

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD
OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS



Newsletter
May 2009

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*It's nice to see reports from so many contributors this time.
Please keep this going by keeping notes of activities in your branch.*

*The deadline for the next Newsletter is : **30th August**
Please make a note of this date in your diary*

Please send your contribution either through your
Branch Press Correspondent or direct to :
e-mail : christopherpearson@btinternet.com or Tel : 01536 420822

THE PRESIDENT'S PIECE

Easter Saturday dawned grey with a bit of dampness in the air but at least it wasn't the snow and wind of last year. 17 walkers met at Morton with the majority doing a 6 mile walk at great speed and the other three a much more leisurely 4 1/2. We all met up at the pub at Morton for lunch where there were some muddy aperitions called cyclists.

Here are a description of two of them; 1 Black cycling leggings, shorts reminiscent of 'It ain't 'alf hot Mum', indeterminate coloured top, mud all down the back and rather wet in some strange places. 2 Practically immaculate off-white trousers, sweat shirt and no visible signs of being on a bike. There two male ringers live in the same town/village - Guess who?

There were about 30 cyclists altogether and after lunch they were off to complete their ride. I'm not sure who the oldest cyclist was but it might have been the one that inadvertently went over a fence minus cycle but the youngest was Toby Bence who I understand kept his companion at full stretch.

Many thanks everyone who came, all who sponsored, Sue & Sue for refreshments, and those who came to the pub to support.

We have already had a successful 6 - bell striking competition and I hope the 3 further events to be held this year will be as well attended.

Have a good summers ringing.

Brenda Dixon



News from the Branches

CULWORTH

RINGING AT HELMDON From Chris Klein - Wassink.

Since the completion of the new ringing balcony last August, the ringing progress in Helmdon tower has been very rewarding. There are currently seven learners at Helmdon, four of whom are now able to ring rounds and call changes, with the other three catching up fast. Saturday morning practices are well attended and are fun too. Recently we rang for a Wedding with six Helmdon ringers. The first time in many years that this has been possible, so there was much celebrating.

Joe Glenham, who is Tower Captain once again, has taught six of the learners from scratch, and He and I (Joe and Chris as in Christine), have had the invaluable help of Pam and Malcolm Taylor from Brackley, who volunteered to help from the beginning and we at Helmdon wish to thank them very sincerely as so much progress could not have been made without them.

Helmdon's next aim is to teach plain Hunt to those who are keen to learn this, and we shall shortly try to organize help with this. In the mean time, we are able to ring for Sunday Services (Not every week yet), but much more often than before.

The Ringing Balcony itself is a joy, and we are very fortunate that the basic construction was funded for us. There are some adjustments still to be made, e.g. changing the position of the fifth bell, and hopefully these finishing touches will soon be completed. Any way, smiling faces all round.

BODDINGTON UPDATE.

Christine Copeman informs me that the repair work on Upper Boddington Church tower has now been finished and paid for, and Boddington bells appeal group are now going all out to start the bell work in the Autumn.

Boddington appears to have been very lucky with the Kelttek Trust, who have found them a suitable new Treble Bell, which subject to Faculty approval of its removal from the Church at Bacup in Greater Manchester, they should be able to use. This has been a great boost to morale, as it will save them several thousand pounds. They estimate

that they need to raise in the region of £40, 000 . The Boddington Bells group are starting to apply for grants and they have a full programme of fund raising events for the rest of the year,. The major one being a Flower Festival over the weekend of 30th - 31st, May with many other attractions in the Churchyard and surrounding area.

RETURN OF THE CHACOMBE BELLS.

The news received from Michael Alcock at Chacombe tells the excellent news the " The Chacombe bells returned to the Village on Friday 6th March and were successfully re - hung in the tower on Monday 9th March. Many thanks to all those who assisted on the day, especially John Lewis. The re-cast Tenor bell with the inscription " In memory of Ted and Norma Garret," looked magnificent. The bells were test - rung by staff from Whites of Appleton and Chacombe ringers to celebrate what would have been the Golden Wedding Anniversary of Ted and Norma Garrett. The Service of Dedication will be held on Sunday 12th July at 4 .p.m.to which all are welcome."

BRANCH OUTING TO THE STRATFORD UPON AVON AREA.

On Saturday 21st, March around 20 ringers and friends set out on the " Claydon Fox ", mini coach to ring in five towers in the Stratford upon Avon area of Warwickshire.

The first tower was the very pleasant easy going six at Henley in Arden , where a good standard of striking was the norm. Also at Henley those who were sightseeing down stairs in the Church were treated by a fine organ recital , This talented organist , duely explained that she was " not very good ". The second tower was only a couple of miles away , being the 10 - 2 - 6 cwt six at Wootton Wawen. Again these bells were rung well. However the Church historians among us were soon attracted to the exhibition in the Church showing a model of how this amazing old Church would have looked in Saxon times. St. Peters, has retained much saxon and also some fine medieval work , as well as a little very good modern stained glass.

Next was the promptly served delicious lunch at the Bull inn in Wootton Wawen ,followed by a change of plan. Owing to a concert practice in Stratford Church the ringing there was having to be much earlier. The ten bells at Stratford were rung reasonably well (for us) ,with mainly rounds and call changes and plain hunt being rung. We were entertaining a large crowd od visitors who were enjoying a visit to Stratford on this



glorious spring day.

