

# Les Cloches des Îles

February 2017 – Issue No. 64



Dead Dog  
Yorkshire

Maltesers

Jersey 6 bell  
win

Simulator draw

Julie McDonnell

30 peal success

Alderney  
Delight

First on 12

Busy in Tulloch



The Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers  
Newsletter of the Channel Islands District

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<p>It is fantastic to have a wider range of authors in this edition of Les Cloches. Previous issues, although interesting, have been largely written by one or two members of the district and it can lead to a biased view of where all the action is taking place. Be sure to write up your news for the August issue and get your tower, island and personal achievements documented so we get a full view of how well our District is doing, as well as a more varied and enjoyable newsletter to read! Try to nominate someone to write up an event straight away as it's harder to put something together months later.</p> <p>Another plea is that you take more photos! Feel free to email me straight away with the photos and send the write-up later. With cameras in phones now of such good quality it is easy to snap a couple of shots and it brings life to the newsletter.</p> <p>DL</p>	3	Completing the family
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## Completing the family

Helen M McGregor

I would definitely describe Stedman as my Desert Island Method....if I could only ever ring one method ever again it would have to be Stedman.

Of course the main reason I like it is that I stay straight in the slow work when Peter dreams off the line – but seriously I just love the ‘poem’ of the slow work. Not for me the rigidity of ‘Quick 6’ or ‘slow 6 now’, - how boring & tedious ☹ - far more evocative of spy novels, treasure hunts & secret codes is ‘third third second lead lead second lead lead second third third second lead second third third second lead second third third second lead lead second third third’ - oh to recite that every 105 seconds or so for 2 1/2 hours – bliss ☺

And then of course you have to remember to change your feet – Did I? Didn’t I? – not to worry I will just check the feet of my fellow ringers while I dodge with them on the back – so much more fun than smiling at them when dodging together – a furtive glance at the floor where they are standing can be so much more enlightening – phew – of course I did ☺ but then that could just be the way they are standing & they have another way to know if they are quick or slow ☹ no worries – my feet are always right, happily they do it on their own totally independently of any conscious thought on my part – how lucky to have such clever feet.

My first peal of Stedman was Stedman Triples on 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 1983 with John Pladdys conducting – I swear he was psychic – he knew I was considering going wrong before I did! 2 more peals of Stedman in 1983 both caters. Another peal of Stedman triples in 1984, then cinques in 1996, 2013 & 2014.

I was never with 4 other Stedman ringers, 1 of whom had to be a conductor, AND a peal of bells until The Page 3 Society were on their way south after ringing their most northerly handbell qtr at Muckle Flugga. We were overnighing at Tulloch together with available bells aplenty, so we chose the back 5 of the 12 – hard work but very satisfying.

## **The Page 3 Society**

**Tulloch**, Highland, Tulloch Ringing Centre

Monday, 1 August 2016 in 2h 35m (7-2-4)

### **5040 Stedman Doubles**

1 Jenny M Page

3 Helen M McGregor

5 Jack E Page (C)

2 Daniel J Page

4 Peter J R Bevis

First peal of Stedman Doubles for all the band and completes the family from Doubles to Cinques: 3.

Of course Jack is planning Stedman 13 & 15 so he isn't recognising this as a complete family – I suspect it is for me though

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**

## **The Dead Dog rides again**

**Helen M McGregor**

I started to learn to ring Yorkshire S Major in hand in the early 90's. After a few quarter peals I was eventually considered good enough for my mentor to suggest a peal with me on the tenors. Ringing the tenors I had only to learn 7 combinations of place bells but keeping the permutations in my head whilst striking evenly & rhythmically & not getting lost was tricky.

A band was assembled so strong that Peter commented afterwards that they could have got a Dead Dog through it – it was 1992. I have repeated the feat 7 more times – always on the tenors. To ring an inside pair (the 3/4 or the 5/6 requires mastering all 21 possible combinations of place bells and to be able to switch from one to another easily – it has been a great challenge for me – lots of writing out the leads & poring over the patterns, taking every opportunity to ring plain courses and specially composed quarter peals with reduced combinations with my long suffering friends.

But the Dead Dog has just been seen again - now on an inside pair ringing with 3 super-stars of the handbell world on Alderney to ring a tower bell peal. I am hugely grateful to them for guiding me through my first ever handbell peal of surprise major on an inside pair.

Just like buses, Peter rang 2 peals of Yorkshire on the trebles – his first ever of surprise major in hand (after ringing handbells for 30 years) and then a second one in the same weekend.

**Guild of St Cuileáin, Alderney, Wells House**

Monday, 15 August 2016 in 2h16 (11G),

**5152 Yorkshire Surprise Major**

Composed by D G Hull

1–2 Thomas J Hinks

5–6 John N Hughes-D'Aeth (C)

3–4 Helen M McGregor \*

7–8 John P Loveless

\* First surprise major away from tenors

**Guild of St Cuileáin, Alderney, Wells House**

Friday, 12 August 2016 in 2h18 (12F),

**5088 Yorkshire Surprise Major**

Composed by Graham A C John

1–2 Peter J R Bevis \*

5–6 Jack E Page

3–4 John P Loveless

7–8 Graham A C John (C)

\*First Treble Dodging Major on handbells

**Guild of St Cuileáin, Alderney, Wells House**

Monday, 15 August 2016 in 2h 16m (12F),

**5024 Yorkshire Surprise Major**

Composed by Jonathan H Potter

1–2 Peter J R Bevis

5–6 Katharine J Firman

3–4 Graham G Firman

7–8 Jack E Page (C)

We took tower bell advantage of the peal band (& their supporters) too – special sessions of major on Friday afternoon 12<sup>th</sup> Aug and triples on Monday morning 15<sup>th</sup>, together with our normal Saturday & Monday practices had Aileen, Heather & Philippa working on Stedman triples, Double Bob Major, Little Bob Major, 3 leads of Kent TB major, Cambridge Major, Grandsire Cinques and treble bob on 12 ☺ closely watched by June, Trevor, Donald, Aaron, Pam, Victoria, John & Maurice  
Well done Alderney

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**



## 30 Peals – The Analysis

**Duncan Loweth**

You may remember from the previous two editions of Les Cloches of the challenge I was set by Guernsey handbell ringer Amy Madden which was to ring 30 peals in 2016, the year I turned 30.

At the end of July 23 peals had been scored and 7 remained. With 5 months to go I felt quietly confident that it could be finished off before the end of the year.

24) It was lovely to have Rob Gorton back in Guernsey for a couple of weeks and despite not having rung handbells for almost a year, Rob seemed to ring effortlessly. It was a delightfully rhythmic and steady peal and a fantastic first for Rob.

25) Detailed elsewhere in this issue is the story of how Gemma came to agree to ring a peal despite not being a ringer and having no interest in becoming one! I expected her musical background would make the peal rhythmical but I feared it would be slow – it wasn't, it ticked along nicely. Jack was offered the bells for the peal in place of Helen but declined, I'm not sure he realised that left him in charge of a baby! His face was sheer panic as I explained how to change her nappy. Thankfully for him, Janice arrived 10 min into the peal to help with Evelyn.

26) Exhausted from the first peal that day Helen and I sat down for a nice peal of Cambridge Minor with Jack and realised how cooked our brains were. He kept us going for an extent and then we relaxed into Plain Bob. I say relaxed; we raced through at break-neck speed.

