



Shropshire Association of Church Bell Ringers

Quarterly Newsletter - June 2020

Calendar of Events			
Date	Event	Venue	Time
4 th July, 2020	Recruitment and Retention Workshop	Virtual	19:00 - 20:00
11 th July, 2020	Monthly Practice	Virtual	19:00 - 20:30
1 st August, 2020	Introduction to Bob Calling	Virtual	19:00 - 20:00
8 th August, 2020	Monthly Practice	Virtual	19:00 - 20:30
5 th September, 2020	Introduction to Conducting	Virtual	19:00 - 20:00
12 th September, 2020	Monthly Practice	Virtual	19:00 - 20:30

A message from the Ringing Master

Dear members and friends,

Although we are seeing a welcome easing of lockdown restriction, any meaningful return to ringing still seems a distant prospect. We must all not be tempted to return to ringing until it has been deemed safe to do so and I strongly advise that we all follow the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers for guidance on how and when we return.

Committee members have been meeting regularly throughout lockdown via Zoom to find ways in which we can keep in touch with ringing. It's been great to see some of you at our virtual practices using Ringing Room and at Vicki's virtual quiz

I hope you are enjoying Tony's Treasure Hunt and Shaun's Brain Teasers, we have a number of other virtual ringing events planned throughout the summer. Please keep an eye on the website and Facebook page for details.

Don't forget the Association has a Zoom subscription which you can make use of, please email me (master@sacbr.org.uk) for details.

If you have any ideas for a ringing lockdown event, then please get in touch.

Keep in touch. Take care and stay safe.

Best wishes

Matt
Ringing Master

Virtual Social Gathering

In the event that we are unable to meet up for a social gathering in November, I am planning an online alternative using Zoom. How do people feel about holding an open-mic evening? I know that members are a multi-talented lot and wondered if anyone would like to play their piano, recite a poem, tell jokes or sing for the rest of us. Please let me know on socsec@sacbr.org.uk if you would be prepared to contribute. I'm sure you would find a friendly and appreciative audience.

Vicki
Social Secretary

Keep your brain 'Ringing Active'

Want to keep your mind 'Ringing Active' ready for when we return to the Towers? Shaun has a collection of brain teasers which will keep bell ringing at the forefront of your minds. Contact him on pro@sacbr.org.uk to receive a collection of them.

Method ringing on handbells

Method ringing on handbells has never really interested me. I like tower bells, the feel of the rope and the weight of the bell. So when Matthew came back from making things safe at St Michael's and said 'I've brought the handbells, I thought we could have a go', I was rather less than enthusiastic.

However, the day came when we had finished the decorating, the garden was tidy and we had run out of flour for baking. Let's see if we can plain hunt on 4, we should be able to manage that. First we need to get the bell to strike every time, not as easy as you might think and how off-putting when it doesn't, it's so tempting to ring it again.

Finally, with plain hunt mastered, we embarked on Plain Bob Minimus. This is where you have to split your brain in two. Actually you don't, this is not the way to do it at all, but with no one to show us it's how we started. After a while you realise that as with all things ringing, there is a pattern. Once you have picked this this up you can just ring the pattern and put your brain back together.

Could we ring a quarter peal we wondered, that's 53 extents (a lot of counting).

Of the many failures, some were due to spotting one of our neighbours going out for a second time in a day, the cat snoring loudly on his chair, seeing a large spider heading towards your feet or because 'I can't do it if you are looking at me'.

We laughed a lot, swore a little but finally we did it, and were thrilled with our efforts until we looked on Bellboard and saw that our friends had rung 9 methods. Well now we had a target - the 11 Plain Minimus methods before the end of lockdown. We gradually added the new methods, painstakingly learning the patterns and trying not to forget the ones we learnt earlier. Our goal was achieved at last on 12th April.

We were starting to get to grips with some treble bob methods and we had plans to ring a few more quarters and then attempt a peal for the VE day commemorations. This was all scuppered when I fell and broke my arm whilst on our daily walk. As I write this I am still in plaster and the day when I can pick up a bell again seems a long way off. I am very glad that we gave it a go though, it was fun.

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Gail Lawrence



Recruitment!

