



Middlesex Bell News

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www.bellringing.london

Getting the wheels turning

Our President, Geraldine Forster writes:

Some newer members of the Association have been asking about its structure, what it offers its members and what does the President actually do?

Your Association covers a large area; all of London north of the Thames and the whole of the old County of Middlesex, in two Districts, N&E and S&W. Each district has its own officers (see the website for contacts). The two District Ringing Masters do a lot of work organising local practices, quarter peals and QP days, and striking competition bands. The Training Officers organise courses within their District – always willing to arrange training on request. Ask them!

The Association Officers look after the finances, publicity, peal recording, membership, bell restoration, insurance and many other issues. They also run the ringing when the whole Association comes together – usually at the AGM and Autumn General Meeting.

The Association Ringing Master, David Bassford, runs the monthly 12-bell practice at St Magnus-the-Martyr and organises the bands for the annual Service of Ordination at St Paul's Cathedral, the London 12-bell Competition and the Essex Trophy. Some of you met him helping beginners at last year's Summer School. The Association Training Officer, Clyde Whittaker, coordinates training for the whole Association.

And what does the President do? Having spent three years hard graft as Association Master, I now have a much easier job. My role is to chair the twice-yearly Committee Meetings (which comprise the Association Committee and District Chairmen, Masters and Representatives) and the Meetings themselves. I also support the Bell Restoration Committee and anything else which comes my way. And I ring!

This large team of dedicated people keep the wheels turning (literally!). Lend a hand. You do not have to be the most experienced ringer to take on a role – if you fancy joining one of the Committees, have a word with an Association or District Officer; new blood is always welcome.

Queen's Tower at Imperial College



James White writes:

Ringing at The Queen's Tower, Imperial College London, is very limited, largely because the bells are loud and the tower is in the middle of an active college, and partly because the bells are quite a challenge to ring due to significant tower movement. There are only about a dozen days each year when the bells are rung, mostly for Royal anniversaries (as the original donor wished) or major College occasions.

However, others do occur, most recently on 19th January when members of the MCALDG joined members of the University of London Society at their annual visit to the tower. For the last five years their ringing at the tower has formed part of the Roger Bailey Memorial Ringing in January. This year, with the number of UL ringers available being quite small the occasion was opened up to members of the Middlesex Association, and around thirty people came to experience the climb and the challenge of ringing even rounds.

All those who had slogged up the 239 steps to the ringing room were given the chance to ring. However with few people present that had experience of the bells, the ringing on all ten bells, with a total weight of a little under eight tons, was limited to rounds and called changes. There were also two short touches of Grandsire Doubles on the front six bells. The ringing dates for the tower are set out on the tower page of the Middlesex Association website. Experienced ringers are welcome to come to ring.

Happy Birthday Prudence !



Janet Drake & Pauline Dingley write:

Prudence Fay is celebrating her 80th birthday on 18 March (which is also the birthday of at least 3 other N&E ringers). Most of you will have rung with Prudence on tower or handbells and remember her as editor of Bell News, a post she held so excellently for 14 years. Some may also remember that a decade ago she was Association Secretary for 4 years . We send her our very best wishes and look forward to continuing to ring with her, though not on quarter peal day - she's out celebrating!

Prudence - very many Happy Returns of the Day.

St Martin's Ruislip



Judith Roberts writes:

Our Ruislip bells had remained silent for several years until a small group reformed about 7 years ago; with help from other towers we were able to ring rounds and call changes. We had no accomplished ringers amongst us and so it was very much starting from scratch.

Recently 6 new ringers have joined us and they have been taught how to handle the bells. An opportunity to join other ringers for training seemed very beneficial. Because our numbers of new ringers was high James White thought it best to come to us at Ruislip. So for three consecutive evenings in January 2019 he joined us at St Martin's Church. With him came Sonia Field and Christopher O'Mahony from St Mary's, Harrow-on-the-Hill.

We spent the evenings concentrating on good handling and ringing in rounds. Every member of our tower benefited greatly from this concentrated teaching, improving our skills. The support from established ringers amongst our learners was invaluable. Confidence grew and the enthusiasm spread within the band.

We now aim to join practice sessions at other local towers and in the fullness of time invite other towers to join ours. We hope to attend more society days out now that we have the confidence to ring with more experienced ringers, gathering knowledge from others.

