



Middlesex Bell News

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Autumn General Meeting at Ealing

The General Secretary, Stephen Mitchell, writes:

Following the sad death of Philip Vracas, the MCA President, in April, Steve Jakeman (Vice-President) will chair the meeting on **15 October**. We will elect a new President at the AGM in April 2017, when we will also be electing a new Master, and senior officers.

The programme is:

General ringing from 3 p.m. at Christ the Saviour, Ealing.

Service at 4.30 p.m.

Tea at 5 p.m. in the church hall of The United Reformed Church on Ealing Green, 200-300 yards away.

Meeting (also in hall), 6 p.m.

There is a car-park in the shopping-centre; but no parking at either church.

New faces, please — or new ideas

Janet Betham writes: Once again we took a **fund-raising stall** at the busy Highgate Fair. As our theme was the Queen's 90th birthday, we sold Union Flags; coloured masks of the Queen's face; red, white, and blue cupcakes; and home-made and home-grown goods.

Despite our worries about a scarcity of donors and helpers, the usual people turned up trumps. My grateful thanks go to them — the same people who help and/or bring goods to sell every year. Steve Jakeman, Debbie Malin and the Finchley band again entertained passers-by with handbells; and we managed to raise the usual £360+ for the BRF.

We would love to raise more next year (17 June; I

need to book by March), but we really need new volunteers. If anyone has a fresh idea for the N&E's major fund-raiser, please let me know so it can be put to the Planning Meeting in January.

Six-bell final

This contest will be held at **Hanwell before the Autumn Meeting on 15 October**, from 2 p.m. The teams entered to ring for the Association Plate and the Rhodesia Plate are Ealing, St Peter's, Staines, Hillingdon, St Augustine's, Kilburn, Aldgate, and St James's, Islington.

The *S&W 6-bell contest* was held at Cranford on 5 June, judged by Paul Flavell. Ealing were the winners. *The N&E 6-bell contest* was at St Mary's, Kilburn, on 16 April, judged by Martin Sutcliffe, and won by St Augustine's, Kilburn.

Congratulations

Stephen Mitchell writes: **Anna Benz** (15) rang her first QP (covering to Grandsire and P. B. Doubles) at All Hallows', Twickenham, on 23 July. She is the daughter of Otto, our tower captain, and has learnt to ring in 2016, as part of her Duke of Edinburgh award programme. Well done, Anna!

Good way to learn

Rowena Steward writes: On 18 June, 10 learners and 17 helpers descended on Barnet and Hertfordshire for the annual **N&E District Learners' outing**. We didn't stray far from London's outskirts.

The day started with the 8 bells at Monken Hadley, followed by the 6 at Ridge; an energetic morning involving lots of rounds, call changes and Plain Hunt. At the Old Guinea pub in Ridge we enjoyed lunch, and some of us had a go on handbells in the garden, led by Jinny Kufluk.

The next stop was South Mimms (6), and then North Mymms (8). Here the Monken Hadley ringers fortified us with greatly appreciated tea, biscuits, and home-made cake, before our journey home.

It was a fun day out that provided some great experience of ringing on unfamiliar bells, and an opportunity to get to know learners from other towers. I'm looking forward to next year's outing! A big 'thank you' to Janet Betham for organising the outing, to those who hosted us, and to Steve Jakeman for running the ringing. After tower donations, almost £64 was raised for the BRF.

Tea and two towers

Stevey Farnworth writes: For the **N&E's Half-Day Outing** on 20 August, 14 people met up in Epsom on a breezy, sunny afternoon. We rang at St Martin of Tours (10), and then walked through a park and woods towards Christ Church, Ealing Common. Some had a picnic tea by the pond (with ducks); the rest took refreshments at the Cricketers pub. We finished by ringing the lovely 8 at Christ Church. It was a great afternoon.

The Cambridge road

Angela McLellan writes:

Adrian Sweeting led a fast-moving, intense morning session on **learning Cambridge Surprise Minor** on Saturday 25 June. His enthusiasm for the information he was delivering was clear from the beginning. Short theory sessions were followed by ringing sessions to put into practice what we had been discussing. Note-taking was unnecessary (actually forbidden!) as he told us we would be much better learners if we listened carefully, and promised us his notes, which pacified some of us.

