

S A C B R 1926 – 2026 Newsletter - June

What a splendid evening we all had at our Centenary Dinner on May 15th! Over a hundred current and past members, friends and guests from neighbouring Associations, sat down to an excellent meal and much good fellowship at Hawkstone Park Hotel. A full report follows.

Our President, Archdeacon Nick Watson, had to miss the event because of planned knee surgery. We wish him a speedy recovery and hope to see him later in the summer,

In **June** we have the **Striking Competition** to look forward to. For details of this, and other events to come in the near future – read on.

There is lots for you to action this time – do get your bookings in soon!

Happy Ringing.



Ed.

Centenary Dinner

It's some years since the Shropshire Association held a dinner, but Ann Williams started organising this one, nearly three years ago. Her confidence was completely justified: about 100 people attended the gathering at Hawkstone Park Hotel, where the arrangements and the meal were very good.

A charming touch was the decoration of every table with fresh flowers, in milk bottles from Ann's collection. Guests were also greeted by a puzzle box, which turned out to contain an engraved glass memento of the occasion, a handsome gift to everyone attending from an anonymous benefactor.

Andrew Gordon took on the role of MC, with the help of a large handbell. He first called on the Master, Tony Freemont, to welcome us. Tony made us feel very much at home. He introduced visitors representing our neighbouring Associations, past Masters including Edric Broom, Committee members, and especially Vicki Sivess, who was warmly thanked for her organisation of the event. He had a special word, too, for four young ringers who attended, and for 'senior' members, Brian Kear and Mair Mothershaw.

In the absence of our President, Paul Lewis said Grace, and the meal began.

After the main course we sat back to enjoy two speeches. Paul Lewis reflected on our 100 years, asking us to consider how things have changed, what we have achieved, and how we will progress in the next century. Rather than a historical survey, Paul gave us a mix of details from the past, and thought-provoking observations. The Association has faced two major breaks in ringing: during World War 2 and, recently, during the Covid pandemic. Both were turning points, when a lot of ringers were lost. Remarkably, the Association has grown throughout its life, and now has a membership of about 300, as high as it has ever been. He urged us to be ambitious, in terms of the scope of our ringing and the standard of our striking.

Guest speaker was Simon Linford, from St Martin's Guild, recently President of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers. Simon spent boyhood family holidays at Clun, and recalled early ringing outings with Ann Williams, very safety conscious, even before rear seatbelts were mandatory. He wondered why she put up with driving youngsters about the county on tower grabs – 'after a while I realised we were paying for her petrol'; and with Andrew Gordon, the complete opposite, no idea about seat belts.

Simon observed that ringing association dinners were now uncommon, so it was good to see such a large, friendly gathering. Territorial associations fell into three categories: 'active, passive, and Do not resuscitate'. It was clear that the Shropshires were in the first group, and he congratulated us on our growing membership, and the wide range of grass roots activities which were plainly engaging a lot of the members.

With a wealth of jokes and one-liners, Simon soon had us all rocking with laughter. He was fascinated by the SACBR 'obsession' with teas. Even the earliest reports of meetings in the 1920s made regular mention of how many sat down to tea, while making no reference to the ringing. Some things never change!

Finally, he came to the future of ringing, and the 'Ringing 2030' project that he is involved with. He emphasised the need for enthusiastic, forward-looking leaders to drive ringing on as a vibrant part of the local community.

Simon called for a toast to the Shropshire Association, and sat down to warm applause. Andrew then proposed a toast to Ann Williams, who master-minded what was a very successful event.

Gill Glover

The Gallery



The packed dining room at Hawkstone Park Hotel



Geoff Harding, Paul Smart, Madeline Harris, Steve Harris



Meole group: standing L to R : Michael Carding, Peter Hampton, Andy Digby, Tom Derrington, Lisa Grimmatt, Arthur O'Hara, Patrick Braven-Giles, Vicki Sivess, Karen Hampton, Alastair Brierley.

Seated L to R : Simon Linford, Ann Peppiatt, John Peppiatt, Rowena Pett, Mary Lucas, Josephine Wrin.



