

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS



Newsletter
March 2010

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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

I hope 2010 has started well for everyone and that it continues to be a good year.

Nine of the ten branches managed to hold their AGM's in January despite the weather and the other one was held in February. I went to four, which was interesting with the same discussions coming up several times.

Several things occurred to me during my visits.

(1) Bellringers can put on a very good tea whether it's a traditional ringers tea, soup with sandwiches and cakes tea or jacket potatoes with hot toppings followed by cake or pudding.

At least one of each of the above came my way.

(2) All had a service with good singing and with thought provoking talks at three of them. At the fourth no one came to take the service so one of the members led it.

(3) There is a limited number of members who are prepared to help run the branches.

(4) Most branches wonder how to get more people to meetings, this has led to some branches having many fewer ringing opportunities.

Is this the way to go?

I hope many of you will ring peals or quarter peals to welcome our new Bishop, Donald Allistaire, who will be installed on April 17th. I have had an invitation to this as president and have accepted on behalf of the Guild.

Happy ringing,

Brenda Dixon.

P.S. Still looking for a Master and a Secretary.

News from the Branches

CULWORTH

HOLIDAY TO NORTHUMBERLAND AND NEWCASTLE 22ND - 26TH SEPTEMBER 2009.

On Tuesday 22nd September 2009 , 12 local ringers set out from Whitfield, Brackley, Eydon, Helmdon Badby and Charwelton towers for the annual ringing holiday, this year based at Alnwick in Northumberland . The first tower enroute was is the attractive south Yorkshire village of Sprotborough near to Doncaster.

After watching pork pies being moulded and buying other delights from the local butcher,s shop, a good standard or ringing was achieved on the pleasant 8 1/4 cwt ring of 8 bells at St. Mary's Church.

The next tower was Brancepeth , five miles to the west of Durham, where St.

Brandons church was devastated by fire in 1998 . This sis also the home of the Durham University Society of ringers, where the tuneful 14 - 1 - 13 ring of 8 bells , had to be rehung with some being re - cast after the fire . The ringing here was good , and all present were interested to see the work still in progress in the Church.

The Alnwick Lodge hotel was our base. a Farm house and barn yard, where the barns had been quirkily converted into accommodation, using antiques and restored fittings. Ironically phil had a tiny room with a very imaginative bath indeed.

Wednesday morning saw a visit to the Alnwick Castle Garden, after which a pub Whitley Bay was the first tower of the day. Following a good pub lunch, and a walk on Whitley,s scenic sea front , we proceeded into Newcastle.

Having walked across to Gateshead on the new Millennium foot bridge the 31cwt 8 at St. Mathew,s was the first tower.

Here the ringing was kept very simple but the striking remained good. It was a pleasure to meet a former Charwelton resident and life - long friend of Graham who lives opposite the Church, Brigid O, Conor.

We proceeded then to all that remains of St. Stephen,s low Elswick , the massive Tower and spire to ring the majestic 27 1/2 cwt 8 bells.

Again we settled down very well, partly helped from the professional advice of David Hird.

David then guided us to St. Nicholas, Cathedral , an interesting 37 - 2 -17 ring of 12, . When asked to climb on the Tenor box, Graham feeling a touch of sudden vertigo , asked Chris Klein Wassink to hold his legs, This did not happen, and he is still reminded of this request.

finally to lighter things , St. Johns, a 11 cwt 8. This is the Newcastle University tower, and home to much great ringing. Again much enjoyed by all.

Thursday morning took us west into Coquetdale where the pretty country town of Rothbury was our first destination. The 13 cwt 8 at All saints were easy going and steadman triples was rung well here.

The next tower , which is run by a former Brigstock ringer , was a fairly new 6 1/2 cwt 6, augmented from 3. all very modern and much enjoyed .

Heavier stuff was to come , and at St. Oswyn's, Church in Wylam On Tyne , Carole Pullin had to come to Graham,s rescue who failed to pull off the 22cwt tenor of this ring of 6.

Hexham Abbey followed a nice pub lunch at Horsley, This ring of 10 bells again was much enjoyed [tenor 21 - 1 - 16 ,] All present finding ringing here a great pleasure.

Newburn on Tyne was the next tower, here St. Michael's Church had recast its 8 bells and replaced part of its roof owing to a fire. The 8 - 9 - 22 ring of eight are very sweet and tuneful , and were rung well. The preparations for a flower festival in the Church were almost complete.

