

# Tower Talk

The newsletter for ringers using



Learning™  
the Ropes

Association of Ringing Teachers / Learning the Ropes – [www.learningtheropes.org](http://www.learningtheropes.org)

## Number 6 - January 2018

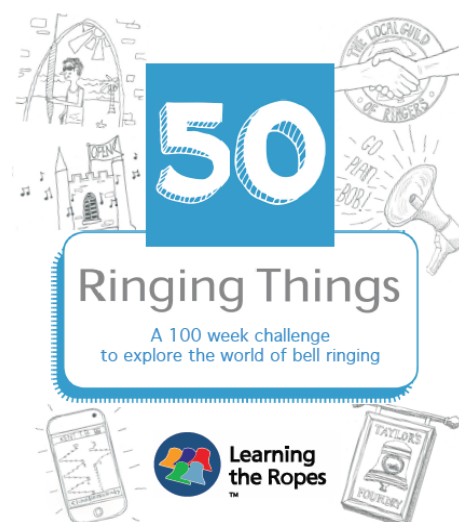
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Happy New Year! to all ringers using Learning the Ropes – here's to a successful year, and we hope you all achieve everything you have in your sights!

Once again we have collected a mix of stories to motivate and inspire you to aim high, to keep going, to try something new, to help someone, to tackle that thing which has been eluding you, to share your success ...

With New Year comes talk of resolutions and in ringing it's the same – and so this time we are focusing on the '50 Ringing Things' which provides a huge number of ringing related challenges which you can aim for and have a bit of fun as well. Have you seen the booklet? If not, you can find details of it on the Learning the Ropes website at [learningtheropes.org/50-things](http://learningtheropes.org/50-things), and you can order your copy from there, too.

With 50 Ringing Things, you can explore the wide world of ringing and the many different activities that hook fellow bell ringers into this addictive hobby. A variety of contributors have written a series of entertaining and informative tips and guidelines to help you get the most out of each challenge. When you've ticked off a challenge yourself, why not share your experience on the 50 Things Facebook group? And 15, 30 and 50 challenges completed entitle you to order a Bronze, Silver or Gold certificate!

So let's meet some of our fellow ringers who have thrown themselves into the challenge!

# 50 Ringing Things 'Hall of Fame'

Here are the details of the first certificate achievers:

Mar 2017	Kaitlin Woodland	Bronze
Apr 2017	Gemma Evans	Bronze
Apr 2017	Anthea Hiams	Bronze
Apr 2017	Nick Hiams	Bronze
Apr 2017	Jennie Higson	Bronze
Apr 2017	Giles Willson	Bronze
May 2017	Sally Brown	Bronze
May 2017	Georgine von Enckevort	Bronze
May 2017	Lucy Gwynne	Bronze
May 2017	Robin Hickmott	Bronze
May 2017	Barbara Le Gallez	Bronze
May 2017	Debbie Phipps	Bronze
Jun 2017	Gemma Evans	Silver
Jun 2017	Debbie Phipps	Silver
Jun 2017	Giles Willson	Silver
Jul 2017	Hayley Clarke	Bronze
Jul 2017	Viv Endecott	Bronze
Jul 2017	Gemma McGee	Bronze

Aug 2017	Sally Brown	Silver
Aug 2017	Annie Cunningham	Bronze
Aug 2017	Nick Hiams	Silver
Aug 2017	Robert Nicols	Bronze
Aug 2017	Sally Nicols	Bronze
Aug 2017	Adam Turner	Bronze
Sep 2017	Roger Booth	Bronze
Sep 2017	Gemma Evans	Gold Plus
Sep 2017	Jenny Halliday	Bronze
Sep 2017	Gemma McGee	Silver
Oct 2017	Sally Brown	Gold Plus
Oct 2017	Catherine Neyland	Bronze
Oct 2017	Debbie Phipps	Gold Plus
Oct 2017	Jimmy Yeoman	Silver
Nov 2017	Gillian Hosking	Bronze
Nov 2017	Kathy McCarthy	Bronze
Dec 2017	Melissa Hunt	Bronze
Dec 2017	Bogumila Myers	Bronze

## 50/50 Club Draw News

The Annual Christmas draw of the LtR 50/50 club took place in the pub session after a good practice night in Whitehaven. The lucky annual prize winner was Ann O'Hare who has been learning to ring at Ringwood, Hants.

The three other winners of £38.75 each were:

- Stephen Hoar, a teacher at Thame St Marys;
- Peter Hunt, a teacher at Thurcaston; and
- Christine Day, a learner at Twickenham who joined this autumn and won in her first draw - as others have done in the past!

Have you joined yet? It's open to everyone who is registered on SmART Ringer (that's everyone who is on the Learning the Ropes scheme). All you have to do is make contact with the Club Organiser, Chris de Cordova (35 Thornton Road, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 6UW or email [5050club@learningtheropes.org](mailto:5050club@learningtheropes.org)) OR download a form from [www.learningtheropes.org/5050club](http://www.learningtheropes.org/5050club).

