

Middlesex Bell News



Issue 107

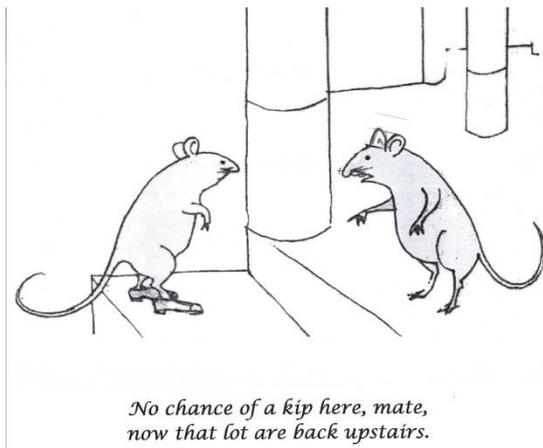
September 2021

www.bellringing.london

Hurrah! Tower ringing is back.

Encouraging words for N&E from Lucy Chandhial, Helen Porter and Janet Drake

Many towers are now back to regular practices and we have started to plan for District practices and events again with ringing at the centre. The Calendar on page 5 has a more complete list of opportunities already arranged for this autumn but if you know of something not shown or would like to see something not currently included please do say. Watch for MCALDG email updates.



*No chance of a kip here, mate,
now that lot are back upstairs.*

The N&E district organises something on the third Saturday of every month and we will now make this an invitation to a tower and a social opportunity and people can join either or both aspects. We are staying mainly in district and definitely within London this year.

We are re-starting the second Sunday of the month ten-bell method practice with a plan to base ourselves at Hackney and Limehouse as suitable towers to get to and to ring at. These ten-bell practices are for both ten-bell method ringers and for those at an earlier stage of ringing.

We are well aware that as we expand the calendar we might find we need to re-think at any stage and we will adapt based on advice and feedback but we hope to see many of you at some kind of district practice in the next few months.

Help for your tower

Every tower is different and so every practice is different. You have the opportunity now to think about your aims and needs individually and as a tower band. We are not planning to start a cycle of inviting the district to join tower practices but if your tower would benefit from one or two more experienced ringers joining you for a dedicated focused practice on a particular method or on a more regular basis to enable the band to progress please let Helen know (N&EMaster@bellringing.London).

Equally if you would like more tower ringing opportunities please do say as there is likely to be a tower not so far away which would appreciate you!

Precautions

We are moving indoors as we head into the autumn but will always be looking for spacious venues and well ventilated rooms for both the ringing and the social part. There are still many factors to take into account around ventilation, space, individual ringers' health / risk, how people travel to practices, etc but the primary guidance is that practices can be organised with thought to numbers attending based on the ringing chamber.

More on the things to consider can be found at <https://cccbr.org.uk/coronavirus/>

Ringling Room

If you are missing Ringling Room and zoom opportunities and would like to know what is still available as ringing from home please say and we can put you in touch with the ongoing practices in Ringling Room, whether Middlesex practices or broader groups.

Any requests or questions ?

If you have any questions or concerns or any specific needs do let one of us know. Our email addresses are on the website - <http://www.bellringing.london/district-officers> .

South & West District programme

Details of the S&W autumn programme are being planned and will be circulated in due course. Keep an eye on MCALDG emails for developments or contact Mike Palmer S&WMaster@bellringing.london or Mike Wigney S&WSecretary@bellringing.london .

Jenny Weston

Dickon Love:



Jenny was a committed member of the choir, and joined the Royal Jubilee bellringers at St James, Garlickhythe with real enthusiasm. She originally decided to try ringing at a Middlesex ringing school at St Mary Abbots, Kensington on their simulator in advance of joining us on Thursday evenings. Her bell to start

with was the 5th (“Anne”), but she was determined to adapt to the other bells, which she did. She made good use of the Wednesday lunchtime practices which helped her nail plain hunt.

Jenny was such fun in the tower at practices, and at the pub and other social events. I have abiding memories of her sitting with the largest glass of gin possible, holding court with her effervescent personality and real generosity. I last saw her for the ringing at Prince Philip’s funeral when we she was chiming “Philip” from the ground floor. She was delighted to be part of this, particularly as we hadn’t all seen each other for so many months.

