



Middlesex Bell News



Issue 100

December 2019

www.bellringing.london

Origin of Bell News

The first issue of Bell News came out in March 1994 with the declared object of improving communication between the Association and its members (342 in 1994, over 530 today). It ran to six pages. There was no calendar, now the most popular page. Instead much of the issue was a write-up of forthcoming events, enlivened by cartoons:



thus providing an historical precedent for the reintroduction of cartoons into the September issue.

Roger Booth, the first editor, will be remembered by many as doing a great deal of teaching, and for his part in establishing the Association of Ringing Teachers (<http://ringingteachers.org/>). The early issues of Bell News included schedules of courses being run by the CCCBR, and educational descriptions of training conducted by our Association. It was a somewhat serious working document, though older ringers might be amused at Roger's request for contributions to be submitted on floppy disks (*younger ringers should ask their parents*).

Over the next 25 years Bell News evolved, shrinking to four pages, of which one was committed to the calendar. This was probably an inevitable consequence of the MCALDG group email facility and online search resources.

Over the last year Bell News has grown a dual personality, appearing in print and now online. The online edition contains material for which there was no room in print, pictures, and, as some may have noticed, colour. Hyperlinks to useful websites are included so that members can follow up material originating outside our Association.

In order to keep Bell News useful and entertaining, members are urged to tell the editor what they like, don't like, or would like to see. Roger said exactly the same 25 years ago. That is the only way the News will reach its 200th issue in 2044.

The Association is going paperless

Jill Wigney announces:

From 2020 there will be one printed copy of the Annual Report and of Bell News per tower. Members may request a paper copy of either, or both, if they would prefer to continue to receive paper versions. Requests can be made to your tower captain, who will be able to indicate a member's request on the annual tower form which is returned with the subs to the District Secretary. Requests may also be made direct to your District Secretary, the Report Editor or the Membership Secretary.

Printed copies of the Annual Report for every tower, and for any members who have requested one, will be distributed at the AGM in April, in the usual way.

PDF versions will be produced and distributed to members via email Tower Contacts for forwarding. Unattached members will receive their PDFs direct by email. Members may request to have their PDF version of the **Annual Report** emailed to them direct by emailing their District Secretary, or the Membership Secretary. **Bell News** will continue to be emailed to the MCALDG Email Group, or for members not in that Group on request to their tower captain or the Bell News distributor (jrbetham@hotmail.com) with their email address. It will also be placed on the Association website.

Ringling opportunities

The calendar on page 4 shows the current plan for the next 3 months, but keep an eye on the website calendar (<http://www.bellringing.london/>) for updated details.

The S&W Planning Meeting on 7th December and the ADM on 11th January, and the N&E's Planning and Annual meetings on 18th January and 15th February, are not only enjoyable social occasions but also offer ringing at all levels.

Rounds and About provides early stage ringers across London with expert tuition up to rounds and plain hunt. See the last page for details. For specific training requests contact any of the District Training Officers, or Sonia Field (sonia.field@hotmail.com) in the northern sector of S&W, for further information either as a student or helper.

The Central Council meeting

Adrian Udal, CCCBR Rep, writes:

In September, over a weekend the Central Council of Church Bellringers (CCCBR) met at Goldsmiths' College in New Cross. Many Association members took part in both the organising and running of the event. Clyde Whittaker, Sonia Field, and our Master Dave Bassford were amongst the key local players. This year the CCCBR's events were open to all, with tower visits, workgroup presentations, the opportunity to ring on Sunday at churches across the City, and a mini-roadshow to finish.

All four of our CCCBR representatives attended the formal meetings on Saturday 7th. This was Robert Lewis' last meeting as Editor of 'The Ringing World' and his first one as a MCA & LDG rep. Chris O'Mahony, until recently ringing at Harrow, retired early to return "down-under," and Simon Linford was elected as the next CCCBR President.

At the President's dinner, Alan Regin, Steward of the Rolls of Honour, received a special presentation, a framed sandbag from Ypres in recognition of his rôle to mark The Great War's Centenary.

On Sunday the new-style 'Mini-Roadshow' offered three mini-rings outside, four training bells inside, seventeen exhibitors, twenty-one expert speakers on a range of subjects, a youth panel, and Steve Coleman to entertain us.

What more could you have wanted if you ventured across the river on a sunny Autumnal weekend?

The voice of the future

Charlie Hicks writes

The youth panel, 8 of us, spoke about our bell-ringing experience in front of 50+ people. The objective of this presentation was to explain how important it is to involve the younger generation in the bell-ringing community. It was important that we

got our point across for bell-ringing will die without a new generation. As a young bell-ringer I understand how it's hard to get young people to ring because when I first heard of bell-ringing through my mum I



was very reluctant to go, but when I had my first lesson at St Marys Kilburn with Charlie Creelman, I suddenly became infected with the bell-ringing bug, but people are becoming more and more immune. So my mission is to bring back the bell-ringing spirit within young people and I won't stop until this mission is achieved.

