzhardinge**, usually rented **German Cottage** for the winter season – it was in the area of **Rose & Crown Court / St. Margaret's Road**, and later became **Livorno Lodge** which was occupied for a time by **Pate's Grammar School for Girls**.)
- 26 Oct 1838 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** met at **Teddington Cross Hands** and the **deer** led the chase through **Beckford** to **Bredon**. Unfortunately she was so stressed during the run that she died before reaching home, a less usual outcome.
- 1 Nov 1838 A report in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* was typical of many on the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** – the stag was uncarted at **Cobberley Gate** and ran to **Colesbourne Village**, through **Coombe End Wood** where several huntsmen lost their way, across the **Beech turnpike** and over a stone wall country to **Mr. Procter's farm** at **Elkstone** and thence to **Cowley Wood** where it was captured after a run of **1 hr 20 mins**.
- Dec 1840 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** were unable to go out as their stag cart had been impounded by the local carrier, at whose premises it was kept, in lieu of unpaid bills. Although popular, the Hunt suffered from a perennial shortage of funds.
- Feb 1842 The **Badminton Fox Hounds** attended a **meet** at **Northleach** – an event often wished for by the sportsmen of Cheltenham and the vicinity. A company of 1,500 to 2,000 gentry and yeomen, including a number of ladies on horseback and in carriages, gathered to welcome the **Duke of Beaufort**. A heavy fog unfortunately marred the sport.
- Dec 1842 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** met at the **Rising Sun, Cleeve Hill**, for a run that was not without mishap. The **stag** led them from **Southam** through **Prestbury Park**, across the **Evesham road**, on through **Swindon** to **Uckington**, then over to **Heydon Hill**. Passing **Redgrove** the stag crossed the **railroad** near **Badgeworth** just as one of the **Gloucester trains** came into view. Regrettably the leader of the hounds was cut in two by one of the carriages. The deer was eventually taken near **Brockworth**. A farmer named **Hobbs**, of **Woodmancote**, was thrown from his horse during the run and broke his leg.
- Oct 1845 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** were led by a stag, uncarted at **Prestbury Park**, through **Uckington** and round the outskirts of **Cheltenham** to **Hatherley Place** (now St. Stephen's Road) and then into **Tivoli**. It then made for **Suffolk Lawn** and ran into the stables at the back of **Mr. Fortescue's** house where it was captured.
- 1846 Among the venues for meets of the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** were **Bays Hill**, **The Pheasant** on **Gloucester Road**, **Kilkenny**, **Mytton** near **Tewkesbury** and **Teddington Cross Hands**.
- 17 Oct 1846 The *Cheltenham Looker-On* described the first meet of the season of the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds**:- It took place in the open space fronting the **Queen's Hotel** where the master of the hunt, **Mr. Ansley Robinson** arrived at about 11.30. The party moved off, the pack taking the lead with its attendants in **dark green livery**, followed by the gentlemen of the hunt and about 50 or

60 well-mounted amateurs, some 18 or 20 open carriages, filled principally with ladies, bringing up the rear. The stag was uncarted in a field to the left of the **Shurdington Road**. It set off through **Badgeworth**, then came at a leisurely pace through **Hatherley**, across **Lansdown** and **Bays Hill** into the **Old Well Walk**. Here he was startled and driven to and fro by boys until he leapt the palisade at the back of a dwelling house and got away through the **Promenade** and **High Street** towards **Charlton Kings**. Was caught at **Charlton House**, a full half an hour before the hounds caught up.

- 12 Aug 1847 Letter from **Earl Fitzhardinge** declining his usual present of **red deer** for the **Cheltenham Stag Hunt** and claiming the **hounds** as his own property to be returned to **Berkeley Castle**. He still intended to hunt the **Cheltenham** country with his **foxhounds**, but withdrew support for the **Stag Hounds** in revenge for his brother's **political defeat** in the recent elections. **Mr. Theobald** offered to undertake the mastership of a new pack and his establishment consisted of a pack of hounds, **15 red deer** and a stud of **23 horses**. **Mr Theobald** ran the Hunt for three seasons, after which he moved to **Bath** as the subscription in **Cheltenham** often fell short of the **£700** he had been promised.