Pippa Tucker, Stella Doyle, Al Doyle, Jeanne Spink



Jet Pariera-Jenks, Sue Dancey, Mair Mothershaw, Karen Powell



Karen Bryant, Pauline MacDonald, Tim Mear, Mike Aspey



Eleanor Linford, Simon Linford, Andrew Gordon, Paul Lewis



Oswestry and friends

Top and half top row - Andrew Davies, Richard Major, Frances Major, Sam Davies, Chris Hoare, Pippa Tucker, Cordelia Warr, Jeanne Spinks, Peter Eves, Tony Freemont (half a line below), Gina Shakespear, Stella Doyle (half a line below), William Barter, Al Doyle, Jenny Hoare.

Lower row - Brian Rothera, Jan Snowball, Isla Rothera, Mark Gilham (master elect of the Hereford Guild), Nessa Gilham, Sue Robinson (Master of the Hereford Guild)



Tony Freemont and Cordelia Warr



Mark Adams, Edric Broom, Phil Gay, Rowena Gay, Kathryn Greaves, Bill Deason, Gill Wheatley

REMEMBERING RODGER V BAYLIS

Rodger was a farmer at Sutton Maddock. His death occurred from a tragic accident on the farm. He was air-lifted to Stoke on Trent hospital where he survived another 8 days. Rodger died peacefully with his family around him on 20th April.

I have known Rodger ever since he learnt to ring in 1988. The then vicar Revered David Chantry ask me to teach ringers for the six Parishes. Rodger and his son James answered the call. The first night at Sutton Maddock there were 21 recruits to have a go learning to ring bells.

After a few weeks we had a hard core of people who seemed keen enough to handle a bell. Some did not and they faded away. Rodger, James, Andrew Pooler, Reg Pooler, Diana Randles, Melvin Randles, Cecily Taylor, Ann Hill and her daughter Mel were their main core. Ron Smallman, Norman Owen and Tony Bennett from Stockton were ringers and occasionally rang with us.

The main practice was held at Ryton every Tuesday, also supported by ringers from Codsall. Rodger was always supportive, helping when maintenance was required. When Ryton was augmented in 1993 help was required; Rodger was always there. Supplying a block and tackle to lift the bell into the tower and help to hang it with myself and Reg Pooler.

Many towers need repairs and maintenance in the group. Rodger was always there to help. He will be sadly missed, as a ringer, and helping to teach new people to ring the bells. He was especially pleased as his granddaughters learnt to ring as well. He also

helped out at nearby Worfield. He was always there: Sundays and practices, for weddings and any special ringing around the parishes.

Rodger rang one peal at Ryton: the tenor behind to a Peal of Doubles on 12th February 1996, in Memory of Reg Pooler.

As a local Farmer at Sutton Maddock, Rodger did many things for the community in the area. He played tennis at Worfield Tennis club for 31 years. A true Gentleman. A Peal was rung on the day before his funeral in memory of him. The bells were half muffled on the Tuesday before the service of thanksgiving attended by nearly 400 people.

May he rest in peace.

Andrew Gordon



Ring around the six parishes, in memory of Rodger Baylis

Peal for Rodger Baylis

An Association peal of Mixed Doubles has been rung at Sutton Maddock on Monday, 18th May. This was the day before the Service of Thanksgiving for Rodger's life. Ringers were 1) Trevor Lock, 2) Nicola Galton, 3) Samantha Martin, 4) Adrian Roberts, 5) Andrew Gordon, who conducted.

Young Ringers at Hodnet

On Saturday, 23rd May, we held an afternoon practice for our Young Ringers. We worked on rhythm and accuracy in striking rounds on the 8, as well as Call Changes, Plain Hunt and Plain Bob Doubles and Minor. Kathy Fitchew and Biff provided tea, and we enjoyed the cool, tranquil atmosphere of the beautiful church. Many thanks to John Powell and the Hodnet ringers for facilitating this practice.

Update on All Saints, Forton

We have received the following update on the position at Forton, where last year we understood that there was no ringing.