Treasure In The Attic

David King writes:

The CCCBR conference offered the chance to tour the Ringing Room and Bell Tower at St Paul's. Our group was escorted up to the Triforium level of the cathedral - The Attic.

Like all great attics, there are all sorts of interesting treasures hidden up there, including original pieces of St Paul's that had survived the Great Fire, and a wooden scale model of the cathedral built for King Charles II to show him how his money would be spent. Up there the light floods in, angelic and atmospheric. There's a smell too, old books and ink, which fills the air already thick with history and knowledge.

Up past the Fibonacci staircase,



geometric, precise, poetic and beautiful, through The Sewing Room where ladies were busy hand stitching robes and altar cloths, we arrived in the ringing room to catch our breath before one more short climb, a final few steps, and we were up and out on the outside of the tower, in the wind and the rain, looking down on the bells of St Paul's themselves.

Janets' autumn Jaunt

Ginny Johnson (Islington St James's) writes:

Janets' Jaunt on 5 October was a pleasantly rural circular walk in Essex of about seven miles, taking in Manuden



St Mary the Virgin, Manuden

and Stansted Mountfitchet, both with Hertfordshire spike spires:



St Mary the Virgin, Stanton Mountfitchet

A party of 18 ringers and friends, with an age range of 6 to 80+, made their way through fields lined with blackberry bushes and crab apple trees. Our first tower at Manuden, dating back to 1143, was a light ring of 6 on the first floor overlooking the nave. Afterwards we admired the neat churchyard and half-timbered mediaeval houses around it on the short walk to the Yew Tree .

Foraging blackberries and wild apples in the hedges, the party continued to Stansted Mountfitchet



Picking blackberries

- a redundant Grade 2 listed church, with 8 bells hung anti-clockwise (which took some getting used to, particularly for call changes - Look the **other way!**)

As readers can see, this was very pleasant social excursion in lovely weather. All are welcome to the next Jaunt in April (weather not guaranteed !) Our thanks to Janet Drake and to Janet and John Betham for organising everything. £116 was raised for the BRF.

S&W Quarter Peal week

Mike Wigney reports:

This was another rewarding week with 15 quarters attempted of which 11 were successful. It was good that several people came out of quarter peal retirement to take part. Firsts included:

First Stedman ó Guy Wells
First Stedman as C ó Bridget Campbell
First Middlesex Triples ó Bridget Campbell
First Grandsire Triples ó George Hart (Hersham)

As usual, several of the quarters at the end of the week were rung half-muffled in remembrance. This year we particularly remembered Dorothy Barker and Geoff Willis, who died recently.

Tulloch Improvers' Ringing Course

Mary Ruth Mayo writes:

Woken by the sound of a cockerel crowing, looking out over a stunning variety of leafy green trees against a backdrop of majestic hills soaring into the eerily hanging mists, we are in the Scottish Highlands, at the Tulloch Ringing Centre (<http://tullochbells.com/>) The inspiration and head teacher, Helen McGregor, along with her husband Peter Bevis, created this unique, purpose-built centre to attract students from all over the UK (and beyond). A number of MCALDG members have benefited over the years.



Photo: Helen McGregor

Having no neighbours to annoy, we rang for several hours a day for five full days. The centre has two towers, one larger (12, 7 cwt), the other small (8, 1 cwt). All the bells were secured through the good offices of the Keltek Trust. There is a simulator room with one bell.

The pick mix sessions to suit students from 3 weeks to 3 years experience taught skills from basic bell control to plain hunt and even bob doubles ably assisted by half a dozen eagle-eyed helpers.

The lunches were good too !

S&W go back to Amersham

Mike Wigney reports:

Four years after our previous visit, 21 members and friends returned to Amersham for the S&W district outing. Starting at the delightful easy-going ground floor 6 at Penn, we then went to the other extreme with the grand old heavy 8 at Great Missenden. Little Missenden's 6 bells are quite tricky, with ropes guided round and through the organ. There we were able to view the Saxon chancel and the outstanding imaginatively 13th century wall paintings (<https://www.lmchurch.org/wall-paintings>).

Lunch in Amersham was followed by ringing on the fine new 12, where several of the group rang for the first time on 12 bells. The day rounded off with Chalfont St Giles (light 8, ground floor, more wall paintings) and finally the 6 at Chalfont St Peter.

Following the line

Chris Weavers writes:

The N&E November Half Day Outing on 16th November saw a group of around 30 following the Docklands Light Railway line from Poplar, through Greenwich and on into Lewisham.

