

Ilchester Branch Secretary's Report

2010-11 has seen 12 new members join the Branch, some of whom were attracted to ringing by the diocesan recruitment drive held at some of the towers. On a sadder note, Bob Field passed away on 21st May: he had been elected to membership in 1938, been a ringing master in the Cary Branch until 1976, then moving to Preston Plucknett before his final move to Ringwood. The period ended with there being 191 Branch members, just 3 less than for the previous year.

As well as its monthly practices, the Branch has had various outings. The young ringers have rung twice in the Frome area, the main Branch outing was to towers around Milverton, there was a mini outing to 3 towers just west of Axminster and the annual walking outing visited 3 towers around Ashcott. The Branch 6 bell striking competition attracted 8 bands but the winners, Preston Plucknett and South Petherton, just missed gaining places in the Association finals. The Branch has now joined with the Cary and Crewkerne branches for surprise major practices on the 5th Saturdays when they occur in the month. Our ringing master, Robert Harvey, has been joined by Dave Hammonds and together they have planned a comprehensive programme for the coming year.

The Branch hosted the Association AGM at Martock (see minutes elsewhere in the report) on Easter Monday. Eddie Hancock, who joined the Association in 1966, was elected to HLM status and Matthew Martin received a cheque for his first place in the Association Young Ringers competition as did Kris Martin for his third place. Yve Nicholls and her team provided a splendid tea raising £200 that was later passed on to the Bell Fund.

Brian Dodd