

*G & B Diocesan Association of
Church Bell Ringers
Cheltenham Branch Newsletter
February 2005*

Recent firsts: well done

Barbara Pettit, Catherine Heathcote, Huw Davies: 1st Peal Spliced S Major (Cambridge/Yorkshire/Rutland)
Elizabeth Evans: 1st QP Maximus
Jeremy Hitchings: 1st QP Plain Bob Doubles as conductor
Max Drinkwater: 1st QP Lincolnshire S Major
Philip Abbey: 1st QP Bristol Maximus as conductor
Roy McBane: 1st QP 'inside' to Plain Bob Doubles

Other Recent Achievements

Hugh Evans rang his 250th Peal on 27th December 2004 at St. Mary, Prestbury.
John Ridley rang his 1,000 Peal for G&BDA on 23rd January 2005 at St. Mary, Speen, Berkshire

Notable ringing during the Christmas period

The first QP of Surprise (Cambridge S. Minor) was rung at St. Christopher's for the Carol Service on 19th December.

On Christmas Day the Leckhampton band rang a QP of Cambridge S. Minor at 7 am; the band included Max Drinkwater who'd also rung for Midnight Mass the night before.

Charlton Kings: "I was pleased that the local band at Charlton Kings was able to ring a course of Glasgow Surprise Major for the Christmas morning service. This achievement results from our strategy of adopting a special method [or methods] each month. In February we are ringing Bourne S Minor and London S Major. The intention, however, is not to have all such methods at a more advanced level, and they are always interspersed with more general ringing. During 2005 we aim to have a varied mix of challenges, and we always welcome anybody who wishes to join us." JRR

Gloucester & Bristol Association Quarter Peal and Peal Festival

I apologise for my omission from December's Newsletter of the two peals that were rung by Cheltenham Branch for the Festival.

CHARLTON KINGS, Glos,
St Mary
Tue Oct 19 2004 2h55 (17 cwt)
5152 Yorkshire Surprise Major
Comp. J R Ridley
1 Daniel J Goodrum
2 David P Greenaway
3 Pauline F Smith
4 Robert W Sanders
5 Hilda C Ridley
6 Quentin S A Jackson

7 Richard C Knight
8 John R Ridley (C)
First peal at first attempt: 1. Rung by the local band.

CHELTENHAM, Glos,
St Mary the Virgin
Sat Oct 23 2004 3h11 (22 cwt)
5040 Yorkshire Surprise Royal
Comp. J R Ridley
1 John R Ridley (C)
2 Mary K Lynch
3 Reg C Hitchings
4 Ruth E Stickland
5 Richard C Knight
6 David J Lynch
7 Hilda C Ridley
8 Conrad D Warford
9 Mark B Davies
10 Andrew M Bull
Circled the tower: 3.

A Different "First"

Congratulations to Catherine and Mark Davies who are the proud parents of a beautiful baby girl, born on 2nd February.

Fred Bloxham

"On Friday 14th January the Winchcombe bellringers rang a quarter peal for the funeral service of Fred Bloxham (otherwise known as "John"). He had rung with us for some years, generally as a "Tenor man", and was always there on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings - although he rarely visited other towers. He gave up ringing when he was 89, as I think he found the stairs a little difficult.

At the funeral service his niece gave a eulogy at which it was apparent that in his younger days he had been invited to ring at St. Martin in the Fields in London. But he was a very modest man and we were not told of this. Although he spent his early years in London he was, at heart, a countryman and Estate management is where he spent most of his working life.

The funeral cortege was magnificent with a large black, glass-sided carriage, drawn by 2 black horses with black plumes. Apparently the horses came from Reading and are famous in Film & TV circles.

The quarter details are as follows:

14th January 2005: 1260 Grandsire Doubles:
1 Pauline Payne
2 Janet Covey-Crump
3 Peter Davies
4 Leo Doyle
5 Clare Pritchard (C)
6 David Evans"

St Mark's

"St Mark's continues to pick up pace with the first fundraising events being planned for the coming year. Look out for concerts, fetes, beer, and household consumables and please dig deep to help.

The Faculty application has been sent off and we are awaiting a reply, meanwhile our time is being filled by the ever growing pile of grant application forms. Now also begins the time of seeking donors for parts of the new ring and we would ask that if you would like to have an informal chat about donating, you approach either Simon, a member of the ringers or Paul Harris the vicar. No amount too small!

We are also pleased to announce that the project has been adopted by the church as part of its re-ordering and updating plan. This means that although the ringers will be doing the work for the bells the PCC and congregation are supporting the project and we have already received some offers of help.

Hopefully by the next newsletter we will have some firm events to invite you to, but in the mean time we continue to look forward to seeing you all at practice where we are concentrating upon Smithfield doubles (Stedman variant) for the next two months. There are also numerous weddings in the pipeline. Who said 5 bell towers were easy?" SR

G&BDA Training Day - March 12th 2005

Don't forget that the closing date for applications for a place on one of the courses on the Training Day is Friday, 18th February.

Helpers are also needed; if you can help for the morning/afternoon/all day and have not already done so, please e-mail Janet Covey-Crump as soon as possible at jcoveycrump@yahoo.co.uk.

Under 19's Striking Competition - Nibley Trophy

"Adam Vellender is organising Cheltenham's entry into this year's Under 19's striking competition at Great Somerford on the afternoon of May 21st. So far he has four band members and so is looking for another two to take part. If you would be available to be part of the band, please contact Adam by e-mailing adam@vellender.co.uk, or phoning (01242) 524604, with details of when would be the most convenient times to hold practices." AV

Forthcoming Practices

The next Branch Practice is at Childswickham on Friday 11th February, when the special method will be Stedman Doubles. Rounds, Call Changes, Plain Hunt, Plain Bob and Grandsire will also be rung as required.

On Saturday 26th February Leckhampton will host a Surprise Practice with the special method being Bristol Surprise Major. Cambridge and Yorkshire Surprise Major will also be rung.

Tips

Work done = Force x Distance Moved, therefore if you give a long pull with a flick at the bottom you can ring the same bell with half the effort or a bell that's twice as heavy with the same effort. JCC

Have a look at the really good ringers in the branch. Do they move their heads and bodies sideways when ringing? If not, try moving just your eyes not your head. JCC

Q: I'm ringing what I think I should be, but I'm not fitting in. What should I do?

A: Don't give up on your line, you might be right. If you do give up, you will definitely be lost! PAA

Q: I've been asked to call a touch but it's gone horribly wrong. What should I do?

A: If you can't put it right, try one of the following: restart and try again, call a simpler touch (or method), or stand and regroup. PAA

Advance Notice

We each know what makes our own tower tick, and I think many of us may be interested in other towers too. An idea for future newsletters is to have a short piece written by a different tower, to give us an idea of what the tower/ringing room/bells are like; what sort of thing is rung on practice night/for service; level of support etc etc. What do you think? Is this something that you would like to read in the newsletter? Please let me know. Even better, please write an article about your tower and e-mail it to me at janice.branchsec@btinternet.com.