

The **St Martin's Youths** had an outing to Aldridge and Little Aston. Fifteen young members attended, including friends from St Michael's Lichfield who are part of the group. At Little Aston there was a "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" competition, in which Chief Judge Chris Mills controversially disqualified the adult band for taking too long over their practice and giving an incorrect signal! The contest was won by Harborne.



Tony Daw ran an unusual **training event** which was about how to learn methods more effectively. More theoretical than practical, but an example of how broad training can be.

A **peal at Solihull** on 13 April commemorated the millennium of St Alphege's martyrdom. Four previous attempts at Grandsire Caters since April 2012 with a band of current and ex-Solihull ringers failed for various reasons. Unavailability and late illness forced a reconsideration of the method and the band for

the final attempt before the end of the millennial year so a peal of Plain Bob Triples was rung.



It was first peal for four members of the local band: Malcolm Paulson, Linda Whitehead, Keith Whitehead, and Clive Day.

Plans are progressing for the **Rod Pipe Commemoration Weekend** in October – more details at the end of this Newsletter.

The Central Council Librarian, Alan Glover, to whom a copy of the **St Martin's Guild Report** had been sent by our Librarian Richard Jones, described it as "a model of presentation and interest"! Praise for the new Guild certificate was also received from Chris Ridley who is collecting all Guild and Association membership certificates past and present and who had been disparaging in the Ringing World about the low quality of modern certificates.

The “**Carlsberg Day**” was an important and extremely useful event. Between 20 and 30 members and guests spent a long morning in Moseley discussing and brainstorming how the perfect ringing organization would be set up. Although we strayed a bit to just thinking about how our own Guild could work better, some clear action points came from it, plus one masterplan.

The first of the simpler action points was a number of things we are going to try and do to make ‘the Guild’ more accessible to those towers and ringers who don’t currently think it is something for them, overcoming such problems as holding a Guild practice at a particular tower and the local ringers not coming, and finding opportunities for Guild members to ring at the big rings – St Martin’s and the Cathedral – without feeling intimidated or scared of them.

The second action point is for the Guild to get much closer to the church at high level, because getting Diocese and clergy understanding of our recruitment issues for instance might make them able to help us. We are of course providing a service to the Church. Mark Regan, who chaired the day, has had particular success in this regard at Worcester Cathedral, where the Bishop and the City’s clergy are central to the resurgence of ringing in that City.

But the most important thing to come out of the day was the proposal for what has now become called the “Birmingham School of Bell Ringing”,

which if you have been reading your emails in the last week, you will now know about.

Clare McArdle introduced the idea in absentia, although it did carry the proviso “of course this could never happen”. It was however seized upon as a possibility, and then a sub-committee was formed to take the idea forward, and now it is being launched in September. This is following the Master’s philosophy that the best way of getting something to happen is to announce the launch date and then delegate delivery to other people!

As there is plenty more Birmingham School of Bell Ringing information circulating now, no more will be said here.

**Colin Baugh** has become a **Life Member** of the Guild in recognition of over 50 years’ services as Ringing Master at Shirley. This is not only an outstanding achievement in Guild terms, but nationally very few people ever give this much service to one tower.

The **Adult Learners Outing** in May saw over 25 ringers go to Handsworth, Erdington and Aston, with the travel between towers on the Outer Circle bus route. The ALO, although possibly in need of a new name, has become a permanent feature in the calendar.

**Northfield** held a Race Night in aid of rebushing their clappers. The evening was brilliantly compered by Andy Carr, and the 120 attendees contributed over £700 to the fund.

It has been a period of exceptional peal ringing performances for the St Martin's Guild.

**Birmingham, W Mids**

Cathedral Church of St Philip

Monday, 22 April 2013 in 3:25 (31-0-21)

**5088 Spliced Surprise Maximus**

(7m: 768 Alnilam, 720 each Alnitak, Bellatrix, Betelgeuse, Orion, Rigel, Saiph,  
77 changes of method, all the work)

Composed by A G Reading

- 1 Louis P H Suggett
- 2 Victoria J M Wilby
- 3 Elizabeth M Harvey
- 4 Adam A Brady
- 5 William T Bosworth
- 6 Alan G Reading (C)
- 7 Stephen M Jones
- 8 Gabrielle L Cowcill
- 9 Simon J L Linford
- 10 Paul E Bibilo
- 11 Thomas W Griffiths
- 12 Michael P A Wilby

Remembering Rod Pipe, architect of the Orion "family", whose 73rd birthday would have been on 17th April.

Firstly, the above peal is one of the most difficult compositions of Spliced Maximus rung, and was achieved at the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt depending on how you count! The methods are the seven different below works, which have Orion above the treble. Peer recognition saw it sit at the top of the RW BellBoard "featured performance list" for nearly two weeks. Credit to the composer and conductor who did a great job, and sheer bloody-minded concentration from everyone else.

