

# Middlesex Bell News



Issue 104

December 2020

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

## THIRD ONLINE-ONLY LOCKDOWN ISSUE

### MISSING RINGING ? 1665 and 2020



Thanks to <https://www.moltenblue.co.uk/>

In 1665 the Black Death couldn't stop ringers carrying on ringing, as Steve Coleman told us in Bell News 102, although in the print above two ropes have been left dangling and the left-hand ringer looks poorly. But in 2020 much has been going on and much is planned, thanks to our energetic Officers....

### Middlesex Association retrospective

*Lucy Chandhial writes for the record:*

Since lockdown was introduced and the majority of ringing stopped in March 2020, we have continued a range of virtual activities within the Middlesex Association, with training theory sessions and talks, and online practices. Many towers have held a regular practice or social virtual meeting. Handbells, virtual and socially-distanced, have been rung far more than in previous summers. Our surveys show that less experienced ringers appear to have enjoyed and benefited more from the virtual opportunities than the more experienced ringers.

In August and September the N&E had socially-distanced meetings with handbells. We recorded our (very simple) fun with handbells on Bellboard, such

was our pride at physical ringing! At the end of our meeting at Trent Park a short shower provided a rainbow.

In September we met at Well St Common, near St John of Jerusalem, South Hackney, and 'christened' Steve Johnson's new set of bells, with 'one in hand' plain hunt. It was a sunny afternoon and a good opportunity to exchange ideas and news from across the district.

Across the Association in early October 63% of towers who normally ring every week for a service were ringing again (27/43) and 60% of towers who have a weekly practice were meeting (24/40), whether for outdoor handbells, zoom virtual pub session or a RingingRoom practice. Around a third of towers who normally ring for services less frequently or practise less frequently are also keeping their rhythm for service ringing and some kind of meeting, equivalent of a practice.

Tier 2 lockdown generally stopped Sunday service ringing, and from 5th November church services and ringing ceased altogether.

We hope to get back to normal – one day !

## Handbell Ringing – getting started

Mike Wigney provides guidance on starting on handbell ringing....



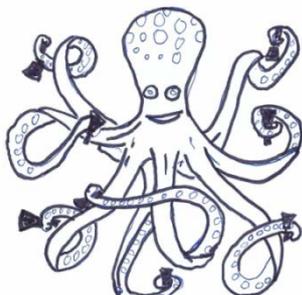
With normal ringing suspended, many of us have been using handbells or RingingRoom to keep together and to keep the little grey cells working. It has been noticeable how quickly several people have picked up plain hunt and plain bob without the worry and challenge of moving a large lump of metal on the end of a rope around a tower. Having got this far, ringing two bells rather than just one may not be as difficult as you think. It is possible to go from zero to quarter peal of Bob Minor in as few as just three or four sessions.

The editor asked me to write an article for Bell News about how to get started ringing two handbells. Almost immediately, an article appeared in the Ringing World which described just that. There is also a new set of ART modules with 5 levels which work their way in small logical

steps through from complete beginner to Surprise. And to top it all, we have a book entitled '*Change-Ringing on Handbells*' published recently by Tina Stoecklin and Simon Gay, both now living in Glasgow, but both with strong connections to the MCA. Links to all of these are on the last page of this issue.

Real handbells are best of course, all sitting together with tea and cake, but if this is not possible then RingingRoom is a good second option. The line delays are now less frequent than they were in the early days, and for short pieces of ringing you can always just start again. I know of two other virtual options – Handbell Stadium (uses motion controllers) and Ding, but I have not used either of these.

As with other forms of ringing, **it's important to move in small steps**, get one stage good before moving on to the next. If you are lucky then several steps will work out for you in a very short time. But if not, then take your time – in the long term it will be more successful.



Just rung a peal of London No.3 !

If you are on real handbells, make sure that you can strike them reliably and accurately, both at handstroke (up) and backstroke (down). It's the flick of the wrist at the end which makes the bell strike, not elaborate arm movements. For many people, this is the hardest bit !

The ringing must be even, with a handstroke gap, just like tower bells. When rounds work well, try other rows such as 132546, always ringing by your two places in the row, not by whom you are following.

Start slowly if necessary, but speed up as soon as you can. Slightly faster than tower bells. When things go wrong, the rhythm will then keep you on track and give you a chance of coming out in the right

place. If someone doesn't ring in the right place, don't wait ! If your band contains one or more ready-made experts, then you can dive straight in and all ring two. If you are all learners and struggling to make it work, you may want to bring in an extra ringer or two to ring just one bell each to make it more stable.