27) Evelyn enjoyed a day with Gemma's parents whilst I took the train to London to ring a couple of Cumberland peals with Alan Regin. The first, seven surprise minor methods, was pretty calm. It was nice to have the 5 as I could follow the compositions of the extents nicely which helped me not to go wrong.

28) Later the same day we rang Bristol Major and it was glorious. I don't think I've rung better before or since. I had to not look at the tenors as I

expected the rope sight would put my striking off. I was on the 4 and made the bob quite a bit to begin with, so I decided that I would only look at the clock when I made the bob (this was about half an hour in). Despite being tempted many times I resisted looking and waited until the next time I made the bob, it was taking a long time but eventually it happened and the peal came round!

29) The next day I drove up to Cambridgeshire for a peal of the 11 plain minimus methods at a 4 bell tower. The bells were rather heavy for a 4 and it was hard work, I think we were trying to turn them in a little faster than they should be rung. We all had pretty shredded hands by the end.

30) The same day, after a tasty pub lunch we rang a steady peal of Bob Minor in hand. It was nice to finish the 30 as it started, with a first peal of Bob Minor in hand.

By the end of the year I got up to 34 peals. I was already booked into two peals in Alderney, one in August and the other in December. We were also due to ring a handbell peal in Alderney but with the pressure off we rang three quarters instead including one of Original Minor which was a triumph. The other two peals got booked in when I realised Gemma was away for a weekend in November and what else should you do when your wife is away but ring peals?!

A few statistics:

1	Minimus	68 different people rang with me in one or more of the peals with the top scorers:	
2	Doubles		
2	Doubles and Minor		
17	Minor	9	Helen M <sup>c</sup> Gregor
7	Major	7	Jane Le Conte
1	Royal	6	Janice Firth
		6	Peter Bevid
10	Tower	5	Alan Regin
18	Handbells		
2	Miniring		

The most popular method of the 30 was Plain Bob Minor which was rung 8 times (9 if you count the peal of Bob Minor with an extra 30 of Grandsire doubles).

In the course of the year I joined 5 guilds / associations. Winchester and Portsmouth took the most peals with 14, followed by the Cumberlands with 6.

Of the 30 peals I conducted 21 and personally scored 11 firsts of various different forms.

I was expecting to find ringing 30 peals quite difficult, particularly when 4 or 5 were planned for 2 or 3 consecutive days, but ringing them wasn't the hardest part. Neither was learning the new methods. The hardest thing was organising the bands, particularly the UK bands where I was trying to find people to ring who I'd never meet and did not have the local contacts. I am deeply grateful to everyone who rang with me in the year, especially those who rang multiple times, and did not moan or grumble, or even need much arm twisting as I asked them to ring yet another peal. Everyone was very supportive and generous with their time and I could not have achieved it without your help so THANK YOU!

**DL**

### **The day I agreed to ring a peal (as a non-bell ringer)!**

**Gemma Loweth**

On a cold winter's evening, just before Christmas last year, my husband and I were enjoying good cheese, good wine and good company with our friends Dan and Amy Madden (Amy is also a handbell ringer). Duncan was musing on the idea of doing something to celebrate his 30th Birthday which was approaching in August 2016 and saying how he would like to try to arrange a few peals in August to mark the occasion. Suddenly, with a wry smile on her face, Amy came out with "as you are going to be 30, surely you should ring 30 peals!" To which I opened my mouth to suggest how ridiculous that sounded, however, after taking a look at Duncan's face,



I shut my mouth again because I knew any protest I made would be in vain! I simply said "you are crazy, you know that don't you?!" A plan had been hatched and already I could see the cogs turning to turn this challenge into reality.

We went to visit family over Christmas and New Year and one evening we were relaxing in a sauna chatting about the past year and the birth of our beautiful daughter and our thoughts of the coming year. The subject of 30 peals soon came up in conversation and I said "You are serious about this aren't you?" To which Duncan's response was "of course and if you want to ring one with me, I'm sure it can be arranged". This was the most ridiculous suggestion ever, because although I have tried ringing and on handbells have rung plain hunt on a coursing pair, I soon discovered that it was not the hobby for me and I preferred my classical music. I don't know whether it was the wine or just being relaxed whilst away for the Christmas celebrations, but I suddenly heard a little voice saying "I might consider it if a) I don't have to do much, if anything, to prepare; b) you never expect me to ring again; and c) it is done on your actual birthday" and no sooner had I heard those words said, I realised that it was me who had said them! Uh oh, there was no going back now! It was like telling a child in a sweet shop that if he could work out how to open that jar of treats, they were his!

When we got back to Guernsey, Duncan explained to me that I would be taking bells 5 and 6 but only need to think about one bell. My right hand would be counting 5,4,3,2,1,1,2,3,4,5 over and over and my left hand would simply be going 6,6,6,6,6,6,6 etc. It sounded easy enough to me, but the thought of doing this for 3 HOURS, quite frankly sounded like torture! At the usual handbell practice I sat down, took hold of the bells and gave it a go. I could do this. It wasn't too bad. After ringing for a while (it felt like at least 30 minutes) I asked how much longer than what we had just done would be required to do a peal. I was then given some horrible news. We had only been ringing for around 5 minutes and if we went at that speed, the peal would take around 3.5 hours + to complete! Noooooooooooooo!

Over the next few months, at the start of handbell practice I occasionally sat down for 10-15 minutes to 'give it a go' and see if we could get the

speed up. On Monday 8th August (two days before peal day) I realised that I hadn't tried it for a while so we had another go. We were ringing for a while when Duncan said "that's all" and informed me that on Wednesday we would be ringing that section 42 times over and if we rang at that speed, we should be in for a peal time of around 3 hours 20 minutes. It felt like a life sentence, but as a one off birthday 'treat' I was confident that it was something I would be able to endure!

On the 10th August 2016, Duncan turned 30 years old. After opening some pressies, he went to the airport to collect Helen (who was in my peal) and Jack (who was ringing another peal with them later in the day). Once sat down with the bells in my hand, I knew there was no going back. Down went the first bells - oh no, I hadn't taken my jumper off and I was boiling! I really hadn't thought this through! Luckily, something went wrong within the first couple of minutes, so we stopped and I was able to take my jumper off and make sure I was sitting comfortably.

Take two... 5,6 - 5,6 - 4,6 - 3,6 - 2,6 - 1,6 - 1,6 - 2,6 - 3,6 - 4,6 - 5,6 - 5,6 etc. Ok, so this is going to be a LONG 3 hours. I managed to catch sight of a de-humidifier machine that we have and noticed that there were 5 grooves in the side. To help hold my concentration and to be frank, give me something to do with my eyes, I used these five grooves to help keep track of where my right hand bell was going down. "Bob", "Bob", "Bob"... I heard Duncan saying. I was sure that he had previously told me that I would hear the word "bob" said 42 times (it turns out that there were three times 42 bobs). We had started and there was no stopping until I heard "that's all"!

After a while, I notice that I could see Duncan's watch and although I wasn't 100% sure what time we had started, I thought it was shortly before 10.30am. The watch said 11am - one 6th of the way through, I thought! I tried not to look at the watch again because I thought it could be a bit off-putting. After what seemed like a long time, I looked. 11.05am. Drat, that was a slow 5 minutes! By the time 11.30am came around, I was getting in the swing of things and there were some patches where it was sounding quite nice and rhythmical. At 11.35am Duncan said "that's half way" - "yes" I thought, thank goodness for that.