- 15 Oct 1847 The first meet of the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** under the mastership of **Mr. Theobald** took place at the **Plough**. Fifty or 60 gentlemen, some in scarlet coats, turned out along with several ladies in dark riding habits who rode beside them. They were followed by a number of private carriages, flies and other vehicles, filled mostly with ladies. Among those at the meet were **Lord Dunalley**, **Mr. Fortescue**, **Pearson Thompson**, **J. Agg Gardner**, **Mr Teaste**, **Ansley Robinson** (the late master), **Mr Stubbs Wightwick**, **Mr. Stuart**, **Gen. Brough**, **Col. Northey**, &c. Among the 'sporting characters' were **Tom Oliver** and **Holman**. **Mr. F. Jacobs** met with a serious accident breaking his collar bone going over a five-barred gate.
- 23 Oct 1847 Although the **Cheltenham Harriers** had been disbanded 10 years previously, other packs still hunted in the area. On this date the *Cheltenham Looker-On* reported 'The **Norton Harriers** met yesterday at **Mr. Dangerfield's** farm, the **Hyde**, and had excellent sport. The **Brockworth Harriers** have been hunting the country below **Gloucester** this week, but next week the meets will be again in the neighbourhood of **Cheltenham**.'
- Dec 1849 Unusually a hind was killed during a chase by **Mr. Theobald's Stag Hounds**. It was uncarted at **Teddington Cross Hands**, took the **River Avon** above the **Mythe** and then was lost for the night. Next day it was unlodged from a small coppice and, after a run of 5 or 6 miles, took to the water followed by the whole pack. It was unfortunately killed before the Huntsmen could rescue it 'though every effort was made to do so, especially by **Messrs. La Terriere**, whose bold riding on this occasion proved them to be first-rate sportsmen'.
- 12 June 1850 It was reported that **Mr. Theobald's Stag Hounds** had been sold to a foreign nobleman. (**Mr. Theobald** was 'snapped up' to become master of the Stag Hounds at **Bath**, but interest only lasted for one season and the **Bath Stag Hounds** were for sale in 1851.)
- Jun 1851 **Jim Hastings**, known in the sporting press as the '**Flying Tailor**', died. He had followed **Earl Fitzhardinge's hounds** for the previous **36 years on foot**. He would often walk **25 miles** from **Cheltenham** to **Berkeley** to a meet, follow the hounds all day, be in at the death and walk back to **Cheltenham** the same night. On one occasion he walked **16 miles** to a **Broadway** meet, **8 miles** or more with the **hounds**, then in at the death **12 miles** away at **Fairford**, back to **Broadway 20 miles**, and then to **Cheltenham 16 miles**. He then joined a **badger-hunting** party at **Queen and West Woods**, at least **12 miles** more.
- When young he had set up an amateur 'hunt' of his own – he had tied a herring to one of the **London coaches** as it passed through Cheltenham. Then he put his terrier on the scent and it was soon followed by nearly every dog in town. This novel 'pack' followed down the **High Street** and along the **Gloucester Road** in 'full cry' as far as **The Pheasant** where the horses became restive and upset the coach into the ditch.
- Oct 1851 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** met under a new master, **Arthur Edwin Way Esq.**, at the **Andoversford Inn**. By this time **Earl Fitzhardinge** had forgiven the town for his family's election defeat and was again contributing deer to the Hunt.
- Feb 1851 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** continued to grow in popularity. There were 300 people present for an uncarting at **Seven Springs**, 'the Master considerably allowing an extra hour that the gay Bachelors might recover from the fatigues of the previous evening's polkas'. Only six men were in at the finish after a run of 1 hr 35 mins which took in **Birdlip**, **Ullenwood**, **Crickley Hill**, **Barnwood**, **Brockworth**, **Upton St. Leonards**, **Witcomb**, **Cranham Wood** and **Climperwell** where it was captured.