Start with Plain Hunt on 6. There are 3 possible positions (shown in the diagram below at the end):

- Coursing. This is the easiest for most people, and is rung by 1-2 and by 5-6 in Plain Hunt starting from rounds. Come together and cross in 1-2 and in 5-6, otherwise make sure that you know which of your bells rings first, make sure that bell is in the right place and allow one other bell to ring between your two bells
- Opposites. Rung by 3-4 in Plain Hunt. Come together and cross in 3-4, nice and symmetrical, one leads when the other lies. (and don't forget to lead at backstroke).
- 2-3 position. Come together and cross in 2-3 and in 4-5. Both 1-2 and 3-4 will ring this position if you start Plain Hunt from row 134256. Why do you need this position? Look at the second lead of Bob Minor, when the 2 starts in 4th place

Once you can ring the 3 positions comfortably, then you are ready to look at Plain Bob Minor. Plain Bob is just Plain Hunt, but with 2nds when the treble leads, and dodges in 3-4 and 5-6. Look at the plain course and see which two positions you are in at each lead end (the backstroke), then ring plain hunt from there. You'll need to know when the treble is leading to tell you when to do something different, so ringing the treble makes it slightly easier.

- Ringing 5-6 also gives an easier ride with 4 of the 5 leads in the coursing position. If you are all doing it together for the first time, you may need to do this in instalments !

And...

Don't forget to have fun !

## Handbells at Twickenham

*Stephen Mitchell writes:*

Back in February 2020 we had a burgeoning ringing scene at All Hallows Twickenham, with weekly Wednesday morning practices attracting attendances of around 20 people, mostly but not all of them retired.



*All Hallows, interior, showing ceiling*

The majority had learnt to ring in the previous 3-5 years, several of them recruited through 'Ringing Remembers' in 2018, but two in their early 60s had returned after learning as teenagers. Everyone was making good progress, including ringing quarter peals, and this had a positive impact on Sunday morning ringing, with all 10 bells being rung occasionally. Then lockdown arrived and put a stop to all this.

Once restrictions eased in July, and handbell practices outdoors for up to six people were allowed, I launched an initiative to teach people change-ringing on handbells (double-handed). In our south-facing, suburban garden Mary Gow and I hosted two practices a week, for four visitors at a time, from mid-June to early November.

Mary, James White and I were the only people available with any experience of handbell ringing, and even Mary and James had not rung handbells seriously for several years, and we had a group of eight people keen to learn from square one.

Starting with learning to strike rounds on 10 with open handstrokes, and building up through right-dodging exercises to plain hunting on coursing pairs, we successfully took eight people from scratch to competent plain hunting on six (on all three pairs).

Before the second lockdown in November, which prevented even small gatherings in gardens, all our learners were ringing Plain Bob Minor (two of them on all three pairs). James and Mary were rediscovering how to ring touches, and we were getting to grips with courses of Plain Bob Major.

The recently published book by Tina Stoecklin and Simon Gay, '*Change-Ringing on Handbells, Volume 1: Basic Techniques*' has proven

invaluable to me as a teaching guide and textbook for the course. Several participants purchased it.

All concerned did lots of homework, which is even more necessary for handbell than for tower bell ringing, as there is more to learn at any level to ring a pair of bells, and less opportunity to listen and 'stand-behind'.

Ringing handbells outside in sun and wind, with attendant birdsong and aircraft noise (fortunately less these days in west London!), is certainly different than ringing indoors. Fortunately, most Wednesday and Friday mornings turned out dry, often the weather conditions were perfect.



Everyone thoroughly enjoyed it, and most importantly kept coming! We were even featured in Radio Three's Sunday morning bells slot in August, Wendy Johnson having submitted a recording of a touch to the programme accompanied by a lyrical description of garden handbells! We plan to resume practices once the restrictions and weather conditions allow us to ring again.

Most of our learners in this initiative were still at the plain hunt/covering/plain bob doubles stage on tower bells and are now much more advanced in their method ringing capabilities on handbells than tower bells.

We did resume limited, tower bell ringing at All Hallows on Sunday mornings in the summer, in line with Central Council guidance.

It will be interesting to see how much read across there is between the two disciplines once we are allowed back in the tower for something like normal ringing, hopefully by Spring 2021.

