

The **St Martin's Youths** competed in the 3rd Ringing World National Youth Contest in York on 6th July.



The team acquitted themselves well, improving on last year's performance. Ringing early in the day left plenty of time on a hot sunny day to ring at many other city centre towers, to put in a winning performance on a treasure hunt quiz, do some hand bell ringing, try a mini-ring and there was plenty to eat and drink. There were hundreds of other kids and this is now a major event on the ringing calendar. Next year's contest will be in Worcester on 5th July 2014.

Youth practices continue on the fourth Wednesday of the month at St Paul's. All young ringers are very welcome regardless of ability and noisiness. There is an emerging plan to organize quarter peals at the Cathedral on the same evening, so young ringers can be dropped off, drivers can spend a

useful/enjoyable hour at the Cathedral, before picking up again.

The **Birmingham School of Bell Ringing** is the big news of what might otherwise have been a relatively quiet three months. If the School has somehow managed to pass you by, this is a major long term initiative aimed at creating a step-change in recruitment and training in the Guild.

Every Saturday morning there is teaching of ringing between 10.15 and 12.15 following the Learn the Ropes (LTR) syllabus. All those doing the teaching have been through the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS) to give a common approach and structure.

There will eventually be towers covering four stages of LTR, but the School has started with the first and third stages, "Tower A" and "Tower C", which cover initial bell handling and then learning Plain Hunt. Tower A is at St Paul's Jewellery Quarter, while Tower C is Yardley.

The School has been preceded by a string of emails trying to convey both the magnitude of the overall plan, but also the achievability given the intention to start small and build up.



Tower C induction

A number of things are now needed to continue the early success:

Recruits

We have a small waiting list at Tower C, but we can definitely feed new recruits into Tower A. Tower A is also benefitting learners who want more handling practice or instruction.

Helpers

There are lots of active towers in the Guild from which so far there have been no helpers. We have some regulars, while others have been once or twice. The School should work if a lot of people can come even only once a month.



You do not have to be a superstar to be a helper. Bob Doubles is pretty much the entry level for being useful. For the record, the School is grateful to the following who are already on the roster:

Andy Clarke, Chris Mills, Colin Baugh, Gill Postill, James Ramsbottom, Katherine Vernon, Mike Dodson, Mike Rigby, Oliver Bouckley, Richard Jones, Rose Horton, Steve Horton, Steve Jones

Tutors

Again for the record, those currently involved in teaching or mentoring teachers at the School are:

Andy Carr, Angie Dunsmith, Arthur Reeves, Clare McArdle, Fran Cinderey, James Forster, John Anderson, Matthew King, Richard Andrew, Sally Daniel, Simon Linford, Tony Daw, Tracy Stevens

We are short of people to run Towers C and D and we plan to run another ITTS Module 2 course. You do not have to have done Module 1 to do Module 2, i.e. you can become a tutor without having to teach bell handling.

Tower B is going to start in January at Handsworth, with Tower D at Solihull shortly thereafter.

The School is not financially dependent on the Guild thanks to a generous start up loan from Tony Daw, and appears to be very capable of generating an ongoing surplus.

Engaging the **Bishop of Birmingham** was another action point from the “Carlsberg Day”. It was considered to be important to establish a closer relationship with the church at the highest level, and to that end Simon Linford had a meeting with Bishop David Urquhart to explain the Guild’s activities and aspirations. The meeting took place just as the BSoBR was starting and so Simon was able to explain the School, with the result that the Bishop agreed to send a letter and copy of the School Prospectus to all the clergy of towers with bells, endorsing the initiative and offering support.

The Guild entered the **Worthington Trophy** 10 bell competition which this year was held at Sileby in Leicestershire, with a test piece of 311 Erin Caters. The hosts, Derby, had clearly done some work familiarising themselves with this extremely odd-struck ring of bells, and as such nudged our band into second place.



The band pictured above was:
Front, l-r Vicky Wilby, Mark Eccleston, Arthur Reeves, Mike Dodson, Fran Cinderey
Back l-r Clare McArdle, Phil Ramsbottom, Simon Linford, Michael Wilby (C), Tony Daw

The **plaque** commemorating the 250th anniversary of the first “true and complete peal” in Birmingham was unveiled to the congregation at St Philips Cathedral during a morning service in September. Richard Jones made the most of a short opportunity to explain the history of ringing and the Guild, and the Dean said kind words about the contribution made by the ringers. A course of Plain Bob Major, the method rung in 1755, was performed by Tony Daw, Michael Wilby, Vicky Wilby and Simon Linford.