It costs only £12 for an annual subscription and all the money collected is divided equally between prize money and essential funding for running Learning the Ropes. The more people who join, the bigger the cash pot for prizes! We have several thousand people registered on SmART Ringer, but nowhere near that number in the Club, so please join!

By Chris de Cordova,  
50/50 Club Administrator and  
ringer at Whitehaven, Cumbria



“The more people who join, the bigger the cash pot for prizes!”

# Double Success

Saturday 28 October was a ringing milestone for myself and my husband, Nathan. We managed to ring our first quarter peal inside to Plain Bob Doubles.

I was on bell 3 and Nathan 5. We were both so pleased and relieved to ring the quarter peal without incident, something we never thought would be possible when we first started to ring. It was also special because we achieved the quarter peal and our LtR Level 4 certificate pretty much two years to the day we both started to ring.

We ring regularly at our local church in Leek Wootton, Warwickshire, and started to learn after the bells were refurbished and went from a ring of five to six. Once the bells were back in action, as we live so close to the church, it was a case of "if you can't beat them, join them!"

We both really enjoy the challenge of ringing, although sometimes it can be the most frustrating but enjoyable pastime. We are, however, very glad we have started out on this journey.

We have had great support over the past two years to get us to this point, especially from our Tower Captain at Leek Wootton, Mark Sayers.

I also should mention the rest of the quarter peal band who made the achievement possible for us: Mark (2), Angela Roskelly (1), Ray (4) and Janice Sheasby (6). Thank you to you all.

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By Clare Gould, ringer at  
Leek Wootton, Warwickshire



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Nathan and Clare Gould

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## Recent Successes

In the fourth quarter of 2017, 189 certificates were awarded to ringers at the various stages of Learning the Ropes (LtR) as below (last year's numbers shown for comparison):

Level 1 - Bell Handling	82 (92)
Level 2 - Foundation Ringing Skills	55 (41)
Level 3 - Introduction to Change Ringing	17 (10)
Level 4 - Novice Change Ringer	20 (13)
Level 5 - Change Ringer	15 (9)



If you'd like to see more of these and other similar statistics, they can all be found on the SmART Ringer website at [smartringer.org/public/records/](http://smartringer.org/public/records/).

If you have a story to tell of your own success, or that of one of your pupils, please send it to the Editor and we'll help you to share it.

# Home From Home - Tulloch Works its Magic

I live in Sidmouth, and I have been learning to ring at the Parish Church there for the past 18 months with Tower Captain Anne Bailey. Anne is a brilliant teacher who is taking me on my "Learning the Ropes" journey very patiently and skilfully. It's a great way to learn. She is also a mine of information and mentioned the Tulloch Training Course to me when I asked her about possible training courses.

I was intrigued by Tulloch being an unusual secular ring up in the West Highlands of Scotland, and with a Scottish husband I thought we might go there and combine it with visits to friends and family. I thought I'd give it a try, despite the long journey to get there!

I had huge anticipation of how the course would be and was pretty excited about it, taking time off work specially to go. I imagined how the place would be and what my accommodation would be like, but as it turned out the centre was nothing like I had imagined it, and neither was where I stayed. My "cottage" was neither cold nor damp - which I thought it might be - but a toasty warm little bungalow! It was quite modern with a coal fire, radiators and night storage heaters too. It had a lovely friendly feel to it, with a huge modern kitchen where I enjoyed the company of the three fellow-ringers that I shared it with. We had a lot of laughs. (My husband didn't join me in the end).

As for the ringing centre at Tulloch, I had imagined a huge, draughty barn, like an enormous church tower with bells visible hanging high overhead, but it was actually a newly refurbished, purpose-designed building with two ringing chambers, both cosy and comfy, a big kitchen, a front hall/reception area, and a nice big seating area with settees and a roaring wood burner. And on top of that, there were endless supplies of coffee, biscuits and cake - plus a delicious lunch every day. The home-made soup was lush! It had a "family" feel to it. A real home from home.

The bells were much lighter than I had expected, so needed very careful handling. The bigger chamber has 12 bells in it, with the heaviest being lighter than my normal "number 4" bell in my home tower. The lightest bells were like "tinker-bells" in sound. We only rang the lightest bells on the last day when we rang all 12 bells in rounds, and then did "Kaleidoscope" and "Mexican Wave" which was fun.

The smaller ringing tower had 8 very light bells too, but they handled beautifully. I just needed to be careful not to bump the stay! The final room housed a dumbbell attached to a simulator which I honestly had to "grapple with" - it was not my favourite thing to use! I didn't cope well with it at all, but I gave it a go!

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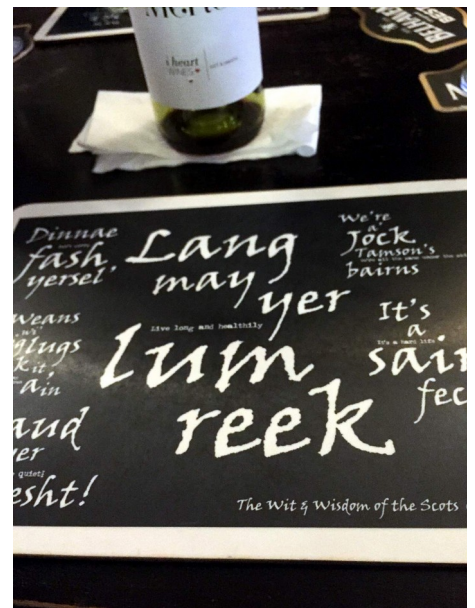
By Sue King, ringer at Sidmouth, Devon



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Here is Sue (right) with Christine Tankerton (a lovely American lady, based in Cambridge) and handbell tutor (and ART Member) John Cater, from Derbyshire.

