Bath & Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers



Chew Branch



Newsletter: March 2025

Welcome to the spring edition of the Branch newsletter. Thank you to those who have sent news and photos, helping us all to stay in touch with what is going on in the Branch. Do please keep your news coming in for future editions.

There are plenty of ringing opportunities coming up so 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. Do think about attending as it's an opportunity to ring on different bells, meet other ringers in our area and, quite frequently, attempt something that you don't usually get the opportunity to ring at your own practice night.

19th April (Easter Saturday). **7.30pm – 9.00pm**
The Potters Yard Ring, Holcombe; BA3 5EX
12 bells; tenor 1-1-9
An opportunity to try your hand on this light-weight ring of bells installed at Matthew Higby's workshop. They were recently augmented from 8 to 12.

21st June. 7.30pm – 9.00pm
Chew Magna; BS40 8RE
8 bells; tenor 28cwt

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

15th November. 3.00pm – 4.30pm
Branch AGM: **Congresbury;** BS49 5DQ
Church car park.
8 bells; tenor 34cwt. Toilet.

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)

.....

Saturday 19th July

Branch Mini Outing

.....

Saturday 18th October. 7.15pm

Quiz Night

Yatton Chapter House (adjoining the church)

****

10–Bell Practice

7.30pm – 9.00pm
on 1st Saturday of month, alternating between
Wrington (36cwt) – May, July etc
and **Backwell** (17cwt) – April, June 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

.....

Surprise Major Practice

7.30pm – 9.00pm at Yatton
on 2nd Saturday of each month

from Cambridge to Spliced Surprise

A Message from the Branch Treasurer

I would like to thank all Chew Branch towers for the timely submission of 2025 Subs. All paid on or before 31st January 2025 as requested and only one cheque.

Any changes notified to me at the time of payment have been made to each tower record. Updates have been sent to B&WDACR Secretary/Treasurer and of course to our Chew Branch Secretary, Lesley.
Wishing you all good health and happiness for 2025.

Shirley Edwards

Congratulations to . . .

Backwell Ringers on scoring their first quarter peal of Caters with a Sunday-service band, and to **Lisa Parker** for ringing the treble to her first quarter of Caters and **Huw Parker** for ringing the tenor to his first of Caters (Plain Bob Caters, Backwell, 16th February).

Tony Cox who marked the 60th anniversary of his first peal (Cambridge Surprise Minor at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire) with a peal of 6 Treble Dodging Minor Methods at Publow on 5th February.

Les Curwood who marked the 30th anniversary of his first quarter peal by ringing the tenor to 1320 February Doubles (Clapton in Gordano; 3rd February).

Richard Humphries (aka Humph) who celebrated his 80th birthday (admittedly a day early) with a peal of Humph Surprise Major (Barrow Gurney; 21st March).

Alison Pemble on ringing her first quarter of Plain Bob Minor on an inside bell (Portishead; 6th February).

Lynne Purcell on ringing the treble to her first quarter of Minor (Plain Bob; Backwell; 24th February).

Lionel Smith who marked the 65th anniversary of his first quarter peal (Kent Treble Bob Minor at Fawley, Hampshire) with 1265 Double Norwich Court Bob Major (Winford; 21st January).

James Travis who covered to a quarter peal of 3 Doubles Methods: his first quarter at his first attempt (Clevedon St Andrew; 6th March).

Tobias Viney on ringing his first quarter on an inside bell (Plain Bob Doubles; Yatton; 23rd February).

Clara Waller who rang her first quarter of Royal on an inside bell when she rang the 2 to Cambridge Surprise Royal (Evercreech; 20th February). Soon after she rang her first peal of Royal on an inside bell – also Cambridge Surprise (Backwell; 2nd March).

Congratulations to
Lucy Warren and Alan Reading
married at Yatton Church
on Saturday 8th March

(See Tower News: Yatton)

Tower News

Chew Magna

An all ladies band rang at Chew Magna on Saturday 8th March to celebrate International Women's Day. The band was made up with ringers from both Chew Magna and Litton.



From left : Judith Green, Helen Ayrton, Dawn Stollery, Cathy Monaghan, Anne Garnish, Annie Sewart.

Nempnett Thrubwell



The bells have been out of action for two years or so but it is hoped that they will soon be operational again.

