

THE BLUE LINE

August 2024

Issue 2

Welcome to this 2nd edition of the Blue Line, I hope you enjoyed the first. I am aiming in these sheets to give a blend of news stories from around the Association, things of interest and information about what's coming up within the Association. If you have anything you would like to have included in a future edition do please do let me know by emailing me on general.secretary@bath-wells.org.

Don't forget this year's Association 8 Bell Striking Competition at Nunney on Saturday 28th September. Details are on the website, and entries should be notified to Julian Back at FromeBranch.Secretary@Bath-Wells.org. I am sure every Branch can muster 8 ringers, so surely there's no reason not to see all 11 Branches represented that day!



ADRIAN BECK HLM

At Chilcompton practice night on 15th July Adrian Beck became an Honorary Life Member of the Association when the Master presented him with his certificate. This was a very special award as it not only recognised a lifetime of contribution to our art by Adrian, but the same contribution made by his brother, Robert. The full text of the citation is reproduced here.

Adrian and Robert Beck HLM

Adrian's election this day recognises his own contribution to the art of change ringing and our Association, however it also recognises that similar contribution made by his late brother Robert. In a sense this award is therefore made to both brothers and will be recorded as such in the Associations records.

Adrian and his elder brother Robert (then aged 7 and 9) were taught to ring at Chilcompton by their father Ronald. They rang their first peal at Ashwick in June 1954, and following a gentle start, peal ringing became a large part of their lives, with the brothers going on to ring a further 1451 peals together, believed to be more than any other pair of siblings within our art.

Across seven decades Adrian and Robert have freely given of their time and energy to support the improvement of our art in all its forms, striving for the development of others, and for the furtherance of excellence. In their home tower the 'mission statement of the belfry' is to provide a warm, welcome atmosphere, with support to learn and progress being paramount, whether in basic handling through to surprise maximus.

Adrian has been captain of the Chilcompton ringers for more than 40 years, following his father's own captaincy, and during that time has led the band to win the BWDACR 6 bell trophy more times than any other band. During this period Robert and Adrian's inspiration also saw them lead the replacement of the original heavy ring of six with a fine new peal of ten in the year 2000, and subsequently augmenting them to twelve in 2009.

Recognising as it does both Adrian and Robert's service and contribution, it also is unique in recognising both sons of a previous Honorary Life Member. This is the first time in the history of our Association that two generations have been recognised in this way.



The Bath & Wells team: Adelaide Crowle, Leanna Elton, Sam Elton, Jack Higby, Melissa Hunt, Walter Sinclair, Paddy Sowter, Finlay Totterdell, Igi Waugaman Reed and Clara Waller.

THE RINGING WORLD NATIONAL YOUTH COMPETITION

This competition, now in its 14th year, competes for the Whitechapel Trophy. This year the competition was held in London and we can all be very proud of our own young ringers who, not only had a great day, but also were all wonderful ambassadors for our Association. However none of this would happen without the tireless and dedicated work of many people encouraging them, training them, transporting them around and generally making it all possible, in particular we and the team have a great debt of gratitude to Jan Wyatt.

Jan says about the day: Our RWNYC started just before 7am for the Taunton contingent when they boarded the train for Paddington. The rest of us joined the train at Highbridge, Yatton, Nailsea and Bath. We rang at St Michael Cornhill, St Olave Hart Street, (we came 5th out of 13 Teams in a striking competition here) Christchurch Spitalfields, St Mary Le Bow, St Lawrence Jewry and St Giles Cripplegate. We took part in an enormous photo shoot at St Paul's Cathedral and heard Great Paul ringing. We certainly got our money's worth out of our tube tickets but also walked six miles. We dived into a shop that sold only plastic ducks, well everyone needs more plastic ducks don't they? Our train home was cancelled due to lack of staff, think this was caused by a certain football semi final. Anyway we all got home eventually and are claiming a refund from GWR for our fare. Can't wait for next year

And from one of our team, Finlay Totterdell: This year's RWNYC was in London, an incredible place for ringing in my opinion with some excellent towers. Our team celebrated coming fifth for the call change category on eight bells: a remarkable result in my opinion considering we came joint last in York the previous year, and only practiced a few times together over the year!