“ It had a “family” feel to it. A real home from home.”





However, the best thing on the course for me was my discovery of the joy of ringing handbells. Definitely my favourite part of the week – and whenever I wanted to spend time on the handbells having a go at a method there were plenty of opportunities to do so, which was great. And I got quite good at it in a short space of time. As Helen, the course leader told me, ringing the handbells really does help your tower bell ringing. I could not agree more. It gave me a far greater understanding of “the overview” of what all 6 bells are all doing in relation to each other, instead of fixating (as beginners like me do) on just my one bell and how to handle it. It helps you listen to the music of the method, too.

So my main motivation since coming back home is to get going with two other ringers and liberate the handbells which I didn't even know we had on the tower windowsill! I am also enjoying using the far greater understanding that I gained at Tulloch – thanks to my brilliant tutor, Stephen – at reading various methods and studying “the blue line”, which is now no longer a mystery to me. Hurrah!

My raising and lowering in peal is still “work in progress” and handling will always need to improve, but we worked hard and spent a long time on both those aspects of ringing on the course, as we did on basic handling skills.

So, again, these are aspects of the course that I have reflected on since returning to my home tower. I am not afraid to raise or lower my bell now, which is a step in the right direction.

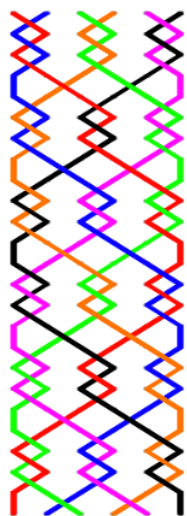
My ropesight was already not bad, but since the course I have realised it is quite good! I am generally more ready to “have a go” at different things, too. Like hunting on inside bells, covering (which I did a lot on the course) and ringing the treble to a variety of different methods. I am enjoying doing it all, now I am back at my home tower.

“ The best thing on the course for me was my discovery of the joy of ringing handbells.”



“ I am not afraid to raise or lower my bell now, which is a step in the right direction.”

## Tulloch Ringing Course July 2018



Have you rung a Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Minor on an inside bell?

If you have, and you are keen to progress, why not come to Tulloch for a week in July and learn about St Clement's College Bob Minor, Bastow Little Bob Minor, Little Bob, Treble Bobbing and Kent Treble Bob Minor. In addition to tower bell ringing, handbell ringing will also be encouraged to assist understanding of method construction and full training will be given. We have six places available to extend your horizons in a supportive atmosphere with ART trainers and a friendly local band.

The cost of the course is £75 and will run between 10am and 5pm, Monday to Friday, 2 to 6 July 2018. We will provide a light lunch and all day tea / coffee / biscuits at an additional cost of £3 per day. Tulloch Ringing Centre will make a donation to ART at the conclusion of the course.

Please e-mail Helen McGregor for more information: [tullochbells@gmail.com](mailto:tullochbells@gmail.com)

# Ropesight and Rhythm: 2017 LtR Masterclass Report

On Saturday 16 September I spent the day at the Learning the Ropes Masterclass. Having completed Level 5 during 2016, I'd received my invitation earlier in the year and the time had now come for me to take part in a day of ringing with top-flight ringers in Birmingham.

After the initial socialising with other ringers from around the country, Masterclass organiser Stephanie Warboys introduced us to some increasingly difficult listening exercises. It baffles me now how people judge striking competitions. We listened to Plain Bob Doubles, Rounds and Plain Hunt on five, and I realised just how noticeable mistakes on the treble and tenor are, but in methods it was quite difficult to pick out mistakes made by bells 3 and 4.

After this, we split into groups. My group (led by Stephanie) headed to St Philip's Cathedral where I was thrown into my first proper method ringing on more than six bells under the watchful eye of Clare McArdle. I started to notice the importance of rhythm over ropesight especially with more bells ringing.

We had a speedy lunch and then we were straight back in. We had a shot at Rounds and Call Changes on 12, which was not easy at all, but after a while I was starting to pick my bell out of what had previously seemed a very rough sea of noise.

We then had a change of scene and we walked to the next tower, St Paul's in the Jewellery Quarter. After ringing Plain Hunt on 9, I could pick my bell out of the change, something I had never really been able to do before. With a bit of ringing technique advice from Graham Nabb, everything was starting to come together.

The final tower of the day was a short stroll away at St Martin's in the Bullring. Here we met up with the other group led by Simon Linford. By this time the 5:30am start was catching up with me. However, I rang Plain Hunt on 11 which, after the morning's experiences, wasn't that much of a fuss.

Then came the highlight of the day - ringing on 16. This was a right job to pick your bell out, but I must have been doing a decent job because Clare wasn't having to say that much to me.