Alderminster was the next , newly scheduled tower, where having rung on the 12 - 0 26 ring of six, we were able to enjoy the fine display of primroses in the Chuchyard, and some chose to walk by the river stour.

Heading closer to home we arrived at Tysoe where Steadman and a good variety of methods as well as this Principle were rung very well on this majestic 12 -0 -18 six. Tysoe Church has a superb array of Kneelers all showing local scenes. And there is also some stained glass remembering the former village Fire station and its important role in village life.

Many thanks must go to Phil Curtis and Ian Chapple etc. for arranging such an enjoyable day out. and also to our faithful Driver Les Bodily.

LOIS WEEDON NEWS.

Phil Mansell writes that following the enjoyable Bellringing walk in the Autumn of 2008, where the Lois Weedon ringers did a circular walk from Everdon, Fawsley, Badby, Newnham and back to Everdon (ringing in the four towers along the way) . The tower is now planning their 2009 walk, perhaps around the Burton Dassett area in Warwickshire]and neighboring towers. They would therefore like to hear form any body who has organised similar outings in this area. Please contact Phil Mansell Tower Captain 01327860784 or email < philandmansell@hotmail.com >.

EYDON NEWS.

Ringling is still progressing well at Eydon , and Geof Stretton reports that Eydon ringers are now learning to ring a touch of Plain Bob Doubles. Also Eydon tower will be sorry to lose their promising young ringer, Verena Jackson who will be leaving in the Autumn to train as a Vet in Lincoln. (Verena hopes to ring in Lincoln).

BRACKLEY NEWS.

Brackley tower received the very sad news that Their long standing tower member David Bennet passed away on 28th, March having recently moved to the Swansea area. several Brackley and Green, sNorton [where David also rang], ringers travelled to Swansea Crematorium on 9th April to attend David,s Funeral. Before moving to the area, David was a former tower captain of Liverpool Cathedral. Brackley tower also rang another 1/4 peal which has become a tradition to do in St. Peter,s , prior to the Good Friday Service.



CHARWELTON UPDATE.

At the time of writing work is progressing to install Charwelton Bells. This work is due to be completed around the middle of May. The Service of Re- Dedication is planned to take place on Sunday 19th, July . The right Rev. Frank White, Bishop of Brixworth will be performing the rededication , which will take place at 3.p.m. All are welcome.

Graham White - Culworth Correspondent

DAVENTRY BRANCH

January

On January 1 a quarter peal was rung at Harpole of Plain Bob Minor, the first for Liz Moore and first inside and first for 30 years for Jane Bloomfield.

The first-Sunday quarter peal was Plain Bob Major at Whilton conducted by Jim White in 45 minutes.

There were 53 at Daventry on the afternoon of our AGM. All ringing was on ten bells as decreed by the branch ringing master. Michael Haighton took the service and played the organ - giving us a choice of tune for the last hymn. Six members were involved with the readings, prayers and resetting organ stops on the 'Father' Willis organ ready for the next hymns. The church was very warm on a day when the temperature did not rise above 0oC. All officers were re-elected and omitting Abigail Buck - now away at university, so was the committee. Elected as new members were Alison and Pat Milner of Braunston, Alan Rodhouse and Stella Lowe for Farthingstone. There were 18 ringing in the evening, which included valiant attempts at Cambridge and Yorkshire S Royal.

Byfield practice night on January 16 produced Alison Buck's first quarter peal of minimus – on the back 4, conducted by (four-bell addict but now augmented) Graham White.

On January 24, Geoff ran a plain hunting session in the morning at Braunston and Peter Wenham ran Grandsire Doubles in the afternoon. The temperature can be deduced from Peter asking to ring the tenor to warm himself up half way through the afternoon – after the hot tea!

February

The first-Sunday quarter peal was Rutland Surprise Major at Easton



Neston conducted by Ian Willgess and dedicated to the memory of Marion Gilbert of Napton who died earlier that day.

The February meeting was held at Bugbrooke and Duston. With the absence of the chairman, the business meeting was over in record time and nobody has given me any other interesting snippets to report!

Ten people attended the call changes training session at Braunston run by Peter Wenham in the morning of February 28 and 11 people in the afternoon - lowering & raising in peal at Flore run by Ian Willgess.

Byfield have bought a new set of pulley wheels to replace the moulded plastic ones into which ropes have worn severe grooves. Richard Hartley and I have kept contact with Brockhall –this year it is paths – the tower is yet to follow in their fund raising.

March

Braunston ringing has been through a period of physical upheaval by alterations to provide wheel chair access to the toilet and a refurbished kitchen. This also involved replacing the ladder to the loft with a new-fangled stair, enlarging the hatch opening on to the clock room floor and fitting safety gates. Clearance to ring on Mondays and Thursdays was successfully negotiated but nobody told Peter that the ringing room was to be redecorated and all notice boards, pictures etc would have to be removed! Peter reports that the dust has now settled (and been swept up) and we can enjoy the benefits of extra seating space because the flower arrangers' cupboards have gone. Braunston ringers are also resplendent in their new tower pullovers and shirts.

