

**The Bath and Wells
Diocesan Association
of Change Ringers**



ABBREVIATED ANNUAL REPORT

1st November 2019 – 31st December 2020

REFLECTIONS FROM THE MASTER

Dear Friends

Writing this in advance is a bit odd. We're in another period of major change which directly affects us. We're all waiting the Coronavirus to go away and we'll as getting in the line for the appropriate injections. There is good news on the horizon. Just as well as the last year has seen (or heard) no proper ringing across the Diocese. Our towers stand forlorn and empty, but not unloved. Old habits die hard, but the one thing that comes across is the defining silence. Our world is one of great contrasts and this time is no exception. When the bells ring out again, they will be well received that normality is returning. Our ringers will be the tidings of great joy in a modern age. Ringers are by definition a (normally) patient and fore bearing lot. News, excitement and proclamation is at the heart of ringing and we shall be leading the way like no other. Our future is one of rebuilding and encouragement. We need to be ready.

I frequently think of our faithful ringers, their compatriots and the families that support them. There have been many changes and farewells over the last year, but we need to remind ourselves and those with ears to hear, that that beautiful sound speaks of a deeper expression in our community, calling the people to be faithful, comforting the housebound, declaring a restoration. Thank you for all you have done, will do and the support you provide. God bless you in the year ahead.

Mark Jackson.

In our thoughts we remember those whose friendship we have enjoyed, but we see no longer. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light: shine upon them. May the souls: of all the faithful departed, through: the mercy of God, rest in peace and rise in glory.

Roland Backhurst – Butleigh

Peter Bartin - Limington

Marcus Barton - Leigh on Mendip

Rob Bonnet - Queen Camel

Valerie Boyce - past member at Lydeard St Lawrence

Martin A Briggs - past member at Queen Camel

Jim Cook - Bath Abbey

Anthony E Cox – Blackwell
Richard Dowdeswell - Kingsbury Episcopi
Peter M Giles - Batheaston
Eddie Hancock (HLM) - Drayton
Michael Horseman (HLM) - Farmborough
Mary Knight NRLM - previously St James, Taunton
Ken Laver - South Cadbury
Sally Lawrence - Weston super Mare
Christopher Robinson – past member at Pitminster
Jim Taylor - Preston Plucknett
Mike Woolacott - past member at West Monkton

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

This is possibly the most unusual period for a General Secretary to report upon. The last major suspension of ringing was during the dark days of wartime. I do not seek to draw any comparison, but nevertheless we have been living through an extended period of societal disruption, where many things we hold dear have been cancelled, postponed or simply made impossible. Of greatest issue is the human tragedy we have witnessed, on a scale unimaginable, yet so close to home that we will all have been touched in some way.

For ringing we all enjoyed the first four months of our year in somewhat blissful ignorance of what was to come. We rang for Remembrance and for Christmas in 2019, we welcomed the bright new 2020, with occasional news reports of a problem in far off Wuhan, and continued through those early months of 2020, with service ringing, peals & quarters, meetings and practices, and then – it all stopped!

We have learned new skills, and our normal vocabulary has embraced words like 'Zoom' & 'furlough'. Quizzes and catch ups have replaced practices and peal & quarters have become the preserve of handbells, oh and our new friend 'Ringing Room'. Many Branches have transferred meetings and events to an on-line basis. And at Association level we have continued to look at things like the rules we need for now and the next few years, we have moved our year end to align with the calendar year, and we have thought about our website. While we delayed in the hope of physical meetings, it became clear that this would not be possible and hence our Standing Committee, and General Committee meetings and our AGM were held by Zoom this year. For 2021 the AGM will be on the 2nd Saturday in May (8th) come what may. If we can meet physically, a near normal pattern will be based in Frome Branch, and if we can't, it will be by Zoom, commencing at 10:00.

Across our nation we have seen great acts of kindness and care for those around us during this time of adversity, and we know that those in our ringing community have played their part. Our tower bell ringing may have been severely restricted to occasional 15 minutes on incomplete circles, but in the wider

context the problem of limited ringing has not been the biggest thing to worry about. Our art will survive and as ringers we will return, our towers will once again become the foci of our week and the fellowship that is so important to us all will be undented.

I look forward with confidence and hope for a return to better days for everyone, and for the day when our bells can once more shout from our towers.

David Parfrey

TREASURER'S REPORT

Despite everything it has actually been an active year for the Association accounts. I am pleased to say that the decision was made to open the general fund to supporting the Association during the pandemic with the launch of the return to ringing scheme. A number of applications have been approved with a few payments being made before the winter lockdown. An important change has been made to the financial year for the Association – it will now run from 1 January – 31 December starting from 2021. Subs are now due by end March. Please note that the accounts set out below are for 14 months.

Liz Lane

TOWER ADVISER'S REPORT

The fifteen inspections and reports undertaken in the last Association year, carried out within COVID-19 regulations where necessary, were allocated and carried out on a geographic basis by myself and Bernard North, to whom I am grateful. Of the fifteen inspections carried out ten were Initial visits, requested by PCCs prior to any work being undertaken; the remaining five being final inspections to confirm the completed work prior to Bell Fund grant money being released. The ten initial inspections included maintenance recommendations at Taunton St James, East Harptree, Shepton Montague and Chiselborough. More extensive maintenance was needed at Pitminster where the 7th bell was found to be cracked. Options for future improvements were discussed at Somerton. North Curry is in need of major work following cracking of frame members. A rehang was supported for Staplegrove. Stoke St Gregory was found to be in good order. The five final inspections saw the successful augmentation to 12 +1 at Bridgwater St Mary, the clappers refurbished at Locking, the rehang at Leigh on Mendip, the new and refurbished clappers at Taunton St James and the completion of rehang work at Pitminster, where the 7th bell has been replaced with a bell via the Keltek Trust.

John Hallett

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER'S REPORT

I am pleased to be able to write my first report as safeguarding officer. I must thank Barrie Hendry for all his support and guidance during my induction to the role. Following on from Barrie I have continued to work closely with Glenys Armstrong, the Diocesan Advisor for Safeguarding. Although access to towers has been severely limited this year, we continue to monitor known offenders and have maintained our lines of communication across the country.