Christmas Quarters

Bob Allen writes:

To help work off the Christmas excesses, the Hillingdon band organised 4 quarter peals for the week between Xmas and the New Year. Unfortunately Plain Bob Major was lost but Danny Burke rang his first QP, Robert Pridham his first for 25 years and Bob Allen conducted his first quarter, all of Grandsire Doubles. Many thanks to all our helpers from both within and outside the band without which we could not have achieved so many quarters.

Pay attention at the back !



Nicola Finnerty writes:

How hard can listening to your bell be? Well, very is the short answer! Many a novice and not so novice struggle with what is seemingly easy but which is so hard. The poor striking, the frustration, the plateau, and more, is something many of us relate to and bond over. But help is out there.

Last Saturday 6 ringers at varying stages of our ringing careers but with a common aim of wanting to learn to listen, attended St Mary's Church in Finchley, where we were put through the ringer (the old ones are the best ones) by Clyde Whittaker and Michael Royalton-Kisch. We listened and listened and listened some more ó as Clyde commented óThe learners' intense concentration was at

times so wired that it could have run the National Grid for hours" (see picture !) - and then put it into practice. We took turns to face the wall, play -the lotteryø clap and ring (at the same time), count rhythmically and -Fireø (to name but a few activities). With the result that we are now all on the very firm path of being able to hear our bells.

A breakthrough we all agreed and are now brimming with confidence and have vowed not to assume responsibility for every striking error in our respective Bands (unless of course justified). So, I cannot recommend this course too highly. It was fun, engaging and I shall definitely return. A big thank you to Michael and Clyde for their patience, expertise and humour.

London Ringers Advent Carol Service

Gregory Rose (Stepney & Foster Lane) writes:

Our 4th Advent Carol Service at St Giles-in-the-Fields was very rewarding and well attended. But what lies behind this?

In 2015, Margaret Peirce and the late Philip Vracas invited me to join them to re-start the London Ringersø Advent Carol Service, which had previously been organised by Gwen Rogers. We decided to set up the first service at Christ Church, Spitalfields, where Philip was actively involved, and thereafter we have chosen different venues each year.

Organising the Carol Service is quite a job - booking the church and priest, readers, organist, singers, compiling service sheets, and notifying bell-ringing organisations. Fortunately we have had congregations numbering 80-100 participants each year. Choosing the post-service pub, with good draught beer, is also very important!

My role as choirmaster is to book singers, preferably ringers, rehearsal space, choose repertoire, typeset the service sheet, print out scores and liaise with an organist. Choosing repertoire without previous knowledge of the level of reading and singing is difficult, and in the early years I was over-ambitious! We now have a good pool of singers, plus a ringing organist, Leigh Simpson, and we are preparing for the next service, to be held at St Dunstanøs Church, Stepney, on Tuesday, December 3rd 2019. Put it in your diary!

S&W ADM

31 members made it to the S&W ADM in January, held in Chiswick church. The service was led by Fr Alan Trigle, one of our Ringing Remembers recruits and was followed by tea

in the church. The tea and raffle raised £85 for the BRF.

At the meeting we welcomed 8 new resident members plus 4 associate members. Most of the officers were re-elected; the main changes are that the post of Chairman is now vacant following Peter Kempøs retirement from the post, and Sonia Field joins Richard Jones and Roger Forster as training officers. Other positions re-elected were::

Ringing Master	Mike Palmer
Deputy Master	Dorothy Barker
Secretary	Mike Wigney
Treasurers	Jill Wigney (S) Janet Baker (W)
Bell restoration	Richard Jones Ray Pearce

Training opportunities

Sonia Field writes:

N & E district have planned a programme of training sessions which are open to **all** Middlesex ringers. If you see something advertised that you would like to attend please do apply. Meanwhile, in S & W we are targeting needs on a more local basis at individual towers. See Judith's report!

Twickenham have focussed a session on plain hunt and planning is underway for a training session at **Great Stanmore** (Little Bob Major) and **Harrow Weald/Harrow-on-the-Hill** (rounds to Bob Doubles).

We have so many attendees that these sessions are full without wider advertising! So why not arrange for some training to take place at your home tower?