## Guidebook

"Change-Ringing on Handbells: Volume 1: Basic" is available from Amazon, £20 post paid, and has received good reviews.

## Looking ahead

*Lucy Chandhial poses the question:*

What would be needed to get back to regular ringing in your tower (once the Covid situation opens the opportunity)?

Some ideas have been suggested:

- 1- An online tool for booking spaces at practices, trainings and meetings so that we can keep numbers controlled so long as distancing guidelines remain.
- 2- Sessions to help people recover their handling skills (and catch up with their RingingRoom expertise in the ringing room!)
- 3- 'Return to Ringing' materials to encourage those who have lost contact to come back to ringing.
- 4- Recruitment focus to find and train new ringers (maybe six to twelve months after getting back to 'normal' when the returning ringers are settled?)
- 5- Continued virtual sessions for those who cannot return to ringing due to personal health or tower circumstances, possibly arranged by District, or Association-wide.
- 6- One point of contact to support ringers with getting in touch with their local tower, (which may have changed if they are not now ringing in central London after work, etc) so that people can ring close to home wherever possible.

We would like your input on the way the Association officers can best support all towers to keep their band together, get back after lockdown to ringing for practices as well as services and prepare relevant support for the eventual return to district and Association practices, training sessions and meetings.

Let us know which of the above ideas seem most useful and relevant to you and your tower band and what else you think is important and could be prepared by the Association. Consider arranging a discussion on this subject by your tower to generate ideas.

**Please provide your thoughts and feedback** to the District Secretaries and Training Reps. Their email addresses are on the website at:

<http://www.bellringing.london/district-officers/>

## Recruitment & retention

The Association of Ringing Teachers is piloting workshops to train and develop skills and materials to retain ringers and to recruit.

ART members of our Association are encouraged to follow this work with a view to building and strengthening bands once lockdown regulations permit. Recruitment champions will be needed.

## Host your own virtual practices

Early in lockdown we ran some sessions on how to use Zoom with RingingRoom to ensure that any tower which wanted to start hosting virtual practices could learn (one way) to do so.

If you would now like the opportunity to join a similar session (or one-to-one advice) to enable your tower to plan a RingingRoom practice for the Winter contact: Lucy Chandhial

[N&ESecretary@bellringing.london](mailto:N&ESecretary@bellringing.london)

or Sonia Field:

[S&WTrainingRep3@bellringing.london](mailto:S&WTrainingRep3@bellringing.london)

## Do it your way !

*Wendy Crampton, Bushey, demonstrates:*

Practising socially distanced Treble bobbing on Dunstable Down:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeDpZGN\\_Erw&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeDpZGN_Erw&feature=youtu.be)

*Sonia Field, Harrow on the Hill, uses her carport for tutoring:*

In order to ring handbells for a wedding, Jo and Wendy, having never rung handbells before, practise under the critical eye of Jake the dog:



*Megan Staley, formerly ringing at Hampstead, reports:*

This is a link to Pachelbel's Canon arranged for handbells by Fred Gramman, the music director at the American Church in Paris:

<https://vimeo.com/464095442>

## Bell restoration report

*Steve Jakeman, BRF Officer, reports:*

Grants of £1,000 each have been approved from the Bell Restoration Fund to restore the single bell installations at Hornsey St George and Tottenham St Philip the Apostle.

The current scheme at Hampton has been on hold during lockdown, but minor maintenance has been possible at Finsbury St Clement, and some training in steeple-keeping has been done.

## Geoff Foster



**28 July 1949 – 27 October 2020**

Geoff was a member of the band at St Martin-in-the-Fields, where he was previously Steeplekeeper and was tower secretary at the time of his death. He also rang at Waterloo, other towers both north and south of the river, and particularly Garlick-hythe.

Geoff learned to ring as a youngster in St Alban's and continued as a student at Cambridge, but the pressures of work and family life meant he gave up. He returned to ringing after a 40-year gap when he retired six years ago.

Geoff was willing to get his hands dirty with tower maintenance and was very useful when ropes needed splicing. He was a skilful teacher of bell handling and was always looking for volunteers to teach.

Geoff set himself the goal of a peal of Stedman Cinques, (his favourite) when he returned to ringing and delighted and proud he was when "that's all" was called to a peal of Stedman Cinques rung at St Martin's in September 2018. Any first on 12 is a big achievement, but to do it with such aplomb and when close to 70 is no mean feat at all and showed how hard Geoff worked at ringing. As usual, Geoff was first at the bar, with his customary cheeky pint for himself while he was waiting.



