

# Les Cloches des Îles

August 2014 – Issue No. 59



Loss of Stalwart  
Alderney Ringer

Jersey 8 Bell Win

Samba Bells

Youngest Bristol

Muted Tower

School Rings

Wedding Bells

Handbells

Record Quarters

ITTS



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

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A write up of the ITTS course is contained in this issue; however, I would like to emphasise the most striking point I took from the training. Yes, there were some great tips as to how to teach bell control, but it's not trying to make teachers teach this way or that way – 'it's not a straitjacket', as Pip Penny said throughout the sessions.	3	Ann Wheeler 1947-2014
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**Ann Wheeler (12/06/47 - 12/03/14)**

**Helen M McGregor**

The Alderney band are sad to report the death of Ann Wheeler on 12th March following a 4 year battle against melanoma.

Ann had been taught by Maurice Stupart and remained a stalwart member of the band until the last. Ann was a very enthusiastic ringer and is seen here (far right) in the band that named Alderney Bob Doubles in July 2010.



Although too weak to ring in the quarter peal we rang to welcome her first grandchild on 12th February she came up and sat and listened to the whole quarter.

Always smiling, always ready to decorate the tower with Christmas lights, always willing to ring for less experienced ringers, ready to put the kettle on, studying her line for St Clements..... Ann has asked to be buried wearing her St Anne's ringers tee shirt..... she will be missed.

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



## Spring Meeting 10/11th May 2014

Helen M McGregor

The date for the first ever Inter-Island 8 bell competition was set by the committee taking into account Easter school holidays, professional exam dates & existing work commitments of the strongest CI ringers - Saturday 10th May, the day after Liberation Day was the agreed date

Donald Hughes, the Alderney tower secretary liaised with local craftsman Chris Brown to use a piece of the old Alderney oak frame to turn a bell & stand it on a sweet chestnut circular plinth. The Jersey ringers were asked if it was acceptable to name this trophy for Jack Worrall, they in turn approached Jack's family & we received their blessing. The Alderney band finalised the inscription and the silver was ordered.



It was fitting for the Town Church - with the best peal of 8 in CI - to host the first competition and permission had readily been given. The judge was invited when he came to Alderney for the dedication service of the new 12 in the autumn. Martin Turner was disappointed to discover the bells were being dedicated while still on the floor of the church & not swinging in their frame aloft, but when he realised he might have a better chance of grabbing the 12 if he came back in the spring Martin agreed to be our first 8 bell judge, however it was upon condition that he could peal the Forest bells to complete Guernsey towers to peals

Liberation Day ringing on Jersey and Guernsey is reported elsewhere, suffice it to say here that Martin scored his peal at Forest. Supper at The Imperial Hotel enabled Helen & Duncan to be make Pip Penney's acquaintance & for Richard to growl at Helen about her proposal to change the 6 bell rules. Happily Helen was saved from further mauling by the need

to get off to St Peter's for the practice and then to lower the bells and tie them in readiness for Saturday's ITTS module 1 practical sessions

Combining an 8 bell striking competition with a business meeting and an ITTS course made for a seriously exhausted District Secretary (well done Jane) but it did mean we maximised attendance for the meeting and minimised the cost for those ringers wanting to sample the ITTS scheme:-) The weather was for once kind to our arrangements and we were all assembled at TC for 10 o'clock practice for the 2 'away' teams, then the actual competition. Efficient stewarding & catering meant all 3 island teams and the district team rang the touch & everyone had loaded their plates with delicious sandwiches (thank you TC) in time for the meeting to start at 11.30.

After the meting Martin declared the results - with Jersey placed 1st with 85% (good ringing , nice to listen to), Guernsey 2nd with 76% (slow but relaxed), Alderney 3rd with 63% (the least experienced band) and the district team being the most settled and decidedly the best team to enter the Guild competition

Most of the visiting CI ringers had signed up for the ITTS module 1 course being led by Pip Penney however there were 2 break away groups - Handbells for Richard, Steve & Peter B and also a quarter of Norwich S Minor at Vale - which meant everyone's needs were well catered for

A special thanks are due to Jane for the massive amount of organisation that went in to make the weekend so enjoyable and successful & thank you all for coming to make the Spring meeting such fun - roll on Spring 2015



HMM<sup>c</sup>G



**1<sup>st</sup> – Jersey - Mike Halsey, Robin Pittman, Judy Collins, Justin Read, Louise Read, David Clare, Richard Harris, Peter Routier**



**2<sup>nd</sup> – Guernsey – Jane Le Conte, Tim Wainwright, Duncan Loweth, Phil Le Conte, John David, Mike Bubb, Paul Lawrence, Mark Pizzy**



**3<sup>rd</sup> – Alderney - Aileen Wilson, Heather Winder, Philippa Arditti, Pam Pearson, Helen M<sup>c</sup>Gregor, Peter Bevis, Stephen Rossiter, Victoria M<sup>c</sup>Allister**

## The rise of a touch of Grandsire Triples on Alderney

Helen M McGregor

Picture the scene - ADM, Jersey, September 2013 (& an empty bell chamber in St Anne's, Alderney where once there had been only a 13cwt peal of 6 bells)...What did she say? an 8 bell striking competition - what!..with a set piece of Grandsire Triples? ...yeah right!...at the Town Church with its 21cwt tenor..are you mad?.., next September - phew at least we will have nearly a year.....say again?...the meeting wants to have the 8 bell at the spring meeting? - she hadn't thought of that:-(-{

Doesn't the District Master realise that only 4 Alderney ringers can even write out the line for Grandsire Triples, who is going to ring the tenor? nobody who can cover on 8 has ever rung a bell heavier than 13cwt, we can't even begin to practice till we get the bells back and that will be early November, and then our 3 best ringers will be in Uk for Christmas and our training officer will be on Guernsey for January.....is she mad?

One the bells were back in they were so loud in the ringing room that no-one could hear any of the (probably) useful instructions coming from the conductor, even our first attempts at just rounds on anything more than 6 lacked rhythm, this was certainly going to be a challenge. Eventually our plain hunt on 7 started to take shape - all Steve & Peter's instructions about coursing orders were a bit confusing but once everyone was able to see the 'tramlines' running through the higher-numbers ringing then slowly order emerged from the chaos of ropes. Next was plain hunt with a grandsire start and now we were starting to see some structure and feel the rhythm.

The touch of grandsire was printed out for every bell and gradually after much chopping & changing a team & 2 reserves started to emerge. Every visitor tried to help us, we had extra practices just for Grandsire Triples anytime we knew there were extra ringers on the island (thank you Kensington, thank you Cumberlands & thank you Town Church) - theory sessions & pep talks - but nothing worked:-{ the bells were still too loud for comfort, the visitors weren't numerous enough, our ringers kept popping off-island, we couldn't get beyond the second bob, it was tricky to see how we were going to avoid utter humiliation on May 10th.:-{ :-(-{



On Saturday April 25th a peal band from the Reading area rang a peal in the afternoon. The vicar gave permission for extra ringing on the Sunday afternoon. We had plenty of visitors, we silenced the bells and switched on the simulator using the front 8, all our team except Steve was on-island. We started by ringing the touch using 4 Reading ringers and half of our team standing behind 'their ' bell. Then we swopped one Reading ringer for their Alderney 'shadow'..the whole touch still came round:-), we swopped in another Alderney ringer for their Reading counterpart - it still worked, we switched over the 3rd pair and yet again it came round. Strengthening the band by taking out an Alderney ringer and replacing them with their Reading partner we gave the 4th Alderney ringer a shot at it - success again. The pressure was on - could we now do it all on our own??? Taking out all the Reading ringers (except for the one ringing Steve's bell) we pulled off...the rounds settled down, "Go Grandsire" & we were off - the first 4 leads were pleasantly familiar - we usually got this far, but then we DIDN'T implode in a tangle of ropes, we weren't firing out, along came the 3rd bob & still it was sounding like grandsire triples, single half way...the tension was mounting, we were smiling at our dodging partners, watching our course bells like hawks, nodding at the hunt bell as we passed them after the treble- it was working.....meeting the 2 where we had passed the 3 in the first half...6th out of the hunt & 5th into the hunt, nearly there...4th went into the hunt for the second time....'single, that's all"..we had done it!!!! Our Alderney band (minus Steve) had rung the touch- Sunday April 26th - a red letter day indeed. It was suggested in some quarters that as we could do it now that Steve wasn't on the 7th it must have been him firing it out all along but I don't hold with that.