Her funeral took place at St Mary’s, Primrose Hill; the Garlickhythe wreath bore a scallop, the symbol of St James the fisherman. Our thoughts are with Jenny’s family, and all those who were close to her.

Ringling for Grenfell

Fr Alan Trigle

I served as curate in a neighbouring parish to Grenfell Tower just before the fire occurred, and I remember being at a party with the vicar of St Clement’s, Notting Dale one evening. From there he went home and was awakened later that night by the noise of the fire. In good Anglican style, he opened his church door and put on the tea urn and welcomed the traumatised residents inside; that was the start of a long process of accompanying the victims and their families. They were poor people in one of the wealthiest parts of London, and the accommodation they were housed in was shamefully unsafe, but when I was serving there I found them endlessly friendly and welcoming.

So I was proud to ring 72 strokes on the tenor at St Nicholas, Chiswick on the evening of 14 June in memory of the victims, followed by a pause and then 4 more strokes, one for each year since the fire. Our neighbours, who are not normally bellringing fans, thanked us for doing this, and we also got positive messages from other nearby residents.

Other towers across Middlesex tolled for the fourth anniversary of the Grenfell disaster on 14th June:

At St John at Hackney Steve Jakeman tolled 74 + 4 times for Grenfell, as did Nick Gander at St Mary Magdalene, Holloway. . Tolling or chiming was also performed at Sunbury, South Hackney, Edmonton, Enfield St Andrew, and Bethnal Green, and at other towers which have not recorded the event.

Ringling for the NHS



Sara Berry-Hewish
Genevieve Algie and I, both being NHS workers, rang on 6th July at St Mary Magdalene, Holloway, for the NHS and Care Workers. We rang Treble Two and Cambridge Two, details of which are taken from the Huntingdonshire Church Bell Restoration Society booklet. My jersey was chosen to emphasize the celebratory nature of the performance.

Stephen Jakeman

We had two pieces of ringing for the 73rd anniversary of the founding of the NHS - first some tolling at 8pm on 5th July (<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1451799>). This was preceded by a quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles, rung by a band which included Susan Crocker, who was awarded the MBE in January 2021 for her nearly 30 years of work for the NHS. Judy Bourne, who worked for 25 years for the NHS, is also associated with this ringing. (<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1451796>).

Pam Roth



Paul Norman

Pam Roth, longest serving ringer at St Bart’s, died on 24 June aged 87. Taught to ring there in the 1960s, she was both a loyal member of the band and faithful parishioner. Though prevented from ringing after a stroke in 2016, she continued to join us regularly in the tower, in the pub, and on

Zoom. Dearly loved and sorely missed.

City of London Festival of Bells

The Festival of Bells commenced at St Paul's Cathedral at 9a.m. on 31st July with the sound of Great Paul being chimed from the south-west tower. The chiming mechanism is at present non-functional, so that this bell, the heaviest ever cast in the UK at nearly 17 tons, was chimed by hand. This YouTube link shows from below the impressive process.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bn6Gtsdw-os>

Great Paul was then joined by the bells in the south west tower and rang with them before fading out – a wonderful sound.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rPHY8-vUlo>

Some 25 City churches, marshalled by Dickon Love, were available for ringers for the Festival, and many members took advantage of this unique opportunity.

Sara Berry-Hewish:

The Festival was an opportunity to Grab a Tower for those experienced and inexperienced. As rusty ringers from Holloway we thought we'd try visiting a couple of Towers recommended to us. We were warmly welcomed at St Margaret Pattens (a wonderful Wren church) by Hans Rashbrook and really enjoyed ringing the 1768 bell, a well as getting to see the 1624 service bell in the belfry.



Interior of St Margaret Pattens

We took a leisurely stroll onwards to our next Tower via Leadenhall Market, sheltering from the thunderstorms at the New Moon before heading to St Botolph's without Bishopgate. We were welcomed by Tower Captain John Adams, caught up with Hans again and rang with fellow ringers from Leicester and the Midlands, managing to ring some rounds and call changes.

