Bath & Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers



Chew Branch



Newsletter: January 2025

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2025. And thank you to those who have sent news and photos for this edition: it's been a busy period for many of our members!

There are plenty of ringing opportunities (and something for everyone) in the coming months: please put the dates in your diary.

Branch Events

Saturday Branch Practices

Everyone welcome. Ringing for all abilities, from rounds and call changes to surprise methods. If you've not been to one of these practices before, do think about attending. It's an opportunity to ring on different bells, and meet other ringers in our area.

15th February. 3.00pm – 4.30pm
Portishead; BS20 6PS.
Parking on roads.
8 bells; tenor 15cwt. (toilet)

15th March. 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Kingston Seymour; BS21 6XE.
Small church car park.
6 bells; tenor 17cwt. (ground floor)

19th April (Easter Saturday): to be confirmed

21st June. 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Chew Magna; BS40 8RE
8 bells; tenor 21cwt

20th September. 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Barrow Gurney; BS48 3RP. Church car park.
8 bells; tenor 11cwt. (ground floor)

15th November
Branch AGM: venue to be confirmed.

20th December. 3.00pm – 4.30pm
Abbots Leigh; BS8 3QU. Parking on road.
6 bells; tenor 11½cwt.

Details of these events nearer the time

Saturday 17th May; 2.30pm
Branch Striking Competition
Chew Stoke; BS40 8TU
6 bells; 10¾cwt (ground floor)

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Saturday 19th July
Branch Mini Outing

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Saturday 18th October. 7.15pm
Quiz Night
Yatton Chapter House (adjoining the church)

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10–Bell Practice
7.30pm – 9.00pm
on 1st Saturday of month, alternating between
Wrington (36cwt) – Jan, March etc
and **Backwell** (17cwt) – Feb, April etc
(changes to programme are occasionally necessary)
Grandsire Caters to Surprise Royal
Those attending should be competent on 8 and looking to broaden their experience

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Surprise Major Practice
7.30pm – 9.00pm at Yatton
on 2nd Saturday of each month
from Cambridge to Spliced Surprise

Congratulations to . . .

Lisa Parker on ringing her first quarter of Triples on an inside bell (Plain Bob Triples at Backwell; 22nd December).

Alison Pemble on ringing the treble to her first quarter of Triples (Plain Bob Triples at Backwell; 22nd December).

Will Rogers on ringing his 150th quarter (conducting 3 Doubles Methods at Clapton in Gordano; 28th December).

Russell Toogood on ringing his first quarter of Stedman Triples (Yatton; 29th December).

Elizabeth Smith who celebrated her 75th birthday with a quarter of 1275 Carlisle Surprise Minor (Stanton Drew; 10th January) and a few days later rang her 900th quarter (Tadmarton, Oxfordshire; 14th January).

Tower News

Backwell

Since Christmas Day and New Year's Day fell on a Wednesday, our usual practice night, we decided it would be nice to take a little time out and visit a few local towers as a change from the norm. When fixing an outing it is always good to have a known lunch venue so we started with the idea of the Waldegrave Arms in Chewton Mendip. Never miss an opportunity to ring at Chewton if you can as they are a superb 8 renowned amongst the ringing community worldwide. Our first stop was the mid weight and easy going 6 at Litton, but the ropes were a bit on the short side! Chewton Mendip proved a hit with all: again we were challenged by the short ropes and one exceedingly high sally for a 7ft ringer. After an excellent lunch we drove on to Ston Easton, a ground floor very light ring of 6 - a contrast to Chewton, but we did well. I had positive feedback from everyone and thank the local ringers for the use of the bells.

A ringing outing is fun, team building and sociable so if you are thinking of fixing one up this year I would highly recommend it. Happy to give tips to first timers!

Rebecca Cox



Outside the final church; Lisa is not in the photo as she is behind the camera!

Chew Magna

Saint Andrew's celebrated its patronal day on Saturday 30th November 2024.