To round off the day, Masterclass certificates were presented along with some souvenir mugs, photos were taken, and I set off on my way home.

I thoroughly enjoyed my day and found it incredibly useful. I learnt things about striking that I never would have thought about before, and just how important ringing by rhythm is.

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By Olivia Hunt, ringer at  
Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset



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Olivia receiving her Masterclass certificate from St Martin's Guild Ringing Master, Arthur Reeves.

“ With a bit of ringing technique advice from Graham Nabb, everything was starting to come together.”

“ Then came the highlight of the day - ringing on 16.”

“ I learnt things about striking that I never would have thought about before.”

# 50 Ringing Things: Moving Out of My Comfort Zone

I originally bought the book '50 Ringing Things' because I saw it at the ART (Association of Ringing Teachers) conference and it looked a little more interesting than the usual 'How to call Stedman' or other books that seem to consist of incomprehensible lines of numbers.

I've been ringing for a long time so I flicked through it thinking 'Oh, this is not really for me - I've probably done most of these'.

Anyway, I did not do anything much with it and it sat on the table for a few weeks. Then one night, with a rather nice glass of Merlot to hand, I opened it up and had a better look.

I'm up for a challenge so I decided to take on the spirit of the book and start from scratch, and nothing I had done before would count! I logged onto the ART website and registered.

First to be ticked off in the book was 'Enter a striking competition' and 'Experience a ringer's tea'. Thankfully these two go hand in hand so that enabled two Things to be ticked off together (and very yummy the tea was too). At the competition there was a lot of interest in the 50 Ringing Things book with a few other useful suggestions being made as to what else could go into it. I'm sorry to say though that some of the other suggestions made were less suitable for publication.

50 Ringing Things is an interesting little book that challenges you to explore the world of ringing. I thought it was aimed at those learning to ring but I have found it great fun and I've been ringing for years. It challenges you to complete the 50 things within 100 weeks but in fact you can just dip in and out of it as quickly or slowly as you wish.

What it does do is open your eyes to some other aspects of ringing. An 'ooh I could do that' and then be able to get another tick in the book does encourage you to try things that perhaps are a little outside of your comfort zone. For example I called my first Quarter Peal for 30 years - ironically enough I did this before I could tick off calling a plain course.

Completing 15 things gives you the Bronze stage and I have just passed the 30<sup>th</sup> 'Thing', giving me my Silver award.

The first 15 things were quite easy to complete but it has been a little harder to tick off more Things as they actually involve doing some work outside of your usual comfort zone. Most of my first Things were in the green section (My Ringing); now I have to branch out a bit more into the red section (My Tower) and blue section (Out and About).

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By Lucy Gwynne, ART Accredited  
Teacher at Warwick



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Lucy in the belfry, getting to grips  
with a cracked stay

“ 50 Ringing Things is  
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Silver award.”



I'm now wondering if, with a bit of an extra push, I can get Gold Plus (doing 50 things within one year). I volunteered to fit the muffles for Armistice day, and Christmas and New Year ringing are booked.

Here I am getting down and dirty in the belfry, helping to get an old stay off the fourth at our local tower. Maintenance work is not something I've done before and to be honest not something I think I'll be looking to continue but hey, I've done it and it wasn't that bad.

AND, I'd just like to point out that it was definitely not me who cracked the stay in the first place.

I would thoroughly recommend this little book to anyone, at whatever level. It is definitely not the usual book on ringing. It is great for those new to ringing to see what there is to do. It is also great for those of us who have been ringing for years as it is a gentle challenge to try something different. What's more, the whole thing is great fun and gives a real sense of satisfaction.



**“** I would thoroughly recommend this little book to anyone, at whatever level. It is definitely not the usual book on ringing.”

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## Australian Diary

Here in Bendigo, Victoria, we are waiting on the restoration of our beautiful church to be able to ring more often. At the moment we can only ring a few times a year while engineering reports are carried out to investigate the amount of movement in the tower. In the meantime we are ringing at the Norfolk ring which is a ring of eight dumb bells owned by my teacher, Stephen Young. We also continue to go to Ballarat once a month.

I am pleased to have a picture of our recent ring in Ballarat with the ringers there. It is nice to be accepted into a new area as a new ringer, but wherever I go there is always a box to stand on! Recently I visited the UK and one thing I noticed about practice between here and in England is after our practice we usually get a coffee from McDonald's drive-through for our long journey home, but in England it is a walk to the pub for some social time. This I really enjoy!

And my most recent piece of news is that I have now achieved my Level 2!

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By Karen Adamson, ringer from Maldon, Australia



Stephen Young



The ringers at Ballarat



# Christmas Bell Ringing in Sydney

*13 year old Rowan Butler, a ringer at Kineton in Warwickshire, had a great surprise last Christmas when he visited Australia ...*

I was lucky enough to go to Australia last Christmas to meet a friend who I had met at school when he was living in England. I stayed in Sydney and we saw some great sights such as the beaches and the famous bridge. One day, my friend's Mum said that she had specially arranged bell ringing for me in St Mary's Cathedral.