Fancy volunteering and lending a hand running the Association? We are after two keen and budding volunteers to take up the posts of 'Health and Safety Advisor' and 'Central Council Representative'. These will be non-committee member posts, and we hope to appoint the successful candidate at the Quarterly Meeting.

If you would feel you could make a positive contribution and would be interested in learning more about the roles, please contact Madeline on secretary@sacbr.org.uk.

Books for bellringers

Whilst practices are suspended here are some book suggestions you might like to try. They are available from the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and can be ordered from the website at www.cccbr.org.uk/pubs. Postage and packing is included in the price. It is worth taking a look at the Shop section of the website as this is just a selection and there are some items which can even be downloaded for free!

John Couperthwaite. Ringing basics for beginners

Central Council £2-50

Originally written as short articles for a newsletter, this is one for home study. There are no diagrams but it is good on what you need to look at when learning a method. Sensible and reassuring help on how to begin conducting too. *Can also be downloaded free.*

John Harrison and Catherine Lewis The new ringer's book

Central Council £10

A modern, well-written book illustrated with plenty of action photographs, diagrams and the odd cartoon. Three parts cover the range of skills a ringer needs to acquire, how to develop your ringing career and background on ringing history. Comprehensive, clear text makes this a book every new ringer should have.

Chris Adams Ringing circles

Central Council £3.50

A handy guide for anyone wanting to learn a range of simple methods. It shows the line, the circle of work and, most importantly, the work at bobs and singles. It is clearly laid out with a double page spread for each method. Ideal for both learning and a quick refresher.

A. Waddington Beginners' Plain Bob

Central Council £1.50

Handy pocket sized booklet with all the essential information clearly laid out. Includes no-nonsense snippets of general advice

Jad Bienek

A maintenance message to pin up in the tower...

Advice on bell maintenance for when ringing returns

I am sure that everyone is looking forward to returning to bell ringing again when the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted. After a break in ringing for several months, I would suggest performing some maintenance checks before you start ringing.

The warmer weather of the summer months causes wood to shrink and bearing lubrication to dry out. Joints in wooden structures i.e. bell frames, bell wheels, headstocks and stays, may have loosened so check that the various retaining bolts are securely in place and tighten them if required. Check the lubrication of plain gudgeon bearings, pulley bearings and clapper bearings. Try cleaning off old surplus grease and lubrication and apply fresh oil or lubricate as required.

If the wire mesh protection on louvred windows has holes then birds may have taken the opportunity to create a nest in the belfry.

May I suggest you look to declutter and clean the ringing room to reduce the number of items that could harbour the COVID-19 virus.

You may wish to look at Central Council advice on web link - <https://cccb.org.uk/2020/05/29/stewardship-management-workgroup-when-we-ring-again/>

A below shows a suggested Table of Maintenance Tasks.

Geoff. Harding,

Bell Advisor

Task	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Annually
Lubricate plain bearings	x			
Check lighting throughout tower	x			
Lubricate plain bearings rollers (pulleys)		x		
Check ropes		x		
Check stays for looseness and cracks		x		
Check for loose clappers/staples		x		
Test emergency lighting		x		
Grease ball bearing rollers (pulleys)			x	
Clean and check sliders and runner boards			x	
Grease clappers (if applicable)			x	
Check for tower roof drainage			x	
Check for ingress of water			x	
Check rollers for wear and free rotation			x	
Check "spider" cord			x	
Clean ringing chamber			x	
Check frame bolts			x	
Check headstock bolts			x	
Check bearing bolts			x	
Check for worn clapper bearings			x	
Check for loose/missing wheel bolts			x	
Check clock hammer(s) and spring(s)			x	
Check chiming hammers			x	
Check all chiming hammer ropes for fraying			x	
Check for ingress of birds			x	
Check access stairs/ladders/traps			x	
Check safety of sound control system			x	
Check bell chamber				x
Check rope chutes/bosses/guides				x
PAT test all portable electrical appliances				x
Check clock hammer wires				x
Check clock weights/wires/pulleys				x
Check tower or spire structure				x
Clean out dirt and rubbish				x
Treat rust outbreaks				x

Do you have a piece you think should be included in the next Newsletter or on the Facebook page? Please send all suggestions to Shaun at pro@sacbr.org.uk. All suggestions welcome!

DEADLINE for the September edition of the Newsletter: **Friday 11th September, 2020.**