The next Monday practice night we tried it on the back 8 bells instead of the simulator - it still came around :-) & this time the rest of the band were scoring our striking - OK we probably weren't going to win the trophy - but we did get to the rounds at the end. Various team members had to be away after that but we had a session with very busy grandsire doubles touches perfecting the art of making 3rds and going into the hunt, other team members worked on the simulator fine tuning their plain hunt on 7. Our reserves came willingly to stand in variously for treble, tenor & inside for plain courses as we didn't have enough inside ringers to try the touch, the rest of the band kept asking 'how is it coming along?" a tremendous team effort.



The only question now was were we going to be able to manage the heavy 8 at Town Church? 3 of us were going to be on Guernsey on 30th April, 4 of the others said they could come too - including our tenor ringer. Jane Le Conte was required to sign the Official Secrets Act once she entered the ringing chamber at TC with us 7 to make up the band (thanks Jane) - there was to be no letting slip our training techniques to the opposition. We started out with good steady rounds, then hunting with a grandsire start, then the first lead of Grandsire Triples, then a mock-up of the competition - 2 mins of the touch, turn the treble over, and then we rang the touch quite confidently :-)

On the eve of the competition our tenor ringer joined the Town Church band for the Liberation Day service and was given plenty of practice on the tenor (well done TC), and then again at St Pierre du Bois on the Friday night Richard Harris gave some very good advice (thanks Richard) & Phil permitted extra tenor behind practice ( thank you Phil)

If you simply read the results of the first ever Inter Island 8 bell striking competition you may be forgiven if you think that Alderney didn't do well - after all we were placed 3rd out of 3. But I consider we won a tremendous victory - half our band went from a standing start to a Sunday Service standard touch of Grandsire triples in under 6 months...and let us not forget that Jersey will be unable to improve upon their performance of May 10th, Guernsey will struggle to ring significantly better but boy oh boy Alderney have got the bit between their teeth now:-)

The Alderney Training Officer

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

## **I.T.T.S. Module 1**

**Judith A Lainé**

Module 1 of the I.T.T.S. (Integrated Teacher Training Scheme) was held on the 10th and 11th May at St Peter's Church immediately after the 8 bell striking competition.

It was really good that bell ringers from all the Channel Islands attended and we all found it very interesting and very tiring!

The tutor, Pip Penny, came over from the mainland to run the sessions. She's a little ball of energy and she certainly wore us out by the end. She is also someone who is very easy to understand, very patient and able to explain things in another way when I didn't understand the first time.

The scheme splits people into two groups, Teachers and Mentors. Teachers, are people who are learning how to teach bell handling and Mentors are people who can already teach bell handling and are supposed to help and guide the Teachers to get better. The Saturday afternoon session, was for everybody. Pip taught us some ways of teaching each little part of ringing a bell. She said that when a learner is doing something wrong, you stop, get them to practice just that little bit they are doing wrong, and then put the whole thing back together again. One of these was the hand-ring exercise which she uses when a learner doesn't pull straight down, another was for when a learner is gripping the tail end to tightly she gets them to pass the tail end back and forth between the ringer and teacher whilst ringing the whole bell. We tried this, passing it between three of us, it felt very odd but we got used to it. One of the skills was nibbling down a bell. I've done this with children at Duncan's Tuesday school practice and it went very well. I've not tried any of the others yet, but Pip gave us a book which has all the tips in so when I feel ready to give another one a go I can read up on it before I give it a go. Pip also did some theory sessions. They were about how to talk to the learner and give them feedback as they are handling the bell. I found that very difficult, particularly doing it with a ringer more experienced than me pretending to be a learner. I was afraid of saying the wrong thing, or not saying something I should say. Pip was very good and gave advice on what things to say and what wasn't as helpful. It's something I want to get more confident with before I teach someone all on my own, but having people like Paul, Jane and Duncan to watch whilst they are teaching is very useful.

Pip also showed us how the learner could mess up what they are doing and showed us how to get the bell back into control and things we could do to reduce the chance the learner could mess it up in the first place. I found this very useful as I was worried that I wouldn't be able to get the bell back into control without hurting the learner or myself in the process!

The Sunday morning session was for Mentors only and Sunday afternoon all of the Guernsey ringers came back to do more of the same, tips and tricks to teach with. The Jersey and Alderney ringers had to leave on the Saturday evening or Sunday morning, but now Helen is able to teach the session like Pip does she is going to finish the training in Alderney and Jersey.

We were provided with plenty of tea, coffee and delicious cake which helped us survive a very exhausting but exciting and inspiring weekend. We got the book of tips I already mentioned and a log book which is a record of what I've taught and advice my mentor has given me. I will need this to become accredited. There is also a website with lots of things on it but to be honest I haven't got onto it yet as I'm still working on everything else.



This was a very interesting course to attend and I would do the course again as I feel there is still a lot I would get out of it and I would strongly recommend it to everyone but a must for all future teachers. It's a fantastic foundation for people to build on and to become a teacher in your own way.

**JAL**



## **Jack Worrall Tribute and Trophy**

**Judy Collins and Simon Linford**

New striking competitions are rare. The RWNYC of course has hit the headlines. But in the Channel Islands, another new competition has just been inaugurated, and just as eagerly fought – the Inter Island Annual 8 Bell Striking Competition.

The relative strength of ringing on the different islands oscillates with time, with bands comprising a mix of home grown ringers, and ready-made ringers moving to the islands either temporarily or permanently. Striking competitions between towers on the islands present logistical challenges and expense not experienced on the mainland, but the representation of towers in such competitions would put most areas to shame.

Alderney is currently in the ascendancy, having recently benefitted from augmentation of the six at St Anne's to 12, and it was the Alderney ringers who donated the fine trophy pictured. Most appropriately, the trophy has been dedicated in memory of Jack Worrall, a patriarch of Channel Island ringing.

An obituary to Jack was published in issue 5351, but its authors were not able to draw on knowledge of Jack's ringing career and hence do justice to the significance of his contribution to ringing in the Channel Islands, and Jersey in particular. The dedication of this trophy to Jack has given us the opportunity to present a little more of what Jack achieved.

Jack had been an active early member of the University of Bristol Society, but his moving to Germany to teach put his ringing career on hold. It was not until he moved to Jersey in 1976 as a Headmaster, that his passion and enthusiasm for ringing could come to the fore again.

Initially there was just the ring of six at St Mark's, but in the late 1970s a project to install a ring of eight at "St John in the Oaks" was inaugurated. Jack's advice was invaluable to the project and to the Rector. He started teaching future members of the band to ring handbells at his school, and at St Mark's at least a year before the installation in 1979. After that the bands continued to ring together and made good progress, supporting each other's practice nights as they do now.

The Channel Island District was formed in September 1980 at a meeting held in Jersey with 50 ringers from the three main islands present. Jack was elected as the first Secretary of the new District, and took part in a quarter-peal of Bob Doubles at St Mark's with each tower captain from each of the five member towers, plus an additional Alderney ringer. He continued as Secretary for several years, helping devise the rules for inter-island meetings and competitions. His emphasis was always that as many ringers as possible should take part, since they had taken the trouble to make the trip.

Through the early years of change ringing in Jersey, Jack pretty much taught everyone and so left a considerable legacy. He was always very pleased to follow the progress of any of his learners either in ringing or academic success. Often among the learners were several of his schools pupils and for several years until his retirement, he insisted that school carol services should be at St Mark's (not the closest church by any means) so that ringing could take place .

Jack would want to do the simple things well rather than push the boat out too far, although as the bands in Jersey strengthened and started ringing a lot of Surprise Minor and Surprise Major, Jack was able to demonstrate the breadth of his skills. His mistakes would be few and far between, and accompanied by much wailing and gnashing of teeth. The strength of Jersey ringing was definitely helped by the tradition of ringing evensong quarter peals at St Mark's, with Jack conducting many.