We spent the afternoon exploring the huge harbour and had a picnic in the Botanic gardens before walking over to the cathedral. The front of the cathedral was lit up in different colours to celebrate Christmas and there were hundreds of people. The Sydney Street Choir was in full voice on the steps outside the building.

The Cardinal's tower contains the bells which were first rung in November 1900. The lower part of the tower houses the ringing chamber and above this room are hung the 14 bells which make up the St Mary's peal. Each bell bears its own religious name such as 'Mary, the Mother of God' or 'St Francis'. The Cathedral bell ringers belong to a group known as The St Mary's Basilica Society of Change Ringers, and they include many skilled ringers. The head of the Society is called the Captain.

To get to the top of the tower we had to climb 111 steps and we had to get there by 6 o'clock. The bell ringing instructor invited us in and first of all we went higher to visit the bell chamber. We had to wear huge ear muffs! We then went back down where I rang on the treble and the second. My friends all watched, but I never thought I would ever ring in Australia and this was a very special memory. After an hour or so we went back down to see the cathedral being lit up. It was an amazing day!



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The photos show:

[Rowan and his friends in the ringing room](#)

[The cathedral lit up for Christmas](#)

[Ringing the cathedral's bells](#)

## Fascinating Fact

Supplied by Rowan

St Mary's cathedral is one of Sydney's most historic buildings and is one of the finest examples of English-style Gothic churches in the world. William Wilkinson Wardell, the nineteenth century architect, planned a cathedral shaped from the local sandstone and the building was eventually completed one hundred years after he died!

# Ringling with Two Sets of Teachers 9,000 Miles Apart!

That's us – Sally and Robert from Cumbria. How did we come to this situation? Well, one of our sons in Perth, Western Australia, decided to learn to ring at The Swan Bell Tower and when we visited him he took us along.

Back home, we decided to visit our local tower and learn to ring ourselves, which we have been doing with our teacher Richard, and in the following few months he trained us up to Level 1. He also advised us that time at the end of a rope was essential and visiting different towers was a good idea.

Being retired and the work ethic long gone, we planned another longer visit across the pond to our son. This has now become the norm; six months on each continent – all year long summer! We only wish that we had discovered it many years ago!

We took up our ringing again in Perth under the guidance of Laura, a well known and affectionate lady who soon got us chiming the bells at the Swan Tower.

In Western Australia (WA) there are eight towers. Three are within easy commuting distance and two are a few hours away. We are welcome to attend any of the practice nights in the towers and a group of us do. The ringing period in WA is usually 6pm till 8pm. Our home tower in WA is St George's, where we practise on a Tuesday evening and ring for service on Sundays. Having home towers in two different continents was deemed not to be a problem by our respective teachers.

Returning to Cumbria, we regularly ring at three towers. The eight bells of our home tower are nice sounding and a pleasant weight. Practice is on a Wednesday and we ring for service on Sundays. We also travel eight miles to another eight bell tower of similar draught and weight. Recently we started ringing at a tower further away which offers us twelve bells. Three nights a week out and about.

The local Guild also arranges a three tower day trip with a pub lunch around the district (known affectionately as the Codgers outing) once a month. In addition, once a year we have a three day outing further afield usually covering ten towers. These events attract around thirty to forty ringers enabling a wide variety of methods to be attempted. One of the advantages of the UK is that within an hour or so of travelling there are in excess of fifty towers. We take advantage of this to visit local towers if there is a practice when we are out.

Where are we up to on learning? Well, Sally having a musical upbringing is now looking at Cambridge and beyond whereas Robert is busy trying to perfect Plain Hunt from any bell and on any number. Robert feels that his progress is hampered as the result of being told as a child that he is tone deaf and music is not for him. How teaching and child rearing have changed since the '40s!

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By Robert Nicols



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The Swan Tower



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The bells of the Swan Tower



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Sally, in white, after a quarterpeal

In the UK there are many towers, so visiting and ringing at a number of locations helps raise ones confidence. As we stay with family in London prior to flying we also frequently ask to join other towers there for their practice night.

Ringing on two continents is fun. We have found certain problems, such as ringing regularly for Sunday services which is one of the 50 Ringing Things we are trying to achieve. It has been helpful having two separate teachers to correct mistakes and look at our technique from a new perspective. Ringing on the different draughts and weights keeps us thinking of perfecting our style. We would advise all ringers, regardless of ability, to visit other towers when away from home. Recently, Perth had a ringer from the UK after she had had only twelve lessons. She is wonderfully enthusiastic and is progressing really well.

And a definite benefit is the double summer where we don't have to huddle around a heater; instead we are frequently in shorts and with the air-conditioning on.



## Two Ringing Quizzes for Children

(Written by an 8-year-old learning to ring at Campton, Bedfordshire, and done as part of her 50 Ringing Things.)



### Starter Ringing Quiz

1. What is the fluffy part of the rope called?
2. What is the heaviest bell called?
3. What is the lightest bell called?
4. What does the treble ringer say before ringing rounds?
5. What do you say to stop ringing?

### More Experienced Ringing Quiz

1. What is the change 13572468 called?
2. How many bells change in a Doubles method?
3. How many bells are plain hunting in Grandsire Doubles?
4. What do you call the person who calls the methods or calls the changes?
5. When would you take coils in the rope when ringing?