The first-Sunday quarter peal was Yorkshire Surprise Major at Husborne Crawley in 51 minutes, conducted by Ian Willgess on St David's Day. Our March meeting was at Kilsby. Due to a rope breaking on the previous Sunday, a brand new (well, 20 years old) unused rope which was very springy was in use on the second bell. 39 people rang from rounds to Stedman Minimus. The lower was followed by a service taken by Revd Peter Beresford complete with pictures of Bath Abbey bells and a peal board. Before walking through a snicket to the village hall, not previously known to several, the chairman was seen to hang a heavy bucket of sand on to the second rope, hoping that it would be fit for Pam to ring on Sunday week and it was. Tea was served by five ladies of the village in fine style. Alice did the vote of thanks before the Rector left with his 96 year old sprightly mother in law. The meeting dragged on because the chairman was back and there was a report on the GMC, not to mention a blow-by-blow account of organising the coach outing and the secretary's revenge



on the ringing master who had dared to criticise incorporating a six bell tower! Dan and Fliss Lister were elected new members from Daventry. Evening ringing at Crick was attended by 26 where ringing ranged from rounds to almost a whole course London S Major!

Revd Canon Michael Webber was licensed at Holy Cross, Daventry on March 9 as priest in charge and Team Rector designate. Ten bells were rung by 16 ringers before the service. This was the first time Hugh Johnson has been able to climb to the ringing chamber since June 2006. The new Rector spent an hour in the ringing room on practice night two weeks later. At Daventry tower AGM on March 17 Hugh Johnson remained tower captain with Richard Waddy and John Neale as deputies. New recruit Fliss Lister became secretary. Hugh thanked Richard for his work as secretary for over 30 years.

A week or so before the Daventry Team held their joint service at Ashby St Ledgers, village ringers John Davies and Adrian Weaver were trained to oil and check the bells and had a practice on them. Before service, the only ringers from the whole Team to brave these bells, and then not the tenor, were two Ashby and two Braunston ringers! On the same day, eleven, representing all Knightley parishes, rang at Badby for Bishop Frank's visit to the family service, which was attended by 27 children and 70 adults. In March the ringing rector of the Lambfold Benefice (which includes Farthingstone and Litchborough), Revd John Hall, was additionally appointed Rural Dean of Towcester.

Ron Woodward died on March 27 aged 84. Ron learned to ring at Daventry, then after service in the RAF he moved to Huntingdonshire for a career in local government. He retired back to Daventry in 1986 and rang regularly at Staverton, Badby and Daventry until his wife, Kath, died in 1999. In December 2000 Ron presented a glass liberty bell for use as a branch competition trophy. In recent years he has rung very little and he last rang after a wedding at Fawsley on September 20, 2003 when he chanced to be walking by with Dorothy, his partner.

On March 28 two more training sessions were held at Braunston: Plain Bob Doubles in the morning run by Peter and Plain Hunting in the afternoon by Geoff. Alison Milner struck her first blows of plain hunting

April

The first-Sunday in April quarter peal of Yorkshire Surprise Major was rung at Holy Sepulchre, Northampton and dedicated to the memory of Ron Woodward. Conducted by Ian Willgress in 44 minutes, it was Justin's first of Yorkshire for a long while!

Sally Thompson completed the training within the curriculum of the



remaining four year-six children at Staverton School and they received their certificates before Easter.

Our April meeting was brought forward to the first Saturday to avoid Easter eve. Fifty people were at Welton on a fine sunny but chilly day with 34 making the climb to ring. St Martins, the patronal method, was rung twice amongst a collection of call changes. Revd John Evans was successfully coaxed away from watching the Grand National to take a lively service and for a bite of tea before hoping to claim his fortune. With Cliff Mortimore at the organ there was some rousing singing. Harold Thompson had assembled a group of tea ladies under Rachael Horder's direction for a splendid tea. The meeting was entertaining with apologies from several absentees, the secretary for not having completed the minutes of the last meeting, the treasurer for not bringing gift-aid envelopes, and the secretary for the Ringing World not acting on her correction of the meeting date! Carol Summers of Hellidon and Dodford, Kath O'Connell and Kate Saynor of Kislingbury were elected members. Alison Buck (waving her elbow crutches) and Graham White eventually agreed that their joint outing to St Albans would be on August 22 which is not the Saturday before the Bank Holiday! In the evening 26 rang at Whilton and two attempts at London S Major were made! The area had a surfeit of ringing meetings this day. The

Coventry Guild rang at Staverton and Daventry and the Guilsborough Branch at Lilbourne, West Haddon and Long Buckby besides our two towers. This only attracted one visitor and some tower hopping by Guild Master Colin with Zoë and three Southam ringers.

Palm Sunday saw Hugh Johnson return as active tower captain at Daventry. There was a turn out sufficient to ring all ten bells! It marked the last day of Sue Merrett's (and Bella the dog's) sojourn. Since their initial mooring near Braunston at the turn of the year, Sue and Bella have been at Braunston on Mondays and Thursdays, at other towers and at Branch training sessions. Sue thanks Chris, Sally and Peter for land transport.