Over the past two years the tower has welcomed and trained a number of novice ringers. As part of the reinvigoration of ringing, new ringer Anne Garnish suggested and organised a special event. She was joined by fellow novice Paul Willis and experienced ringers Pat Yeo, Annie Sewart, Helen Ayrton and Lester Yeo.

Lester suggested Devon call change ringing and a peal of "Sixty on Thirds", which was a new experience for the band. The calls are made every 2nd handstroke lead and result in 60 changes. This is a versatile and accessible intermediate stage between simple call changes and introductory methods. It was rung on the front six and proved highly popular; Lester conducted on tenor and tower captain John Sewart was timekeeper, with the ringing completed in just under 13 minutes. For some this was their longest continuous ring.

The tower is organising a trip to Saint Helen's, Lundy, on Saturday 5th July and would welcome expressions of interest from other local ringers.

Anne Garnish

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We are fortunate in having a fully functional (recently refurbished and relocated by Matthew Higby) Ellacombe. Very useful when we are short of service ringers or early services are too early!

On the Sunday before Christmas a Crib Service was held in the church. We traditionally ring carols/Christmas music on the Ellacombe before this service, as we did this Christmas. The difference this year was we had 4 non-ringers discovering the joy of "bell ringing" through operating the Ellacombe. The 4 teenage granddaughters of the tower captain quickly learnt the ropes and gave us a variety of music, ending with "We wish you a merry Christmas".

A taster for full circle ringing? We hope!

John Sewart



Ringing tunes on the Ellacombe chime

Portishead

Portishead ringers and friends are always up for a party and don't need much excuse so when Christmas comes our sparkly jumpers, best rugby shirts and gorgeous dresses are at the ready. Even before Portishead Christmas Lights Team put the lights on to the top of our tower we were planning a festive curry at The Ghandi. A few days later our table was booked for 26 people in The Albion. Great thing about The Albion is we can choose from their everyday menu as well as the Christmas stuff. We had a brilliant evening, our bell fund bought us all a drink, the food was good and the company wonderful. Rumour has it that one of us fell asleep twice but he seems to have no recall of this and says it was all very enjoyable.

It's traditional for us to ring at 7.30am (yes really) on Christmas Day, a strangely popular thing to do as the 13 ringers who turned up in plenty of time will confirm, as will our congregation who burst into spontaneous applause when we came down from the tower. Nice to be appreciated.

Time for the next Party. New Year's Eve saw us gather in St Peter's at 8pm to eat a lovely meal of Chilli and baked potatoes - thanks Annie, it tasted great - followed by home made cake from Ange and Beth - superb. George brought along his "Marvellous Micro Ring" and we made several unsuccessful attempts for a Quarter Peal. Perhaps we should have turned the music down - strange ringing along to Simon & Garfunkel; anyway you can't win them all.



(Photo of the micro ring by James Humphries)

We rang the old year out and the new one in with Grandsire Triples then raised a glass of champagne.

What next? Well the Birthday Parties will start soon, lots more fun to come.

Jan Wyatt

Tickenham

Members old and new joined the current ringers for our annual January outing. We enjoyed a "Butcombe Wednesday" meal at The Rising Sun in Backwell.

Back to the ropes now for regular Wednesday practices. We are aiming to replace our top ropes in the not too distant future. Why not find time to join us one week soon then you'll be able to return to feel the difference later in the year? Call first just to make sure we'll be there!

Lynne Purcell

Ubley

Exciting news from St Bartholomew's: five of us hope to soon become official Branch members! Over the past few months, we've been thoroughly enjoying learning from our patient teachers - Andrew, Sally, and Martin. We're now ringing on open bells and even managing some decent rounds on occasion. The village has been wonderfully supportive too - some have mentioned going for walks just to hear us ring, while others have said the bell patterns help their children settle down for bed.

Our recent open-door events have also been a great success, giving villagers the chance to see the bells being rung - and some even ventured up to take a look at the bells themselves!

