

S A C B R 1926 – 2026 Newsletter - July

Have you seen the latest Shropshire Magazine? There's a splendid 'social scene spread' of photos of our recent dinner at Hawkstone Park Hotel.

And After Simon Linford's teasing remarks at the dinner, I couldn't resist this snap of the striking competition 'ordinary' tea.

Now, we have to outdo this next month for the Centenary Tea at St Chad's! We plan to include a few extras, such as summer fruits and cream, and of course a celebration cake – but I promise the usual favourite home-made bakes will be included. See below for full details of the July anniversary day.

A full report on our June activities follows, along with further news of other forthcoming activities.

Happy Ringing.

Ed.



Update on Training Activities

Our June Training Morning was held at Moreton Corbet on Saturday 27th. Six students grappled with Plain Bob Doubles, Plain Hunt Doubles, and ringing the tenor behind. Tutors and students alike managed to combine intense concentration with a light-hearted approach. It was good to see the progress being maintained by all those attending. Many thanks to all those who turned out to support the training, whether by

manning the pop-up kitchen, providing a theory lesson, making up a band or standing behind a learner. A very worthwhile morning!

We have heard of various good things going on around the Association, thanks to the generous help of experienced ringers. At Cheswardine Duncan Davis, with some help from other Newport ringers, has started teaching four new recruits. These are not the most straightforward bells for beginners, having quite a long draft. Paul Smart assisted with some less springy ropes from the Association Rope Bank, which has made handling easier. I know that Duncan would be glad of any additional help, if you live within reach and have had some practice at teaching. Meanwhile, at Forton, Matt Lawrence has also been teaching beginners.

We have plans to further enlarge the pool of ringing teachers in the Association. More of this in the autumn, when we hope to hold an ART training day, and a half day for tower leaders.

Gill Glover

Striking out for fun – Association Striking Competition Upton Magna, Saturday 13th June

Eleven teams gathered on a bright and breezy afternoon, for this year's striking competition, at Upton Magna. The bells here are a very pleasant, light, ground floor ring. The ringers included twenty people who had never entered a striking competition before. Very well done to them for having a go: competition can be a nerve-stretching experience, and we hope they all enjoyed themselves. To open proceedings, Sue Dancey gave a warm welcome to us all in the village hall, which was followed by the draw. Those well down the running order then turned their attention to the ample tea, which was laid out temptingly in the centre of the hall. On these occasions, tea is continuously available, so everyone fits their eating and socialising around their place in the draw. This does mean a lot of going back for seconds – and thirds.

Meanwhile, over at the church, ringing started promptly and carried on in brisk fashion throughout. Madeline Harris and Alan Glover were kept busy marshalling teams, photographing teams, advising and assisting with timing and counting the call changes. Seven teams rang call changes, and four ventured into method territory.

The standard was extremely variable, reflecting a wide range of experience, from recent learners to the St Chad's band, which has literally hundreds of years of combined experience! Inevitably, this led to an equally wide range of scores.

Judge Bill Deason had difficulty in distinguishing the performances of two of the middle bands. Each team is allowed three minutes' practice, which may include one or more pull-offs. Some ringers also tried individual bells after adjusting ropes. There should then be a signal of two or three whole pulls on the tenor, before the performance to be marked.

Unfortunately, this didn't work too well. Perhaps the organisers should look again at the signal, to ensure the judge is clear about when each competition piece is starting.

Eventual winners of the Ernest Willcox cup were Shrewsbury A, ringing Grandsire Doubles. The Call Change trophy went to Oswestry A. The Charles Allmand shield was won by Bicton. Both Oswestry and Bicton demonstrated skill in placing their bands, with experienced ringers on treble and tenor to provide a structure for the newer ringers on the middle bells.

Several people commented that they would like more feedback, to have an idea how to improve their scores. With my Training Officer hat on, here are a few suggestions.

- 1) **Before** Make time for some sort of striking exercise at every weekly practice. This may be simply rounds – perhaps even rounds facing the wall, with everyone counting the beats out loud. Or give every bell in turn a go at leading, and try to get all the leads the same (This is hard!).
- 2) **On the day** Do use the whole of your three minutes' practice time. I have been ringing over fifty years, and it still takes me several minutes to settle into the team rhythm. Ring plenty of rounds, and aim to settle at the speed that best suits all the band. When the rounds are steady, start your competition piece. You won't have time to complete it. Ask an extra person (there is always a marshal to help) to tell you when time is up, and stand at once.
- 3) **What to ring** Keep it simple. Allow for ringing on unfamiliar bells, and for nerves. Step back from the hardest thing you can ring, and go for what your least experienced ringer is confident with. You may be able to ring an extent of doubles, but will plain courses sound better? You may ring call changes at home with everyone leading, but in a competition it's simpler to put your best leader on the treble and leave them there.

I hope these comments are constructive and not too daunting. It takes years to achieve consistent good striking, even with a core of steady 'old hands'. So keep on practising!

No matter what your scores, please celebrate a great afternoon and plan your future entries - it is always good to see what improvements your band can put into place. The next striking competition will be Saturday June 12th, 2027. The tower has yet to be confirmed. We have a judge who has not been with us before. It would be great for him to see the same enthusiasm and commitment as were displayed this year. Sunday service ringing lies at the heart of our bellringing. The striking competition is one way to help us make our Sunday ringing more and more rhythmic and something the congregations admire. Of course, the other things about the striking competition are that it brings us together in a sense of friendly rivalry, and for connoisseurs of good food, our legendary, tea.