Paul Wedlake

Stanton Drew

On a very sunny morning in February some of the ringers from St. Mary the Virgin, Stanton Drew, made the trip over to St Andrew's in Backwell. We were welcomed by Bec and her wonderful team of helpers. The aim of the morning was to work on raising and lowering in peal.

We are a varied bunch in Stanton Drew; some of us only a year and a bit into ringing and some who have been ringing for decades! We have been working hard on call changes and moving toward

plain hunt but we had been neglecting the practice of raising and lowering.



The ringers who attended the raising and lowering session at Backwell

During our visit we learnt many top tips. The heaviest bell actually leads the pace as this is the hardest/slowest to raise. We also were encourage to practice raising in peal by using bells 1,3 and 5 instead of all the bells at once - this helps to make less of a din if it all goes wrong!

Our biggest take home - as with all aspects of ringing - we need to practice, practice, practice! We have committed to raising and lowering at least twice at the beginning of each practice session and make sure we finish our ringing in time to lower tunefully and not just as fast as we can!

Our tower has been out of action since January, whilst maintenance of the roof is being carried out. We hope to be back in the tower in the next few weeks to put what we have learnt into action.

Thanks to the Backwell team for their time and guidance (not to mention the coffee and homemade treats!)

Joanna Malpass

Stowey

Stowey bells have been out of action for some months while major work is carried out on the fabric of the church and tower. Looking at the church website suggests that they currently have a faculty application lodged with the Diocesan Advisory Committee for work that should solve the problem of dampness around the inside of the base of the tower. It also notes that they now have a toilet in a separate building in the church grounds.

Ubley

Four Ubley ringers are now members of the Association (see Reports of Branch Events). They are continuing to make progress as they reach the first anniversary of starting bell ringing in Ubley. They're still figuring out call changes and have just been introduced to dodging.

Ronan Dorvillers



Ian, Ronan and Christie proudly displaying their membership certificates (the curious orange glow apparently comes from the heaters!)

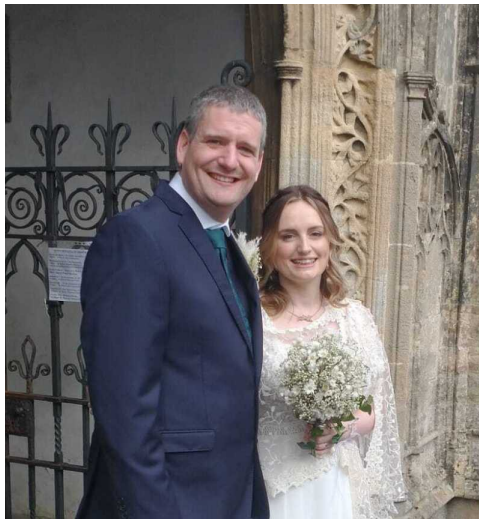
Yatton

Lucy Warren and Alan Reading were married on Saturday 8th March at St Mary the Virgin, Yatton. They have lived in Yatton for a number of years and are valued members of our local band.

It was a great ringing occasion with ringers from all over the country at the ceremony. Naturally there was much ringing on the day including a peal of Bristol Surprise Major at Yatton in the morning followed by ringing before and after the wedding including the local band and bands from both Alan and Lucy's ringing friends.

A truly special occasion.

Bernard North



In Memoriam

Geoffrey Ralph Marchant: 15.01.1940 -14.01.2025

As reported in the last newsletter, at the Branch AGM in November we celebrated the long service of Geoffrey Marchant, 72 years a member of the Bath & Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers. Geoff passed away on 14th January 2025. Bernard North has compiled this short obituary from the tribute read at his funeral in Yatton church on 18th February 2025.



Geoff was born on 15th January 1940 near Bridgwater, Somerset, to William and May Marchant. His school days were all spent in that area. He learnt to ring at the age of 10, along with his older brother Clive, at Durleigh, part of a new band formed when the bells were augmented from 4 to 6 bells. He rang his first quarter peal 3 years later and his first peal just 18 months after.

In 1968 he met Eleanor, also a ringer, and they married in September 1969 at Woolavington church. They moved into their own home in Yatton where sons Andrew and Philip were born. Both Ellie and Geoff rang at Yatton, but Geoff got more pleasure in passing on the skill of ringing to others, so eventually started teaching ringing at St Michael's Church, Butcombe. Both sons learnt to ring at Butcombe.

