

Off to university?

If you or any young ringers you know received their A-level results yesterday and are off to university, don't miss the article in last week's issue where eight different uni ringing societies introduced themselves.



The Birmingham Universities Society of Change Ringers (BUSCR) have since been in touch with us to say that they will welcome all new students coming to the Birmingham universities this academic year. They have an active society with all standards catered for. Practice night is Fridays 7:30-9pm, Edgbaston Old Church (then the pub). For more details contact Master James Mundy (buscr.master@gmail.com) or Secretary Frank Agar (buscr.committee@gmail.com).

Check www.universityringing.org for details of more societies, or the Young Change Ringers Association at www.ycra.org.uk.

Update: The Crown v Julie McDonnell

Since our last update (*RW*2021/535), the above case has still not come to trial at Lewes Crown Court. The alleged offence is “Theft – other – including theft by finding”, including a sum of around £6,000 via JustGiving. Scheduled trial dates have included 1st June 2021, 14th March 2022, 6th July 2022, 17th January 2023 and 14th August 2023. The last was postponed in a hearing on 4th August. Reasons for the adjournments include defendant ill health, confusion over medical reports and the 2022 barrister strikes well-publicised in the mainstream press.

A hearing to establish fitness to stand trial is scheduled for 18th August, at which we expect a new trial date to be set.

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Dales, Peaks and Staffs



Trisha, Mike, Owen, Gill, Mary, Tony, Jackie, Malcolm, Wendy, Nick, Colette, Adrian, Loretto, Andrew, Peter, Caleb, Penny and (in front) Fraser

This year the annual Barnes Summer Tour took place around the Derbyshire Dales with occasional forays into the High Peak and across the border into Staffordshire. We assembled at the *Jinnie* in Rolleston-on-Dove before adjourning to the church, where CCTV and blue lighting provided a weirdly artistic perspective on the bells in their two-tier frame.

Our base was the *Charles Cotton* hotel in Hartington, named after the Derbyshire poet and angler (1630-87). Negotiating the entrance to the carpark required a certain degree of sobriety but the rooms in the annex were spacious and comfortable. The food was reasonable, although the dinner menu did not convey the impression that there was an inspired and innovative chef in the kitchen. However, the service at breakfast was extraordinarily efficient – no excuse whatsoever for not getting to the first tower on time!

Meanwhile the *Devonshire Arms* seemed to have pretensions to being a restaurant, turning away customers who would have been happy to sit and eat in a corner of the bar (and buy two or three pints). The best beer of the week was at the *White Hart* in Alton, a community pub with beer from the local Rural Brewing Company, and at the *Old Poets Corner* (another reference to Mr Cotton?) in Ashover, where an array of handpumps featured the entire Titanic range plus several beers from other breweries. Sadly, it being lunchtime, the prospect of ringing and driving precluded sampling more than one.

It would be invidious to single out a “best tower”, but Youlgreave would be worth visiting for the majestic hum of the tenor alone. The unusually shaped tower at Wormhill with its tiny ring of six (no stays and sliders) was interesting, but your correspondent, having climbed the ladder, decided that the sideways and upward step onto the floor was too much for his arthritic

limbs. This did not deter the more able-bodied from carrying Mike and his wheelchair up there, nor Adrian from ringing the tenor balanced precariously over the gap normally covered by the trapdoor.

The ten at Ashover have some interesting if sobering inscriptions:

“I SWEETLY TOLLING MEN DO CALL
TO TASTE ON MEATS THAT FEED THE
SOULE” (4)

“MY ROARING SOUND DOTH
WARNING GIVE THAT MEN CANNOT
HEARE ALWAYS LIVE” (5)

“ALL MEN THAT HEARE MY MOURNFUL
SOUND REPENT BEFORE YOU ARE IN
GROUND” (7)

“THE OLD BELL RUNG THE FALL OF
BONAPARTE AND BROKE APRIL 1814” (3).

The long draught above the chancel crossing at Ashbourne was daunting (indeed, too daunting for some) but the bells were surprisingly well behaved.

Whilst there I missed the opportunity to check whether the famous inn sign of the *Green Man and Black's Head* is still spanning the High Street (the pub closed some years ago) or whether it has fallen prey to woke iconoclasm.

Mechanical failure struck twice. Kent Minor was ticking along nicely at Pentrich when Gill uttered something that wasn't a bob and was left holding the tail end of the tenor rope which had parted company with the sally. At St Luke's Derby an ominous thud turned out to be the seventh losing part of its wheel.