Congratulations to Heyford in coming third in the Spring Festival competition and Badby seventh. There was the usual large representation from our branch in those distant parts of the diocese. Six of us made a day of it by ringing at four more towers on the way.

Congratulations also to Michael Harding who successfully ran the London Marathon on April 26 to raise funds for cancer research in memory of his Mum, Joy.

Thanks are due to Tom Anderson who has completed our branch website www.daventrybranch.org.uk over the Easter holidays. Also thanks to Alex



Libby for facilitating the site and Hilary Aslett for the majority of tower photos. Now comes the discipline of keeping it up to date!

Geoff Pullin - Daventry Correspondent

GUILSBOROUGH BRANCH

To commemorate the Marriage of Alyssa Howard (of Marston Trussell Hall) and Stephen Probst, also a 49th Wedding Anniversary compliment to the Treble ringer and Donald C Johnson the following Quarter Peal was rung.

Marston Trussell, Northants. 30th Aug 2008. 1260 Plain Bob Doubles.

*Claire S Johnson 1, Janet M Armitage 2, Kelvin Broad 3,
David Townsend 4, Geoff D Armitage (C);*

The Marriage Ceremony took place at St Mary's RC Church, Husband Bosworth, and the Quarter Peal was rung as guests arrived at Marston Trussell Hall for the reception, all except the Treble ringer (from Lubenham) having just rung for a wedding at Welford - rather tight timing!

Geoff D Armitage (Tower Captain)

The Branch Annual Meeting at Guilsborough in January showed the usual attendance, ringing and service prior to tea and business meeting.

The service was lead by Michael Pettit who was meeting us for the first time. He was made very welcome. He assured us that he knew all about bellringers having been in Geoff Pullin's area prior to his move.

There was no change in the branch committee except the Ringing Master. Ken Rutland has done the job well for three years and has introduced some changes and new members. All his efforts have been greatly appreciated. He has produced a good programme for 2009 and Robin Wilson has returned to the position with shared support from Richard Johnson.

Richard has introduced the Lacey family who are making a valuable contribution to the ringing at Brixworth and the branch.

It is good news that Spratton have resumed regular practices on Wednesdays but not such good news that branch practices on Saturday mornings are not so popular.

Walgrave ringing has slowed up as one of the most enthusiastic members has had a baby which must take priority. we hope she will return when little one grows a bit.

unfortunately the weather conditions caused a cancellation of the February meeting but lost time was made up in March and April.



Four members of the branch took part in the sponsored ride and ramble. David Westerman and Robin Wilson took part in the cycle ride and Dorothy Westerman and Ken Rutland did the walk.

There had been some concern about Robin's health prior to the event but was declared fit enough to ride and made a good job of it including causing David some concern when he managed to lean on a fence which gave way resulting in Robin landing on the other side with his bike on top of him. Still no harm done and it's good to know that his back on form.

Lilbourne

Congratulations to John and Jan Alexander for getting the restoration scheme approved by the DAC; At last!

Dorothy Westerman - Guilsborough Correspondent.

KETTERING BRANCH

Following the Branch AGM the first committee meeting was held on 27th January at Chez Bence.

A full year of events were arranged to include the resurrection of the Striking Competition by popular request of a few members present at the AGM. A few outings, one of which will include a cycle run for those wishing to partake, the annual Bar-B-Q and the much enjoyed "Manic Beetle Drive." Basic Training will continue once a month at Rothwell when other events do not take it's place. February and March had training followed by evening ringing at Barton Seagrave and Cranford respectively. April training was replaced with an enjoyable afternoon of ringing at Brampton Ash with our usual tea and biscuits at "half time," kindly supplied, as always by Murray.

A few members, accompanied by friends and family, and of course our little dog Daisy and puppy Toby thoroughly enjoyed the Sponsored Rutland Walk. The drizzly weather at the start didn't dampen our spirits and several of our members had the challenge of cycling round. It seemed a huge event when we all met up at the pub for lunch and a well deserved pint of whatever. I believe Boris the Terrier was there somewhere with Liz Adcock, maybe inside enjoying his "doggy beer" (yes you can get it) whilst our two dogs enjoyed begging a beef lunch from Linda and Tom from Rushden Tower. Chris had his arm twisted by young Tom as he wants them both to hire a TANDEM next year, That one needs

thinking out very carefully.

A few of our members have rung their first quarter peals, Kate and Geoff Curnock, Barton Seagrave, Toby Bence and Jonathan Mc Coy, Rothwell and Jason Burt, Desborough. Congratulations to them all.

Our next Branch event will be a full day outing in the Huntingdon area, to be arranged by Michael Wallis our Branch Ringing Master. Unfortunately we shall be unable to support this as we shall be on holiday in Scotland for the week but hopefully will enjoy ringing at around six towers whilst there.

More news of the summers events in the September issue.

Until then, happy ringing.

Written on behalf of Chris by Frances J Pearson.

PS, Chris had all branch reports in by the deadline except Kettering Branch.

Whilst querying why he hadn't had it, I reminded him that HE was supposed to submit it. He had been so busy producing this newsletter, it slipped his mind so I stepped in. My apologies if I have missed out anything of importance.