Although, I didn't want to clock watch too much, I knew that every minute that past was a minute closer to the end! I thought it would be sensible for me to have a bit of a wiggle on my chair and shrug my shoulders to stop myself getting stiff, but I soon realised that it might be a bit late for that. Although I had been quite good at stretching out my hands as we were going, I had clearly not moved my shoulders or back for the past hour or so and I suddenly knew about it! At 12.30pm, I thought to myself that if half way was 11.30 the end must be in sight. "This must be the last time" I thought, but we kept going. "This must be the last time", but again we kept going. "Surely, this must be the last time", but still we kept going. I soon gave into the thought that it could keep going for quite a while so I just needed to go with it. "That's all!" I heard, followed by the lovely sound of 1,2,3,4,5,6 bells, bringing it to an end!

I can't quite say that I enjoyed it, but it certainly was an achievement to add to my CV and with a time of 2 hours 21 minutes, a very respectable achievement at that! Has it turned me into a bellringer? I'm afraid to say it hasn't - I think I'll stick to the violin! I am very grateful to Helen and Duncan for putting up with my super novice ringing style and helping to drag me through and I am very grateful at being able to have joined in the celebrations for my wonderful husbands 30th Birthday. Our peal was number 25 of his target so I've got no doubt that he will hit it well before the end of the year and I am very proud of his commitment and achievements.

As you will all be aware Duncan can have some crazy ideas when it comes to bell ringing (in fact, when it comes to most things really), so please feel free, if you ask him what he plans on doing for his 40th and you hear his answer "40 peals in 40 days, of course", to tell him that he is truly bonkers!

Wishing a very happy 30th Birthday to a very special man!

**GL**

## Bellringers Strike Back Against Blood Cancer

**Helen M McGregor**

You may have seen in the Ringing World that UK lady bell ringer suffering from Leukemia has an anonymous donor promising £10,000 for The Anthony Nolan Register and Bloodwise charity if 100 bands around the country ring a quarter peal specially composed & named after her – Julie McDonnell Bob Doubles.

This is a variation composed from ringing Callender bob with a Lichfield single, quite challenging but the Alderney band succeeded on Saturday Aug 20.

We are planning more attempts in the coming weeks to include as many as possible of the band.



Photo of the band which rang 1260 Julie McDonnell Bob Doubles: 1. Heather Winder, 2. Daniel Page, 3. Helen McGregor, 4. Peter Bevis, 5. Jack Page (c), 6. Aileen Wilson

## Guernsey Added To The Julie McDonnell Map

**Sue Le Feuvre**

So pleased that the Town Church has been able to add Guernsey to the Julie McDonnell map. We rang a QP of Julie McDonnell Doubles this morning with an all Town Church band. What a great end to our 2016 ringing...

Guernsey, CI Town Church  
Wednesday, 28 December 2016 in  
44min (11cwt)

### **1260 Julie McDonnell Doubles**

1 Sue Park	3 Sue Le Feuvre	5 Duncan Loweth (C)
2 Jane Le Conte	4 Paul Lawrence	6 Janice Firth

First in variation for all.

**SLF**

## Alderney Delight

**Helen M McGregor**

It's official - Alderney is a delight:

### **Guild of St Cuileáin**

**Alderney**, Channel Islands  
Wells House

Friday, 12 August 2016 in 2h 52 (16)

### **5040 Alderney Delight Maximus**

Composed by David C Brown

1-2 Jack Page	7-8 Graham G Firman
3-4 Thomas J Hinks	9-10 Katharine J Firman
5-6 David C Brown C)	11-12 Graham A C John

First peal in the method: 3-3.4-2-t-2-5.4-4.7.6-6.7.6-6.7, 2. Group A.

The band plan to return to ring this in the tower before too long

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**

## Results 6 bell inter-tower Jsy Sept 17<sup>th</sup> 2016

Helen M McGregor

Judges Jo Druce & Giles Winter:

Generally the ringing was good, pleased to have a wide age range in the participants and a corresponding range of abilities leads to an interesting spread of ringing. We noted that the bells were lighter than many were used to but all participants managed the bells well.

Most bands had a good rhythm so some slight inconsistencies in the changes were absorbed tho there was a problem with some of the little bells ringing over the bigger bells & particularly some of the leading was uneven

Team 1 (Alderney Hedgehogs), a nervous start, good basic rhythm, settled well after 2 or 3 circuits – very pleasing that they continued to improve throughout the test piece. Score 24



Team 2 (Vale), good rhythm, periods of clean changes the a period of less clean ringing – particularly in the middle of the change & at lead. Score 18.

Team 3 (Town Church), The rounds were poor but once they went into changes they suddenly had a much better rhythm (!), some very steady ringing, a good tenor beat but some clippy ringing from the little bells. Score 15 ½

Team 4 (Elizabeth College 1), An inexperienced band, trying hard. The



faults came because pairs of bells rang too close but once the ringing came back into rounds it was perfect, they were encouraged by the good clear rounds and off they went again. Very consistent ringing. Score 37



Team 5 (Alderney Puffins), Very good steady rounds which they used to maximum advantage, lots of clear rows but then little bells in seconds and thirds place were an issue but good steady piece of ringing. Score 13 ½

Team 6 (Elizabeth College 2), An inexperienced call change band, whose inconsistencies were repeated. They need to listen more to improve but had a good basic rhythm. Unfortunately a few extra changes were rung than were strictly needed. Score 41

Team 7 (St Mark's) Good rhythm, long periods with no faults, what clips there were in seconds place with the little bells being responsible for the deviations. Score 7 ½



Team 8 (St John's), Rounds were lumpy but then once they went into changes it was a good piece of ringing, long periods with no faults tho again some tenor/leading issues. Score 11

Team 9 (scratch), Another interesting piece of ringing, there were some inconsistencies but long periods with no faults – sadly a hiccup near the end resulted in quite a few faults. Score 14

Results: 1<sup>st</sup> St Marks, 2<sup>nd</sup> St John's & 3<sup>rd</sup> Alderney Puffins

## **Jersey comes first and second in 2016 inter-island 6 bell striking competition**

**Justin Read (written as a press release)**

Jersey church bell-ringers were awarded first and second place in the annual inter Channel Island 6 bell striking competition which was held in Jersey on Saturday 17th September.



The competition, which took place at St John's in Jersey, saw teams from Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney compete to win the Taylor Shield.

The competition involved 10 bands of bell-ringers ringing a test piece of 120 changes, i.e. each bell sounds 120 times. Each team selects the 'tune' they want to ring and learns the test piece in advance. Two UK judges, who flew in for the competition, scored the ringing based on how even the ringers rang the bells and awarded scores accordingly. The lower the score the better the ringing was judged to be. Jersey St. Mark's who came first with 7.5 faults, Jersey St. John's came second with 11 faults. The third placed band was Alderney with 13 faults.

Justin Read, captain of the winning team from Jersey said, 'We are delighted that Jersey has once again won the shield against stiff competition from bands representing the other islands. It was particularly pleasing that the judge commented that there were long periods of faultless ringing during both the Jersey pieces'.

The two Jersey bands included 12 year old Hannah Read, who was participating in her first competition with the oldest ringer, Robin Pittman, having recently turned 80.

In April 2017 a Jersey band is planning to compete in the inter Channel Islands eight bell competition which will be held in Guernsey. Jersey won this competition in 2014 and 2015 and looking forward to regaining the trophy next year.