As the number of rings of bells in the Channel Islands grew, the links between the Islands were as strong as they could be given the logistics. Jack's contribution wasn't just to Jersey ringing, but he was a much valued and respected contributor to ringing in Guernsey and Alderney as well. For this new Inter-Island trophy to be in memory of Jack is a fitting memorial to a man who contributed so much. And, fittingly, Jersey won it for the first time.

Judy Collins – member of the 1979 first group of ringers at St John's, and Simon Linford, Jersey 1992-2002.

**JC and SL**

## **Liberation Day 2 quarters and a peal**

**Stephen A Rossiter**

Thinking of a way to celebrate Liberation Day I chatted to Duncan and thought it would be a nice idea to try and ring two peals in a day, one on Jersey and one on Guernsey. However after some thought, this seemed possibly a bridge too far and we decided to ringing a Quarter on each of the towers in Jersey, followed by a Peal at Forest on Guernsey. I travelled from London to Jersey the day before and Duncan though came over in the morning. In true Channel Islands fashion the plane was just over an hour late which meant rather than a leisurely 2 quarters it was a dash to St. Marks when we rang spliced Cambridge, Plain and Little in just under 40 minutes, followed by Superlative and St. John's. Back to the airport where we left on time arriving in Guernsey with time for lunch and then the peal at Forest of 7 different minor methods. Thanks to the other ringers for making it possible, it certainly was a great day.

Jersey, Channel Islands, St. Mark the Evangelist, **1260 Spliced Minor (3m)**

Plain, Little and Cambridge Composed by Glenn A A Taylor

1 Michael J Halsey; 2 Duncan Loweth; 3 Justin A Read; 4 Peter J Routier;  
5 David S Clare; 6 Stephen A Rossiter (C)

Jersey, Channel Islands, St. John in the Oaks, **1280 Superlative Surprise Major**

1 Louise Read; 2 Richard Herrissier; 3 Robin Pittman; 4 David S Clare;  
5 Peter J Routier; 6 Duncan Loweth; 7 Justin A Read;  
8 Stephen A Rossiter(C) 1st in method: 6

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

Guernsey, Channel Islands

St. Marguerite de la Foret

Friday, 9 May 2014 in 2hrs 33mins (5)

**5040 Minor (7m)** 1 extent each: Bourne S, Double Oxford B, Norwich S, St. Clements CB, Kent TB , Cambridge S, Plain B.

1Helen M McGregor

4Peter J R Bevis

2Duncan Loweth

5Tim Wainwright

3Martin J Turner

6Stephen A Rossiter (C)

For Liberation Day

**SAR**



## **An Alderney trip with a difference**

**Anne Dorey**

This year's Alderney Arts Festival parade was due to start with a bang – literally! Samba Burros ( Portuguese for donkeys ) had been asked to play at the festival & lead the parade on the morning of Saturday 24th of May. We assembled at the Island Hall at the appointed time only to find that we were the only ones parading. It was raining and no-one else was prepared to get their costumes wet. As we've got plastic skins – on our drums – and are used to playing in all weathers, we set off up the High Street & down Victoria Street playing our usual loud rhythms to the horror of some and the delight of others – we were actually asked to play an encore!

What has this to do with bell ringing? Well later in the day while listening to one of the excellent groups playing at the festival I met Philippa of the Alderney bell ringers and having found out that they practiced on Mondays arranged to go and try their new bells.

Alderney being such an expensive place to get to, several of the band had arranged to stay for a few days; some at the campsite - where the tents all blew down the night before they got there - and the more elderly and infirm in hotels. Our group had also decided to hire a car which was well worth it as we didn't have to rely on taxis and there wasn't always time to walk. It was the first time that I'd driven in Alderney and apart from trying to keep off the cobbles as much as possible – my bones rattled for a long time afterwards – it was a very pleasant experience.

I set off for the ringing practice with a friend who was interested to see the bells and watch the ringing. We were welcomed by the Alderney ringers who were ringing six. I was surprised to see that even with twelve bell ropes the tower still looked nearly as spacious as usual and there was still plenty of room for the sofas! I was able to join in and ring a couple of bells during the practice and afterwards Donald took us upstairs to the bell chamber. We had a very enjoyable hour and my friend was very impressed with the art of bell ringing. We both enjoyed seeing and hearing about how the new bells had been hung. Thank you to the Alderney ringers. We'll see you again in September for the Striking Competition.

**AD**

## Guernsey Handbells

**Duncan Loweth**

For quite some months now a small group of Guernsey ringers have met on a Monday afternoon and have been dabbling in the dark arts of handbells.

It turns out they are not dark arts at all but we have had a very jolly time, drinking tea, chatting and ringing together. I had some basic understanding of ringing methods in hand and led the group in ringing the three plain hunt patterns which I will give a brief description of later on. Once we had cracked those we were all at the same level and without an experienced ringer we have slowly learnt to ring plain courses of Plain Bob Minor. We can still fire out the plain course but on a good day we can ring a simple touch!

Spurred on by our success we had a go at a plain course of Plain Bob Major and found we can manage over half a course before our little grey cells burn out!

Taking advantage of a weekend with Helen McGregor in June we were dragged through courses of Little Bob Minor and Major, St Clements Minor and Major, Bastow Minor and touches of Plain Bob.

Without Helen we have managed the course of Little Bob and good long patches of St Clements.

We are making huge progress considering we have no steady ringers and more importantly than anything else we are having lots of fun!

A few people have said how difficult it must be to ring two blue lines and yes it is horrifically hard! Fortunately there is a trick which makes it a lot easier.

If you pick up any two bells for plain hunt on 6 the two blue lines will form one of only three patterns. Tower bell ringers will recognise coursing, which is where one bell follows another down to lead with a gap of one bell in between. There is opposites, where the bells ring a mirror image and the 2/3 pattern which is the hardest to get your head around. By ringing lots of plain hunt whilst holding different bells you can practice those patterns and they do become automative. I learnt the pairs of

numbers by rote, as have others, but another method is to count the place of whichever of your two bells rings first and trail the other after however many other bells have struck depending on the pattern. So in coursing you count 1<sup>st</sup>, wait for one other bell to sound, then strike your other hand; 2<sup>nd</sup>, wait for another bell, then strike your other hand; 3<sup>rd</sup>, wait for one other bell, then strike your other hand; etc.

These patterns become quite easy with practice which leads onto ringing Plain Bob. In Plain Bob you ring one of the plain hunt patterns until the treble leads. Now you concentrate on where you strike your bells. If its 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> you think make seconds with that hand, and dodge with the other. Now you have struck in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> you realise this is the 2/3 pattern and merrily ring the pattern until the treble comes back to lead.

What is particularly good about handbells is you get all the rewards of method ringing without having to spend 3 months learning to handle the bell. Indeed, several of the Monday troop cannot ring plain hunt in the tower but have rung touches of bob minor in hand.

If anyone is interested in learning to ring handbells do let me know. On Jersey contact Richard Herrissier and on Alderney Helen McGregor.

DL

Coursing

123456  
214365  
241635  
426153  
462513  
645231  
654321  
563412  
536142  
351624  
315264  
132546  
123456

23

123456  
214365  
241635  
426153  
462513  
645231  
654321  
563412  
536142  
351624  
315264  
132546  
123456

Opposites

123456  
214365  
241635  
426153  
462513  
645231  
654321  
563412  
536142  
351624  
315264  
132546  
123456

The patterns are drawn in blue and green. The red lines show the treble and the 2 coursing in all of the diagrams.

A trapped hour lead Judith and myself to ringing a QP of PB Minimus in hand:

Town Church, 30 July 2014  
in 44min (12F)

**1272 Plain Bob Minimus**

1-2 Judith Lainé

3-4 Duncan Loweth

First quarter in hand: 1-2



Guernsey's handbell group is now established with 6 adults and 3 children all keen to make progress. The onus for teaching falls on Duncan's shoulders and he is doing his best to keep one step ahead of the rest of us. His ability as a teacher and his mathematical brain is certainly a huge help to us, but progress is necessarily on the slow side. so when Helen offered to spend a weekend in Guernsey to help us progress, the offer was gratefully received.