Frances Pearson

NORTHAMPTON BRANCH

The Annual General Meeting was brought to a sobering close after a member raised the poor support for Branch Practices and events and the unwillingness of members to serve on the committee. He suggested the Committee should consider dissolving the Branch if the situation does not improve during 2009. As a consequence the first Newsletter of the new year contained details of the duties of the post-holders on the committee. It is hoped this will encourage enough Ringers to volunteer to form a full Committee next year and keep the Branch going for many years to come.

The AGM was held at Cogenhoe on 24th January with 21 Northampton Branch members present. Ringing started at 3.00 pm before the service taken by the Rector, Rev. Richard Stainer. Two members of the Church PCC had very kindly prepared a cooked meal which was very much appreciated on that cold day and many present were able to have scold helpings!

The Programme this year contains more practices and training than before, but the weather disrupted the first Special Plain Bob Doubles Practice, booked to take place at Broughton on 12th February. Three



brave people from Northampton travelled to Broughton and joined in the tower practice that evening, but when the Special Practice was reconvened on 12th March Broughton Ringers had the helpers all to themselves, so we spent a busy evening looking at Plain Hunting as well as Plain Bob.

The weather was kinder on 26th February for the monthly Branch Practice at Wootton and thirteen Ringers spent an enjoyable evening ringing a range of methods, even a reasonable course of Cambridge.

Everybody had been saving themselves for the Training in Raising and Lowering in Peal arranged for 14th March. Geoff Pullen was booked as our trainer and Abington Church as the venue. The first hitch was problems with the weather vane on Abington tower which caused ringing to be suspended for a time, so hasty telephone calls were made and Dallington very kindly came to our rescue. Then, only a week before, we realised there were 17 names down to attend. Geoff said this was too many for one tower and asked for a second tower to be arranged so that two trainings could run in parallel. The Rector of Cogenhoe agreed to let us ring there. Ian Wilgress very kindly stood in at short notice to run the Training at Dallington and Geoff and Carol came to Cogenhoe. The next problem was refreshment for Dallington, and to make sure the Dallington group had a cup of tea during the afternoon, Trevor Jarvis and

Colin Sampson were asked to swap towers (Trevor had the tea for Dallington). We all worked very hard at both towers and afterwards everyone said they had had a good afternoon. When 5 o'clock came one beginner at Cogenhoe even asked "do we have to stop now, I would like to carry on!" Before we left we had a group photograph taken at Cogenhoe. We are very grateful to Geoff and Ian and all the support ringers they brought with them for all their help and encouragement to Northampton Branch Ringers. We are looking forward to having Geoff back next March for a training in Kent Treble Bob.

A fortnight after the training we held our quarterly meeting at Duston. During the afternoon and evening 16 Ringers joined us. For the business meeting there were 15 members present. Ray Henman and Marcia Morgan have valiantly volunteered to come onto the Committee and we were pleased to welcome them back (they have both served on the Committee in the past). The Officers made their various reports and following the meeting ringing continued until 8 o'clock.

Dorothy Stopps - Northampton Correspondent



PETERBOROUGH BRANCH.

Peterborough Cathedral.

We continue to have good support at practices, in fact there were 25 people there last Monday (though 15 is probably nearer the average attendance). We ring every Sunday morning, and ring quarter peals for evensong twice a month.

Effort has been targeted at good ringing on higher numbers, and providing development opportunity for those who wish to come along. Significant recent events have been a quarter peal of Grandsire Caters, several of Bob Royal, two very pleasant quarter peals of Grandsire Cinques (so good that the Dean asked Christopher Groome who the visiting ringers were!), a quarter of Yorkshire S Royal, and a half course of Yorkshire S Maximus. Plain courses of Stedman Cinques are succeeding more often now.

We rang handbells in the Queensgate Shopping Centre in support of the Cathedral's heritage stand, and we look to the future with optimism.

Robin Rogers

Glinton Tower News

Easter week, in particular Maundy Thursday always denotes our AGM evening. Instead of meeting to ring, Holy Week also signifies a meeting for bells' business and our annual social event – the dinner. This is a hugely convivial event, this year being held in Glinton itself, attended by past and present ringers, spouses, partners and friends. The business in hand was dispensed with fairly rapidly, although mention was made of a new “stepped” approach to practice night timings.

We continue to be fortunate in attracting a goodly number to Thursday evening practices, but progressing further in ringing is still proving a challenge. No doubt the swift progress achieved by our newcomers will mean they are soon going to leave some of us behind. It was inspiring to be joined for Easter Day by some who had only started ringing in September 2008. It is super to see such enthusiasm; let's hope it continues and strengthens.

Gill Cowcill



Bulwick

Once again we have successfully mixed business with pleasure. At the end of January three couples went off on a saga weekend to the Docklands Hilton! We were impressed by the friendliness and efficiency of the staff and the swift service of the Thames Clipper. We enjoyed a leisurely drive to London stopping off at Leighton Bromswold for lunch en route. We spent Saturday in the city walking across the top of Tower Bridge, visiting a museum interspersed with visiting points of interest in the Camra Guide. We ended up in Convent Garden for a meal before returning to our hotel. Sunday saw us in Brick Lane at a market where Derek came away with a bargain supply of super glue and the Burgess' with enough oranges for marmalade. We finished the weekend away with a pub lunch near Duxford.

