

IRISH BELL NEWS

Issue 1 - July 2015

Welcome to the first issue of the “new” Irish Bell News. This in no way tries to copy the much-loved magazine which was produced for 36 years by the late Fred Dukes, but will hopefully serve to communicate news throughout the membership of the Irish Association of Change Ringers.

The Executive Council of the IACR supported the idea that an electronic newsletter could be emailed to ringers and so involve no cost in terms of production or purchase. I have tried to contact all the towers in Ireland in order to glean news, and I apologise in advance for any omissions.

I hope to have the next issue out before the end of the year, and would appreciate it if towers could email me any news or articles – by the end of November - to my email:

Simon950@aol.com

Any news is appreciated: news items written by a tower contact; items “borrowed” from your church magazine; Facebook pictures, or articles which relate to bells from your local newspapers. If you know the email address of anyone who would like to receive the Irish Bell News, then please send me their details.

Simon Walker

A MESSAGE FROM DAVID TAYLOR, PRESIDENT OF THE IRISH ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

For centuries we have been sending out messages in sound that remained only as long as a bell reverberated. Then five hundred years or so ago with the invention of movable type and the spread of literacy the message took on typographic form and the word spread. The cooperation of that world of print with ours of sound was good but now we have words on screen, almost instant communication with any place on earth - belfry calling out to belfry - through electronic and digital means and as our horizons expand our world seems more local. No longer is a trip to America, Australia, New Zealand or Africa the occasion for an American wake because we as individuals are in contact with our international family of bellringers easily. But one thing has been lacking in recent years and that is a compendium of bell news with an Irish flavour in internet form. Now, Simon Walker steps into the breach with this first digital version of Ireland's Bell News. This is a welcome and exciting development that augurs well for the future of bellringing and change ringing on this island.

Every journey starts with one step and on behalf of the Irish Association of Change Ringers I look forward to this venture taking one great step after another just as each of us did when we first climbed the steps to an Irish belfry and entered into a great ancient world where every day we may learn something new - or, if we prefer, just do it a little better. This first internet Irish Bell News is a welcome step up. May it ring true and thrive.

TOWER HISTORY

The following article, written by Kennedy Roberts, appeared in the parish newsletter of Rostrevor, where there has been a lot of hard work getting the bells ringing again. Therefore, it is worth repeating it here!



A brief history of bell ringing in Kilbroney.

Kilbroney Church was built in 1821. It is situated in the heart of Rostrevor village at the top of the square. Originally the village would have lived to the toll of a single bell: a 17” diameter brass bell called ‘The Bell of the Crag’ which was the bell belonging to the original church of St Paul. It took almost sixty years before Kilbroney Church could ring in the changes with a set of six bells gifted to the church by the then vicar Rev. William C Barker in 1880.

The bells consist of six different sizes and six different notes - A, B, C, D, E and G. (we have no note F in our collection). The smallest bell weighs 32st (208kg) and the largest 650kg which is equivalent to the weight of a vintage Mini car, like Mrs Sheila Jameson’s! In all there has been a team of campanologists ringing the bells for almost 135 years in Rostrevor. The first team of bell ringers Kilbroney had was unique in that it consisted of three sets of

brothers: Charles and James Cunningham; Robert John and Joe Kyle; John and Gerard Bussel.

James Cunningham, a Justice of the Peace saw the need to improve striking and put forward the Cunningham Cup in 1950. He died shortly afterwards in his 92nd year but his life in the church was connected closely to the bells. There are certificates hanging in the belfry which were awarded to James Cunningham and Henry Lightbody in 1903. In 1954 the "Cunningham Cup Competition" was held at Rostrevor. The home team gave an excellent performance, winning the cup with a near perfect ring. The judges at the presentation commented if they awarded us 100% we might look too good! Later that year Kilbroney entered the record books, winning the "Murphy Cup" (Blue Riband of Irish Bell ringing), and became the first northern team to win the double of both Cunningham and Murphy Cups.

In Ireland campanologists are usually members of and affiliated to the Irish Association of Change Ringers. In Northern Ireland we take part in the Northern District which has been going since 1947. Each district enters a striking competition for a cup. In the Northern District that is the Cunningham Cup and the Murphy Cup is the all-Ireland trophy. Currently there only sixteen towers remaining with enough campanologists to ring the bells. To date St Bronach (Kilbroney), our title in the district, has won the competition twice, the award be presented to Aubrey Wylie on both occasions when Aubrey was the Tower Master and Conductor.