This was a truly magnificent sight to see , there is much talent here. Sadly, John Lewis , having mislaid his glasses. had gone back to Wylam to search for them , thus missing ringing at 2 towers.

The final tower of the day was the Morpeth Clock tower, these bells again are well cared for, and very close to the shop fronts, and so good striking here was essential.

Friday morning took us north to Berwick on tweed. Again this is a secular tower, where the bells hang in the tower of the town hall . At Berwick good ringing is also essential, as the approach to the ringing room is via the old prison cells. This tower has a fine sounding 20 - 3 14 ring of 8 . The remaining part of the morning was spent on Holy Island [Lindisfarne] before proceeding to ring at Bamburgh . The 8 bells at St.Mary's were again easy to ring , [I think that Joan even rang here]. The great attraction to most however was the tomb of Grace Darling in the Church yard., and the magnificent Castle towering over the town .

The last tower of the day was Embleton , where the 6 bells had fairly recently been re - hung , the best touch here was the simple Reverse canterbury doubled. Cambridge surprise minor rolled around nicely also .

Dinner that evening was at the Alnwick Castle tree house, a very stylish restaurant which is built among the trees close to the Alnwick Castle garden. The journey home was broken by the chance to ring on the superb 20 1/2 cwt 8 at Tadcaster in North Yorkshire. Here we were entertaining those attending the Church duck race on the river near by. Many thanks must go to Ian and Sara Chapple, Julie Blencowe and phil Curtis for organising another super holiday.

BODDINGTON UPDATE.

News from Christine Copeman. -

The good news is that Taylors are starting work on the week commencing 12th April. The bad news is that Boddington may not have the second hand bell which the Keltek trust found them, as the removal from St. Saviours Church in Bacup has been held up due to the first contractor going into administration , and therefore all the permissions, Faculties etc. are having to be re-applied for. If this bell is not available, which seems unlikely, then Boddington bells committee will have to raise an extra £4000 for the cost of a brand new bell.

However work will be starting in April come what may, and is due to take 8 - 10 weeks .

MORETON PINKNEY

Moreton Pinkney are practicing on Thursday evenings, and at present these practices are proving very successful.

A.G.M.

Despite the bad weather the A.G.M did take place on 16th January at Brackley , instead of the proposed venue, Aynho. There was a business meeting only in the Church Rooms followed by light refreshments. The officers remained unchanged , with Martin Rowling as President, Phil Curtis as ringing master , and Nick Chatt as the assistant, with the suggestion that Angela Whitfield of Eydon may be interested in taking care of the northern end of the Branch . Vivienne woodward was also re-elected as Secretary , with Joe Glenham and Michael Scott as steward. Richard Gale remains Treasurer with Graham White as the News letter correspondent , and Anne Berrington being the independent examiner. etc. Many thanks were given to all the hard work given by all of the various officers during the past year. Congratulations to Helmdon for being this years winners of the Presidents cup, which was presented to Helmdon,s tower captain, Joe Glenham.

THIS YEAR BEING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BRANCH , there will be a Branch dinner on Saturday 17th, July at the Red Lion Pub in Culworth . Also this years annual outing on Saturday 20th, March will go to the Marlow - Henley on Thames area.

QUARTER PEALS

Four Quarter peals have been in our Branch since the last newsletter. Firstly, at Whitfield on 16th September, 1260 Grandsire Doubles was rung , The ringers were as follows :- Ann Widdowson , Treble, Sheila Brown 2, Sara Chapple 3, Julie Blencowe 4, Ian Chapple [Conductor,] 5 Paul Bennett 6. Rung to celebrate the award of an MBE to Alister Widdowson, son of the treble ringer.

Also at Whitfield on 31st December, 1260 Grandsire & Plain Bob Doubles , Ann Widdowson Treble, Sara Chapple, 2, Ian Chapple 3, John Lewis 4, Philip Curtis, Conductor, 5, Re.d, Will Adams 6. Rung to celebrate the marriages of Kelly Edwards to James Adams, and Sian Adams to Wayne Mc Corkell.

Also on 2nd, January, 1260. Grandsire & Pb Doubles . Ann Widdowson Treble, Sara Chapple 2, Philip Curtis 3, Julie Blencowe 4, Ian Chapple [c] 5. Rev.d, Will Adams 6.

