

Belfry Bat November 2021

On November 1st the U3A croquet group met for coffee and on Wednesday the peal attempt was an awayday at Little Eaton, but we weren't successful. In the evening there were ten at the St John's practice, including Denzil from Betley, and we had a very good ring. On Thursday we went to Preston to pick up our refurbished cushions, which are very good. When we got home we went to the Offley Arms in Madeley for lunch. This was an exploratory visit in preparation for the Wednesday ringing group's Christmas lunch. The management were very keen to meet our requirements, but a final decision will not be made until we have been to the Old Swan in Madeley Heath for the AGM of Betley Croquet Club on November 9th.

Friday was a significant ringing anniversary. In 1821 a band in Yorkshire rang the first peal of Superlative Surprise Major, the most difficult method pealed at that time, so we decided to try to replicate it with our regular Wednesday band. We were able to use the same composition as was used in 1821, so our performance, which was successful, was an exact replica.

Saturday November 6th saw the monthly North Staffs Association meeting, which was at Rolleston-on Dove. It was well supported, and there was some good ringing. Ten of us turned up for ringing on Sunday morning but we were disappointed to discover that the service was at Silverdale, out of sequence presumably so that Remembrance Sunday can be at St John's. On Wednesday we failed to ring a peal in the garage, but once again had good practice with a quarter peal. In the evening there were only six at the practice, so we finished a bit early.

When we had lunch at the Old Swan on November 9th I discovered that they already had a party booked in for December 15th, so we confirmed the Offley Arms

There were eight on Remembrance Sunday at St John's, and as usual we rang half muffled. The degree of muffling seemed less than usual – perhaps we need a new set of muffles. I was unable to recruit a band for the garage on Wednesday morning, and we were also short in the evening, with only five at the practice. But this gave us an opportunity to attempt some things we wouldn't otherwise have had time for, so still a good practice. On Sunday November 21st we did some good four-bell ringing at Madeley, and in the afternoon we had our annual peal attempt for the Cumberland Youths' peal weekend. We had planned to ring eight, but reduced to six when one of the band tested positive. We didn't manage to ring a peal but did ring a good quarter peal, which was followed by an excellent supper prepared by Ro. The band included Neil and Alison Harvey from Sapcote in Leicestershire, who we got to know when their son Stephen was a student at Keele ten years ago.

There was no ringing in the garage on November 24th as we were setting off for a visit to family and friends in Suffolk, staying as we did in August in the Bury St Edmunds Premier Inn. On Friday we visited Colin and Myrna Richmond in Woodbridge, and on Saturday morning travelled back into increasing amounts of snow in time to have lunch with Eunice Mortimer at Barlaston.

We rang six on Sunday morning