The Bells

The bells are housed in the belfry above the porch, and under the square tower roof at the west end of the building.

The ring of six bells was gifted chiefly through the generosity of the vicar at that time, the Rev William C Barker, who was vicar from 1871 until 1903. They were cast and installed in 1880 by John Taylor & Co Founders, Loughborough.

In 1949, after seventy years of service, the axles of the bells were rusted up. The wooden headstocks carrying the bells were defective and it was therefore impossible to ring the bells effectively. A major overhaul of the entire system took place which included replacing all the defective components and fitting the most modern ball bearing working parts. This was through the generosity of the publishing firm McDonald & Evans, London. The work was carried out by John Taylor & Co Founders, Loughborough, the original manufacturers and installers.

The bells were re-dedicated on 25th April 1950 by the right Reverend W.S. Kerr, Lord Bishop of Down and Dromore.

In 2004, Mr Aubrey Wylie, the tower ringing master, replaced all the bell ropes and had the system serviced.

Weights, dimensions and notes of the bells:

	Weight	Diameter	Note
Treble	208Kg	70cm	E
2	254Kg	75cm	D
3	307Kg	80cm	C
4	362Kg	85cm	B
5	464Kg	92cm	A
Tenor	650Kg	103.5cm	G

TOWER NEWS

BALLYMENA (St Patrick): August 2013 and we thought we were in heaven. Three young people and an adult were lined up ready to start learning in September. Two of them took to the ringing 'like a duck takes to water' and after a very short time, under the excellent tutelage of Sam, they were able to join us for service ringing. Christmas and now three were able to join us for the Christmas and New Year services. Since then we are now back to the loyal band of regulars. Like all towers it is getting increasingly hard, if not almost impossible to get people to come up the tower and learn. Hopefully though we'll have another appeal for ringers in September, and see what happens.

Over the past three years we've had to have a considerable amount of work done to the tower, the result of years of reporting water ingress that no-one paid any attention to. Then 'little mushrooms' started popping up from behind the wooden panelling. The outcome was the inevitable 'dry rot'. Three quarters of the Ringing Room floor had to be removed and new steel beams inserted, not to mention the organ having to be completely dismantled and taken off to Wells Kennedy in Lisburn. This now means that the appearance of Ringing Room has changed considerably from what most people will remember and the organ has now been reinstated although one section has still to be completed.

On Saturday 11th July ringers from Coleraine and Ballymena rang to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. This ring was dedicated to all our parishioners and those of St Patrick's Coleraine, who were in the armed forces at that time. The phot below shows from left to right: Loraine Watt, Karen Smyth(Coleraine). Standing left to right: Brian Hume (Coleraine), Ivan Stacey, Alex McKay, Ronnie Fleming, Trevor McCandless (Coleraine), Colin Watt and Alastair Marrs.



That's the end of the update so far, and we look forward to seeing you all at the November district practice.

Lorraine Watt

BANGOR (St Comgall): On 10th January we met for our Annual General Meeting and received news about the bells, currently out of action due to a fire in the church. The Tower Captain reported that the ringing chamber had been repainted and new carpet laid in 2014. However, since that there had been bird infestation which means that the ringing room will have to be refurbished again. The clappers from the bells have been removed for refurbishment following approval by the church authorities and these were delivered to Martin Hough's workshop.

The following are the officers for 2015: Tower Captain – Colin Holliday; Tower Secretary – Mrs Jean McBride; Treasurer – Andrew White; Steeple Keepers – Martin Yardley and Brian Hamilton. It was voted unanimously that Mrs Jean McBride be made an honorary member of Bangor Parish Honorary Society of Bellringers in recognition of the affection in which she is held by the Bangor ringers and for all the support, hard work and help the tower and its members have received from her during her long association with the tower.

Bangor Website - Andrew White, Webmaster.

BELFAST (St Donard): I would like to start these notes by thanking all the ringers from other towers who help us out for Sunday Service ringing and on practice night - without them we would not be able to ring all six on our own. So thank you to Liz from Carrick who rings with us every Sunday evening and Gaurang from St Thomas' and Andrew from Bangor, who help frequently on a Sunday Morning. And to all the ringers from the other towers, ie Maud (Drumbo), Liz (Carrick), Harry and Aubrey (Derry), Maralyn and Duncan (St Thomas');

Daryl and Alistair (Hillsborough); Andrew (Bangor) and Jim (Holywood) who are regular attenders on practice night.