Gill Glover and Tony Freemont

The Gallery



Bicton



Dawley A



Meole Brace A



Newport A



Wellington



Shrewsbury A



Dawley B



Meole Brace B



Newport B



Oswestry B



Shrewsbury B



Oswestry A



Ernest Willcox Cup presented to Shrewsbury A



Charles Allmand Shield presented to Bicton



Call Change Trophy presented to Oswestry A

REQUEST FOR "WHY YOU RING" STORIES

The **Shropshire Magazine** wants to cover the **Centenary Service at St Chad's on Saturday 25th July**. They are keen to include some quotes from our Shropshire ringers. Please send me your name, age (optional) and tower with a sentence or two saying how you started ringing, why you enjoy it and what you like most about it.

Thanks: *Michael Carding*. michaelcarding@btinternet.com

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:-

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|-------|--|---|
| 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. |

BOOKINGS FOR TEA

We plan to have a rather special tea for the occasion. The charge will be £10 per head (which will include a tower donation). At present 40 tickets remain. Please book your tea by email to gill.glover407@outlook.com **I am away from 5th July, so if possible let me know before this. Later bookings to Vicki Sivess, socsec@sacbr.org.uk**

A group booking for your tower is fine, but we would like names. Also let me know of any dietary requirements. This is important. **We are happy to cater for special diets, but we will plate these separately, and we need to know in advance.**

WANTED – RINGERS' PHOTOS

At Hodnet recently, I noticed a delightful group photo from some years ago, featuring young versions of several of our ringers, together with fondly remembered former members. Do you have any such photos at your tower? Or in your own album? It would be great to put together a small exhibition of Association members, past and present. Do please send me a copy (email is fine) of anything suitable you have.

Gill Glover

SATURDAY 15TH AUGUST 2026 : SACBR CENTENARY 1926 STYLE OUTING

(walk, bike, horse, car?)

Overview : Four towers will be open : 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. Refreshments will be offered at Sutton Maddock. The Mason's Arms is close to the church at Kemberton and The Bell is close to the finish at Shifnal. Toilets in the village hall, next to village shop, at Beckbury, close by at Sutton Maddock, in the Mason's Arms at Kemberton and under the Viaduct at Shifnal. Parking available at all four.

NOW is the time to register! The impression is that it will be popular but at this stage I have no idea of numbers. Please e-mail me on michaelcarding@btinternet.com

Please tell me how many in your party, ringers or just walkers, total or partial route. **Then I will send you a REQUEST form.** This will tell me whether you require logistics/transport from Shifnal to Beckbury at the start or finish. I am not offering to do this for non-ringers or those doing just part of the route.

I will also send you a map and narrative of the route although the expectation is that we will “stick together” between the towers. Cyclists, horse riders etc will be able to plan their own route using this.

This is intended to be great fun and a reminder of how dedicated our forebears were in pursuing the exercise. Do you want to dress in the style of the era? Or make some gesture in that direction?

Others can use cars or elect to do just part of the walk and arrange transport to fit. We hope that lots of SACBR members will ring at these towers on this day even if they decline to walk between them. At the end, of course, there are the twin delights of Shifnal bells and the mobile belfry.

Charges (in support of the four towers and SACBR) Total Package £10
Per tower £3 Non-ringers £5 Young ringers free Cash on the day

Michael Carding. 07814 567363 michaelcarding@btinternet.com



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>

On Sunday evening of 21st June, Paul and I, your Central Council Reps, attended a Zoom meeting chaired by CCCBR President Tina Stoecklin. It was my first CC meeting and I was impressed by how many reps attended. Something that was discussed is a proposed 'census' of ringers, which it is hoped would allow the CC to gain a more precise idea of how many ringers there are and their abilities. This will help inform how the Central Council support the needs of ringers at various stages of their development.

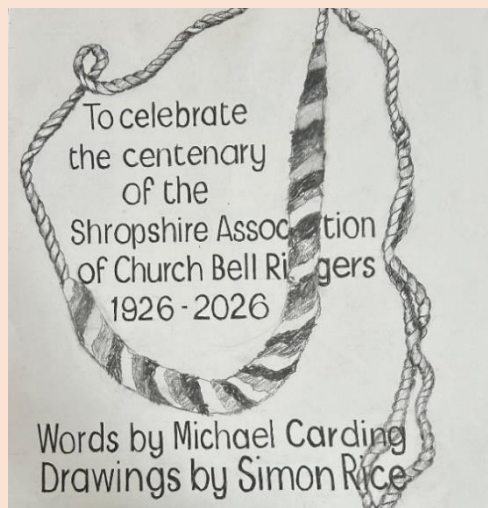
I'll feed back further when we receive the full minutes.

Now hiring – Ringing 2030 Youth Development Officer (re-advertised due to change of circumstances):

Are you passionate about working with young people and ready to make a lasting impact? We're recruiting a new Youth Development Officer to help build the next generation of ringers and support the international Ringing 2030 strategy.
Proposed start date: 20th July 2026

The SACBR Centenary Zine

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



Sales of the zine have already raised about £400 towards maintenance and upgrade of the Lichfield mobile belfry. It has been admired by many ringers and art lovers but some find it too expensive. We now have a mini version priced at only £10, still with all the drawings and words. They will be on display at all centenary events throughout the year.

All the profits from this project will go towards the re-furb and update of the Lichfield Mobile Belfry for which SACBR is one of three partners.

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

Si Rice, Michael Carding