



# Middlesex Bell News



Issue 109

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## Subscriptions

*Jill Wigney, Membership Secretary, reminds us:*



2022 subs are now due - £10 for Ordinary members and £5 for Ordinary Junior members. Payment can be made through your tower captain, or direct to the Association bank account.

If you have not yet paid yours but would like to do so, please email me for information at:

[MembSecretary@bellringing.london](mailto:MembSecretary@bellringing.london)

## CCCBR Covid advice

The application of the government guidance to 'consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces' applies to some ringing chambers, particularly if ventilation is poor.

We encourage all ringers to take both a personal approach and a collective approach to how residual risk is managed. With no limits on numbers, distancing or duration, the emphasis is on considering which mitigations are appropriate for a particular ringing situation, adjusting the length of time.

For instance, a fully vaccinated band (two vaccinations and booster) might be comfortable ringing for an extended period of time at a well ventilated tower if all participants have done a LFT within the previous 24 hours. Teaching youngsters is likely to be for shorter periods, again with a LFT within 24 hours and possibly with a face covering.

Summarised from <https://cccbr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Guidance-post-Plan-B-Jan-2022-v1.1.pdf>

## MCA 125th anniversary

Our Association was formed on Whit Monday 1897 from the amalgamation of The Middlesex Association with The South and West Middlesex Association. S&W District is marking the occasion on 4th June with ringing at Christ the Saviour, Ealing.

Other towers across the Association may wish to ring for this anniversary.

## One Thousand Peals (and 1,000 quarters)

*Stephen Mitchell, Association Secretary, member Ancient Society of College Youths*

The Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, and the 125th anniversary of the Middlesex Association, will provide reasons for members to ring quarter peals (QPs) and peals in 2022. Which activity is best to engage in? The answer for me has always been both.

Having learnt to ring in a Lincolnshire village, Fulbeck (6), I rang the treble to my first QP there in July 1967. Almost a year later, I rang a full peal on the same bell.

My opportunities for ringing peals greatly increased at university in Manchester in the 1970s, particularly with Marcus Sherwood as conductor, and then when I came to work in London in 1978. Peal organisers like Frank Blagrove, Bernard Taylor and Roger Bailey all boosted my total, often conducting Spliced Surprise Major at Middlesex towers, and in Roger's case handbell peals.

Over time, and with some fallow years, my peals accumulated. I reached 1,000 in 2016 (ringing 3-4 to Lincolnshire Surprise Major, at home on my handbells), and celebrated with a glass of champagne!

Meanwhile, I tended to ring fewer QPs. However, since the millennium I have rung over 150 with local ringers at Twickenham, and over 80 on Sunday afternoons at Southwark Cathedral. Until people spent lockdowns entering performances from their personal or tower records on Bellboard, I had no clue about my QP total. I was therefore rather surprised when a Bellboard search revealed 999 for me in February, followed by 1,000 a week later (Stedman Cinques at Croydon St John), celebrated with a pint of beer! Some others may well be lost in the sands of time.

For me, both QPs and peals are worthwhile activities, more focused than practices, and enabling ringers both to make progress and record achievements. Lengthy periods of settled, well struck ringing are more frequently achieved in peals, in which there is also more scope for interesting, musical compositions. Ringing Triples, it is very satisfying to ring all the 5040 possible changes.

I also enjoy the physical and mental challenges of ringing for three hours, particularly on rewarding bells. As ringing returns to normal, whether you ring QPs or peals this year, enjoy them!

## A trail of destruction ?

*Sonia Field*

No need to stay at home just because it's January. To lighten the dark of winter the eKenton group decided to visit Bath. On 14th January some of us joined a band at Widcombe just outside Bath to ring a QP of Norwich Surprise Minor. Afterwards, pleased with our success, we elected to leave the bells up at backstroke in readiness for the next morning. As we left, one of the band commented: 'I hope the bells don't blow over in the night'. Why would they? There was no wind.