Before the virus situation began Jill Hansford and I had started to arrange the then required leadership level face-to-face training with the Diocese. We were also in the process of developing specific bell-tower training/workshops. This was all put on hold when the Diocesan Safeguarding trainer left. Over the last

year we have not had a consistent Diocesan trainer, and we are still currently waiting for an appointment. Many members have raised concerns about their access to the training due to the various lockdown or tier restrictions. With the absence of a Diocesan trainer, along with the sustained social restrictions, we have continued to investigate alternative ways to complete this training. At the same time the Church of England was appraising what training was required for the Church. As a result they have adapted the training offered to bellringers as follows. There is:

- a modified Basic Awareness Safeguarding Training (known previously as C0) available online to all, or in more normal times, face to face with a local trainer. To do this course go to - 'Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal', <http://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org> then once you have registered for an account, 'Online Training courses', and follow the links for Basic Awareness.
- a modified Foundation Safeguarding Training' (known previously as C1) available online to all who have done the basic awareness course, or in more normal times, face to face with a local trainer. To do this course go to - 'Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal', <http://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org> 'Online Training Courses', and follow the links for Foundation training.
- no requirement for people with the sole role of ringer in the Church to complete the Leadership course (previously known as C2). This course is now by invitation or direct request only, via the Diocese. It is delivered over Zoom and is focussed to support those with leading roles in the Church, such as the clergy.

Anyone in any role working directly with children or vulnerable adults is required by the Church to complete the Basic Awareness and Foundation Courses (the later to be renewable every three years). This includes someone who is teaching or supervising a young person, someone supporting or monitoring an adult with a learning disability, or driving them to ringing events on behalf of the Association, Tower Captains, Ringing Teachers etc who are in a leadership role. This is because their main safeguarding responsibility is to ensure the Tower is a safe place for everyone, be alert to and respond appropriately to children and vulnerable adults who may raise concerns, and report any concerns to the correct appropriate authority.

The safeguarding courses are strongly recommended by our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. We would ask people to recognise the value of this training if only so that they can understand some of the issues that their children or grandchildren for example may be facing, or which they may themselves face as they get older. Clearly if there are children and vulnerable adults in the Tower, it is even more important that as many people as possible are educated about the potential risks to them, being alert to them so that the culture of the Tower is a safe one for everyone, while also understanding whom to contact should a child or vulnerable adult disclose something.

For those unable to do courses online, you will need to inform your Church's Safeguarding Co-ordinator that this is the case, along with notifying the Association Safeguarding Officer. Your Church's Safeguarding Co-ordinator will inform you when a meeting has been organised for you to do the training. Please attend these courses when they are arranged, but obviously they cannot happen at the present time due to Covid 19.

Steffi Penny

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

Little did I know how correct was my prediction in last year's report that 'Much of the library ... is going to be hibernating in 2020.' How long that continues into 2021 remains to be seen, but please watch the website www.swheritage.org.uk for announcements about re-opening arrangements at the Somerset Heritage Centre, where the association records and other local items are kept, and please continue to send enquiries to me, especially ones which can be answered from the complete set of annual reports which I am keeping at home. Write to Brookside, Culmstock, Cullompton, EX15 3JU, telephone 01823 680197, or email Librarian@bath-wells.org. Something special added to the library in November 2020 is a set of eight albums of photographs of all the towers with bells in the county of Somerset, taken over many years and now bequeathed to the association by Michael Horseman, and another addition is a facsimile reprint, made and donated by Geoff Marchant, of *Legend of the Little Liberty Bell*, a children's story written and set in Bridgeton, New Jersey, about the bell there which was cast by Thomas Bayley in Bridgwater in 1763.

David Bromwich

EDUCATION OFFIER'S REPORT

The year began normally, and for the first four and a half months the many educational opportunities within our branches continued to take place. Then, very sadly, Covid 19 caused a Lockdown with all our churches and towers locked and our bells silent. Since then, church bell ringing as we know it has not been possible, and many of the events and activities that we usually enjoy in the normal course of the year have been cancelled. Across the country ringing activities have continued on handbells, when possible; in Ringing Rooms; and with talks, discussions and ringing educational information on social media. Across the Association different Branches have used a variety of ideas to keep ringers interested and motivated. The Chew Branch has used a Zoom Quiz; the Crewkerne Branch has had a get-together for the Branch on Zoom each week; and the Dunster Branch has used its newsletter to suggest ideas on how to keep ringing going during the pandemic, ideas for learning at home, and reports on restricted service ringing, etc.

In the third of the year before Lockdown halted ringing your Education Officers and Branches were busy introducing new learning opportunities. The Frome Branch had started a 'Parents at Home Group' on Wednesday mornings. The Glaston Branch had started a monthly special single method practice for a small number of people supported by helpers. The Taunton Branch had started a beginners 12-bell practice which was to have been held every month throughout the year (except two when Church functions prevented the practice from being held).

ART Awards. The Association was once again represented in the ART Awards. Congratulations to Jane Grellier, from Bicknoller in the Dunster Branch, who was awarded the Learning the Ropes Contribution Award 2020 for her contribution to ringing activities in the Branch.

Ringing Room. Whilst unable to ring because of the pandemic some people in the Association have continued to meet and practice using Ringing Room and Zoom. This has enabled them to practice what they are learning, to progress to the next stage, and between ringing to socialize with the other ringers. In the Bridgwater Branch 12 Improver sessions have been held; and there have also been practices for plain hunt on 5, 6 and 7; and for Plain Bob and Grandsire Doubles. In the Cary Branch half a dozen Branch practices have been held, and a group of towers centered around Charlton have practiced weekly. In the

Dunster Branch two practices have been run regularly, one at Sampford Brett for ringers from nine towers, and one for a local group of towers at Carhampton. A monthly Branch practice has also been started in December and will carry on into 2021 if successful. In the Ilchester Branch the 'Friday Band' has met twice a week, once to ring handbells and once to ring tower bells. In the Taunton Branch at least 8 weekly practices have been held based around Bishops Lydeard, Pitminster and Halse.

Tower Maintenance Contacts. During the parts of the year when work in our towers has been possible our Tower Maintenance Contacts (TMCs) have been busy. All branches, except one, have now appointed a TMC, and their names and contact details appear in this Annual Report. They are able to give practical advice on the day-to-day routine maintenance of bells, frames, fittings and ropes, to towers within their own branch. They will be prepared to visit these towers to assist with maintenance or to offer onsite maintenance training. They will re-direct non-routine maintenance issues to the Church's PCC and advise that they should request an inspection by the Association Tower Advisory Service and/or relevant professional organisations. In the Axbridge Branch Burrington and Churchill received help from the Branch when it was requested. In the Dunster Branch several inspections were carried out at towers before ringing resumed after lockdown, and advice re maintenance was given when requested. In the Glaston Branch there was one call-out, a successful inspection and two inspections completed at the end of the first lockdown. In the Taunton Branch the two contacts have been working hard all year, giving advice, completing work or helping to complete work in at least six different towers.