# Handle With Care

*George Pipe is a well known figure in the world of bell ringing. A passionate and dedicated ringer who has not only reached the heights of excellence in the art, but has helped countless bands all over the world to develop and progress. Here he shares some valuable lessons learned when starting out on a lifetime of ringing.*

When I was a child, my family lived in a cottage in Grundisburgh, a village near Ipswich. When I was keen to learn to ring aged eight (in 1943) there was a wartime ban on ringing. Denied the village bells, my father rigged up an ingenious rope with pulley blocks and counterweights on a tall walnut tree in the garden where I could endlessly practise all the techniques for good handling which stood me in such good stead for a long and varied life in ringing, all around the world. This time spent practising all the necessary ingredients – stance, balance, grip, the feel of the bell and the long pull – was the most valuable investment I could have made.

A good and confident handling style is what gives you 100% bell control and striking excellence. Yes – we all know a few who may not be the best handlers but still manage to strike well – but these are few! So to all new ringers, do work hard and enthusiastically at this. You need to feel as comfortable as the concert pianist at his stool, the golfer on the tee or the tennis player at the net.

So – in sequence. Stance: well balanced, one foot slightly in front of the other, feet not too close together nor wide apart. Look as if you mean business!

Hands comfortably on the sally, arms neither bent nor over-reaching. The tail end should lie over the back of the hand allowing all the fingers and the thumb round the sally.

Keep practising to find the feel of the bell at balance – this puts you in charge when you can do this confidently!

At backstroke, look straight ahead or over the left or right shoulder, not through your arms.

On heavy bells or those with a long draught, you need to cultivate a long pull and follow-through. A full length mirror can be a handy prop to help with this, and in addition can lighten the atmosphere in the tower as you all take a go!

Never be afraid to ask your teacher for one-to-one sessions, even if you have been ringing for a while. Practising and perfecting handling is very daunting in a full belfry. The extra time spent will be well worth it and you will come to notice that fine handlers are, like as not, fine strikers.

So back to wartime: when Churchill lifted the ringing ban, I was ready! And so will you be if you work hard to become comfortable with your rope and the feel of your bell, which will give you the best chance of placing your bell ‘on the dot’ at every stroke.

Good luck, good handling, and enjoy the ‘Art of Ringing’!



Grundisburgh Church

*Image Credit: Mike Whitby*

“ A good and confident handling style is what gives you 100% bell control and striking excellence.”

“ Keep practising to find the feel of the bell at balance”

“ Never be afraid to ask your teacher for one-to-one sessions”

“ Work hard to become comfortable with your rope and the feel of your bell”



# A Grand Day Out: Lytchett Matravers Ringers Spread Their Wings

Our Branch Ringing Master Jack Pease was the catalyst for the St Mary's Lytchett Matravers mini outing on 23 September. He got the ball rolling and I was able to then get on with the planning and organisation of what would be the first outing any of us from Lytchett Matravers has been on. It was all very exciting! And if it all went well, I would be able to gain another tick in my book of 50 Ringing Things! We invited some of the Brownsea ringers to add some experience to our ringing, as we are mostly novices, and we really appreciated their support.

The day started with a memorable Salisbury Cathedral Tower tour, arranged by Jack, which involved climbing 332 steps. This doesn't seem bad on paper but when you see what you have to climb through it is a different matter. The talk before we started and during our climb was fascinating. We all got to the top and took in the view from the parapet on both sides of the tower. I was not sure I would be able to do this, having slight vertigo, but there is a photo to prove I was there! By the time we got back down - much easier than going up - we were ready for lunch which had been arranged in a local pub.

Some ringers met us at the pub and when we were all fed and watered we were ready for an afternoon of ringing at three different churches we had never visited before.

We had to find our way out of Salisbury to the first church at All Saints in Winterslow where the bells are rung in the porch! The ropes had to be dropped through the roof of the porch before ringing began and it was a great experience. Luckily we had a beautiful day so those not ringing were able to meander around the church yard in the sunshine. And for those who were ringing, it was a completely new experience!

Then back in the car and off to St Peter in Britford where we encountered yet another new experience. Here, the bells are rung at the crossing of the church ... and the ceiling is very high so the ropes are extremely long! Ringing up was a challenge for those used to ringing up on shorter ropes, but there were enough able ringers to manage. Ringing them was an equal challenge and, unfortunately for some, it was perhaps a challenge too far. However, most of us enjoyed the ring and some found them lovely bells to have the privilege of ringing.

Into cars again and through Salisbury to the beautiful church of St Mary and St Nicholas at Wilton. The tower here was very small but the bells much easier to ring and we enjoyed ringing Call Changes and Plain Bob Doubles. We then appreciated the use of a kettle so we could enjoy a cup of tea before heading home - exhausted, a little more experienced, and definitely very happy.

