



Bristol Rural News

Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers

The Newsletter of Bristol Rural Branch Bellringers

No 309

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

Headlines

- 1 Association AGM—Tewkesbury Branch—18th April—details below
- 2 May Day Outing—Somerset—4th May—details below
- 3 Branch Practice—Mangotsfield—23rd May—15.00-16.30

April-May 2026

Fancy a Day Out?

Spring is officially here, the weather is improving and there are a couple of opportunities coming up to enjoy the countryside whilst ringing some bells. The Association AGM is being hosted by the Tewkesbury Branch this year and as usual there are several towers open for general ringing during the course of the day, including Tewkesbury Abbey. We also have our Branch May Day outing to look forward to: it is in the Frome area of Somerset this time. All the details of both events are included at the end of the newsletter.

And if you like the idea of a day out ringing on a regular basis, 'grabbing' some towers you've not rung at before, there are two regular outings each month to choose from: the Far-Cited ringers meet on the first Thursday and the Dodgers on the third. There is also a monthly Surprise Minor practice at Cromhall on the third Thursday and a joint practice at Chipping Sodbury on the third Friday. If you are interested in any of these, let a member of the Committee know so you can be kept informed of the details.

Chris Greef

Good times had all ROUND at the 2026 Bristol Rural Quiz Night

The tables were all set, the PA was powered up and tested, the prizes were ready and waiting for their winners and, crucially, the traditional hot dinners were smelling delicious as our seven teams arrived at St Mary's Church Hall in Thornbury for the legendary Bristol Rural Quiz.

The quiz masters, Chris and Catherine from Thornbury, created a quiz with a twist and, by reports, a sting in its tail(end). The questions were themed around bell ringing but not as one might expect. All the usual genres were covered: music, film, sport, history, popular culture, science and nature and geography, but with an extra ringing theme denoted by the name of the rounds:

ROUNDS concerned anything which is round including Magic Roundabouts and Benzene.

BOBS included famous people called Bob and a question about Bobsleighs.

RINGS featured JRR Tolkien's famous novel, the Olympic Rings and more.

CHANGES starred David Bowie's song lyrics.

And finally....

BELLES which focussed on famous women from across the genres. The final question of this final round was the only one to be church bell ringing related, and it celebrated the first woman recorded to have rung a full peal;



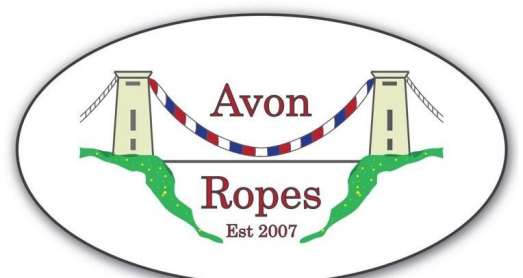
A back to school moment for Neil

Avon Ropes proudly sponsors Bristol Rural News

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Please see our website, www.avonropes.co.uk, our Facebook page or phone on 07946 605 963.

We're local too, based in Mangotsfield.



Alice White from Basingstoke, aged 15, in the 1890s.

In addition, there were two written rounds for each team to puzzle over:

TOWERS was the picture round to include The Shard and no churches whatsoever and... COUNTING PLACES which involved placing four themed items in the correct order, for example elements by atomic number.

All this intellectual teamwork certainly built up an appetite and we were all happy to down pens and tuck in to the delicious homemade fare put together by many of our ringing chefs.

By the end of the evening and after much deliberations from the teams the scores on the heavy oak church doors were:

Snack Cheese (Almondsbury)

NoMoJo (Winterbourne)

Madness in the Method (Thornbury)

Cotele's Bells (Frampton Cotterell)

Aiming for 6th (Westerleigh with special guest Bill Liebow)

Frenchay 5 (who were actually only Frenchay 2 for the first couple of rounds due to a mix-up)

Lovey Times at Church Hall (Westerleigh)

Prizes went to Almondsbury and Westerleigh's Loveys, not least because the latter had brought our youngest team member, Violet, aged around 2 years, and they all appeared to be having the most fun throughout the evening.

By far the booby prize went to Winterbourne who threw the unlucky dice roll to set the quiz next year. Our heartfelt commiserations go out to you!

Prizes also went to the many lucky raffle winners. Thanks to everyone who generously brought a prize as well as to everyone who liberally bought tickets.

Many thanks to all our wonderful chefs for the event, in particular Sue Elliott who co-ordinated and managed the evening's catering with aplomb. You're all keeping this delicious tradition alive and you hold a special place in our hearts (and stomachs).