I am pleased to say that we now have two new ringers in St Donard's. Michael Neil is ringing for Sunday Services and was made a member of the Irish Association at the AGM in Greyabbey. Luke Carson has now mastered ringing the whole bell by himself and will shortly be able to ring in rounds, so things are looking up for us at present.

In closing I would like to wish Simon well for taking on this new venture and supplying us all with news and happenings in the Association.

Jean Jeffery

BELFAST (St Thomas): There was a gap of 64 years between the first time St Thomas' won the Murphy Cup in 1947 and the second time in 2011, so we are delighted that the cup is back again in the tower after just four years. One of the ringers in the St Thomas' band was 15 year-old Adnan Zahoor-Ali, who learnt to ring a few years ago and was ringing in a competition for the first time.

On Sunday 7th June we very regretfully said goodbye to Geoffrey Bourton who had been ringing with us during university terms from September 2011 when he came to Belfast to study Aeronautical Engineering. We shall miss Geoffrey and also his very regular attendance at practices and Sunday Service ringing.

Perhaps uniquely in Ireland or even further afield, one of the windows in the ringing chamber has stained glass. Appropriately the glass is a representation of St Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, Campania, Italy, who required his diocesan priests to ring a bell before celebrating the Eucharist, from which comes the word campanology. The window was designed, made and presented to the bellringers and parish by Paddy Robinson, who was then a student glass artist and also a ringer at St Thomas' 1959-1965. She emigrated to Australia where she has earned an international reputation in stained glass design. Paddy had planned to visit the tower and unveil a small plaque when in Ireland at the end of May but unfortunately was unable to travel. Hopefully next year. We also hope that the window will be included in the database of Church of Ireland stained glass.

Duncan Scarlett

BLESSINGTON (St Mary): On St Patrick's Day a peal was successfully rung on St Mary's bells by a group of bell ringers from England. It is 32 years since a peal was last heard in Blessington and that was for the celebration of the tercentenary in 1983. The peal took about 3 hours, and we congratulate the ringers on their success. (From parish newsletter).

CARRICKFERGUS (St Nicholas): Congratulations to our keenest ringer, Alex Nelson, on again winning the McBride Cup for young ringers. He also recently rang the treble to his first quarter-peal and put up a very good performance.

CORK (St Finbarre's Cathedral): Guy St Leger's sister got married in St Fin Barre's Cathedral on 27th June and we rang for that and then we all went to lunch next day at Guy's house, ate delicious food in the marquee and went for a walk in their beautiful garden, a real gem right in the middle of Cork.

Julia Lysaght

DROGHEDA (St Peter): St. Peter's welcome visiting ringers each Sunday morning at 10.30 for practice and service ringing. There is no ringing on a fifth Sunday. Generally we ring just the front six bells as we are concentrating on raising the standard of striking as we develop our skills. Eight-bell ringing will come later we hope but if enough energetic visitors join us any Sunday we may ring eight.

Our ringers are a jovial lot and the level of attendance is very good. It is most heartening that on more than one occasion members of the congregation, and others, have said how much they like to hear the bells.

Visiting ringers are most welcome and if there are any former ringers out there we would like to see them. It is worth noting that most Sundays several of those people who ring at Drogheda later in the day also ring in either Christ Church Cathedral or St Patrick's Cathedral, both of course in Dublin city, and they also attend practices at those two towers. Mrs Doris Rusk is St Peter's tower secretary.

David Taylor

DRUMBO (Holy Trinity). On the 10th May we rang half-muffled for the remembrance service for the centenary of the death of the son and grandson of Canon Mitchell who were drowned on the Lusitania in 1915. Canon Mitchell was rector of Drumbo at that time. His son, daughter-in-law and grandson were traveling home from America. The daughter-in-law was saved.

We rang the original six bells as these were the bells that would have rung at the funeral in 1915. We were conscious that we were following in the footsteps of our predecessors

The bells of Drumbo Parish have for over 250 years sounded out over the parish to mark many events both sad and joyful both in the parish and nationally. This has been achieved by the dedication of generations of ringers who not only rang but also passed on their skills to

the next generation to the present day. Due to the support of the present and previous Select Vestries we have one of the best maintained rings of bells in the country.