Geoff will be fondly remembered for his good humour, his tireless application to improving his own ringing, and his willingness to give his time and patience to benefit others.

Above all, he was a kind man, generous in every way, good company with intelligent conversation about a wide variety of subjects and a good friend who will be missed in many ways, most of which we probably won't realise until ringing begins again.

Dave Bassford, Master

## Westminster (St Margaret) update

*James White reports:*

The church of St Margaret, Westminster, lies across the road from the Houses of Parliament, under the shadow of Westminster Abbey. At a casual glance it might be thought a chapel or annex of the Abbey.



Its bells are now ringable again. The work on the tower which started in July 2018 was completed in September 2020.

During October the front six bells were rung up, and on Saturday 31st October two combinations of three bells (1-3-5 and 2-4-6) were rung prior to a special service to mark the completion of the work on the tower and as a belated farewell to the previous rector who left in April, during the first (and stricter) lockdown when churches were closed.

There is unlikely to be any more ringing at the church for some time but the bells are now ringable again ready for the time that the current restrictions are lifted and we move closer to all our usual activities.

## Virtual eKenton training

*Caspar Kennedy writes:*

Virtual e-Kenton on 11th October: a contingent in England, and David in Australia. David led us through putting bobs into Plain Bob Minor; just a jumble of numbers made sensible. You had to know your plain hunt in order to Plain Bob, and your Plain Bob in order to be able to respond to a call of 'bob'. The bobs are called at the lead end so it is important to know what place you are in when the bob is called because this determines how you vary from the usual plain bob course.

On 18th October we re-grouped with a slightly different cohort, this time with shadow bands for endless bob courses of Plain Bob Minor.

We finished with Mexican wave on 10, with four blows at rounds, two bells switch places, repeat!

## Remembrance Sunday at Hackney

*Steve Jakeman writes:*

What happened at Hackney was quite extraordinary considering the circumstances. Traditionally we have always had a large civic remembrance service attended by faith groups, civic dignitaries and representatives of the uniformed services.



*Remembrance Sunday 2020*

This year, a smaller but no less dignified service took place attended by the Bishop of Stepney. We were delighted when the Rector, the Revd. Al Gordon, requested that a bell be rung and the tenor was rung half muffled full circle both before and after the service. A BBC London News crew were in attendance and their report broadcast that evening included at least two 'dongs'.

## N& E Quiz Saturday 21 Nov

*Ruth Kitching reports from the front line:*

Has your conductor been struck by lightning? I hope not. Janet Drake, the presiding organiser, has a good line in brain teasers.

A car popular in the 1960s? Our team thought it should be Dodge, but the answer was Minor. No good arguing. What your tower needs in a storm (see above) – conductor. Rank in the Army?.....you guessed it. The one about Cilla Black had some of us stumped – The Avengers? Blind Date? No – Surprise, Surprise of course! After that our team went like the.....clappers – didn't win, but I think we came joint second. Or something.

Here's a photo of a church tower – identify it. (Surprisingly difficult). Church entrances too.

More challenging was the round on identifying towers by the sound of their bells, with extra points if you could guess the method. No points for guessing the conductor though.

I've spent my life avoiding quizzes – partly because I am hopeless at them, having almost zero knowledge of pop music and TV series - and partly because they too often descend into recrimination and anarchy. Perhaps people behave better on zoom, or perhaps it was just the calming influence of Janet and the technical wizardry of Guy that kept us under control. So maybe I will allow my ringing arm to be twisted again for the next one.

Everyone seemed to have an entertaining time, even those that didn't win. It was an excellent District social. Many thanks to Janet and Guy for their efforts.

## Janets' Jaunt 17th October

*Tunde Abdul writes:*

The Jaunt was a lovely autumn walk from Finsbury Park to Alexandra Palace along the Parkland Walk.



*Janet Drake's group at Finsbury Park*

14 people took part, 11 starting at Finsbury Park and 3 joined us on the way along the Parkland Walk, a former railway line, to Highgate including me who came upon Helen's group halfway along the first section of the walk.

In two socially-distanced groups, we met at the Café in Queen's Wood for some light refreshments, a chance to catch up, and unexpected admiration of the Café's vegetable garden. Next time one of their homemade quiches will need to be sampled!