To Celebrate the births of Lucy and Tom Blencowe [Twins], Alexandra [Sasha] Widdowson, and Ruby Henley, Grand Children of 4,1 and 6.

Also at Sulgrave on 24th February , 1260 of Pb Doubles , Treble , Sara Chapple, 2 Ian Chapple,3 Hillary Aslett, 4 John Lewis , 5 Philip Curtis and Hywell Lloyd 6, Conducted by Philip Curtis .

Finally A Quarter peal of Plain Bob Minor was rung at Whitfield on 24th, February, 1, Sara Chapple, 2, Joan Lewis, 3, Ian Chapple 4, Julie Blencowe 5 Philip Curtis , 6, John Lewis. Conducted by Ian Chapple. Congratulations to all who took Part .

CHACOMBE.

We end our good wishes for a speedy recovery to Chacombe's, Tower Captain, Michael Alcock, who has just been able to start back to work part time , following a recent Heart Attack.

Graham White - Culworth Correspondent

DAVENTRY BRANCH

MEETINGS

Our September meeting was at Kislingbury, now with a splendid toilet

facility in the north aisle. Richard Hartley chaired the meeting because the chairman and ringing master were ringing for a late wedding. Gaynor Yates was elected a new member for Hellidon and £150 was voted towards new ropes for Whilton. There were 14 at Holy Sepulchre, Northampton in the evening, but one short for Superlative which Mary Horsley had spent the afternoon revising.

There were six teams for Alan Marks and Brenda Dixon to judge at our five-bell striking competition at Hellidon in October. The collection raised £75.75 for the Guild Bell Fund. Teas made a profit of £99 for the stained glass window repair fund. Weedon won the Ron Woodward trophy, with Badby as runners-up. Later, 12 rang at Southam followed by a 'welfare' stop at The Countryman, Staverton.

The chairman and ringing master also missed the November meeting. Tea was in Byfield church benefitting from the new heating system. Money was voted to Byfield, Staverton and Dodford for ropes and repairs. Evening ringing was moved to Whilton because Cropredy could only offer their simulator.

Great Brington attracted 30 in December before 41 assembled at Heyford for ringing, tea, meeting and the carol concert. The meeting was short, despite the chairman, but time was filled by drawing sixteen prizes for the

branch bell fund raffle raising £44. The Revd Ann Slater led prayers and started the programme, prepared by Janet and printed by Gwynneth, which flowed through 11 carols and 13 performances. The Braunston sketch highlighted Alice the computer and the Heyford one, three burly health and safety inspectors who dampened the carols sung sweetly by Shirley and Sarah Waterhouse. A tall disgruntled elf from Byfield incited us to Unite! Hugh and Deena served mulled wine with mince pies, afterwards.

The annual general meeting, postponed from January due to treacherous frozen roads, was held at Braunston in February. Forty three attended the service, led by Rev Claire Rose-Casemore and accompanied by Michael Haighton on the organ. A good tea was served in the vestry by the local ringers. Officers and committee were thanked, especially retiring members Tom Anderson (website) and Jill Harvey for their work and a presentation of Bells was made to Ted Garrett to mark his retirement from the branch committee – *see photo by Colin Anderson*. Ted joined the Guild in 1946, was on our committee from 1954, branch ringing master from 1960-2, branch chairman 1964-89 and committee member again from 1993 and branch rep. for the Guild 100 Club. Ted, still the Guild's Peal Secretary, was made a Life Honorary



Member by the Guild in 2004. Graham White had his moment of glory in the chair and the officers were re-elected and additional branch committee members are now Dan and Fliss Lister, Gwynneth White and Alison Willgress. Two items enlivened the gathering. The branch ringing master described the afternoon's ringing as appalling, and Ian Calvert raised the retired members subscription rate. Apologies were given to Peter Clifton who had put the lights out at Long Buckby when the first of 14 of us arrived late for evening ringing.

QUARTER PEALS

Did you see the article in the Ringing World about the learner who discovered that what she had heard for some time as 'court appeals', turned out to be quarter peals!