After the dedication, the Cathedral Band invited members of the congregation into the belfry to see the ringing and to learn more about the work of the Band and the Guild. It was a most enjoyable experience all round.



Plaque and peal board being admired

August saw the second **Guild Summer Camp**, designed to develop the skills of current young ringers within the Guild. The week saw six youngsters engaged in a variety of activities, including learning course bells through handbells, striking practise, a trip to the foundry at Loughborough and a tower outing to Stourbridge.



The week also included two quarter peals - Richard Pinnock, a recruit from last year's camp, conducted Plain Bob Minor with his sister Bethan ringing the treble, firsts for them both. Rose Horton and Catherine Vernon rang Plain Bob Triples, their first on 8 inside and on the treble respectively. Thomas Horton rang the tenor behind very professionally, focusing on improving his striking skills.



Learning course bells with handbells

After extensive work by Steve Jones (design and typesetting), Michael Wilby (database), and Simon Linford (design, editing and general direction), the **Guild peal book** has gone to print. For those not aware of the history of this, the hand writing of St Martin's Guild peals stopped in 1993, the last one in the peal book being the first peal on 16. 300 pages of peal book have now been printed, covering over 1000 peals and taking us up to the end of 2010. The book will now be leather bound and should be available for inspection at the AGM and then the Henry Johnson Dinner.

The following ringers have achieved awards under the **Learning the Ropes** scheme:

Level 2

Miles Stockton

Level 3

Bethan Pinnock

Level 4

Rob Pinnock

Harborne

St Peter

Monday 5 August 2013

1320 Plain B Doubles

- 1 Catherine E Vernon
- 2 D Rose W Horton
- 3 Richard Pinnock (C)
- 4 Thomas M W Horton
- 5 Rebekah G W Horton
- 6 Bethan Pinnock

In memory of Ian McArdle - Grandfather of the Treble

First as cover - Bethan Pinnock

Average age 16

Northfield bells are ringing with a renewed sparkle after all 10 clappers were rebushed.

On the subject of Northfield, a number of people have asked whether the very popular Saturday morning practices at Northfield will resume. For the moment at least those practices have made way for the focus on the Birmingham School of Bell Ringing, which is operating on Saturday morning and soaking up most of the people who would have helped at Northfield.

On 13th July there was a **St Martin's Youths** outing to Lapworth and Knowle including a picnic lunch and playing French cricket, Frisbee and badminton on a very hot day in a park in Knowle. Rose made very nice chocolate cakes which unfortunately completely melted into a sticky mess!

Henry Pipe joined the St Martin's Guild after becoming probably the youngest person to ring a peal of Surprise Royal, aged 10½. And it wasn't even of something trivial – HP chose Bristol for his debut.



St Peter, Harborne
Sunday, 1 September 2013 in 2h 45
5024 Yorkshire Surprise Major
Composed by D G Hull
1 Sarah L Vernon
2 Janet A Horton
3 Clare McArdle
4 David G Hull (C)
5 Stephen W Horton
6 Michael Rigby
7 Timothy E H Waller
8 Anthony M Daw
Celebrating a life well lived - Ian
Warwick Moore McArdle, 31st May 1932
- 2nd August 2013. Rest in peace.

The **Smethwick Outing** in September (accompanied by additional taggers on from Harborne) went to the mythical land of Shropshire. The first tower was so efficient that we could walk one way into the tower and out another. So amazed by this place we were, that between the magical and mysterious towns of Wrockwardine and High Ercall, that half of the group decided to go on their own mini-tour of the A Roads. For lunch we travelled to that most sought after place, the pub, and managed to squeeze 14 people around a table that was meant for 8. After lunch, we all rolled into the next church, Atcham, which was conveniently next to the pub. The next stop on our tour was Wroxeter, the place parents only mention when they want their children to have nightmares. Our group of intrepid explorers dared to enter into this cruel place, armed only with the bellies we had accumulated at lunchtime. Fearsome moths awaited us in this domain, as well as an out of tune tenor. We barely made it out alive.

At the last stop, Uppington, a rope became our only casualty and our courageous heroes' story came to a close before its time.

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@smgcb.org.uk

However here are the next few events:

Sat Nov 16th – Practice Moseley

Wed Nov 27th – Youths practice St Paul's

Sat Nov 30th – Adult Learners Event (pm)

Sat Dec 21st – Practice Boldmere

Sat Jan 11th – AGM Solihull

Sat 22nd Feb – Henry Johnson Dinner