The weather on Saturday featured heavy rain, drizzle, bright sunshine and hailstones the size of gobstoppers, which fortuitously descended while we were indoors, enjoying our buffet lunch in the *Shoulder of Mutton* at Osmaston. At dinner, we were seated at a very long table

and the only other party in the room got up and left when the speeches began. Dylan rose admirably to the challenge of the “newbie” speech and treated us to a Maori folk song into the bargain. If the traditional post-prandial rendering of Flanders and Swann’s greatest hits was a little less coordinated than usual, we can blame the length of the table.

The quarter peal to general ringing ratio was lower this year as there were more inexperienced ringers in the party, but 13 quarters were scored out of 17 attempts. Sadly, what was to have been the grand finale, Grandsire Caters at Derby Cathedral, came to grief with just a course and a half to go. Nor were quarters the only things to be lost - Malcolm mislaid his wallet at Eyam (the village whose inhabitants nobly self-isolated to avoid spreading the plague) and Fraser left his bag on the train home. Both have since been reunited with their property.

As always, hearty thanks are due to Trisha for researching and booking the accommodation, Mike for arranging the itinerary and Jill for managing the finances.

TONY NUNN

Sudbury, Derbys. (All Saints) 12 Jul, 1260 PB Minor: Wendy Archibald 1, Jackie Harrison 2, Loretto Puckey 3, Trisha Hawkins 4, Colin Friend 5, Adrian Udal (C) 6. On the Barnes annual summer ringing tour.

Tutbury, Staffs. 12 Jul, 1376 Pudsey S Major: Mike Wigney (C) 1, Peter Richards 2, Malcolm McAlister 3, M Louise Booth 4, Gill Tomlinson 5, Caleb Saunders 6, Fraser Storie 7, Tony Nunn 8. 1st in m: 3, 6 & 7.

Buxton, Derbys. (S Peter) 13 Jul, 1260 Grandsire Triples: Mary E Gow 1, M Louise Booth 2, Gill Tomlinson 3, Penny Bradsell 4, Colin Friend 5, Malcolm McAlister (C) 6, Tony Nunn 7, Eddie Heath 8. A date touch marking the year the church was founded.

Eyam, Derbys. 13 Jul, 1260 PB Doubles: Peter Richards 1, Wendy Archibald 2, M Louise Booth 3, Mark Fielker 4, Colin Friend (C) 5, Andrew Harvey 6. 1st Q inside: 4. On the annual Barnes Summer tour.

Tideswell, Derbys. 13 Jul, 1344 PB Major: Penny Bradsell 1, Jackie Harrison 2, Adrian Udal 3, Loretto Puckey 4, Mike Wigney 5, Trisha Hawkins 6, Fraser Storie 7, Caleb Saunders (C) 8. 1st on 8 as C.

Brackenfield, Derbys. 14 Jul, 1296 Cambridge S Minor: Wendy Archibald 1, Peter M C Richards 2, Loretto Puckey 3, Dylan J Thomas 4, Caleb R D Saunders 5, Fraser A Storie (C) 6.

Darley Dale, Derbys. 14 Jul, 1250 Yorkshire S Major: Trisha Hawkins 1, Penny Bradsell 2, Mary E Gow 3, Tony Nunn 4, Gill Tomlinson 5, Adrian Udal 6, Fraser A Storie 7, Dylan Thomas (C) 8.

Stanton in Peak, Derbys. 14 Jul, 1260 St Simon’s Bob Doubles: Mike Wigney (C) 1, Malcolm McAlister 2, Jackie Harrison 3, Andrew Harvey 4, Loretto Puckey 5, Wendy Archibald 6. 1st in m: 3. On the Barnes annual summer trip.

Bradbourne, Derbys. 15 Jul, 1260 Double Oxford Bob Minor: Colin Friend 1, Wendy Archibald 2, Mary E Gow 3, Gill Tomlinson 4, Tony Nunn 5, M Louise Booth (C) 6. 1st in m: 3. On the annual Barnes Summer trip.

Brailsford, Derbys. 15 Jul, 1296 Cambridge S Minor: Mike Wigney (C) 1, Penny Bradsell 2, Jackie Harrison 3, Mary Gow 4, Helen Udal 5, Malcolm McAlister 6. On the Barnes annual summer trip.