*Illustration removed*

But this turned out to be prescient, because there were queries from local residents why the "bells were ringing at half past one in the morning!" It turned out that No.6 stay had broken overnight.

The first we knew of this was when four of us arrived early on Saturday morning to bring the front ropes down in readiness to ring, and Josh Jones exclaimed in surprise: 'Where has the tenor rope gone?' An immediate fix proved not possible, so when the rest of our London ringers and some locals arrived, 14 of us rang, tenor-less, practising Call Changes, Plain Hunt and a selection of doubles methods.

On to Bathwick for Plain Hunt on 9, then a QP of Grandsire Triples, while with the other half of our group Dave Bassford conducted a QP of mixed doubles at St Michael in Bath. After a late lunch and a general ring at St Michael's we finished at Bath Abbey. Here we enjoyed the view from the roof, which has to be crossed to get to the ringing chamber. Having raised the bells, though, it was found that the clock hammer wire to No. 2 had snapped.

*Illustration removed*

*"Just snapped"?*

So after a pause for investigation and an impromptu Abbey Tower Tour, ringing resumed on the back eight.

Sunday morning saw many of us up early to support service ringing at four Bath towers, culminating with the Abbey where we rang on all ten bells – the clock hammer wire had been fixed with a piece of string (what else?)

As one member of the band wrote: '...I loved the weekend. It was such a fabulous experience. I felt I grew as a ringer and was overwhelmed by the friendly supportive atmosphere throughout... It has really set me up for the week ahead.'

Thanks to all those who helped to make the weekend such a success and to all of the ringers in Bath who made us so welcome.

## Janets' Jaunt

*Janet Drake & Janet Betham*

Saturday 2nd April is the date for the spring Jaunt, walking between Apsley End and Berkhamsted, about 5 miles, with ringing at each end and lunch in the



canalside pub. This ringing and social event takes place twice a year, due to the indefatigable energies of Janet Drake and Janet

Betham who make the arrangements and walk the route in advance to check for mud, fences, and cows. And this time for nesting swans too.

The Jaunt is an Association-wide and beyond fundraising event to raise money for the BRF, and is a good opportunity to meet ringers from across the Association in a relaxed and social setting. All are very welcome.

Further details of times and meeting places will be circulated by email to those on the MCALDG list (if you aren't already on the list, email your request to [mcaldg+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:mcaldg+subscribe@googlegroups.com) to join).

## The S&W District 2022 Programme

*Bridget Campbell, S&W District Secretary*

The S&W programme discussed at the Planning Meeting in December and at the ADM in January has got off to a good start with encouraging levels of attendance at each practice. The aim is to build on past programmes, giving additional ringing opportunities for all levels of ringers in S&W and N&E.

**Hanwell's** eight light bells for the Triples practice took a little time to get used to but everyone enjoyed ringing them and they contrasted with the heavier ring at **Pinner** where the Saturday programme started. The first ten bell practice took place at **All Hallows, Twickenham**, and the second one at **Hillingdon** in February. These are general practices, and ringers of varying levels tend to practise a range of methods.

The monthly Surprise Major practice at **Harlington** started well in January with a number of the standard eight methods covered, including Bristol. The February practice had to be cancelled (Storm Eunice), but we aim to make up for it in March. We also look forward to the **Isleworth** daytime practice and the **Norwood Green** six bell practice starting soon.

All S&W tower correspondents have been sent the schedule for the year, and reminders with any amendments will be issued via the MCADLG group email. Many thanks to the towers for their warm welcomes, and the valuable support of advanced ringers from S&W and N&E at the practices is much appreciated.

## Glyn Colville Williams

Nos da. Cysgwch yn dda



Glyn Williams, the longstanding tower captain of St Augustine's Kilburn, where he had been a constant presence for some 45 years, died on 5 December 2021.

Taught to ring by Ruth How, Glyn joined a band which included such luminaries as Rodney Meadows, Philip Gray and

Jeremy. As Glyn described it, he was simply 'handed the keys to the tower' by Ruth in the early 1980s after an evening in the nearby Carlton Tavern.