It is now our responsibility to pass on these skills to the next generation so that the bells may mark the future events in our parishes and nation.

Those of you who are frequent visitors to Drumbo will be aware that we have been having problems with damp (no, that is not quite right - cascades of water would be better). We now know that this is due to the pointing. It would appear that in the 1940s the tower was pointed using the wrong type of mortar. If this is not dealt with urgently the tower will become unsafe. The Select Vestry has decided to have this work done over the summer. The cost has been estimated as £40,000.

For the last few years we have been having joint practices with St Thomas, usually on alternate weeks. If you intend to visit please check with a ringer from either tower. If you arrive at Drumbo and no one is there go to St Thomas.

Cecil Shaw

DUBLIN (Christ Church Cathedral): Ringing in Christ Church Cathedral continues every Friday night and twice on Sundays. We have a small number of beginners who are making steady progress.

Over the last couple of months the cathedral authorities have begun to repair the structure of the tower. Currently the tower is being repointed and recently the floor of the ringing room needed to be repaired. During this time we were grateful to St. Audoen's who let us hold a practice in their tower. Thankfully this arrangement was only needed for one week as the floor has been repaired and the ringers returned to Christ Church. We are grateful to St. Audoen's for allowing us to use their bells.

Over the last couple of months the ringers have enjoyed a number of social events. In February a group visited Edinburgh for a weekend. It was an opportunity for ringing, sight-seeing and catching up with Ian and Barbara Bell. We have also gathered in Leslie and Ann Taylor's house to ring hand bells and to enjoy good food. The ringers enjoyed these occasions and we thank Leslie and Ann for their hospitality.

DUBLIN (St Audoen). The Youth Handbell Choir, Allegro, from the Union Church of Hinsdale, Chicago visited St Audoen's in June and gave a wonderful concert in the church. The choir was made up mainly of teenagers. They brought with them 61 handbells ranging from very small bells to the largest bell weighing 14 lbs (or 1 stone). For those of us who are used to ringing methods on handbells this was something quite different, which included at times the bells being banged down on the table! If anyone is interested in seeing them in action you can look them up at: www.allegrobells.org<<http://www.allegrobells.org>>.

After the concert the young people and their leaders met three of the bell ringers from St Audoen's and with the assistance of one of the churchwardens they were invited to climb the tower to see the St Audoen's bells. Needless to say all the visitors were impressed with the size of our bells - their largest bell is 14 lbs while our largest bell is 1,642 lbs in weight and their handbells are about 15 years old while three of our bells are 600 years old! After seeing three of the bells being rung for a few minutes each of the visitors was invited to chime a bell and many photos were taken to remind them of their visit to St Audoen's.

Ringling in St Audoen's is going well and for the last month or two we regularly have the six bells ringing before the Sunday service. Unfortunately Sunday morning ringling is from 9.30 - 10.00 so it is sometimes a bit early for visiting bellringers, especially those staying in bed and breakfasts who often don't offer breakfast that early on a Sunday morning: but for those who make it to St Audoen's they are guaranteed a warm welcome not only from the bellringers but from the parishioners of St Audoen's if you wish to stay on for the Communion Service.

Kathleen McEndoo

DUBLIN (Ss Augustine and John): The Eastern District Lindoff Cup competition was held at John's Lane in March with Christ Church, Taney, the worthy winners.

The service ring takes place on the second Sunday of each month from 12.15 - 12.30 and is well supported by the Dublin ringers including some former ringers. If you are ever in Dublin on that weekend, please come and join in the ringling.

We were delighted that John Kane was one of the long-standing ringers of the Eastern district who was honoured for his services to the exercise with a beautiful framed scroll at the Taney barbeque and ring event last summer.

June Kelly

DUBLIN (St Patrick's Cathedral): Charlie Reede has been the backbone of ringling at St. Patrick's Cathedral for very many years - and still is. For this, we are ever-grateful. Over the past year, Derek and Peter have given of their time to bring on new ringers - Tom, Irene, Joe, Adeline, Sean, Niamh, Kenneth and Tony - some of whom have joined our Sunday service bands. We organised a treat for the new ringers at the end of May with a trip to Kilkenny where we were met by Ian and also some of the Drogheda ringers. It was a very enjoyable day with strong emphasis on the social side of belfry life. Thanks to Ian for making us feel so welcome.

