

## Jan – Mar 2017

### Henry Johnson Dinner 2017 “That was then, this is now”

by Jenny Sunter

Under the steer of Chairman Pip Penney the Henry Johnson Dinner was full of vim and vigour. There was a buzz to the evening which was respectful of history and tradition yet asked ringers to think about the modern day place of ringing. Excellence and achievements were celebrated whilst focusing on effective frameworks for the raising of new ringers. The food was good too!



The fifth item of the evening's programme, simply billed as 'Handbell Ringing' epitomised the why and wherefore of the evening. The performance of Little Surprise Royal, echoed points of some key toasts in that it was traditional, had cultural memory, saw communing of like minded people and demonstrated excellence. We could hear a purity in the rhythmic, graduation of small changes and performed as it was, it had an almost celestial quality.

In his toast to 'The Church' Simon Linford reflected on tradition and habit and the push and pull of the ringers relationship with church, architecture and the pub and asked the question; Does our ringing still call people to worship?

In 'The Response' Father Barrie Scott noted that times are changing, not only in the demise of the evensong but in such things as the closure of the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, however he also demonstrated that we have collective cultural memory and a shared history. The sound of church bells, whilst not a memorable theme tune, do seem to remain part of our communities and are still noticed.

The speeches of the evening provided an effective dialogue. Alistair Cherry proposed the toast to 'Guests and Visitors' which deftly highlighted the long reach of the Guild. The relationships of members with ringers throughout the country and further, continues to provide an extraordinary network.



In his response and in moving the toast to the 'Continued Prosperity of the St Martin's Guild', Dickon Love provided a mock tirade of all that London ringing has to offer, as a foil to celebrate Birmingham's sociability, standards, recruitment of ringers and the provision of the best opportunities and teaching.

And it is the opportunities, teaching, support and development which was the nucleus of Stephanie Warboys' toast to the 'Health of the Chairman'. In reviewing the work and contribution to ringing of the 2017 Chair Pip Penney, the list was astounding, and the drive was clear, an effective way of learning to ring. Pip's prodigious output and 'storm Doris' levels of energy, not only inspired but enabled others through the teaching and learning frameworks: breaking it all down,

writing it all up, training the trainers, connecting those that can do and are willing to do, recruiting and then retaining learners who go on to achieve recognised levels of proficiency.



Stephanie emphasised a step change under the heading 'That was then and this is now', commending the increasingly positive environment nurtured by the current Guild Standing Committee, while recognising both the diamond work of John Anderson over 60 years and the work of Tony Daw as previous ringing master. Reclaiming the 12 bell title at the Aston competition final was a coup de grâce, but this was balanced with success

and pride in the Birmingham School of Bell Ringing and student ringers achieving Level 5 under Learning the Ropes. There was a renewed view of what Birmingham ringing is about, as epitomised by the Excellence in Innovation, Retention and Achievement ART award won by Clare McArdle.



In ending the speeches Pip Penney drew a colourful and oddly memorable picture of sheep sliding on ice, amusingly illustrating the precarious nature of deploying information, data and trends in relation to ringing. So to the present, looking out across the banquet tables and the rarity of

seeing ringers in their banquet finery, the 'now' included the statesmen that is Don Finnemore, a table of young bloods, honored guests who are stalwarts of ringing development, ministers of the

church, old friends, the movers and shakers, the backbone of the Guild and quite a few learners.

Not a bad 'now' to be stepping on with.

## Learning the Ropes Achievements

### Level 1:

Charlie Linford  
Eliza Hull  
Yvonne Hadley

### Level 5:

Tim Sunter  
Eileen Keeble  
Mike Keeble  
Adam Knight-Markiegi

Congratulations at both ends of the scale!

