

District Outing '06 – Bath

May Day came once more and this year the active members of the Portsmouth District set off west, it was a chilly morning, but not all that bad.

The first tower of this year's outing was Warminster, a decent size 8, at 24cwt. Being the first tower, ringing was not up to much, and the bells weren't the nicest but an okay start nonetheless.



Ringling at Norton St Philip

The second tower, in contrast, was a light 5 in a small Somerset village. Farleigh Hungerford. Here we started as the Bristol Rural Branch finished their ringing so the locals had the pleasure of hearing plenty of ringing. The ring was strange in as much as the 4th was heavier than the tenor itself. The treble was cast in 1999, and they were listed as a four in the 1976 edition of Dove so it is safe to assume they had been augmented. The bells were nice and lots of doubles didn't get too tedious, we slipped in a bit of May Day too, Plain Bob with Pinks Singles.

The third tower, and final before lunch, was at Norton St Philip, a 10cwt ring of 6. They were slightly rough but good fun and nice to ring. We were allowed up onto the roof where there were lovely views to be seen and the sun was coming out too, it was clear the weather was on our side as it grew into a nice day.

There were a number of pubs in the area, and I didn't hear of any people having a terrible lunch so I assume all went well. There was plenty of time for lunch which left enough time to have a nose around Bath before we clambered up the Abbey's tower.

The first 10 of the afternoon was at Bath Abbey. An anti-clockwise 33cwt 10 seemed a bit of fun to me when browsing Dove so it was only a matter of time before I arranged an outing there, and, being greeted with a long draught filled me with even more optimism! I tell a lie, it was all very serious and intimidating, as well as enjoyable of course. We rang some Cambridge amongst other things here and, hopefully, gave the people in Bath that day something nice to listen to.

Next a short walk back to where our cars were parked at Bathwick, the next tower, and another 10, this time 18cwt. Here we received a warm welcome from the late Robin Stubbs. They were nice bells and easier to ring than the Abbey, unsurprisingly. Thus even nicer ringing. Time seemed to race here, and before long we were all done and heading out of Bath to 'Bathsomething'.



Bath Abbey



***Some ringers' cars at Bathampton
& Richard Harrison's Dad on the bench***

A quick check of the programme to discover it was Bathampton a 7cwt 6, where Ian Carey rang his first peal. There was a bell up wrong for us which used up a bit of time, but we had plenty of it so all got a ring and headed off, slightly droopily in some cases, to the second to last tower, and another 'Bathsomething'.

Again a quick check of the programme to discover the name of the only the second, yet last, 8 of the day. Batheaston weighing in at around 13cwt. These were a nice 8 and the ringing was good. A nice ring as the day drew to a welcome close at the next 'Bathsomething'.

Hopefully the itinerary wouldn't be needed to work out the name of the last tower but it probably was in one or two cases, by process of elimination, we arrived at Bathford a 9cwt 6.

Another successful district outing which I hope was enjoyed by those who came. Rumour has it that next year we might be going near London, but I expect that will change several times before we get to May – any suggestions/requests?