For the first time, St. Patrick's Amateur Society of Change Ringers will take part in Heritage Week, 22nd to 29th August 2015. In conjunction with the Cathedral Manager, we've agreed to open the tower and offer tours to the public on each of the Saturdays. The tours will entail

a short history of the tower itself and of bellringing, followed by an explanation and demonstration of bell-handling and change ringing. The visitors will be encouraged to come back and learn to ring.

Imelda Bryne

ENNISKILLEN (St Macartin's Cathedral): We were pleased to have been able to ring before the service commemorating the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo, and to have been heard on BBC news. The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers fought alongside the Duke of Wellington, hence the connection with the cathedral.

We mustered six ringers to ring for the seventieth anniversary of VE Day and photos of the occasion were published in the parish newsletter.



On the first Saturday in June we hosted the northern district practice. The ringers who took part are pictured above.

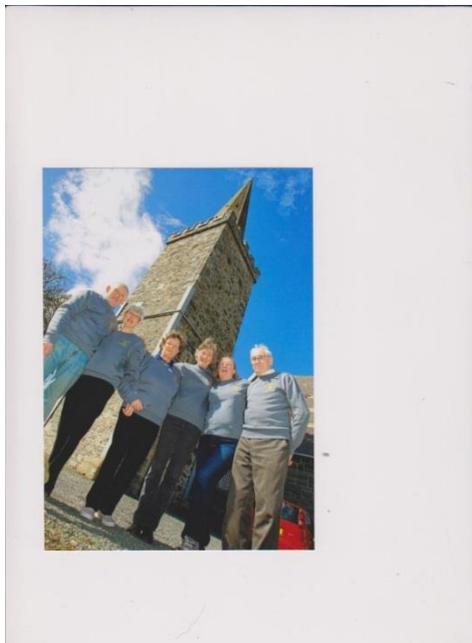
Noble Sheridan, one of our long-standing members, was honoured in the parish newsletter on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday. In addition to highlighting his forty years as a ringer at the cathedral, mention was made of his remarkable army career in the First Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, which took him to places as far afield as India, Burma and Hong Kong.

(News supplied by Stewart Scott)

GREY ABBEY (St Saviour): It does not feel as if eleven years have passed since Grey Abbey first hosted the Annual General Meeting of the Northern District of the Irish Association of Change Ringers, and took part in the Cunningham Cup. Back in 2004 we

were very much a fledging tower: few of us could ring up a bell if it came down (as they did frequently to all of us and still do) and our attention when ringing call changes was apt to wander (and still does). However, we got through our calls somehow and although we were last in terms of the highest number of penalty points, at least we enabled two teams to go forward to the Murphy Cup. Also we were very proud to be awarded a cup for effort, and Norman was hastily commissioned to make a shelf to put it on. It stands today over the right-hand window of our ringing chamber and is now used for a vase of flowers in the absence of any further trophies!

So it was a little like a trip down memory lane to be hosting the district AGM again this year. Astrid nobly agreed to play the organ again for our service, and the Rev Roy Taylor paid full attention to his guidelines about keeping the service short and sweet by starting off before the people ringing for the service had a chance to get into the church! In record time we were all outside again and assembling for the Cunningham Cup competition. All of us who ring at Grey Abbey are very attached to our own particular bell, so much so, that most of us will not ring in any other tower. This makes our track record in competitions somewhat small. However, we made up a team for this year and got through the calls very creditably for us. We were so pleased to finish without mishap. In fact, we were so proud of ourselves that in advance of the competition Astrid bought us all some splendid grey shirts, emblazoned with a bell and our tower name, so that even if we were not the most accomplished of the teams we were certainly the best dressed! (See illustration below which appeared in the Newtownards Chronicle!)



We are still pretty much the same team as first started to learn to ring the bells that Denise McLean was so instrumental in acquiring for our tower, and whom Don McLean taught over a number of years (at probable peril to his health). Lou and Maureen usually cycle down to the tower to ring on Sundays; Ivan must be one of the oldest bell-ringers in Ireland and never misses a Sunday; and Astrid and Rosemary have taken on the tolling of the tenor bell for

funerals as well as providing the most amazing barbeque each year when Grey Abbey hosts the district practice.

Sometimes we are joined by Michele, when she is not committed to playing the double bass for the Ulster Orchestra, and we have recently acquired a learner, Paul Rusk, who is the husband of our church organist. He is shaping up well.