---

## Birmingham Cathedral

Mon 9 Jan 2017 in 3h 23

### 5040 Spliced Treble Dodging

#### Maximus (5m)

1296 Bristol; 1152 Zanussi; 1056 Avon;  
816 Snow Tiger; 720 Phobos; 94 com  
Comp by Mark B Davies

- 1 Dickon R Love
- 2 Mark R Eccleston
- 3 David M W Threlfall
- 4 Jack E Page (C)
- 5 Paul E Bibilo
- 6 Jack P Gunning
- 7 Alistair J Cherry
- 8 James P Ramsbottom
- 9 Stephen M Jones
- 10 Gabrielle L Cowcill
- 11 Michael P A Wilby
- 12 Paul J Tiebout

First spliced maximus as conductor  
Farewell compliment to the Dean, the Very  
Revd Catherine Ogle, on leaving St Philip's  
to become Dean of Winchester

## CASTLE BROMWICH

by Bill Dargue

The first stage of the restoration of Castle Bromwich bells (i.e. the dismantling) is complete. Before the bells fell silent, we were pleased to have two successful quarters rung by a band of local captains and former captains and by our tower band. We also welcomed a number of former ringers and others from local towers who came for a final grab.



prior to the arrival of the bellhanger, a number of the ringers loosened and unbolted anything they could with the kind support of Simon Adams, always a good friend of our tower. Then, over eight days at the beginning of March, Taylor's bellhanger Andy Ogden removed the bells, the frame and belfry floor. Our steeplekeeper, Stuart Stanton had been able to recruit a dozen volunteers: some were ringers from across the Guild, others were interested locals. It was dirty and physically demanding work, but some enjoyed the challenge so much that they ignored the rota and turned up most days. We really are indebted to them for their remarkable efforts, not only for the substantial savings made on the bill, but also for the enthusiasm and commitment they showed to our project.

Those who have rung at Castle Bromwich know what a quirky ring it was. On dismantling the frame, it turned out that this was not just because the bells were poorly balanced. Charles Carr's 1893 frame

was bolted to the floor in only three places, while the beams supporting the belfry floor were not fixed to the tower wall, but merely resting on a brick ledge.

Our six Gillett & Johnston bells are now at Loughborough awaiting a wash and brush-up and will

have their tuning checked in due course. Our two new trebles were cast in September last year. Work on the new installation is due to commence at the end of July and is expected to take up to five weeks. Stuart will again be in recruiting mode.



The Castle Bromwich ringers would like to thank their bellhanger, the extraordinary Andy Ogden, untiring, totally committed and very good to work with, and also St Paul's in the Jewellery Quarter for allowing the Castle Bromwich band to use their tower while theirs is out of action.

Castle Bromwich bellringers' website is easily found by a quick Google.



## 12 Bell Eliminators

The main event in March for St Philip's Cathedral was the hosting of one of the three eliminator contests for the National 12-bell Striking Competition. This involved a lot of meticulous planning and nearly a year's worth of e-mails.

Happily all went well on the day. The Cathedral Band turned out in force to help with the stewarding, the Old Joint Stock did a roaring trade and even the beautiful weather played its part. Of the five teams competing here, Birmingham emerged as clear winners with St Paul's Cathedral and Melbourne coming joint second. These three teams go on to the final at Southwark Cathedral in June.

Our thanks go to all who helped in any way and to the Cathedral staff for all their support.

### Gill Postill



A welcome from Michael Wilby

### Small thoughts from the Chief Steward

It was with some trepidation that I accepted the invitation to take on the role of Chief Steward for the forthcoming 12 eliminator at St. Philips. I later realised that my qualification for being invited to take on this auspicious post was that I had a hat! - the draw can't take place without a hat! And so it was that, to prevent the whole day from being a total non-starter, I duly accepted the role.

To give credit where it's due, Gill Postill did most of the work, pulling together a list of volunteers and even allocating duties to various souls so that on the big day itself I did have a bit of an easy ride.

On the morning in question, special issue yellow badges were handed out accordingly, with operating instructions and health and safety warnings, (damn sharp those fixing pins), and duly worn. I decided that no particular rotation of duties was required, stewards without posts made themselves known to those with and stood in as necessary. It all seemed to work rather well.

