

Chew Branch Secretary's Report

Last year a scurrilous rumour suggested that the Chew branch was in decline - well I'm glad to confirm that we are still strong and active in this part of the diocese! We have made several elections to membership and have some very enthusiastic newer ringers who are making good progress by attending several weekly practices around the patch. Chew ringers have clocked up many quarter peals during the year.

We changed to a bimonthly ringing calendar this year and have had good attendances and some strong ringing at our branch events, including a very successful Call Change challenge afternoon. Nempnett Thrubwell has rarely seen so much activity in November before, and such was the enjoyment of this event that this may become an annual event. The summer mini-outing this year took us along the Collier's Way railway path from Kilmersdon to Radstock and then Midsomer Norton, where we gorged on cakes, but despite full stomachs we were still able to get some good ringing on all 12 bells as a grand finale. Wrington tower is back in action with the bells rehung and tower refurbished and the 1st Saturday evening practices have resumed. There has been some "half-decent ringing" at the 2nd Saturday Yatton advanced practices, and Wraxall is the place to go on a 4th Saturday evening. Teams from Backwell and Winford represented Chew at the 6-bell striking competition in Cary branch but sadly neither made the final. The 8-bell band rang well in the competition held at Shepton Mallet and was disappointed to be beaten into third place. Our year finished with a successful quarter peal of Cambridge Royal for Wells Cathedral evensong at the end of October.

During the year we were sorry to lose Cecil Knight, former captain at Clapton-in-Gordano and Vic James, tower captain at St Andrew, Clevedon. We wish Vic's daughter Phillipa well as she takes over her father's role and continues the family tradition of captaincy at St Andrew's.

Next year we will continue the bimonthly 3rd Saturday ringing programme as it has worked well. The remaining Saturdays represent an opportunity to arrange ringing to benefit members individually or as a band, perhaps as a training session or a quarter peal to consolidate ringing skills. We invite requests and hope to see many enjoying another good ringing year in 2012. Chew branch is still alive and kicking!

Teresa Humphrey