Refreshed and assembled we started off for Alexandra Palace via Highgate Wood stopping off to admire the view over London from the Muswell Hill viaduct, finding out more about the history of the railway line whose path we were following, and its rich history not only from information boards along the route but also from those in the know in the group!

After deciding to ring at Alexandra Palace itself rather than the park we continued on to where another spectacular view was awaiting us over London. And to lunch! Handbells were again rung and the arches of the palace provided lovely acoustics. Mike Wigney instructed me in my first attempt at plain hunting which he and the group seemed to think was not at all bad! By the end I had successfully rung the treble to plain bob minor on handbells – thanks Mike!

Afterwards we went to the café by the boating lake at the palace and the day finished with some ice cream and a lovely end to what had been a very nice outing indeed. £76.50 was raised for the BRF. Thanks to Martin and Fiona Clode and Mike Wigney for providing the bells and Janet D and Janet B for organising.

All welcome to the next Jaunt in the Spring!

## St John at Hackney Tower

*Stephen Jakeman, Tower Captain, writes:*

The last edition of MBN contained a summary of refurbishment works taking place at Hackney in conjunction with the £5m modernisation and restoration project of the church, which is now complete.



The bells were last rung in November 2018 prior to the building being handed over to the main contractor (ROOFF). The entire contents of the tower were removed by the ringers to offsite storage together with the peal boards on display in the porch. No mean task - it is amazing how much 'stuff' accumulates over the years and the opportunity was taken to jettison certain items.

The target completion date of September 2019 for the main contract became reality in July 2020. Even then, we were unable to gain access to the tower for four weeks due to an additional contract that required use of the tower trapdoors. We then had six weeks to complete those improvements that required use of the trapdoors before September 13th when services would recommence.

The main contract included removal of the asbestos-based flooring tiles in the ringing chamber, re-securing of loose steps in the wooden spiral staircase, new electrics throughout, smoke detectors and fire alarm sounders, a remote door entry facility, floors in two of the ringing room alcoves, one with a sink with running water. And there is now a toilet downstairs on our side of the building!

On August 3rd we commenced Operation TOWBIS (**TOW**er **Back In Service**). The first task was to install new mesh on the louvres to keep the tower pigeon-free. This was followed by removal of the four shutters from the existing sound control system installed in 1983. Four temporary work platforms were created and then we had the fun of hauling up some 2 tons of building materials and

equipment, 20m up the tower including a cement mixer !



*No problem.....*

Cement was mixed and the breeze blocks were beautifully laid in the former four shutter openings by Gary Perkins. The new sound control system was constructed, seven new shutters in the sound control floor all operated by rope and pulley from the ringing chamber as before. Access for maintenance has been improved by creating a walkway all around the bells at the upper level.

In the ringing chamber a massive painting exercise gave us the new corporate 'white' colour scheme. Some work remains, including installation of the simulator, commenced but not completed before the main project started.

The team who have achieved the above are to be congratulated – Alec Gray, Chris Weavers, Colin Cherrett, Gary Perkins, Guy Wells, Judy Bourne, Neil Stewart, Paul Browne, Ruth Jakeman, Tim Mills and Tracey Coley. At times it was extremely hot, certainly dusty and dirty, and physically demanding. But we had a lot of fun and overall thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

With the tower facilities improved, an effective sound control system and a simulator available, Hackney looks forward to commencing a new phase in its established teaching and training centre for the area.

## And finally...

This issue of Bell News has included a number of articles about handbells. One of our Training Officers adopted this unusual ringing posture when having his photo taken:



Why so bashful ?

