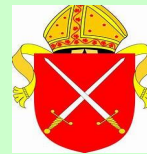




# Middlesex Bell News



Issue 101

March 2020

[www.bellringing.london](http://www.bellringing.london)

## Margaret Peirce

### Honorary Life Membership

*Tim Mills writes:*

Margaret Peirce was made an Honorary Life Member of the St. Botolph's Aldgate Society of Ringers at our AGM on Friday 7th February to mark her contribution to the Society.

Margaret has run practices, arranged Open House ringing, ticketing and teas, and our New Year lunches, been Secretary and Chair of the North and East District, and much else during the twenty-two continuous years she has been Secretary and Tower Correspondent.

The award was approved with acclaim. Fantastic!

## Going green, going paperless...

*Jill Wigney, Report Editor, reminds us:*

This March 2020 edition of **Bell News** is being sent out as a paper version to those who have requested it, and to those who have not yet made their choice. If you have not yet let your tower contact know but wish to receive the paper version, or if you want to be sure that your request has been received, please email Janet Betham on [jrbetham@hotmail.com](mailto:jrbetham@hotmail.com). All tower contacts will receive one copy of the printed version for their tower, plus a copy for each of their members who have requested one, otherwise it is distributed as an online .pdf to everyone on the MCALDG email list and a confirmation email will be sent out when it is ready. To join the email list, email [mcaldg+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:mcaldg+subscribe@googlegroups.com).

Similarly, the **Annual Report** will from now on be printed only for members who request a copy, plus a copy for each tower. If you prefer the paper version, please email Jill Wigney at [Reporteditor@bellringing.london](mailto:Reporteditor@bellringing.london) to request this. Otherwise it will be sent as a .pdf to all members for whom an email address is held and to all tower contacts for onward transmission.

## Opportunities to ring

Membership has risen sharply, to over 600 this year. To get 2020 off to a lively start, both S&W and N&E districts have programmes which offer plenty of scope for ringers at all levels. The Calendar on p. 4 shows what is planned for the next 3 months, but please check with the website at ([bellringing.london/calendar/](http://bellringing.london/calendar/)).

JanetsøJaunt on 18th April is a longstanding favourite, open to all who like the idea of a country walk in the sun with ringing to start and finish, not to mention the pub in the middle.

The all-day N&E District outing will be to the Reading area on 18th July ó keep the date free.

District daytime practices are increasingly popular. S&Wø takes place at Isleworth on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. For N&E see below.

Surprise Major practices are held by S&W on the 3rd Friday of the month at Harlington, and by N&E on the 4th Friday at Pimlico with a QP on the 2nd Thursday (requests to Helen Porter).

A new N&E minor practice will be held on the 1st Wednesday of the month at Southgate from 7pm to enable ringers improve their minor ringing and to move forward to Surprise methods.

Occasional opportunities for experienced ringers to ring at Queen's Tower, Imperial College may arise. See the website Towers page, or contact James White.

Details of the N&E training plan appear on the next page. All members who would benefit are encouraged to apply and to make requests and suggestions to the Training Officers.

## N&E 3rd Wednesday practice

*Adrian Sweeting writes:*

If you can handle your bell, you are welcome to come. The idea of the practice is to take what you know and push it that little bit further!

The core methods are Plain Hunt, Treble Bobbing, Little Bob, Cambridge Surprise and Double Oxford.

Warning ! You might find you are ringing something you were not expecting. Each practice aims to adapt what people know, and improve mental flexibility and confidence.

## A palindromic date touch

*Steve Jakeman writes:*

Two opportunities arose in February to ring date touches. On Sunday 02.02.2020 2020 spliced Cambridge Surprise and Bob Minor were scored at Wood Green.

On Thursday 20.02.2020 2020 of Bob Royal were rung at Southgate. The compositions came from the Ringing World diary, were fun to ring, and interesting to conduct.

## Beginners' ringing tour to Essex

*Imogen Webb writes*

It was a crisp, clear morning on 4th January that saw us convoy first to Chigwell. This is a ringing centre with a simulator housing some lovely bells.

At All Saints, Theydon Garnon there were slightly tinnier bells, four cast in 1628. All round consolidation continued throughout the tour. Time for lunch, and after the farmyard hilarity of the pub, the third tower was at Navestock - a particularly memorable tower for its barn-like quality and old No. 4 cast in about 1470. Ringing was quick, as the tower was cold! South Weald our final tower of the tour, had an odd-struck 4th in a delightful chamber. Each church unique, so too seemingly every bell, such is the wealth and variety of churches towards East Anglia.