JR



**Sat Sept 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Aaron Hallett**

The trip to Jersey was good fun. I made new friends and the competition was great. My team came 7th out of 9. After the competition we went to the zip wire at Creepy Valley.

**AH**



**Duncan Loweth**

Having voted for Elizabeth College to enter legitimate teams in the 6 bell competition I was keen to push the boys for this year's entry. Unfortunately we had a 9 week holiday just before the competition which is sub optimal! It was a mark of how seriously the boys were taking it that they regularly turned out over the holiday to practice. Last time we had entered a called changes band and I decided we would ring plain hunt this year to move us on, ultimately towards method ringing.

The Director of Music is pro-bells which is extremely useful and she encouraged some older boys (15 year olds) to agree to ring in the competition. Not being a ringers she didn't really understand how difficult that would be with only 3 months' notice! Thankfully one of the boys, Finlay Wilkes, had learnt ringing previously although he had given it up for the last 3 years. The other, Harvey Falla, was a complete novice, but when I started teaching him I knew his musical talent was pushing him quickly on. On Harvey's 3<sup>rd</sup> lesson he rang rounds for the first time, and then called changes, including leading! He couldn't attend any of the summer sessions



but came to the Town Church practice on Thursday evening a couple of times. In total I think he had 5 hours of ringing practice before we got the boat to Jersey for the competition.

Although we came last, and second last, I was deeply impressed with the achievements of the boys. The plain hunt band had advanced from called changes the previous year and got a much lower score than previously. I was doubtful that the called changes band would be able to enter, some of the ringers could not keep steady in rounds only a fortnight before the competition, but the fear of public humiliation must have been what they needed because on the day they rang very respectably for their experience level. Both bands were conducted by boys although I did chip in with some striking advice as we rang.

After an intense evening of practice the night before, and the competition in the morning, the boys thoroughly enjoyed the climbing and zip-wire activity at Creepy Valley although they were very sorry to have missed the district meeting in the afternoon.



DL

## **The Master's Maltesers**

**Helen M M<sup>c</sup>Gregor**

At each ADM I propose to award **The Master's Maltesers** to the CI ringer who has made the biggest contribution to ringing over the last year – this can be ringing something challenging themselves but is more likely to be helping others achieve their goals – no matter how modest.

The run-away winner 2015/2016 was Duncan Loweth. Not only by achieving his target of 30 peals in his 30<sup>th</sup> year – necessarily boosting most other Guernsey ringers' peal totals but in teaching so many youngsters on Guernsey that his was able to bring not one but two teams of youngsters to ring on Jersey Sept 17<sup>th</sup>, necessitating an overnight stay. AND as if that wasn't enough – to avoid them having to sit through our service & meeting - he organised a trip to Creepy Valley to ensure they had a great day AND he took youngsters from other teams with him to Creepy Valley – the man is a Saint😊

Please can I have nominations for next year's Master's Maltesers by the end of August 2017 please.

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**

## **cibells.com**

**Helen M M<sup>c</sup>Gregor**

The District website [cibells.com](http://cibells.com) now has a page detailing agenda items for next meeting.

Any member wishing to add an item to the agenda for our next meeting should email their request to District Sec - Jane Le Conte, [janeleconte@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:janeleconte@hotmail.co.uk) who will add it to the webpage. All members can view the current list of matters to be discussed at any time.

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**

## **Town Church Cheshire Outing October 2017**

**Sue Le Feuvre**

On Friday evening people were approaching De Trafford Hotel at Alderney Edge from all directions and by many means of transport. John and I came separately by train, Paul and Lin from Wales by car, Jane from Liverpool, Viv and Graham by car and those coming directly from Guernsey by plane then minibus.

The early arrivals gathered in the bar for a few drinks and dinner and gradually the size of the group expanded until we occupied three or four tables. It was a good evening. It must have been a good evening because when paying my bill I forgot about my sweet. How anyone could forget such a giant chocolate sundae I can't imagine... well yes maybe a few glasses of wine had something to do with it.

Duncan's schedule said we had to leave the hotel at 8.30 so breakfast was going to be a hurried affair since they didn't begin service until 8 o'clock at weekends. We were able to help ourselves to cereal and fruit and make toast before 8.00 so discussed making do with that. But Judith was on holiday and wanted her cooked breakfast. That lady was not for turning! And the hotel came up trumps and got everyone fed with the meal of their choice in time for us to be out in the carpark bang on time.

But hey, somebody's missing! For some inexplicable reason Rob chose MonkeyWorld with Evelyn and Gemma over ringing with us. Shame because I was looking forward to his running commentary from the co-pilot's seat.

The morning went well. as did the lunch at The White Bear at Holmes Chapel so we set off down the road to the church with a really good feeling about the day.

Mmmm that's a bit like ringing; as soon as you think it's going well it all goes downhill. The first touch was Bob Doubles which I was calling. It wasn't going brilliantly and I was about to call rounds when someone yelled "STAND". Peter's rope had pulled through his hands and up through the ceiling. Thankfully the chap who had let us in was chatting in the

street, heard the bell coming down and came back to investigate. He and Peter went upstairs for quite a while but came down with good news.

The stay had not broken, the slider is slightly short to avoid hitting part of the frame and as Peter had rested the stay against it whilst holding up for a dodge the stay had pushed past the slider and gone over the balance. With the bell sorted and rung back up we continued to have a somewhat nervous session.

So after the drama at Holmes Chapel we pinned our hopes on Lower Peover. This was a delightful church with many of the church ladies there to welcome us and offer tea and coffee. They were pleased we were there to ring their bells and stayed to listen. Well I quite liked them but I think I was in a minority of close to one because they had a long draft and were not easy. I think it was with relief that the time came to head up the path to The Bells of Peover for our afternoon break.

In the evening we had a break from ringing and had a posh meal at Pecks. Great to relax in good company with delicious food and (too much) wine. Many thanks for buying us the second bottle of wine and ensuring my hangover Victoria!

Sunday morning was service ringing then the option of lunch or a walk with Rob followed by afternoon ringing which thankfully was without incident. An interesting coffee break at Jodrell Bank Cafe, a ring at Goostrey and then to Rob's tower at Nether Alderley. These were very nice and thank goodness we didn't embarrass ourselves or (hopefully) Rob.

The tower at Chester Cathedral is detached from the main building. These were a lot easier to ring than many cathedrals and Jane ran a good practice... almost to the end. Ringing down in peal was going well; in fact we'd got to "After three miss one and catch in rounds" We chimed the three and we missed one and Duncan gave the rope a good tug to chime in rounds and the rope just kept coming down. Duncan's expression when he thought he'd broken something was priceless!

Ringling at Handbridge was uneventful but as we left the church grounds the lady who had let us in flagged us down and asked whether the fleece

she found in the tower belonged to one of us. Someone said it had already been in the tower when we got there so no not ours. Not far down the road and Duncan's phone rang. It was Sue to ask whether we had found Paul's fleece. Ah! So it was one of ours. But the real problem was his car keys were in the pocket. A phone call to the phone number of the lady who let us in gave us the news that she was out with the dog for a couple of hours. Luckily they hotfooted it back to the tower and she was still around.

That meant that Paul and co missed the final tower so we were a little short of ringers but they were very pleasant and it was a good end to a successful weekend.

When we met up with Paul at the airport we discovered that not only had he temporarily misplaced his fleece during the afternoon but also his iPad and Lin. Thankfully he managed to gather all his belongings together eventually.

