

Bell Ringing Report 2018 – David Prest Deputy Tower Captain

“The bells they sound so clear.....A happy noise to hear” AE Housman

2018 was another very busy and enjoyable year in the tower and beyond. We were delighted to welcome two new ringers, Georgia Yarrow and Sue Taylor. All ringers have continued to develop their skills, with certificates awarded under the Learning the Ropes scheme to Alasdair Catmur Level 4, Georgia L1, Lynn Walton and Susanne Autenrieth L2, and Matt Machin L3.

Ten quarter peals were rung including six by all local bands. The QPs commemorated local and national events, including the retirement of Rev Catharine Furlong, 18th birthday compliment to Alasdair, the marriage of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. Without doubt the most poignant was ringing half muffled to commemorate the centenary end of WWI; this was dedicated to the memory of Arthur William Fuller, a Gransden ringer who was killed at Ypres, and the family members of current ringers who were engaged in the war. The Ringers offered an auction prize to the Gransden Ball, with a tower visit and a QP which commemorated the wedding anniversary of the winners' parents.

A group of Gransden ringers and ringing friends had a very enjoyable ringing tour in Warwickshire. As well as being a fun and sociable event, ringing in new towers is a very good for developing skills – not all towers are the same! We welcomed visiting ringers to St Bartholomew's, including groups from Basingstoke and Essex, and the Hunts District monthly meeting in October.

A team was entered in the Huntingdon District striking competition. Independent judges placed Gransden first in the advanced section, a very exciting achievement for the tower!

Social highlights included the “Ringers and Singers” party, thanks to the Georges for their kind hospitality on a lovely summer's evening, and the Christmas party at the Prests, complete with challenging quiz. Both were a great opportunity to chat about ringing among other subjects.

Essential maintenance to repair the clock hands was carried out in February by Cumbria Clock Company. Since then the clock, installed 1683, has again kept perfect time. Clapper adjustments to the bells was carried out by Whites of Appleton in May. The striking characteristics of the bells were measured in October, in anticipation of modifications to improve striking and raising the bells (especially No 5).

New ringers of all standards are very welcome, with training provided from complete beginners onwards. It is a fun and sociable activity, with public performances welcoming people to every church service. Regular updates about the bells and tower activities are reported on the website, <http://gransdenbells.btck.co.uk> and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/greatgransdenbellringers/> Have a look, or even better come and give ringing a try!