## CALENDAR

Date	Distr	Event	Location	Time
<p><b>Practices</b></p> <p>Dave Bassford will lead two practices each month - on the first Friday evening of the month and on the third Sunday afternoon of the month. The Association General practice using Zoom and <a href="http://www.ringingroom.com">www.ringingroom.com</a> is open to all with no previous RingingRoom experience needed, for all levels of ringing experience.</p> <p>To join email <a href="mailto:Lucy.chandhial@yahoo.co.uk">Lucy.chandhial@yahoo.co.uk</a> - for the zoom link. The zoom link will work for all of these practices so you only need to email once and then you can join anytime.</p>				
Fri 4th Dec	MCA	General Practice	RinginRoom	19:00-20:30
Sat 19th Dec	MCA	Christmas Tunes and chat	RinginRoom and Zoom	15:00-17:00
Sun 20th Dec	MCA	General Practice	RinginRoom	15:00-16:30
Tue 5th Jan	Lecture	<a href="https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/maths-bellringing">https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/maths-bellringing</a>		13:00-14:00
Sat 16th Jan	MCA	Virtual murder mystery event	Zoom	15:00-18:00
Sun 17th Jan	MCA	General Practice	RinginRoom	15:00-16:30
Wed 20th Jan	S&W	Annual District Meeting	Zoom	Late pm
Fri 5th Feb	MCA	General Practice	RinginRoom	19:00-20:30
Sat 20th Feb	N&E	Annual District Meeting	Zoom	15:00-16:00
Sat 20th Feb	MCA	Virtual chat	Zoom	16:00-17:00
Sun 21st Feb	MCA	General Practice	RinginRoom	15:00-16:30
Fri 5th Mar	MCA	General Practice	RinginRoom	19:00-20:30
Sat 6th Mar	S&W	Social event	Date may change – watch emails	TBA
Sat 20th Mar	MCA	Virtual activity TBA	Zoom - TBC	15:00-17:00
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> Mar	MCA	General Practice	RinginRoom	15:00-16:30
<p><b>Training</b></p> <p> Training will be provided by experienced tutors during lockdown. Go to <a href="https://bookwhen.com/mcaldg#focus=ev-sko2-20201219100000">https://bookwhen.com/mcaldg#focus=ev-sko2-20201219100000</a> to see what's on offer and book your place. This user-friendly booking site shows you what training courses are available, and who the tutor is, and details about the course, with a large blue SELECT button on the right to book your place. All places are free. If in doubt, email the course tutor.</p>  				
Fri 11th Dec	MCA	Running a practice on RinginRoom	Lucy Chandhial	19:00-20:30
Sat 19th Dec	MCA	Plain Hunt	Steve Jakeman	10:00-12:00
Sun 27th Dec	MCA	Breaking into calling – 1. Call changes	Dave Bassford	15:00-16:30
Fri 8th Jan	MCA	Starting on handbells	Mike Wigney	19:00-20:30
Sat 16th Jan	MCA	Having fun with Foundation Skills	David Smith	10:00-11:30
Sun 24th Jan	MCA	Towards Plain Bob	Sonia Field	15:00-16:30
Fri 12th Feb	MCA	Safeguarding	Dave Bassford	19:00-20:30
Sat 20th Feb	MCA	Acquiring ropesight and managing without it	Steve Coleman	10:00-11:30
Sun 28th Feb	MCA	Breaking into calling – 2. Bob doubles.	Dave Bassford	15:00-16:30

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

**Next deadline Friday 19th February 2021**

The newsletter is proof-read by Janet Betham (020 8340 1368), [jrbetham@hotmail.com](mailto:jrbetham@hotmail.com).

**Website** material should be sent to Webmaster: James White (S&W), [james.white@gmail.com](mailto:james.white@gmail.com),

or to Anthony Davey (N&E).

*Mike Wigney writes:*

Over the last few months, we have been entering more MCA peals into Bellboard. It's now complete up to 1939.



**William Pye**

The Pye era has now come to an end. Led by William Pye, the Association led the way in both quantity and quality of peal ringing including very many peals at the cutting edge. Of Bill's 1996 peals, 1114 were for the MCA and of these he conducted 859. These included many of London and Bristol Surprise Major (including the first ever peals in each method on handbells), the first ever peals of Spliced Surprise Major in 6 to 12 methods, several peals of Maximus, plus very many peals of Stedman, Triples, Caters and Cinques, on both tower and handbells. Five other members of Bill's regular bands reached 500 peals for the Association – his brothers George R (Bob) Pye and Ernest (died 1915), Bertram Prewett (died in action 1918), Isaac Shade (d 1926) and Charles T (Tom) Coles, Association Secretary between 1909 and 1939. After Bill's death in 1935, Tom continued the good work, arranging and calling many peals. Main peal-ringing centres at the time were Willesden with the Kibys, and, perhaps surprisingly, Bishopsgate.

All through this period, local ringers and bands continued to ring peals at grass roots level, with peals of Grandsire Triples, Bob Major, Stedman Triples and Double Norwich all being popular. Southgate led the way with local band peals up to London Surprise Major and Cambridge Royal. Elsewhere there were strong local bands ringing peals at Walthamstow (then closely associated with the MCA), Tottenham, Edmonton, Acton, Uxbridge (St Andrew), Isleworth, Heston plus the great Ealing trio of ringers – J Armiger Trollope (Central Council Secretary, composer, author), Ernest C S Turner (outstanding composer and conductor) and Wilfrid Wilson (author).