First stop was All Saints, Poplar, featuring ten bells in a church built of Portland stone in the Greek style.



After a trip over the Thames (or below in the case of those who left the DLR at Island Gardens and made their way through the Greenwich Foot Tunnel) the group enjoyed ringing at the second ten bell tower of the afternoon at St. Alfege, Greenwich, the earliest of Hawksmoor's six London churches. Last stop was St. Mary the Virgin, Lewisham, a tower of eight bells, with the unusual feature of having to initially take stairs *down* into the tower as the result of the floor of the main body of the church being raised during 18th-century building works.

Crowded ringing rooms and a brief loss of lighting, when a ringer old enough to know better sat on the switch, did nothing to dim the enthusiasm of the group with the repertoire featuring rounds, called changes, plain hunting and method ringing (Yorkshire, Little Bob Royal, Stedman Caters and a touch of Bristol Royal).

A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon ended with warm thanks to Angela McLellan and Janet Betham for the excellent organisation of the outing - and of course with refreshments at a nearby pub.

The ART of learning

Dora Slater writes

A varied and entertaining session at Harrow Weald organised by Sonia Field, ably supported by our Australian guest, David Smith, started with ringing in rounds. Our techniques were scrutinised and handy tips given to each of us on handling and bodily stance.

We moved on to 'Mexican Wave' and 'Kaleidoscope' which definitely helped us to improve our timing and our ability to change places accurately. A novel Q&A exercise reinforced our understanding of seemingly simple terminology that sometimes confuses, such as front, back, in, out, up, down, and the techniques needed to move places.

Other ringing tasks supported place-making, timing, and practising holding up accurately on the balance for every bell. We all agreed that we had enjoyed an intensive and very useful workout, gaining valuable experience on unfamiliar bells.

Volunteering and Leadership Group

Tim Hine writes:

The V&L Group, set up by the Central Council, is developing a recruitment workshop and seeks to learn from successful leaders. Contact Tim for information or to help: vlead@cccbr.org.uk

Congratulations Dennis !

Dennis Brock celebrated his 101st birthday by ringing a touch of Grandsire Doubles at Cranford.

Congratulations !



Photo: Lorna Doyle

The Essex Trophy

The Essex Trophy 10 bell striking competition is an annual challenge since 1979 for the Guilds and Associations in the south east of England. Middlesex hosted the 2019 event at Southgate but did not enter. Six bands competed to see who could strike Stedman Caters most accurately. Kent won, and Essex did well despite having got together only 48 hours earlier.

Thanks go to the Rev. Hazel Miall for welcoming us to Christchurch, Martin Sutcliffe and the helpers.

Rounds & About

James White explains:

Planning for the 2018 London Bellringing School (LBS) included a series of six fortnightly sessions in the autumn of 2018 to smooth the transition of the students from LBS practice into a tower practice regime. This led to the discovery that sessions at a level suitable for new learners would be of interest to a wider audience.

Under the LBS brand, and catering for ringers from both north and south of the river, these have continued to be organised as blocks of five or six sessions at fortnightly intervals for invited participants (typically recommended to us by tower captains and district masters), with the third series of 2019 now underway, and more planned for 2020. Thus the LBS brand sits alongside the work of the Middlesex Association and Surrey Association which both operate training programmes.

Sessions expect to help with handling, and then the skills needed to ring in rounds and make the first steps into change ringing ó simple call changes, places, and dodging. The title öRounds & Aboutö was coined for the sessions at this level and they appear to have found a niche sitting above basic one-to-one bell handling tuition that some towers can provide but below the level of Middlesex Association Training Events.

LBS ögraduatesö and other more experienced ringers are asked to support our sessions, ringing stably in rounds. More recently helpers have also rung Bastow Little Bob Minimus and Bastow Little Bob Doubles (so that the students can make places in 1-2 on the treble).

We have also run short series of sessions for specific towers on request, or made one-off visits to provide a boost.

Tower captains or others are invited to suggest participants that might like to come to our centrally-arranged sessions (often at St Clement Danes). Contact LBS Master Louise Booth (mlouisebooth@outlook.com) or Secretary James White (mail.james.white@gmail.com) to suggest ringers that might benefit.

A Fun Practice ... in 30C

Sue Carpenter, mopping her brow writes:

On August Bank Holiday Monday, fourteen enthusiastic ringers escaped the 30C heat by assembling for a training session in the cool of the tower at Saint John the Baptist, Aldenham.

Predominantly we rang on six bells covering plain hunt, Stedman and Cloisters among other methods, although rounds and call changes on all eight bells started and ended the proceedings.

The afternoon incorporated exercises such as holding up at hand and back, place making and dodging. Some of these new found skills were put into practice ringing a tune which was almost, but not entirely, unrecognisable as a rendition of Happy Birthday for one of those attending.

