

St Nicholas Church, Abbots Bromley. CC BY-SA 2.0 (Geoff Pick)

Newsletter



April 2019

www.lwascr.org.uk

New members meeting report by

David Towell

Our annual new members' meeting took place on a bitterly cold Saturday afternoon in mid-January. As we'd undertaken some re-ordering of the ringing facilities at Abbots Bromley at the back end of 2018 (of which more in a future article) we were keen to show off our achievement and our tower captain bravely volunteered to host the meeting.

In our planning of the afternoon, what we wanted was for there to be good ringing (no problem there, as in our not-very-biased view we have the finest ring of 8 in Staffordshire), plenty of other activities, good company, a short service and a worthy tea to round off the afternoon. Three to four

months planning went into the day and, expecting the usual 30-40 members, we were overwhelmed in the best possible way when 70 ringers from across the archdeaconries turned up on the day. We were delighted to welcome 20 new members to the society, including three from our own tower at Abbots Bromley.

It was without doubt one of the most successful society meetings for some while, so what went well?

Firstly, the heating went on about 3 hours beforehand, in the vain hope of taking the chill off the church (only moderately successful there, but it was only 2 degrees outside). With 8 bells and 70 ringers, the amount of rope-time for each was going to

be limited, so we arranged several other related activities in the nave of the church as well.

We had two sets of handbell activities, one led by Lucy & Clive Smith to encourage would-be change ringers. The other was a masterful demonstration of plain



Tea for 70?

hunting, directed by Linda Pick, where each ringer was issued a single handbell and encouraged not only to ring the changes, but

also to walk through the line as well, physically demonstrating how the bells change place.

We also had a striking training session run by Lance Hill using Abel on a computer, while Liz Hutchieson ran a separate method and striking training session on our new Matthew Higby training bell.

This attracted much interest from several ringers and has proved to be a very useful acquisition for teaching. We also had our own unique attraction in that our church is the home of the 900 year-old reindeer antlers used in the annual Abbots Bromley Horn Dance. Of course, there was always time for good company & conversation.

Towards the end of the afternoon The Rev. Simon Davis led a short service of evensong with some carefully chosen hymns and lessons. We are lucky that we have a very supportive vicar, as although he doesn't ring himself, the vicarage is next door and he gets the full benefit of our attentions whether he likes it or not – and mostly he does.

The afternoon was rounded off by an excellent ringers tea; Dawn Grundy, Liz, & Sue Binns excelled in producing a range of tasty treats with more than enough to feed 70 (OK not quite the 5000, but a nearly equivalent feat), aided by some excellent cake baking by the home band. Dawn impressed us with her many talents that day which ran to not only organising the tea, but also playing the organ, reading the

lesson – oh and a very competent surprise ringer too.

What could we have done better? More tea (of the drinking variety) apparently. Getting 70 people an opportunity to ring did cause some queues and inevitably there were more learners than experts at several points. However good humour prevailed and it was marvellous to see such enthusiasm.

Or maybe it was just a cold Saturday, too close to Blue Monday, the 6-Nations hasn't kicked off on the telly yet and there was nothing better to do!

Peal Week by Stuart Hutchieson

The 10th annual peal week took place during the February half term holiday. The objective of the week is to provide members with the opportunity to attempt something progressive as part of the Society's Challenge Month. A total of 36 ringers were involved in 10 attempts, of which 7 were successful. These included a number of firsts, notably a first peal for Alex Packham from Lichfield Cathedral. We were unlucky with the 3 that got away, which included Plain Bob Major, Horton's 4 spliced and Norman Smith's. Hopefully we will achieve a rematch of these in the near future.

Thank you to all the towers that made their bells available to us, to Steve, Jonathan, Gordon and Geoff for assisting with the

organisation of attempts, and to everyone who took part. Finally, well done and congratulations to everyone who achieved their goal during the week.

[Thanks also to Stuart!]

Your Society Needs You!

Vacancies from Sept
2019 AGM

- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**
- **Website Editor**

Interested? Contact
sec@lwascr.org.uk

The benefits of TAPS

by Steve Askew

This year, a total of six of our Brewwood ringers participated in the Society Challenge Month "Thursday Accelerated Practice Sessions" which ran each Thursday morning throughout February.

The learning aspirations of the six people from Brewwood were wide ranging from intensive practice in Plain Bob Minor up to Surprise minor and conducting.

The sessions were very enjoyable with Lance being a great host at Armitage. A lovely warm church, plus tea, coffee, biscuits etc. all made ready for each of our TAPS sessions.

Jean successfully accommodated everyone's requests for specific teaching and practice, with loads of ringing including plain bob, Stedman, and St Clements, plus Cambridge, Norwich and Ipswich Surprise for those seeking harder challenges.

There were plenty of opportunities for ringing the treble to both plain and treble bob methods, ringing plain courses of many methods, touches, covering, conducting and raising / lowering.

Practicing these next steps in the individual learning paths for each of our Brewwood ringers in a new environment away from their home tower has proven to be very valuable. Each individual

learner has been able to bring their greater experience gained through TAPS back to their home tower here in Brewwood, and we have in turn benefited as a tower band by being able to attempt more challenging methods and touches.

Rob Hess, one of the Brewwood ringers said "Another TAPS and another very happy customer. Jean and her team offer a warm welcome to beginners - and not so beginners - as well as plenty of advice and encouragement. I've been attending TAPS at Armitage for the last couple of years, picking up valuable tips and confidence which I have been able to take back to practice nights at my own tower in Brewwood. Hopefully, Thursdays next February will bring more of the same. Thanks Jean."

