

April – June 2012

The Guild **6 bell contest** was held on the challenging back six at Smethwick on the afternoon of the May meeting, judged by Paul Bibilo. Nine teams entered, with Birmingham Cathedral winning the method competition and Moseley winning the call changes.

The **St Martin's Youths** (Kids Ring Out rebranded) have been meeting weekly at St Paul's Birmingham practising for the Ringing World National Youth Contest. These practices have been run by Tony Daw, with plenty of support, and huge progress has been made by the young ringers. Read to the end of this newsletter for the result!

A very successful **Adult Learners Outing** was held in April. 14 less experienced ringers (rounds up to Grandsire Triples) were joined by eight more experienced ringers on a coach outing to Codsall, Brewood, Bushbury and Wednesbury. It was so good that it will be repeated, and the next one will be on December 15th.

Andy Carr and Tracy Stevens became the first two Guild members to become Associate Members of the **Association of Ringing Teachers** by passing ITTS Module 1 - Teaching Bell Handling. They were both awarded their ITTS Stage 1 certificates at a Jubilee Barbecue at Harborne.

Birmingham won the **National 12 Bell Striking Contest** at Melbourne with a resounding victory. Birmingham recorded a score of 93%, the highest ever recorded in the contest, with the local band coming second on 86%. This is the 19th time Birmingham has won out of 38 contests, and the 8th time in the last 10 years.

While the Birmingham 12 bell team were winning their eliminator at Kidderminster on March 24th the Guild hosted another **12 bell Eliminator at Aston**. A splendid day saw many Guild members helping Don Finnemore and Chris Mills, Six barrels of beer were consumed and the Harborne Catering Crew were superb. Even the weather was brilliant!

John Fielden's excellent write up of the **Henry Johnson Dinner** was published in the 25th May issue of the *Ringling World*.

The same issue reported on the 40th **Tewkesbury Shield**, where the St Martin's Guild band was placed 4th with a score of 81%.

The new ring of 10 bells for **St Mary's Moseley** were dedicated by the Very Revd Catherine Ogle, Dean of Birmingham, in a special service at St Mary's on Sunday 17th June. It is hoped that they will be hung and ringing before the end of the year. Visits to Taylor's Bellfoundry were organized which enabled many members to see the bells being cast, including the 6th, which was the gift of the St Martin's Guild.

Nine new recruits have so far signed up to the **Summer Camp**. This is a new initiative taking place in the last week of August, to teach up to a dozen 11-14 year olds from scratch in a week, and then integrate them with local bands. There is therefore room for a few more if you have a potential recruit.

St Alphege, Solihull was central to the celebrations surrounding the 1000th Anniversary of the Martyrdom of St Alphege. The Guild was asked to

help with as much bellringing as possible on the Saturday or the celebration, and a peal of Cambridge Maximus was rung in the morning and a quarter of 8 Spliced in the afternoon. Sadly a largely local band peal of Grandsire Caters was lost after a long time the following day, but a quarter was rung instead.

Graham Nabb from the Harry Windsor Ringing Centre, Kineton, was guest tutor at a "**Raising and lowering**" practice at Northfield. A dozen learners and helpers enjoyed the morning (complete with cake of course), and everyone including the helpers learned a lot from Graham's inspirational teaching.

Many of those attending were the learners from **Northfield**, all of whom are progressing well under the leadership of Andy Carr, who is going through the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme under the mentorship of Clare McArdle.

The Guild was represented at an uneventful **Central Council Meeting** in Chester on Jubilee weekend. James Forster remains a member of the PR Committee and Steve Jones continues to serve on the Methods Committee.

Those who took part in the 8 bell Striking Contest last summer will

remember the bells at **Handsworth** becoming gradually more unringable as the clappers seized up in the heat. A number of the bells had stopped striking at all when ringing up. The steeplekeeping SWAT team organized the removal, rebushing, and replacement of all eight clappers, largely paid for by the local bell fund but with a contribution from the Guild BRF. The bells now go excellently.

A number of members have had personal peal ringing achievements. These include:

- Richard Lewis - 1st peal, Yorkshire Major at Harborne
- Mark Eccleston – 1000th peal, Stedman Caters at St Paul's Birmingham
- Thomas Horton – 1st Quarter Peal, Plain Bob Doubles for the Diamond Jubilee
- Eleanor Linford – rang in the peal at St Paul's Cathedral for the Diamond Jubilee service, and for the flotilla

Congratulations to **Jonathan and Susan Healy** on the birth of their baby Matthew, and to **Gordon Birks and Charli Roberts** on the birth of their baby, Joseph.