This was my first foray into the social side of ringing, facilitated by the extraordinary passion and commitment of my fellow ringers and ringing teachers, for which I am incredibly grateful. Particular thanks to Steve Jakeman for arranging this memorable outing.

## Do you have a Hub ?

*Jo Harris writes:*

Do you have a plan in place to help you progress with your ringing and really gain satisfaction and enjoyment from it? I do, through this wonderful learning hub, which draws invited S&W ringers to meet once a month.

Our hub leader, S&W Training Officer Sonia Field, has a training framework to ensure that each member, at their stage of learning, succeeds in becoming a more accomplished ringer. We always know what our goals are for the future; everyone has clear targets for improvement. As a result we enjoy our ringing more and want to achieve more. Homework is definitely involved!

We have all been encouraged to join the ART Learning The Ropes Scheme, and are steadily gaining awards - I was presented with my Level 2 Certificate and Badge at this meeting.



Our Hub meetings are always full of enthusiasm and energy - people gathered together with clear aims and ambitions for themselves. Any would-be ringers coming into the ringing chamber and seeing such a high level of involvement, enjoyment and camaraderie would want to be a part of it.

## Rounds and About

Tower Captains are invited to put forward early-stage ringers to take part in the London Bellingring School extension programme, Rounds and About. Contact Louise Booth or James White, LBS Secretary, at [mail.james.white@gmail.com](mailto:mail.james.white@gmail.com). This programme is provided to assist ringers who have learnt basic bell-handling to progress to the point where they can benefit from Association training courses. Full details appeared in Bell News December 2019.

## N&E training programme

*Hans Rashbrook, Training Officer, writes:*

The training committee has set the following firm dates for training sessions (booking required):-

28th Mar	Plain Bob Doubles (plain & touches)	St Clement Danes
25th Apr	Plain Bob Doubles (plain & touches)	TBA
16th May	Listening Skills	Finchley
23rd May	Calling Call Changes	St Saviour, Pimlico
27th Jun	Steeplekeeping	Christchurch, Hampstead and St Martin, Gospel Oak
28th Jun	Raising & Lowering in Peal	St George in the East
25th Jul	Plain Bob Minor	TBA

If you are interested in any of these courses, please contact one of the Training Officers to apply for a place. Expressions of interest and applications should be made preferably well in advance so that course tutors are aware of demand.

## Gillian Harris M.B.E.



Gillian Harris, a member of the Stepney St. Dunstan's band as well as Surrey and the Docklands Ringing Centre was awarded the MBE (for services to libraries in education) last year and received it from Princess Anne at Buckingham Palace in January. Congratulations !

## S&W Annual Meeting

*Mike Wigney reports:*

The S&W ADM was held at St Margaret's, Uxbridge on January 11 after the usual service and hot tea. The Chair is vacant, but Mike Palmer was re-elected as Master, and took the Chair for the meeting.

Bridget Campbell was elected as Deputy Ringing Master. The Training Officers, Roger Forster, Richard Jones and Sonia Field, continue in office, and all other officers were re-elected. Five new members were elected at the meeting.

## N&E Annual Meeting

*Lucy Chandhial reports:*

The N&E ADM at Dalston and South Hackney was well attended. All officers were willing to continue and were re-elected, with Janet Drake as Chair. The Training Officers are Tue Sando, Guy Wells, and Hans Rashbrook. 41 new members, including some 5 juniors, were elected at the meeting.

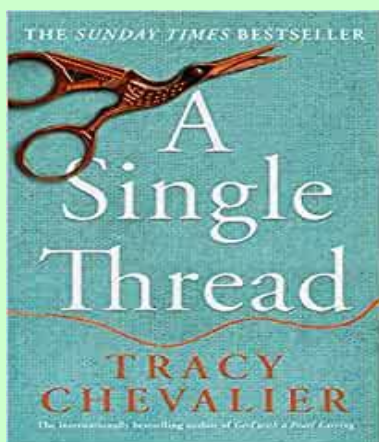
Dalston, the cathedral of East London, is perhaps the only church in the country whose tower displays a conventional clock face on two sides and a barometer on the third, though under steady rain it obstinately maintained that the outlook was 'Fine'.

## “A Single Thread”

by Tracy Chevalier

*Bell News Literary Editor reviews:*

The trap door of the ringing chamber at St Anne's, Highgate swung up, and a visitor said 'Hello, I'm Tracy, can I come and watch?' Many questions and months later, in September 2019 Tracy Chevalier published 'A Single Thread' 338 pages set in the 1930s around the themes of ringing, embroidery and, of course, romance in Winchester. St Anne's ringers are acknowledged and were kindly presented with a free signed copy of the book by the author.