A useful exercise in rope sight involved mixing up some of the bells before starting plain hunt, something not often practised at my home tower.

By the time we got to the Aldenham Social Club for a pint, we had forgotten that we had intended to establish whether the correct name for one of the methods we rang was Bastow or Bistow. Nevertheless it was agreed that a useful session had been enjoyed by all.

And for the more mature student...

Audrey Wakeling writes:

As a more mature student I learnt change ringing as a child fifty years ago in a fine old country village church in a wonderful rural setting in Cornwall.

My father and his father before him were Tower Captains but the terminology we used was different to now. I jumped at the chance to expand my knowledge.

With training at Harrow Weald I now understand öthe inside of methodsö. A lovely element of our sessions is that they have taken place in three different churches with light, medium and heavy bells. . We are getting experience with every weight.

And finally...

Result of competition for best advice for beginners:



öYou won't get far if you don't catch hold!ö

Sage guidance from Steve Jakeman

CALENDAR

Date	Distr	Event	Location	Time
Tue 3rd Dec	-	London Ringers Advent Carol Service	St Dunstan, Stepney	19:30-21:00
Thu 5th Dec	N&E	5 & 6 bell practice	St Anne, Highgate	19:30-21:00
Sat 7th Dec	S&W	District planning meeting & ringing	All Hallows Vicarage, Twickenham	09:30-13:00
Sun 8th Dec	N&E	10-bell method practice.	Southgate	14:00-16:00
Tue 10th Dec	S&W	Daytime practice	Isleworth	10:30-12:00
Tue 10th Dec	S&W	District 6-bell practice	Norwood Green	20:00-21:30
Fri 13th Dec	MCA	Association 12-bell practice	St Magnus the Martyr	18:30-20:30
Wed 18th	N&E	District midweek practice	St George in the East	10:00-12:00
Fri 20th Dec	S&W	District Surprise Major practice	Harlington	19:45-21:15
Fri 27th Dec	N&E	Surprise Major practice	St Saviour, PimlicoTBC	19:00-20:30
Fri 27th Dec	S&W	District 10-bell practice	TBA	19:45-21:30
Tues 7th Jan	N&E	5- and 6-bell practice	St James, Prebend St, N1 8QH	19:30-21:00
Fri 10th Jan	MCA	Association 12-bell practice	St Magnus the Martyr	18:30-20:30
Sat 11th Jan	S&W	District ADM	St Margaret, Uxbridge	15:00-20:00
Sun 12th Jan	N&E	10-bell method practice.	Southgate	14:00-16:00
Tues 14th Jan	S&W	Daytime practice	Isleworth	10:30-12:00
Tues 14th Jan	S&W	District 6-bell practice	Norwood Green	20:00-21:30
Wed 15th Jan	N&E	District midweek practice	TBA	10:00-12:00
Fri 17th Jan	S&W	District Surprise Major practice	Harlington	19:45-21:15
Sat 18th Jan	N&E	District planning meeting and barn dance	Wood Green - details to follow	16:00-21:00
Thu 23rd Jan	N&E	10-bell practice, rounds and upwards	St Clement Danes	18:30-20:00
Fri 24th Jan	N&E	Surprise Major practice	St Saviour, Pimlico	19:00-20:30
Fri 24th Jan	S&W	District 10-bell practice	TBA	19:45-21:30
Tue 4th Feb	N&E	5 & 6 bell practice	St Giles in the Fields	19:30-21:00
Sat 8th Feb	S&W	General ringing ó all welcome	St Mary, Twickenham	14:00-16:00
Sun 9th Feb	N&E	10-bell method practice.	Limehouse	14:00-16:00
Tue 11th Feb	S&W	Daytime practice	Isleworth	10:30-12:00
Tue 11th Feb	S&W	District 6-bell practice	Norwood Green	20:00-21:30
Fri 14th Feb	MCA	Association 12-bell practice	St Magnus the Martyr	18:30-20:30
Sat 15th Feb	N&E	Annual District Meeting	Dalston & South Hackney	15:30-19:30
Wed 19th Feb	N&E	District midweek practice	TBA	10:00-12:00
Fri 21st Feb	S&W	District Surprise Major practice	Harlington	19:45-21:15
Fri 28th Feb	N&E	Surprise Major practice	St Saviour, Pimlico	19:00-20:30
Fri 28th Feb	S&W	District 10-bell practice	TBA	19:45-21:30

Items for inclusion in *Middlesex Bell News* to Anthony Davey at anthony@smoketree.eu
Next deadline Friday 21st February 2020

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

Website material should be sent to Webmaster: James White (S&W), james.white@gmail.com, or to Anthony Davey (N&E).

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