Glyn demonstrated how you don't necessarily need to be the most illustrious ringer to be the best possible tower captain. Indeed, his first and only peal had been in 1977, covering to Grandsire Triples. His open personality and warmth at first greeting was the welcome many of us first had to what was an exceptional local band. While more than capable of ringing Surprise Major, Glyn was always happier ringing Grandsire or Stedman and revelling in the wider ringing – although he never liked Double Norwich, the 'Kilburn Killer'! In addition to being tower captain he was, variously, the church Treasurer, the Churchwarden, member of the PCC and the church Governor for the local secondary school.

Glyn organised countless ringing outings where new towers and good ringing were important but also a good pub for lunch and even more importantly a suitable venue for afternoon tea! For more than 20 years he hosted a New Year's Eve party where all would enjoy a glorious buffet supper before heading to the tower to ring in the New Year.

He was very proud of his Welsh heritage reflected in his welcoming personality, his superb singing voice and his love of Welsh Rugby. He worked for British Telecom for many years but this came to a sudden stop at age 46 when he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. That he survived more than 25 years was extraordinary. He used to joke that he was a medical miracle. He returned to ringing and church activities with gusto but needed to take early retirement.

Glyn's Funeral Service and Requiem Mass on 19 January was attended by over 200 friends, ringers and members of the congregation. His bell ringing friends rang a very well-struck half-muffled Quarter Peal of Grandsire Triples on the night before with many more friends ringing before and after his funeral service the following day. It was a beautiful service, in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, and one fully fitting of Glyn's faith and devotion to the church.

## Hampton St Mary

Bell Restoration Project Launch

*Steve Jakeman*

On Saturday 26th February the delayed launch of the Bell Restoration project at St Mary Hampton took place in the form of a wonderful concert. Organised by Tower Captain, Jonathan Williams, a full church was enthralled by a programme of music from across three centuries with much tenor solo by Jonathan himself accompanied by Philip Kaye and the Thames Singers. This remarkable programme may be downloaded from the website address below.

The concert was preceded by general ringing on the eight bells which all date from 1831 and last saw any works done in 1951.



Some £80,000 needs to be raised to replace the bell fittings, tune the bells, install a sound control system and reorder the ringing chamber. The BRF has already made a grant of £15,000 and promised voluntary labour which will save many thousands of pounds.

This event has already raised in excess of £1,000 for the restoration, but more is needed. If you wish to make a donation, please see <https://www.hampton-church.org.uk/bells>. This link will also give you the option to view the concert with some of the pre-service ringing including lowering of all eight in peal.

## Association Annual Meeting

**Saturday 23rd April**

The MCA Annual General Meeting will be hosted by S&W district at Uxbridge.

2:30 pm. Inter-District Striking Competition for the Roger Bailey trophy at St Andrew's (Hillingdon Road, UB10 0AD Uxbridge).

Following the competition and the judges' comments there will be general ringing at St Margaret's (Windsor Street, UB8 1AB).

4:30 pm Tea and Meeting

Following the meeting, there will be a further opportunity for general ringing at St Margaret's. All are of course welcome.



## The N&E District 2022 Programme

*Lucy Chandhial and GuyWells*

As far as possible the full range of practices, events and training is being restored this Spring. Some details remain to be settled, and will be notified by email later.

Regular practices will be timetabled each month. On the first Wednesday of the month there will be a minor practice, Plain building to Surprise at **Southgate** (venue may change later). On the second Thursday at **St Mary, Islington** there will be a Major practice, Plain building to Surprise. On the third Wednesday there will be general ringing at **Barnet**.

On the third Saturday of each month it is planned to hold a District event, an outing or competition. The ever-popular **Janets' Jaunt** will take place on 2nd April.

The training officers are offering a range of training courses on the fourth Saturday of each month.

Venues, where already settled, are on the Calendar and further information will be emailed as necessary.