‘While All Saints does not have a resident band, the bells are used for training, rung occasionally by the Newport band on practice meetings and we also welcome visiting bands of ringers such as a recent visit from a band of church bell ringers from Staffordshire. Additionally, the bells are regularly maintained and we actively encourage the ringing of our bells.’

*Kevin Ottaway
Tower Correspondent*

(Kevin’s contact details are in the Report. Ed.)

Centenary Engraved Whisky Tumbler



A limited number of engraved centenary glasses are available from Tony Freemont, for £7 each. All funds generated will go to support the youth group.

In June

Striking out for fun – Association Striking Competition

Upton Magna, Saturday 13th June

Following Simon Linford's inspirational address at our centenary dinner - I am proud to be on the committee organising what I have learned to be something of a rare event across bellringing groups. I am convinced our striking competition is a great way to learn from others, enjoy a fine tea and get some neutral feedback on how we are progressing. Most importantly it is great fun - and can involve learner and experienced bands and their supporters and helpers - to make for a fun few hours in the Shropshire countryside.

Join us in hoping for good weather so we can relax in between our performances and partake of a traditional Shropshire tea. You can choose something that your band feel comfortable to ring, either a method or call changes. Full Rules are on the website.

There will be an expert judge with feedback for us all to learn, and the chance to witness the scores on the doors as they are recorded - and you thought Eurovision was exciting! There will be opportunities for all, with places available for 'scratch teams' if there aren't enough people from one tower. It is also great to have support - so please consider coming along to listen, learn, drink tea and eat cake even if you do not intend to ring.

This event brings us all together about half way through our year and is a great chance to talk to others as we listen to our Shropshire bands. **Do let me know how many of you plan to come, and if you are entering one or more bands.** There will be a small charge of £5 which covers tea and a donation for the host tower.

The event will begin with the draw at 16:00 and, dependent on the final number of entries, is likely to finish in the early evening - no later than about 19:00.

Sue Dancey secretary@sacbr.org.uk

Training Morning, Saturday 27th June, Moreton Corbet

Do you want to get to grips with Bob Doubles? Improve your Plain Hunt? Learn a new method? Our **next Training Morning** will be from 10 – 12.30, on 27th June, on the good six at Moreton Corbet. This will be restricted to six students: bookings to Gill Glover: gill.glover407@outlook.com **Three places only remain.**

We will aim to cater for whatever you want to learn or practise, but do let us know, so that we can ensure a suitable band of helpers.

Centenary Celebration
Quarterly, Ringing, Service and Tea
Saturday, 25th July, at St Chad's, Shrewsbury

THE CENTRE PIECE OF OUR ANNIVERSARY YEAR

The Shropshire Association was born, at St Chad's, on 24th July, 1926, so this Saturday 25th is as close as can be to celebrating the actual anniversary. The programme for the day is:-

- 13.45 Quarterly Meeting We will keep this to essential business only.
- 14.15 Open Ringing practice
- 15.15 Service touch
- 15.30 Service, led by Bishop Michael and Revd Sam Mann
- 16.30 Tea After tea we will hold the Raffle and 100 Club draw.

TICKETS FOR TEA

We plan to have a rather special tea for the occasion. The charge will be £10 per head. At present 60 tickets remain. Please book your place by email to gill.glover407@outlook.com I will issue numbered 'e tickets', and request your payment at a later date. A group booking for your tower is fine, but I would like names. Also let me know of any dietary requirements.

100 Club

The SACBR 100 Club is back. We plan to hold the first draw at the July tea party at St Chad's. We hope as many of you as possible will support this valuable fund-raiser for the Bell Restoration Fund. At least 6 projects are currently in the pipeline, so it is vital to keep the fund topped up.

Membership is for adult members of the Shropshire Association only, and costs £12 for the year. There are usually four draws a year, at the Quarterly Meetings, with four or five cash prizes, depending on how many people are participating.

Look out for a separate mailing with the joining instructions.



About the Central Council for Church Bell Ringers

The CCCBR is the representative body for all who ring bells in the English tradition. Founded in 1891, the Council today represents 65 affiliated societies, which cover all parts of the British Isles and further afield.