Everdon bells were very active last Autumn. The village band rang a quarter peal for a christening on September 13. Rhona Anderson conducted Plain Bob Minimus (first as conductor) with Alex Libby ringing his first quarter - on the tenor behind. Anne Ford, Colin and Rhona Anderson rang Grandsire Doubles on Trafalgar Day, conducted by our Guild President. On October 4 there was a traditional harvest quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles rung by friends of the late former tower captain and branch steward, Chris Dalton, conducted by Chris Pickford. Then Rhona was inactive for three months after an operation on her foot!

A quarter peal of Grandsire Triples was rung in thanksgiving for the life of Jan, Peter Clifton's wife, on September 4 at Weedon by friends and conducted by Colin Lee. The start was somewhat delayed by your correspondent being at the wrong tower at the wrong time! A branch quarter peal of Yorkshire Surprise Royal was rung at Daventry and in memory of Joan Calvert, Ian's mother on September 13. Ten days later Charlotte Wilkins marked her departure to Lancaster University by conducting for the first time a quarter of Plain Bob Doubles at Bugbrooke. Peter, her father, rang the treble for this, his first. The October branch quarter was Double Norwich Court Bob Major at

Kibworth Beauchamp conducted by Ian Willgress. Congratulations to Hilary Aslett who rang her 750th quarter peal on October 22 – Double Norwich at Easton Neston.

To occupy time before the evening Guild Quiz on October 31, a quarter peal $\frac{3}{4}$ day started with the organiser forgetting and arriving very late. This omen preceded three of the four being lost. Only Plain Bob Minor at Badby came round at the right time, having withstood a visit from a churchwarden and friends! It was Christine Rodhouse's first inside to minor. On November 5, Staverton practice became a quarter peal of Reverse Canterbury and Bob Doubles conducted by Phil Saunders. The change of method was described 'as smooth as a vintage wine!' The November quarter was of excellent Plain Bob Royal rung in 52 minutes for Remembrance Sunday, conducted by Ian Willgress. This was the first use for a new set of 'Uncle Wilf's' muffles. A half-muffled quarter on November 12 at Heyford was rung in memory of a former headteacher of Daventry Grammar School, Denis Weaver. A quarter peal of Cambridge on November 16 at Harpole celebrated the birth three days earlier of a second granddaughter, Charlotte, for Bridget and Graham Paul (conductor). Dan Lister rang his first quarter peal on November 18 at Pattishall – treble to Plain Bob Minor. Fliss Lister rang her first on

December 4 at Long Buckby, by ringing the treble to Plain Bob Triples, conducted by Richard Waddy, with husband Dan on the tenor – his first on eight. Both were rung within a year of first touching a rope. The first-Sunday in December quarter peal was of 4-spliced surprise major at Long Buckby in a speedy 43 minutes. In January, it was Yorkshire Surprise Royal at Daventry again and in February, at Byfield, first inside to Grandsire Triples for Colin Anderson. These were conducted by Ian Willgress.

SOCIAL

On September 12, Ian and Alison Willgress raised over £200 for historic churches by walking 13 miles to the branch meeting and visiting 11 churches. Peter Wilkins cycled 25 miles to visit 12 churches. He raised £110 on, this, his and Angela's wedding anniversary. They were married at Kislingbury, and a copy of their wedding service sheet was spotted, still pinned to the wall.

Barby Sporting Club was the venue for the branch dinner on October 3. Thirty-three ringers and families enjoyed a filling meal. Janet set up an old photographs competition between courses. There were 29 photographs showing diners in former years. Gwynneth White won by getting under 50% of the 29 photographs of diners correct! Quite

a few wrong-sex answers were revealed!

PEOPLE

Stan Ruddlesden went home from months in hospitals on September 21. Stan has been able to return to ring at the ground-floor ring of Weedon but suffered a fall in January.

At the deanery service at Kislingbury on October 1, Sarah Waterhouse from Nether Heyford was confirmed. The bells were rung by the local ringers supplemented by Sarah's supportive contingent from Heyford.

At his original home tower, Bugbrooke, Ken Ramsbotham organised a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles, conducted by Jim White, on October 10. It celebrated the lives of Ken's parents, Etty and Ken, who died in July and January 2009 respectively.

In November, Rosemary Davidson celebrated her 80th birthday by ringing at Hellidon for the first time for several months.

Harold Thompson had a couple of operations around Christmas and got back to ringing in February.