We celebrated Derek's birthday with a meal at home. The first attempt had to be postponed due to the snow, but we succeeded on Valentine's night as no one in the band was being taken out for a romantic meal for two! As is our tradition every one mucked in providing starters and puddings so the hosts only had the main course to provide.

We once again provided refreshments on Easter Saturday for the intrepid bike riders at Rutland Water, but I don't think Andrew will position himself under a tall tree next year. The birds rather liked the back of his waterproof! Practices are well attended and we welcome our regular visitors. We were very pleased to host the Guild Spring Meeting and six bell striking competition, and were delighted to be runners-up.

Sue Jones - Peterborough Correspondent

RUTLAND BRANCH

The New Year began auspiciously with 27 ringers taking part in the New year's Day Quarter Peals with 5 successfully rung. Our ringing master, Christopher O'Mahony, celebrated his 400th quarter peal as conductor and Michael Pollard conducted his first. A quarter of Rutland Surprise Major was rung in March and a special birthday for Tony Clark was celebrated with a variant of Grandsire Doubles composed by 2 of our junior members.

Our AGM was a happy affair at Haringworth, but sadly Richard Beadman resigned as chairman due to pressure of work, The Branch owes



Richard a great deal; as master for many years and then chairman, he has patiently taught and encouraged many Rutland ringers, often missing meals in order to be at practices. Without Richard there would be many fewer ringers in Rutland. Our new chairman is Richard Moore and we have an enthusiastic committee.

The annual dinner in March was well attended and very successful. Several learners recruited in the Autumn are now into Plain Hunt and Easter Day saw the latest recruit ring her first rounds as a 'Sunday Ringer'. Saturday practices have not been as well attended as we would like, but we were pleased to enter 2 teams for the Guild Striking Competition. The challenge this year will be to train trainers, as the beginners' training sessions are becoming overcrowded.

David Couldwell - Rutland Correspondent

THRAPSTON BRANCH

Our New Year started with ice, snow and freezing temperatures as well as a very well attended A.G.M. at Thrapston. The ringing was of an excellent standard as was the hot and much appreciated supper afterwards.

A few changes to the committee were agreed at the business meeting including Ted Buckby and Ray Banner swapping roles as Ringing Master and Deputy. A provisional programme for monthly meetings was outlined, although the persistent winter weather prevented the Branch meeting at Raunds in February.

Since then Brigstock and Tichmarsh have both provided very purposeful and well-attended Saturday meetings, and with the striking competition in mind, Ray Banner organised an evening 8-bell practice at Woodford, which is hoped to be the first of many.

Ringstead St. Mary's now has new ropes and the village as a whole, has been very pleased to hear the bells rung again, by both local and visiting ringers.

The Branch is continuing to encourage new ringers with beginners progressing well at Wadenhoe, Woodford and Thrapston and as a Branch we are looking forward to our Summer outing in the Sharnbrook area of Bedfordshire and hopefully improving our placing in the Striking Competition.

Thrapston St. James' is also looking forward to welcoming their new



Rector to the combined benefice of Thrapston, Denford and Islip on May.12th.
Alison Byrnes - Thrapston Correspondent

TOWCESTER BRANCH.

Although it seemed so long ago, the mists of time have not yet clouded the memories of the Towcester Branch members, guests and friends who enjoyed the joviality and tale regaling during our Annual Dinner, again held at the Walnut Tree Hotel, Blisworth. Such events always serve well as catalysts for the proverbial team building, which in the case of the Towcester Branch was compounded at the AGM in January, afternoon ringing and service at St John's Wicken preceded sumptuous teas, formal meeting and evening ringing at St Nicholas' in Potterspurty, whole hearted thanks to the merry band of caterers. The highlights of the meeting included the re-election of Chris Bulleid as our very pro-active and supportive Chairman but this was surmounted by the proposal and acceptance of Lizzie Campbell-Preston as a new member and we would all like to welcome Lizzie to the fold.

In accordance with the Calendar of events for 2009, in which the first Saturdays of the month hold a special treat, an arranged Branch ringing practice was hosted by the band at St Bartholomew, Greens Norton in February. Further Branch ringing was also undertaken at St Michael and All Angels, Ashton, during their regular Tuesday practice on the 24th March. Thank you to the hosting bands for their support.

As I write, the eagerly awaited annual ringing outing looms when on Saturday 9th May, the Branch members hit the road to the region of the Leicestershire/Derbyshire border. The highs (and hopefully not too many lows) shall be reported in due course.

Fuller details of the people and branch activities can be found at any time on the *Towcester Branch website www.towcesterbranch.org.uk*
Andy Hartley - Towcester Correspondent

WELLINGBOROUGH BRANCH

The ringing year has started on a high note, with attendance and interest remaining high. Our new treasurer took over at the AGM having served the last 12 months as "treasurer in waiting" and vacancies to the



committee were filled by new volunteers. It is good to welcome new tower representatives on to the committee and we hope they will enjoy the experience and stay for some time.