Thanks also to Chris Greef and Steve Crane for supporting us practically and virtually in getting this year's event off the ground at quite short notice.

**Here's looking forward to the 2027 Bristol Rural Branch Quiz
Go! Winterbourne Surprise Setters**

Catherine White-Horne

Rural Branch Striking Competition

The competition this year was kindly hosted for us by Horton, the bells and church facilities generously offered by Rex Isaac. The choice of bells gave a few raised eyebrows given they are a little heavier than average and what some are used to, on the day though all teams rose to the challenge and rang them successfully.

Once again the weather looked down kindly for the afternoon making for a pleasant time outside the church to drink tea in the sunshine, both for those taking part and the judges who were happily seated the far side of the church away from too much possible disruption. This year there were 7 teams entered, the most for a good few years I believe, this was great to see. Most of the regular entries were there alongside some new, notably Frenchay being a first in my time.

The judges for the afternoon were Andrew and Jane Bull who both graciously agreed to judge even though Jane was booked to ring a peal in the morning leaving very little time for travel in between. Thankfully everyone was there in



"Frenchay 5" minus a few team members

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good time and everything was set up for the draw at just gone 14:00. With more towers entered there was plenty to get through but it all went off without a hitch and we were soon ready for the results.

Andrew gave good detailed feedback for each team including comments on the speed and confidence of each piece, agreeing on the speed and working together as well as leading consistency and making good use of practice time. Method mistakes were the downfall of some teams but a quick recovery is also a vital skill. For anyone who has never entered or sits on the fence about coming along to a striking competition, it is a great opportunity to concentrate on your listening and striking skills rather than perhaps advancing your method ringing arsenal. And besides it is a great social afternoon alongside the ringing.



Horton Church

The results.

7th -Wapley, Peal speed 3:03, Faults 103

6th -Frampton Cotterell, Peal speed (call changes), Faults 99

5th -Syston, Peal speed 3:13, Faults 90

4th -Abson, Peal speed 3:11, Faults 73

3rd - Thornbury, Peal speed 3:05, Faults 67

2nd - Frenchay, Peal speed 3:03, Faults 65

1st - Coalpit Heath, Peal speed 2:55, Faults 28

Congratulations to Coalpit Heath who will now go on to represent the branch at the Association competition, this year to be held at Twynning in the Tewkesbury Branch as part of the AGM day. My thanks go to Andrew and Jane for coming to judge, Rex and all Horton tower for hosting, Val Johnson for doing the teas and Steve Crane for producing the certificates and taking photographs on the day. Also thanks to all who brought along cake and came to support the afternoon.

Matt Johnson

PS—Team photos at the end of the newsletter

New Dashboard for Accessing the Branch Website

There is now a new way of accessing the Branch website, designed to make finding information easier on mobile devices. Go to <https://bellsgandb.org.uk/bristolrural/dashboard.html>. Don't forget to bookmark the link and please share it with your ringing friends. Whichever way you access the website you can see the very latest news plus details about upcoming events there. 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.

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



Steve Crane

Tower Open Days

If you are planning a tower open day this year, don't forget the Branch has a CCTV system that can be borrowed and set up so that visitors can see what is happening in your bell chamber when the bell ropes are pulled. Contact me (cgreef@btinternet.com) if you are interested.

Chris Greef



Website

For all the latest news, events and Branch information visit the Bristol Rural website at:

<https://www.bellsgandb.org.uk/bristolrural>

Scan me  and Bookmark 



Dashboard

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)

Coalpit Heath—5088 Yorkshire Surprise Major

First 8 bell peal for Will de Ray (4) and a compliment to Helen C Mansley on her birthday.

A UBSCR hangers-on peal, rung on the day of the Society's annual dinner.

Mangotsfield—5024 Jovium Surprise Major

50th together for Colin Newman (3) and Thomas Sherwood (5)

Frenchay—720 Cambridge Surprise Minor

First 720 in a Treble Bob method ever rung by a Frenchay band.

Frenchay—1260 Plain Bob Minor

With the best wishes of the band on the eve of the Diamond Wedding of Rev. Judith (Associate Minister) and John (Organist) Lee.

Gloucester & Bristol Association of Church Bell Ringers

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 18th April 2026

Please join us for the competitions, open towers (all ringers welcome), Church Service and AGM followed by tea, ending the day with evening ringing. There will also be a children's quiz with ringing and non-ringing questions at the open towers.

Croome Trophy Competition

Twyning, St Mary Magdalene, 9.00am start

Please note the church is located in Church End and not in the main village. Remember to use the postcode or What3Words. Please park in the church car park to the right of the church gates. Additional parking will be indicated on the day if necessary. All bands need to assemble in the church.

