Bath & Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers

Chew Branch

Newsletter: September 2025

Welcome to the September edition of the Branch newsletter, keeping you up to date with what's going on in our Branch.

As always, thank you to those who have sent in news. Do please keep your news and photos coming in for future editions.

Forthcoming Branch Events

You will find a welcome at all Branch events. The regular Saturday Branch Practices cater for all levels of ringing ability, from rounds and call changes to surprise methods.

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

Please note the change in time. Once the clocks change in October our Branch Practices are held in the afternoon.

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

This is when we elect our officers for the next 12 months.

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

Saturday 18th October. 7.15pm

Quiz Night

Yatton Chapter House (adjoining the church)

This is always a very enjoyable evening.
Further details will be circulated in due course, but for now please get the date into your diaries.

10–Bell Practice

7.30pm – 9.00pm

on 1st Saturday of month, alternating between **Wrington** (36cwt) – September, November etc and **Backwell** (17cwt) – October, December 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

Report of the Branch Mini Outing

On the third Saturday of July, instead of an evening practice at one tower within the Branch, we had an afternoon mini outing to two towers in a neighbouring branch. First on the schedule was the 6 at Axbridge and this was followed, an hour later, by the 8 at Cheddar. The timing allowed for walking between the two towers, which most did, enjoying the scenic footpath via the Cheddar Reservoir. Two members actually cycled the whole way from their home, making use of the popular Strawberry Line cycle route from the disused station at Yatton to Cheddar. And we would have to admit that a couple of others took the easy option and drove between the two towers!



In total 15 members took part in the outing – unfortunately 3 of them had left before we took the group photo!

Ringing during the afternoon ranged from call changes to Norwich Surprise Minor, Stedman Triples and Plain Bob Major.



Chew Branch ringers weren't the only visitors to Cheddar that day – Christine spotted Wallace enjoying a rest on a convenient bench near the caves so stopped for a quick photo. (Just in case any readers are wondering, Wallace was part of the Wallace and Gromit Trail of 53 sculptures in Bristol and beyond.)

Reports of Branch Ringing for VJ Day

The 80th anniversary of VJ Day, on Friday 15th August, was marked by ringing at many towers around the country.

We know of the following ringing within our Branch.
Backwell: 1280 Lessness Surprise Major.
Clevedon St John: call changes.
Weston in Gordano: 1260 Anniversary Doubles.

Association Shirts

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



Contact Jan for further details
Jan Wyatt; 07779388114; janwyatt@live.co.uk

Congratulations to . . .

Lisa Parker on ringing her first quarter of treble dodging minor when she rang the treble at Backwell (5 Treble Dodging Minor Methods; 30th June).

Will Rogers on ringing his 175th quarter peal (31st July; Clapton in Gordano). A couple of weeks later he celebrated 25 years of ringing with a quarter of Grandsire Triples (16th August; St Mary, Redcliffe).

Clara Waller on ringing her first quarter on 12 bells (Grandsire Cinques; 29th June; St Mary, Redcliffe).

Tina Woods-Jones on ringing her first quarter peal when she rang the treble to 1260 Plain Bob Doubles (31st July; Clapton in Gordano).

George Wyatt who conducted his 100th Quarter peal (Grandsire Doubles; 8th June; Weston in Gordano).

Tower News

Backwell

On Sunday 27th July the combined church choirs from St Andrew's, Backwell, and St Mary the Virgin, Yatton, made their annual trip to St Mary, Redcliffe, to sing choral Evensong. As many of the usual Redcliffe ringers were not available that day, Rebecca Cox arranged for a group of 9 Backwell ringers to join 3 of the locals to ring for the service. For several it was their first experience of ringing on this glorious 50cwt twelve.

Portishead

Two separate pieces of news from Portishead: a report of their recent outing and news of 2 brave ringers taking part in a charity abseil.

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George often arranges a Bank Holiday Outing for Portishead ringers and friends so the recent Bank Holiday saw us meeting up bright and early to pack into as few cars as possible and set off to Worcestershire. As well as church towers, we visited several mini rings and because these are in private homes the exact locations were only given

out a few days prior to our trip. First up was a 15 bell mini ring in a sitting room in a really neat and beautifully engineered installation. The bells and frame sat just above something resembling one of those plaster roses so beloved by people wanting houses with features.

The bells were tiny and had come from a variety of sources - easy to imagine the owner touring a gift shop tapping little ornamental bells to check the note. I think one of them actually said Happy Christmas on the side. The tiny bells were a little tricky to ring but we soon began to get the hang of it and eventually managed rounds on 15.

Our next 2 visits were to more conventional church towers. Earls Croome and Twyning: both were easy to ring light sixes.

Lunch was at The Fleet Inn in Twyning, a super and popular pub on the river bank. The journey between the tower and pub was quite exciting. My satnav took us to a cart track. My passengers encouraged me to keep going although I rather expected to end up in a farmyard. However it did lead us to a proper road that did indeed lead to the pub. Next problem, it was the day of the village fete and a traffic jam of enormous proportions made us consider abandoning the car and walking the last few hundred yards. Lorna had a better plan; she moved the no parking cone next to a Range Rover that had stopped in the middle of the road to unload goods, thus allowing me to squeeze the car by and encouraging the rest of the traffic to follow. The owner of the Range Rover watched incredulously as several hundred cars missed her wing mirror by 2 cms - well I hope they all missed!

Two more private mini rings were our afternoon entertainment, one in a garden shed and one in a summerhouse. We enjoyed them very much. All the mini ring owners were extremely welcoming and hospitable, even serving refreshments - absolutely lovely.

We had a great day and are looking forward to whatever George comes up with next time.

Jan Wyatt



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On Saturday 21st June St Peter's Church, Portishead, staged a charity abseil from the top of the Church tower. Congratulations to Jim Humphries and Gerry Skelly on being among several who were brave enough to complete the descent!



Jim (photo above) and Gerry (below) go over the top



Both ringers were extremely well supported in donations and support from the band who turned up on the day. The event was very successful in raising over £7,500 for the Christian Aid Middle East Crisis Appeal and Clevedon District Foodbank.

Stanton Drew

Not a lot has happened in the last few months and unfortunately, due to holidays, illness, etc, we have not always had sufficient ringers for practice nights. However we have still been able to ring for services and community events.

During August it was lovely to receive requests from visitors to our Tower. On 21st August we had visitors from Backwell attempting a quarter peal - superb ringing (although at the end 2 bells had unfortunately crossed over! *Editor*). And on 23rd August ringers from St Paul's Southville, Bristol, and friends from Liverpool also attempted a superb quarter peal.
We had many members of the community saying how they enjoyed listening to our visitors. They don't comment on our ringing in quite the same way!

In the same week we had a request for visitors to attend on Saturday 25th October as part of the South West Ringing Course.

On 30th August we rang at the Opening of "Stanton Drew Flower Show" and offered "Tower Tours" during the Flower Show. This was very successful with a lot of interest shown. We now have a camera in the belfry so visitors were able to see the bells. They also showed a lot of interest in the tower clock. The clock had stopped in June due to a faulty switch: it is now repaired and working well.

We're now looking forward to September and beyond when we're likely to have more ringers available.

Shirley Edwards

Other News and Reports

National 12-bell Striking Contest

It was a home win for the Bristol team in the final of the 12-bell striking contest at St Mary Redcliffe on Saturday 28th June. As was to be expected, all 9 teams set a very high standard but Bristol emerged triumphant with an exceptional score of 96%. The ringing was enjoyed by a crowd of some 1,000 ringers, among whom were quite a number from the Chew Branch, making the most of the opportunity to hear 12-bell ringing at its very best. Of course, they also enjoyed the drinks and home-made cakes that were available throughout the day!

National Youth Competition

The hugely popular Ringing World National Youth Competition was held in Birmingham on Saturday 5th July. Included in the Bath & Wells Association Team were 2 young ringers from the Chew Branch: Igi Waugaman Reed from Clevedon St Andrew and Clara Waller from Backwell.

Despite disappointment in the test piece (Plain Hunt Doubles on the back six at Edgbaston), the team thoroughly enjoyed the day. They rang at St Mary's Moseley (10), St Martin in The Bullring (16), St Paul, (10), and Solihull (12), as well as having a go on handbells and mini-rings. They travelled by bus and train, dined on pizza and ice cream, were presented with medals and generally had a brilliant day.



Back row: Evan, Clara, Walter, Oscar
Front row: Igi, Thomas, Adelaide

The Edna Grabham Memorial Education Fund paid for the team shirts.

Association Striking Competitions

Both the 8-bell and the 6-bell competitions will be held on Saturday 27th September.

The 8-bell competition, hosted this year by Glaston Branch, will take place during the afternoon at St Leonard's, Butleigh. The venue for the 6-bell competition, hosted by Frome Branch, has yet to be announced.

Good luck
to both our teams

Bath& Wells Association

Young Ringers Festival 2025
Sunday 14th September

A Ringing Tour of West Somerset

1.30-2.15pm. St Michael, Minehead. TA24 5JR
10 bells; 22cwt; toilet

2.45-3.30pm. St Andrew, Old Cleeve. TA24 6HP
8 bells; 18cwt

4.00-4.45pm. St George, Sampford Brett. TA4 4LQ
6 bells; 7cwt; toilet

5.00-6.00pm. Burgers, cake and quiz in Sampford Brett Village Hall

It's time to persuade your parent(s), tower captain or teacher that you want to come!

Please let
Jan Wyatt (janwyatt@live.co.uk)
or Jan Swan
(DunsterBranch.EducationOfficer@bath-wells.org)
know if you are coming and if you have any food allergies or dietary requirements

All young ringers welcome

BELLS ON SUNDAY

Church bells are broadcast on BBC Radio 4 every Sunday at 5.43am.
If that's too early for you, the broadcast is also available on the BBC website.

The recordings featured are of bells in churches in towns and villages all around the country

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

Doves Guide for Church Bell Ringers

Dove's Guide (often simply known as *Dove*) is a resource giving details (age, weight, founder etc) of all the towers in the world containing bells hung for English style "full circle" change ringing.

The following type of bell collections are currently in scope:

- rings of three or more bells hung for full-circle English-style change ringing
- carillons in the British Isles
- bells weighing 40cwt or more in the British Isles
- additional bells in the same location as a ring, carillon or 40 cwt bell given above
- bells in buildings under the jurisdiction of the Church of England as part of its Church Heritage Record.

dove.cccbr.org.uk/dove

Next Newsletter

It is hoped to publish the next newsletter towards the end of the year, probably in **November** after the Branch AGM. But don't wait until then; please send your news, and accompanying photos, to the editor as soon as you have any.

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