- 1852 The only fatality during the whole history of the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** occurred when **Master Findon** of **Prestbury** died four days after being injured falling under his horse at a gate.

- 17 Apr 1852 The results of the past season's hunt were reported as **33 ½** brace of **foxes** killed in the **Cheltenham** country and **20** in the neighbourhood of **Berkeley**.
- 20 Oct 1854 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** met under a new master, **Capt. West**, former master of the **Bath Stag Hounds**, replacing **Arthur Way**. As usual the **Stag Hounds** met only on days when **Earl Fitzhardinge's** pack of **foxhounds** were not hunting. The **foxhounds** were usually out on the first four days of the week when in the area.
- 30 Nov 1855 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** had a disappointing run when the stag, released at **Birdlip**, trotted leisurely down **Leckhampton Hill** towards the **High Street**. He was safely captured at **Barrett's Mill**.
- Oct 1856 **Nine red deer**, the gift of **Lord Fitzhardinge**, kept for hunting purposes at the **Cheltenham kennels**, escaped. It took more than a week to re-capture them all as they had spread far across the country around **Cheltenham**. Some were caught in **Charlton Park** where they had joined a herd of **roe deer**. One was caught in **Badgeworth woods**. The last to be caught had joined a herd of **fallow deer** at **Eastnor Castle** beyond **Malvern**.
- 10 Oct 1857 **Earl Fitzhardinge** died at **Berkeley Castle**. The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** had found a new master to replace **Capt. West** – **W.H. White**. However, in his will the **Earl** had bequeathed most of his estate to old friends and former mistresses so the family had to curtail their sporting interests, including **foxhunting** in **Broadway** and the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds**.
- Feb 1858 The sum of £1,600 to £1,700 was raised by gentlemen and tradesmen of Cheltenham and district to establish a new pack of **foxhounds** to be known as **The Cotteswold Hunt**. **Mr. Cregoe Colmore** accepted the **mastership** of the hounds provided the country would be relinquished by **Sir Maurice Berkeley**. **Sir Maurice** withdrew in **April** that year after a last meet at **Sudeley Castle** hosted by **Mr. Dent**.
- Mar 1858 The **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** were finally disbanded. The hounds were sold for the bargain price of **18 guineas** to the huntsman **Charles Allen** who had been a loyal servant of the hunt throughout its existence. The passing of the **Cheltenham Stag Hounds** left only two packs in England, one belonging to **Her Majesty the Queen**, and one to **Baron Rothschild**.
- 15 May 1858 Presentation of a tankard and purse of 200 sovereigns to **Harry Ayris**, huntsman to the late **Lord Fitzhardinge** for 25 years. The testimonial was raised by gentlemen hunting the **Cheltenham** country to mark the occasion of the **Berkeley hounds** being withdrawn from the district.
- 21 Aug 1858 The *Cheltenham Looker-On* reported 'The **Cheltenham & Cotteswold Foxhounds** commenced **Cub hunting** on Tuesday ... the object of this does not contemplate "sport", but rather the **training** of the pack, and the initiation more particularly of young hounds.'
- 25 Sep 1859 The *Cheltenham Looker-On* reported that several **Harriers** had been out in the neighbourhood 'affording considerable amusement to those who seek enjoyment of healthy exercise rather than the hard riding of the Fox chase of Stag hunt. Those mentioned included **Mr. Butt's pack**, formerly **Mr. Bernard's harriers**, the **Brockworth Harriers** and **Mr. Wynniatt of Guiting's pack**, formerly belonging to **Mr. Dangerfield**.
- 1862 Fatal accident to **Mr. Stewart Thompson** while out with the **Cotswold hounds**. The horse fell and threw its rider, inflicting a kick on the back of his head which fractured the base of his skull.