Adrian emphasised the importance of learning Cambridge by place bells rather than as one long blue line, and also the need to learn any method thoroughly before trying to ring it. The session showed us efficient ways of learning which could apply to all methods: knowing which place bell we were, and which place bell we would become at the lead end, especially if there was a call or a change of method; using the treble as a checkpoint and a help to staying right.

We were also taught how to learn other methods, and then to splice them together. That was fascinating. Adrian had printed out some different methods and cut them up into separate leads. He then explained the rules for joining together leads from different methods. The theory sounded logical and not too difficult, but most of us found that in practice it required some concentrated thought.

Since the course, I have been trying to ring a more basic method, Bob Doubles, by thinking of which place bell I become when a bob is

called, rather than the circle of work — more difficult than I expected, but I am improving.

I would like to thank Adrian Sweeting for leading such a useful and informative session, and his team of helpers: Niamh Hickey, Richard Lewis, Paul Norman, Helen Porter, and Clyde Whittaker, who contributed their ideas and expertise to the theory sessions as well as the ringing.

Summer outing

Anthony Davey writes: July 23 saw 15 ringers from the **joint Highgate and Southgate** bands (N&E), with friends from Enfield, enjoying an outing to four towers in Bucks and Herts. Led by tower captains John Thorp and Martin Sutcliffe, the ringers were fairly evenly divided between experienced old hands and aspiring tenderfeet. Advised by one who knew, we chose Marsworth, Wingrave, Stewkley and Great Brickhill as suitable towers: no ground-floor rings, no long drafts, and bells that went well.

All the tower contacts were welcoming and helpful, and at Wingrave we were privileged to have Alan Frost, who has rung in every major royal peal at Westminster Abbey in the past 50 years, standing behind a learner. Early-stage ringers rang rounds, call changes, Bob and Grandsire Doubles on unfamiliar bells; other methods rung included Stedman Doubles, Cambridge Minor, and Grandsire Triples.

The day provided not only an enjoyable outing in the sunshine, including a fairly leisurely lunch at The Rose and Crown at Wingrave (recommended), but also good experience on a variety of bells for newer members.

Done and (almost) dusted

Linda Foddering writes: Without MCA's support and grant, **Norwood Green** would still be fund-raising today. Our appeal for funds to provide new fixtures and fittings started in July 2012; and a committee was formed to raise these. Looking back, our most successful money-spinner was the raffle in 2014, the first prize being a meal for two at the Ritz and transport home in a Rolls Royce. The most difficult challenge was Susan Mills's sponsored climb of Mount Snowdon, which she achieved.

Was it worth it? Of course! We now have clean bells with all new fixtures and fittings back from Whitechapel (the weights of the bells are far less than those quoted by Gillett's in 1909), a new sound-control system, and lighting on all floors. We still have to finish decorating the belfry, lay new carpet, and install Abel. I am now looking forward to training local schoolchildren.

A huge thank you to all who have supported Norwood Green, in one way or another.

Sad farewell

Janet Drake writes: Ringers at Bow in the Road have had to say good-bye to **Clive and Karen Summers**, who learnt to ring there over 7 years ago, as part of a new band made up of members of the congregation, encouraged by the vicar. They were elected to the MCA in 2010. An injury later stopped Karen ringing, but Clive has been a stalwart supporter of both band and church.

They are moving to the Brecon Beacons, where Clive hopes to join a band. They will be much missed.

With us — in spirit

Prudence Fay writes: The late and much-lamented Roger Bailey, who died in 2013, always celebrated his birthday on 25 June with a peal, the number of changes reflecting his new age (and sometimes challenging the composer).

In June this year he would have turned 70, and 22 friends who had loved and benefited from ringing handbells with him came together to keep up the tradition. Nine peals in all were planned for his birthday: one on tower bells at Willesden, Roger's tower, and eight on handbells in venues around London. These, ranging from Kent T.B. Major to Bristol S. Royal, were all scored (sadly, the tower-bell peal wasn't). Everyone then met up in the evening for a merry party at the Market Porter in Borough Market, where Susie Daniels, Roger's widow, joined us. She said afterwards that Roger would have been very moved: he never quite believed that we thought so much of him.

Peter Blight, who was one of the ringers, worked out that the individual handbell peals rung with Roger by those present totalled 1,607, an average for each ringer of 73. Richard Pearce had rung the most: 302.

There was only one hitch. As Mike Trimm, the organiser of the whole celebration, recalled at the party, Roger's free-wheeling and last-minute spirit was definitely absent from Mike's own planning: he began months ahead, and bells, ringers, and venues were sorted with a fortnight to go.