Is the book a good read? Sad to say it cannot be recommended to members, either for its literary merit or for its evocation of ringing. The pages are clogged with research material, and the descriptions of ringing lack the verve of Dorothy Sayers' 'Nine Tailors'.

Stick to 'The Girl with the Pearl Earring'.

## Barn Dance at Wood Green

*'Strictly' Jane Ralley reports:*

Following the N&E Planning Meeting on 18th January came the barn dance at Wood Green, booked by Helen Porter. When first invited, my response had been roughly 'What?! I last went to one when I was 17 and ended up drunk in the middle of the floor!'

I arrived, fuelled up with popcorn and wine, to find the tables absolutely loaded with food and drink and the event already in full swing. Music from Jess Pumphrey had groups of ringers spinning around and thundering up and down the large space under the quick-fire calling of Jess and Janet Drake.

My partner was a ringer of long experience and years, who grabbed my hands and said she'd 'like to spin a bit faster!' Round and round we went in dizzying circles. She was really strong! What an encouraging prospect for the health-inducing and muscle-building benefits of bellringing, I thought. Fun also to see expert bellringers confounded by the barn dance routines, stepping on other people's toes and plain hunting off in the wrong direction!

The raffle raised £250 for the BRF. I came away the proud possessor of a T-shirt asserting 'For Good Vibrations Ring A Bell' and a fluffy pink unicorn.

## MCA Plain Hunt training

*Cathryn & Eleanor Hunt write:*

On 22nd February my daughter Eleanor aged 13 and I met two other trainees at St John of Jerusalem, South Hackney to learn Plain Hunt.



Steve Jakeman started with the theory. Then, after an initial hunt, to my great surprise it then moved to the next level again. While we hunted on the treble, the other ringers started to ring methods! Our faithful '2,4,5,3' was not going to keep us on track - instead, counting places and ropesight came to the fore.

Tea, coffee and delicious homemade brownies kept the brain cells ticking over while we took on this barrage of new information. In all it was a most amazing experience and we can't thank all the ringers enough - they were amazingly supportive and helpful and we can't wait to keep moving onwards and upwards!

## Stephen Coley

*Update from StephenColey:*

Stephen Coley, a previous editor of Bell News, was diagnosed with a brain tumour after suffering a seizure on the Tube in 2018. Following surgery which failed to remove the tumour he is now on a course of chemotherapy.

Stephen has longstanding links with the MCALDG. Over the years he has been a member of the bands at St Bartholomew the Great, Wood Green, Holloway where he was Tower Captain, and St John at Hackney. He was also previously chairman of the North and East District and the District's representative on the General Management Committee.

We wish him well and hope for a full recovery.

## Geoff Willis

*Margaret Willis thanks all who wrote and sent flowers or attended Geoff's funeral. She writes:*

A memorial concert will be held at St. Matthew's Church, Ashford, TW15 2PL on Saturday 9th May 2020 at 2pm.

Geoff's wishes were to have the "Barfield Handbell Team" to perform. Also NO BLACK to be worn. Orders is orders! All are welcome.

## And finally ...

*Chris Trawin reports from Enfield St Andrew*



Our new spider is something special. Carved from a single piece of mahogany, the spider is about the size and weight of a large dinner plate and features a wooden inlay in the shape of a St Andrew's cross on its abdomen. It is the creation and the gift of Mr Marek O'Driscoll, son-in-law of our steeple keeper, Jeremy Taylor, who commissioned the work.

It joins fittings and items of furniture made by another skilled craftsman, Donald Towers, who served as Tower Captain here in the 1950s. Donald was a cabinet maker and teacher of wood trades, and furnished several other towers, most notably St Paul's Cathedral, Dundee, where he made new wheels for all the bells during their 1998 rehangings.