- 1902 '**The Continental**', a favourite hunter of **Capt. H.E. Elwes**, had to be put down following an accident. A large **monument** was erected in a field behind **Leckhampton Court** where it can still be seen.
- 1908 **Capt. Henry Cecil Elwes** formed his own pack of **foxhounds** at **Leckhampton Court**.

## RUGBY

- 1842 **F. Armitage** left **Cheltenham College**. He later became the **headmaster** of **The King's School, Parramatta, Sydney**, where he started the game of **rugby** in **Australia**. He also started **rugby** in **Germany** whilst head of **Neuenheim College**.
- 1844 Brothers **Thomas** and **Charles Acton** moved from **Rugby School** to **Cheltenham College** bringing some unusual ideas about how **football** should be played, i.e. by picking up the ball and running with it. Thus in **1844 Cheltenham College Rugby Union Football Club** became the **fourth** rucker club be founded in the country. The others were **Rugby** (1923), **Cambridge University** (1839) and **Guy's Hospital** (1843).
- 1852 The annual match at **Cheltenham College** was started between the **Classical** and **Modern** (later **Military**) departments.
- 1844-1860s **Cheltenham College** used a **round ball** to the aggravation of their opponents.
- Nov 1854 The first football match of the season at **Cheltenham College** was between the rival **twenties** of

- the **Classical** and **Military Departments**. This match was held every year until the **1950s**, at the beginning of every winter term, and was supposed to be the longest-standing **rugby** match in the history of the game. Another long-standing match at the **College** was between the **Grasshoppers** and the **Fireflies**, which also survived into the **1950s**.
- 1861 The first recorded match involving a **Cheltenham Town** side took place against **Cheltenham College**, although both sides exclusively comprised pupils or former pupils of the **College**.
- 1866 The first proper game took place between two clubs took place when the **College** played the **Cheltenham Teacher Training College**. There were **20** players a side in those days and each club had its own rules and method of scoring, and the consequent fights often lasted five minutes or more. **Hacking** – the illegal kicking of an opponents shins – was essential, as was **tripping** them up. There was no **hooking** in the scrum; instead each side simply tried to **push** the other off the ball. One recorded match at the **College** involved **70** players.
- 1867 **Cheltenham College** published its *21 Printed Rules of Rugby*, which were peculiar to **College** in many respects.
- 1871 **Rugby Union** was formed (nationally).
- 1872 At the first **England v. Scotland** match there were **two Old Cheltonians** on each side. [N.B. – **Old Cheltonian** = **ex-Cheltenham College pupil**.]
- 1873 Three **Old Cheltonians** founded the **Glamorgan Rugby Club**, which later changed to the **Cardiff Rugby Club** in **1876**, and which was founded on **Cheltenham** rules.
- 1873 The **Calcutta Rugby Club** was founded and included three or more soldier **Old Cheltonians** in its key members. In **1875** they also founded their own club for **3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the Buffs** – the **Buffs Football Club**. This club was closed for a while when the **free bar** was closed. The money they had saved was used to have the **Calcutta Cup** made, which was presented to the **Rugby Football Union** in **1878**. The **Calcutta Cup** was subsequently used as the cup for winners of **England v. Scotland** internationals.
- 1876 The **Rugby Union Rules** were officially set up, and were essentially the rules used at **Cheltenham College**.
- 1876 **C.A. Crane** left **Cheltenham College**. He later became the **R.F.U. President** and was responsible for buying **Billy Williams' Cabbage patch** which later became **Twickenham**.
- 1880 **Thirty-one Old Cheltonians** had played for **Trinity** by this date. **Irish Rugby** was started at **Trinity** by **Old Cheltonians** and had **seven OCs** playing in its first ever side of **XX**, all to **Cheltenham** rules.