Teachers of Ringing. A lot of very hard work continues to be done to increase the number of teachers of ringing within the Association. Unfortunately the two courses, a Module 1 and a Module 2 Course, arranged for this year were unable to take place. Those teachers already training will be given time extensions to complete the modules that they are working on at the present time. Before Lockdown 2 new teachers completed Module 1 – Bryony Gray (Monksilver, Dunster) and Sara Coward (Stogumber, Dunster). A total of 8 Mentors and 25 Teachers have completed the award from across the Association. Another Module 1 and Module 2F Course will be arranged next year if possible.

Learning the Ropes. As part of the ART Course the New Teachers and their Mentors have to teach new ringers. The ringers that they teach are able to take part in a progressive scheme called 'Learning the Ropes'. This is divided into five levels. This year in the shortened time available the Dunster Branch has awarded L2 – 2, L3 – 2, L4 -1; and the Taunton Branch L5 – 1. Since work on the award began the Association has awarded 219 Level 1, 134 Level 2, 45 Level 3 and 35 level 4, and 12 Level 5.

Courses Organised by the Branches This Year. In the third of the year before tower bell ringing had to stop the number of courses arranged in the branches remained high, with 86 recorded. The following branches ran the following courses – **Axbridge** – Raising and Lowering, Plain Bob Doubles, Grandsire Doubles, Stedman Doubles; **Bridgwater** – Bob Doubles; **Cary** – 1 Call Changes and 2 Plain Bob Doubles; **Dunster** – 3 Handling/Rounds/Raising and Lowering, 2 Plain Hunt, 1 Plain Bob Doubles, 2 Plain Bob Minor, 1 Introduction to Ringing Room, 1 Bob Doubles in Ringing Room; **Frome** – Handling, moving on from Plain Hunt, Stedman Doubles, Listening and Rhythm Workshop. **Taunton** – 3 Handling/Rounds, 3 Raising and Lowering, 4 Kaleidoscope Ringing and Call Changes, 2 Raising and Lowering in Peal, 2 Plain Hunt, 5 Plain Hunt to Methods, 8 Plain Bob Doubles, 2 Reverse Canterbury Doubles, 5 Grandsire Doubles, 6 St Martins/St Simons, 2 Stedman Doubles, 4 Plain Bob Minor, 2 St Clements Minor, 5 Treble Bob/Kent/Oxford, 3 Surprise Minor (8 methods), 2 Plain Hunt on 7/Plain Bob Triples, 6 calling – including Call Changes, Plain Hunt, Bob Doubles and Grandsire Doubles.

Branch Tutor/Ringing Master/ Trainers taking Weekly Training for a Tower Band on the Band's Practice Night. This very important activity continued in the months that ringing was possible in the following towers – Monksilver, Brompton Regis and Skilgate (combined, most weeks), Dunster (monthly), Wootton Courtenay (weekly training for new band on Carhampton's simulator) (Dunster); Chilton Cantello School and Park School, Perrott Hill School (Ilchester); and Norton Fitzwarren, Staplegrove, Taunton St Andrews/Holy Trinity, Taunton St Mary and West Monkton (Taunton). In the Cary Branch the Ringing Master and Education Officer, with help from other people, have visited five towers during the year to help on their practice night. In the Crewkerne Branch a monthly practice has provided opportunities for ringers to make progress in ringing ranging from rounds and call changes to Plain Bob Minor. In the Frome Branch a regular Monday morning teaching session is run at Marston Bigot, and a learners session at High Littleton.

Other Branch Events with Learning Opportunities. All branches have a monthly practice, except the Bath Branch and the Frome Branch. These have continued during the months that ringing was possible. Unfortunately all Branch Outings – the Axbridge (walking), Bridgwater, Cary (afternoon outing), Chew (walking), Crewkerne, Dunster, Glaston (cycling), Ilchester (2, 1 walking) and Taunton (2, 1 for young and up-and-coming ringers) were cancelled this year. The Cary Branch's 'Firsts Fortnight' was another casualty of Covid, as was the usual Association Quarter Peal Month.

Special Practices Organised by the Branch Providing Learning Opportunities. These might be arranged weekly (W), fortnightly (F), monthly (M) or occasionally (O), and provide very valuable learning experiences. New ones this year included a 12-bell beginners practice (Taunton M), and a single-method practice for small numbers (Glaston M), and others continued from previous years include – 10-bell (Chew M); surprise major (Chew M, Glaston bi-monthly, Taunton F); Advanced (Joint Cary and Ilchester M, Crewkerne M); 8-bell (Bridgwater M, Crewkerne M, Dunster M); 8-bell plain methods (Taunton M); surprise major/minor (Dunster M); surprise minor (Taunton M); 6-bell (Bridgwater M); improvers (Dunster W); and learners (Taunton two W).

Branch Striking Competitions. These are excellent opportunities to promote learning – particularly of listening and striking!! All branches now have a 6-bell competition, with Dunster continuing the friendly competition that they ran for the first time two years ago. In addition to this, Cary has a novice competition, and Taunton has a call change and a rounds competition. However, all of these could not be run this year.

Towers with Simulators or Dumbbells and Ringing Training Centres. The number of towers with simulators or dumbbells (D) in the Association continues to increase. This year another 3 towers, Backwell, Bicknoller and Leigh on Mendip, have either completed the installation of a simulator or are in the process of installing a simulator, making a total of 24 across the Association. Bridgwater have also extended their simulator for their new 12 bells. 8 churches also have a dumb-bell in their towers. Bridgwater Tower is a Ringing Centre and there are another 18 towers across the Association that are regularly used for training. Please note that in the new Faculty requirements, simulator installation is now on List B, and requires the Archdeacon's permission before installation.

Young Ringers Practices. Young ringers are active in most branches. Young Ringers from across the Association were invited to practices organised by Jan Wyatt to prepare for the National Striking Competition before Covid interrupted preparations; the Dunster Branch held a young ringers day in January, with ringing at Sampford Brett and Bicknoller, a pizza lunch, and joining the Branch Practice in the evening; the Frome Branch has a weekly after-school group at High Littleton, now in its fourth year; the Ilchester Branch had a Young Ringers event organised for the Easter Holidays but unfortunately this was cancelled because of Covid; and the Taunton Branch has run practices during each school holiday until Covid again interrupted these.

Young Ringer of the Year Competition. This competition encourages young people to develop as ringers – to ring for services and practice nights, to ring at new towers, to attend branch events, to ring new methods, to begin calling and conducting, and to ring quarter peals and peals. The winner this year was Melissa Hunt from East Huntspill in the Axbridge Branch.

Young Ringers Award. This Association Award is intended for younger ringers at the start of their ringing lives to encourage them to build the skills necessary to progress. This year 5 young people from Wedmore (Axbridge), North Cadbury (Cary), and Portishead (Chew) took part completing 54 tasks between them.