## CALENDAR

Date	Distr	Event	Location	Time
Wed 4th Mar	N&E	District Minor Methods practice	Christ Church, Southgate	19:00-21:00
Fri 6th Mar	N&E	5- and 6-bell practice	St Mary, Finchley	19:00-21:00
Sat 7th Mar	N&E	Plain Hunt training	St James, Garlickhythe	By arrangement
Sun 8th Mar	N&E	District 10-bell method practice	St Anne, Limehouse	14:00-16:00
Tues 10th Mar	S&W	Isleworth daytime practice	All Saints, Isleworth	10:30-12:00
Tues 10th Mar	S&W	District 6-bell practice	St Mary, Norwood Green	20:00-21:30
Fri 13th Mar	MCA	12-bell method practice	St Magnus the Martyr	18:30-20:30
Sat 14th Mar	S&W	General ringing ó all welcome	St Mary, Hayes	14:30-16:00
Wed 18th Mar	N&E	District daytime practice	St George in the East	10:00-12:00
Fri 20th Mar	S&W	District Surprise Major practice	SS Peter & Paul, Harlington	19:45-21:15
Sat 21st Mar	N&E	District Quarter Peal Day	District, finishing Limehouse area	All day
Wed 25th Mar	N&E	5- and 6-bell practice	St Mary, Bow Road	19:30-21:00
Thu 26th Mar	MCA	MCALDG Central Committee meeting	Vestry of St Giles in the Fields	19:00-20:30
Fri 27th Mar	N&E	District Surprise Major practice	St Saviour, Pimlico	19:00-20:30
Fri 27th Mar	S&W	District 10-bell practice	TBC	19:45-21:30
Sat 28th Mar	N&E	Plain Bob Doubles training	St Clement Danes	By arrangement
Wed 1st Apr	N&E	District Minor Methods practice	Christ Church, Southgate	19:00-21:00
Sat 4th Apr	S&W	General ringing ó all welcome	St Mary, Acton	16:30-18:00
Fri 10th Apr	MCA	12-bell method practice	St Magnus the Martyr	18:30-20:30
Sun 12th Apr	N&E	<i>Easter, so no 10 bell method practice</i>	N/A	N/A
Tues 14th Apr	S&W	Isleworth daytime practice	All Saints, Isleworth	10:30-12:00
Tues 14th Apr	S&W	District 6-bell practice	St Mary, Norwood Green	20:00-21:30
Wed 15th Apr	N&E	District daytime practice	St Mary, Islington	10:00-12:00
Fri 17th Apr	S&W	District Surprise Major practice	SS Peter & Paul, Harlington	19:45-21:15
Sat 18th Apr	N&E	JanetsøJaunt	Betchworth and Ranmore Common	All day
Wed 22nd Apr	N&E	5- and 6-bell practice	St Mary Magdalene, Holloway	19:30-21:00
Fri 24th Apr	N&E	District Surprise Major practice	St Saviour, Pimlico	19:00-20:30
Fri 24th Apr	S&W	District 10-bell practice	TBC	19:45-21:30
Sat 25th Apr	MCA	Association AGM, & inter-district striking competition	Barnes, competition from 14:00 Fulham, AGM & ringing from 15:00	14:00-18:00
Sat 25th Apr	N&E	Plain Bob Doubles training	St James, Garlickhythe	By arrangement
Sat 2nd May	S&W	General ringing ó all welcome	St Martin, Ruislip	10:30-12:00
Mon 4th May	N&E	5- and 6-bell practice	St Margaret, Edgware	19:15-20:30
Wed 6th May	N&E	District Minor Methods practice	Christ Church, Southgate	19:00-21:00
Fri 8th May	MCA	VE Day 75th Anniversary	Towers to decide	19:00 suggested
Fri 8th May	MCA	12-bell method practice	St Magnus the Martyr	18:30-20:30
Sun 10th May	N&E	District 10-bell method practice	St Anne, Limehouse	14:00-16:00
Tues 12th May	S&W	Isleworth daytime practice	All Saints, Isleworth	10:30-12:00
Tues 12th May	S&W	District 6-bell practice	St Mary, Norwood Green	20:00-21:30
Fri 15th May	S&W	District Surprise Major practice	SS Peter & Paul, Harlington	19:45-21:15
Sat 16th May	N&E	Listening Skills training	St Mary, Finchley	By arrangement
Sat 16th May	N&E	District 6-bell striking competition	All Saints, Edmonton	From 10:00
Wed 20th May	N&E	District daytime practice	St Saviour, Pimlico	10:00-12:00
Fri 22nd May	N&E	District Surprise Major practice	St Saviour, Pimlico	19:00-20:30
Fri 22nd May	S&W	District 10-bell practice	TBC	19:45-21:30
Sat 23rd May	N&E	Call changes training	St Saviour, Pimlico	By arrangement
Wed 27th May	N&E	5- and 6-bell practice	Christchurch, Isle of Dogs	20:00-21:30
Sat 30th May	MCA	Association 8-bell striking competition	St Andrew, Uxbridge	15:30-18:00
Wed 3rd Jun	N&E	District Minor Methods practice	Christ Church, Southgate	19:00-21:00

Items for inclusion in *Middlesex Bell News* to Anthony Davey at [anthony@smoketree.eu](mailto:anthony@smoketree.eu)

Next deadline Friday 22nd May 2020

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