

January saw the **Annual General Meeting** at Moseley. This was a departure from the usual AGMs in the City Centre, with the Guild being guests of the Moseley band to enjoy their new bells, which we did.

Richard Grimmatt and **Richard Jones** were both elected as Life Vice Presidents of the Guild, after proposal by John Anderson. The Richards join John Anderson, Andrew Stubbs, Terry Hampton and Muriel Reay, as LVPs.

Life Membership was awarded to five members for exceptionally long service to the Guild: Frances Dodds, Gill Fielden, Paul McEvelly, Chris Mills and Charles Webb.



And it was a day for new members also, with **20 new members** being elected, including five year old Joseph Slater, elected an Associate Member at the same time the rest of his family

became Full Ringing Members. A statement of intent!

Clare McArdle chaired an excellent 125th Henry Johnson Dinner in the Banqueting Suite of the Birmingham Council House. There were 120 members and guests present, with speeches from Rev Catherine Ogle, Dean of Birmingham Cathedral, Christine Andrew from Manchester, John Fielden and Steve Horton. John Fielden challenged the Guild to regain



some of the ground it might be losing to Cambridge at the cutting edge of ringing. Other highlights included a touch of Stedman Triples on handbells, good food, and huge flower arrangements on the tables. Look out for Catherine Pinnock's forthcoming Ringing World report.

Maurice Edwards will chair the 2014 Henry Johnson Commemoration Dinner.



There were two peals and a quarter rung on the morning of the dinner. One of them was the first peal for Rose Horton (Smethwick), who was presented with a certificate at the dinner (above), while in a peal of Cambridge Royal at Northfield Ewan Hull (age 10) became probably the youngest person to ring a St Martin's Guild peal, causing his father David to shed a tear or two.

An **ITTS Module 2** course was run at St Paul's Birmingham in February. The Module 2 course is about teaching elementary change ringing, with particular focus on techniques that enable bands to get to Plain hunting, Plain Bob Doubles and Grandsire. A lot was learned by students and mentors.

Courses such as this exploit the teaching set-up at St Paul's to the full, with theory sessions and presentations downstairs, followed by practical sessions on the bells, and then back to the training room for refreshments.

A peal was rung at **Handsworth** to mark the departure of the vicar, the Rev Brian Harris, to

pastures new. Catherine Taylor (Kings Norton) called Yorkshire Major. His final service was preceded by ringing on all eight bells, which hasn't happened to Sunday service at Handsworth for quite a long time.

And shortly afterwards a peal was rung at **Smethwick** to mark the departure of the vicar, the Rev Nigel Mason, also moving to pastures new. Steve Horton (Smethwick) called the peal of Grandsire Triples.

The Birmingham band in the **National 12 Bell Striking Contest** booked their place in the Final with a 2nd place finish in one of the "Eliminator" heats at Towcester. There will be ten teams in the final, which will be held at Ripon Cathedral on 22nd June.

The Harborne machine rolls on, and the following ringers have achieved awards under the **Learning the Ropes** scheme:

Level 1

Bethan Pinnock

Level 2

Catherine, Rob, and Richard Pinnock

Level 3

Richard Pinnock

Level 4

Tom Horton, Rose Horton, Richard Pinnock

Richard Pinnock (Harborne) has continued his rapid progress since learning to ring on Summer Camp last year. Richard rang his first quarter inside in March, having rung his first quarter in January.

Catherine Vernon and Rose Horton also rang their first quarter peals inside, with Rose also recording her first of Minor and first of Triples.

Clair Parker of Harborne also joined the quarter peelers with her first.

Teachers continue to pursue the **ITTS course**. John Anderson previously attended Module 2 and is a full member of the ART. Andy Carr (Northfield) has completed Module 2, and Clive Day (Solihull) has completed Module 1. If you want any guidance on how ITTS can benefit you or your tower please speak to any member of the Standing Committee and we will extol its virtues.

A delegation from the Guild attended the first AGM of the **Association of Ringing Teachers**, at Kineton. The Guild has six full members of ART – Simon Linford (St Martins), Clare McArdle (Hb), Tracy Stevens (Hb), John Anderson (St Martin's), Andy Carr (Northfield), and Tony Daw (City). Arthur Reeves (St Martin's) and Angie Dunsmith (Kings Norton) are Associate members having completed Module 1.