I was able to take time out for lunch at The Old Joint Stock, and having got myself seated near the entrance I made a point of counting the yellow badges seen entering, frantically doing the maths to work out if any of the stewards were actually left in the Cathedral. I was assured on several occasions that there were.

The results came and went pretty much without incident, (though I admit to being just a little surprised when the winning team was announced!), and with that our work was as good as done for the day.

Can I please say a big "thank you" to all those who stepped forward and helped to make the whole day to run smoothly. Your help was very much appreciated.

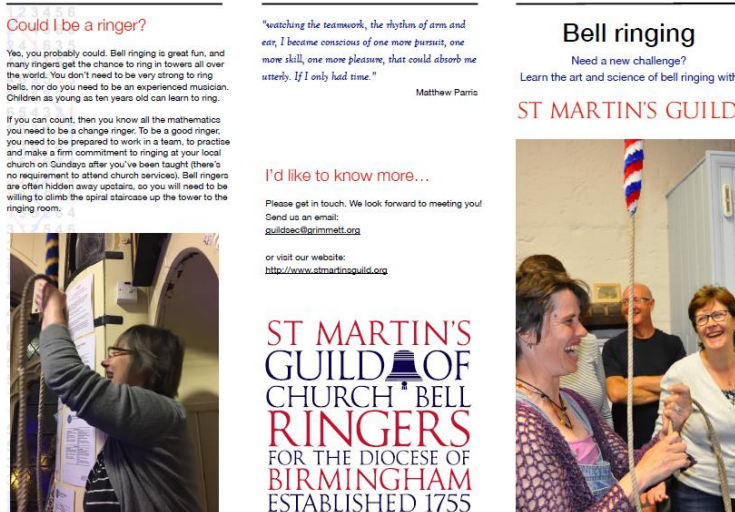
### Phil Ramsbottom

## PR Matters By Tim Sunter

### New Guild leaflet on the way

For all the talk of Facebook, Twitter and other social media, sometimes good old fashioned print does the trick just as well. So thanks to the ever efficient Clare McArdle for drafting and proofing the new Guild leaflet.

The leaflet covers topics such as why people ring, how bells work, how we ring them and the methods we use to create 'tunes.' Despite this wide range of topics it remains succinct and accessible.



When they arrive from the printers they will be available for all Guild Towers to use in their efforts to recruit and promote ringing.

### Giving a ringing talk? Slides available

Although the Central Council comes in for criticism at times, it does seem to be making huge strides in publicity for ringing. Its latest initiative is to support anyone who is going to give a talk on bell ringing with a complete set of four PowerPoint presentations for members to use.

The four presentations cover:

- A general overview of ringing

- A presentation to those particularly interested in the science & maths of it all
- A presentation for those interested particularly in history
- A 'recruitment' presentation

As well as being of use in presentation they make delightful reading in themselves, giving a succinct overview for each of the topics. The slides are at:

<https://cccbr.org.uk/2017/03/19/powerpoint-presentations-to-use-for-pr-purposes/>

or for those short of time try typing

<http://bit.ly/2oAGxut>

### Heritage Open Days

A number of towers took part in last year's Heritage Open Days. It was an ideal opportunity to demonstrate bell ringing and to recruit.

This year the national event is taking place from 7th - 10th September. If you are planning an event you can register with Heritage Open Days and receive free support.

There is a deadline of 1st May for full support and 1st August for events requiring Heritage Open Day insurance.

More details can be found on:

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/portal>

### Use the Facebook page to let members know what is going on

Think you're going to be short on practice night?  
Need help with a Quarter Peal?

Let us know what is going on via the Guild's Facebook site. We tried it in Brierley Hill and got lots of response when we needed help with a practice.

And it is always fantastic to hear good practice elsewhere.