While we have not progressed beyond Plain Hunt (and some of us prefer to do this by numbers and on our favourite bell), we very much enjoy meeting each Sunday to ring for Matins and other services during the year.

Amanda Blackmore

HILLSBOROUGH (St Malachy): With the death of Harry Shortt on Easter Sunday, our tower lost its most popular member, and the community of Hillsborough as a whole lost one of its best-known residents. Harry learned to ring in the 1950s and, after a break of many years, recommenced in 1999 in time for the millennium. From that time he became one of our most faithful members and his arrival in the tower was always eagerly awaited, as he was a constant source of “craic”. Harry loved ringing competitions and was delighted by the many successes which we enjoyed over the years. He was also very prominent in the extensive celebrations which went along with competition wins! In recent times his greatest source of pride in ringing terms was the fact that his son-in-law, Stephen, and grandsons, Stewart and Andrew, became ringers and they have proved to be valuable members of the team. We rang the ten bells half-muffled for half an hour at the conclusion of Harry’s funeral and were pleased to be joined in the ringing by IACR president David Taylor, along with Charlie Reede and Nigel Pelow. Such was Harry’s popularity that we had to ring two quarter peals in his memory, to facilitate the number of people who wished to take part.

On a happier note, we were delighted to be able to mark Alistair Jameson’s sixty years as a ringer by making a presentation to him at our recent tower dinner. We had a peal board made by Paul Rapson, which records the first ever peal on our bells and the first on the ten, in which Alistair rang the tenor. The board was provided by the ringers and Select Vestry as a tribute to Alistair’s long service. We were delighted when the Irish Association of Change Ringers acknowledged his long years of service by electing him as a life member. On 1st July the peal board was dedicated in the tower by our rector, Rev Dr Bryan Follis.





We were pleased to win the Cunningham Cup competition at Greyabbey, and were able to field two teams. One of our teams include three members of the one family – Charlie Kilpatrick and daughters Sarah and Alice, who rang really well, especially as this was the first time they had rung outside Hillsborough. We were also presented with the attendance shield, due largely to the good attendance of our new ringers, Sarah, Alice,

Stewart, Andrew and Neville. All began ringing within the last eighteen months and have enabled us to ring ten bells on a weekly basis.

The bells were rung to mark the birth of Princess Charlotte of Cambridge and the seventieth anniversary of VE Day.

At a recent practice night we fired the bells to congratulate Jonathan Houston on attaining a BA honours degree in geography from Queen’s University Belfast.

Simon Walker

KILKENNY (St Canice’s Cathedral): Renewal of wedding vows. Congratulations to Ian and Gail McCullagh on their ruby wedding anniversary on Sunday 25th May when, with the Dean (also a ringer), they renewed their vows in St John’s (News from the parish newsletter).



LIMERICK (St Mary's Cathedral):



Over recent weeks Dell executives visiting the Dell Limerick campus have been offered the opportunity to visit St. Mary's Cathedral and bell tower. All have accepted and have been "blown-over" by the building, the art of bell-ringing and the view of the city from the top of the tower. The most recent visitor was the most senior so far. Jeff Clarke is Vice Chairman of Operations, and President, Client Solution. He has visited Limerick many times over the years, but this was his first time to visit St. Mary's, and he was over-whelmed by all he saw and experienced.

Attached photo (above) shows, left to right: Agnes Lynch (Dell Limerick), Kieron Brislane (Dell Limerick), Jeff Clarke (Dell Austin), Tim Dwyer (Site Lead, Dell Limerick), Charlotte Logsdon (Dell Bracknell), Timmy Coughlan (Dell Limerick), Very Rev Sandra Pragnell, Dean of Limerick.

On Thursday 9th July, in St. Mary's Cathedral, a quarter-peal of 1260 Plain Bob Doubles was rung in 40 minutes.

On Saturday 18th July we enjoyed a tower outing on the Waterford and Suir Valley Railway.

Kieron Brislane.

LURGAN (Christ Church, Shankill): On Sunday 10 May 2015 fifteen minutes of call changes were rung after morning service to mark the seventieth anniversary of VE Day. The ringers were as follows: 1 Sandra Castles; 2 Denis Johnston; 3 Jill Castles; 4 William Dumigan; 5 Leslie Wylie (C).

From Campanophile.