But on the morning of 25 June itself, Sheila Dickinson's flight from Switzerland was suddenly cancelled, and she couldn't make it. "Things then reverted to true form," Mike said. "A peal of major had

become a peal of minor, and an hour after the agreed start time, we still hadn't decided on a method or a suitable composition."

Very Roger!

A family wedding

Chris Trawin writes: On Saturday 28 May, the Parish Church of St Andrew, Enfield, was the venue for the wedding of Elizabeth, Angela and Kevin McLellan's elder daughter, and Tom Killey, both of whose connections with the church go back a long way.

The ceremony was conducted by our Vicar, the Revd Dr Steve Griffiths. A fine triples band rang the couple in and out, after which we were joined by friends from St Mary Magdalene's, up the hill in Enfield, for general ringing on eight. My thanks to all who rang with us that day, and especially to Sasha for organising the ringers' refreshments.

Norman churches in Northampton

Kris Fowler writes: Before the N&E District Outing on 16 July there was much discussion of train times, advance tickets, annual pass discounts, etc. Nevertheless, we all easily met up at Northampton to head for the first tower, with a few arriving by car later to make up the complement of 16. The sound of ringing led us to St Peter's, a handsome Norman building, as there was another visiting band, whom we would, in fact, follow around the rest of the day's circuit (very efficient for the tower hosts!).

Steve Jakeman and Mark Harris, N&E Assistant Ringing Masters, ran alternate sessions. The 24-cwt 10 at St. Giles were heavier than some of us normally ring. Of course,

handling unfamiliar bells is a benefit of an outing. Nevertheless, despite invitations from the ringing master, there was no clamouring to ring just one more touch before lunch.

There was time enough for a little exploration of the town before the next tower; and one scenic detour took in the stylish Charles Rennie Mackintosh house. The afternoon started with rounds on 10 at All Saints', followed by Plain Hunt on 9 and 10, which was a first for some. Other methods of the day included P B Major, Norwich S Minor, Yorkshire S Major, and Grandsire Caters. The last tower, Holy Sepulchre, was another Norman church, with the striking round design of the Templars.

Over pints at the Black Lion afterwards, a remarkable consensus developed about the preferred train back to Euston. It turned out to be a lucky one, pulling into London just in time to let the Kilburn contingent dash through the closing doors of the Overground train across the platform. A satisfying victory to crown an enjoyable day. Perfectly planned (thanks to Janet Drake), it went off without a hitch.

A day of quarters

Linda Foddering writes: On 1 October, Mike Wigney and I are organising this year's **S&W Quarter-Peal Day** on the same lines as the N&E's: as many QPs as possible to be rung on that day (four slots to choose from: 10am; 12.30; 3pm; and 5.30pm). Let Mike or me know if your tower is available, and what quarters you want to attempt. We may also be able to organise QPs on other days during the week that follows.