## Ringling Master's Report

Arthur Reeves

It pleases me greatly to start this report with several congratulations. The Guild and BSoBR were again highly recognised at the recent ART conference. It was fantastic to see



Sophie Keeble win two ART Awards, Christine Burnell being "highly commended", and of course to Simon Linford in recognition for his work as an inspirational leader both within the Guild and beyond. Furthermore, the Birmingham 12 bell team convincingly won their the eliminator round of the hotly contested National 12 bell contest last weekend and we wish them luck at the final at Southwark in June. It is, of course, pleasing and right that we recognise the excellent successes of these individuals and teams. But I'd also like to recognise all those within the Guild who work continuously, and tirelessly, to keep things going week in, week out.

In the last newsletter, I reported that monthly, focused, practices would commence on the third Saturday of each month. Our current focus is Surprise Major. I'm delighted to report that these have met with enthusiasm, with over 20 attended each so far. This has allowed some members to begin ringing Surprise Major for the first time and other members to extend and stretch their repertoire. We will, as I have often said, continually review what these monthly practices offer to ensure we are fulfilling the needs and wants in Guild activities of as many members as possible. Along with Phil Ramsbottom, who has continued to organise 10-bell quarters and now focused 6-bell practices, the Guild offers a huge range of

opportunities. And on that note, I am very grateful to Phil for his continued work with these practices. His contributions allow us to offer so much more than I, or the Standing Committee, could on our own. As always, do get in touch if you feel we are missing something or if you would feel prepared to run something and would like some support.

The youths have continued to meet and are looking forward to welcoming other young ringers from around the country to Birmingham on July 1st. It should be a fantastic day, so put it in your diaries! I've mentioned before how challenging we find youth recruitment and retention, so a group of us are planning to meet on Sunday 23rd April at 11am in Waterstones Café to begin discussing this.

I enjoyed ringing at Coleshill this month and with the Castle Bromwich ringers at their temporary home at St Paul's – we look forward to having a go on your new bells soon! Finally, best of luck to both the Guild team and St Paul's who will compete against one another, and other teams, for the Tewkesbury Shield in May.

**Arthur**

St Michael's, Boldmere,  
Sunday, 19 March 2017  
1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Brenda Thomson
- 2 Sally Jenkins
- 3 David Denbigh
- 4 Nigel Crowther
- 5 David Reeves (C)
- 6 John Sherlaw

To celebrate the 70th birthday of Brenda Thomson on 13 Feb 2017

## ART AGM

by Christine Barnell

On 11th March just over 100 ringers arrived at the Village Hall in Old Basing. The event was the ART annual AGM, Conference and Awards ceremony hosted by the Winchester and Portsmouth Guild. It was also the fifth anniversary of the Association.



I arrived after the AGM just in time for coffee. The large hall was full of people talking. A dumbbell was set up in one corner connected to a simulator and tables had displays of publications, DVDs etc. available to buy then and there or online. After introductions and a welcome from Graham Nabb the conference began.

The first talk, Engaging Your Stakeholders, was given by Mark Regan and emphasised the need to adapt, adjust and think differently in order to engage the non-ringing community. Graham Nabb was next showcasing new products from ART. These included:

- Raising and Lowering in Peal DVD
- 50 New Things booklet-a bucket list for new and not so new ringers to tick off
- The new, improved ART web-site
- Tower Talk - an online magazine for learners

Pip Penney spoke with enthusiasm about the resources available to enable teachers and other interested ringers in running workshops ranging from hand bells to simulators.

The third presentation of the morning was given by Moira Johnson on the subject of Recruitment: the Holy Grail.

For the afternoon session we split into smaller groups to hear talks that we had chosen when booking. My choices were:

### 1. Ringing Culture: Help or Hindrance? Elva Ainsworth

Elva's talk gave an insight into the psychology of group behaviour and how groups behave in response to change. There were many interesting charts in her presentation. Try googling some of these:

Schein's Iceberg Model  
Lewis Country Model  
Barrett Model  
Lewin Change Model

### 2. Igniting the Spark: Lessons from Devon - Leslie Boyce

This presentation showed how collaboration with a primary school has brought new, young ringers to the point that they are part of their local band. Even though my stomach wasn't rumbling, the tea and cakes at 4 o'clock were very welcome. Thanks and congratulations to the cake-bakers.