ROSSCARBERY (St Fachtna's Cathedral): Ringing continues at the cathedral, and we have a beginner, Suzannah, who is making good progress. We have a newly-formed handbell group – Carbery bells – which is making great progress as seen by their rendition of “Edelweiss” available on Facebook.

Information from Martin Hough.

ROSTREVOR (St Bronach, Kilbroney): Bellringing in Kilbroney is returning!

For the best part of ten years there has been almost no ringing in Kilbroney, and the sound of the ringing bells is something that has been missed by the parishioners and the wider community. Although this was not universally so, there has been wide interest and strong support even from those residents right beside the bells in the local community, with several requests from local people who are not Church of Ireland members to become bell ringers. They and any other person from the local community with an interest will be made most welcome to explore and pursue that interest to become a bell ringer.

Since having rung in the New Year of 2015, at the inspired suggestion of Steven Toase who although currently living in Scotland was taught here, as all of us were, by the late Aubrey Wylie, interest in Kilbroney bells has increased. However Kilbroney will require to expand its current pool of ringers by recruiting those who can already ring to come back to bell ringing and by training new ringers.

To ring a bell, you do not need to be immensely fit and strong. Ringers do not have to be musical or good at maths, just well co-ordinated and with a sense of rhythm. It's all about technique. The bells rotate on ball bearings so only the friction has to be overcome. Some quite small children and elderly people ring perfectly well. It's a hobby you can begin as a child and continue into your eighties. The main purpose is to ring before Sunday service. All ringers must be prepared and able to attend practice on Thursday evenings at 7pm and ring on a Sunday morning. For training, a weekly practice is essential.

We are now looking at having a team of regular ringers, and have reconnected with the Irish Association of Change Ringers, Northern District, for continuing education, support and sharing their vast experience. Although Kilbroney is rather a long way from winning back the Cunningham Cup, we can always aspire to it! We know that previously new ringers were trained in 1950 and won the Cunningham Cup in 1954.

We now have established ringers: Ken Roberts, Shelagh Roberts, Steven Toase, Stewart Nash, Patric Harris, Geoff Henly and Joe Wylie doing their best to ring every Sunday. There are new learners, Brona McVittie, Victor Cirefice, Timothy Alexander, Jessica Griffin (14) Matthew Nash (13), and in the wings very new learners; Siobhain Trainor, Catriona O'Hanlon, Pauline Coffey and Noelle Coffey(13). Kilbroney expects great things from them!

There have been many others trained by Aubrey Wylie in his dedicated long span of service as Ringing Master and Conductor, and we are particularly interested in getting in touch with anyone previously fully or partly trained to encourage them back to bell ringing. The writers also express their individual and collective appreciation of all Kilbroney bell ringers to Aubrey Wylie and his memory.

We appreciate the assistance and encouragement we have received from: Jean Jeffery (Irish Association of Change Ringers), Margaret Dowd (Lyons), Joe Wylie and Geoff Henly, fellow members of the Northern District, and most importantly our parishioners and the local community.

The old handbells which hang in our ringing room have recently been restored by Martin Hough, and are as good as new (see below).



Kennedy Roberts

ASSOCIATION NEWS

At the May meeting of the Executive Council of the IACR two of our long-standing ringers were honoured for their significant contributions to the association. Leslie Taylor of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, and Alistair Jameson of Hillsborough were made life members of the association, and to them we send our congratulations.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The Irish Bell News for July 1965 reports that the Northern District Cunningham Cup competition at Ballymena yielded twelve teams, with the home team emerging as winners. Three teams competed for the Murphy Cup at St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. The winners were Mt St Alphonsus, Limerick, with St George, Dublin, and Ballymena second and third respectively.

BELLS IN THE MEDIA

BBC Newsline gave us some very steady ringing by the local band at St Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen, prior to the service to mark the two hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo.

The ringers of Rostrevor were heard on BBC Radio Ulster in the programme "Your Place and Mine". We heard the bells ringing call changes, followed by interviews with Sheila Roberts and the local ringers who have been working hard to get the bells ringing regularly again.

The Church of Ireland's Facebook page gave us a snatch of the bells of St Mary's Cathedral in Limerick ringing at the end of the service of enthronement of Rt Rev Kenneth Kearon as Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe.