It was a thoroughly enjoyable day out (despite getting soaked by the heavy downpours and running to catch the tube), and our team was able to get some once in a lifetime grabs such as Bow and St Michael Cornhill, ringing on some more challenging, heavier bells, having a go on mini rings which were good fun (of which is a rare opportunity for me), and also being able to spend quality time together and share some memorable experiences that I will never forget.

Personally, the RWNYC's have been very special for me as, being a quite shy person who struggles with self-confidence, and especially ringing in front of new people which can be daunting, they have challenged me to go out of my comfort zone and ring harder, heavier bells away from the confines of the light eight I am used to, and talk to new people; and I have made many new, lifelong friends because of them. They have also encouraged me to progress as a ringer and learn new methods and ring at new towers. And not to mention our rubber ducks which have become somewhat of a symbol of our young ringing team, won at York last year! If we came last at York for ringing, we certainly made up for it by coming second in the after-party games (another of my favourite parts of the contest that offers a chance for some fun games and good laughs, and of course the classic pizza - a nice ending to a long day of ringing) and we won rubber ducks for coming second place in the games. Despite missing the after party at St Paul's Cathedral this year due to a cancelled train, the day out was an amazing experience and a fitting end to time participating in the contests. It has been both an honour and a joy to ring with such good friends and participate in the competitions, and although being sad that I can no longer participate, I look forward to helping out in years to come and still coming along to get some good grabs and spending time with my teammates, which would undoubtedly not happen without the help of our team leaders and adult helpers, who we are all eternally grateful for. We all look forward to future young ringing and next year's contest!

EGMET - The Edna Grabham Memorial Education Trust

Born into a ringing family in Uxbridge Middlesex, bells played a large part in Edna's early life. She often found herself the only girl amongst a crowd of enthusiastic young ringers who enjoyed spending all their holidays cycling round the country ringing.

Edna, who had rung with the best in London at St Paul's Cathedral, found satisfaction in more than just the enjoyment of ringing: her great love was to see people new to ringing learn a good technique and get a good grounding that would stand them in good stead wherever life took them. Whenever a group needed help getting youngsters, or newcomers, up and ringing, she would be there to support them.

Later in her life she moved to Somerset, and became an active member of the Bath and Wells Association. In her retirement she became its Education Officer, helping to organize and run educational weekends for beginners, and those starting method ringing. She also encouraged experienced ringers to learn the skills of calling, and the duties associated with being a Tower Captain and Steeple Keeper.

In her will, she left £3,000 to set up a Trust Fund to provide grants to help ringers develop their ringing and leadership skills, encouraging them to become better ringers, and share with others the joys of ringing and of playing a part in the world wide family of bell ringers.

The money was invested, and ever since then the Trustees have been giving small grants to young ringers wanting to go on courses and training events.

At the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Trustees, it was suggested that we should use Edna's money in a more imaginative way, that would benefit more people. We voted to pay for a barbeque at the Association Young Ringers' Striking Competition – hoping that the promise of a barbeque would encourage lots of people to come. It must have worked – there were lots of teams! We also voted to pay towards the coach that took the young ringers to York for the National Striking Competition.

Since then we have continued to help with the cost of sending the Association's Young Ringers to the National Competition and have paid for refreshments for our young ringers' events.

We've branched out into running courses with expert tutors from outside our area, and even Covid didn't stop us – we used Zoom to carry on the teaching.

Last year we helped to run a Recruitment Day at South Petherton complete with a mini ring and free cake! Encouraged by the success of this, this year you will find the Trustees at the Somerset Steam and Country Show at Low Ham over the weekend 20th and 21st July. Once again we are paying for the Charmborough Ring and we'll be staffing it so that anyone who wants to try ringing can have a go.

The Trustees are Helen Beaufoy (secretary) Rob Perry (Chairman) Jill Hansford and Beverley Perry. Small grants are available for anyone (young or not so young!) who wants help with going on a ringing course, or for anyone who is arranging a training or recruitment event. If you can't get in touch with one of us, you can apply through www.treblesgoing.org.uk

Next time we'll tell you more about the development of 'trebles going' and what's going on there.

And also next time we'll be carrying a report on the National 12 Bell Competition Finals held at Chilcompton in June, what an amazing day that was!

And remember, if you have any stories or news you'd like to share do please contact me David Parfrey at General.Secretary@Bath-Wells.org

THAT'S ALL