

*G & B Diocesan Association of
Church Bell Ringers
Cheltenham Branch Newsletter
August 2005*

Recent firsts: well done

Max Drinkwater: 1st QPs Grandsire Caters, Double Norwich Court Bob Major, Variable Hunt Plain Bob Major
David Greenaway: 1st QPs London S. Major, Yorkshire S. Royal

Quentin Jackson: 1st QP on 10 in hand (Plain Bob Royal), 1st QP as Conductor in Hand (Plain Bob Major)

Ann Jessop: 1st QP Bristol S. Major

Gillian Lloyd-Williams: 1st QP on 8 (Treble to Grandsire Triples)

Sue Millen: 1st QP Yorkshire S. Royal

Hazel Sweetman: 1st QP 'inside' to Plain Bob Doubles

Anna Bayley, Sue Drinkwater, Cathy Heathcote, Terry Jones (C) Barbara Pettit, Helen Taylor, Stuart Tomlinson: Variable Hunt Plain Bob Major

Under 19's Striking Competition

Congratulations to our Under 19 ringers who entered the striking competition for the Nibley Trophy, and won it. The band was Rachel Chadwick, Megan Hester (formerly Elkstone, now Cirencester), Jeremy and Nathaniel Hitchings and Emma Murphy, with Matthew Greenaway in charge. The judge was Hugh Evans. I should like to thank all who took part and all those who helped "behind the scenes", particularly Janet Covey-Crump without whom I doubt if we would have been able to enter a band.

Other Recent Achievements

Philip Abbey: 350th peal on 12 April 2005 (Cambridge S. Royal in-hand), 50th handbell peal for the Association on 11 January 2005 (Bristol Surprise Royal in-hand)

Forthcoming Practices

Saturday 6th August: You should already have seen details of the double bill for the Light Bell Ringing Experience - 14:00 – 15:30 at St Christopher's, Warden Hill followed by 16:00 – 17:30 at The Shed, 38 Ashchurch Road, Tewkesbury. Please see the article below about ringing at St. Christopher's.

Saturday 3rd September: Branch Outing (see below)

Thursday 11th August at 7:30 pm: the Branch Practice will be at Dumbleton with Stedman Doubles as the special method in addition to the usual Rounds, Call Changes, Plain Bob and Grandsire.

Thursday 8th September at 7:30 pm: Joint practice with Gloucester Branch at Cheltenham Parish: 10 and 12 bell ringing for all abilities. If you didn't go to the picnic at Gloucester Cathedral because you felt you weren't experienced enough to ring there, this is a golden opportunity to have some practice on higher numbers of bells.

Saturday 24th September at 7:30 pm: Branch Surprise Practice at Swindon Village with Carlisle Surprise Minor as the special method.

St Mark's

The St Marks ringers will be holding a Barn Dance on Friday November 18th. Please put it in your diaries now, and Simon will let us have more details later. They have also launched their new web site (no www needed) <http://stmarkschelt.zapto.org>. An aerial photograph of St Mark's features on jigsaws that are being produced for the appeal. They will cost £21.00 each and will be available soon. Copies may be ordered in advance from Owen Barraclough or any of the St Mark's band.

Branch 6-bell Striking Competition & Barbecue

This year seems to be the year for Striking Competition Gremlins. Not only did the Penn Trophy competition venue have to be changed at the last minute in April, but Cheltenham Branch also proved how adaptable we are when last-minute changes had to be made in the arrangements for our 6-bell striking competition. Undaunted, the competition for the Banner trophy took place at Dumbleton, where the "Indian Rope Trick" took on a whole new meaning for some ringers. The competition for the Cleeve Trophy had had to be moved to Alderton, but rather disappointingly only one band entered (St. Christopher's).

Following the striking competition we enjoyed a very sociable barbecue during which the judges (Malcolm and Sheila Taylor with assistance from their son) announced the winners of the Banner Trophy to be Charlton Kings (for the third consecutive year). If you look on the Branch website (address below) in the Archive section, you can see photographs of the Banner and Cleeve Trophies being awarded. Even the weather was perfect for the striking competition and barbecue, with the shower of rain holding off until dusk when we were clearing away anyway.

I should like to thank everybody who contributed to that very successful day: the judges, the ringers who took part in the competition, and those who lent equipment or brought goodies for the barbecue. Following the barbecue a donation of £100 was made to the St. Mark's restoration project.

Soundproofing at Toddington

"The Young People's Working Party consisting of Isabel, Nathaniel and Jeremy Hitchings with Owen Barraclough and Janet C-C spent 3 hours at Toddington cutting up old carpets and putting 3 layers under each bell and around the bell frame. The bells are still a bit loud but not deafening like they used to be." J.C-C.

