

The first fivers at Harborne

By Clare McArdle

On Saturday 22 June, two young ringers at Harborne in Birmingham made history. They became the first people to complete the Learning the Ropes scheme to Level 5 with the “minor approach”. In addition they both started from first principals at Level 1. What is perhaps more remarkable is that they have achieved this in just one year! A fantastic achievement by both, but they have actually achieved far more than just a certificate.

Rose Horton started ringing last June, just after the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations. She is from a ringing family and her older sister Rebekah and younger brother Tom are both ringers too. When she was 9, Rose had had a go at learning to ring, but gave up quite early on and stolidly resisted any entreaty to try again once she was a bit older. Things change though.

Rose had always kept up the social links with local ringers and days out, holidays and all the usual events. Now in the 6th thinking about university and leaving home, a realisation on her that turning up at a new local tower and asking if she on holiday with them and help out with ringers’ teas could be eccentric, to say the least.

And so it was that Rose came back to the fold. After a few lessons she hit the ground running and her progress was Along the way to achieving Level 5 Rose has rung 13 quarter one of which she conducted and to date she has rung 2 peals.

Richard Pinnock was one of the students on last year’s St Guild Summer Camp. The students were taught bell handling rounds in a week and afterwards Richard joined the band at Harborne, where he began to make astonishing progress. In addition to the quarter peals required for Learning the Ropes, Richard has rung a quarter peal of Stedman Triples and is now ringing inside to Surprise Major and Stedman up to Cinques.

Ringling fever seems to have struck the Pinnock family and shortly after Richard completed the Summer Camp his mum Catherine, dad Rob and younger sister Bethan all began to learn. Keeping it in the family, Richard conducted Catherine’s first quarter peal (Plain Bob Doubles) with Rob ringing the tenor behind.

With such talent, their journey from Level 1 to Level 5 has been rapid. At times, we even felt as though we were struggling to keep up with them. However, by sticking to the syllabus we ensured that practice at many fundamental skills was not overlooked. We are fortunate too, at Harborne, that we have many more learners and Rose and Richard get to revisit these skills most weeks as the experienced ringers helping the others along.

I am extremely proud of both of them. Well done Rose and Richard!

