



Bristol Rural News

Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers

The Newsletter of Bristol Rural Branch Bellringers

No 310

Website: <https://bellsgandb.org.uk/bristolrural/> email: bristolrural.branch@bellsgandb.org.uk

Headlines

- 1 Branch Practice—Coalpit Heath—27th June—15.00-16.30
- 2 Branch Practice—Abson—25th July—15.00-16.30
- 3 Branch Practice and Cream Tea—Thornbury—22nd August—15.00-18.00

June-July
2026

Notes from the Association AGM

This year's Association AGM was hosted by the Tewkesbury Branch. There were as usual some towers available for open ringing, the striking competition, a service, meeting and tea. Particular points that might be of interest to members include:

Membership subscriptions

There is no change to the standard £20 subscription for adults, nor for any other category. From the £20, £12 goes to the Belfry Fund, £4 to the Association and £4 to the Branch.

Members can now sign up to the Member Mojo system, which will enable them to receive updates on events etc. directly from the Association. Details are on the G&B website.

Ringling support

In addition to grants for bell maintenance activities, the Association is now offering support for the promotion of ringing, including help with the hire of a mobile ring for open days and with the cost of residential ringing courses. More details can be obtained from the Association secretary.

Striking competition

The six bell Croome competition was held at Twyning where Bristol Rural Branch was represented by Coalpit Heath, conducted by Russell Scudamore. The team came 4th out of 9 bands and the judge's comments included: "Good use of practice time. Even striking. A strong competitive ringing speed plus a clear open hand stroke lead". The full list of results was:

- 1 Cirencester, Cirencester – awarded the Croome Trophy
- 2 Tewkesbury, Tewkesbury Abbey – awarded the Great Peter Trophy
- 3 Bristol, Henbury – awarded the Sabin clapper
- 4 Bristol Rural, Coalpit Heath
- 5 Cheltenham, St Mark – awarded the Scudamore clapper
- 6 Wotton under Edge, Dursley
- 7 Gloucester, Brockworth
- 8 Swindon, Purton
- 9 Stroud, St Laurence

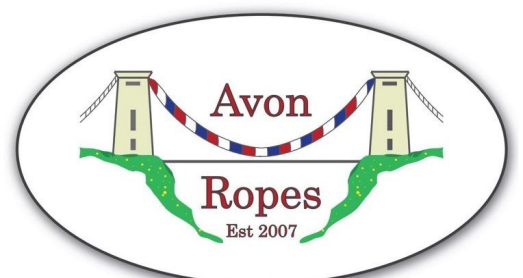
The eight bell Penn competition was held at Ashchurch and Bristol Rural Branch were represented by ringers from Almondsbury, Coalpit Heath, Frenchay, Thornbury and Tytherington, conducted by Matt Johnson. The team came 6th out of 7 and the judges' comments included: "Good use of practice time and immediately settled well into changes. The judges felt for us when the method mistake hit in the third lead but we worked well as a team to recover which was a joy to hear. Settled again and well struck thereafter".

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The full results:

- 1 Cheltenham, awarded the Penn trophy
- 2 Tewkesbury, awarded the Chairman's Baldrick
- 3 Bristol
- 4 Wotton-under-Edge
- 5 Cirencester
- 6 Bristol Rural
- 7 Stroud

Sue's Tours

Some of you will know that Sue Elliott is in the habit of organising extended ringing tours. Over the years, she has covered Cornwall and Devon, plus a number of 'islands' - Lundy, the Isle of Wight, Eire, Ypres (part of the island of Europe?), Brownsea Island.

This time she arranged a trip to Northern Island, with 23 taking part including a few non-ringers. Most of us therefore gathered at Bristol Airport to catch the 07.00 flight to Belfast, although a few sensible members flew out the previous afternoon to avoid the ridiculous o'clock start to get to the airport. By the time we had deposited our luggage at our hotel, it felt like lunchtime when it was actually only 09.30. This gave us time for some general orientation and eating before setting off on the local train to our first tower, Carrickfergus. I'll let Sue explain how we spent the week:



Bristol Rural Branch Team



At Carrick a Rede

"Thank you for your support. Without you I wouldn't have been able to ring the bells of Northern Ireland.

"What a good week we had, from the bells to the weather, the company to the hospitality we received. We had a good range of bells too: rings of 6,8,10 and 12 ranging from 3cwt to 32cwt.

"Monday We started the week by plane, bus and rail to Carrickfergus, a lovely 8 in a beautiful location by Belfast Lough, followed by an evening ring at St Donard's, Belfast which was just large enough to hold 6 ringers at a time.