- 26 Nov 1881 The *Cheltenham Mercury* reported a match between the **Beaufort** and the **Pilgrims** which took place at the **Beaufort football and cricket ground, Hales Road**. It was won by the **Beaufort**. On the same day the **Beaufort v. Pilgrims** (2<sup>nd</sup> XV's) also played, also won by the **Beaufort**. The **Pilgrims** became disheartened by their defeat and, refusing to play any longer, left the field a quarter of an hour before time. The **Beaufort side** included **Jessop, Bourne, Barrett, Wheeler** and **Etheridge**, while **McBerty** and **Hodge** played for the **Pilgrims**.
- 1885 **Cheltenham College** first used **4 three-quarters**. Universities and International sides adopted the **4 three-quarters formation** somewhat later in **1893**.
- 1886 A standard set of rules was adopted nationally, and this included the principle known as the '**Cheltenham College Rating**'. The rating, which had been in force at the **College** for about 20 years, equated three tries to one goal. The modern scoring values were not adopted until 1905.
- 1889 The **Cheltenham RFC** grew out of the **All Saints** side. The inaugural meeting of the town team took place at the **Sydney Arms Hotel, Winchcombe Street** when **W. Cooper** was elected as the first captain. The side's home ground was the **Agg Gardner Recreation Ground** at **St. Paul's** and the club's **strip** consisted of red and blue squared shirts with shorts that tucked into knee-length socks.
- 1898 **D.D. Dobson** left **Cheltenham College**. He later gained **six England caps**, was sent off in **Australia** in **1904** for 'using obscene language', and was killed by a charging rhino in **Africa** somewhat later!
- 1892 Although House matches commenced at the **College** in **1866**, there were no inter-school matches until this year when **College** played against **Rugby**. From then until **1896** there was just one match a year.
- 1899 The flourishing **Cheltenham Rugby FC** moved its base to the **Athletic Ground** in **Albion Street**.
- 6 Dec 1905 Between 8,000 and 12,000 spectators watched **Cheltenham Rugby Football Club** play the **New Zealand All Blacks** at **Cheltenham Athletic Ground, Albion Street**. The **All Blacks** won 18-0, but were full of praise for the way their hosts had played. The visitors had tea afterwards at the **Town Hall**, when each was given a souvenir **Cheltenham** guide book.

- 1912 **Bill Burford**, a founder member of the **Cheltenham North Rugby Club** played for **Cheltenham** until **1925**. He was raised in **Worcester Street**, which provided two other **Cheltenham Town** rugby players – **Arthur Cooper** and **Charlie Locke**.
- Mar 1913 Two boys from the **Parish Church School** played for the **England Rugby XV** against **Wales**.
- Pre-1919 **Thirty-seven Old Cheltonians** were **rugby internationals** by this date.
- 18 Jan 1922 The **Cheltenham Rugby Football Supporters Club** was formed.
- 1924 **George Hastings** was born. He was educated at the **Grammar School** where he took up rugby. He played front row forward for **Cheltenham** in **1942** then, during National Service, was a member of the **Army team** in **Egypt**. He became a regular member of the **Gloucester City XV** in the late **1940s**. In **1950** he joined the **county side** and became its **captain** in **1955/6**. He went on to play for **England** and **The Barbarians**.
- 1965 **Whitefriars Old Boys'** team played until **1972**.
- 1979 **St. Paul's College** won the **British Colleges Rugby Cup** for the first time.
- 18 Sep 1996 A **60-year-old** retired Cheltenham engineer was still playing rugby for the **Cheltenham Saracens**.
- 13 Feb 1999 The *Gloucestershire Echo* announced that **Debbie Innes**, Head of Infants at **Christ Church Primary School**, had become the first **woman referee** in the country to become a **Rugby Union Official**. She started off at the **Gloucestershire Society** and was appointed to the **RFU** at the beginning of the season. This meant she could run the line for matches in the **Jewson National League Two** and as such had made her first appearance at the **Prince of Wales Stadium** the previous week (**Sat 6<sup>th</sup> August**) when **Cheltenham** played **Clifton**. It had taken **Debbie** eight years to reach the highest level any female official had ever reached.