We should of course, have realised just how hard we were to be worked, but as Helen explained, she wanted to give us pointers to a selection of methods that should be in our grasp if we keep working at it. I had rather hoped she would help me consolidate PB minor and major, but we were introduced to the 'delights' of St. Clements, Double Court and Little Bob.

From Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoons we met in Duncan and Jane's homes and in rooms at Elizabeth College; the latter venue was for 3 Elizabeth College students aged 11 and 12, 2 of whom also ring tower bells and who are hugely enthusiastic; good to see and long may it last.

It is a salutary lesson, after many years of tower bell ringing to come to a related discipline which proves to be a real challenge; there is no doubt that the 'little grey cells' are not as flexible as they once were and this is reinforced when watching the youngsters acquiring new skills so readily.

However, I strongly believe that new challenges are good for us, though I suspect it will be a while before I can count the number of dodges one hand is doing on the front whilst keeping an eyes on the other hand ringing bob minimums at the back - there's no doubt St Clements is easier in the tower!

We would welcome anyone who would like to join us in hand bell sessions; it is not necessary to be a tower bell ringer to take up hand bell ringing as Amy and Sue have demonstrated. currently we meet on Mondays at 6pm at Roseville Community Centre. Anyone interested please contact Duncan in the first instance.

## **Schools ringing practice**

**Duncan Loweth**

After school on a Tuesday nine children from three different schools on Guernsey come together to learn to ring tower bells. Most weeks we go to the Vale Church as some of the kids are quite small, but once a month we go to the Town Church so they get used to heavy bells too.

Some are learning to handle a bell, others are learning Plain Bob Doubles. The practice is usually rather manic and when several kids are learning handling together it does sound rather bad! But I have spoken to several of the neighbours and they are very happy with the horrendous noise emitting from the church each week as they know it's the next generation of ringers literally learning the ropes.

I am very grateful to the superb team of helpers who teach the kids, ring steadily around them and keep the whole thing fun and energetic.

A cake break half way through the practice helps to keep the kids going as well as keeping the grown-ups going!

Three of the band are now Sunday service ringing at their nearest towers. The hardest thing is keeping them ringing from one year to the next. Over the past three years only 1 has stuck with it throughout. Many others have reached service ringing standard only to find their timetable clashes in September and ringing is the thing to give. They have all said how much they enjoyed ringing and are sad that they can't carry on, but they still give it up. I have always had to think though that people are flighty in their hobbies, and children even more so, and you have to teach 100 people to ring to get just 1 or 2 lifetime ringers.

This year's batch seem particularly keen though and I am hopeful that many will stay on next year. It helps that over the years we have got far better at teaching and the kids are getting to rounds far quicker. To try to ensure they don't find another hobby the school sessions are carrying on throughout the summer (except when I'm on honeymoon). Sadly they are slightly too young to attend the normal 'grown-up' practice nights as they have bed times to stick to!

Next year I am hoping to recruit a fresh bunch from the new Year 7 students aswell as retaining the current group. As well I'm trying to

organise an afterschool handbell group at my school's prep school to catch them when they are at their most keen.

My advice to anyone trying to set up a similar youth group is you must persevere. Keep it going in the first years until you have enough kids that it has momentum. It is so much effort, disheartening, frustrating and difficult; you can't go into it thinking you will have a new service band in 12 months. You can't expect anything of them – they're kids. Some like responsibility and most will be thrilled when they are good enough to ring for service and for weddings, but you can't start teaching them with an expectation that they are going to do it. You have to teach them because ringing is fun and that is all. The hope is that in 10 years' time there will be one or two who have stuck with it and are adult ringers, but if it works you should have a steady supply of 1 or two ringers each year.

A youth group is not just for Christmas, it's for life.

Guernsey, CI (Town Church) Sunday, 13 July 2014 in 45min

### **1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

1 Sue Park

4 Tim Wainwright

2 Rob Gorton

5 Duncan Loweth (C)

3 Jan Le Conte

6 Will Stoddart

First quarter peal: Will (aged 12)

**DL**

### **Town Church on mute**

**Duncan Loweth**

We have now installed sound control at the Town Church which is effective enough to placate even our fiercest of neighbours. In fact I have received several comments that the bells are too quiet!

I'm still tweaking the setup to get the best balance of sound all around the church and in the ringing chamber, as well as getting the volume just right. However, the Town Church is now more ringing friendly and visiting bands would be welcome to ring for longer periods of times during working hours and more peals may be allowed per year.

I won't lie, my main objective was to get more peals per year, and to be able to ring peals during the working hours, but as an added bonus the sound control has stopped bells shouting out of their nearest window and taken a lot of the harshness out of the sound which remains true with the sound control open.

**DL**

## **District AGM on Alderney - 20th Sept 2014**

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

General ringing 10am - 12noon

Draw

Inter tower 6 bell striking competition & lunch 12.15 - 1.30pm  
(Tea, coffee, squash and cakes available at the back of the church but please buy your own sandwiches from P J Pantry/Hot Bread Shop on Victoria St - menus available on the day)

Meeting 1.30 - 2.45pm

Results 2.45 - 3pm

Afternoon tea & cakes (in Philippa's garden- just around the corner from the church) concurrent with quarter peal attempt of Plain Bob Max 3 - 4pm.

General ringing 4 - 6pm

Gloria's for dinner - please let me have names to join us for dinner 7pm

Judge for the competition: Graham Nobbs (assisted by Viv Nobbs)

I am expecting 1 team from Jsy, 1 x TC, 1 x Vale, 1 x St Peter's , 1 x Forest & 3 x Ay. If incorrect please let me know, [helen@tullochfarm.co.uk](mailto:helen@tullochfarm.co.uk)

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

**Editor:** I have been advised by the District Secretary that the minutes of the last meeting will be distributed to tower secretaries closer to the meeting.

## Elizabeth College boys discover ringing

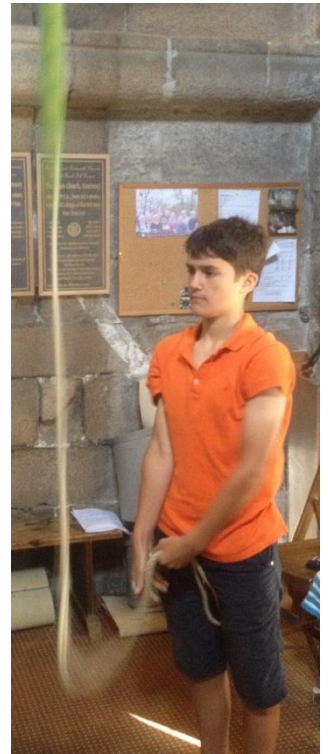
Duncan Loweth

At the end of term Elizabeth College has 'Investigation and Discovery Week' where the boys do various activities which they wouldn't normally have a go at. Just like last year I offered bell ringing as an activity.

Last year I had 8 sign up so I was a little disappointed when only 4 were keen this year. However, I was allowed to run the activity with just 4 (which I was surprised about) and I quickly realised that it would be far easier with fewer kids and they should get further and thus we would be more likely to get them hooked!

When I saw the names I was surprised to see two of the four were ringers from the Tuesday afterschool practice. They are so keen on ringing they wanted to go 5 mornings of it instead of anything else on offer.

I worried that this would make the sessions difficult with two who could ring rounds and two who had never seen a rope before. However, the two new ringers learnt to ring the whole pull by themselves in by the end of the second day so for most of the week they were able to practice rounds altogether. Whilst the new boys were resting their arms the two experienced ringers learnt to plain hunt and one learnt to ring plain bob doubles. They also practiced the Mars bar challenge – to set the bell at hand and back stroke 20 times in a row without fail. Daniel managed it on the first session and kept going to the count of 36. William managed the challenge on the last session by which time Daniel had managed to set the bell over 100 times in a row without fail hand and back.





We rang at the Town Church with the bells tied and the simulator on. By the end of the week we rang the bells open for a service in the church. All 4 boys rang together some reasonable sounding rounds as well as pulling off in Queens, Titums and reverse rounds.

They learnt to ring a bell down including taking coils. They also managed to ring pain hunt major with two hand bells each.