*Debbie has gone on to gain her Gold Plus certificate - Ed.*

By Debbie Phipps, Tower Captain at Lytchett Matravers, Dorset



# Annie's Challenge Scrapbook

When Annie Cunningham, a ringer working towards Level 3 at Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, took up the 50 Ringing Things Challenge, she had the brilliant idea of one day making a scrapbook to record her achievements and experiences. These have now earned her a Bronze certificate and she is well on the way to Silver. Here she shares some of the highlights.

Local Guides visited Marsworth this summer. The girls had a great time with both tower bells and handbells. The same format was used at St Mary's in Hemel Hempstead (my home tower) when children from a local secondary school came to visit. The children were challenged to pull off the 19 cwt tenor. When they left I had a go myself. I surprised myself (and others!) when I pulled it off and kept control. Tick!



I was honoured to be invited to join the ringing for a memorial service held at Marsworth church for a fantastic lady called Della who was working her way through Learning the Ropes there. I didn't know her for long but her

infectious enthusiasm and interest in people around her were invigorating. She had planned for the bells to ring as her family and friends came into the church for her memorial and again as they left. This experience was very personal and very moving.



I went to St Albans Abbey for the District Practice. A first on 10 bells for me and maybe next time on all 12. The 160 steps to reach the belfry were well worth the challenge too! I rang bell number seven, called Judas. All

the bells are named and I'm told that mine was named after another Judas - not the traitor! While we were there the Mayor was having a look round and listening to the ringing. He seemed very interested.



The Charmborough Ring - a mini ring - was at the Classic Motor Show on Redbourn Common. Too good a chance to miss, so I went straight there from St Albans. A demonstration was in progress. Fascinating! So

after a lovely barbecued burger hot off the grill at the Scouts' stall and a cuppa from the Guides' stall, I made my way back to have a go. Brilliant!

An interesting challenge was the Bell Maintenance workshop in Northampton. Since then I've been able to assist with a bell maintenance check at Mentmore. It was good to have the reminder of the things learned on the course and have a spanner in my hand for tightening nuts and bolts - even though only one actually needed tightening.

By the time this is circulated I hope to have rung a quarter peal as part of the Peal for Pudsey Campaign - and I have £204 pledged for this! And I'm also off to Campton, Bedfordshire, for their Festival Of Bells to try handbells. And then it's Christmas and New Year!

# Learning Tips No.6: Handling Light Bells

One of the “Fifty Ringing Things” is to “Ring on a bell lighter than 3 cwt (152 kg)”. My home tower is a six with the front three less than 3 cwt, so we do get the occasional visitor who comes along to collect a “thing”. What do I tell them before they catch hold?

There is one component of a bell mechanism which doesn't weigh ever so much, but the weight of which starts to matter more and more as the weight of the bell gets less and less. This is because the weight of this bit doesn't reduce much as we go from a heavy bell to a lighter one. Perhaps surprisingly, this is the rope itself!

Think about what happens to the rope as we ring a bell. The image (right) may help you to visualise it. When you pull the sally at handstroke the wheel turns and the rope comes down, then it goes back up and is wound right around the wheel ready for the backstroke. But, because the sally has risen to a higher point now, more rope is wound onto the wheel than before – and you need to have provided enough energy to add to the momentum of the bell to get all that rope up there. With a light bell there isn't much momentum, so you have to pull the handstroke relatively firmly to get the rope to do that. At backstroke, however, the weight of the rope itself will help you to turn the bell, and the additional energy this provides will easily lift the (shorter) length of rope back up again. And if you're ringing in a tower with a long draught the effect is even more obvious because a longer rope weighs more.

So here are some things to think about:

- Try to feel the point of balance, even though it's less obvious than with a heavier bell.
- At handstroke you will probably have to pull quite a bit more firmly than you expect, but start gently as you don't want to endanger the stay.
- Keep tension in the rope at backstroke, but try not to add any more energy – it probably won't be needed.
- Keep your arms high at both handstroke and backstroke, and accurately adjust the rope length, so as not to bump the stay.

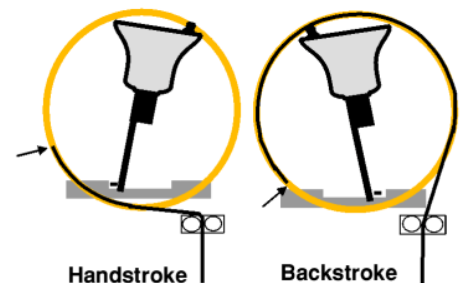
Another time when a difference is obvious is when raising or lowering a light bell in peal. When raising, it's very easy to go up far too quickly. And lowering often catches people out because heavy bells have enough momentum to stay up without much work from the ringer, whereas with a light bell you really have to work to keep the bell far enough up even as it's coming down – you'll probably find that you need to add energy at every stroke, even when you're ringing one-handed. It also helps if you can make (or release) coils without thinking, so you can concentrate on accurately following the bell in front of you on every stroke.

One final point: one of the other “things” is to “Ring on a Mini Ring (tenor less than 1 cwt or 50 kg)”. What I've said here doesn't really apply to a mini ring because they are engineered differently, so if you want to collect that “thing” as well you'll need to seek further advice before you have a go at that.

