

TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT

Looking at the training log for the past year has been a reminder of how different things were a year ago. From August 2019 to March 2020 sizeable numbers of ringers met in often cramped ringing chambers for busy training days and had lunch in crowded pubs: then came lockdown and ringing training like many things came to an abrupt halt.

The normal part of the training year began on Thursday 29th August when a small group met at Llanfeugan to work towards Kent Treble Bob Minor by stages that included Treble Bob Hunt, Bastow Little Bob and Forward Minor. With two students in the morning and three in the afternoon there was plenty of rope time and very good progress was made. Lunch at the Royal Oak, Pencelli, gave an opportunity for relaxing and socialising between two energetic sessions.

With the number of helpers and students reduced by accidents and ill-health the Surprise Minor Day on Tuesday 29th October almost didn't happen but we persevered and had a really excellent day focusing on London, starting by ringing one lead at a time and ringing confident plain courses by the end. The morning session was at St David's, Llanfaes and, after an enjoyable lunch at Pilgrims Cafe in the Close, ringing continued on the front six at Brecon Cathedral.

In February 2020 a tower support session was held on the practice night at Llanbedr Ystrad Yw. Having a few additional Surprise ringers at the practice enabled ringers there to ring Cambridge and treble bob hunting to a method. Unforeseen events had reduced the number of helpers but in spite of that it was a very productive evening.

The annual training programme has a Doubles Day as a regular feature and this year it was held in the northern part of the diocese at New Radnor and Knighton on Saturday 22nd February. There was so much demand for this that an extra doubles course in April was arranged for those who could not be accommodated in February. With five students ringing methods that included Plain Bob, Reverse Canterbury and St Simon's it was an intensive day and the helpers worked hard to give the students as much practise as possible. Lunch at the Horse and Jockey in Knighton was a cheerful interval in a busy day. I felt this was a most successful day with all the students making notable progress.

Then came lockdown and the rest of the year's programme had to be cancelled. I was very sorry to have to disappoint those ringers who had signed up for the Bell Experience Course in March, the April Doubles Day and the Minor Day in June.

At last year's AGM the Les Evans Trophy, awarded to the ringer who has made most progress during the year, was presented to Andrew Williams of Llanbedr who was commended for his enthusiasm and willingness to take advantage of any ringing opportunity offered to him. Subsequently he and

many others benefited from the series of quarter peals organised by Hal Drysdale with the intention of reinforcing skills developed in the training programme and elsewhere.

After getting on for twenty years as Training Officer I have decided now is time to hand over responsibility for training to the next generation. It has been a great honour and immensely satisfying to serve the Guild in this way and I have many people to thank; the Guild Masters and other officers over many years for their positive support of the training programme; the tower captains and incumbents for allowing the use of their bells; the students for their commitment to developing their ringing skills. Finally, and most importantly, I thank the helpers who have so willingly given their time to help others make progress, who have smiled and said 'yes' when I have asked them to give up yet another precious Saturday to help with training and who have cheerfully and competently stood up to ring even at the end of an exhausting training day. Their encouragement and support of the students have been essential in creating a good atmosphere and ensuring the success of the training days. Things will inevitably be done differently in future but I feel sure this spirit of friendly co-operation will remain.

Kath Johnson
Training Officer.