

Axbridge Branch Secretary's Report

Hutton's new bells were put through their paces as they hosted our 6 bell striking competition in April. Congratulations to Shipham and Axbridge, who both went forward to compete at the final in Wembdon.

Bubbly was brought forth to the crowd at Hutton, but *not* to congratulate the winners. It was a privilege to toast to Marion and Richard Newman's 40th wedding anniversary which fell on that day. Caroline Hunt contrived to keep her beautiful celebration cake a secret until the presentation at teatime, and the grandchildren managed to maintain the "surprise method". The bubbly and cake went down a proper treat!

8 Bell Competition results were good. Two bands: Team B came 2nd place, and team A came 4th place. Congratulations - but sorry no bubbly this time!

Monthly branch practices have continued with encouraging and consistent support from our own and neighbouring branches. Led by John Dunstone, new ringers are welcomed, but still plenty of opportunity for the more experienced to get 'stuck into'.

Attendance at 10 bell practice is struggling. Debate was held at both Branch Meetings this year, as to whether to continue with both types of practice in the same month, or change to a different Saturday. More discussion will be had about this, no doubt, if numbers don't pick up.

Our host for AGM was Brent Knoll. Numbers attending the meeting were significantly less this year than in previous years (in my experience). Hopefully this is not a downward trend. Thank you to our hosts, and also to Viv Freeman, who willingly helped out on behalf of Brent Knoll ringers.

John Creber, ringer of Mark, was presented with his 75 year Long Service Certificate. John was first elected at the tender age of 7 years. Charles paid tribute to his breadth of experience, his commitment and contribution to the Branch and Association where he held the posts of Branch Chairman, and Deputy Master.

Walking and Ringing - a perfect combination? It certainly worked out well on our Branch walk between Croscombe, Dinder and to St Cuthbert's in Wells, on a beautiful sunny day in July. A good time was had by all.

During 2011 we have held six Training Sessions: Running a Good Practice at Banwell (by Pip Penney from the Central Council), Raising and Lowering in Peal (twice at Lympsham and once at Rowberrow), Grandsire Triples at Weston-super-Mare (by Richard Newman) and Plain Hunting at Shipham. We wish to thank all towers for the use of their bells, our tutors and last but not least our wonderful helpers.

We were pleased to welcome new members Harry Dudden, Mary Hannam, David Lees and Len May, but sadly reported the deaths of John Russell of Weston-Super-Mare, Anne Scarisbrick of Bleadon, and Margaret Freeman of Churchill, who are sadly missed.

Jude Akhurst