It took an American, Miss Margaret Nicholls, to be the first lady to take part in an MCA peal in 1902 (one in tower, and one in hand).



**Margaret Nicholls**

We then had to wait until 1909 for the next one, when the great Edith Parker rang her first peal, Superlative at Edmonton.

Clearly a formidable lady, she called the first ever ladies' peal (non-Association) in 1912, founded the Ladies' Guild, and, as Mrs George Fletcher, called peals of up to Stedman Cinques and Cambridge Maximus with the best ringers of the day. She also rang a handbell peal of London Surprise Major in 1939, the first such performance by the MCA since Bill Pye's four peals in 1904.

Other prominent lady ringers were Phyllis Moss (Mrs Cecil Mayne) whose one and only peal for the MCA as conductor was Holt's Original, Elsie



*Mrs. Edith Fletcher in 1938.*

Bennett (Hairs) and Kath Bradford (Lock).

As we hit the late 1920s and 1930s, we start to see early peals by names which will be familiar to those of us who have been ringing for a while – Ron Bullen, Jack Crampion, Jack Euston, Tom Lock, Jim Prior, Olive Ashbrook (Rogers) and of course from 1935 Dennis Brock.

A statistical summary appears on the next page.

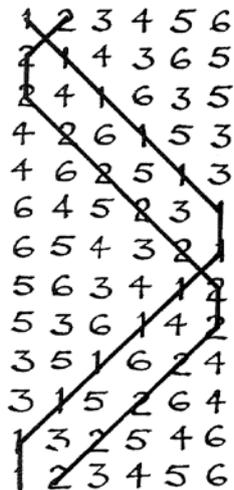
Jill has also been entering more recent peals. All MCA peals from 1976 to date are also in Bellboard.

## Historic Peals rung for the MCA

## Attachment 1- continued

	Tower	Hand	Total	
Doubles/Minor	102	6	108	
<b>Total on 6</b>				<b>108</b>
Grandsire	224	27	251	
Oxford Bob	23	0	23	
Stedman	427	31	458	
Other	15		15	
<b>Total Triples</b>				<b>747</b>
Bristol	180	3	183	
Cambridge	162	0	162	
Double Norwich	130	10	140	
Kent	93	6	99	
London	180	5	185	
New Cambridge	17	0	17	
Oxford Bob	15	1	16	
Plain Bob	120	35	155	
Superlative	255	2	257	
Yorkshire	13	0	13	
Spliced	49	1	50	
Other	46	9	55	
<b>Total Major</b>				<b>1332</b>
Grandsire	24	5	29	
Stedman	238	70	308	
Other	2	1	3	
<b>Total Caters</b>				<b>340</b>
Cambridge	63	0	63	
Kent	22	4	26	
Middlesex	5	0	5	
Plain Bob	0	6	6	
Other	15	2	17	
<b>Total Royal</b>				<b>117</b>
Grandsire	0	1	1	
Stedman	86	43	129	
<b>Total Cinques</b>				<b>130</b>
Cambridge	29	0	29	
Other	6	2	8	
<b>Total Maximus</b>				<b>37</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2541</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>2811</b>	<b>2811</b>

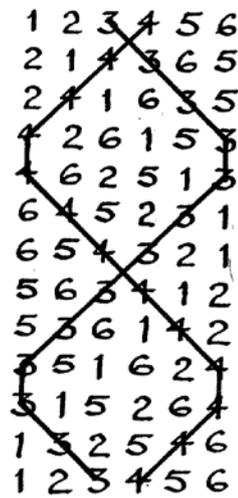
PLAIN HUNT ON 6 BELLS



'coursing'  
position



2-3 position



'opposites'  
position

Ringling World 5715 6 Nov 2020 p1107 – Mary Jones article on handbell ringing

Association of Ringing Teachers (ART)

LTR for handbells <http://ringingteachers.org/resources/handbells>

and:

<https://www.handbellringing.co.uk/change-ringing-handbells-volume-1-basic-techniques>

The following link provides instructions for plain hunt on 4 and six handbells:

<http://btckstorage.blob.core.windows.net/site8108/Website%20PDW%20RbI%209%20Handbells.pdf>