They boys were an absolute credit to themselves and the school. They were polite, engaged and kept ringing despite sore blisters which we had to wrap up with lots of tape.

The Guernsey Press came down to interview the boys as well as another group of boys who were making a newspaper for their week's project. Even if the two new boys don't carry on ringing it was excellent PR for young bell ringing and if all it does is make ringing more widely known as a hobby then it was worth all the effort.

My thanks go to those who helped run the sessions; Helen M<sup>c</sup>Gregor, Jane Le Conte, Paul Lawrence and Judith Lainé.



## Wedding Bells in the Vale

**Duncan Loweth**

On July 26<sup>th</sup> 2014 I was very privileged and pleased to marry Gemma Wickersham at the Vale Church at 2pm on a sunny Saturday afternoon. The week leading up to the wedding had been very busy setting up a marquee for the reception and doing most of the catering myself. To keep my out of trouble on the morning of the wedding I arranged to ring a peal at the Vale which we scored. I've very grateful for the Vale ringers organising some general ringing after the service which was delightful to hear as we had photos outside the church.

Gemma and I are very grateful for the cards, gifts, and ringing footnotes which we have received. It was a magical day and we are very happy together.

**DL**

**Helen M McGregor**

We were delighted to be able to attend the very happy wedding celebrations of Duncan Loweth & Gemma Wickersham on Saturday July 26th at Vale Church. The bride was outstandingly beautiful, the groom handsome, the ringing excellent, the weather perfect, the hymns rousing, the company terrific, the catering sumptuous, the speeches entertaining & short :-), the young bridesmaids angelic, the string quartet entertaining..... a wondrous start to a very happy life together. Helen, Peter & Jack

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









## **Society of Royal Cumberland Youths**

Guernsey, Vale

### **St Michel du Valle**

Saturday, 26 July 2014 in 2hrs  
40mins (6 cwt)

### **5040 Cambridge Surprise Minor**

7 x 720's

1 June A Saint

2 Jack Page

3 Helen M McGregor

4 Peter J R Bevis

5 Duncan Loweth (C)

6 Stephen A Rossiter

Rung to celebrate the marriage of  
Duncan Loweth and Gemma  
Wickersham taking place at this  
church later today.

## **Society of Royal Cumberland Youths**

Stepney, Greater London, E1 0BH

### **St George in the East**

Thursday, 24 July 2014 in 2 Hours  
59 minutes (6-0-9)

### **5152 Spliced Surprise Major (23 Methods)**

224 each Yorkshire, Uxbridge,  
Cornwall, Double Dublin, Bristol,  
Whalley, Watford, London,  
Tavistock, Glasgow, Cambridge,  
Cassiobury, Lindum, Superlative,  
Wembley, Rutland, Jersey, Preston,  
Ipswich, Cray, Ashted,  
Lincolnshire, Pudsey. 160 changes  
of method, all the work.

Composed by Norman Smith

1 Joanna K Dorling

2 Katherine E Young

3 Timothy R Forster

4 Shirley E McGill

5 Richard M Hobbs (C)

6 Janet E Archibald

7 Alan Regin

8 Colin J E Wyld

Rung as wedding compliment to  
Duncan Loweth and Gemma  
Wickersham and as a get well  
compliment to Stephen A Wheeler  
who was due to ring in this peal.  
Best wishes from the band.



## **Town Church, Guernsey**

Wednesday, 30 July 2014 in 51 minutes (21cwt)

### **1260 Plain Bob Triples**

- 1 Judith Laine
- 2 Paul Lawrence
- 3 Nicky David
- 4 Sue Park
- 5 John David
- 6 Mike Bubb
- 7 Duncan Loweth (C)
- 8 John Lihou

To celebrate the wedding of Duncan and Gemma on Saturday 26th July 2014



Alderney, Channel Islands

## **St Anne**

Thursday, 24 July 2014 in 45 minutes (4)

### **1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor**

- 1 Aileen Wilson
- 2 Helen M McGregor
- 3 Philippa Arditti
- 4 Peter JR Bevis
- 5 Stephen Rossiter
- 6 Jack Page (C)

Rung to celebrate the imminent marriage of Duncan Loweth and Gemma Wickersham. First treble bob, 1.

Guernsey, Channel Islands

## **St. Marguerite de la Foret**

Tuesday, 29 July 2014

### **1320 London Minor**

- 1 Jack Page
  - 2 Gereldine Forster
  - 3 Helen M McGregor
  - 4 Peter J R Bevis
  - 5 Duncan Loweth
  - 6 Stephen A Rossiter (C)
- Rung to celebrate the marriage of Duncan Loweth and Gemma Wickersham on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2014.



## College simulator sees the sun

**Duncan Loweth**

Last year Elizabeth College bought a Saxilby Simulator, and although it has seen some use in its home in the music block its room has been used as a dumping ground for recording equipment and few kids have had a go on it as both they and I have to be in the vicinity of the bell as well as the situation being right for them to try this weird and laughable activity called bell ringing (which is often at the receiving end of jokes about bell ends, exaggerated hand movements which are not at all like a proper handstroke and references to the mars bar advert).

So I have been keen to take the mountain to Mohammed, but having found the funding for £1000 worth of kit I was not going to be able to convince the powers that be to spend another £850 plus postage on the portable stand to take the bell outside. I considered making one myself but I doubted I could do a good enough job to avoid killing several people if/when my homemade contraption fell to the ground. I started thinking about how else you could support things 8 foot in the air when my mind turned to scaffolding.

The college has a scaffold tower which the maintenance team use for whatever repair jobs need doing, and with a little coercion and some cake,

they built the scaffold tower out on the lawn for the Arts Festival afternoon which showcased various activities the boys had been participating in within Art, Music, Drama and now bellringing!

Lots of the visitors came and had a go on the simulator including boys from the prep school, parents, governors and John Gollop (Guernsey States member).



It was disappointing that more students from my school did not have a go but they were tied up with their own displays of Music, Art and Drama. However, it was highly successful in progressing ringing as a normal and acceptable part of college life rather than this weird thing which that crazy Maths teacher Mr Loweth does. Hopefully the good PR will make it easier to recruit and retain pupils in the future.



DL

## Jack in Hand

Alderney ringer Jack Page has achieved a high standard of handbell ringing at a record young age.



## Oxford Diocesan Guild

Reading, Berkshire, 18 Sandhills Way, Calcot

Wednesday, 9 April 2014 in 2h55 (15)

## 5090 Bristol Surprise Maximus

Composed by David G Hull

1-2 Jack Page

3-4 Elizabeth C Frye

5-6 Bernard F L Groves

7-8 Graham G Firman

9-10 Katharine J Firman

11-12 Graham A C John (C)

First handbell peal of Bristol Maximus and at age 16, the youngest to do so: 1-2.

50th of Bristol Maximus in hand: 7-8 & 11-12.

## Future of Ringing Seminar

**Duncan Loweth**

Mike Bubb and I attended a seminar run by the Central Council on the Future of Bell ringing; Mike in his capacity as Guild Treasurer and myself representing the Channel Island District.

The Central Council has run several of these seminars to seek out good practice in areas where ringing population is growing and share it with areas in which it is not. The other aim was for the Central Council to ascertain what it can do as the central body to support Guilds and Districts in recruitment, retention and re-joining.

The session started by looking at some national and local statistics. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century there were roughly 40 000 ringers and now roughly 38 000. Whilst that is a reduction of only 5% there is a large shift in the age profile. In 1988 33% of ringers were aged 20-49 and 33% were 50+. In 2008 the aged range of 20-49 had dropped to 12% and the 50+ was up to 62%. The latest data (which is about 5/6 years old) suggests that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Ringing Masters / Tower Captains are 50+ and a third of learners are 50+. The numbers of active peal ringers is also down<sup>1</sup> from 5000 in the 70/80s to 3000 in 2012. In the 70/80s there were 600 new peal ringers per year and that has dropped to 150 new peal ringers.