If that's something you feel you need a helping hand with, let one of your training reps know and we will see what we can do.

May the Hunt Continue ...

Tue Sando, Training Officer, writes:

óThat was a revelationö. Those are the words a ringing teacher wants to hear from a new ringer who has just completed his or her first perfect course of plain hunt. Suddenly it all makes sense and the ropes drops from the ceiling in a crystal-clear pattern before the learnerøs eyes.

Steve Jakeman achieved exactly that with the learners at the plain hunt course at St Clement Danes. The ringing room at St Clement Danes was packed with students and helpers. Despite ó or maybe because of the lack of room - everybody got along famously over home-made cake at the tea break.

The course was part of the Middlesex Associationøs 2019 training session series, to encourage the new Ringing Remembers

ringers to take their first fearful steps towards method ringing & hopefully to a quarter from the treble.

The rest of the year will offer many different courses at all levels, including

- how to call call-changes;
- understanding the structure of methods;
- calling & conducting classes with Dave Bassford.

(Editor's note: they do it differently in Surrey; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRAnZvCcRQ0>).

Please, Sir, we want some more...



Louise Booth & James White write|:

The 2018 London Bell Ringing Summer School held six follow-up sessions to provide continuing support for the new ringers. The feedback at the end of these sessions was unanimous; ‐please can we have more?‑

So, The London Bellringing School was established, to work alongside the other London ringing societies in the support and training of ringers, particularly at the lower levels. The training we decided to offer was directed to bell handling skills, ringing in rounds, simple call changes, dodging, place-making and other basic ringing skills.

There was a huge response, far more than could be accommodated in a block of Saturday training sessions. Hence ‐Rounds & About‑ went out and about in the Association..

Ruislip ringers were helped (see Judith Roberts' account earlier). A second group from the Docklands area has been receiving training from Louise Booth at local practices at **Limehouse and Rotherhithe**. A third group have been receiving on-going support at **Pimlico** on Monday afternoons, looked after by Stephanie Pattenden, Peter Blight and James White. Finally, six Saturday sessions of Rounds & About are in progress at **St Clement Danes and Fulham** where Louise Booth leads the sessions with up to eight students attending.

Huge thanks goes to the helpers who have been invaluable making the training successful. If you have a training need for

Rounds & About, please email London.Bellringing.School@gmail.com .

N&E ADM



Margaret Peirce retires as Chair

The 2019 ADM was held on 16 February at All Saints, Edmonton by courtesy of Fr Stuart Owen, and attended by 35 members. Over £100 was raised for the BRF from a raffle and tea. After a round of grateful applause for her services, Margaret Peirce resigned as Chair, Janet Drake being elected in her place. The majority of district officers remained in place:

Ringing Master:	Helen Porter
Secretary:	Lucy Chandhial
Ass't Secretaries:	Janet Betham
	Angela McLellan
Training officers:	Tue Sando
	Guy Wells
	Hans Rashbrook
Bell restoration:	Martin Sutcliffe
	Michael Royalton-Kisch

And finally....

Association Handbell Day Monday 6th May



The sixth Association Handbell Day will take place at Harrow School. This year, it will fall on Monday 6th May.

If you'd like to come along, please register with Christopher O'Mahony:
cdomahonyuk@gmail.com