- Apr 2003 **Chris White**, a Cheltenham ex-teacher from **Prestbury Primary School**, became the first professional **English rugby referee** at the **European Heineken Cup**. He took charge of the final between **Toulouse** and **Perpignan** in **Dublin**. He had previously played for **Cheltenham Rugby Club**.
- 4-5 Nov 2003 **Rugby referee Chris White** was given an **Honorary Fellowship** by the **University of Gloucestershire**. He refereed the rugby **World Cup semi-final** between **Australia** and **New Zealand** in **Australia** the same month. He played a key role in the development of an all-new **rugby referees scholarship** at the **University**.
- 19 Mar 2005 **Chris White** refereed a **rugby Grand Slam** game between **Wales** and **Ireland**.

## TENNIS

- Early 1870s Future tennis stars, the twins **Willie** and **Ernest Renshaw**, lived with their mother and stepfather, **Edward Meara**, at **Clarence House, Imperial Square**, and attended **Cheltenham College** as dayboys.
- Mar 1875 **Jem Lillywhite**, the lessee of the **Town Hall** in **Regent Street**, became sole agent for **sphairistike** in **Cheltenham**, supplying the public from his shop at **Queen's Circus**. The game, invented in **1874** by **Major Walter C. Wingfield**, was soon renamed **lawn tennis**.
- Oct 1879 **Lawn Tennis Week** was established, traditionally to be held from the first Monday in June.
- 1881 **Willie Renshaw** beat **John Hartley** at **Wimbledon** in just 37 minutes – his record for the shortest-ever men's singles final has never been bettered.
- 1881-1889 The **Renshaw twins** dramatically increased the popularity of British lawn tennis with their exciting, competitive play. Both rivals and accomplices, they won 13 **Wimbledon** titles separately and as doubles partners during the 1880s. Their domination to the game was so complete that the period became known as the '**Renshaw Rush**'.
- 1885 **Tennis** began to be played at the **East Gloucestershire Club** in **Old Bath Road**, although it took a back seat there to **cricket** and **hockey**.
- 8 Jun 1889 **Lawn Tennis Week** – The **annual tournament** of the **Cheltenham Lawn Tennis Club** was held in **Montpellier Gardens**. The entries this year included **Miss Martin**, who had won the **Championship of Ireland** the previous week, **Mr. and Mrs. Hillyard**, **Mr. E. Renshaw**, **Miss Stansell**, **Miss Langrishe**, **Mr. Baldwin**, **Mr. Milne**, **Col. Law**, **Capt. Taylor**, **Capt. Lousada**, **Miss Pope**, **Mrs. Hill**, **Miss Rooke**, **Mr. Benson**, **Miss Agg**, **Mr. Owen Dunn**, **Mr. Winslow**, **Mr. Mascie Taylor** and others. The value of the prizes offered was **£260** and included a **resident's challenge cup** value **£60** for the gentlemen's singles, a **resident's challenge cup** value **£50** for the ladies' singles, and a gentleman's **veteran's cup** value **£5** for singles.
- 1896 The first **American** tournament was played at the **East Gloucestershire Club**.
- Jul 1905 Proposals were made to charge for **tennis** and **croquet** played in **Wellington Square, Clarence**

- Square and Pittville Crescent**; the charges were approved.
- 1 Feb 1923 **The Municipal hard tennis courts at Montpellier Gardens** were formally opened.
- 1924 **East Gloucestershire Club** members **Kate Lidderdale** and **Mary McIlquham** were finalists in the **Wimbledon Ladies Doubles**.
- 1924 Two **hard courts** costing **£110** each were laid at the **East Gloucestershire Club** enabling **winter tennis** to be played for the first time.
- 1931 **Tennis** was permitted for the first time on **Sundays** at the **East Gloucestershire Club**, but only in the **afternoons**.