Vice Master, Christine Hill, described the situation in W&P as currently not a crisis situation but not sustainable into the future. She said that although there were children coming to ringing in the W&P as part of Duke of Edinburgh programmes and otherwise, but the majority of youth ringers are the children of ringers. She pointed out that the Guild has resources to help in a variety of ways: by arranging events; being the link between towers and central council; coordinating initiatives (possessing both physical and human resources); potential to fund projects which have a good business plan; and to generate publicity. She concluded with a questions as food for thought: How much pressure should there be for Sunday service ringing? And could secular ringing be the way forward?

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<sup>1</sup> not that peal ringing is a direct measure of the number of ringers, but through the peal records in the ringing world we can monitor this figure more frequently and more easily; the other data came from a large scale survey taken across the country which is quite expensive

The day continues with discussion in groups, sharing ideas and strategies to attract more ringers, more young ringers, retain existing ringers, and to reclaim lapsed ringers. A variety of points were raised when all the groups fed back to the Central Council representative including: having a presence in schools or with Scout/Guide groups, Duke of Edinburgh or any other youth organisation so that we are known to exist; not to seem desperate in our publicity to attract ringers, newspaper adverts which say 'there are only three of us left and we're getting old and we need some new ringers' is not going to attract as many people as an advert which makes ringing sound fun and interesting – we need people to come to ringing because they want to ring and we are doing them a favour teaching them, not that they are doing us a favour in learning; making our towers more pleasant (warm, comfortable, toilet access if possible) as well as the whole experience<sup>2</sup>, including a good social atmosphere, well planned and structured ringing sessions where everybody is making progress but mainly having fun and enjoying themselves.

The Immediate Past Master of the Sussex Guild spoke about the process of change they had undertaken in their Guild.

They sent out questionnaires to their membership asking what they wanted. Very few people replied and it was not clear whether that was because they didn't want anything because they were happy with things as they were or because they were so despondent with the Guild generally that they saw no point in replying. The IPM wondered if all the membership think of themselves as the Guild or the District, and knew of many towers which say things like 'the District are coming this weekend' as if they were something to be feared. He also pointed out that people have other commitments in their lives and not everyone is as keen as others about ringing.

In Sussex the Committee looked at what was going on and their main suggestion was to do away with the district set-up and encourage the work of the association to be done by networking between towers. He pointed out that visiting between towers seemed good within districts, but towers on the border with another district rarely mixed across the dividing line. They held meetings to which about half the membership attended, they did not like this idea and wanted to keep the current district set-up. They

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<sup>2</sup> Which I think we are very good at in the CI and all the towers are very well kept.

wanted more association training – but they wanted it in their own tower. A lot of ringers like ringing in their own tower and have no desire or inclination to travel to any other tower for any reason, indeed a number of ringers were uncomfortable or fearful about doing so. They pointed out that the language used was off putting – a district meeting sounds like you'll be sat around a conference table talking about ringing statistics and not spending the day having a nice ring up the tower. An important message which was fed back was 'we are not against change, but it's happening to quickly' – the ringers wanted evolution and not revolution.

Pip Penney gave a brief introduction to the ART and ITTS. The ITTS is about bringing university research about learning and teaching to the process of teaching bell ringing. She does not expect ringers who already teach to start teaching ringing in a different way – in fact her way is probably identical to your way but she may learn a few tips from you and you may learn a few tips from her. The two main points of ITTS are to bring experienced and novice teachers together so a new generation of teachers learn from those already doing it<sup>3</sup> and secondly to improve the quality of the feedback and the planning of the lessons that learners receive, keeping them motivated, challenged and happy. She spoke about Learning the Ropes which is basically an updated version of the Sherbourn teaching resources, and made a good point that if teaching is standardised then a learner who move s to a different part of the country can carry on wherever they left off with their last teacher.

ART is the Association of Ringing Teachers and is the governing body which looks after ITTS and through which one can gain accreditation as a teacher. Whilst there is no requirement to be accredited to teach, if you were running a recruitment programme it comes across far more professionally if you have accredited teachers and a slick programme of study. People expect it and whilst some are happy with the informality and old fashioned style of bell ringing and the way it is taught, many more people expect much more of a professional, polished experience. Pip Penny referenced similar changes made in Scouting and Guiding groups which were suffering similar declines in numbers and have managed to affect great change and are now growing in popularity again.

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<sup>3</sup> Which in many places is already happening and is happening quite naturally – but in other places where they have few experiences ringers left it is not happening and novice ringers are having to teach learners and don't have anyone to help them



A teacher can be CRB checked (or whatever they call the criminal background check these days) through ART (though she wasn't sure if that was all you needed for the Channel Islands, we may still need to apply for local police checks – I don't know). ART membership also includes liability insurance for teachers over the age of 18.

The ITTS course is going from strength to strength. It has been run over 100 times so far. The £15 course fee covers the resources you are given in the session, the Tutor and their travel expenses are currently paid for by the Ringing Foundation which is supporting ART and ITTS for the first years of their life to give them a chance to become self-sufficient.

After lunch there was an explanation of what the Ringing Foundation is and does. It exists to financially support initiatives which have the potential to progress ringing. For example, they would not donate money for a mini-ring for my school, they don't fund hardware. However, they would consider supporting a pilot scheme of incorporating bell-ringing into the national curriculum for music in schools (and thus part fund a mini-ring) because the project is an idea which could be used throughout the country if it works.

The meeting was very positive and most people there seemed to be of the mind that we can make certain changes and attract people into ringing if we put the effort in. I spoke to a couple of ringers – they have two in their tower and they have spent the last 4 years teaching people to ring who then give up for other activities 12 months later (not because they dislike ringing – they just never got the bug for it) and they have to start all over again trying to find more recruits – they are tired, disheartened and ready to give up. Thankfully we are not at that point – yet! We can attract people to ringing but we must make sure they see all the good points and we make it as easy as possible for them to enjoy and keep enjoying their ringing. Arranging lessons outside of normal practice times so they can get to ringing rounds quickly is hugely important – ringing three times in a practice night will not get them learning fast enough and they are more likely to give up. We are not in crisis in the CI, we can still ring methods together, but we have to act now to ensure we have enough to ring in future years.

**DL**

## Guild 8 bell July 5th 2014

**Helen M McGregor**

The District entered the Guild inter-district 8 bell striking competition again this year - a success in itself as only 5 out of the 8 Districts put in a team.

Representing the Channel Islands were

1. Philippa Arditti (Ay)
2. Jane Le Conte (Gsy)
3. Helen McGregor (Ay)
4. Peter Routier (Jsy)
5. Justin Read (Jsy)
6. Peter Bevis (Ay)
7. Stephen Rossiter (Ay) (C)
8. Tim Wainwright (Gsy)



The competition was held at St Andrew, Hurstbourne Priors, Hants, a 14 -3 -9 ring of 8.

Choosing to ring the same touch of Grandsire Triples that had been set for the inter-island competition meant at least everyone was familiar with the touch, even though most were on a different bell when ringing for the District than when they had been when ringing for their Island. Sadly it was apparent that we actually rang in 3 ever so slightly different groups:- (the Ay speed, the Gsy speed & the Jsy speed) so although the end result was (as had been the case at TC in May) superior to anything any one Channel Island could have produced we failed to 'sparkle'.

The results were as follows:

1st Christchurch and Southampton 24 fault rang 5th  
2nd Portsmouth 26 faults rang 1st  
3rd Winchester 27 faults rang 2nd  
4th Alton and Petersfield 54 Faults rang 3rd  
5th Channel Islands 63 faults rang 4th

Yes - the top 3 teams delivered ringing superior to us but that was only because they ring together more often than we do. As a group of 8 ringers we were more than capable of beating any other District band if only we could practice together more often. However, sadly, that is very difficult & expensive to arrange. What has been suggested is a "District Outing" once a year close to competition date. Once a date is agreed by those who will be representing the District next year then the date will be opened up to everyone. The outing will be on the mainland to facilitate cheap travel. Next year's Guild competition will be Sat 4th July so the District outing should be sometime in June

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

It is pleasing that the district has once again entered a team in this competition, held this year at Hurstbourne Priors.

The team was Philippa Ardittii, Helen McGregor, Peter Bevis and Stephen Rossiter from Alderney; Justin Read and Peter Routier from Jersey; and Tim Wainwright and Jane Le Conte from Guernsey.

