

AXBRIDGE BRANCH

Worle was host to our 6 bell striking competition this year, where a total of 8 teams competed (from a total of 7 contributing towers). We were grateful to our judges Jill & Mike Hansford from Taunton, who gave encouraging feedback, and to Worle ringers for their warm hospitality and plentiful tea.

Two towers, Shipham & Axbridge went on to compete at Association level, in the Bath Branch. Shipham are to be congratulated for their progress as they came 4th in their qualifier. Axbridge came 1st in their qualifier and then came 4th place overall (out of 6 teams).

Shipham have every reason to be proud of their young ringer Krystyna Masny, who came joint-first in the Bath and Wells Young Ringer of the Year Competition having achieved 334 points along with Matthew Martin (South Petherton). She has only been ringing for 20 months and this is a fantastic achievement. Very well done Krystyna - from the whole Branch!

Yet more achievements in the Association 8 bell striking competition. Axbridge was the only Branch to enter two teams, one of which won first place and brought the trophy home. Congratulations to the band in Axbridge.

Many towers embraced Recruitment Week in October, making extra special effort to put up posters, support their evening practices, and welcome visitors. Pam Ebsworth co-ordinated materials & information. Our most successful event was the Open Tower day at Banwell on Saturday 16th, where 18 people visited, had a tour of the bells and watched the ringing. A brave 12 (aged between 6 and about 50) then had a try on the backstroke. At the time of writing, 7 have taken up the challenge of learning to ring. We would like to thank everyone who helped to make this such a pleasant and profitable day, especially the Banwell Ringers and Pam herself.

Cheddar hosted our AGM this year, and took the opportunity to nominate their two new members Jenny & Elizabeth Coates. Pat & Clive Panchard presented them both with a large Lindt chocolate bell. Surely this must be the best solution to the recruitment problem? Now we know why Cheddar has such a healthy number of members!

Our social event this year was courtesy of Richard Newman and Clifford Nicholls and their pub quiz in March. The quiz was well attended with a good range of questions for general appeal. It was enjoyed by all, and well attended. Unfortunately the venue didn't quite match the same high standard, as it was too cold and the food disappointing, but a good time was had by all, despite this.

Training events this year were Raising and Lowering in Peal at Rodney Stoke and Brean, Cambridge Surprise Minor, Extents of Grandsire, Calling and Conducting, Bell-handling and Plain Course of PB Doubles. Our Tutors were Pam Ebsworth, Charles Pipe-Wolferstan and Richard Newman. Thank you to them and to all the helpers - we couldn't do this without you.

Monthly Branch practices continue to be well supported. John Dunstone is always pleased to see new faces, and welcomes all levels of ability. We are grateful to John for all his continued efforts.

Jude Akhurst