- 1934 The **Centechs Tennis Club** was established. The grass courts were set up by the **Cheltenham Centre for Technology** on land in **Moorend Grove, Leckhampton**.
- 1938 **Margaret Eyre (née Lidderdale)** became the **first female professional tennis coach** in the country.
- 1993 At the **East Gloucestershire Club** four **grass courts** were converted to **Astroturf** with a grant from the **Foundation of Sports & Arts** and gifts and loans from club members.
- 11 Sep 2006 The *Gloucestershire Echo* reported that tennis players from the **East Gloucestershire Club** had made history. The **men's and ladies' teams** from the club had been crowned **Kia National club League champions** and taken the two **£3,000 first prizes**. It was the first time in the history of the competition, which started in **1993**, that one club had won both titles in the same year. As part of their prize, **East Glos** were able to nominate a player from each of their teams to compete in the **Kia Amateur Australian Open** in **January 2007**.

## WATERSPORTS

- Jun 1867 The **Cheltenham College** held its **annual diving match** at the **Montpellier Baths** (now the **Playhouse**).
- 1880 The **Cheltenham College Swimming Baths** opened. The building is now considered to be the oldest purpose-built swimming pool surviving intact in the country, although now covered over and used as a store for medical records by **Cheltenham General Hospital**.
- 5 Oct 1881 The *Cheltenham Examiner* reported on the first **annual swimming match** at the **Montpellier Baths**.
- 21 Jun 1887 Cheltenham's first **municipal swimming baths** were opened at **Alstone Upper Mill, Great Western Road**, as part of the celebrations of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. Sixteen members of the **Cheltenham Swimming Club** put on an **exhibition water polo match**. One side wore **red caps**, the other **white**. The club generally continued to use the **Montpellier Baths** for the next **10 years** as it was nearer most of their homes.
- 1887 The swimmers using the new **Alstone Baths** decided to form a **water polo club** or section to take part at the **regattas** held at **Gloucester, Evesham and Tewkesbury**. For two years the team won the **eight cups** at the **Tewkesbury Regatta**.
- 1896 It is thought that **Cheltenham** first played **Weston (super-Mare)** at **water polo** in this year.
- 1898 The **Alstone Swimming Club** was formed, principally for **water polo**.
- 1900 The **Cheltenham and Alstone Swimming Clubs** merged to become the **Cheltenham Swimming and Water Polo Club**.
- 1901 **Cheltenham** became the first official **water polo champions** of the **West**.
- 1902 **Cheltenham** lost the **Western final** in the sea at **Teignmouth**. Conditions were 'awful and four Cheltenham players were **seasick**; it was the last time championship polo was played in the **sea**.
- 1904 **C. Maisey**, a young member of the **Cheltenham Swimming Club**, was awarded the **Royal Humane Society's vellum** for rescuing a child from the **Thames** at **Abingdon**.
- 1904 The Borough Surveyor granted the **Alstone Baths** for **Thursday night polo practice**. In the early days the **Baths** did not open until **June** and so, in order to practise, the **water polo teams** used **Postlip Pond**, which was exceedingly cold at that time of the year. On Saturday afternoons they used **Webb's brickyard**, the clay giving them muddy hands, feet and foreheads!
- 1905 **Water polo** matches were first played with **St. Paul's College** (Teacher Training),
- 1907 It was requested that pieces of **white material** be put at the back of the **goal nets** to aid sighting.
- 1908 **Colin Lewis**, a founder member of the **Cheltenham Swimming & Water Polo Club**, represented **England** in the **backstroke** event at the **Olympic Games** in **London**. He won his heat.
- 1910 The **Cheltenham Ladies Club** started at the **Montpellier Baths**. The same year **Alderman Stewart** founded the **All-year-round Club** at **Alstone open-air bath**.
- 1911 At the **Coronation Gala** at **Pittville** members of the **Swimming & Water Polo Club** won **29**



- prizes.**
- 1912 A **Cheltenham Corporation team** beat **Dale Forty's, Martyn's Athletic, Post Office and Gas Works** teams in the local business houses' and works' team race. They won again the following year.