A series of truly exceptional performances on handbells culminated in this one. All seven peals by the same band, all conducted by Mark, all at the first attempt, and charting landmark developments in Stedman Triples composition (and complexity).

**Birmingham, West Midlands**

RC Cathedral of St Chad

(The Ullathorne Room)

Thurs, 6 June 2013 in 2h17 (13 in E)

**5040 Stedman Triples**

Composed by C J E Wyld  
(bobs only one part)

- 1–2 Alan S Burbidge
- 3–4 Charles A S Webb
- 5–6 Mark R Eccleston (C)
- 7–8 Paul E Bibilo

This composition was first rung at St Botolph Without, Aldgate on 16 May 1995.  
The seventh, and final, peal in the Stedman Triples 'Landmarks Suite'.

Then at the end of June ...

**Birmingham, West Midlands**

RC Cathedral of S Chad

Thurs, 27 June 2013 in 2h 17 (13 in E)

**5040 Stedman Triples**

Composed by Rev H Law James

- 1–2 Alan S Burbidge
- 3–4 Charles A S Webb
- 5–6 Mark R Eccleston
- 7–8 Paul E Bibilo

Rung silent and non conducted

On 28th May there were two simultaneous peals of Stedman Triples on handbells, i.e. eight members involved. The Guild Master tested Mark Eccleston's conducting skills to

the full in one of the performances, whilst the other passed off without incident. This is the first time this has been done, but there are enough capable members to ring three concurrent peals of Stedman now.

**Castle Bromwich** tower has launched its own new and excellent website

<http://cbbells.webs.com/>

It has details of the restoration project, old photographs of the band and ringers, history of the church and bells, and much more.



Castle Bromwich project Trustees

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

*Level 2*

Bethan Pinnock

*Level 3*

Rob and Catherine Pinnock

(includes ringing first quarter peal)

*Level 4*

Catherine Vernon

(includes ringing a quarter of Doubles inside)

*Level 5 "Minor approach"*

Rose Horton & Richard Pinnock

(includes ringing a quarter of Minor inside)

Rose and Richard are the first people in the country to be awarded Level 5 for Minor.

Along the way, Rose has also called a QP and rung 2 peals. Richard has called a QP and rung a QP of Stedman Triples.

Bethan has rung her first QP on the treble to doubles so is well on her way to achieving Level 3.

The **6 bell contest at Barston** attracted nine teams, with three contesting the call change competition and six ringing methods. Bands came from Harborne, Perry Barr, Solihull, Moseley, St Paul's and St Philips, with the Master putting together a scratch band to mop up those not in a team. The call change competition was won by one of the Harborne teams, while St Paul's triumphed in the method category with a polished performance of a course of Carlisle. Stephanie Warboys (St Martin's) was the judge.



St Paul's



## Charmborough Ring

On two days in late May, the group organizing the Summer Camp decided to book the Charmborough ring for two days to try and recruit young ringers.

A big team effort got it organised in just five weeks to hit the half term target. Tracy Stevens had the biggest job – organising helpers not only to help erect and dismantle the structure on both days, but also provide tutors and other helpers throughout the days. Tracy also produced some excellent display boards.

The two positions chosen were the new Eastside City Park, outside the Science Park and Millennium Point, and near the Town Gate entrance to Sutton Park. Both these locations we thought would have lots of young people.

Bad news was that there were two cold wet days in half term – the two days we chose! There were not very many people in either park but we did our best, and the number of Guild members who came out to support was tremendous.



The end of the first day finished with a very cold and wet peal attempt ...



### Successful peal band:

Tony Daw, Tim Davis, David Pipe, Paul Bibilo, Simon Linford, Michael Wilby

However the end result was not great. Despite names and contact details having been taken from 44 prospects, only two of those could be converted into 2013 Summer Camp attendees. We hope that the seed has been sewn with many of them though.



The rain was definitely a factor – we could have had three times as many people on sunny days, and we now think that targeting specific schools might be better.

## BUSCR News

BUSCR held two of its annual tours at the beginning of June. As students are supposed to be revising for exams in May the May Day tour took place on Saturday 1st June with ringing at 4 towers in the Banbury area.

The following weekend saw the group heading to Herefordshire for the annual camping trip. The weekend started with Andrew Piggin ringing his first quarter peal inside to Plain Bob Doubles at Edgbaston. As some members were reluctant about camping the group stayed in two holiday cottages. They enjoyed ringing at 10 towers in the Forest of Dean, Monmouth and Ross on Wye areas as well as a game of crazy golf before returning to Edgbaston for evensong ringing.



Both tours were enjoyed by all with some great weather, good company and a mixture of towers!

Right at the end of June, the Birmingham band won the **National 12 Bell Striking Contest** for an unprecedented fourth consecutive time, and the 10<sup>th</sup> time in the last 13 years. Birmingham recorded a score of 91%, with the next five teams ranging from 84% down to 80%. Not only is the band unchanged for five years, they have even stuck to ringing the same bells, with a degree of preparation and focus which sets the band apart from the competition.