Young Ringers Achievements. George Wyatt is still the Deputy Ringing Master of the Chew Branch and Tower Maintenance Contact for the Branch. Tom Mitchell is now Ringing Master in the Dunster Branch, and has also achieved national accreditation as a teacher of ringing. Olivia Hunt is now Ringing Master in the Axbridge Branch and has also begun training as a teacher of ringing. Freya Milner from the Ilchester Branch has also started training as a teacher of ringing. In the Bath Branch Finlay Totterdell has rung his first peal and in the Frome Branch Jack Higby has rung his first quarter peal inside whilst Zac Griffiths and Emma Hooper are now ringing for Sunday Service. These are excellent achievements, and we look forward to seeing more of our young ringers' active in this way in the future. For this to happen it is very important that we all continue the excellent work of encouraging young people into our towers.

The Ringing World National Youth Contest 2020, due to take place in York this year, and where the Bath and Wells team had already been entered, was eventually cancelled. When it had not been possible to hold the event on its usual date in July it had been hoped that a date in the autumn would prove possible, but this was not to be and defeat was eventually accepted. We hope that this very important and exciting event for our young ringers will be able to take place once again next year.

The 2020 Association Youth Striking Competition was another casualty of ringing still not being possible by the autumn. This was due to have been held the Ilchester Branch in September and hopefully will be able to be held there in 2021.

The Branch Education Officers are meeting three times a year. If there is something that you would like them to address please tell them! I would like to finish by thanking the Education Officers for their hard work and the progress that they have achieved in their branches during this very difficult year.

Jill Hansford

EDUCATION ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31.12.20

Opening Balance – £2258.09

INCOME

Budget for the year ending 31.12.20

EXPENDITURE

D P Bagley – Simulator for Bicknoller

£649.00

received from the B&WDACR	£3700.00	D P Bagley – Simulator for Backwell	£629.00
EGMEF – Donation towards expenses		D P Bagley – Simulator extension Bridgwater	£268.00
Association Young Ringers Striking Competition	£50.00	D P Bagley – Simulator for Leigh on Mendip	£629.00
Refund from YHA (accommodation deposit)		Young Ringer of the Year Competition Prizes	£120.00
		Young Ringer Awards	£270.00
		Hire of Butleigh Church Room – Education Officers	£24.00
		Meetings – 2 @ £12	
Total Income	£3750.00		
Opening Balance	£2258.09	Closing Balance	£3710.69
<u>Total</u>	<u>£6299.69</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>£6299.69</u>

QUARTER PEAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

The total number of quarter peals rung during the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020 and published in the Ringing World or on BellBoard was 380. these were rung in 152 towers, again this quarter peal report includes those quarter peals submitted to BellBoard only, of course those that are neither published online or in the Ringing World are still be excluded from the analysis. These quarters were in the main rung in the first three months of the year only, before ringing was suspended, so no comparison can be made with previous years. Despite the short time period covered it is encouraging to see a good number of ringers ringing their first quarter and progressing to their first inside, although it would be nice to see more of these achievements published for all to see in the Ringing World. With towers largely out of bounds it is not surprising that a large increase in handbell quarters have been rung this year, 50 in 2020 compared to 8 in 2019. Now that the association year has been aligned with the calendar year the quarter peal report will also officially follow suit from 1st January 2021, if we are able to ring any quarter peals in 2021, that is!

There were 5 quarters of Minimus, 104 of Doubles (of which 9 were Grandsire and 9 Plain Bob), 2 of Doubles and Minor, 163 of Minor (of which 68 were Surprise and 22 were Plain Bob), 37 of Triples (of which 18 were Grandsire and 5 Stedman), 43 of Major (of which 34 were Surprise and 3 were Plain Bob), 10 of Caters (of which 9 were Grandsire), 11 of Royal (10 of which were Surprise), 1 of Cinques, 4 of Maximus (31 of which were Surprise).

8 members rang their first quarter peal, 6 members rang their first inside and on 195 occasions someone rang something new. One member conducted their first quarter peal and 28 conducted a new method.

50 quarter peals were rung on handbells, 15 at Evercreech (Halcyon), 4 at Wedmore (The Laurels), 3 at Burnham-on-Sea (Jaycroft Road), 3 at Batheaston (Vale View Cottages), 3 at Backwell (Farleigh Road), 1 at Bath (Purleigh Drive), 2 at Holcombe (Charmborough Farm), 1 at Emborough (Old Down Inn), 2

at Wookey (Summerhouse, Batch Cottage), 3 at Wells (Turner Court), 1 at Wells (Recreation Ground Bandstand), 2 at Wells Cathedral and 10 at Wells, St.Cuthbert's Green

The position of the eleven branches in the Association is as follows:

AXBRIDGE	45 quarter peals rung in 12 towers
BATH	39 quarter peals rung in 13 towers
BRIDGWATER	23 quarter peals rung in 13 towers
CARY	23 quarter peals rung in 13 towers
CHEW	35 quarter peals rung in 15 towers
CREWKERNE	24 quarter peals rung in 13 towers
DUNSTER	19 quarter peals rung in 8 towers
FROME	54 quarter peals rung in 18 towers
GLASTON	8 quarter peals rung in 6 towers
ILCHESTER	27 quarter peals rung in 11 towers
TAUNTON	83 quarter peals rung in 30 towers

Overall, quarter peals were rung in 44% of ringable towers with 5 or more bells.
22 quarters were rung for the Taunton branch ¼ peal month.

Congratulations to the following members:

- **Who rang their first quarter peal:** Mike Anderson, Fiona Bevan, Annabella Brosnan, Mark Brosnan, Andrew Higginson, Christopher Lewendon, Trevor Lewis, Tobias Viney
- **Who rang their first quarter peal inside:** Alison Cockell, Derek Cockell, Andrew Harrison, Jack Higby, Barbara Taylor, Russell Toogood
- **Who conducted their first quarter peal:** Debbie Parfrey.
- For whom special celebration quarter peals were rung:
 - Beckington – 80th Birthday of John Ball
 - Carhampton - 60th Birthday of Caroline Ralph
 - Chard – 70th Birthday of Patrick Rendell

- Clevedon, St.John - 90th Birthday of Mike Callow
- Marston Bigot – 60th Birthday of Vicki Rowse
- Norton Fitzwarren – 50th Birthday of Clifford Nicholls
- Queen Camel– 80th Birthday of Stanley Redmond
- Ruishton - 70th Birthday of Mervyn Arscott
- Shipham - 70th Birthday of Adrian Adams
- Whatley – 70th Birthday of Cathy Civill
- Wincanton – 70th Birthday of Cathy Civill
- **Who achieved personal milestones:** Valerie Stone 3900, Roy Shallish 3000, Beverley Perry 2900, Leslie Perry 2300, John Boorman 1900, Ray Jones 1500, Tim Phillips 1200, Alex Hunt 900, John Harrold 700, Kay Smith 600, Olivia Hunt 25
- **Who achieved personal milestones as conductor:** John Boorman 600

Quarter Peals rung in memorium at:

Dowlish Wake, remembering **Joy Petrie RIP**, former tower captain and chairman of Crewkerne Branch

Bath Abbey, Bathwick, Bath (Walcot), Bath (Weston), Chewton Mendip, Chilcompton, Claverton – remembering **Jim Cook RIP**

Clifford Nicholls

PEAL SECRETARY’S REPORT

Peals from November 2019 to the end of December 2020. Because the Association has changed its year end to match the calendar year end this report covers 14 months from the start of November 2019 to the end of 2020. However because of the Covid pandemic ringing has been severely restricted for most of this period and only two peals, both on handbells, have been rung since towards the end of March 2020.