Afterwards we wandered down to join a bevy of contented ringers at the end of the day at the Walrus & Carpenter, Monument. Many thanks to Hans & John for their encouragement and a hello to all the new and old friends we met throughout the day!

Lucy Chandhial:

I rang in a quarter peal of plain bob doubles at St Katharine Cree. Before we started Bogumila Myers asked whether we really wanted to ring with the door

open. I was quick to say I thought we should, for the cool breeze. At the end of the quarter, after continuously counting my places whilst hearing buses clunkety-clunk across the manhole cover, tourists explaining to their children 'six ropes and six people', what I thought was a dog with a bell on its collar and the assembling ringers waiting for general ringing and chatting about their experience of the day so far, I told Bo 'next time you suggest closing the door I will listen to you!'

Having started the day tired, after a week of cycling and ringing in Bedfordshire with the Society of Roving Ringers, I still enjoyed ringing called changes on 12 at St Mary le Bow and the quarter at Cree before heading home for a restful evening.

If Dickon is willing to organise this again, I'd like to ring at St Sepulchre, Newgate but I wasn't early enough this time. I saw ringers I haven't seen for more than a year and met some I only know from zoom or emails. The enthusiasm was as clear as the bells on an otherwise quiet Saturday in the City of London.

Back to School

Katy Hulatt and Becca Sheridan

On 14th August we met at St Martin's, Ruislip for a full day of training. For some this was their first time back in a bell chamber since the beginning of the pandemic. One of our newer ringers, who had almost mastered solo bell handling before the first lockdown found that muscle memory can survive a pandemic too!

We commenced by ringing up and then did called changes to warm up. We then took turns at facing away from the centre mid ring to reduce ropesight, thus consolidating our striking by ear. After a lovely lunch at a local eatery, we practised a range of skills including bell handling, striking well and Plain Hunt.

We finished with an historic striking competition that included forfeits. After carefully listening to the three teams, judges Becca and Marilyn confidently announced: "Team Four!" as the winners! After a quick discussion it emerged that they had accidentally judged the warm up for each team. However, the Phantom Striking Team of St. Martin's won't be forgotten quickly.

Our grateful thanks to Sonia Field who led the practice, and to tutors Dave Bassford, Chris Rimmer, and Alistair Smith.

Jo Harris

On 4th August Dave Bassford ran an earlier training session at St Martin's, Ruislip, a ground-floor ring with long ropes which have quite a bit of stretch in them. Gaining control over these by the end of the training session, after struggling to begin with, was a great feeling. The improvement in our abilities was shown when a few days later many of the same people rang for a wedding at St Martin's and produced some very good ringing to see the happy couple out !

Betty Sutcliffe



Martin Sutcliffe

Betty died at home on August 8th, after a short illness. She was born in 1927 at Tugby, in Leicestershire, where her father was the vicar. The church there has four bells, and as a child Betty asked the ringers if she could learn. Unfortunately, they put her off, saying that only men rang bells. It was not strictly true, of course, but it was a common attitude at the time.

In spite of this disappointment she remained interested and when, after her retirement, she found out that they were short of ringers at her church, Christ Church, Southgate, she started to learn with Dennis Willcocks. It wasn't easy for her because in addition to being elderly she had had a fracture in her upper right arm which prevented her from raising her right hand above her head. However, she persisted and eventually rang in a good number of quarter peals and 15 peals, the last of these when she was in her eighties.

Betty was good at organizing, fund raising and persuading people to do things, and served as the Secretary of the North and East District for several years. She was Tower Captain at Southgate for a while, and also President of the Association for a term, during which she organized a dinner and dance at the Ramada Hotel in Acton to celebrate the centenary of the London Diocesan Guild.

In her working life Betty was at various times a midwife, a health visitor, an arranger of adoptions for the Church of England Children's Society and an army officer in Queen Alexandra's Nursing Corps, where she served in Mauritius and Kenya. As a nurse she worked not only in England but also in Canada and Barbados. In her spare time she took an Open University degree in geology, was a guide at St Paul's Cathedral, and studied the history of her very extensive family.