Gordon Lane of Kingsbury was awarded a special certificate by the Heart of England Handbell Society for "his outstanding contribution to the art of handbell ringing. Founder member of the Kingsbury Handbell Ringers and 60 years service with the team." The certificate was presented at the 60th Anniversary Concert of the Kingsbury Handbell Ringers.

The **May Meeting** passed off without incident but with plenty of business. Highlights, other than the banana sandwiches, included a decision not to change anything to do with the Henry Johnson Dinner, and discussion on the necessity of the Guild taking out Public Liability insurance before the Summer Camp and thereafter.

Lots of towers rang for the **Diamond Jubilee** including (to our knowledge) Birmingham Cathedral, Knowle, Harborne, Northfield, Hampton in Arden, and Lapworth.

All the work peals of Spliced Surprise Major have never been a particular focus of the St Martin's Guild. Simon Linford is keen to change this and is organising monthly Sunday afternoon peals of spliced major. A highlight in May was a peal of Norman Smith's **23 Spliced** at Handsworth.

Stephen and Rowena Shipley are undertaking a huge charity tandem ride, riding John O'Groats to Lands End in two weeks either side of the Summer Social. Their 1,000 mile endeavour is in aid of Prostate Action and Marie Curie Cancer Care. They can be sponsored via www.virginmoneygiving.com/StephenShipley or directly when they return.

Matthew and Richard Lewis are climbing a small hill (Kilimanjaro!) in Africa in July. They are raising money for a local hospice in memory of Richard's Sister-in-Law, who was cared for at Myton Hospice last August. They can be sponsored via: www.justgiving.com/richard-lewis11 or directly when they return

Alan Reading called a peal of **3 Spliced Differential Triples** at St Chad's, a peal containing only pure triple changes. Its high level of technical merit shot it to the top of the Bell Board "Featured Performances" list.

The St Martin's band had a weekend **outing to Dordrecht** in Holland, where there is a mini-ring created by Paul de Kok. As part of a weekend of indulgence, a peal was rung at 't Klockhuys, being the first tower bell peal rung by the Guild in mainland Europe.

The **Slater family** from Moseley are learning en masse at St Paul's, Birmingham. Rob and Heidi, along with their two sons Tom and Dan, will become members of the band at St Mary's once the bells are installed.

Mark Eccleston finished organising 12 bell peals at Birmingham Cathedral, after having organized as many as 120 successful peals. Michael Wilby is taking over the organisation of what has been a core feature of Birmingham's strength as a centre of ringing excellence for decades.

The 2nd **Ringing World National Youth Contest** was held at St Paul's Birmingham on 1st July, hosted by the St Martin's Guild. The St Martin's Youths entered the Call Change competition and achieved a C grade for a piece of ringing that was conducted by Dan Harris of Castle Bromwich. The team comprised:

- 1 Catherine Vernon (Harborne)
- 2 Tawana Machiridza (Perry Barr)
- 3 Ian Wharton (Perry Barr)
- 4 Jason D'Arcy (Harborne)
- 5 Grace Blick (Polesworth)
- 6 Peter Lewis (Harborne)
- 7 Dan Harris (C) (Castle Bromwich)
- 8 Thomas Horton (Smethwick)

And more from the RWNYC:

Guild Master Simon Linford was again Chief Judge, and will undertake the role for a third and final time next year.

Praise was heaped on the organisation team for the RWNYC. Organiser Adrian Udal said "All of the SMG were just brilliant hosts – we couldn't have asked for better. Everything just went so well – I doubt it could have gone any better." Chris Mills led the organisation with Clare McArdle leading the catering team. Over £400 has been added to SMG funds as a result.

The 120 young participants, plus their entourages, enjoyed ringing on the Charnborough Ring, set up in St Paul's churchyard, at the two Cathedrals, and on the 16 bells at St Martin's. One 13 year old visitor was overheard to say "this has been the best day of my life."

14 Jul - St Martin's Youths outing
14 Jul – Summer Social
21 Jul – Guild practice King's Norton
18 Aug – Guild practice Coleshill
27 Aug – start of Summer Camp
15 Sep – Guild practice Tanworth in A
22 Sep – Worthington Trophy
29 Sep – Training Day
6 Oct – 8 bell contest and Meeting
20 Oct – Guild practice Aston
10 Nov – start of Quarter Peal Week
17 Nov – Guild practice Harborne
15 Dec – Adult Learners Outing and
Guild Practice Wolverhampton

That's all folks!

Forthcoming events: