

Editor's Foreword – Andy Clark

While lots of activities have come to a grinding halt, I've certainly enjoyed reading some of these articles seeing how the St Martin's Guild has continued to offer great variety during the lockdown. In this edition, we also remember Andrew Stubbs, who was a longstanding member of the Guild. Finally, just a thank you to all the contributors to this edition – I barely have to do any chasing for material, which is great, and it makes the editing job a pleasure.

Ringling Master's Report – Arthur Reeves

For the last newsletter, I was writing at a time when lockdown had just begun and all ringing had ceased. I wrote that whilst it may appear that the purpose – the *raison d'être* even – of ringing associations and guilds had temporarily ended, St Martin's Guild officers believed that it was now, more than ever, for us to bring people together. When I reflect back on the last three months, I am proud of how the Guild has transformed itself. As we look forward to ringing resuming over the coming months, albeit under a 'new normal', we will continue to reflect and adapt as necessary.

So what has our 'new normal' been for the last few months?

- Guild members conducting weekly shopping trips for other members
- Twice weekly training sessions, led by a wide range of people
- Our first online Business Meeting, and several online officer meetings
- Three quizzes
- A hotly contested Bake-Off competition, which raised over £1,000 for charity
- A photo competition
- Plenty of work conducted on re-designing and updating our website
- Guidance and support for towers as we begin to consider how we re-start ringing
- Sessions on Ringing Room led by a range of individuals, including firsts for several members
- Focus sessions for Brumdingers on Ringing Room, with a number of firsts
- Handbell opportunities offered
- Recognition from both the Association of Ringing Teachers and the Central Council for our online training programme

I am particularly grateful for all those who have supported this broad range of activity. Without this support, we simply could not have managed to arrange such a diverse range of topics. I know how much time goes in to planning sessions, especially when you are attempting to get your head around new technology, so thank you again to all those who generously gave up their time to plan and lead. And a particular shout out to Simon Linford and the Brumdingers, who have taken Ringing Room by storm!

And thank you also to those who have attended. Without you, we wouldn't have a Guild. Average attendance has been at about 30, with many sessions meeting over 40 attendees. I wondered at the start of this whether people were attending simply because they were bored, but interest hasn't seemed to wane yet!

Clearly, online training has its limitations. Whilst it is useful to spend time reflecting on theory (and too often this is overlooked in towers), divorcing this from practice entirely will inevitably lessen the effectiveness of the theory. Yet online sessions do truly overcome geographical barriers. In 'normal times', we are highly unlikely to have benefited from the expertise of Tina Stoecklin and Simon Gay introducing

For up to date information and latest calendar use the website <http://www.stmartinsguild.org/>

us to handbells recently, or David Smith's invaluable input over the last few months. Zoom allows an easy forum for presenters from Glasgow and Australia to reach us right in the comfort of our homes!

So as we look towards the future, where ringing will begin to resume, we will reflect on whether online sessions may continue to play some part in our training programme. And I hope members will make use of the online library, with the recorded sessions, as part of their preparation before going back into the tower. A huge thank you to Mark Eccleston for all of his work on re-designing the website and keeping it so up to date. If you haven't visited recently, do. All our training resources are available at: <http://www.stmartinsguild.org/teaching/training-and-resources/>

As lockdown restrictions begin to ease, the Guild will – for August at least – be reducing the online training programmes offered centrally. We will, as you'd expect, continue to monitor circumstances closely. I'm also certain other members will be keen to offer sessions on Ringing Room. Janet Horton has offered handbell sessions, so contact her directly for more details.

And whether you are considering going back up the tower or have made the decision that now is not the time, stay safe. A huge thanks to the following for hosting training sessions:

<i>David Baverstock</i>	<i>Alison Hodge</i>	<i>Clare McArdle</i>
<i>Julia Cater</i>	<i>Janet Horton</i>	<i>Chris Pickford</i>
<i>Tony Daw</i>	<i>Steve Horton</i>	<i>Phil Ramsbottom</i>
<i>Mark Eccleston</i>	<i>David Hull</i>	<i>Tina Stoecklin</i>
<i>Alison Edmonds</i>	<i>Simon Linford</i>	<i>David Smith</i>
<i>Simon Gay</i>	<i>Adam Knight-Markiegi</i>	<i>Jonathan Townsend</i>
	<i>John Warboys</i>	<i>Stephanie Warboys</i>

For judging our photo competition: Michael, Vicky & Elizabeth Wilby, Richard & Gill Postill

For co-ordinating the bake-off: Stella Tew, Clare McArdle and Tracy Stevens

And if you haven't made it to one of our training sessions, resources from the following sessions are available here: <http://www.stmartinsguild.org/teaching/training-and-resources/>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How we learn and how to learn methods</i> • <i>Abel, Tadhil and Methodology</i> • <i>Coursing orders</i> • <i>Place notation</i> • <i>Stedman</i> • <i>Plain Bob Doubles</i> • <i>Conducting various doubles methods</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is a bob?</i> • <i>Walking through methods</i> • <i>Handbell ringing</i> • <i>Understanding call changes</i> • <i>Tower stewardship</i> • <i>Introduction to composing</i> • <i>Ringing heavy bells</i> • <i>History of Birmingham bells</i>
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Remembering Andrew Nicholas Stubbs – *Mark Eccleston*

9 October 1939 – 2 April 2020

Andrew was born in Birmingham on 9th October 1939. He attended King Edward VI School in Edgbaston and graduated from Oxford University in 1961. A move to London saw Andrew join Equity and Law Life Assurance Company where he had a successful career, working at their head offices in London and High Wycombe. When the company opened another decentralised head office in Coventry in the early 1980s Andrew returned to the Midlands.

Andrew learnt to ring at Handsworth during the 1950s, taught by Ian Thompson. He was extremely talented, an accurate striker and became a prolific peal ringer. He rang 2,184 peals between 1959 and 2014 and was a great supporter of the peals at Birmingham Cathedral.

Andrew was a dedicated member of the Ancient Society of College Youths (ASCY), having been elected in 1961. He joined the band at St Paul's Cathedral during the 1960s and remained a full member until 2000, long after he had relocated to Solihull. He competed in the National Twelve Bell Contest 20 times between 1978 and 2001 and was a member of the St Paul's winning bands in both the 1984 and 1996 contests.

Interested in the organisation and management of ringing, Andrew was a long-standing member of the Central Council from 1975 until his death. He was Steward of the Rolls of Honour from 1999 to 2008 and served on The Ringing World committee, later the Board, from 1978 to 2002.

In addition to long-held positions in the ASCY and the Oxford University Society, Andrew was also an officer of the St Martin's Guild, serving as Master for 11 years and subsequently as Life Vice-President. He was Bell Advisor for the Birmingham Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches, Trustee of the Guild's Bell Restoration Fund, and Tower Secretary at St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham.

In these roles Andrew was likened to a non-executive director, concerned to ensure things were carefully considered and done properly. Andrew was conservative and stood his ground when he felt this was necessary, but his concern was always to do his best by the ringing organisations he served.

For many years Andrew had been an enthusiastic smoker and drinker. Upon recovery from abdominal surgery in 2004 he found he could no longer drink real ale. Then, following a subsequent operation, Andrew found that a shortage of breath meant that ringing even light bells was impossible. His long peal ringing career, and indeed all ringing, ended in 2014.

Yet Andrew's approach was to concentrate on those activities he could still undertake. He continued his regular attendance at an annual cycle of ringing events, and remained a keen member of the 'Last Wednesday' daytime band centred in the Midlands.

Outside of ringing, Andrew's love of music saw him as a frequent attendee of CBSO concerts. He contributed to the administration of the housing complex where he lived in Solihull, and served as Treasurer for the Birmingham Ileostomy Association, being heavily involved in supporting patients in challenging times.

Andrew enjoyed the events he had organised to mark his 80th birthday in October 2019. And although Andrew had not been in robust health for a number of years, his death less than six months later, came as an unexpected shock.

Andrew died on 2nd April 2020 of the Covid-19 virus. He will be remembered for his loyalty, courtesy, wise counsel, and his extensive contribution to ringing over very many years.



(Photo courtesy of Richard Wilsher)

A memorial service for Andrew Stubbs has been provisionally booked for Tuesday 13th October 2020 at 13:30 in St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham. If social distancing rules are still in operation by then, the service will be rebooked for a later date. An update will be given nearer the time

Ringling Zoom – Keith Whitehead

Deprived by lockdown of his usual opportunities to harangue learners at Wednesday evening workshops and Moseley midweek practices, Phil Ramsbottom has been hosting a series of Ringing Room workshops.

The structure we arrived at wasn't planned but evolved. We have sessions twice a week lasting just 45 minutes (plus a bit if it's going well and we want to). There are only five or six people involved (broadly the same six ringers – see photo below) so that we're all ringing all the time. And naturally there's chat beforehand and during, including some ringing theory discussions – often around how to ring a particular method without learning the blue line.



We use Zoom as the meeting host and everyone uses headphones to prevent echoing and feedback. The technology sometimes plays tricks like freezing one individual temporarily and buffering all their incoming sounds; then delivering them all together in an almighty crash. To the other five ringers, everything sounds fine and they can't understand why person six has gone wrong! This doesn't end well, but it's easy to stand the bells, refresh and try again – or move on. Often we find that the technology improves across the session, which is a bit weird. Ringing Room itself is, I think, fine and the problems are local. Perhaps someone else in your household decides to download a large file and hog all the broadband. It's worth asking your household to keep off their devices for the duration of the session!

By contrast, having one of our group 'across the pond' has caused relatively few problems.

Simply the act of ringing a bell by pressing a keyboard is so different from normal experience that it takes quite a bit of practice to be comfortable with it. Things like spotting the treble are tricky compared with tower bells – at least for me!

Against this background we have, nevertheless, managed an impressive array of 25 methods over the 14 workshops so far – with a liberal dose of spliced and touches:

- **Minor:** Plain Bob, Bastow, Little Bob, Single College, Single Oxford, Double Oxford, St Clements, Kent Little, Kent, Oxford Treble Bob, Double Court and Double Bob
- **Doubles:** Plain Bob, Twineham, Union Bob, Reverse Canterbury, Cloister, George's Maggot, Devon Place, Stedman, St Simon's, St Martin's, Original, St Augustine's and Grandsire
- **Minimus:** Reverse Bob

Some of us have rung many methods that we've never rung on tower bells, so we hope this is transferable knowledge when we get back to our towers. Most importantly, we've had a lot of fun.

The 100 Club – Clare McArdle

Please see the table for the Q2 results. Well done to the winners and thanks to all for participating!

April	1 st	42	Simon Linford	£50
	2 nd	2	Phil Ramsbottom	£15
	3 rd	47	Graham Kelly	£5
May	1 st	17	Phil Sealy	£50
	2 nd	56	Eleanor Linford	£15
	3 rd	32	Ann Smart	£5
June	1 st	96	Trish Everett	£50
	2 nd	37	Chris Mills	£15
	3 rd	26	Christine Barnell	£5

St Martin's Guild Lockdown Bake Off – Clare McArdle

When our new secretary was elected at our AGM in January, she took on the role having been assured by the former secretary and the Ringing Master that 'she would spend a maximum of about an hour a week on Guild business'. All went well at first – a little bit more time, perhaps, whilst the new Standing Committee got used to each other and she got her head round how we do things in the St Martin's Guild. But then... Covid-19 and all ringing ceased in a matter of days. In common with everyone else, guild officers felt profoundly shocked by the course of events and we were all thrown in at the deep end in an alien environment – we were presiding over a guild of bell ringers that were not able to ring. The view of the officers was that the Guild was needed now, possibly more than ever, to keep people together and reassure them as we entered what we now know has been a prolonged period without being able to ring or socialise.

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The first big casualty in the Guild's calendar was the 6-bell Striking Contest and business meeting in May and we set about thinking what we might do instead to attract members to come. In previous years we have held a 'Bake-Off' competition – it showcases some of the other skills our members have and can involve our younger ringers too. It's also a very good way of providing the tea. And so, the idea of the St Martin's Guild Lockdown Bake-Off was born. How would it work? As there could be no judges, who would decide which was the best bake? The logical solution was that the winner would be decided by voting. There was a lot in the news at the time about how charities were hard hit by the cancellation of events and the closure of their shops, and this led us to the idea that we could raise some money for charity. Just two days before the lockdown was announced, we learned that Trish Everett's husband had died shortly after being diagnosed with an aggressive cancer. As friends we felt helpless, unable to comfort one of our own in need. Raising money for the hospice that had cared for him was one way that we could support her, so that was how we decided on our charity.

To enter we asked people to make a minimum donation of £2 to a JustGiving page set up in Chris's memory, then email a photograph of their bake. They had two weeks to do this before entries closed and voting opened. To vote, we asked that people made a minimum donation of £2 and they then received a digital voting form. All bakers were given the chance to vote. Voting closed two days before the Guild meeting. The coveted prize was a 'Star Baker' apron in both adult and junior categories.

We hoped that the Bake-Off would lift people's spirits, whilst at the same time raising money for a worthwhile charity. The response was amazing – way beyond what we had dared to hope. There were initial responses of 'we've got no flour' or 'we've got no eggs' but within a short space of time, spurred by the publicity of the trailer (what else do you do in lockdown other than teach yourself movie making?) the entries were coming in. In spite of the national shortages of all baking ingredients there were an incredible 39 adult and 10 junior entries to the competition and some amazingly generous donations to our JustGiving page by entrants and voters.

On the day of the business meeting, around 50 guild members logged into the Zoom meeting for the results of the Bake-Off. Trish had sent me a heartfelt tribute to read out thanking everyone for their efforts and contributions. There was a huge variety of bakes and each one meant something to their creators, succinctly put in one sentence with their entry. The winning entries were the spectacular Easter Simnel Cake baked by Pauline Forster of Moseley, a tribute to her grandmother who would bake one every year, and Max Earthquake's lovely rainbow cake, 'to thank the NHS for helping people with coronavirus'.

The event raised an amazing £1,355 for Solihull Marie Curie Hospice, who have written to the Guild to say thank you, and, I hope raised the spirits of all who took part. I have a feeling it raised Stella's blood pressure somewhat as together we worked out the logistics of making it work. Well done Stella for rising to the challenge and co-ordinating it all.

The photographs show Pauline's Simnel Cake, Max's Rainbow Cake, and the two bakers proudly sporting their new aprons!



Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust – Simon Linford

The Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust is currently working on its second stage Lottery Fund application for the proposed museum of bell ringing, and is doing consultation and research. As they were keen to hear the views of young ringers and future visitors, they asked if the Brumdingers would be prepared to be a focus group for their research.

So over the course of two Thursdays, the mass ranks of Brumdingers, six each week, took part in Zoom meetings with Chrissie van Mierlo who is organising the consultation, and had a great time thinking about exhibits, designing 'merch' (including Susan's bell rope embroidered polo shirt), and making sure that the cafe is well-stocked with bell-shaped biscuits and masses of caramel wafers.

They were delightfully inventive, but it was also interesting for Clare and me to hear them describe ringing to Chrissie, including what they loved about it. There was a lot about the friendship it gives – 'It's great because you like have your friendship group from like your own tower, but then you get friends from like other towers as well'.

The reward is going to be an outing to Loughborough when allowed, with of course a plentiful supply of caramel wafers!



An Update from BUSCR – *Emily Walker*

It will come as a surprise to no one that, along with the rest of the ringing community, the BUSCR ringers have been without a weekly practice night since the beginning of lockdown. In fact, this year the AGM had to be held online since the vast majority of our members had fled from Birmingham back to their respective home counties (or country in Joe Berry's case!).

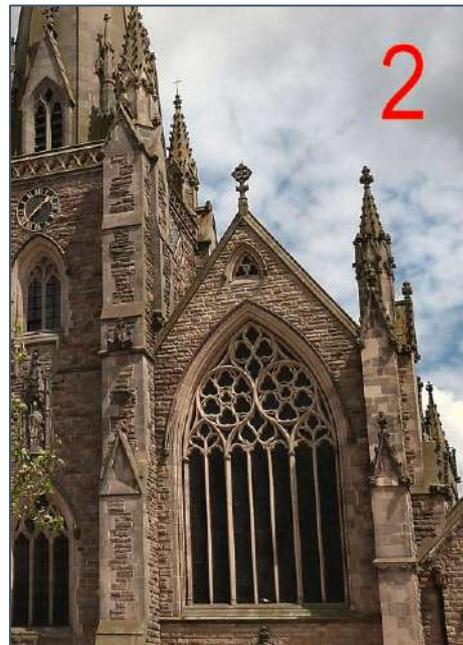
In light of the distinct lack of physical ringing, the members of BUSCR, like so many other ringers, turned to Ringing Room in order to keep practice going. We started out small, just doing Plain Hunt, so that those of us unfamiliar with the virtual ringing experience could get to grips with it (learn the ropes if you will). Afterwards, we progressed to other methods, such as Plain Bob, Bastow and Grandsire, among others. The one benefit we found with this online version of ringing was that if you went wrong, you could simply blame it on a poor internet connection!

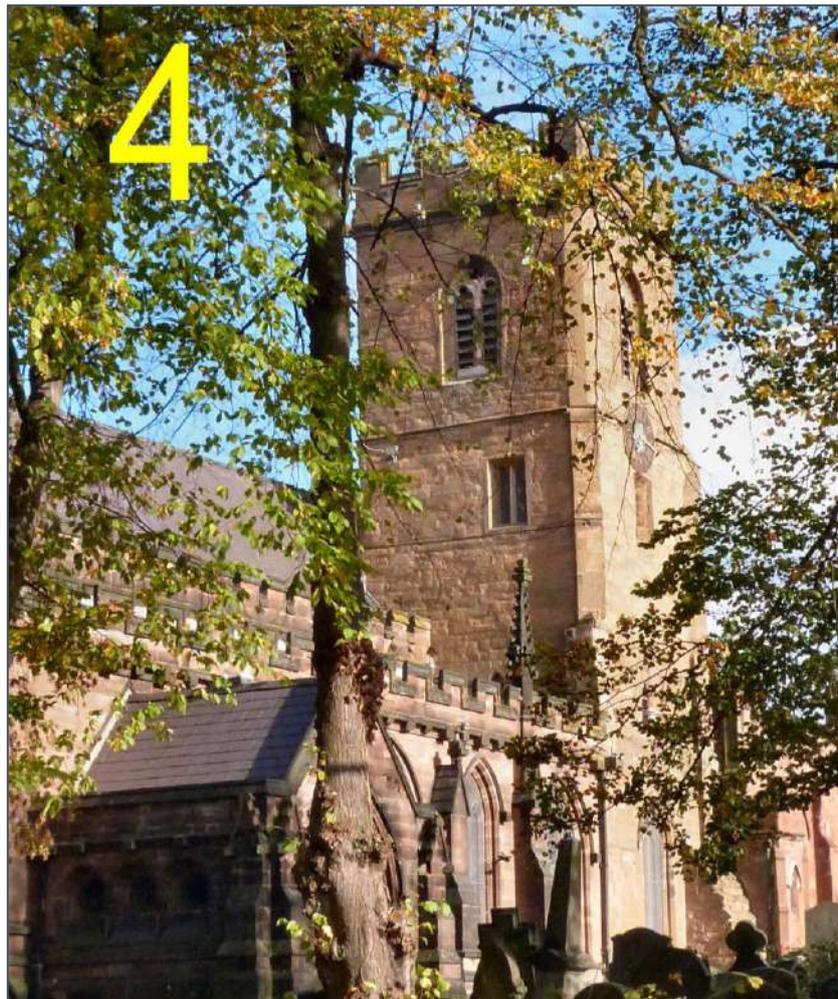
Needless to say, while we are enjoying ringing together in the virtual sense, we are all very much looking forward to the return of ringing in the tower. It is our hope that by the beginning of the academic year, BUSCR will be able to return to a somewhat normal practice night, but if this is not the case there is still much we can do together as a society outside of the tower (while remaining socially distant if required).

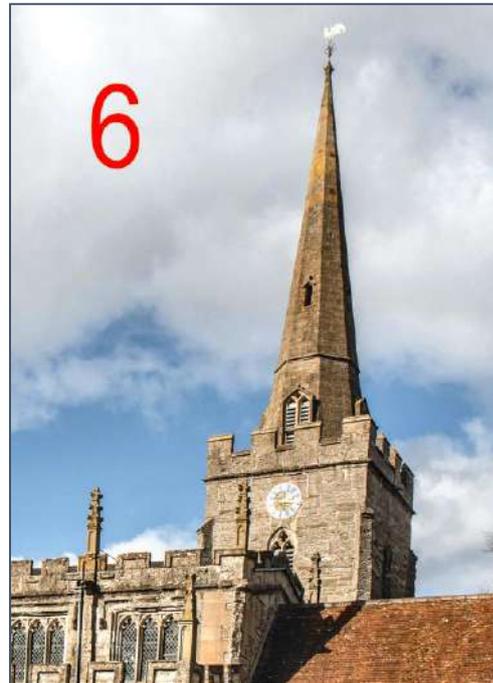
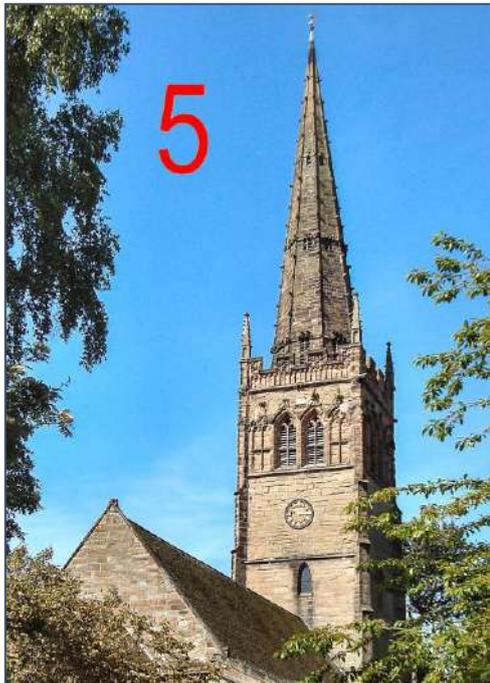
Looking ahead to September, we are preparing to welcome both Freshers and current members to BUSCR and returning to traditional University life.

Know your St Martin's Guild Towers? *Andy Clark*

Just for a bit of fun, I asked our resident photographer Richard Postill whether he could provide a selection of photographs of towers in the St Martin's Guild, for us to guess the locations. Richard obliged, as I hoped, and so here we have *cropped* pictures of six towers. If you can get all six, you are doing better than me! (I got a feeble four out of six, but perhaps I can blame it on having moved away to Gloucestershire!). You'll find the answers later in the newsletter.







The Sound of Sunday Service Ringing Again... *Sand Cooper*

OK, so it might be a while before we are ringing again. Whilst churches are planning to reopen, we have no details as to when our church, St Alphege in Solihull, will move away from their daily YouTube offerings to hold services in church with an actual congregation. So instead, we've been in touch with our Parish Team to see whether they can start adding the sound of our bells at the start of the Sunday Services that are posted. We want to be a part of the Parish's ongoing worship and let's be honest, we're keen not to be forgotten. Our approach was met with a really warm response so if you haven't already made a similar approach for your tower, it may well be worth you doing so? Of course, having received an enthusiastic response, we then needed to come up with the goods! And who could have predicted anything like what we have been dealing with over the last few months so, I'm afraid we had no pristine, pre-prepared recording of our bells ready for lockdown. Instead the hunt was on, which in itself has been rather fun.

With the help of band members, amongst the recordings we found were those made for the BBC; one being for Radio 4's, Bells on Sunday back in April 2012, albeit that the recording is no longer available from the BBC site. Another, a quarter rung for the christening for the son of one our band members, some 33 years ago. We also found a recording of ringing for a local couple's 60th Wedding Anniversary, when they visited the tower to hear us ring. And then there were the four recordings of our bells that we found on You Tube. The biggest issue we have had is that most of these recordings are made from our ringing room and so include the sound of the conductors, rope noises and the sound of talking from those sitting out. However, the Parish have only been looking for short excerpts to play at the start or end of a service so by listening through it all and suggesting the best bits which included well struck rounds on eight and some Grandsire Caters, we believe we will now have made a useful contribution and we look forward to hearing our recordings being included in future services. Perhaps you were already ahead of us? Either way, we hope your bells are also still being heard.

Guild Notices – Mark Eccleston

Online training resources

Guild members have been busy delivering online training sessions over the past three months. All resources (including video recordings, slides and supporting documents) can be found on the Guild website:

<http://www.stmartinsguild.org/teaching/training-and-resources/>

Tower details on the Guild website

Although we are not back ringing in our towers, the coming weeks may prove a useful opportunity for members to check their tower's details on the Guild website: <http://www.stmartinsguild.org/our-guild/towers/>

- Are the names, and contact details, of the tower contact up to date?
- Are the times for Practice Night and Sunday Service ringing accurate?
- What methods are usually rung?
- Is there any additional information for visitors (e.g. toilet facilities, parking)

Any updates for the Guild website can be sent to: smgcb@gmail.com

Books for sale

The Guild has a number of ringing books for sale which are available to purchase from the Treasurer. We can offer a 20% discount on all orders over £10. Further details can be found on the Guild website at:

<http://www.stmartinsguild.org/teaching/books-for-sale/>

My First Lockdown Ringing – Andy Clark

Not strictly a St Martin's Guild item, but hopefully of interest anyhow. As per the national lockdown, I haven't been able to ring at my home tower in Gloucestershire – St Mark's in Cheltenham – since mid-March. However, once the announcement was made that you could meet with up to six others in an outdoor environment, Cheltenham ringer Reg Hitchings, and his wife Isobel, set about converting their indoor mini ring (termed the 'bicycle ring', as the bells are mounted on bike wheels), into a 'socially-distanced' mini ring in his back garden. As you can see from the photo below, the bells are spaced so that people don't need to come close to one another, in line with the social distancing guidelines, and Reg also sensibly ensures that each ringer sticks to the same bell for the duration of the bell ringing, to avoid making contact with more than one rope.

So what did we ring? We attempted a quarter peal of Shetland Bob Minor, which is actually fairly tricky as it has Reverse Canterbury Bobs, and it involves lots of sets of three blows (so a bell makes six blows in fourths at a bob). Probably not too difficult on tower bells, but certainly more challenging on a mini ring, when there is precious little thinking time! Unfortunately our quarter peal attempt came to grief, but we switched to the more familiar Double Oxford Bob Minor, and the ringing really settled down. Sadly the quarter also imploded two leads from the end, and perhaps we can blame the hot weather that week! I look forward to some further quarter peal attempts on these bells, although clearly the ability to ring these is somewhat weather dependent. As I type this, there is steady drizzle outside so I am glad there are no quarter peal attempts today!



Linford Family Handbell Ringing – *Simon Linford*

The Linford family had a burst of ringing handbells at home at the start of lockdown. Starting with bite-sized chunks, we built up from a course, to 120 to 360 before eventually ringing a full quarter peal at the second attempt. Although there hasn't been much time spent on the next stage of learning, the Guild's 1920s set of handbells is certainly getting well used in lockdown. In addition to our home ringing, they are used by the Brumdingers on Sunday mornings, and have been used by the Guild band that is practicing ringing Cambridge Royal. If anyone wants to make a handy carrying case to supplement the large heavy wooden box that would be very useful!



Answers to 'Know you Tower'!

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. St Paul, Birmingham | 4. St Mary, Handsworth |
| 2. St Martin, Birmingham | 5. St Nicolas, Kings Norton |
| 3. St Mary, Castle Bromwich | 6. St Mary, Lapworth |

An update on Brumdingers – *Simon Linford*

Keeping the Brumdingers interested and motivated has been my key task outside the mass of Central Council work. Ringing Room has of course been a blessing and with Clare's help we have been running around four sessions a week. At first, we had the entire group together at the usual Thursday evening time, but that descended into such chaos we needed a different plan!

So we split into smaller groups at different levels and at different times of the week. We toyed briefly with ringing Call Changes, Kaleidoscope exercises and Plain Hunt on single bells, but decided to take the plunge and just teach them all to ring change ringing on handbells. In many respects, ringing two bells is easier than one, especially if you are not having to think about the physical mechanics of ringing at the same time. All of them have embraced it, and on a roster of 14 regular attendees, all can ring Plain Hunt on coursing pairs, and six have gone past the stage of ringing Plain Bob Minor on the tenors to ringing Bob Minor on the trebles (which is much harder).

While doing the job of keeping the group together, it is interesting to see how these handbell skills are developing and how it will affect their tower bell ringing. Of those who can now ring Bob Minor on handbells, only three had even rung Plain Hunt on tower bells. So they know the concepts of the method, without any similar tower bell experience. We are now introducing Bobs, but it is done by thinking about what it does to the pair, rather than, as you might do on tower bells, thinking about what it does to your blue line path.

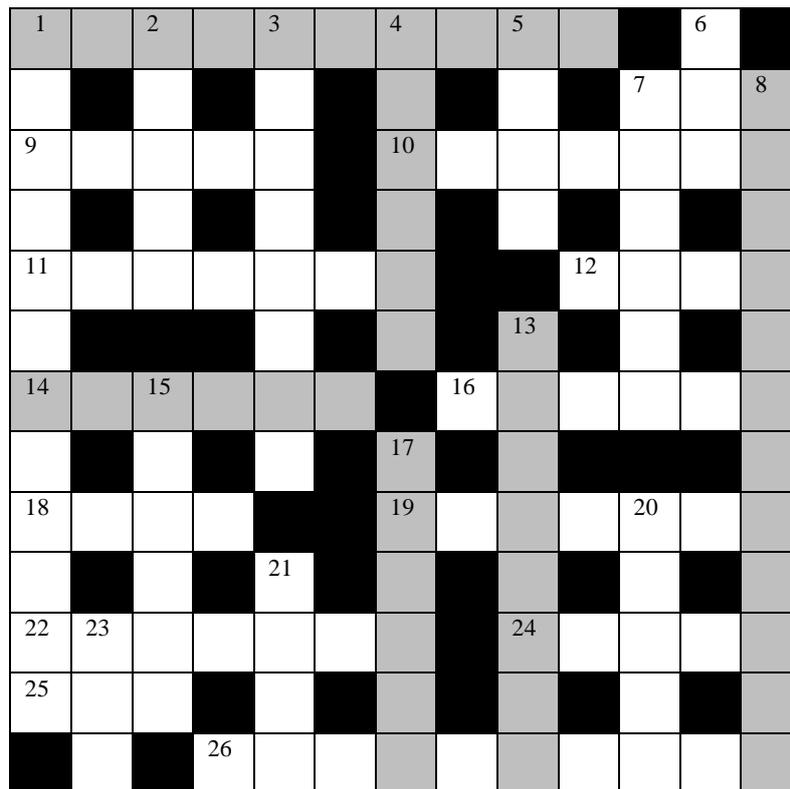
When the lockdown eased and we were permitted to meet with more than one other person outdoors, we started meeting to ring on real bells. That has just been with those who have successfully rung 5-6 to Bob Minor. So on Sunday morning we ring outside Moseley church with Susan and Orson, while Charlie and I have also been to the Paulson's house to ring with Sara and Malcolm, and to the Wilby's house to ring with Elizabeth. One rainy day saw Charlie, Kunal and me ringing Bob Minor under a tree in Perry Barr!



Bell-ringing Crossword Puzzle No. 2

The answers to be entered in the greyed cells are the names of 'named Call Changes': these must be entered according to the order that the bells ring in those changes (so, for example, ROUNDS would still be entered as R-O-U-N-D-S because its bell order is 1-2-3-4-5-6, but other named changes will have their names mixed up according to their particular bell order). Mildly cryptic clues are given for these entries: some are familiar, others less so. If you get stuck, you can refer to the web-site whose address is given below. All other clues are 'normal'. The solution is overleaf.

<http://www.bellringingcentral.co.uk/brcontent/methods/calledchanges/index.html>



Across	Down
1 Absurd conk (anag.) (10, two words)	1 Talked to oneself (12)
7 Pull (3)	2 Japanese assassin (5)
9 Forward thrust (5)	3 Functions (8)
10 Stone Age artefact (7)	4 North-east embraced by the south-east? (6)
11 Seepage (7)	5 Tiny particle (4)
12 Quarrel (4)	6 Bed (3)
14 Royal pieces? (6)	7 Alcoholic drink (6)
16 Aim (6)	8 Twist nothing (anag.) (12)
18 Greek character; a jot (4)	13 Buttered (anag.) (8)
19 Glowing (7)	15 Character (6)
22 Set aside for a specific purpose (7)	17 Waggish cards? (6)
24 Watching narrowly (5)	20 Friend (5)
25 Owed (3)	21 Couple (4)
26 Affluent (10)	23 Seabird (3)

Solution to the Puzzle!

1 S	D	2 N	U	3 O	R	4 K	C	5 A	B		6 C		
O		I		P		E		T		7 T	O	8 W	
9 L	U	N	G	E		10 N	E	O	L	I	T	H	
I		J		R		N		M		P		N	
11 L	E	A	K	A	G	E				12 S	P	A	T
O				T		T		13 R		L		N	
14 Q	E	15 N	U	E	S		16 O	B	J	E	C	T	
U		A		S		17 J		U				I	
18 I	O	T	A			19 R	A	D	I	20 A	N	T	
S		U		21 P		E		T		M		I	
22 E	23 A	R	M	A	R	K		24 E	Y	I	N	G	
25 D	U	E		I		O		T		G		O	
	K		26 P	R	O	S	P	E	R	O	U	S	

- 1 across BACK ROUNDS [10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1] → SDNUORKCAB
 14 across QUEENS [1-3-5-2-4-6] → QENUES (clue refers to chess pieces)
 4 down KENNET [1-5-3-4-2-6] → KENNET (clue implies NE “embraced by” KENT [i.e., south-east])
 8 down WHITTINGTON’S [1-2-11-9-7-5-3-4-6-8-10-12] → WHNTNTITIGOS
 13 down BURDETTE [3-1-2-4-7-5-6-8] → RBUDTETE
 17 down JOKERS [1-5-4-3-2-6] → JREKOS (clue refers to playing cards)