Brassington, Derbys. 15 Jul, 1260 Stedman Doubles: Peter Richard (C) 1, Caleb Saunders 2, Mike Wigney 3, Dylan Thomas 4, Fraser Storie 5, Eddie Heath 6. 1st Stedman Doubles: 5.

Butterton, Staffs. 15 Jul, 1320 Norwich S Minor: Dylan Thomas 1, Caleb Saunders 2, Loretto Puckey 3, Gill Tomlinson 4, Fraser Storie 5, Tony Nunn (C) 6. 1st in m: 3. On the Barnes annual summer trip.

Swanwick, Derbys. 16 Jul, 1260 St Simon’s Bob Doubles: Trisha Hawkins 1, Wendy Archibald 2, Mike Wigney 3, Colin Friend 4, M Louise Booth (C) 5, Malcolm McAlister 6. For morning service. On the Barnes annual summer trip. **£92**

Sixteen quarters in a day



1977 band in the tower L-R: Christopher Kingdon, Leslie Arscott, Adrian Arscott, Nicholas Kingdon, Robert Parker and Thomas Kingdon

In January 1977 a band from Luccombe in Somerset set out to break the record for the number of quarter peals rung in a day, which had been set at 13 by an Essex band in 1974. Their record has since been surpassed by bands ringing successive quarter peals in the same tower (28 at Mablethorpe, 25 at Ossington), but they achieved the feat of 16 in a day in different towers – even crossing the county line into Devon. When Nick Kingdon recently uploaded the series to BellBoard, we asked him to share his memories of the day.

The ringers of the Sixteen in a Day quarter peals on 8th January 1977 were Les Arscott, Bob Parker, Adrian Arscott, Tom Kingdon, my brother Christopher Kingdon and myself. All ringers are cousins of varying distance to me and Chris except for Bob Parker, a lifelong family friend.

Les Arscott came up with the idea, which was hatched around our table at Luccombe during the summer of 1976. Les always had big ideas, and the thought of trying to break a record whilst raising money for a good cause (we raised £400 for the Children’s Society) really got us all excited.

Every possible contingency plan was thought of, with nothing left to chance. January was chosen as the time for it to take place when our holiday hotspot Exmoor is bleak and devoid of holiday traffic, so there would be no hold ups between churches. Les’s brother Ray (father of Adrian Arscott) was instrumental in organising the support network and publicity while Les and Tom took care of ringing arrangements. (Great Uncle Fred, who taught most of us to ring, didn’t think we would ever manage to pull it off!)

The buzz started building as Christmas 1976 approached. Between Christmas and New Year, Tom and Chris did a recce on all the churches to check the state of bell ropes,

road works etc. Unfortunately Tom came off his bike, but thankfully he wasn’t injured.

We didn’t know what we were ringing until the actual morning when we were given slips of paper with who was conducting what and who was ringing treble and tenor. This was organised by Tom with the help of Les and Adrian the night before.

We were ferried between churches by Les’s wife Jean and Bob’s wife Lesley starting at Luccombe, then Porlock, then Selworthy. By the fourth church, Wootton Courtenay, the blisters were really starting to appear. Dunster was next, followed by Timberscombe, Cutcombe, Exford (blisters on blisters by this time!), Withypool, Hawkridge, Dulverton, Brushford, Bampton, Morebath, Brompton Regis and finally Exton. (Adrian managed to avoid the blisters by borrowing his sister’s police gloves – which never regained their shape!)

We finished about 9.30pm, very exhausted with aching arms and stomach muscles, but triumphant! We returned to Exton the following day to take the photos. See *RW* 1977/152 for Adrian Arscott’s contemporary account of the day.

Being a young lad at the time I felt like a superstar for a while afterwards and we received a standing ovation at the next Taunton branch quarterly meeting.

Update on the ringers:

- Les Arscott died in September 1999. He was a ringing inspiration to us all until the end and rang a quarter peal, which I called, in his last week of life.
- Adrian Arscott has recently returned to ringing after a break.
- Tom Kingdon is seen on BellBoard regularly ringing in Beverley, Yorkshire.
- Bob Parker is a retired bellhanger and still rings regularly in Somerset.
- Chris Kingdon – took 20 years out of ringing (and regrets it!) and is now a keen ringer again in Bridport, Dorset.

I have continued to be an active ringer in West Somerset with my family, and do my best to encourage new recruits along the way.

NICHOLAS KINGDON



The band with supporters at Exton the day after