After tea Philip Barnes presented a report from CRAG(Council Review Action Group). This group was formed to review the role and activities of Central Council. The final session was led by Graham Nabb inviting questions from the floor.

Now it was time for the ART Awards Ceremony. The hall was cleared. Tables were placed down the length of the room and drinks and nibbles (is a sausage roll a nibble?) appeared sponsored by John Taylor & Co. Stephanie Warboys and Stephanie Pattenden were in charge. St. Martin's Guild did well.

Last year Clare McArdle and the Birmingham School of Bell Ringing won the ART Award for Innovation in Recruitment or Retention so this



year she had the pleasure of presenting the award to Arnold, St. Mary's, Nottingham.

ART Award for Inspiring Leadership in Ringing - Simon Linford was joint winner with Linda Garton

Learning the Ropes+ Outstanding Progress, Highly Commended - Christine Barnell



And the accolade goes to Sophie Keeble! Winner in two categories

- LtR Level 5 Achiever of the Year 2016
- LtR+ Young Conductor of the Year



**Coleshill**, SS Peter and Paul  
Sunday, 5 February 2017 in 3h 5m (14)

### **5040 Grandsire Triples**

Composed by J J Parker

- 1 Christine Mills
- 2 Catherine R Taylor
- 3 Richard J Andrew
- 4 Clare McArdle
- 5 Thomas M W Horton
- 6 Stephen W Horton
- 7 Simon J L Linford (C)
- 8 Roy Followell

First peal: 5,8. 100th together: 2,6



**Knowle**, West Midlands

SS John the Baptist, Lawrence and Anne  
Sunday, 19 March 2017

### **1280 Spliced S Major (5m)**

384 Rutland, 320 Superlative, 192 Cambridge, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, 33 com.

Composed by SC Theobald

- 1 Alison R Williams
- 2 John Anderson
- 3 Rowena Shipley
- 4 Ruth E Shepherd
- 5 Roy Williams
- 6 A J Barnfield
- 7 Guy Darvill
- 8 Stephen Shipley (C)

For evening service.



## BUSCR news

On 28th January BUSCR held its annual dinner. It was a banter-filled evening with entertaining speeches from guest speaker Mark Eccleston and then-master Jack Page. A handbell performance followed suit, performed by several members of BUSCR. This performance was the culmination of numerous exhausting practices over the previous month, where BUSCR had been driven to achieve near-perfection under the relentless iron fist of our glorious handbell leader, Chris Mills. Chris continues to astound us with her willingness to help out at Edgbaston and now seems a good opportunity to thank her for her ongoing support of the society.



BUSCR had attempted an undergraduate peal the day before the dinner. Things were not looking good for this attempt; the day before the peal a member of the band had to drop out due to ill health. But yet again, Chris came to the rescue to make us back up to 8. Unfortunately, conductor malfunction meant the attempt was unsuccessful but we made up for it by scoring 2 quarter peals on dinner day, one of Beverley and one of Mixed doubles. This was a lovely way to end Jack Page's reign over BUSCR as just 2 weeks later I was voted in as the new Master at our AGM.

Since then we have travelled to Nottingham for an outing, and NUSCR very kindly joined us to help

boost the numbers. Like many other well-known pairings, such as Peanut butter and Jelly, Macaroni and Cheese, and the boyband McBusted, we toured Nottingham as one cohesive mega-group, B'NUSCR, and enjoyed plenty of good ringing. Unfortunately, our new mascot, 'Sheila the Tortoise', was stolen by NUSCR! Fortunately for her, NUSCR are not just capable bellringers, but are also well equipped to care for plush toys, and she was reunited with BUSCR a week later at the 12 bell eliminators in Birmingham.