This Annual Report contains a summary list of peals rung in this period and full details are available from the Association web site in the form of a downloadable PDF (portable document format) file. This has a number of advantages as it is searchable and contains a number of links to other online information. Each peal is linked to its Bellboard record where more information such as photos of the band may be available. There are also some links to the tower details on Dove and the composition used where that was given via Bellboard. Full details of all Association peals rung in recent years are also available by searching Bellboard and much statistical information is available through Pealbase thus significantly reducing the value of printed publication in a Report.

99 peals were rung for the Association in this period and the average of 20 peals a month before the lockdown was consistent with previous years. There were 37 peals (out of 112) rung in Somerset which were not credited to our Association and this should be a cause for concern. 23 peals (a quarter of all tower bell peals) were rung on small secular rings. 24 peals were rung outside the Association territory, 20 in Devon and 4 at Tulloch in Scotland. With tower-bell ringing restricted the proportion of handbell peals increased although the absolute number (7) remained the same as last year. Congratulations to Peter Felton

on calling them all. There were 3 first pealers in this period and congratulations go to Phillipa James and James P Humphries (Clapton in Gordano, peal No 12757) and Finlay D Totterdell (Lansdown, Bath, 12779). Also congratulations to Alison Felton on ringing her first handbell peal (12808).

Two towers (both in the Chew branch), Clapton in Gordano and Publow had their first peals since rehangng. Robert Perry's band set a new record for the Association by ringing 144 Doubles methods and variations at Farmborough (12733).

The ringing of peals and quarters is a good way to mark significant events and this year it was disappointing that a number of national events had to pass by without being marked by the ringing of bells in the usual fashion. Let's hope that the important events of 2021 can be celebrated more appropriately. However, please keep footnotes to things with a genuine relevance to the actual peal or band concerned and make sure they will be understandable to a wider audience than just the peal band.

As usual a number of milestones were claimed, the most significant of which were:

Peals for the Association

Chris Field: 1400 (12805), Donald Carter: 900 (12716), Hilary Beresford: 500 (12732) and Jane Spencer: 300 (12755). Also 100 handbell peals: Jennifer Taylor (12766)

Peals for the Association as conductor

Tony Cox: 600 (12748) and Robert Brown: 200 (12747)

Personal totals

Barrie Hendry: 2900 (12712), Matthew Higby: 600 (12741), Ben Kipling: 500 (12713), Jane Spencer: 400 (12769)

Personal total as conductor

Donald Carter: 1200 (12732)

The leading ringers, conductors and towers this year are much the same as previous years and it is disappointing (although understandable) that most of the leading peal ringers are now retired. As an association we need to more proactive in encouraging younger ringers to progress into ringing peals and quarters and so avert the inevitable decline when our older ringers become less active. Most peal and quarter peal ringers will be only too pleased to help an aspiring ringer progress, so don't be afraid to ask.

Leading Ringers: Jeffrey Knipe (46), Lesley Knipe (40), Andrew Ball (34), Michael Spencer (32), Jane Spencer (30). Another 9 ringers rang between 20 and 28 peals for the Association.

Leading Conductors: Donald Carter (19), Robert Brown (18), Anthony Cox (12). A further 3 people called over five peals for the Association with Peter Felton calling all the handbell peals. The leading 6 conductors called over 70% of all peals rung for the Association in this period and the leading two conductors were both NRLMs.

Leading Towers: Huntsham (14), East Huntspill (11), Shepton Beauchamp (10), Marston Bigot (5), with Barrow Gurney, Chilcompton, North Wootton and Winford (4). These 8 towers accounted for over 60% of all tower-bell peals rung for the Association in this period.

The all-time leading ringers for the Association (totals at year end) are:

All peals: Barrie Hendry 1779, Robert Beck 1424, Christopher Field 1400, Adrian Beck 1397, Jeffrey Knipe 1208, Lesley Knipe 1133, George Massey 1103, Margaret Chapman 1031

Handbells: Margaret Chapman 414, Tom Chapman 349, Barrie Hendry 244, Alex Hunt 108, Jennifer Taylor 101

And the leading conductors are

All peals: Timothy Collins 711, Anthony Cox 608, Donald Carter 580, Brian Mountjoy 415, Barrie Hendry 400.

Handbells: Tom Chapman 199, Barrie Hendry 105

Tony Cox

Bath and Wells Peals November 2019 to end December 2020

B&W No	Date	Place	Method	Conductor
12710	01/11/2019	Timsbury (The Pig Sty)	5058 Turramurra Surprise Major	Brian J Woodruffe
12711	05/11/2019	Publow (All Saints)	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Matthew R T Higby
12712	08/11/2019	Evercreech ('Halcyon')	5184 Plain Bob Major	Peter N Felton
12713	08/11/2019	Clapton in Gordano (St Michael)	5040 Cambridge Surprise Minor	George E Wyatt
12714	09/11/2019	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5120 Spliced Surprise Major (4 m)	Michael R Spencer
12715	09/11/2019	Marston Bigot (St Leonard)	5040 Stedman Triples	Robert Perry
12716	12/11/2019	Littleham (SS Margaret & Andrew), Devon	5024 Myrmica Treble Place Major*	Robert D S Brown
12717	12/11/2019	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5056 Tornado Delight Major	Donald B Carter
12718	14/11/2019	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5112 Dipsophobia Alliance Major*	Robert D S Brown
12719	14/11/2019	Barrow Gurney (SS Mary V & Edward K&M)	5024 Easton-in-Gordano Delight Major*	Anthony J Cox
12720	16/11/2019	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5040 Surprise Minor (7m)	Robert D S Brown
12721	16/11/2019	Chew Magna (St Andrew)	5056 Cambridge Surprise Major	Alan G Reading
12722	17/11/2019	Stoke sub Hamdon (Ringmore 21, East Stoke)	5040 Cambridge Surprise Minor	Donald B Carter
12723	17/11/2019	Chewton Mendip (St Mary Magdalene)	5040 Grandsire Triples	D Paul Smith
12724	19/11/2019	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5024 Vicissitudinous Delight Major*	Robert D S Brown
12725	20/11/2019	Marston Bigot (St Leonard)	5120 Verdley Castle Delight Major	Anthony J Cox
12726	21/11/2019	North Wootton (Great Orchard Campanile)	5024 Sussex Surprise Major	Joseph St J Beaumont
12727	22/11/2019	Barrow Gurney (SS Mary V & Edward K&M)	5376 West Town Delight Major*	Anthony J Cox