THANKS to the TAPS team.

Newsletter Editor

Sue Binns has kindly volunteered to take over from Matt Gallon in editing the newsletter.

Please support Sue by sending her your news!

newsletter@lwascr.org.uk

The Tamworth After School ringing club

by John

Mulvey

We have been very lucky at Tamworth to have gained four young ringers through an after school ringing club. This after school club for pupils from the Landau Forte Academy QEMS is now in its fifth year and meets from 3.30pm on Wednesdays for an hour. Andrew Else and Richard Chantler are the tutors.

For the first two years of the club none of the pupils showed an interest in attending our practices and Andrew wondered if this was a good way of increasing the number of ringers at Tamworth.

Then two years ago two of the students, who were able to ring rounds, asked if they could come and join us at practice night. Two more joined them from the following year's club.

Very soon after joining us for practice they wanted to come along and ring with us for services. Now all four come to ring at practice and at least once on Sundays.

We realised that in order to keep their interest we needed to present them with new challenges and involve them in social events. This has involved all members of the Tamworth band being willing to give up their time

to transport them and ring with them at events that we organise.

February half term fun

Our young ringers have a two week half term in February and Andrew Else decided to keep them busy during this time.

During these two weeks each of them has rung a quarter peal. Freya Roberts rang her first quarter peal; ringing the tenor to Bob Doubles. Peter Biggin and Jack Lisseter each rang the treble to Bob Doubles. Tamzin Gulliver rang the treble to St Clements Minor.

They were taken to visit three new towers for their practice nights and Lichfield Cathedral for Sunday afternoon service ringing.

As well as this, those of us who are retired took them on a mini outing to ring at the nearby towers of Grendon, Polesworth and Orton on the Hill, not forgetting of course to include a pub lunch at the Unicorn at Orton.

Future plans to keep their interest include a skittles evening and a ring and walk event to which we may invite their parents.

We are trying to maintain their enthusiasm and it takes a lot of organisation and time but when one of your ringers says "The best thing about going to school was starting bell ringing" it makes it all worthwhile.



Young Tamworth ringers from the after school ringing club. Top: Peter Biggin & Jack Lisseter; bottom: Tamzin Gulliver & Freya Roberts.

More from Brewood.. by Steve Askew

Here in Brewood, we sought to make progress on a number of fronts through "Ringing Remembers" and through our Challenge Month.

We were delighted to welcome four new people to learn to ring during our Ringing Remembers campaign: Ruth Arbon, Lynn Bibb, Anne Moseley and Jane Osborne.

They all joined us for our remembrance day ringing on 11th November as you can see from the Bellboard notice here: <https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1257916>

Since November, all four of our new learners have continued to progress by ringing at Brewood and at other local towers.

For challenge month, we set ourselves a number of tower and personal targets.

For the tower, we sought to slightly expand our repertoire of methods to include a bit more surprise minor such as Norwich Surprise Minor, and we also sought to increase the number of people in our band who have achieved quarter peals, and as such, our ringer Rob Hess achieved his first quarter peal ringing the treble to a quarter of plain bob minor as in this bellboard notice:

<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1270180>

On the down side (although it was very good learning), we didn't successfully complete a peal attempt of plain bob major during peal week. (we will try again next year).

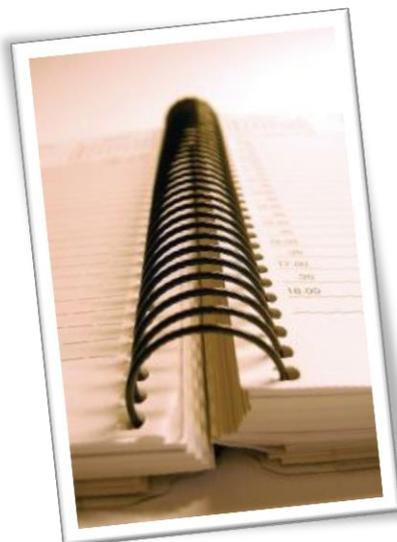
Email distribution list

For society announcements and news of events join the email list. Send your email address to: sec@lwascr.org.uk

Diary dates

Please make a note of the following events coming up. More details at www.lwascr.org.uk or from sec@lwascr.org.uk

- ✓ 23rd April, Tuesday Daytime Band
- ✓ 27th April, Society outing
(Leicester/Nuneaton)
- ✓ 18th May, Young ringers' event, Darlaston
- ✓ 21st May, Tuesday Daytime Band
- ✓ 15th June, Full meeting, Shenstone



Bell Restoration Fund Report

Total Funds: £14,170

Committed: £9,800

Over the years, many society towers have benefited from the fund, including recently: Cannock (sound control) and Abbots Bromley (training bell).

To keep the fund healthy, please consider donating through a one-off donation, or setting up a standing order. Towers who have benefited may also wish to make a donation from their own funds.

Contact: treasurer@lwascr.org.uk

100 Club Update

Lucky winners of the last draw were:

- ❖ 1st Nic White
- ❖ 2nd Ollie Bouckley
- ❖ 3rd Ruth Vyse
- ❖ 4th Bill Deason



If you'd like to try your luck and help raise money for the Bell Restoration Fund, please contact Linda Pick: lindapick@totalise.co.uk from the Society website.