Branch Outing

The Branch Outing this year will be on Saturday 3rd September in the area to the west/southwest of Oxford. The Branch website gives details including links to StreetMap but for those without internet access I'm attaching a separate copy to this newsletter. None of the bells are heavy, and a generous amount of time has been allowed for lunch, so this promises to be a thoroughly enjoyable day. Do please try and join us, particularly if you seldom make it to Branch Practices. We'll be very pleased to see you.

A Joint 'First'

Congratulations to Emma and Philip Abbey who are the proud parents of Daniel Edward Meikle, born on 17th July. He's already been to his first branch practice!

The Five Taylors?

Although they're not in our Branch many of us know Malcolm and Sheila Taylor, who celebrated their silver wedding anniversary by ringing a peal of 7 Surprise Minor on 16th July at Tredington, (where Sheila & Malcolm were married on 19th July 1980). It was a real family occasion with Malcolm, Sheila, Bernard, and Philip Taylor (Malcolm and Sheila's son), Hilda (née Taylor) and John Ridley in the band. It was also Sheila's 200th peal. Congratulations to you both.

Badgeworth

Pat Hickey has asked me to pass on his thanks to those ringers who have been to Badgeworth recently to help. As with many towers, it's difficult to know how many ringers he can expect each week, but if you don't mind if you find the tower full after all, Pat will be pleased to see you.

St. Christopher's, Warden Hill

This ring of 6 is the newest and lightest ring of bells in the branch. The tenor weighs only 63 lbs (<29kg) and the treble is a mere 20 lbs (<10kg). Consequently they need a totally different technique to ring them. I think the most important thing is not to be afraid of them! You need to pull the handstroke **firmly** so the bell will go up to the balance at backstroke. The weight of the rope (and your arms) is more than enough to pull the backstroke. Most people find it easiest to use just one hand on the handstroke and either one or both hands on the tail. It is quite possible to ring them (particularly 5 and 6) in the normal 2-handed way. If you lose control of the bell the best thing to do is pull the sally and wait at backstroke.

If you have not been to St. Christopher's then please consider coming one Wednesday evening (7.00 to 8.30p.m.). Although the bells are small, we have one of

the biggest, warmest, most comfortable ringing rooms in the branch! I.H.

Plain Bob Doubles Variations at St Christopher's

At St. Christopher's to give our learners more practice at the dodges and places in Plain Bob we ring 'Sticky' Plain Bob. Each time the treble leads we call 'stick'. The bell making seconds continues to stay in seconds place, ringing after the treble (how many learners look for another bell for their 2nd blow in seconds?). The bell making long 5ths continues to ring in 5ths place over the 2 bells dodging in 3-4. The bells dodging 3-4 up and down continue to dodge. This continues until the change is good and then the conductor calls 'carry on' at which point you continue ringing plain bob, until you reach the next sticky point. We have had quite a lot of success with this.

The other variation is to repeat the same lead. You do this by ringing the first lead as normal, and then each time the treble reaches the back it rings 4 blows in 5ths and then goes down to lead. The bell which makes 2nds (the 3) then turns round in 4ths place so it comes down to lead before the treble ready to make 2nds again. The other 3 bells just keep ringing the same lead and doing the same piece of work each time. This variation is useful if a learner finds one piece of work difficult to do. It also has the advantage of reinforcing where you pass the treble for each piece of work, and where you pass it after the work. I.H.

Max Surprise Minor at Leckhampton

"We've just rung a quarter peal in what we believe to be an as yet un-named Surprise Minor method. Perusal of TDMM revealed that TDMM 1234 was unnamed and available. We've named it after one of our young ringers who has been ringing for the past three years, and is making rather good progress."

Leckhampton, 29th May, 1320 Max Surprise Minor: Bob Bennett 1, Max Drinkwater 2, Sue Drinkwater 3, Catherine Heathcote 4, Stuart Tomlinson 5, Terry Jones (C) 6. 850th quarter: 6. Believed to be the first quarter in the method with place notation -56-1456-56-36.12-14.36 lh 12 le 142635 (TDMM 1234). Terry Jones

Terry has kindly provided the "blue line" of this method, which is attached for those who may wish to try it. It will also be posted on the Branch website for later reference, together with details of Terry's expansion of Variable Hunt Plain Bob from Minor to Major, of which Leckhampton rang a Quarter Peal on 5th June (see the "Recent Firsts").

Unless you have done so already, please let me (Janice) know if you rang for the Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War Two on 10th July at 5 pm, for a possible article in the next newsletter. Thank you.