- 1914 **Colin Lewis** won the **50 yards backstroke championship** of **Alberta, Canada**.
- 1919 The **Peace Carnival** at **Pittville Lake**, lasting three days, was described as a '**surfeit of water sports**'. **Cheltenham** beat **Evesham** 7-0 at **water polo** on the last day. Attendance reached **32,500** on the Bank Holiday.
- 1920 **Colin Lewis** retained his title of **50 yards backstroke champion** of **Alberta, Canada**, and then retired from competitive sport.
- 11 Jun 1920 Mixed bathing began at the **Corporation Baths (Alstone)**.
- 1923 **W. Cook** took the **Cheltenham water polo team** to **Weston** and recaptured the **Western Counties laurels** after **18 years**.
- 1923 A **Cheltenham Ladies water polo team** was formed, playing at the open-air **Alstone Baths**. They played teams such as **Gloucester City, Oxford University, Penarth, Western-super-Mare** and **Swindon**. The women initially played with a full-size ball, but **Mr. Pilkington**, the **Alstone Baths superintendent**, suggested that a movement should be started to legalise the use by women of a smaller ball. '**Amphibian**', the regular *Echo* writer over **60 years**, agreed that 'the average woman cannot be expected to get a good grip of a full-size polo ball.'
- 1925 **Mr. Charles Williams**, a Director of **Cavendish House**, gave a **Presentation Cup** to the **Cheltenham Swimming & Water Polo Club**. The first winner was **A.E. 'Bert' Coulston**.
- 1927 **Cheltenham Juniors** won the **Western Junior Championship** (water polo).
- 1931 The **Grammar School** had its own **water polo team** by this time.
- Aug 1933 The **Cheltenham** and **Blackburn** water polo teams played the **England semi-final** at the **Alstone Baths**. **Cheltenham** won 4-2, with **Howard Jones** scoring all **Cheltenham's** goals. (They were beaten the following month in the **final** by **Coventry** at **Ashton-under-Lyne**.) Later that evening they joined **Cricket Festival** players and 'lots of the most charming dancing girls in town' at the **Town Hall**.
- 1936 **Cheltenham** won the **Western Counties Senior and Junior Polo Championships**, the **Gloucester County Senior and Junior Polo Championships**, and the **Gloucester County Team Swimming Championship**.
- 1945-6 The **Ladies Water Polo team** folded after more than **20 years**, having had to rely on 'scratch' players for the previous few years.
- 4 Sep 1954 **Water polo** was **floodlit** when the **Cheltenham Club** played the **Dutch Champions** at **Cirencester Open Air Pool**.
- 2 Oct 1968 The *Gloucestershire Echo* reported that **water polo** was the only sport where the players devoted more time to **training** and **playing** than those of any other sport – with the possible exception of full-time professional footballers. The paper also pointed out that it was the only sport where the **players** had to pay more than the **spectators** on **match night**. The entry fee at the **Alstone Baths** was **two shillings** and the **players' match fee** was **three shillings**.
- 4 May 1971 **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother** officially opened the new **£650,000 Pittville Swimming Pools**.
- 1 Jul 1971 The **Alstone Swimming Baths** had closed and it was reported that the complex would become an indoor market with a café and a launderette.
- 1974 The **swimming pool** at the **St. Paul's College Hardwicke** site opened.
- 1983 **Sue Cummings** re-started a **Ladies Water Polo Team**. In **1986** she went to University, starting a **Ladies Water Polo Team** for the **University of Wales Colleges**. Gradually the local team petered out, some girls going off to University and the few remaining girls transferring to **Bristol Central**.
- 9 Oct 1984 The former **Alstone Baths** were demolished as part of the **St. James' Station** site redevelopment.
- 2 Aug 1995 Cheltonian **Leon Taylor** reached the semi-finals of the **Olympic 10m highboard diving** competition.

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