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

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

Simon Linford – first Stedman on handbells

Rose Horton – first peal and first of Treble Bob

Sally Daniel – first Spliced Surprise Major

The **Knowle** band continues to chalk up quarter peals for services, having rung 14 since the last newsletter including one of Yorkshire Major, and a first for Neil Taylor.

## **Rod Pipe Commemoration event**

The Rod Pipe Commemoration event is taking place on the weekend of the 12<sup>th</sup> October. Ringers from around the country will be coming to Birmingham as guests of the Guild, and the bands of St Philip's and St Martin's where Rod was a member.

The purpose of the event is a one-off commemoration and celebration of Rod's contribution to ringing not just in Birmingham but nationally, and involving as many ringers as possible. The timetable is as follows:

### *Friday evening*

Dedication of the new ringing chamber at St Martin's - Pipe family and local band  
General gathering in the Old Royal, Birmingham, from 7.00 pm – all welcome

### *Saturday morning*

Peals and quarter peals  
Lunchtime – Old Joint Stock (by St Philip's)

### *Saturday afternoon*

#### **"Hawkear Experience"**

This will be an opportunity to try your hand at judging (anonymously) three pieces of 12 bell ringing, accompanied by analysis of how the Strikeometer/Hawkear works, and then see your own results compared with what Hawkear says.

### *Saturday evening*

We hope to have a large gathering of ringers at the Council House, Birmingham, for a general

celebration of Rod's contribution, with a hot buffet, copious real ale and wine, and entertainment. The latter will take the form of a couple of speeches, a spectacular touch on at least 24 handbells (worth the cost alone!), an innovative photo identification quiz, and general bonhomie. (Expected price £25)

### *Sunday*

Further peals and quarters  
Lunchtime meeting pub (tbd)

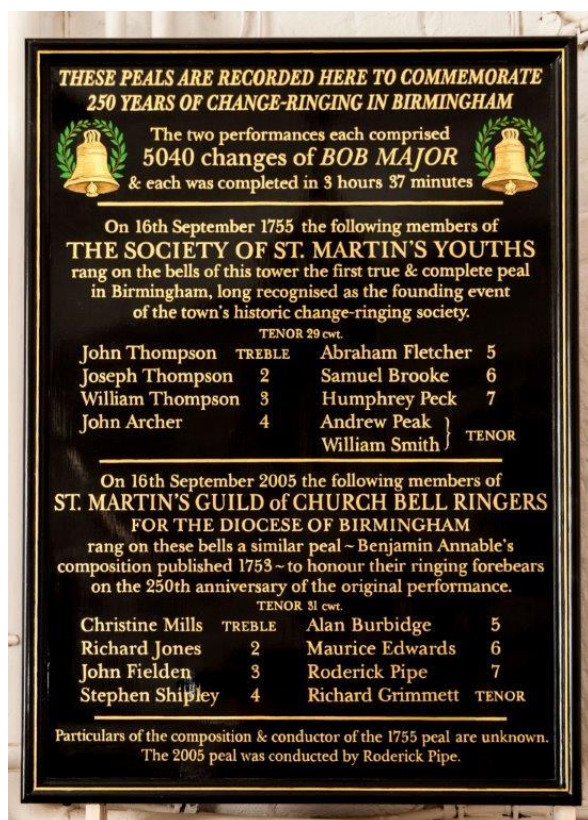
St Martin's will be open at other times on Saturday and Sunday for everyone to go and have a look at the improvements to the ringing chamber.

In the run up to the weekend, The Guild is going to have a month of quarter peal ringing. The aim will be to ring a quarter peal in every single tower in the Guild, with each of those quarters including as many members of the local band as possible. First quarter peal certificates will be presented at the Saturday evening event at the Birmingham Council House.

Rod's contribution to ringing in Birmingham was considerable, both in depth and breadth, and we are hoping that members will come out in force to enjoy the commemoration, and to make the visitors welcome.



A board commemorating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first “true and complete peal” in Birmingham has been erected in the Cathedral ringing chamber:



and the plaque giving more public notice of the performance is now in the Cathedral:



## Forthcoming events:

If your tower does not have a copy of the calendar on the notice board then ask why not! The calendar is available from Clare:

[secretary@smgcbr.org.uk](mailto:secretary@smgcbr.org.uk)

However here are the next few events:

- 20 Jul 8 bell practice, Smethwick
- 24 Jul Youth practice, St Paul's
- 6-10 Aug Summer Camp
- 17 Aug Evening practice, Coleshill
- 28 Aug Youth practice, St Paul's
- 14 Sep – 12 Oct Quarter Peal Month
- 21 Sep 8 bell practice, Shirley
- 25 Sep Youths practice, St Paul's
- 5 Oct Afternoon mini outing
- Business meeting, Erdington