*[When we asked John Harrison for permission to use his image, he suggested also reading the article 'Does size matter?' from The Ringing World, available at [ccbr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/200205.pdf](http://ccbr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/200205.pdf).]*

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By Mike Rigby, ART Accredited  
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Lighthorne, Warwickshire



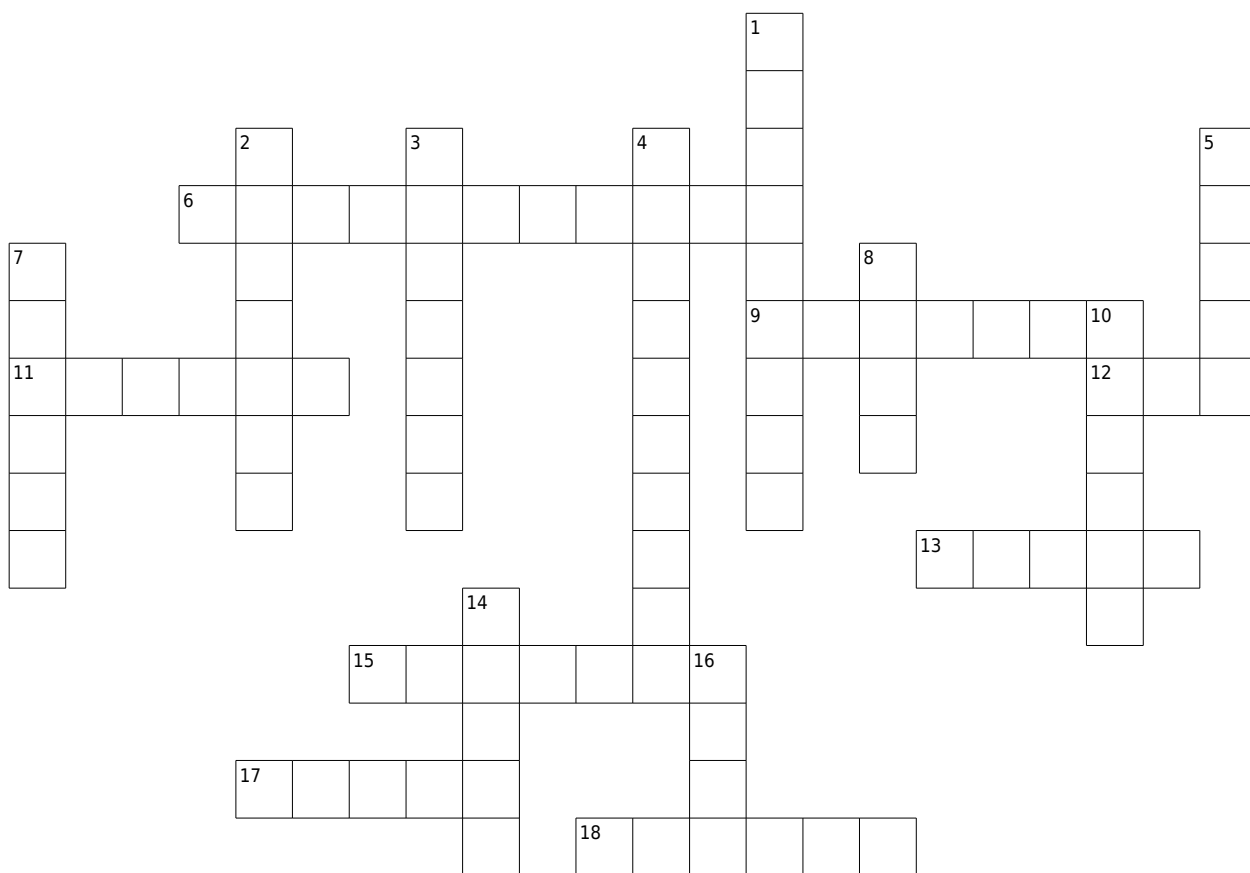
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Image credit: John Harrison



# Crossword: Parts of the Bell

This crossword will help you to learn the parts of the bell, and is (mostly) suitable for ringers approaching LtR Level 1. However, some of the answers might require a bit of help as they are from Levels 2 and 3.



## Clues Across

6. What 10d moves within (6,5)
9. Name given to the change 142536 (7)
11. When hunting up, your speed relative to rounds speed (6)
12. What you do while you're 'at the back' (3)
13. What you do when you stay 'at the back' the whole time the others ring a method (5)
15. Freely moving part of a bell mechanism that initiates the noise (7)
17. Large, circular, wooden component which is pulled upon to swing the bell (5)
18. Name given to the change 135246 (6)

## Clues Down

1. Hefty metal (or wooden) piece to which the top of a bell is secured (9)
2. Name of the pin which forms an axle (7)
3. Two of these take the weight of each bell (7)
4. Place where 16d goes through 17a (6,4)
5. The entire mechanism of all of the bells is mounted in one (or more) of these (5)
7. When hunting down, your speed relative to rounds speed (6)
8. Component that allows you to stand the bell (and might break if you overdo it) (4)
10. Wooden piece that moves when struck by 8d (6)
14. Fluffy, woollen part grasped at handstroke (5)
16. A ringer holds this to control their bell (4)

*With thanks to Debbie Phipps.*