## The Nine Tailors

*Bell News literary critic*

Members who have read and enjoyed Dorothy Sayers' "The Nine Tailors" will be interested to know that the author accumulated 63 pages of research on bells and ringing, 40 of which are blue lines and their analysis. She could ring any of these methods in her head, or so it was said – presumably by her.

She was elected Vice President of The Ladies Guild ([www.ladiesguildofcr.org.uk/](http://www.ladiesguildofcr.org.uk/)) according to Janet Stephenson, its archivist, but never touched a rope.

The Nine Tailors was published in 1934, but Dorothy Sayers made no secret of the fact that she had been inspired by "The Nebuly Coat" by John Meade Falkner, a mystery story published in 1903.

## Flying Scotsman centenary

*Edward Gormley*

*Illustration removed*

On Friday 28th January a quarter peal of 1260 Ready Money Doubles in 45 minutes was rung at St Katharine Cree, a first in variation for all involved, for which I rang the treble. This is the first of series of celebrations of the forthcoming 100th anniversary of The Flying Scotsman - the most famous steam locomotive in the world - in February 2023.

## Gambling in the tower ?

*Hilen Amin*

Sunday 20th February saw a group of keen beginners assemble at All Saints, Harrow Weald for a post-lockdown basic skills training programme. No warning was given that dice and magic would be involved.

We started by working on our handling skills, holding the bell up on the Nth pull based on the roll of 2 dice. Strangely we kept throwing 7s and 11s. Sonia Field later realised she must have grabbed a couple of her son's dice from an old magic set. Not sure what the trick was, but one die had all 5s and the other had only 2s and 6s!

Wendy called 33 changes for Devon Call Changes, which was followed by Plain Hunt on 5. We then did some dodging practice that prepared us for several attempts of Bistow Little Bob Doubles.

We probably need another 2-3 hours practice, but we were close...

## ART Teaching skills

Recruitment and development of new ringers depends upon provision of good teaching in the tower. If the beginner is given uncertain or unplanned teaching, or is allowed to become nervous, they may not make progress and become discouraged.

The Association training team is considering different possible ways to deliver this training and invites input from members. Any member who has rung inside to a QP and is a confident ringer is able to train to teach. You may already have experience of teaching, or wish to take on training in your tower, or to be available more widely to assist other towers.

So if you are interested in learning how to teach well, you are invited to contact the MCALDG team representative at [sonia.field@hotmail.com](mailto:sonia.field@hotmail.com).

## And finally

Ringers took up all kinds of alternative occupations during the Covid restrictions – embroidery, jam-making, study of industrial archaeology, to name just a few.

But William Bishop, a ringer of 30 years' experience, mainly at Gospel Oak and Highgate, has outdone the rest with his economic interpretation for the modern world of Boethius' "Consolation of Philosophy", written 1500 years ago.

To be published by Routledge in March ([www.routledge.com/9781032127583](http://www.routledge.com/9781032127583)) this scholarly work is surely a must for every ringer's bookshelf.

