



Bristol Rural News

Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers

The Newsletter of Bristol Rural Branch Bellringers

No 307

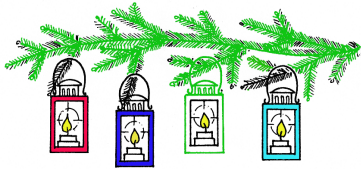
Website: <https://bellsgandb.org.uk/bristolrural/> email: bristolrural.branch@bellsgandb.org.uk

Headlines

- 1 Mince Pie Practice—Frampton Cotterell—29th December—15.00-16.30
- 2 Branch practice—Bitton—24th January—15.00-16.30
- 3 Branch Quiz—Warmley—14th February—19.00—TBC
- 4 Branch Practice—Alveston—28th February—15.00-16.30

Christmas 2025

HAPPY



CHRISTMAS

News from the Branch AGM

Our Branch AGM was at Almondsbury this year. After some tidy ringing (everything from rounds and call changes to Cambridge Surprise Major) we were led in our service by one of the Almondsbury clergy team and then treated to a splendid tea. The official minutes from the AGM will be issued in due course but some key messages are:

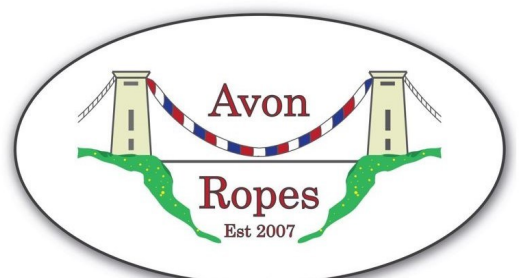
- the chairman Bryan Hardwick thanked all at Almondsbury for preparing for the meeting and he thanked committee members for their support
- members stood in silence in memory of Mick Lewis, a faithful Branch member who died this year
- Bryan announced that he was standing down as chairman for personal reasons. There being no one present prepared to take on the role, towers are being requested to consider whether any of their members could do so. It was explained that it is mainly a task of coordinating the Branch's activities
- the secretary (Bill Liebow), treasurer (Geoff Pick), ringing master (Matt Johnson), deputy ringing master (Geoff Pick) and website administrator (Steve Crane) were all happy to continue and were unanimously reelected
- Gill Greef volunteered to act as management committee rep
- no one volunteered to act as publicity officer. If any Branch member would like to take on this task, please contact the committee
- encouragingly about 10 new members were elected
- Roger Haynes (Association Chair) explained Membermojo, a new on-line membership registration process that is being introduced by the association over the next year. More details are given on the Branch website. He also explained that plans were being developed to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Association by purchasing a mobile belfry. If these went ahead Branches would be asked to contribute.

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Website News

You can see the very latest news plus details about upcoming events on our Branch website. You can also search for items of interest, checkout recent Branch entries on BellBoard and read a growing list of bell ringing articles contributed by members.

www.bellsgandb.org.uk/bristolrural/

Details of the new Association membership system Membermojo can be found by following the links from the home page.

Bell Casting Day Out for Let's Ring!

It's not every day you get to see a bell being cast at the last remaining bell foundry in the country. It was worth the early start for eight Let's Ringers, who set off from across the country to converge on Loughborough for our annual outing. Let's Ring! is our training scheme creating the next generation of ringers for St Mary's, Thornbury and beyond. Our itinerary also included ringing at five towers, playing frisbee, consuming huge portions of fish'n'chips and generous helpings of sticky buns. If this is making you feel queasy, fear not! We returned home buzzing with chatter about the day and a warm glow much like the bell metal we had seen being poured.

Naturally, we were accompanied by Ben our mascot teddy, our glamorous glitter ball and tremendous tie-dye. Here's what we did:

Ringling at Quorn, a lovely 11cwt ring of eight bells got us off to a great start. We met up with Faith Daykin who was super friendly and who supported us throughout the day.

We regrouped at the Parish Church in Loughborough, a demanding 30cwt ring of ten bells. We befriended a visiting Dutch couple whom we invited in to see how it's done. Outreach is always high on our agenda. Also, the local ringers designed and put up a poster just for us!

A veritable hike to find fish'n'chips was rewarded with more food than anyone could eat and was accompanied by the famous Let's Ring! travelling ketchup.

The Foundry Tour, including not one but four bell castings, was fascinating and fully lived up to expectations. Our guide fielded many questions from our inquisitive group and Ben our mascot teddy got his own hi-vis vest.

Ringling at the Foundry Tower, a very light 6cwt 12, was challenging and fun, supported by our tour guide and some extra ringers we roped in (pun intended) along the way.

Oaks in Charnwood (10cwt, eight bells) awaited us as we navigated our way through Loughborough's many road works, but no time was wasted as the early birds staged an impromptu game of frisbee and scoffed sticky buns.

On our way home we were invited to join the practice at Tewkesbury Abbey. The beautiful Norman tower contains a glorious ring of 12 bells and the friendliest bunch of very capable ringers you could ever want to meet. Both of our youngest crew proudly rang the majestic 27cwt tenor bell.

We were home in time for bed and dreams of glowing bell metal, nicely struck ringing, technicolour tie-dye, glinting glitter ball, swirling sallies and smiling faces, sometimes smeared with ketchup.

Many thanks go to Faith and all the ringers who helped us that day, to Peter England our foundry guide, to Sally Brown



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who helped behind the scenes to make our day such a success and to Andrew Ward, as always, for supporting this and all our ringing adventures.

