

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

Recent firsts: well done

Melvin Brown: 1st Treble to Minor
Rachel Chadwick: 1st QP (Treble to Plain Bob Doubles)
Max Drinkwater: 1st ever Peal (Cambridge Major), 1st QP
as Tenor Behind (Grandsire Doubles half muffled)
Sue Drinkwater, Barbara Pettit: 1st Peal Cambridge
Major
David Greenaway, Quentin Jackson: 1st Peal Surprise
Royal (Yorkshire)

Forthcoming Events

The 2006 Branch Programme is with the Printer now, and will be sent out to you as soon as possible. In the meantime you might like to put the following events in your diaries.

Thursday 29th December 10 am to noon: Young Persons' Christmas Event at St. Christopher's, Warden Hill, Cheltenham. It will include ringing on the Church bells, ringing changes on handbells and ringing Christmas tunes on handbells, and promises to be good fun. Refreshments will be available.

Monday 2nd January 2006 at 7:30 pm: Branch Doubles and Minor Practice at Swindon Village. Let's make this first Branch Practice of the New Year a really well supported one – have an enjoyable evening and shake off any remaining post-Christmas lethargy!

Friday 20th January at 7:30 pm: Branch Doubles and Minor Practice at Badgeworth.

Saturday 4th February at St Mark's Church Hall:



Barn Dance

Saturday 4th February 2006
St. Mark's Church Hall 7:45 pm
Live Band Hot food available

Tickets £10, concessions £7, available from
the church office

In Aid of St. Mark's Bell Restoration Fund
<http://stmarkschelt.zapto.org/>

Tickets are limited, so make sure you don't miss out on what promises to be a very enjoyable evening by buying yours without delay from either the Church Office or any member of the St. Mark's band. You might be interested to know that the Live Band is Alex Hajok's.

AGM News

Branch Practices: Recent attendance at Surprise Minor practices has been disappointing (with the exception of the Badgeworth S. Minor practice) so apart from one such Practice in March, all Branch Doubles and Minor Practices this year will cater for Rounds and Call Changes through to Cambridge S. Minor, depending on the ringers present. There was a request at the AGM for some non-surprise practices to be held on Saturdays, so the 2006 programme has been amended to provide three Saturday non-surprise practices.

Towards Better Striking in the Branch: At last year's AGM Joint Ringing Master Philip Abbey asked ringers to learn a new method thoroughly before taking a rope. This year he thanked ringers for preparing methods better prior to ringing, particularly in the Bristol and Advanced Surprise Major practices. However, much remains to be done in the Branch to improve the accuracy of striking, and I attach Philip's Report for the benefit of those who were unable to attend the AGM.

St Mark's: Simon Ridley anticipates only 2 years' further ringing before the bells become unsafe. So far about £16,500 has been raised towards the £80,000 target, with coasters and jigsaw puzzles joining hats, preserves and beer in the money-making efforts. However Janet Covey-Crump pointed out that the Branch voted 2 years ago to support the project and we need to achieve thousands of pounds per year towards the total. She said bellringing is about the only musical activity for which lessons are free and the "instruments" are free, having largely been given by the generosity of previous generations. We are planning a sponsored Quarter Peal Day next October to raise funds, and Janet pointed out that if every ringer in the Branch donated the money they were paid for ringing at weddings, this alone would yield over £7,000 per year. For more information, please see Janet's poster in your tower.

Gift Aid on your subscriptions: All the money from tax refunds goes to the Association Belfry Restoration Fund (so indirectly to St Mark's amongst others). Everyone who is a tax payer is encouraged to complete a G & B Gift Aid form to maximise the income of the Association. If you need a form Barbara Pettit or I will be very pleased to supply one; just let us know.

Branch website: David and Mary Lynch were thanked for hosting the Branch website until now. By using e-mail in preference to postage where possible, sufficient savings are made to allow the Branch to afford the cost of having the website properly hosted. Since the AGM Philip has already made the necessary changes, and the new address of the Branch website is <http://www.cheltenhambranch.org.uk>.

Proficiency Certificates were awarded to Alex Hajok, Jeremy Hitchings, Nathaniel Hitchings and Ann Jessop. Congratulations to all of you. The Association's Working Group which was looking at the Proficiency Certificate concluded that it was difficult to improve and should be kept as it is.

Badges: New G & B badges are now available for £3.00 each. The profit from the sale of these will go to the Belfry Restoration Fund.

Central Council Visit to Cheltenham: This will be from Friday 25th to Tuesday 29th May 2007, and volunteers will be needed to man a Reception desk to answer questions; and also to help with using roving microphones during the Monday meeting.

Tower Maintenance sessions can be arranged for ringers wanting to get involved through the Association's head Belfry Adviser, Malcolm Taylor.

Other Recent Achievements

On 24th October at Compton Abdale Nathaniel Hitchings rang his 25th Quarter Peal (Plain Bob Doubles); then on 5th November he conducted a Quarter Peal of 3 methods of Doubles at St Christopher (the most methods he's conducted), which was for his birthday and the anniversary of Guy Fawkes' failed attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament.

Spotted in the Ringing World of November 11th on page 1100, we have 3 Ambitious Apprentices, Alice King and Lydia Johnson from Badgeworth and Matilda Shipsey from Winchcombe; and one Happy Hunter, Emma Murphy from Badgeworth. Well done all of you.

Have you any spare knitting yarn?

Jo Boulton has knitted several hats this year which were sold by Joan and Owen Barraclough in aid of the St Mark's Bell Fund. Owen reported that they sold like hot cakes and would be grateful for as many as Jo is able to knit.

In order to be able to knit some more hats for next autumn, Jo needs some more wool, of any colour or thickness. Please would you let her have any spare wool that you have, so that she can turn it into hats to raise money for St Mark's Bell Fund? If you give it to anyone who goes to Bishop's Cleeve, Swindon Village, Cheltenham Parish or Ashchurch, or bring it along to any Branch Practice, it will be passed on to Jo. Thank you.

Woolstone

I am pleased to report that the roof of the nave of St Martin of Tours, Woolstone has been completely replaced. It was too dark to see when we held the Branch Practice there earlier this month, but Caroline

says it looks much better now. Although the tower is back in action, it is still best to check first if you are intending to go and ring with them.

West Cheltenham Team Ministry

Gift Aid Declaration for St. Mark's Bell Fund

Please make cheques payable to "St. Mark's Bell Fund".

Full name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

- I want West Cheltenham Team Ministry PCC to reclaim tax on all donations I have made since 6th April 2000 and all those I make in the future.
- I note that I should tell the PCC if I cease to be a tax payer, or if I cease to pay an amount of tax that at least equals the tax reclaimed from this donation.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for signing this gift aid declaration. Gift Aid giving greatly simplifies tax recovery, but the church needs to demonstrate that it has the evidence to support all tax claims (an "audit trail"). This is simpler if you use personal cheques or a standing order.

✂.....

Receipt:

Name: _____

Amount: _____

Thank you for donating towards the St. Mark's Bell Restoration appeal.

 Signed on behalf of St. Mark's, Date
 Cheltenham

If you want to see the programme for 2006 before the cards are available, log on to the Branch website at: http://www.cheltenhambranch.org.uk/programme_2006.htm