QUARTER PEALS RUNG IN IRISH TOWERS

Bray (Christ Church) 15 January 2015 in 58minutes

1312 Brandau Surprise Major

1 Andrew W R Wilby	5 Michael J Pomeroy
2 Clive G Smith	6 Timothy P Bradley
3 Julia A Lysaght	7 Richard H Burton
4 Peter J Sanderson (C)	8 Brian P Diserens

To celebrate the 10th wedding anniversary of Brian and Geraldine Diserens, married in this church on 15th January 2005.

Limerick (Mount St Alphonsus) 22 January 2015

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1 Mark Thompson	4 Mike Pomeroy
2 Christy Pratt	5 Philip Talbot
3 Julia Lysaght (C)	6 Stephen Jordan

1st away from cover: 1

Cork (St Finbarre's Cathedral) 31 January 2015 in 44 minutes

1290 Doubles (60 Stedman Doubles, 1230 Plain Bob Doubles)

1 George Roberts	4 Liam O'Sullivan
2 Julia Lysaght (C)	5 David Galbraith
3 Ivan McCutcheon	6 Martin Dier

First Quarter: 6. For Martin Dier, leaving St Finbarre's after two and a half years of ringing, and for Jean Hamilton, ecologist and badger tracker.

Belfast (St Thomas) 7 March 2015 in 46 minutes

1260 Stedman Triples

1 Maud Lindsay	5 Gaurang Patel
2 Jean Jeffery	6 Michael J Pomeroy
3 Philip M Talbot	7 Alan J Ladd (C)
4 Julia A Lysaght	8 Geoffrey Bourton

First quarter of Stedman as conductor: 7

Drumbo (Holy Trinity) 8 March 2015

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1 Maud Lindsay	4 Philip Talbot
2 Geoffrey Bourton	5 Mike Pomeroy (C)
3 Julia Lysaght	6 Gaurang Patel

1st Minor: 2

Dublin (St Patrick's Cathedral) 22 March 2015 in 49 minutes

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1 Irene Stokes	4 David Taylor
2 Derek McEndoo	5 Peter McBride (C)
3 Gail McEndoo	6 Derek Waller

First attempt : 1.

Rung as a birthday compliment to Joan Murphy, President of the St Patrick's Amateur Society of Change Ringers.

Hillsborough (St Malachy) 19 April 2015 in 45 minutes

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1 Stan Scott	4 Daryl Jameson
2 Alistair Jameson	5 Simon Walker (C)
3 Gaurang Patel	6 Stephen Walker

Rung as a thanksgiving for the life of Harry Shortt (1941-2015), a much-loved ringer at this tower who died on Easter Sunday. First quarter for Stephen, Harry's son-in-law.

Hillsborough (St Malachy) 26 April 2015 in 48 minutes

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1 Jonathan Houston	4 William Chapman
2 Daryl Jameson	5 Simon Walker (C)
3 Gaurang Patel	6 Gary Patterson

A thanksgiving for the life of our friend Harry Shortt. Died on Easter Sunday.

Dublin (St Patrick's Cathedral) 7 June 2015 in 43 minutes

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1 Kathleen McEndoo	4 Robert MacDonald
2 Joan Murphy	5 Peter McBride
3 Gail McEndoo	6 Derek McEndoo (C)

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Guinness restoration of the Cathedral.

Dublin (St Patrick's Cathedral) Sunday 21 June 2015 in 56 minutes (45-1-18 in C)

1264 Plain Bob Major

1 Imelda Byrne	5 Alan Winter (C)
2 Nicola D Bright	6 Jonathan A Agg
3 Joan Murphy	7 Richard A Smith
4 Peter McBride	8 Martin J Bright

Rung before evensong in sorrow for Olivia, Eoghan, Eimear, Lorcan, Ashley and Niccolai.

Carrickfergus (St Nicholas) 22 June 2015 in 44 minutes

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 Alex T Nelson | 4 Alan J Ladd (C) |
| 2 Maud Lindsay | 5 Gaurang Patel |
| 3 Jean Jeffery | 6 William Chapman |

First Quarter Peal – 1

Limerick (St Mary's Cathedral) 9th July 2015 in 40 minutes

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 Gerry O'Shea | 4 Kieron Brislane |
| 2 Christy Pratt | 5 Mike Pomeroy (C) |
| 3 Philip Talbot | 6 Mark Thompson |

A thanksgiving for the life of Father Vincent Kavannah CSsR, Mount St. Alphonsus Limerick who died recently.