

## Belfry Bat July 2021

On Saturday July 4<sup>th</sup> I collected the repaired Madeley clapper, and it was fitted that evening. We rang six for the service on Sunday with a late change of band as Imelda was called in to work. In the afternoon I went to Cannock to ring a quarter peal for the ninetieth birthday of John Daubner. John was one of the team who built the mobile belfry, after which he used his engineering skills to implement some very useful modifications.

Monday had been designated as NHS Day, with a request for commemorative ringing in the evening. A slightly different band from Sunday rang, including a nurse, an NHS dentist, a nurse trainer and several patients. Ro came to listen, and was joined by four others, but unfortunately our ringing was not up to our usual standard. More work was done on the extension on Tuesday, and Ro spent some time moving books into the new shelves.

On Wednesday Ro came to the practice for the first time since lockdown and rang with no ill effects to her wrist. Good news! In the afternoon we had been visited by our friend Ray Ballard, here on a flying visit for his wife to attend a meeting. On Friday we started to move furniture into the extension. We rang six at Madeley on Sunday, and the ringing was good. On Wednesday July 15<sup>th</sup> we had what we hope will be our final limited-numbers practice. On Friday we were visited by our friend David Stott, who told us he was planning to go to a steam gala at Amerton Farm on Saturday, so we decided to go together. The farm is well known as a place to take children to see a variety of animals and enjoy a play barn, but it is also the home of the Stafford Narrow Gauge Railway Society, who have laid out about a mile of 2' gauge track where they run a number of industrial locomotives. On Saturday four were in steam, two of which had been made in Stoke and one in Stafford.

We rang five again on Sunday, and we were pleased with the ringing, not least because Ro demonstrated that she has not forgotten how to ring things she last rung in early 2020. I saw on the church web site last week that weekly services were going to resume on Sunday July 25<sup>th</sup>, but on Monday Steve Mellor phoned to say that the current fortnightly arrangements will be continuing. Disappointing, but it means we will be able to offer more help to Madeley.

For our first unrestricted practice on Wednesday July 21<sup>st</sup> there were eight in the belfry, a comfortable number and we had a good practice. I had planned to visit the Loughborough Bellfoundry on Thursday to see progress on the new mobile belfry, but once again Taylors asked for a postponement.

I was surprised to receive a parcel on Monday July 26<sup>th</sup>, as I hadn't ordered anything. But all became clear when I opened it - it was a gift from the AA to mark my 50 years as a member, a leather-bound road atlas. We had planned to host an outdoor gathering of the chapel non-students group on Tuesday evening, but the weather forecast was never good and it was called off during the afternoon. Another free gift arrived on Thursday, a rather nice wind-chime to Ro from a friend for whom she had done a favour.

On Friday I took the mobile belfry to the Cheshire Show. This is usually a three-day event in June, but had been re-arranged for one day this year following cancellation last year. Although rain had been forecast, it remained dry, which was a bonus. We rang only four on Sunday morning as a result of self-isolation for some and going to work for another. I hope our audience noticed the difference.

Phil Gay