The Alderney contingent were already on the mainland and met at the tower in time for the draw for order of ringing; meanwhile the Jersey and Guernsey ringers met at Southampton airport and shared a hire car. The Guernsey flight was delayed and a text to Helen meant she was able to move our drawn position of ringing second, to that of ringing fourth.

The bells are pleasant and go well and we rang the touch of Grandsire triples that was nominated for the inter-island competition in May. We rang reasonably well, but having heard some of the other teams realised that we have a long way to go to be in contention for a place. In the event we came last of the 5 teams that entered but should be pleased that given the fact that, of all the districts of the guild, we have the most difficult journey to make, we did take part.

We managed to ring in 2 of the other towers that were open but our ringing was seriously curtailed by the fact that lunch took 90 minutes to arrive - the next time Tim recommends somewhere because "it's in the good Pub Guide" we won't listen!

Those of us returning to the islands that day, attended the early part of the business meeting, but plane schedules meant we had to leave after about 40 minutes. However, it was good to spend a day in the company of ringers from other islands in the district with the opportunity to share ideas about recruiting and teaching as well as ideas for future district events.

**JLC**

## **TOWN CHURCH, GUERNSEY – TOWER REPORT**

**Paul Lawrence**

How the outlook has changed since the last Tower report! All was ticking along nicely and then we start to lose some ringers so will have to consider recruitment in earnest now.

On the plus side two of the young ringers that Duncan has been training came along to ring for Sunday morning service. Hopefully their interest will continue and we will do our best to encourage their visits.

We enjoyed our tower outing to Alderney back in February - seems an awful long time ago now but we enjoyed trying out the new bells. (It was interesting to note that we had trouble getting bookings on the Aurigny flight but on the day of travel there were at least 6 empty seats.)

Practice nights of late have been a bit of a challenge with the odd one having to be cancelled. We seem to have a tower of holiday addicts causing the occasional shortage of ringers but to balance that we are seeing an increase in the number of visiting ringers which has saved more than the cancellation of more than one practice.

Duncan has worked extremely hard to install a sound management system in the tower and it works really well. We can now ring during the day without causing upset to our Town neighbours so a big “thankyou” to Duncan.

**PL**



## ST JOHN, JERSEY – TOWER REPORT

**Justin Read**

St John's have had an exciting six months, welcoming six new learners to the tower, three of whom joined us having seen a posting on Facebook from Jill Scott who has returning to ringing after an extended 'career break'.

With so many new learners all of our teaching skills have been put to good practice; I would like to express my thanks to all those who have been lending a hand. A mention must go to Richard for organising some fun hand bell sessions.

Tenacity seems to play a big part in recruiting and retaining new recruits. One of the learners has not yet returned as she promised she would - I will keep chasing! And we will continue to make efforts to encourage some younger members of the community to have a go.

With our focus quite rightly on our new recruits, our repertoire is unchanged: on a good day we can ring surprise major to a good standard with a local band. Following a few trips to ring on the mainland this year, I am beginning to realise that we ring our bells quite slowly for their weight but it takes confidence and a keen ear from the whole band to have the courage to up the tempo slightly – at times we are tempted to slow the pace to give ourselves more time to think!

As an island eight bell band, we were really pleased with our performance at the striking competition. At the time of writing we are working on hiring a private plane so we can enter the six bell competition on Alderney.

Finally, as I always say, other Channel Islanders are always very welcome to visit and join our practices.

**JR**

## ST ANNE, ALDERNEY – TOWER REPORT

Stephen A Rossiter

Since my last report we have continued to improve on higher numbers, with occasionally being able to ring rounds on 12 for Sunday service, if everyone is on the island.

The nature of island life means that we can have long spells with many ringers away, as this has been the case in the last six months, which has meant less ringing than normal over the Easter period.

We were saddened to lose Ann Wheeler who died on March 12th after a long illness, A quarter peal was rung on the 13th and the peal scored by a visiting band from the Oxford Diocesan Guild was dedicated in her memory.

Special mention must be made to Aileen Wilson who rang the treble in fine style to a Quarter Peal of Cambridge Minor, her first attempt at treble bob.

Our handbell ringing continues to improve and last week we rang plain hunt on 14, a personal best for 6 of the ringers.

Congratulations also go to Duncan for conducting his first Quarter peal in hand.

SAR

### **Oxford Diocesan Guild**

Alderney, Channel Islands, St Anne  
Saturday, 12 April 2014 in 3hrs 22  
mins (13 cwt)

### **5042 Yorkshire S Maximus**

Composed by D F Morrison

1 June D Wells

2 Beryl R Norris

3 Jack Page

4 Helen M McGregor

5 Kenneth R Davenport

6 Robert A Partridge

7 Stuart F Gibson

8 Peter J R Bevis



9 Timothy G Pett

10 Kelvin R Britton

11 Bernard F L Groves

12 E John Wells (C)

Rung open in celebration of the life of Ann Wheeler late of this tower

## VALE, GUERNSEY – TOWER REPORT

**Mike Bubb**

The first six months of 2014 as always seem to have flown by.

It was with regret that Colin announced he was giving up ringing. A valued member of the band and Tower Secretary he will be sorely missed. He keeps tabs now on the ringing from his pew! One goes and one comes back. Well on a regular basis. It's good to see Helen back ringing quarter peals with us.

So what have we been up too ringing-wise. Fewer evening services means that we have been ringing more quarter peals prior to the morning service. A 9.30 start certainly sharpens the brain. No hangovers from the night before!

So what highlights from the quarters? Olivia rang her first one. Tenored behind to Doubles in three methods. A beaming Olivia when I said "that's all". A quarter of plain bob minimus! A good exercise in counting. Our date touch of 2014 minor on 18<sup>th</sup> May. Thanks John for the composition. Jointly conducted Plain Bob Doubles on 29<sup>th</sup> June.

It's always a joy to ring in a "first". Congratulations to Nicky on calling her first quarter (doubles in three methods).

The weddings are coming thick and fast this year so that's our Saturdays taken up!

**MB**

### Quarter Peals

St John

9 May	1280 Superlative Surprise Major
5 May	1272 Westminster Surprise Minor
4 May	1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major

#### Town Church

13 July	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
9 July	1260 Grandsire Triples
29 June	1260 Plain Bob Triples
30 April	1250 Yorkshire Surprise Major

#### St. Anne

12th February	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
5th March	1260 Plain Bob Minor
13th March	1260 Plain Bob Minor
12th July	1260 Plain Bob Minor
24th July	1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor

#### Wells House

14th February	1264 Plain Bob Major
7th May	1344 Plain Bob Major
15th July	1260 Plain Bob Minor

#### Vale Church

13 July	1260 Doubles (3methods)
29 June	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
15 June	1260 Doubles in 4 methods and 8 variations
8 June	1260 Doubles in 1 principle, 5 methods and 8 variations
2 June	1260 Grandsire Doubles
29 May	1260 Doubles in 6 methods and 5 variations
25 May	1260 Doubles in 6 methods and 5 variations
18 May	2014 Minor in two methods
10 May	1320 Norwich Surprise Minor
9 May	1269 Doubles in 11 methods
4 May	1260 Doubles in five methods
2 May	1260 Grandsire Doubles

#### Vale Church (cont.)

28 April	1260 St Clements College Bob Minor
20 April	1260 St Simons Bob Doubles
17 April	1260 Grandsire Doubles
17 April	1260 Doubles in 7 methods and 4 variations
30 March	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
28 March	1260 Doubles (3m/p)

16 March	1260 Doubles in 4 methods and 6 variations
5 March	1269 Grandsire Doubles
2 March	1260 Doubles in 3 methods
16 February	1260 Doubles in seven methods and three variations
6 February	1260 Grandsire Doubles
2 February	1272 Plain Bob Minimus
27 January	1260 Doubles in five methods and six variations
12 January	1260 Plain Bob Minor
5 January	1380 Doubles in 3 methods and 7 variations

St Peter's	
11 January	1280 Double Norwich Court Bob Major

Forest	
29 July	1360 London Surprise Minor
11 January	1260 Stedman Doubles

St Mark	
9 May	1260 Spliced Minor (3m)

## Letters

Dear Editor

The band in Alderney are busy following on from months of practicing Grandsire triples. The new objective is to ring plain bob major. Clearly if we manage a quarter of this with our local band it will be a first.