Geoff was a mechanical engineer by profession and worked for many years as a stress engineer in the aerospace industry around Bristol, including a period at British Aircraft Corporation working on Concorde of which he was particularly proud.

Geoff was instrumental in the rehanging of the single bell in Kenn church for full circle ringing. He rang this bell regularly for services, occasionally assisted by Eleanor.

Many years ago he set up and ran the Chalice Handbell Team, ringing in care homes and for other special occasions around the Yatton area.

Sadly, Geoff contracted Parkinson's disease some years ago which severely curtailed his ringing activities both on tower bells and handbells. On the Saturday after he passed away, son Andrew rang the single bell at Kenn 84 times in his memory.

Reports of Branch Events

The Branch Practice on **Saturday 15th February** was held at St Peter's, Portishead, and was very well attended despite the grey, damp weather. As always there was ringing to suit all levels of ability: call changes; plain hunt; Plain Bob, Grandsire and Stedman Triples; Plain Bob Major; Cambridge Surprise and Yorkshire Surprise Major.

When not ringing, most members took the opportunity to pop down into the church where tea, coffee and a selection of cake was being served.

The final task of the afternoon was to elect the following new members:

Clutton
Jon Brown, Mary Loakes, Andy Loakes

Long Ashton
Rebecca Woodgate

Ubley
Christie Peacock, Ronan Dorvillers, Ian Goldsmith, Jane Hayley

.....

The **March Branch Meeting** was held on a bright spring afternoon at Kingston Seymour, where the primroses were much in evidence in the church grounds. Again, it was a very well attended event – perhaps the promise of tea/coffee and a wonderful selection of cakes was an added attraction!

It was good to see a number of relative learners as well as the more experienced members and the ringing reflected this mix of skills, ranging from rounds and call changes, Grandsire Doubles and Plain Bob Minor, to Stedman Doubles and Cambridge Surprise Minor.

General Notices

South West Ringing Course

24th – 27th October 2025
Millfield School, Street

Keep the date free
Book as a student or a helper

Tuition groups will probably cover:
call changes, plain hunt,
Plain Bob Doubles,
Plain Bob Minor,
Grandsire Triples

Applications for student and helper places opens on 1st May 2025

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

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

National 12-bell Striking Contest

If you want to hear some really top class 12-bell ringing, go along to St Mary, Redcliffe, on Saturday 28th June to listen to the final of the National 12-Bell competition. The test piece is a touch of 252 Stedman Cinques.



Joining the home team will be the top two teams from each of the 4 qualifier contests held on 22nd March: the Ancient Society of College Youths, Birmingham, Cambridge, Exeter, Guildford, St Paul's Cathedral, the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths and York.

Next Newsletter

It is hoped to publish the next newsletter in **June**. 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.

Association Shirts



Bath & Wells shirts are available in a variety of colours, with your tower name added if required.

From **Linela Embroidery Ltd**, for polos (£19) and sweatshirts (£23) we use RTX brand: they are designed for workwear so last for ages and wash well. Regatta fleeces are also available (£30). For fleeces we recommend women's style for any ladies as the sleeves are really long in the unisex fleeces. Unisex is probably a good choice for polos or sweats.

Delivery around 2 weeks. Just let Jan know what you would like and she'll give you Bank details to BACs the payment.
£1 from every garment sold goes to the Bath & Wells DACR. (£137 from 2024 sales).

Jan Wyatt; 07779388114; janwyatt@live.co.uk

Pro RTX Pro Sweatshirt - Linela Embroidery Ltd
Regatta Thor III Fleece Jacket - Linela Embroidery

Contact Details

Newsletter Editor: Elizabeth Smith
lizandlionel43@gmail.com

Branch Chairman: Glenn Taylor
ChewBranch.Chairman@bath-wells.org

Ringing Master: Rebecca Cox
ChewBranch.RingingMaster@bath-wells.org

Deputy Ringing Master: George Wyatt
ChewBranch.DepRingingMaster@bath-wells.org

Secretary: Lesley Chandler
ChewBranch.Secretary@bath-wells.org**Treasurer:**

Shirley Edwards
ChewBranch.Treasurer@bath-wells.org