12728	23/11/2019	Frome (St John the Baptist)	5088 London Surprise Major	Donald B Carter
12729	23/11/2019	Combeinteignhead (All Saints), Devon	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Robert D S Brown
12730	28/11/2019	North Wootton (Great Orchard Campanile)	5056 Chiddingstone Delight Major	Donald B Carter
12731	28/11/2019	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5088 Riddle-Me-Ree! Delight Major*	Robert D S Brown
12732	30/11/2019	Marston Bigot (St Leonard)	5152 Spliced Surprise Major (23m)	Donald B Carter
12733	01/12/2019	Farnborough (All Saints)	5040 Doubles (144 m/v)	Robert Perry
12734	03/12/2019	Wedmore (The Laurels)	5184 Plain Bob Major	Peter N Felton
12735	03/12/2019	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5088 Zephyr Delight Major	Donald B Carter
12736	05/12/2019	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Jeffrey Knipe
12737	05/12/2019	North Wootton (Great Orchard Campanile)	5184 Frodsham Surprise Major	Donald B Carter
12738	06/12/2019	Weston super Mare (St John the Baptist)	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Joseph St J Beaumont
12739	06/12/2019	Tulloch (Tulloch Ringing Centre), Highland	5015 Grandsire Cinques	Andrew H Ball
12740	06/12/2019	Tulloch (The Last Tower), Highland	5056 Turramurra Surprise Major	Matthew R T Higby
12741	07/12/2019	Tulloch (Tulloch Ringing Centre), Highland	5042 Cambridge Surprise Maximus	Matthew R T Higby
12742	07/12/2019	Tulloch (The Last Tower), Highland	5040 St Simon's Bob Triples	Robert Perry
2743	07/12/2019	Ditcheat (St Mary Magdalene)	5056 Cambridge Surprise Major	Michael R Spencer
12744	08/12/2019	Chilcompton (St John the Baptist)	5056 Johannesburg Surprise Major	Adrian P Beck
12745	10/12/2019	Wedmore (The Laurels)	5024 Plain Bob Major	Peter N Felton
12746	12/12/2019	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5076 Tickle Cock Bridge Alliance Major*	Robert D S Brown
12747	15/12/2019	Kingsteignton (Kings Ting-Tong), Devon	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Robert D S Brown
12748	15/12/2019	Chewton Mendip (St Mary Magdalene)	5152 Bristol Surprise Major	Anthony J Cox
12749	17/12/2019	Dowlish Wake (St Andrew)	5100 Lord Hereford's Knob Alliance Major*	Robert D S Brown
12750	18/12/2019	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Donald B Carter
12751	18/12/2019	Marston Bigot (St Leonard)	5024 Windsor Castle Surprise Major	Anthony J Cox
12752	19/12/2019	Wedmore (The Bakery Tower)	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Donald B Carter
12753	19/12/2019	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5088 Yorkshire Surprise Major	Michael R Spencer
12754	21/12/2019	Winford (Blessed Virgin Mary & St Peter)	5024 Double Dublin Surprise Major	Donald B Carter
12755	26/12/2019	Newton Abbot (St Leonard's Tower), Devon	5024 New Cambridge Surprise Major	Robert D S Brown
12756	27/12/2019	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Richard A M Newman
12757	28/12/2019	Clapton in Gordano (St Michael)	5040 Doubles (7 m)	Andrew H Ball
12758	31/12/2019	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5040 Totaleclipse Surprise Royal	Donald B Carter
12759	31/12/2019	Hardington Mandeville (Blessed Virgin Mary)	5100 Gollumpus Alliance Major*	Robert D S Brown
12760	02/01/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Robert D S Brown

12761	03/01/2020	Timsbury (The Pig Sty)	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Matthew R T Higby
12762	04/01/2020	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5088 Kenninghall Surprise Major	Donald B Carter
12763	08/01/2020	Marston Bigot (St Leonard)	5120 Xiquena Castle Surprise Major*	Anthony J Cox
12764	09/01/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5100 Namelessnesses Alliance Major*	Robert D S Brown
12765	12/01/2020	Chilcompton (St John the Baptist)	5076 Spliced Cinques and Maximus (2 m)	Robert Perry
12766	15/01/2020	Wedmore (The Laurels)	5184 Plain Bob Major	Peter N Felton
12767	15/01/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (14 m)	Richard A M Newman
12768	16/01/2020	Winford (Blessed Virgin Mary & St Peter)	5152 Queen Eleanor Surprise Major	Anthony J Cox
12769	16/01/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5100 Yeehaw Junction Alliance Major*	Robert D S Brown
12770	16/01/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5152 Spliced Surprise Major (23m)	Donald B Carter
12771	18/01/2020	Taunton (St Mary Magdalene)	5007 Stedman Cinques	Timothy M Payne
12772	22/01/2020	Evercreech ('Halcyon')	5088 Plain Bob Major	Peter N Felton
12773	23/01/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5152 Lindum Surprise Major	Jeffrey Knipe
12774	24/01/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (14 m)	Richard A M Newman
12775	25/01/2020	Backwell (St Andrew)	5040 Cambridge Surprise Royal	Anthony J Cox
12776	30/01/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5088 Brexit Derangement Syndrome Del. Major*	Robert D S Brown
12777	31/01/2020	Barrow Gurney (SS Mary V & Edward K&M)	5152 Goshawk Surprise Major	Anthony J Cox
12778	01/02/2020	Bath (Blessed Virgin Mary, Bathwick)	5021 Grandsire Caters	Michael J Stubbs
12779	02/02/2020	Bath (St Stephen, Lansdown)	5040 Grandsire Doubles	David L Parfrey
12780	04/02/2020	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5040 Jamboree Surprise Royal	Donald B Carter
12781	05/02/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (19 m)	Richard A M Newman
12782	06/02/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5152 Spliced Surprise Major (23m)	Donald B Carter
12783	09/02/2020	Chilcompton (St John the Baptist)	5042 Cambridge Surprise Maximus	Robert Perry
12784	14/02/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (19 m)	Richard A M Newman
12785	17/02/2020	Highweek (All Saints), Devon	5040 Lazarus Rattle Alliance Major*	Robert D S Brown
12786	20/02/2020	Weston-Super-Mare, St John the Baptist	5120 Worlebury Surprise Major*	Anthony J Cox
12787	20/02/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5088 Watford Surprise Major	Jeffrey Knipe
12788	20/02/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5152 Superlative Surprise Major	Richard A M Newman
12789	20/02/2020	North Wootton (Great Orchard Campanile)	5088 Abergavenny Castle Surprise Major	Donald B Carter
12790	22/02/2020	South Petherton (St Peter and St Paul)	5042 Spliced Surprise Maximus (4m)	Donald B Carter
12791	26/02/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (21 m)	Richard A M Newman
12792	27/02/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5120 Cambridge Surprise Major	John R Martin
12793	28/02/2020	Barrow Gurney (SS Mary V & Edward K&M)	5088 Kestrel Delight Major*	Anthony J Cox
12794	29/02/2020	Winford (Blessed Virgin Mary & St Peter)	5024 Yorkshire Surprise Major	Robert Perry
12795	03/03/2020	Shepton Beauchamp (St Michael)	5042 Yorkshire Surprise Maximus	Donald B Carter