	Distr	Event	Venue	Time
Wed 27 Feb	N&E	10 bell practice from rounds upwards	St Clement Danes	6:30 ó 8:00pm
Fri 8 Mar	MCA	12 bell practice	St Magnus	6.30 ó 8.30pm
Sat 9 Mar	S&W	General ringing ó all welcome	St John, Pinner	10:30 ó 12:00
Sun 10 Mar	N&E	10 bell method practice	Stepney	2:00 - 4:00pm
Tues 12 Mar	S&W	Daytime practice ó all welcome	Isleworth	10:30 ó 12:00
Tues 12 Mar	S&W	6-bell practice	Norwood Green	8:00- 9:30pm
Sat 16 Mar	N&E	District Quarter Peal Day. <i>Contact Lucy Chandhial or Steve Jakeman</i>	Around the district, ending at Gallery pub, Pimlico	
Wed 20 Mar	N&E	Day time practice	Monken Hadley	10:00 ó 12:00
Fri 22 Mar	N&E	Surprise Major practice	St George in the East	7:00 ó 8.30pm
Fri 22 Mar	S&W	District 10 bell practice	TBA	7:45 ó 9:30pm
Wed 3Apr	N&E	5/6 bell practice	Bow in the Road	7.30-9:00pm
Sat 6 Apr	MCA	J&J Jaunt ó	Chiddington & Haslemere details by email & website	All day
Tues 9 Apr	S&W	Daytime practice ó all welcome	Isleworth	10:30 ó 12:00
Tues 9 Apr	S&W	6-bell practice	Norwood Green	8:00- 9:30pm
Wed 10 April	N&E	Day time practice	St George in the East	10:00 ó 11:55
Fri 12 Apr	MCA	12 bell practice	St Magnus	6.30 ó 8.30pm
Sat 13 Apr	S&W	General ringing (6 GF) ó all welcome	East Bedfont	10:30 ó 12:00
Sun 14 Apr	N&E	10 bell method practice	Southgate	2:00 ó 4:00pm
Fri 19 Apr		GOOD FRIDAY		
Fri 26 Apr	N&E	Surprise Major practice	St Saviours, Pimlico	7:00 ó 8.30pm
Fri 26 Apr	S&W	District 10 bell practice	TBA	7:45 ó 9:30pm
Sat 27 Apr	MCA	MCA Annual General Meeting N&E Hosting	Aldgate (striking comp) St Katharine Cree	2:30 start. From 3:30
Thu 2 May	N&E	5/6 bell practice	Edmonton	7.30-9:00pm
Fri 10 May	MCA	12 bell practice	St Magnus	6.30 ó 8.30pm
Sat 11 May	S&W	General ringing ó all welcome	Harlington TBC	10:30 ó 12:00
Sun 12 May	N&E	10 bell method practice	Limehouse	2:00 - 4:00pm
Tues 14 May	S&W	Daytime practice ó all welcome	Isleworth	10:30 ó 12:00
Tues 14 May	S&W	6-bell practice	Norwood Green	8:00- 9:30pm
Wed 15 May	N&E	Day time practice	Southgate TBC	10:00 ó 12:00
Fri 17 May	S&W	Surprise Major practice	Harlington	7:45 ó 9:15pm
Sat 18 May	N&E	N&E 6 bell striking competition	Front 6 at South Hackney	
Fri 24 May	S&W	District 10 bell practice	TBA	7:45 ó 9:30pm
Fri 24 May	N&E	Surprise Major practice	St Saviours, Pimlico	7:00 ó 8.30pm
Sat 25 May	MCA	MCA 8 bell striking competition	TBC	TBC
Wed 5 Jun	N&E	5/6 bell practice	Isle of Dogs	7.30-9:00pm
Sat 8 Jun	S&W	Daytime practice ó all welcome. TBC	Christ the Saviour, Ealing	10:30 ó 12:00
Sun 9 Jun	S&W	District 6-bell striking competition	Harefield TBC	2:15 ó 5:00pm
Sun 9 Jun	N&E	10 bell method practice	Stepney	2:00 - 4:00pm
Tues 11 Jun	S&W	Daytime practice ó all welcome	Isleworth	10:30 ó 12:00
Tues 11 Jun	S&W	6-bell practice	Norwood Green	8:00- 9:30pm
Fri 14 Jun	MCA	12 bell practice	St Magnus	6.30 ó 8.30pm
Sat 15 Jun	N&E	N&E Fundraising ó Highgate Fair	Highgate	12:45 ó 5:30pm
Wed 19 Jun	N&E	Day time practice	TBC 10am to noon	10:00 ó 12:00
Fri 21 Jun	S&W	Surprise Major practice	Harlington	7:45 ó 9:15pm
Thu 27 Jun	N&E	10 bell practice from rounds upwards	St Clement Danes	6.30-8:00pm

Items for inclusion in ***Middlesex Bell News*** to Anthony Davey, editor, at anthony@smoketree.eu.

Next deadline, Monday 20 May 2019.

The newsletter is proof-read and distributed by Janet Betham (020 8340 1368), jrbetham@hotmail.com.

Material for the **website** should be sent to your District Webmaster: James White (S&W) jw_home@ntlworl.com or Anthony Davey (N&E).

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