Betty's funeral took place at Christ Church, Southgate on 31st August. Ringers from across the Association rang a touch of Grandsire Caters as Betty's coffin left the church. At St Mary Magdalene, Enfield a peal of Grandsire Triples was rung in thanksgiving for her life, and at other towers quarter-peals and other ringing took place in her memory.

Michael Sprackling



Richard Jones, Christ the Saviour, Ealing

Michael started his ringing career in Ealing under Wilfred Wilson at Christ the Saviour in Ealing Broadway, and became Tower Captain in the late '70s. In the 80s he became Tower Captain St Mary's, South Ealing as well. Eventually, the two bands became one and he continued to be Captain until ill health necessitated his retirement in this role a few years ago. When not in his Captain's role, he was quiet and unassuming but a top ringer who seldom made a mistake. His favourite method was Grandsire Triples which he conducted innumerable times, following the coursing order to put others right.

No matter the strength of the band or what was being rung, Michael was unfailing in his good humour. He taught many ringers in his time. Even after his retirement, he was the fount of all knowledge and looked upon to give advice on frequent occasions. Due to his good nature, he has left a happy band of ringers in Ealing, who will miss him, tremendously.

Helen Windsor, St Clement Danes

Michael Sprackling is part of the history of St Clement Danes, just across Strand from his workplace as a Lecturer at King's College, as well as his Ealing towers. For many years Tower Captain of the Central Church of the RAF, claimant to 'Oranges and Lemons' fame, he organised and called ringing for so many weddings, funerals and notable events which the church's unique associations call upon it to lament or celebrate. As years went by, Michael increasingly shared the role of Tower and Bells Officer with Alan Taylor, and eventually retired from the liaison and steeple-keeping aspects, leaving them in Alan's capable hands. Happily though, Michael continued as a stalwart leader of the monthly second Sunday QP band until he could no longer, organising the band and running the ringing until not long before the pandemic. I am pleased that I rang my first few quarter peals together with Michael in 2019 just as I was stepping into the role of Tower/Bells Officer (with much trepidation as a new and inexperienced ringer, but with the active support of Alan).

CALENDAR

Date	Distr	Event	Location	Time
<p>Planned events - any changes and more details will be sent via email to the Middlesex Association email list nearer the date of each event. If you are not already on the list and would like to be, send an email with your preferred email address to mcaldg+subscribe@googlegroups.com.</p>				
Date		Topic	Location	Time
Sun 12th Sept	N&E	Ten Bell Method Practice	Hackney St John	2:00 - 4:00
Sat 18th Sept	N&E	Heritage Open Day- ringing and social	Camberwell, St Giles	1:00 - 4:00
Sat 2nd Oct	MCA	J&Js' Jaunt – walk and ring in two towers	TBC	All Day
Sat 9th Oct	MCA	Association Autumn Meeting	TBC, in person and with Zoom	Afternoon
Sun 10th Oct	N&E	Ten Bell Method Practice	Limehouse, St Anne TBC	2:00 - 4:00
Sat 16th Oct	N&E	District Ringing and Social	Hampstead, Christ Church	2:00 - 5:00
Sat 23rd Oct	MCA	London 12 Bell Competition - come and listen	Cheapside, St Mary-le-Bow	Afternoon
Sat 13th Nov	MCA	Lord Mayor's Show Ringing	Cheapside, St Mary-le-Bow	11:00 -
Sun 14th Nov	N&E	Ten Bell Method Practice	Hackney, St John	2:00 - 4:00
Sat 20th Nov	N&E	District Ringing and Social	TBC	2:00 - 5:00
Sun 12th Dec	N&E	Ten Bell Method Practice	Limehouse, St Anne TBC	2:00 - 4:00
Sat 18th Dec	N&E	District Ringing and Social	TBC	2:00 - 5:00
<p>10-bell practice This practice will not be restricted to members wishing to ring 10-bell methods, but will normally offer opportunities to all members to improve their ringing.</p>				

Items for inclusion in *Middlesex Bell News* to Anthony Davey at [BellNewsEditor@bellringing.london](mailto:bellnewseditor@bellringing.london) .

Next deadline Monday 22nd November

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