Catherine White-Horne

Visit to Dorset—September 2025

We were blessed with wonderful weather yet again. We all enjoyed the 15 towers we rang at from Swanage to Bournemouth (Worth Matravers, lovely 6, Kingston, Wool, Lytchett Matravers, Oakdale, Hampreston, Canford Magna, Corfe Mullen) and on the way home at Sturminster Marshall, Spetisbury and Shroton. We can recommend the Coach House Inn at Winterbourne Abbas, the food was excellent. Most of us stayed in the 9 bedroom house a short walk from the pub, most convenient.

Sue Elliott



Dyrham update

The last time the bells at Dyrham church were rung was by a visiting band on 16 March 2020. During that visit the rope on the nr 5 bell snapped and it was reported that the tenor rope too was suspect. Shortly afterwards, therefore, both ropes were taken down and new ropes ordered, paid for by the Parish Council. However, Covid struck preventing any further ringing for many months and just when it seemed likely we could restart an Architect's report highlighted the poor state of the tower and no further ringing was allowed.

Fast forward to 2025 and a renewed plea to chime the bells using the ropes from the ringing room since the Ellacombe apparatus was partially seized. Permission was eventually granted and over the weekend of 18/19 October the 4 bells that had ropes attached were chimed for the first time. With this encouragement a work-party was organised and on 23rd October a cleanup of the Belfry and an inspection of the bells was undertaken. The two new ropes were fitted to the 5 and 6 and the bells rung up and down to check all was well. The Ellacombe apparatus was inspected and remediated. Going forward the intention is to chime the bells regularly until such time as funds are available to allow the necessary repairs to the tower be undertaken.

Many thanks to the members of the work-party, namely, Linda Gittings, Fred Willington, Bryan Hardwick, and John Payton who gave up a morning of their time in this endeavour.

Glenn Laurence

Branch Methods

Have you ever wondered whether there is a method named after your tower? Gary Crisp obviously has and this is what he found. There are quite a few of them and what intrigues me is that a number of them can't actually be rung on the bells after which they are named. Anyone thought of augmenting Iron Acton to an 8, or Tytherington to a 10, for example?

Ed

I was interested to see how many methods are named after Branch towers. Unfortunately, most of these are challenging to ring and I don't anticipate that they will be rung at Branch meetings. If you want to see the 'line' for any of these, simply type the name into Google followed by Minor, Major, etc. as appropriate. (Other web browsers are available!)

Minor Methods

Dyrham Delight, Frampton Cotterell Delight, Pucklechurch Treble Bob, Tytherington Bob.

Major Methods

Almondsbury Surprise, Bitton Surprise, Coalpit Heath Surprise, Coalpit Heath Bob, Filton Surprise, Iron Acton Bob, Mangotsfield Surprise, Mangotsfield Delight, Mangotsfield Bob, Syston Delight, Syston Bob, Thornbury Surprise.

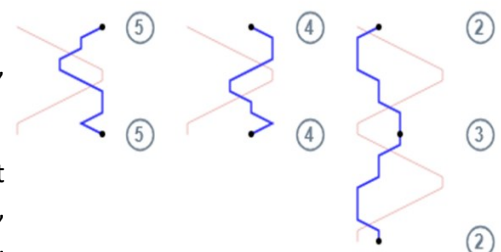
Royal Methods

Frenchay Surprise, Frenchay Common Surprise, Tytherington Surprise.

The only Doubles method is Winterbourne Bob which is unusual in that two bells, 4 and 5, just ring the same lead over and over with 2 and 3 sharing the front work.

Winterbourne Bob Doubles

3.145.125.123.5,123 [13245]



Gary Crisp

Books Available

The Central Council has just published a new guide to better striking for beginners. I expect there are some useful tips for more experienced ringers too! It's available from the Central Council for £4.50.

Bill Liebow has some books and badges available at cost as below. Please contact him if you are interested:

The One per Learner Book (the little yellow book, ideal for learners for logging progress in early stages) - £1 each.

Ringling Circles (gives the blue line and details of what happens at calls for some standard methods) - some left at £3.50 each.

Ringling Achievements

(This list is compiled by searching Bellboard under the G&B Association. If you don't put your ringling on Bellboard and attribute it to the G&B I won't find it. Ed)

Bitton—1260 Bob Triples

Rung in memory of Brian K Lewis, (Mick), who learnt to ring in this tower in the 1950s. Rung by some of the members of the Syston Friday Tour Ringers. 1st quarter peal on 8 bells Nigel Scudamore (treble)

Mangotsfield—5024 Bristol Surprise Major

Siston—1260 Plain Bob Doubles

Rung in memory of Brian Keith Lewis (aka Mick) during QP month

Wapley—1260 Bob Doubles

1st quarter peal for Laili Brooks (treble)

Almondsbury—1344 Lindum Surprise Major

Frampton Cotterell—1260 Mixed Doubles (6m)

A Quarter Peal of 1260 Changes to mark the retirement from the Fromside Benefice of the Rev Malcolm and Jo Strange - rung by ringers representing all the active towers in the benefice.



Laili's first quarter peal

A Cryptic Clue

If you've read all the way through to this point, you've obviously got time on your hands! How about this cryptic crossword clue from the Guardian to keep you occupied a bit longer, passed on by Catherine White-Horne:

Caught northern Spice Girl draped in curtain, making church music (6,7)

Answer next month.