## Susannah Moore

### 16 Bell Peal

It is difficult to ring 16 bell peals at the best of times but meeting 16 at 5.30 on a weekday evening and ringing something this tricky until quite late goes some way to explain why it is not done often.

**Birmingham, St Martin**  
Tuesday, 28 March 2017 in 3h 42m  
**5058 Bristol Surprise Sixteen**  
Composed by John S Warboys  
1 Susan E Marshall  
2 Mark R Eccleston  
3 Simon J L Linford (C)  
4 Paul McNutt  
5 Simon A Bond  
6 Dickon R Love  
7 Jack P Gunning  
8 James P Ramsbottom  
9 Jack E Page  
10 Stephen M Jones  
11 James Clatworthy  
12 Paul J Tiebout  
13 Paul N Mounsey  
14 Paul E Bibilo  
15 Michael P A Wilby  
16 John S Warboys  
First on sixteen: 7, 8, 9  
First mid-week evening sixteen bell peal here since 2009

## 10 Bell Quarter Peal Programme

This year the plan is to have just one 10/12 bell event per month. As well as having fewer events I feel there's more of a need for targeted



practice sessions, (workshops almost), as opposed to arranging quarters. It's worth remembering that scoring a quarter was never the main goal, it has always been to provide ringers coming into higher numbers ringing with the opportunity for some extended practice with a half decent band around them. Scoring a quarter, if indeed we did, was just a bonus.

This year started out with a Cambridge Royal practice at Moseley in January and two ringers successfully honing their skills in this department. By chance an extra event was arranged at St. Martin's a week later where a good quarter of Grandsire Caters was scored, a first on 10 for Susannah Moore.

The February event was to be Cambridge Maximus but sadly after 40 minutes of perfectly respectable ringing a few too many ringers decided to go AWOL all at the same time! Still good practice though for some of the band, and I include me in that list.

March has also seen two events, (despite my comments at the start of this article), a quarter at St. Paul's of Cambridge Royal which turned into a Little Bob Royal practice, (nothing wrong in that and again, some good 10 bell experience gained), and also a re-run of the Cambridge Maximus which very nearly suffered the same fate as the previous attempt. A great quarter though which was a first of Treble Bob Maximus for Angie, and a first of Surprise Maximus for the programme.

Can I once again thank everyone who so willingly, and sometimes at very short notice, gives up their valuable time to support these events. I really appreciate everything you do as I'm sure those benefitting from the programme do too. And finally, if there are any of you out there, or you know of someone, who would benefit from taking their first steps in 10 bell ringing, then please do get in touch. Ringing the treble to Plain Bob or Grandsire Caters is where it all starts.

**Phil Ramsbottom**

### **Birmingham Cathedral**

Monday, 16 January 2017 in 3hrs 18mins

#### **5016 Spliced Maximus (10m)**

1056 Gluon Little Alliance, 576 each Top Little Hybrid, Strange Differential, Plain Bob, 480 each Up Differential Little Hybrid, Down Differential Little Hybrid, 432 Lepton Little Bob, 336 Charm Differential Little Hybrid, 264 Baryon, 240 Meson Differential Little Hybrid; 216 com

**Composed by D J Pipe**

- 1 Mark R Eccleston
- 2 Simon C Melen
- 3 Christian M Peckham
- 4 Paul E Bibilo
- 5 Jack E Page (C)
- 6 Jack P Gunning
- 7 James P Ramsbottom
- 8 Paul McNutt
- 9 Simon J L Linford
- 10 Colin M Lee
- 11 Thomas W Griffiths
- 12 Michael P A Wilby

Jack Page conducted this peal at his first attempt, he is the youngest person to conduct a 'Particles' peal by far at 19

First particles peal: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8

In other peals, **Angela Wakefield** rang her first peal of Surprise Major – Superlative at St Paul's, and **Alistair Cherry** called his first of Stedman Cinques at the Cathedral.