12796	05/03/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5032 Zowerswopped Alliance Major*	Robert D S Brown
12797	05/03/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5152 Spliced Surprise Major (23m)	Donald B Carter
12798	06/03/2020	Timsbury (The Pig Sty)	5088 Kenninghall Surprise Major	Brian J Woodruffe
12799	08/03/2020	Chilcompton (St John the Baptist)	5040 London No 3 S Royal	Robert Perry
12800	11/03/2020	East Huntspill (Little Orchard Tower)	5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (21 m)	Richard A M Newman
12801	12/03/2020	Winford (Blessed Virgin Mary & St Peter)	5056 Sliced Surprise Major (4 m)	Anthony J Cox
12802	12/03/2020	Huntsham (All Saints), Devon	5184 Quedgeley Surprise Major	Michael R Spencer
12803	14/03/2020	Merriott (All Saints)	5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (19 m)	John R Martin
12804	14/03/2020	Chew Magna (St Andrew)	5024 Platinum Surprise Major	Alan G Reading
12805	15/03/2020	Ston Easton (Blessed Virgin Mary)	5040 Surprise Minor (7 m)	Robert Perry
12806	15/03/2020	Bovey Tracey (Wobbly Bob's Campanile), Devon	5088 Yorkshire Surprise Major	Robert D S Brown
12807	27/08/2020	Wedmore (The Laurels)	5024 Plain Bob Major	Peter N Felton
12808	14/12/2020	Wedmore (The Bakery)	5040 Plain Bob Minor	Peter N Felton

* indicates first peal in the method

REPORTS FROM THE BRANCHES

AXBRIDGE BRANCH

The year started well with branch practices and education mornings happening each month with a good turnout at both. In particular the training for 'Teachers' held at Banwell in February gave a really good perspective on what it is like to teach a learner and how to correct mistakes when they do happen. Branch practices were well attended, particularly Brean as this a tower without regular ringing practices and some members had never had a chance to ring there before.

Once lockdown started to lift some ringing was able to take place in a few towers once again with the use of masks, hand sanitiser and even plastic screens between bells to allow more people to ring. Although it was not for long and only for Sunday service, it did lift spirits for all those who rang and also those outside the towers who had missed hearing the bells too. More recently, many of the branch have been using the internet based "Ringing Room" to get their ringing fix. There are now plans for branch practices using this method to encourage members to keep up with learning and practicing of methods even if physical ringing cannot currently take place. So far we have achieved some touches of Plain Bob and Grandsire Doubles with hopes to move onto triples as we all get more comfortable with the software.

We know this year has been hard for a lot of towers who were struggling to maintain a regular band and practices before the initial lockdown and one such tower which has decided to stop ringing is Mark. We would like to thank all those at Mark for their commitment to ringing and for hosting practices for the branch.

Despite everything going on, the branch did manage to gain a new member this year who was already a regular at St John's, Weston-super-Mare. Membership was confirmed at the branch AGM which was held in November via Zoom. At the meeting the present officers were re-elected for the coming year.

We would like to thank everyone involved with ringing whether it be at practices, education mornings or other events that we did manage to host in early 2020. We all look forward to a time when our bells can ring again and we can meet for regular practices and events.

Sarah Lippett

BATH BRANCH

Whilst the Covid regulations ceased all ringing activity in the Branch a number of towers have managed to keep spirits up and morale high by Zoom meetings. The Abbey ringers have met on Monday evenings during the pandemic in the "Abbey Arms" their virtual pub. This has included a highly popular quiz each week prepared by Patrick Bridges. In September they enjoyed a splendid socially distanced garden party at the home of Tony Fortin. Although there have been no practices, they rang the front six every Sunday between mid-July and the November lockdown, and on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The bells were chimed using the Ellacombe chime on Easter Sunday and VJ Day, and at 6pm throughout the November lockdown. On Remembrance Sunday the front nine were chimed, with the tenor tolled half-muffled."

During the first lockdown, Bathwick was the first Bath tower to start regular Zoom meetings in place of their regular practices. Quizzes soon became a weekly thing, with participants taking it in turns each week to write the questions. They also branched out into virtual games involving bluffing (provided by a ringer who lectures in psychology at the university), board games such as snakes and ladders and trivial pursuit, and also virtual Boggle. Though not a substitute for ringing and post-practice pints, it's been a very effective way to keep the Bathwick community in touch with each other through lockdowns. Christchurch have held a Saturday morning ZOOM in lieu of a practice and Will and Maggie have regularly chimed for services and rang socially distanced in October and on Christmas Day.

Richard Sweet

BRIDGWATER BRANCH

Our Branch membership of 142, including 2 HLMs, was recorded at our October 2019 AGM at Highbridge. There were no further new members nor resignations recorded. New membership numbers will be revealed following the collection of subscriptions for the new Association year now on starting 1st January 2021. A further quarterly meeting was held in January 2020 at Westonzoyland before Branch activity was brought to a halt by COVID-19. We did not hold an AGM in October 2020, but through electronic communication to the membership and officers it was agreed that current officers, with one exception, would continue in post until activities resumed.

John Hallett

CARY BRANCH

CHEW BRANCH

The 2020 year started well with Branch Practices held at East Harptree and Winford towers, but in common with other branches our practices thereafter, and our AGM, have been cancelled due to the Covid19 limitations.

A well-received online quiz was however organised in the Autumn by ringing master Bec Cox.

Our Treasurer has found electronic payments for annual subs have been very helpful this year, and many members have renewed their subscription despite the ringing limitations we have suffered.