The keynote speech was from Mark Regan, who talked about the achievements at Worcester, but the highlight was Clare's presentation on the use of the "moodle site" used as part of ITTS. No one would have guessed that this was the first time Clare had ever given a PowerPoint presentation.

You may have noticed that **Andy Ellis** (Sutton and Erdington) has gone a bit quiet. Twin sons George and James arrived on April 3rd might be the cause! Congratulations to Andy and Leti.

Keith Richards died on 19th March following a second stroke. Keith was a very active member at Kingsbury, and would have been known to many Guild members.

Gill Postill (Cathedral) is recovering very well following a heart attack suffered on 9th February. Although not ringing again yet, she is getting back into the social side of ringing and keeping the Cathedral supplied with jelly babies!

Plans for the proposed refurbishment of **Castle Bromwich** bells are becoming clearer. 2017 will be 300 years since bells first rang from the tower, providing a fitting and achievable target. Augmentation to eight would be the optimal plan, if two Gillett & Johnson bells of notes A^b and G can be found, otherwise a refurbishment of the existing six will be the target.

Fundraising will start as soon as the total project costs are known. An application to the Heritage Lottery Fund will be made, based on the significant heritage of the ring and its potential as a training tower. The team is going to be looking for all the help it can get and provides the Guild with a worthwhile project to get behind.

The **58th BUSCR Dinner** was held on 26th January at the Edgbaston Palace Hotel. There was a very good turnout of 32 members and friends. Ryan Mills from York was guest speaker and told of how important the social side of ringing was to him and to university societies.

Conversion of the March Guild practice into a Saturday morning **10-bell practice** was deemed a great success. About 25 members attended the practice at Moseley, with methods ranging from Grandsire Caters through to London and Triton Royal over the course of two intensive hours, fuelled by tea and cake. This format will definitely be repeated regularly.

The Moseley practice was followed by leaving drinks for **Jack Gunning**. Jack was a ringer at Harborne and regular attendee at city centre towers. He has moved to Kent and will be sadly missed.

The local band at St Martin's rang a peal of Stedman Septuples (15) in memory of Rod Pipe. Peals of Stedman 15 are always an achievement, and to ring one with a Sunday Service band especially so. The footnote to the peal was "By members of the Bullring Sunday Service Band, dedicated to the memory of Roderick W Pipe, former conductor of this band; innovator, leader, mentor and friend.



Stedman 15 band

Members with personal peal ringing achievements include:

Adam Brady (BUSCR) – first handbell peal, Stedman Triples at St Chads.

Rose Horton (Smethwick) – first peal

The Guild's colour palette has been expanded with new purple and gold clothing as shown in the mystery torso below!



Forthcoming events:

This coming Saturday 20th April is a Guild practice at Aston. Everyone welcome and all abilities catered for.

Northfield are holding a Race Night including a Fish & Chip supper and raffle in aid of their clapper rebushing appeal. This will be on 11th May, the evening of the next meeting and 6 bell striking contest. Northfield's clappers are taking quite a pounding with the volume of practicing and teaching going on, so this is a very good cause.

If your tower does not have a copy of the calendar on the notice board then ask why not! However here are the next few events:

- 20 Apr "Carlsberg Day", Moseley
- 20 Apr Guild practice, Aston
- 24 Apr Youths practice, St Paul's 7pm
- 4 May Tewkesbury Shield
- 11 May Business meeting and 6 bell contest, Barston (pm)
- 18 May Adult Learners Outing
- 18 May Guild practice, Northfield
- 22 May Youths practice, St Paul's 7pm
- 8 Jun Guild practice, Sutton Coldfield
- 22 Jun 12 bell Final, Ripon
- 26 Jun Youths practice, St Paul's 7pm
- 6 Jul RW National Youth Contest, York

Towers have been put after ringers' names in order to give those who do not know everyone more of an idea of who is who and where. Some people ring at many towers, so this is just giving a general picture. Please don't get annoyed if you think other towers you ring at should be credited!