Thank you Duncan for a great ringing outing.

**SLF**

## **Tulloch 2016**

**Hannah Read**

During October half term this year we had a wonderful week in Tulloch. We were looking forward to the trip, but we did not expect to accomplish so much. When we left for the airport, William could just about ring rounds and called changed and I could ring Plain Bob Minor.

The trip to Glasgow was easy, thanks to EasyJet. Richard met us at the airport and we collected the car. We then headed for Tulloch collecting far too many supplies at a convenient Tesco – the boot was already full with luggage so we had the food packed around us in the back of the car. Lunch was at a posh department store (called The House of Bruar) in the middle of nowhere. A very odd place but the food was good. We were surprised to see Jersey Pottery for sale alongside Harris Tweed!

Having arrived at our lovely cottage in Tulloch we just about had the



chance to unpack before the first ring of our holiday. This was an impromptu practice on the main 12. This was our first ever ring on 12 bells. Whilst slightly daunting at first, the bells were very easy to ring, so we soon got over our initial nerves.

For those who don't know Tulloch, it is a ringing centre, with farm attached, and has a beautiful ring of 12, a very light and easy-going ring of eight and a simulator. The two peals of bells are hung in adjacent buildings, but both can be rung at the same time due to excellent sound control.

The simulator lets you ring everything from covering behind to Plain Hunt on five to Stedman Septuples. The simulator was a particular favourite of William, daddy and Richard. Richard was renamed Mr Simulator – which is where he was most often found accompanied by the obligatory box of chocolate. William spent many hours practicing tenor behind whilst daddy tried more adventurous stuff. The simulator scores each piece out of 10. At first we thought that it was impossible to score a perfect ten but Helen was the first to achieve it and was so excited she got Richard out of bed to show him. William was very proud to have been the first to score 10 when covering to triples. The simulator could be booked for an hour at a time and daddy appeared to have booked it during the early hours on some mornings (but he never scored a 10).

During the week, there were a number of peals and quarter peals at the two towers and on hand bells. In total, there were three peals and 35 quarters. Here are some of the most notable performances:



Hannah's first quarter as conductor – 1260 of Plain Bob Doubles

Hannah's first of Triples

William's first quarter – covering to Plain Bob Doubles\*

William's second quarter- covering to Plain Bob Triples

First ever quarter of Tulloch Alliance Major

Duncan's first quarter of Surprise Major in hand

\*William was only expecting a long touch!

Another notable performance was Victoria's first attempt at Surprise Minor, which very nearly turned into a quarter peal.

It was good to have so many other children in the group, including Daniel Page (14) who called his first quarter, Jennifer Ellis (11) who rang her first quarter and Adam Turner (9) who was able to ring rounds and called changes on 12. During the week, we rang some excellent rounds on 12 with the youngest ringers, in order of age (William on treble, followed by Adam, Jennifer, Hannah and Daniel). Daddy didn't quite make the band!

In addition to the ringing, Tulloch is a fully functioning farm, with goats, sheep, horses and chickens. We loved being able to collect our own eggs for breakfast in the morning, and I enjoyed the horse-riding. We also loved exploring the local area, which included a walk to a waterfall accompanied by one of the farm dogs to show us the way.

An honourable mention goes to the amount of chocolate and cake that was consumed during the week, all washed down with copious amounts of tea and coffee. Without the sweet treats, I don't think we would have achieved so much.

All in all, it was a really fun and friendly week and we can't wait to go back.

P.S. I don't know why everyone moans about the Scottish weather. It was lovely during our time there apart from on our day off when we tried to



visit Ben Nevis but found the visibility and winds meant the cable car was shut.

**HR**

## **First on 12**

**Helen M M<sup>c</sup>Gregor**

The CI 12 bell capability got a very useful boost when Duncan & Jane rang their first peal of cinquies on Sat Dec 10th.

### **Winchester & Portsmouth Diocesan Guild**

**Alderney, Alderney**

St Anne

Saturday, 10 December 2016 in 3h13 (13–1–0 in F#)

### **5015 Grandsire Cinques**

Composed by R LeMarechal

1 Roy LeMarechal (C)	5 Duncan R Loweth	9 Julian N Ferrar
2 Peter J R Bevis	6 Helen M McGregor	10 Michael J Pomeroy
3 Andrew H Ball	7 Jane LeConte	11 Andy Mead
4 Ian P Hastilow	8 George E Wyatt	12 Graham J Wright

First on 12 - 5, 7, 8.

With the best wishes of the band to local ringer Maurice Stupart for his 92nd birthday on 13th Dec.

The peal was a 92nd birthday complement to Maurice

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**

### **Improved sound control at St Anne's**

**Helen M M<sup>c</sup>Gregor**

The stone masons & carpenters have been very busy up the tower.

Historically the 12 sets of louvers (3 on each of the 4 faces) had been open to permit the full volume of the bells to cascade over the town. However ten years ago 8 louvres were sealed with only 4 (the centre one in each face) having shutters openable for performances. This had the unfortunate result that the bells closest to the open louvre sounded out much louder than bells in each corner of the tower – leading to a very unbalanced sound effect outside. The band are delighted with the recent work of the stone masons and carpenters – we now have new parallel slate sound boards – replacing uneven concrete slabs - directing the sound down into the churchyard and all 12 louvres now have openable shutters –

permitting both quiet practice and balanced performance ringing. We are very grateful to the States of Alderney for maintaining this aspect of the Church building – the bells of Alderney have a good following amongst ringers in the UK and we are looking forward to a busy 2017

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**

## **More training from our visitors**

**Helen M M<sup>c</sup>Gregor**

The Alderney band have again played host to visitors who came to ring a full peal on all 12 bells Sat Dec 10<sup>th</sup>. The visitors came to a special practice on Friday afternoon Dec 9<sup>th</sup> which allowed Philippa, Victoria, Heather & Aileen an opportunity to develop their Kent TB Major & their Cambridge Surprise major skills. The visitors also joined us on Sat morning to share their know-how with the whole Alderney band.

The visitors had invited 2 ringers from Guernsey (Jane & Duncan) and 2 from Alderney (Helen & Peter) to have ropes in the peal which was rung as a 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday compliment to Maurice. The ringing on Sunday morning was enhanced by the presence of the visitors & the band have received many compliments on the quality of the recent Service ringing.

John & June Wells have also just spent a hectic 4 days on Alderney. They have taken part in 3 separate training/qtr peal afternoons: The following first qtr peals demonstrate the increasing depth of ability we have here on the northern isle 😊 Aileen Wilson – first treble for Surprise major & first Kent TB major. Heather Winder first Kent TB major, first inside Surprise Major. Victoria McAllister first Kent TB Major, first bob caters. Donald first tenor cover for caters and Jane Trought her first on 8 bells when she rang the treble for the all local qtr bob major for Homecoming. Heather & Aileen also rang in the bob caters but they are old hands at that so didn't get a footnote 😊

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**

## Tower Reports

### St Anne, Alderney

We have been without a vicar since end of October but the ringing is flourishing. When providing the Ringers Paragraph for the parish profile we took the opportunity to standardise the midweek qtr peal attempts so we now have 2 practice slots and 2 dedicated performance ringing times. Of course we also ring for any extra services and many secular events eg Opening Alderney Week. We are currently expecting an invitation to stand in at York Minster and think it is only Aurigny sabotaging the mail that has caused our invitation to be delayed.