## CALENDAR

Date	Distr	Event	Location	Time
Tue 8th Mar	S&W	General practice	Isleworth (10 bells)	10.30-noon
Tue 8th Mar	S&W	6 bell practice	Norwood Green	8.00-9.15pm
Wed 9th Mar	N&E	Minor methods practice	Southgate TBC	7.30-9.00pm
Thu 10th Mar	S&W	8 bell practice	Hanwell	8-9.30pm
Thu 10th Mar	N&E	Major practice building to Surprise, 2nd hour general	Islington St Mary	7.00-9.00pm
Fri 11th Mar	MCA	Association 12-bell method practice	St Magnus the Martyr	6.30-8.30pm
Sat 12th Mar	S&W	Second Saturday practice	Acton	11.30-1pm
Sun 13th Mar	N&E	10-bell method practice	St John at Hackney	2.00-4.00pm
Wed 16th Mar	N&E	Daytime general practice – all welcome	Barnet	10-12:00 noon
Fri 18th Mar	S&W	Surprise Major practice	Harlington	7.45-9.15pm
<b>Sat 19th Mar</b>	<b>N&amp;E</b>	<b>District outing, with North Surrey</b>	<b>Docklands</b>	<b>Afternoon</b>
Fri 25th Mar	S&W	10 bell practice	Twickenham	7.45-9.15pm
Sat 26th Mar	N&E	Training – Plain Hunt	TBA	TBA
Sat 2nd Apr	MCA	Janets' Jaunt – all welcome	Apsley End, Berkhamsted	All day
Wed 6th Apr	N&E	Minor methods practice	Southgate	7.30-9.00pm
Thu 7th Apr	S&W	8 bell practice	Hanwell	8.00-9.30pm
Fri 8th Apr	MCA	Association 12-bell method practice	St Magnus the Martyr	6.30-8.30pm
Sat 9th Apr	S&W	Second Saturday practice	Ealing Christ the Saviour	10.30-noon
Sun 10th Apr	N&E	10-bell method practice	Limehouse	2.00-4.00pm
Tue 12th Apr	S&W	General practice <b>Holy Week</b>	Isleworth (10 bells) TBC	10.30-noon
Tue 12th Apr	S&W	6 bell practice <b>Holy Week</b>	Norwood Green TBC	8.00-9.15pm
Thu 14th Apr	N&E	<b>Holy Week – no practice</b>	Islington St Mary	
Fri 15th Apr	S&W	<b>GOOD FRIDAY</b> - no Surprise Major practice	Harlington	
Sun 17th Apr	MCA	<b>EASTER SUNDAY</b>	All churches	various
Wed 20th Apr	N&E	Daytime general practice – all welcome	Barnet	10-12:00 noon
Fri 22nd Apr	S&W	10 bell practice	Harrow on the Hill tbc	7.45-9.15pm
Sat 23rd Apr	MCA	MCA AGM and striking competition	Uxbridge	3.00pm
Sat 30th Apr	N&E	Training TBA	TBA	TBA
Wed 4th May	N&E	Minor methods practice	Southgate	7.30-9.00pm
Thu 5th May	S&W	6 bell practice	Hanwell	8.00-9.30pm
Sun 8th May	N&E	10 bell method practice	St John at Hackney	2.00-4.00pm
Tue 10th May	S&W	General practice	Isleworth (10 bells)	10.30-noon
Tue 10th May	S&W	6 bell practice	Norwood Green	8.00-9.15pm
Thu 12th May	N&E	Major practice building to Surprise, 2nd hour general	Islington St Mary	7.00-9.00pm
Fri 13th May	MCA	Association 12-bell method practice	St Magnus the Martyr	6.30-8.30pm
Sat 14th May	S&W	Second Saturday practice	Harrow Weald	10.30-noon
Wed 18th	N&E	Daytime general practice – all welcome	Barnet TBC	10-12:00 noon
Fri 20th May	S&W	Surprise Major practice	Harlington	7.45-9.15pm
Sat 21st May	N&E	Event or outing TBA	TBA Details by email later	All day or pm
<b>Fri 20th May -Fri 3rd Jun</b>	<b>N&amp;E</b>	<b>Quarter Peal weeks</b>	<b>Various</b>	<b>As arranged</b>
Fri 27th May	S&W	10 bell practice	All Saints, Fulham	7.45-9.15pm
Sat 28th May	N&E	Training – Stedman	TBA	TBA
Wed 1st Jun	N&E	Minor methods practice	Southgate TBC	7.30-9.00pm
Thu 2nd Jun	S&W	8 bell practice	Hanwell	8.00-9.30pm
Thu 2nd Jun to Sun 5th June	<b>QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND</b> For N&E quarter peals can be supported by the District as part of quarter peal ringing. Other ringing up to individual towers.			

*Middlesex Bell News* contributions to [BellNewsEditor@bellringing.london](mailto:BellNewsEditor@bellringing.london), deadline 27th May.

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