The object of the Central Council is to advance the practice, heritage and appreciation of bell ringing as

an enjoyable mental and physical exercise and unique performing art for the public benefit of both church and community.

Our Central Council representatives are Paul Lewis (Edgmond) and Nik Galton (Shrewsbury). They receive regular news updates from the CCCBR, and by using the link below, it will enable members to read them too.

Find out more at <https://cccbr.org.uk>

Ringers looking for opportunities to find a project for a 'first' challenge may like to peruse the CCCBR shop for ideas. It's a good place for finding 'real' books, as some prefer a hard copy to doodle on.

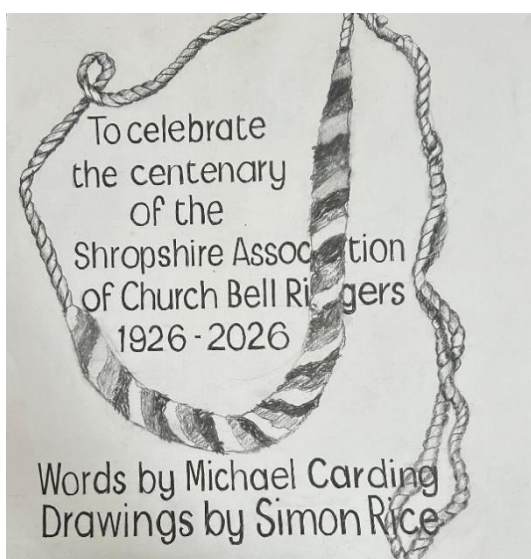
This bundle is available at £10:



More can be found at: <https://shop.cccbr.org.uk/>

The SACBR Centenary Zine

Zine = a magazine that is "non-commercial often homemade usually devoted to specialized and unconventional subject matter".



This is the ultimate memento of our Centenary Year. It has been lovingly crafted by two of our tower captains and is born out of affection for our hobby and grateful memory of those who have rung before us. Simon is an artist and Michael is a poet. Evocative charcoal drawings are enhanced by descriptive, intriguing verse.

This is a limited edition of one hundred, each individually assembled, and will cost 20 guineas (£21) in aid of SACBR. Your zine will be a unique *objet d'art*, a treasured reminder of our love of ringing and of the Centenary Year.



For more information and to place an order: michaelcarding@btinternet.com

Si Rice, Michael Carding

SATURDAY 15TH AUGUST 2026 : SACBR CENTENARY 1926 STYLE OUTING

(walk, bike, horse, car?)

Overview : Four towers will be open for ringing : Beckbury, Sutton Maddock, Kemberton, Shifnal.

Ringers can do the whole trip, ringing at all four and walking between them (total 11 miles). Or cycle or ride or use 21st century transport. Some may do part of the route walking and part by another means.

It will end at Shifnal where the Lichfield Mobile Belfry will be available as well as the bells of St Andrew

Detail: Saturday 15th August 2026.

10.00 to 10.30 **Beckbury, St Milburga**, TF11 9DG; SJ 765 016. SIX 4 – 2 – 18

10.30 Start walk to Sutton Maddock. West. 3.5 miles mostly along quiet lanes.

12 noon to 12.30 **Sutton Maddock, St Mary**, TF11 9NQ; SJ 719 014 FIVE 7 – 0 – 9

12.30 Start walk to Kemberton. North. 3 miles mostly on good footpaths.

2.00 to 2.30 **Kemberton, St Andrew**. TF11 9LJ; SJ 729 045 EIGHT 5 - 2 – 19

2.30 Start the walk to Shifnal. East, then North. 4.5 miles mostly on good paths.

4.00 to 5.00 **Shifnal, St Andrew**. TF11 9AB; SJ 747 075 EIGHT 18 - 3 – 19

Also at Shifnal, throughout the afternoon, the Lichfield Mobile Belfry will be available.

There will be more detail in the July newsletter including a map. At that stage I will ask you to register that you want to be involved and for which parts. Meanwhile please spread the word and generate enthusiasm. At this stage it feels as though it will be well attended!

Michael Carding