We are pleased that two of our young learners at Portishead received Young Ringer awards from the Association, after their recruitment following Cub Pack visits to the church and tower.

Judith Green

CREWKERNE BRANCH

Coronavirus has hit our ringing by halting it for best part of the year. The officers of the branch had a small socially distanced meeting to discuss the current situation. We agreed to roll the Branch AGM by twelve months to November 2021, unless we can meet before and complete it in a Branch Meeting.

Some Towers have been able to ring for Sunday services in between the lockdowns albeit with reduced ringer numbers.

The Ilminster area ringers Zoom meeting has been opened up for all branch members. A very successful social gathering which we discuss all topics. All ringers in our branch are encouraged to complete the C of E C0 online Safeguarding course. This is a simple awareness course which is a requirement for your Church.

Membership currently stands at 101 members plus 1 HLM.

Ken Hallett

DUNSTER BRANCH

The branch began the year looking forward to a full fixture list of training sessions, branch practices, outings and social events. In the event, of course, most were not able to take place, with ringing stopping in March due to the coronavirus restrictions. The first three monthly branch practices were held and the ten training sessions that were possible and the weekly “improvers’ practices” were all very well attended. Since then, in the periods when ringing was allowed, many of the towers in the branch have managed to keep at least some ringing going. The following figures have been obtained from a survey of all the towers in the branch.

Of the 24 towers that would normally ring for a service, 15 rang on at least some Sundays. 11 rang half their full complement of bells to maintain social distancing, while 4 tolled a single bell. 5 towers rang on Remembrance Day and 5 rang for some Christmas services. 3 rang for at least one wedding and 1 rang for a funeral.

Only 3 towers managed to continue with some form of weekly practice, all using Ringing Room and Zoom (one also organised some outdoor handbell practices). There was, of course, a steep learning curve for ringing with the new on-line technology and we were grateful to ringers from Bridgwater and Taunton branches who helped at some of the early practices. A further 3 towers kept in touch with their ringers by other means (newsletters, quizzes etc.). Encouraged by the take-up of on-line ringing the branch is now organising monthly practices, on the same day that the normal practice would have been held. Overall, the survey indicates that 23 branch members use Ringing Room regularly, while a further 8 have tried it but not continued with it. While this is only a small proportion of the branch’s membership (167) it probably represents a larger proportion of those that usually attend branch practices.

A number of towers report that some members have expressed reservations about resuming ringing, either because of health concerns or because of nervousness after a long period without ringing. When ringing is able to resume, the branch will concentrate its training efforts on restoring confidence in ringing and then on a branch-wide recruitment drive.

GLASTON BRANCH

Our modest planned diary of events was impacted considerably, as were all Branches from March 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic which swept the world. Prior to this hitting, a very enjoyable soup and roll lunch, mixed methods ringing and branch meeting were held at St. Benedict’s Glastonbury in January. It was encouraging that 22 members attended the event at this time of year, including a few long-standing members who have found it difficult to attend recent meetings. Unfortunately, remaining planned events had to be cancelled in line with national and Association guidelines: the annual Branch 6-bell striking competition, summer outing and Annual General Meeting. In the circumstances, the committee proposed that they were willing to stand for

another year and any business requiring agreement of members would be conducted at the next possible meeting. The good news is that certain limited ringing has been undertaken during this period as detailed in the Ringing Master's report.

It was with great sadness that we learned in July of Roland (Roly) Backhurst's passing peacefully at home after a long illness. He offered so much to the world of bell ringing having rung for 53 years and been a member of Glaston Branch for 46 years. He was an Association Towers Advisor, Central Council Rep for Bath and Wells, and principal author of the new Manual of Belfry Maintenance.

At the time of writing, a provisional programme for 2021 is being planned, subject to prevailing conditions. The Committee is very aware of the potential challenges facing ringing post-pandemic and will work towards mitigating these as far as possible.

Mike Palmer

ILCHESTER BRANCH

Strangely enough, not much to report on 2020 ringing. The quarter peals on New Year's Day went ahead. The annual Skittles event at the Rose & Crown also took place, proving more popular than ever this year, with larger numbers attending than expected. It turned out to be very nearly the last time ringers could get together en masse as the rest of the year very little ringing has been done due to the Covid pandemic.

We did have a half yearly meeting in March when nine new members were elected, including Lucy, the Branch Canine Mascot. Mike Spencer, who celebrated his 1000th peal at this meeting, has now moved away. He has been an enthusiastic, hard working Ringing Master for the Ilchester Branch, and he and Jane will continue to be non resident life members.

Sadly, in 2020, we have learned that Jim Taylor, Richard Dowdeswell and Eddie Hancock have all passed away.

TAUNTON BRANCH

The 2019 AGM was held at North Curry Church on 12th October where officers were elected. Most were re-elected but Margaret Laver retired as Bell Fund Officer and Lena Massie was elected in her stead. The 2020 AGM was postponed because of Covid-19 and will be held as soon as possible. Until then, all Branch officers will continue in their posts. A long service award was presented to Reg Lee from Pitminster for 40 years membership.

Only one Learning the Ropes certificate was awarded. The highest award, Level 5, presented to Gill Day from Hillfarrance.

Sadly, I have to report the deaths of Valerie Boyce, a ringer at Lydeard St. Lawrence until she retired from ringing 10 years ago; Mary Knight, past ringer at St James Taunton; Christopher Robinson of Pitminster and Mike Woolcott, a past member of West Monkton tower. All much missed.

During the year 23 new members were elected and 2 returning members re-elected. Branch membership is 251.

To avoid clashing with the Southwest Twelve-Bell Striking Competition, Taunton Branch AGM will take place on the first Saturday in October.

Before ringing was stopped, 36 Courses were run – including 96 course modules covering many disciplines. 206 course places were taken by 65 different ringers. Huge thanks to the 36 people who helped on these courses and we look forward to their recommencement. About half the quarter peals organised as part of the Association Quarter Peal ‘Month’ to raise money for the Bell Fund were rung. 22 quarter peals included 11 firsts. 25 ringers took part and £250 raised for the Bell Fund. A new Branch practice – beginners 12-bell – began in January. Only two of ten practices were held with 41 people attending the first practice of rounds and call changes.

Without physical ringing, Ringing Room and Zoom are being used. At least eight weekly extremely useful practices are held in the Taunton Branch. From early March all ringing was cancelled and towers were locked. It was upsetting but necessary to overcome Covid-19. All competitions and outings were cancelled and we were unable to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VE day on 8th May. The Association Inter-Branch Six and Eight-bell Striking Competitions and the National Youth Competition were cancelled.

A big thank you to our Branch Officers for their hard work as well as to everyone else for their help.

Gill Whatmore