"Tuesday We met the coach that took us round for the rest of the week. We had an early start to get us to Enniskillen cathedral. Unfortunately, the bells were not the best and the Hastings stay on the 4th was too short to stand the bell, something we didn't discover till after a couple of ringers had the rope ripped out of their hands. But hey ho we take the

smooth with the rough. In the afternoon we visited St Columb's cathedral in Derry/Londonderry.

"Wednesday Ballymena and Coleraine were our towers today followed by a visit to the spectacular world heritage site of Giants Causeway, made even more spectacular by the blue sky and the surf crashing over the rocks. Sadly, it was too windy to visit the rope bridge at Carrick a Rede so instead our driver took us along the beautiful north coast to Cushendun and Cushendall. We stopped at the closest point to Scotland, just 12 miles away, where the Irish Sea meets the Atlantic and visited the smallest pub (it would have been rude not to have had a Guinness). We returned to Belfast via the Glens of Antrim, carved out by glaciers during the ice ages.

"Thursday Today took us to the Mourne Mountains,



Royal Hillsborough

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ringing firstly at Newcastle which was a lovely light 6 that rang much better than their weight would suggest. Next stop was Rostrevor which some people struggled a little bit with, after which we set off to Royal Hillsborough for a few hours to ring and visit the Castle or Gardens.

"Friday morning we visited the best bells of the tour at Ballylesson. We could have stayed all day but no we had to move on to Bangor via Stormont, Holywood and St Marks Belfast. We had to say goodbye to our coach driver Paul, who had been a mine of information about Northern Ireland all week and was endlessly patient with our quirky interest in church bells.

"The people of Northern Ireland were so welcoming, nothing was too much trouble. All in all it was a fantastic place to visit with a variety of scenery from the rugged coastline to lovely fishing villages, and the glens and mountains: it had it all. The people we met at all the towers were welcoming and very pleased to see us. Of the 13 towers we rang I would recommend them all although one was not quite so great, definitely in the 'Rung there, don't need to go back' category.

"Great food, great company what more could you ask for, Thank you."

And, on behalf of all those who joined the outing, thank you Sue for organising such a splendid week.

PS See if you can identify all the towers we rang at from the map, without cheating. I certainly feel I know a lot more about the geography of Northern Ireland than I did.



New Dashboard for Accessing the Branch Website

There is now a new way of accessing the Branch website, designed to make finding information easier on mobile devices. Go to <https://bellsgandb.org.uk/bristolrural/dashboard.html>. Don't forget to bookmark the link and please share it with your ringing friends. Whichever way you access the website you can see the very latest news plus details about upcoming events there. You can also search for items of interest, checkout recent Branch entries on BellBoard and read a growing list of bell ringing articles contributed by members.

Details of the new Association membership system Membermojo can be found by following the links from the home page.



Steve Crane

Daytime Practices


If you've got some spare time during the day, why don't you try one of the Branch's regular daytime practices? Abscon practice on a Wednesday from 10.30 till 12.00 and Siston on a Friday from 10.00 till 11.30. All levels of ringing are accommodated, from Plain Bob Doubles to Surprise Minor. They are both very friendly, sociable and well attended practices. Ringers have a broad range of ringing experiences so you're virtually guaranteed to leave having learnt something new. Tea and biscuits are available after ringing (there's a small charge to cover costs) and it's a great opportunity to meet new ringers. As always, it's worth checking with the tower contact before setting out—the Siston practice sometimes moves to Kelston or Wapley.

Chris Greef


Tower Open Days

If you are planning a tower open day this year, don't forget the Branch has a CCTV system that can be borrowed and set up so that visitors can see what is happening in your bell chamber when the bell ropes are pulled. Contact me (cgreef@btinternet.com) if you are interested.



Chris Greef



For all the latest news, events and Branch information visit the Bristol Rural website at:



<https://www.bellsgandb.org.uk/bristolrural>

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Books Available

The Central Council has just published a new guide to better striking for beginners. I expect there are some useful tips for more experienced ringers too! It's available from the Central Council for £4.50.

Bill Liebow has some books and badges available at cost as below. Please contact him if you are interested:

The One per Learner Book (the little yellow book, ideal for learners for logging progress in early stages) - £1 each.

Ringling Circles (gives the blue line and details of what happens at calls for some standard methods) - some left at £3.50 each.

Ringling Achievements

(This list is compiled by searching Bellboard under the G&B Association. If you don't put your ringling on Bellboard and attribute it to the G&B I won't find it. Ed)

Wapley—1260 Plain Bob Doubles

First quarter inside Nr 4. Congratulations Laili.. Cambridge by the end of the year.

