

CUGCR Finds Ringing and Wintry Musical Merriment for New Year in Shropshire

It is common knowledge in Cambridge that it takes three years to establish a tradition amongst undergraduates; so when the Guild returned to Shropshire for its New Year ringing and festivity for a second year having been so well hosted previously, we knew it was dangerous territory - many thanks, though, go to our hosts in Shrewsbury for their generous hospitality once again. However, a repeat visit did make it more difficult for the organiser of towers, who sought to avoid those places where what Shropshire had to offer had already been sampled.

So it was, that those keen (or coerced) peal ringers amongst the group making their way to the gathering on the Wednesday before New Year stopped off a couple of stations up the train **line to make a successful attempt in Telford. We only managed to lose one ringer in the town's** bewildering concoction of villages (and he the Salopian local), while those travellers not ringing could only find a library offering the desired warmth in which to bide their time in uncharacteristic undergraduate style.

Wednesday 29 December 2010

Telford, Dawley Magna (Holy Trinity), Shropshire (8-0-5)

5040 Treble Dodging Minor (7m) in 2h38m

Professor Moriarty D, York S, Norwich S, London S, Surfleet S, Beverley S, Cambridge S

1. Frederick RWM Manners (Trinity)
2. Elizabeth C Frye (Trinity)
3. Robert T Backhouse (Downing)
4. Max LD Drinkwater (Jesus)
5. Jonathan A Agg (Emmanuel) (C)
6. Luke TW Smith (Trinity Hall)

First peal: 1

Method rung for the first time: Professor Moriarty Delight &x5x4x2x6x4x3 le6

An engagement compliment to Philip Earis (Clare) and Jennifer Butler (Clare)

Without jeopardising the peal entirely, a Delight Minor method was found to give an appropriate name to, and we could choose no-one better to name it after than our long-standing attention-seeking hyper-active friend Professor Moriarty, the Scottish Terrier who has joined our ranks for these last two years.

That evening, we all convened to total ten in what was an encouraging turn-out from a guild enjoying the addition this year of a number of ringing freshers, both post- and under-



graduate. It meant that there was a healthy variety and standard of ringing when we crossed the border on the five-tower outing around Welshpool the next day, with many of those methods one feels one should limit on an ordinary practice night enjoyed. We were grateful to two locals who travelled with us, with whom we shared the delights of Double Cambridge Cyclic Bob and Cyclic Bristol Surprise Major - rung starting the method again at the handstroke half lead and every equivalent thereafter - amongst other things. The only disappointment of the day was that the views we knew should be afforded across the

Welsh vales were obscured by the fog, which did test the composure of the drivers on the **darkened return home more than our attempts at Dixon's Bob Major.**

To round the day off, while most of the group took to the crossword with a glass of something wet, a band quartered the household for the first time in hand. Although encouraged to **raise his quarter peal total to a round figure, one member of the band's declining of later offers** did leave him on 49 for the year, while the others went on to progress in their aim of circling the

ground floor.

Thursday 30 December 2010
Montford (Montford House, Octagon Room), Shropshire (13E)
1264 Plain Bob Major in 36m
Composed: Mark B Davies
1-2. Max LD Drinkwater (Jesus)
3-4. Elizabeth C Frye (Trinity)
5-6. Jonathan A Agg (Emmanuel)
7-8. Luke TW Smith (Trinity Hall) (C)
First quarter in hand: 1-2

New Year's Eve saw a break from ringing for the most part, although a visit to the local tower was paid in order to assess its condition - we knew that the tenor at Montford church would be unringable as the clapper is in need of rebushing, though without an active local band this sadly falls low on the priority list, but we thought it prudent to check over the state of the bells before coming back in the evening to ring the old year out and the new in.



The rest of the day was spent perusing the local culture, early risers (and those not keen on tower maintenance) being taken on a brief tour of historic Shrewsbury, and the whole group making their way down to the industrial cradle of Iron-bridge to satisfy the excitement of the engineers in the group, who were most disappointed to find the hands-on science museum shutting early for the holiday season. The fog was kind enough to clear enough to actually see the bridge even if the **temperature didn't rise sufficiently high to prevent certain people testing the strength of the frozen canal.**

Time was found to bring another quarter round after dinner, proving that some of the novelty ideas aired on outings can be sustained for longer periods of time.

Friday 31 December 2010
Montford (Montford House, Dining Room), Shropshire (13E)
1320 Cambridge Treble Jump Minor in 33m
1-2. Jonathan A Agg (Emmanuel)
3-4. Elizabeth C Frye (Trinity)
5-6. Luke TW Smith (Trinity Hall) (C)
Rung to avoid Bananagrams

We wished happy birthday for this day to one member of the guild who had been present, although we did have to say farewell to her as she made her way home. Our numbers were soon replenished, however, by an old stalwart friend whose return to this country happily coincided with our gathering, although his flight from the United States in the morning rendered sleep necessary if he was to remain awake for the New Year **welcoming in St Chad's, Montford. His attendance was appreciated, however, as we were able to all join the firing and even a few changes sharing out the strokes with an even distribution of two to a bell; everyone was in sufficiently good spirits to ignore the inap-**



propriateness of the minor front five being rung, and Professor Moriarty stayed obediently under guard for the duration of the ringing.

We returned home for a glass of champagne and celebration; twelve noon was perhaps therefore a little on the early side to start the ringing of the date touch (prepared for us by an erudite guild composer) having made the cross-country trek up to the market town of Wem. Unfortunately, most of the local shops were shut including the famous cheese merchant, so our visit extended little beyond ringing.

Saturday 1 January 2011

Wem (SS Peter and Paul), Shropshire (12-2-23)

2011 Spliced Surprise Major (2m) in 1h07m

62 London, 1949 Yorkshire (1 com)

Composed: Philip AB Saddleton (Trinity)

1. Georgina Harris (Pembroke)

2. Catriona Shearer (Jesus)

3. Elizabeth C Frye (Trinity)

4. Max LD Drinkwater (Jesus)

5. Robert T Backhouse (Downing)

6. Frederick RWM Manners (Trinity)

7. Luke TW Smith (Trinity Hall) (C)

8. Jonathan A Agg (Emmanuel)

First Surprise Major inside: 6

Longest date touch for all the band

Activities for the afternoon centred around another which is becoming dangerously close to tradition: the guild ten-pin-bowling contest. Whether this was won by the person to knock the most pins down or the one to simply bowl the fastest (infuriatingly not the same person) was argued, but the rematch on the dance machine afterwards settled a clear winner, despite pooled efforts from the men. This last day saw the polypins from the local Stonehouse Brewery in Oswestry being finished off (moving onto bottles offered the opportunity for a course of Norwich Minimus blown by those not ringing the real instruments) before giving final thanks to our hosts and departing the following morning.



Saturday 1 January 2011

Montford (Montford House, Kitchen), Shropshire (13E)

1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor in 32m

1-2. Luke TW Smith (Trinity Hall)

3-4. Elizabeth C Frye (Trinity)

5-6 Jonathan A Agg (Emmanuel) (C)

Rung in front of a rather warm Aga

Thank you to our hosts (especially of course to Prof. Moriarty) and to all our conductors, composers, organisers and drivers, and may the ringing continue throughout the coming year.

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