

## **Dunster Branch Secretary's Report**

Audrey Westall (Secretary) and Jo Evans (Assistant Ringing Master) both stepped down during the year. Thanks to both for their considerable contribution to the running of the Branch. Glenys Tonks was elected as Branch Secretary and Mike Dewar to the new post of Newsletter Editor. Otherwise the committee remained the same.

During the year Jon Rose (Ringing Master) has modified the format of the Branch practices to maximise their relevance to the membership as a whole. While continuing to have a named method as their goal, the monthly Saturday practices now concentrate on call changes and simpler methods in the early part of the practice. The monthly 6 Bell practice is now entitled "Plain Bob Doubles and Beyond". These changes are judged to have been successful, the number of members attending having significantly increased, and Jon is considering changing the 8 Bell practice in a similar way.

More formal training is the responsibility of Education Officer Susan Mew, who has organised a full programme of Training Sessions during the year, from "Bell-Handling" for beginners, to "Training the Trainers," for those interested in teaching ringing. All these sessions have been fully booked in advance. Susan is also responsible for the Young Ringers programme, a role which she continues to tackle with great enthusiasm and commitment. A programme of outings and other activities was organised, with the assistance of Sue Atkins (Assistant Ringing Master), and the small but keen group of young ringers is progressing steadily, one of them - Andrew Bawden - being awarded the Achiever of the Year shield.

During the year the Branch has been pleased to welcome 15 new members. Sadly, however, it has also lost a number: Joyce Lloyd who became a member of the Association in 1950, and was a regular member of the Dunster band until a few years ago; Tim Gibson from Minehead, an experienced ringer who joined the Branch relatively recently; Anne Stenning from Wiveliscombe, joined the Association in 1971, and her many years involvement included 15 years as Branch Secretary and Treasurer and Deputy Master of the Association.

The annual Branch Outing was in July. Some 54 members and friends enjoyed a tour of the Somerset levels, and ringing at six towers, together with a visit to the bells at Wells Cathedral.

The other, purely social Branch activities were well supported as usual. 60 members attended the annual dinner, organised by Maureen Hawkins and held at Oake Manor Golf Club in March, and more than 50 participated in the keenly contested skittles match, won this year by Exford.

As with any organisation, the Branch can only flourish with the participation of its members, and being able to communicate with the membership is therefore vital. The branch's database of members' contact details has been overhauled and a procedure put in place for updating it regularly. This will ensure that the maximum number of members can be reminded of forthcoming practices, and other events, and receive their own copy of the Branch Newsletter, either electronically or by post if they don't have email.

As the ringing year draws to a close next year's fixture list is being planned and under our new chairman I am confident that Dunster Branch can look forward to another busy and enjoyable year of ringing.

Glenys Tonks