41 performances on Bellboard tell their own story:

26 December 2016	St Anne	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
21 December 2016	St Anne	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
18 December 2016	St Anne	1260 Plain Bob Minor
16 December 2016	Wells House	1280 Kent Treble Bob Royal
15 December 2016	St Anne	1250 Cambridge Surprise Major
15 December 2016	St Anne	1264 Plain Bob Major
14 December 2016	St Anne	1280 Kent Treble Bob Major
14 December 2016	St Anne	1280 Kent Treble Bob Major
13 December 2016	St Anne	1296 Plain Bob Caters
10 December 2016	St Anne	5015 Grandsire Cinques
28 September 2016	St Anne	1260 Doubles (4m)
13 September 2016	Wells House	1296 Spliced Major (4 Methods)
11 September 2016	Wells House	1266 Spliced Major (2m)
10 September 2016	Wells House	1320 Netherseale Surprise Minor
9 September 2016	St Anne	1260 St Clements College Bob Minor
8 September 2016	St Anne	1260 Julie McDonnell Bob Doubles
6 September 2016	Wells House	1260 Doubles and Minor (2m/V)
2 September 2016	Wells House	1320 Norfolk Surprise Minor
1 September 2016	St Anne	1320 Bourne Surprise Minor
31 August 2016	Wells House	1260 Julie McDonnell Bob Doubles
30 August 2016	Wells House	1260 Un-Saiph Little Bob Major

28 August 2016	Wells House	1250 Yorkshire Surprise Major
27 August 2016	St Anne	1260 Plain Bob Minor
27 August 2016	St Anne	1260 Julie McDonnell Bob Doubles
26 August 2016	Wells House	1250 Yorkshire Surprise Major
25 August 2016	Wells House	1344 Double Bob Major
25 August 2016	Wells House	1260 Double Bob Royal
25 August 2016	Wells House	1260 Original Minor
24 August 2016	St Anne	5056 Plain Bob Major
23 August 2016	Wells House	1260 Plain Bob Royal
20 August 2016	St Anne	1260 Julie McDonnell Bob Doubles
17 August 2016	St Anne	1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor
15 August 2016	Wells House	5024 Yorkshire Surprise Major
15 August 2016	Wells House	5152 Yorkshire Surprise Major
14 August 2016	Wells House	5136 Bristol Surprise Maximus
14 August 2016	Westeros	5024 Spliced Surprise Major (4m)
13 August 2016	St Anne	5136 Bristol Surprise Maximus
12 August 2016	Wells House	5040 Alderney Delight Maximus
12 August 2016	Wells House	5056 London Surprise Major
12 August 2016	Wells House	5088 Yorkshire Surprise Major
9 August 2016	Wells House	1274 Aileen's Little Bob Major

We are particularly proud of our 4 qtrs of Julie McDonnell – one of which was in hand – enabling 8 different band members to make a contribution to the Ringers Strike Back fundraising campaign. Also – while Jack was with us - we took the opportunity to ring & name a new plain major method, Un-Saiph Little bob major which is an interesting variation on ringing the usual little bob major – Un-Saiph has the treble only hunting to 3rds place rather than 4ths so above the treble the dodges are 3/4, 4/5, 5/6, 6/7 and long 8ths – try it, it's fun.

The Alderney ringers welcomed Mariko Whyte into the band in the autumn – she has made an enormous impact on our ability to ring everything so much better – every band always says 'if only we had one more' – well we got one😊. Our 8 bell band has benefitted most significantly & we now have 3 leads of Kent TB Major & plain hunt on 9 as standard on Sunday mornings – and our raising & lowering just gets better

& better.

As ever the visiting peal bands, John & June Wells and Jack & Daniel Page have all been worked very hard to extend the repertoire of our top end and they, in turn, have helped bring on the novices – the synergy is palpable. Storm damage to the roof of the tower stairs has all been repaired and the States of Alderney took the opportunity to replace the old uneven concrete louvers with beautiful, even, slate ones.

In addition - historically - the 12 sets of louvres (3 on each of the 4 faces) had been open to permit the full volume of the bells to cascade over the town. To permit quieter practice 8 of the louvres had been permanently sealed and only 4 (the centre one in each face) had shutters openable for performances. This had the unfortunate result that the bells closest to the open louvres sounded out much louder than bells in each corner of the tower – leading to a very unbalanced sound effect outside. The band are delighted with the work of the stone masons and carpenters as we now have new slate sound boards directing the sound down into the churchyard and all 12 louvres now have openable shutters – permitting both quiet practice and balanced performance ringing.

The much loved simulator at Wells House has been dismantled and shipped to Jersey☺ a new one is on order together with a set of 8 which will be hung in a circle in our garage – all of which will be designated Wells Bells – and should be available by the summer 2017 ☺

**HMM<sup>c</sup>G**

## **St. John's, Jersey**

The St. John's band is expanding! Following a plea on Radio Jersey (both Justin and Louise were interviewed on separate occasions), we have one new recruit, Sarah, who is making steady progress. We have also taught a new ringer, Guy, in super quick time. Sadly, Guy has had to take some time away from ringing to study for his advocates exams. We look forward to welcoming Guy back shortly.

Practice nights have moved to Tuesdays, which seems to have improved availability, as has the judicious use of Google Sheets to check availability.



The Rector of St. John's left the island in October to take up a new post in the UK. Ringing has, of course, continued during the interregnum. We await news of our new Rector who we understand will be appointed early in the New Year.

The Read family, together with Richard ventured north to Tulloch in October. Hannah and William made excellent progress during their week away. Hannah can now ring Plain Bob Triples, Grandsire Doubles, Treble Bob and Plain Bob Minor. William rang his first two quarters, ringing the tenor behind to double and triples. Richard became 'Mr Simulator' and spent many happy hours supporting everyone to get the most out of Tulloch's ringing simulator. A furious competition then ensued as to who could achieve the perfect score of 10, or indeed whether it was possible at all, culminating in Helen fetching Richard late one evening to evidence her score.

As a band we have enjoyed supporting the learners (indeed perhaps we are all really still learning) including challenging ourselves to a variety of handling challenges; including standing the bells after each pull, ringing rounds and backwards rounds at alternate strokes (thanks to Helen for that one), and generally having fun while improving our teamwork and striking.

Robin has been out of action due to a sore knee. We hope the latest operation has been a success and he is back on the end of a rope soon.

Thanks to everyone for their continued support.

2 January 2017	St John	1260 Grandsire Doubles
18 September 2016	St Mark	1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor
5 August 2016	St Mark	1260 Mixed Doubles (2 Methods)

**JR**

## Vale, Guernsey

We have managed to ring for all of the Parish Eucharists. It has been difficult especially when the ringers are on holiday and the band is decimated. Practices continue. Our minimus and doubles repertoire is expanding.

At Christmas we were pleased to welcome David Ely on his annual Christmas visit. Roping him in for a quarter peal for the Christingle service.

We had an enjoyable day in Jersey, For once travel wasn't hampered with fog! And we managed to get there and back on time.

We now have two learners! Barrie and Beverly. They were married at the Vale in September and are now part of the Church family. They started learning in January. Their aim (other than becoming Sunday Service Ringers which is the reason we ring) is to ring a quarter peal together for their first wedding anniversary. So far so good.