Access to the tower is via external steps to the south side of the church. Mind your head as you enter the ringing room.

Postcode: GL20 6DA What3Words: ///flaunting.vineyard.quilt

Toilets and refreshments are available in the church. Cash only for refreshments with all profit going to the church.

Penn Trophy Competition

Ashchurch, St Nicholas, 10.00am start

Please park in the church car park or on the grass verges on either side of the drive.

All bands need to assemble in the church.

Access to the tower is from within the church, short steep steps to the ringing room.

Postcode: GL20 8JZ What3Words: ///tile.flattens.remix

Toilet and refreshments are available in the church. Cash only for refreshments with all profits going to the church.

Towers Open for General Ringing

09.00 – 10.00 Priors Norton (8) (GF)

Postcode: GL2 9LS What3Words: ///professes.fork.fittingly

Please park carefully in the churchyard avoiding blocking anyone in.

The entrance to the ringing room via the main church entrance.

A Portaloo is located in the churchyard. Refreshments will be available in the church. Cash only for refreshments with all profit going to the church.

10.00 – 11.00 The Leigh (6)

Postcode: GL19 4AF What3Words: ///highlight.clattered.envelope

Parking is available in front of the church.

The entrance to the ringing room is via the main church entrance and up a short flight of stairs at the back of the church.

Toilet and refreshments will be available in the church. Cash only for refreshments with all profit going to the church.

11.00 – 12.00 Deerhurst (6)

Postcode: GL19 4BX What3Words: ///whistling.blinks.surfer

Please park with care in the road leading to the church. Additional parking is past the church in front of Odda's Chapel.

The entrance to the ringing room is via a spiral staircase located to the right of the main church porch.

A toilet is located past the main church entrance and then round to the right.

12.00 – 1.00 Tirley (6) (GF)

Postcode: GL19 4HH What3Words: ///pelting.scatter.aquatics

Please park on the side of the road outside the church.

The entrance to the ringing room is via the main church entrance.

A toilet is located in the churchyard, please ask the stewards for directions. Refreshments provided in the church, and you are welcome to bring your picnic to eat in either in the church or churchyard. Cash only for refreshments with all profit going to the church.

Service, AGM & Tea

2.00 – 2.50 Bushley, Worcestershire, S Peter (6)

Postcode: GL20 6HT What3Words: ///crackles.travels.bath

The ringing room is accessed by a ladder and trap door in the porch. A steward will assemble bands, please be patient and follow their instructions.

Parking is at Bushley Village Hall adjacent to the church, or as directed by the stewards. The hall will be open from 2.00 for hot drinks. Toilets are available in the hall.

2.50 – 3.00 Service Touch (band chosen by the Association Ringing Master)

3.00 Service

The meeting will take place directly after the Service in **Bushley Village Hall** followed by tea.

Sandwiches & cakes will all be homemade.

Numbers for tea would be appreciated (but not compulsory) to Rosemary Mackay

Gluten free options will be available (made with non-gluten ingredients but not in a gluten free kitchen), please let Rosemary know of any other dietary requirements and we will accommodate where possible.

email : rosemary_mackay@yahoo.co.uk by 14th April.

There will be a charge of £5.00 for tea payable contactless or cash.

Evening Ringing

6.00 – 8.00 approx Tewkesbury Abbey (12)

Postcode: GL20 5SR What3Words: ///shell.goat.beak

Please park in the Gander Lane car park or further along in the vineyards car park. Both car parks are free from 5.30pm.

The tower steps are located externally in the north transept. A steward will be on the door. Bands will be placed by the steward in the ringing room.

Please note that there are 160 steps up to the ringing room. No children under 8 are allowed in the tower.

The Bristol Rural Branch May Day Bank Holiday Outing

Monday 4 May 2026

The towers are all in North-East Somerset (Frome area).

10.30 to 11.15

Buckland Dinham St. Michael & All Angels, BA11 2QP, 8, 10 cwt

11.30 to 12.30

Mells. St Andrew BA11 3PW, 8, 26 cwt. Toilet

12:30 to 2:15

Lunch - Make own arrangements. There are a number of places to eat in Frome and also various village pubs.

2.15 to 3.00

Whatley. St. George, BA11 3LE, 6, 12 cwt. Ground Floor

3.15 to 4.00

Nunney. All Saints, BA11 4LW, 8, 10 cwt

4.15 to 5.00

Marston Bigot. St Leonard, BA11 5DE, 8, 7 cwt

Striking Competition Team Photographs



Abson



Coalpit Heath



Frampton Cotterell



Frenchay



Syston



Thornbury



Wapley