Ronan Dorvillers

Weston in Gordano

When the wooden louvres from your church tower are in such a state of decay that they start falling into the church yard, the time to do something about it was yesterday. That's what the Churchwarden at Weston in Gordano thought, so he wasted no time in getting some estimates. Not surprisingly George Wyatt came up with the best price as he has a vested interest in keeping Somerset towers in good condition. The new wood for the louvres was purchased from a sawmill in Clevedon. It's Sapele wood from sustainable forests in West Africa. A good choice for the job because it's very hard, quite oily, has a high tolerance against bending and is naturally resistant to insects. The downside is it's quite hard to machine but George has the tools for the job. Measuring twice and cutting once meant it all fitted perfectly so George rather enjoyed slotting them into place.

Jan Wyatt

Wrington

Wrington hold an **improvers practice** on the 4th Thursday of each month, 7.30pm – 9.00pm. Ringing on 8 and 10 bells, mainly simple Triples and Caters methods.

Visitors will be made very welcome.

For more details contact Alli Grieveson: allyson.newman@btopenworld.com

Yatton

On the 17th December the Yatton ringers met in The Butcher's Arms in Yatton for an evening of convivial conversation and excellent food followed by a lovely touch of Kent Major on handbells which entertained the ringers and all in the pub.

Chris Lewendon



The Yatton ringers: colourful paper hats and Christmas jumpers were much in evidence

In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we record the recent death of Geoff Marchant. At our last AGM it was reported that he had been awarded a certificate for 72 years membership of the Bath and Wells Association. During his time in the area he had been a member of Butcombe, Blagdon and Clevedon St Andrew's. Most recently he was listed in the Annual Report as a Member Emeritus of Kenn tower.

May he rest in peace

Reports of Branch Events

The final Branch Practice of 2024 was held at Yatton on Saturday 21st December. Seventeen members attended and ringing, which catered for all abilities, included rounds and call changes, Plain Bob Doubles, Grandsire Triples, Stedman Triples, Plain Bob Major, Yorkshire Surprise Major and Superlative Surprise Major. An enjoyable afternoon was rounded off with mulled wine and mince pies.



Some of the ringers enjoying their mulled wine

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The first Branch Practice of 2025 saw the year off to an excellent start with a very well attended meeting at East Harptree. The bells are an easy-going 6, no doubt greatly enhanced by the major refurbishment carried out in recent years. As is always the case at the Saturday Branch Practices, all levels of ability were catered for, with ringing including rounds and call changes, Plain Bob Doubles and Minor, Little Bob Minor, London Surprise Minor and Carlisle Surprise Minor.

It was pleasing to elect 5 new members:

Lucy Curd: Congresbury
Roger Lyons: East Harptree
Helen Durbin: East Harptree
Julia Exon: Long Ashton
Julie Wyatt: Long Ashton

We welcome them to the Branch and all its activities.

And finally, on a rather chilly afternoon, the tea, coffee and cake, served throughout the afternoon in the church, was most welcome!

We hope to see you at future Branch Practices

Always display the
POSTCODE
for the church in the ringing room.
It will be required
by the emergency services
should you ever need to call them

South West Ringing Course

24th – 27th October 2025
Millfield School, Street

Keep the date free
Book as a student or a helper
More details nearer the time.

Guild of Devonshire Ringers and CC initiative

General Notices

Saturday 8th March

International Women's Day

In recent years this day has been marked by women ringers getting together for general ringing, a quarter peal or even a peal.

There is usually an event on *Bellboard* that your ringing can be linked to

80 VE DAY©
80TH ANNIVERSARY
A SHARED MOMENT OF CELEBRATION
8 MAY 2025

Ring Out in Celebration at 6.30pm on Thursday 8th May

An opportunity for general ringing, a quarter peal or a peal

Will your tower be ringing?

There will be an event on *Bellboard* that your ringing can be linked to

The 80th anniversary of VJ Day is celebrated on 15th August

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Next Newsletter

It is hoped to publish the next newsletter in **April**. Please send your news, and photos, to the editor as soon as you have any. It will be kept on file until the next edition is put together.

The logo below is the new branding commissioned by the Central Council of Church Bellringers (CCCBR)

BELLRINGING