It must be something in the water but we rang quarters for two new grandchildren for Vale ringers. Thomas (Mike and Cathy's grandson) so an appropriate quarter of St Thomas Doubles was run and Rose (John and Nicky's granddaughter) for which a quarter in 4 methods.

We also joined in the Julie McDonnell ringing scoring a quarter of the variation on 30<sup>th</sup> December. So far she has raised over £7 million for support for blood cancer patients.

My thanks to the Vale ringers for their loyal support. Without that we would not be able to ring Sunday by Sunday calling the faithful to worship and reminding others that the Church is still there.

3 <sup>rd</sup> July	1260 Doubles in 11 methods
18 <sup>th</sup> July	1260 St Thomas Doubles. Rung to welcome Thomas David James Gallienne a grandson for Mike and Cathy
24 <sup>th</sup> July	1260 Doubles in 3 methods and 3 variations. A farewell to Rev Matthew Barrett as he prepares to become Rector of St Peter Port and Vicar of St John. One of the was

appropriately St Matthew.

15<sup>th</sup> August 1260 Grandsire Doubles. Rung half muffled in celebration of the life of Jean Noyon

4<sup>th</sup> September 1260 Doubles in 5 methods. Rung open in celebration of the life of Peter Derham one of the founding members of the District

10<sup>th</sup> September 1260 Doubles in 1 method and 3 variations.

24<sup>th</sup> October 1260 Doubles in 4 methods. Rung to welcome Rose Emily May Young a granddaughter for John and Nicky. 750<sup>th</sup> as conductor Mike.

13<sup>th</sup> November 1260 Doubles in 5 methods. Half muffled for Remembrance

24<sup>th</sup> December 1260 Grandsire Doubles

30<sup>th</sup> December 1260 Julie McDonnell Bob Doubles

12<sup>th</sup> November 2016

5040 Doubles in 42 variations

Treble Sue Park

2 Nicky David

3 Duncan Loweth (conductor)

4 John David

5 Michael Bubb

Tenor Will Stoddart

First peal Will

Most variations to a peal for all.

**MB**

## **Town Church, Guernsey**

Looking back over the last 12 months I feel immensely proud of the Town Church ringers, for our achievements but also for a determination and resolve for learning and improving which is driving us from strength to strength. It was barely 18 months ago that we regularly fired out any attempt at a QP of minor (even plain bob was not safe) and since then we

have succeeded in a whole host of doubles, minor and triples methods more often than not without the help of more experienced ringers and conductors.

The Cheshire outing was a busy and tiring weekend but a fantastic tour of north Cheshire and a chance to catch up with previous members Rob, Harriet and Colin as well as Viv and Graham Nobbs. The Cheshire trip was also prime practice time for our QP of St. Peter Port Bob Triples which we named several weeks afterwards for the induction of our two new priests.

December is usually busy with Santa Claus ringing, fighting for a parking space on Thursdays and the Christmas party; but this year someone had the bright idea to make 40kg of fudge to sell to raise more funds for the simulator project.

And finally our second annual simulator striking competition was a roaring success, not least because I tied for first place! We were very grateful of the fantastic turn out from our sister towers, especially the Alderney and Jersey ringers flying in to ring with us.

Wednesday, 25 January 2017	1320 Oxford Treble Bob Minor
Sunday, 22 January 2017	1320 Slapton Slow Course Doubles
Wednesday, 18 January 2017	1260 Doubles (3m)
Sunday, 15 January 2017	1260 Spliced Doubles (8m)
Thursday, 12 January 2017	1272 Spliced Minor (2m)
Wednesday, 11 January 2017	1260 Badgeworth Bob Minor
Sunday, 8 January 2017	1260 Dewsbury Bob Minor
Wednesday, 4 January 2017	1260 Grandsire Doubles
Wednesday, 28 December 2016	1260 Julie McDonnell Doubles
Sunday, 18 December 2016	1260 Grandsire Doubles
Friday, 16 December 2016	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
Wednesday, 14 December 2016	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
Wednesday, 7 December 2016	1260 Grandsire Triples
Sunday, 4 December 2016	1260 St Nicholas College Bob Minor
Sunday, 27 November 2016	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
Wednesday, 16 November 2016	1320 Kent Treble Bob Minor
Sunday, 13 November 2016	1260 Doubles (3mv)

Wednesday, 9 November 2016	1344 St Peter Port Bob Triples
Sunday, 6 November 2016	1260 Doubles (10mv)
Wednesday, 2 November 2016	1320 Orpheus Doubles
Sunday, 30 October 2016	1260 Grandsire Doubles
Thursday, 20 October 2016	1320 Reverse Canterbury Doubles
Sunday, 16 October 2016	1260 Doubles (4m)
Wednesday, 12 October 2016	1260 Doubles (1m10v)
Sunday, 9 October 2016	1260 Reverse St Nicholas Bob Doubles
Wednesday, 5 October 2016	1260 Reverse St Simon's Bob Doubles
Sunday, 2 October 2016	1260 Reverse St Simon's Bob Doubles
Sunday, 25 September 2016	1260 Single Canterbury Minor
Sunday, 18 September 2016	1260 Middlesex Bob Triples
Wednesday, 7 September 2016	1260 Grandsire Doubles
Sunday, 4 September 2016	1260 Grandsire Doubles
Wednesday, 3 August 2016	1260 Doubles (1m3v1p)

**DL**

## **Elizabeth College, Guernsey**

After a long time of concentrating on striking and entering several competitions it is time that the boys work on their range of ability so they do not get too bored ringing called changes week in and week out.

Of course we still do ring called changes for the couple of boys working at this level but it has been lovely getting the more experienced boys to call the changes. Some have been learning plain bob, others the treble to doubles methods. To motivate them to learn Plain Bob Doubles I set them the ambitious target of ringing a QP of PBD with an all Elizabeth College band for the Christmas carol service. I was amazed how much was achieved in 6 weeks, with just one practice session each week.

By the time the carol service came round each ringer was capable of their respective role with a more solid band around them but we hadn't been able to practice all together due to random absences each week. Sadly they were not strong enough to ring all together. I dragged them through 2 extents hoping they would pick up some clues as it progressed but each ringer was too wobbly and kept setting each other off.

With some help from the grown-up Guernsey ringers we managed to get several through their QP individually and they rang steadily and struck nicely throughout.

Methods and QPs are the targets for the next 6 months as they need to develop the ability to keep focused for longer periods of time and with a wider repertoire they will be more useful to the island ringers.

**DL**

## **Guernsey Handbell Ringers**

**Duncan Loweth**

We seem to have turned a corner in our handbells are much more able to pick up new methods. Jane in particular has been able to turn her hand to Oxford TB, Double Bob and a few leads of Cambridge Minor. Janice has a handicap of not having the tower bell background which Jane and I bring into our handbells but, again, she seems to be internalising and connecting many aspects of the theory and is not only more steady with the methods but speed and striking is getting very good.

I've resumed an Elizabeth College practice although at the moment it is only two teachers and a sixth form student. Alex, the sixth former, is keen and several times we have rung QPs of minimus when Andrew, the teacher, is not available. We are tantalisingly close to ringing a QP of Bob Minor which is pretty good considering how recently both came to ring handbells and have no tower bell experience.

A lot of time and effort has gone into the handbell teaching programme which is being rolled out at the ART conference in March. The Guernsey ringers have been willing guinea pigs for some of the techniques and method choices that have gone into the scheme and I'm grateful for their support.