Calendar

Date	District	Event	Venue	Time
Fri 9 Sept	MCA	12-bell Method Practice	St Magnus the Martyr	6.30-8.30pm
Sat 10 Sept	S&W	District Ringing Meeting	St Mary's, Twick'ham	10.15-11.50
Tue 13 Sept	S&W	Tuesday-morning Practice	Isleworth	10.30am-noon
Fri 16 Sept	S&W	Surprise Major Practice	Harlington	7.45-9.15pm
Sat 17 Sept	MCA	Open House weekend (<i>see below</i>)	St Botolph, Aldgate	<i>See below</i>
Tue 20 Sept	N&E	7- and 8-bell Practice	All Hall.'s, Tottenham	7.30-9pm
Fri 23 Sept	S&W	District 10-bell Practice/QP attempt	All H., Twickenham	7.30-9.15pm
Fri 23 Sept	N&E	Surprise Major Practice	St Saviour's, Pimlico	7-8.30pm
Tue 27 Sept	S&W	District 6-bell Practice	Norwood Green	8-9.15pm
Sat 1 Oct	MCA	Janets' Jaunt (<i>see below</i>)	Thames Valley	All day
Sat 1 Oct	S&W	Training Session (<i>John Manley</i>)	Tbc	tbc
Sat 1 Oct	S&W	Quarter-Peal Day (<i>see page 3</i>)	District-wide	All day
Wed 5 Oct	N&E	6-bell Practice	Isle of Dogs	7.30-9pm
Sun 9 Oct	N&E	10-bell Method Practice	St John at Hackney	2.30-4.30pm
Tue 11 Oct	S&W	Tuesday-morning Practice	Isleworth	10.30am-noon
Thur 13 Oct	S&W	District Triples Practice	Hanwell	8-9.30pm
Fri 14 Oct	MCA	12-bell Method Practice	St Magnus the Martyr	6.30-8.30pm
Sat 15 Oct	MCA	Association Autumn General Meeting and Finals of 6-bell Striking Competition (<i>see p 1</i>)	Ealing Hanwell	From 3pm From 2pm
Tue 18 Oct	N&E	District 10-bell Practice	St Clement Danes	6.30-8.30pm
Fri 21 Oct	S&W	Surprise Major Practice	Harlington	7.45-9.15pm
Sat 22 Oct		London 12-bell Contest: Whitechapel Trophy	St Sepulchre, Holborn	2-6pm
Tue 25 Oct	S&W	District 6-bell Practice	Norwood Green	8-9.15pm
Fri 28 Oct	N&E	Surprise Major Practice	St Saviour's, Pimlico	7-8.30pm
Fri 28 Oct	S&W	District 10-bell Practice/QP attempt	Hillingdon	7.30-9.15pm
Sat 29 Oct	S&W	District Outing (<i>Mike Wigney</i>)	Waltham Abbey area	All day
Wed 2 Nov	N&E	Surprise Minor Practice	St Katharine Cree	7-8.30pm
Sat 5 Nov	S&W	District Ringing Meeting	St Mary's, Sunbury	10.30am-noon
Tue 8 Nov	S&W	Tuesday-morning Practice	Isleworth	10.30am-noon
Fri 11 Nov	MCA	12-bell Method Practice	St Magnus the Martyr	6.30-8.30pm
Sat 12 Nov	MCA	Lord Mayor's Show ringing (<i>see below</i>)	St Mary le Bow	10am-noon
Sun 13 Nov	N&E	10-bell Method Practice	St John at Hackney	2.30-4.30pm
Wed 16 Nov	N&E	7- and 8-bell Practice	Bow in the Road	7.30-9pm
Fri 18 Nov	S&W	Surprise Major Practice	Harlington	7.45-9.15pm
Sat 19 Nov	N&E	Half-day Outing (<i>see below</i>)	South London	2-6pm
Tue 22 Nov	S&W	District 6-bell Practice	Norwood Green	8-9.15pm
Fri 25 Nov	S&W	District 10-bell Practice/QP attempt	Isleworth	7.30-9.15pm
Fri 25 Nov	N&E	Surprise Major Practice	St Saviour's, Pimlico	7-8.30pm
Wed 30 Nov	MCA	London Ringers' Advent Carols (<i>see below</i>)	St Botolph's, Aldgate	7 pm
Sat 3 Dec	S&W	NB: District Planning Meeting and ringing	Hillingdon (tbc)	2.30-4pm

London Open House, 17 Sept: St Botolph's, Aldgate, will open at 10 a.m., serving refreshments (proceeds to BRF), and holding ringing talks and demonstrations 10-12 noon and 2-5 p.m. Help is needed for stewarding, serving teas, and ringing (competent Grandsire Triples ringers). All offers to Margaret Peirce,.

Janets' Jaunt, 1 October: This is still at the planning stage, but it will likely be by train, to walk along the Thames Path, ringing at Marlow and another tower. Details in due course from Janet Drake and/or Janet Betham.

Lord Mayor's Show ringing 12 Nov: more details from Stephen Jakeman

Half-day Outing 19 Nov: Walworth 2-3p.m., nearest tube: Elephant & Castle; **Borough 3.30-4.30 p.m.,** nearest tube: London Bridge; and **Waterloo Road at 5-6 p.m.,** nearest tube: Waterloo. Information from Lucy Chandhial

Advent Carol Service Wed 30 Nov: *Margaret Peirce writes:* The service is for all London ringers, their guests, and any visiting ringers. The director of music, Gregory Rose, is recruiting singers for the choir: please contact him. The organist will be Michael Royalton-Kisch; and there will be a chance to socialise after the service somewhere close to the church.

Items for inclusion in *Middlesex Bell News* to Prudence Fay, editor,. Next deadline, 15 Nov 2016. The newsletter is **distributed** by Janet Betham , or). Material for the **website** should be sent to your District Webmaster: Anthony Davey (N&E); James White (S&W).

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