Since the A.G.M, training and surprise practices have taken place and again I can report that attendance was excellent and all levels of ability have taken advantage.

Following on from this, congratulations go to Rushden who entered the six bell striking competition at the Spring Festival on April 25th. A total of 8 teams entered and I understand that Rushden enjoyed a clear win from their nearest rivals Bulwick.

With all the positive news, one must ask why the quarter peal day was a disappointment. Only 24 ringers made themselves available and eight attempts took place, of these 5 quarters were successful. Within this, one ringer Marcus Green of Grendon rang his first quarter, our ringer master Alan Marks called his first Stedman after all these years` and 4 members rang Double Court Bob minor for the first time. Well done to all who entered and particular congratulations for those achieving a “first”.

Plans are well under way for the mini tour on 20th June and we shall be heading over the County boundary to Warwickshire. The plan is to visit 4 towers and final arrangements will be available on the web site nearer the time. It is always an enjoyable day and ringers of all standards from any of the branches are most welcome.

The committee have decided that a change is needed for the business meetings as there has been a low turn out for many of the church services. Ringers seem to come for the initial ringing or arrive for the meeting which takes place after the service. It has, on occasions been quite embarrassing when the vicar and organist are asked to prepare a service and the congregation does not go into double figures. Therefore, the format for the May and September meeting will be a practice from 3.00 to 6.00 p m and ringing will only be interrupted for tea and biscuits and a short meeting to address any immediate issues such as new members, first quarter certificates, financial considerations. The committee will be monitoring this change and reviewing its effect, so if you have any comments or suggestions please contact our Secretary with your ideas.

The following practices are planned for the next few months:-

- May 16th** am Sharnbrook Surprise and
3.00 p m Irchester Branch Practice.
- June 20th** Mini outing



June 27th am Higham Ferrers Surprise
July 13th Branch striking competition at Mears Ashby
Sept 12th am Wicken Surprise and
7.00 p m Wollaston Branch Practice.

Full details are on the web site www.wellingboroughbranch.org.uk

Visitors and friends are most welcome to come to all or a few, for the entire practice or part. Look forward to seeing you there.

Tanya Clayton - Wellingborough Correspondent

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER'S PIECE

I keep the diocesan website www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk, Cross Keys and diocesan magazine resource advised of our Guild events. Please don't forget to get advance information to your church magazine, local newspapers, local radio etc of special ringing activities in your branch and tower. It lets the population know that bellringing is alive, well and the thing to do!

As I mentioned at the Spring Festival meeting, we have again been asked to take part in the second Northamptonshire Healthcare Trust Festival of Wellbeing which will be taking place for about four weeks from June 21, 2009. Last year the information didn't get into the Newsletter and I passed information to branch ringing masters. Last year, our participants entry read:

We are a guild of church bellringers covering the diocese of Peterborough of which nine of our 10 branches cover the whole county. Our aims are: ringing for Divine Service; recruiting and training ringers; encouraging the art of change ringing; helping ringers to improve the standard of ringing; care and restoration of bells and their fittings. The physical action of ringing a bell is a gentle exercise requiring coordination of eyes, ears and hands. The different "methods" that we learn are useful in keeping minds alert and active. The social side of our gatherings are helpful, especially to people living alone. Our members range from 8 years old to 85 years plus.

It won't cost us anything, the festival is not about raising money, just public awareness about activities beneficial to physical and mental health, so please try to advertise some ringing event, it need not be anything out of the usual. Practice night, open tower evening, dedicated quarter peal or peal, would be suitable examples. Please advertise well in advance with a contact name, so we can show off our

exercise as a way to wellbeing and perhaps gain a recruit or two! Please incorporate the name of Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers and remember our logo badge is available to copy from www.pdg.org.uk.

If you let me know in advance of any relevant event and I will ask the organisers to include it in their advertising and website.

On another matter altogether - does anyone know of the whereabouts of any records of the Towcester & District Association, the Daventry District Association (was there one?) or Weedon and District Bell Ringers' Association please? My enquiry has been sparked off by information found and needed for the CCCBR memorial records of bellringers killed in the World Wars.

I have already transcribed records from local towers of competition ringing by the Weedon association between 1908 and 1927 in Dodford, Everdon, Litchborough and Weedon towers.

Geoff Pullin

SPRING FESTIVAL 2009

The Peterborough Branch arranged for general ringing on the fine millennium six at Easton on the Hill to start the day on April 25, although a hardy few from the west had made it a day out by ringing at four more nearby towers. Afterwards the draw took place at Bulwick, in fine sunny weather, for the order of ringing in the six-bell striking competition.

There were eight teams representing a tower each from across the diocese. The home team rang first, so that they could deal with the catering! At quarter-hourly intervals the others took their turn at releasing the butterflies from their stomachs and shaking of the knees. Everyone completed the allotted task. Whilst the judge reviewed his notes, the competitors and supporters, now replete from the splendid running buffet supplied by local ringers in the snug village centre just across the road, assembled in the south aisle for a formal meeting, chaired by our President, Brenda Dixon.