**DL**

## **New Year's Ringing at St Peter's**

**Anne Dorey**

It must be a year or two since we have rung in the new year at St Peter's but this year there were enough willing volunteers so we decided to revive the tradition. Eight of us, seven ringers and a champagne bottle opener, scrambled up the tower steps with varying degrees of agility. It was probably the offer of a glass of bubbly that persuaded us to leave our celebrations and muster at the tower at nearly midnight. We rang out the old year for ten minutes before our bottle opener, who doubled as our timer, warned us of the approach of midnight. We stood our bells while the tenor was struck twelve times and on the twelfth stroke we began to ring the new year in for another few minutes.

Some of us were impatient to toast the new year so our bottle opener performed his vital role and we all enjoyed our champagne and apple juice before dispersing to our homes in the knowledge that we had to be back in the tower by 9.00 am to ring for the morning service. Next year new year's day won't be on a Sunday so maybe we'll be able to persuade a few more people to join us so that we can ring all ten bells.

We wish all the island ringers a very successful ringing year and hope for some more volunteers to swell the ranks.

**AD**



## **Town Church's 2nd Annual Simulator Contest A Ringing Success!**

**Sue Le Feuvre**

Around 30 ringers from Alderney, Jersey and the other towers in Guernsey joined the Town Church ringers on Saturday for a day of tower bell ringing and a striking competition on the Saxilby simulator which was set up in the church. Tea, coffee and cake was available all day and at lunchtime soup and bread and cheese was added to the mix.

Last year the striking competition was held in the tower on a tied bell but this year worked so much better because we were able to ring and use the simulator at the same time, and in fact in the morning the organist joined in the mix (it was happily agreed that we'd all get along together and we did!).

We were pleased that the Rector called in for a chat and a coffee. He seemed very happy to see his church so full of people and action.

ITV sent a reporter and we were featured on the "And finally" slot at the end of the local news on Saturday evening with a few moments of ringing and a short interview with Janice.

Worthy winner of the "tenor behind" striking competition was Anne Dorey, a ringer at Forest/St Peters, Guernsey while joint winners of the "inside to PB Minor" were Duncan Loweth (Town Church) and Peter Bevis (Alderney). Attempts were made to get them to ring a plain course of Cambridge to determine the overall winner but it seemed that neither was willing to risk it!

Thank you Duncan for organising such a wonderful day and thank you everyone for supporting us. **SLF**

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## Bradfield Ringing Course

Sue Le Feuvre

I'm a great fan of ringing courses and have been to Sparsholt (the predecessor of Bradfield), Hereford and Bradfield many times both as a student and helper but not for many years. But last year I decided that it was time for another visit.

When applying students have to choose the group that they think will be suitable for the stage they will be at about 4 months down the line so best to consult with your tower captain to get advice. Some people are over-ambitious while others don't realise how near they are to a giant leap forward. For helpers you simply tick the groups you are confident you can keep right in. I ticked the boxes up to Plain Bob Minor but omitting Bell Experience. No learner needs me wandering all over the place trying to figure out who to follow in call changes!

I was very lucky my flight was on time so I knew I'd be in plenty of time to get to Reading where I was being collected by another helper and taken for lunch. But I was just too early and had to hang around for 2 hours until off-peak train fares kicked in. Next time I'll go a few days early and make the cost of my flight worthwhile. There must have been nearly 20 of us helpers sitting in the pub garden on the bank of the river at Pangbourne and it was a wrench to tear ourselves away to check into the course.

Although I've been many times before I was semi-anonymous this time because I'd previously used my married name. Even Margaret Winterbourne, who organised the accommodation had no idea I would be there. But I don't really meld into the background so my cover was soon blown. One sad thing for me was how many of my old friends were not there; some had died while others had simply dropped out due to old age. But it was lovely to see so many young tutors.

Bradfield College is a vast site and no matter how many times I'm there it still takes me at least a day until I can find my way around. The accommodation used was in different blocks than the last time I was there. Smashing new blocks though mine was right at the top of the hill. I wonder if Margaret might have taken pity and allocated me a room nearer sea level

if she'd realised I was the old girl? But at least it was quiet up there, well away from the beer room.

Those who book in early have a couple of hours spare to get their bearings or simply rest before the action begins. Kicking off is the welcome meeting hosted by The Two Mikes. They can rival Ant and Dec any day! The tutors are introduced, 'elf 'n' safety covered and everyone separates off for the first theory session with their group. This usually starts with introductions and sorting out car sharing and most importantly finding out whether any locals have recommendations on pubs for lunch on the Friday and Saturday. Then some theory on the group's method. This year I was helping with Grandsire Doubles which I was pleased with (at the beginning anyway). After 3 days of nothing else it becomes rather tedious and that's why my favourite group to help on is plain hunt. You get to ring all sorts of doubles methods while the learner plain hunts the treble.

Then evening meal and off to the first tower. Ringing at different towers is an important part of the learning process. They do try to allocate the more challenging bells to the more advanced groups but since they make use of every available tower within an acceptable distance from the college some will be easier than others. But I think this is a good opportunity for those who only ever ring at their home tower to experience other towers and maybe realise how lucky they are at home.

Once back from ringing the options are the brew room, the beer room or back to your accommodation block to put your feet up. You might not feel like collapsing on Thursday evening but you probably will by Saturday evening!

Friday and Saturday follow similar patterns; breakfast followed by an optional session, then off for the day to ring at 4 towers with a pub lunch in between. Returning to the college in time for coffee, followed by a theory session for your group and more optional talks.

On Saturday evening there was a mini ring striking competition which I somehow found myself in a band for. Needless to say we didn't win; I'm not certain but I think we came 4th (out of 4).

Sunday morning is taken up with optional sessions for students or service ringing for helpers. Then after lunch a final ring.

The optional sessions vary each year but include handbells, conducting, teaching handling, rope splicing and any number of interesting things. The best attended sessions are always Steve Coleman's so if you're going the advice is to get to his talks early if you want a seat.

I think the course is best suited to those ringing doubles or minor and perhaps triples; partly because less experienced ringers will get more benefit from the whole experience of meeting other ringers, realising that others are also struggling and just simply becoming more aware of the wider world of ringing but also because a course or even half course of Surprise Major takes so long to ring that each student will only get one ring at each tower.

It is a wonderful but very tiring experience but don't be surprised when you get back to your home tower keen to demonstrate your new skills to find that your mind goes totally blank and you haven't a clue how to ring the method you rang all weekend. Give your brain a few days to clear and you will reap the rewards.

Bradfield is now taking applications for this year's course on 17 - 20 August 2017 so why not think about going.

**SLF**

## Town Church Quarter Peal Day

**Duncan Loweth**

The Town Church, Guernsey are hosting a QP day on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April and all CI ringers (and any visitors) are welcome to take part.

My plan is to arrange a number of QPs throughout the day and I hope everyone will have an opportunity to have a go at something new or challenging as well as supporting others in their own targets.

It would be lovely to include Alderney and Jersey ringers although we appreciate there is significant cost involved in travelling. We should be able to put up visitors overnight if this would be helpful.

If you are interested please email the details below to [duncan.loweth@gmail.com](mailto:duncan.loweth@gmail.com) or post the following form (address in district contacts pager) by 5<sup>th</sup> March:

Name.....

How many QP would you be willing to ring?

Which times are you available?

9am   10.30am   12noon   1.30pm   3pm   4.30pm   6pm   7.30pm

What would you like to achieve on the day?



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