However I wonder when any district tower last rang a quarter of major with only the members listed in the guild report? I suspect it must be a while back but I hope someone can save me hunting through the RW by telling me when.

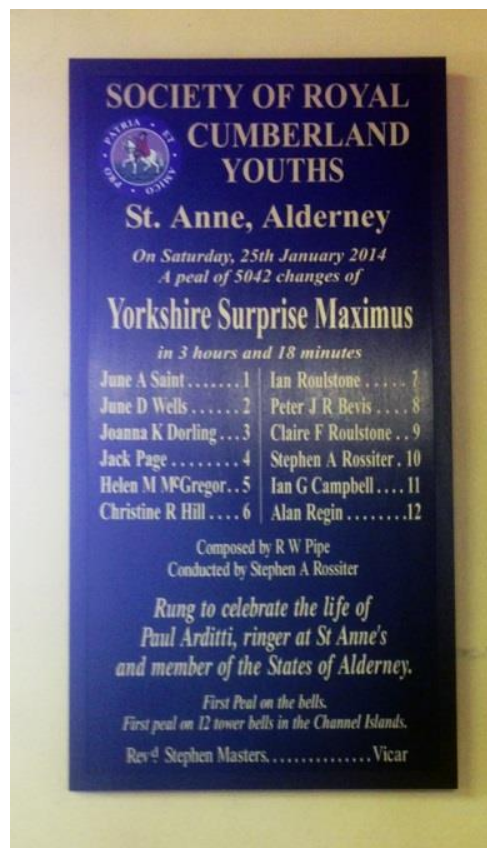
Peter  
[p@peterbevis.com](mailto:p@peterbevis.com)

## St Anne Peal Board

Peter JR Bevis

The Alderney band has recently taken delivery of a new peal board which commemorates both the sad loss of Paul Arditti and the first peal on our new ring of 12 bells. Peal boards have a habit of being extraordinarily expensive and the waiting list is long from the old established manufacturers. We were fortunate enough to procure ours from Duncan Loweth who has only recently branched out in this direction. Good value, excellent quality and quick delivery. Now we have ordered another before he gets overwhelmed with other orders!

PJRB



## Spring Meeting 2015

Helen M McGregor

Next year's Spring Meeting will take place at St John's Jersey on Saturday 25th April 2015

The Jack Worrall inter-island 8 bell striking competition piece will be 224 changes of Plain Bob Major, WHWH

Other fun to be arranged :-)

HMMcG



## 14 IN A DAY

**Mike Bubb**

Towards the end of May I had to go to the mainland for a meeting of treasurers.

Viv, the Guild Master had said that the youngsters on the Isle of Wight were ringing quarters and would I like to ring at Carrisbrooke (similar weight to Town) Grandsire Caters. Well yes was the answer. So that was that. Little did I know what was unfolding.

A week before she asked if I would take a rope at Newport – Grandsire Cinques. Well in for a penny in for a pound. I did ask for the tenor (no, taken) Well treble but can't guarantee I'd cope. It was only then that I was told about the 14 in a day. Never been done before. No pressure then!

At Carrisbrooke Viv and I took treble and tenor respectively . I could drift along worrying about the next tower.

So on to Newport. Steve Noyes was conducting. A simple composition with two plain leads in each part. At least when a call was made I'd know where I was. After 5 minutes of terror I thought this is daft relax. So 1312 changes later that's all was called. First on 12 for me. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief as the two major challenges of the day were over. Three eight and a six to go. Viv, Graham and I went along to Arreton for 8 45 to hear the last quarter of the day, No ringing! Thankfully they were late and went into changes just after 9. Plain Bob Doubles conducted by all six ringers. Of the six ringers five had rung in all of the quarters. From the first 'look too' at Godshill at 7am to the final 'that's all' at Arreton at 9 35pm all towers had been quartered in a day. Well done.

As a post script it was a privilege to have been invited to take part in this momentous occasion.

**MB**

## **Fourth Saturday practices on Guernsey**

**Jane Le Conte**

In an attempt not to lose the momentum of the monthly practices run by Helen, Guernsey ringers agreed to continue a once a month practice with the aim of getting sufficient ringers together to attempt methods that are not rung on practice nights.

To that end we have been meeting at St. Peters to allow forays into 10 bell ringing as well as more adventurous methods on 8 bells. Tim organises ringing here and then we move on to the Forest where Mike Bubb oversees the ringing.

Methods are chosen in good time for people to have no excuse not to have a look at them beforehand and the main focus has been Double Norwich CB Major and which we should be attempting to ring a quarter of soon.

The success of the meeting very much depends on numbers available to attend and highlights our lack of ringers; only one or two unable to attend can make a huge difference to what we can attempt. June's meeting was boosted by members of a visiting peal band, which gave a solid framework for locals to slot in to a made for a very successful and enjoyable practice.

**JLC**

## **Young Ringers**

**Peter JR Bevis**

We all hope to recruit more young ringers - if nothing else, they have the potential to ring for longer than old learners and often they pick it up a lot quicker too. Our attempts to create a children's band last year in Alderney fell on stony ground, but of course children can and do make good recruits.

We are pleased to welcome Jack Page and his younger brother Daniel back to Alderney. Jack learned at St Anne, five years ago and I called his first quarter (PB Major) a year later. Jack had just become a teenager (13), but more than twenty ringers have rung their first peals before they were 13, so that would make Jack a late starter.

Perhaps the most notable of those very young ringers is Henry Pipe, who rang his first peal at the age of 7. I met him recently at Tulloch, ringing his 21st peal and third of Bristol S Maximus, aged 11. His little brother, Alfred, rang his first peal (bob major) aged 8. Both appear to be very normal lads, who happen to be good at ringing.

But Jack, although a late developer, has been making up for lost time. After his first peal, Yorkshire S Major aged 14, Jack rang 74 peals (23 of which were in-hand) before his 17th birthday. These include such tricky performances as conducting a peal of 8-spliced, 14-spliced S Royal, 23-spliced S Major, an inside pair to Cambridge S Maximus and Jack at 16 is still the youngest ringer to have ever rung Bristol S Maximus in-hand (until Henry gets the chance to try it). Jack was asked to stand in for the 14 spliced S Royal on the morning of the peal as another ringer had dropped out. He learned the methods in the back of a car on the short drive to the peal. I wondered how this was possible, but when I asked Jack he just smiled and said that 8 of the methods were simple extensions of the standard 8 S Major, so after he had looked at them that only left 6 completely new methods to learn from scratch! I wish I could absorb new methods like that.

Jack's last peal as a 16 yo was a peal of Cambridge at Vale church for Duncan and Gemma's wedding and he joined the locals for some general ringing after the ceremony. Then it was back to Guernsey again two days later to ring a peal of Spliced S Major at Town Church for his birthday. Now



**DANIEL PAGE**



**JACK PAGE**

he is spending the rest of the summer on Alderney ringing plain hunt on seven, bob major and rounds with the St Anne band. Whatever the need, Jack's there ready to help with a quiet smile.

**PJRB**

## St Anne's School Activities Week

**Helen M McGregor**

The newly augmented peal at St Anne's - for the first time ever - provides us with some light bells & so is now able to offer ringing lessons to children :-)

Having contacted St Anne's school we were delighted when our offer of participating in their activities week was accepted. Because the weather was glorious we only had 3 children - apparently if the weather had been worse some of the outdoor activities would have been cancelled and we would have had more - but 3 were good.



We were particularly grateful to Duncan Loweth for joining us from Guernsey, he has such terrific experience in teaching children we got lots of invaluable tips from him:-). Incorporating handbells, a mobil iPad league on best score for covering to doubles & plenty of practical bell-handling we kept the children well occupied.

All 3 asked for more ringing at the end of the final session so we count the event a success. We have contacted the children who have previously rung the wombels and as they will join us up the tower on Tuesday eve July 29th, the first meeting of Alderney Bell Club should have between 6 - 8 interested youngsters attending.



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

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