After the 100-club draw, the meeting agreed to make bell fund grants to East Haddon of £2,800 and to Higham Ferrers for £3,600 for improving bell fittings. This was followed by notices of future Guild events. It was announced that evening ringing would be at Weldon instead of Oundle due to a clashing concert and that the Guild was



participating in the second Northamptonshire Healthcare Trust Festival of Wellbeing in June. A comprehensive vote of thanks was made to the organising branch and tower by Ivor Dicken.

Guild Master, Colin Lee, thanked all the participants and pointed out that even those coming last were followed by many teams who failed to even enter the competition. Colin introduced the judge, Matthew Tosh, ringing master at Bristol Cathedral, who gave some comments on the speed and characteristics of each test piece. He then announced the positions in reverse order:

Harringworth

Badby

Uppingham

Rothwell

Desborough

Heyford

Bulwick

Rushden

and presented a certificate to each team and the Weaver Shield to Simon Dixon on behalf of the Rushden team. The ringers in the winning team were Sarah and Jim Hedgcock, Brenda Dixon, Bob Whitworth, Simon Dixon and Alan Marks.

Afterwards Weldon ringing room was packed with many ringers and an overflow in the church. Ringing was under the Master's direction and included Plain Bob Triples, Erin Triples and 8-spliced surprise major.

A good day out for around 60 members. What would attract a few more teams and supporters?

PRO



100 CLUB

New members are always welcome - and needed - to ensure a boost to the bell fund. Nearly half of the 12 pound annual subscription goes to the bell fund, so an easy way to support the work of the guild and a chance to win cash prizes.

Branch coordinators can take your money and pass it on to me.

Winning Numbers

I only give the winning numbers as a rule, (some wish to remain anon. data protection!) but have included the branch as well.

October: 25 (W) 45 (P)

November: 58 (N) 50 (N)

December: 49 (N) 11 (W)

January: 83 (K) 48 (G)

February: 132 (G) 71 (P)

March: 93 (K) 134(W)

April: 10 (N) 80 (P)

Derek Jones.

GUILD ARCHIVIST

At it's meeting in March the Guild Management Committee decided that there was a need for a Guild Archivist and as I had volunteered they asked me to take on the role.

I see the need as someone to whom any historical material that is at risk of loss or has no home can be sent to then be lodged with the existing Guild Archive in the County Record Office at Wootton. Situations I have already experienced are a tower being cleared out and a non ringing relative not knowing what to do with a ringers records.

I do not see it as an attempt to deprive towers of their archives I feel strongly that these should be retained in the place where they are most relevant, though it might be of interest to know of their existence.

The contents of our Archive are currently published in the Annual



Report. In anticipation of the Archive expanding it would seem that the place for this list to be available should be the Guild's website where it could be updated regularly.

So if you have anything or know of anything, I can be contacted at:
18 Sheep Street, Wellingborough NN8 1BL, tel/fax 01933 225848
(answer phone always on) or h@aitch.org.

Denis Pearson



GUILD SPONSORED RIDE/WALK RUTLAND WATER



SATURDAY 11TH APRIL
2009

Have you looked up www.pdg.org.uk lately ?



Latest and recent **Guild Newsletter** are there for all to read



There is a list of **Guild Officers**



The all-branch calendar shows regular **surprise major practices**



There are direct connections to **branch** and other **ringing websites**



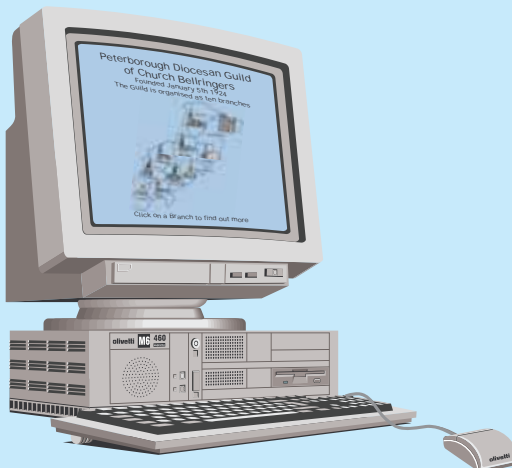
There is a section to help **tower publicity**



There is now a section about the **Bell Fund**



There is a copy of the **Guild Badge** for documents or posters



GUILD EVENTS 2009

13th June

Guild AGM - Rutland Branch

Afternoon Ringing - Preston (6) 2.30 - 3.15pm

Uppingham (8) 3.15 - 4pm.

Service - 4.00pm SS Peter & Paul, Uppingham.

4.45pm - Tea & AGM in Uppingham Town Hall.

Evening Ringing - Uppingham (8) 7.30 - 9.00pm

19th Sept

Guild Summer Festival - Kettering Branch

4.00pm - Eight-bell inter-branch striking competition
at Rothwell (on the back 8 bells)

Evening Ringing - Desborough (8)

31th Oct

Guild Quiz - Daventry Branch

Question Master: Hilary Aslett.

7pm for 7.30pm start. Teams of four,

£5 per person including buffet.

Please bring your own drink!

Venue: Weedon Village Hall, West Street,
Weedon NN7 4QU.

Lat. 52.22849, and Long. -1.08457.