TOWERS

Fifteen ringers from Daventry and five villages rang the ten bells for the deanery Advent Carol service. On Christmas morning, eleven turned out in the slushy weather to ring. At Dodford the architect has stopped ringing until the loose plaster on the wall alongside the 3rd and 4th ropes is removed. Richard Hartley still indefatigably organises ringing practices at Staverton on Monday mornings and Thursday evenings. As a pay-back to the village, twice monthly Sunday ringing is by the Farthingstone ringers who are currently without their own bells. The Braunston team took over on the Sunday when the sole Daventry Team service was there. We understand that the new vicar for Welton learned to ring in Wales but had to give up after a car accident. We hope to have her restored! The old year was rung out and the new year in at Badby, Barby, Braunston, Heyford and Litchborough at least. Several snow storms and freezing side-roads caused a few practices and Sunday ringing to be cancelled.

Geoff Pullin - Daventry Correspondent

GUILSBOROUGH BRANCH

September 21st was the Diamond Wedding of Mary & Jim Burton of Sibbertoft. Mary had requested a Quarter Peal which was rung in the evening by Ken Rutland , Robin Wilson , Michael Fiander , Paul Reading & David Westerman. Mary sat in the church throughout the Quarter and was joined by Barbara (her daughter) & Jim during the ringing. When it finished a celebratory drink was enjoyed by all. On the following Saturday many ringers , friends & family gathered in Welford Community Centre room for a wonderful Luncheon party.

Paul Stedman George Armitage died in fatal car accident near Fleckney on the 10th November. This came as a shock to many of us but not least to Geoff & Janet who shared an evening meal with him prior to his return to his marital home. His wife Ann of 6 1/2 months was working late. There was a memorial service in Marston Trussell church on November 20th when members of Peterborough & Leicester Guild rang before and after the service, Immediately before the service Mary Burton , godmother Geoff & Janet & Helen Armitage & Nick Skelton godfather rang for a short while.

The Branch A.G.M was neither the coldest nor the snowiest we have had in the last 50 yrs but was not without its hitches.

Julie & Merrick had gone to great lengths to make us comfortable in church. The Village Hall was not available so everything took place in church.

There were two hiccups. 1 Some-One turned off the heating not realising that Merrick had put it on for the ringers meeting. 2 The booked priest failed to arrive for the service so we had a D.I.Y.

The business meeting went well with only one change of officer. Richard Johnson returning to the post of Branch Ringing Master and Robin will remain Branch Steward only.

All officers were thanked for their efforts throughout the year and we look forward to welcoming our friends from neighbouring guilds and branches.

East Haddon bells are now back in the tower and ringing again We are told they are much easier to handle & look forward to a meeting there later in the year.

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Dorothy Westerman - Guilsborough Correspondent.

KETTERING BRANCH

Branch Striking Contest

This was held on September 12th at Cransley and was judged by Chris O'Mahoney Rutland Branch Ringing Master. Tea and cakes were kindly provided by Pat Edkins. An amazing number of 9 teams took part, results as follows:-

1st Rothwell C, 2nd Rothwell B, 3rd Kettering, 4th Wilbarston B, 5th Rothwell A, 6th Desborough A, 7th Desborough B, 8th East Carlton, 9th Wilbarston.

Summer Festival

This year it was hosted by us and was held at Holy Trinity Church Rothwell on September 19th. A running buffet tea was provided by committee members, with the event being well supported. Guild Master Colin Lee judged the 6 teams who entered, presenting them all with a certificate. Results are as follows:-

1st Kettering 2nd Daventry 3rd Guilsborough 4th Wellingborough 5th Rutland 6th Thrapston. Kettering Branch have won the trophy for the tenth time in it's 24 years existence.

Kettering Branch Ringing Master, Michael Wallis received the splendid Harry Wooding trophy from Colin Lee. Evening ringing continued at Desborough until 9pm.

Half Day Mini Outing

Arranged by Chris Pearson it took place on October 10th, visiting 4 towers including Cosby (6), Countesthorpe (8), Saddington (6) and Kibworth (8). A good afternoon was enjoyed by 25 branch members and friends with a picnic tea along the way.

Beetle Drive

It was great fun and as manic as ever, we started with a fantastic hot supper and dessert provided once more by "Bill's Ladies", followed by the beetle drive, once again organised and 40 unruly maniacs kept under control by Bill Adcock. Jim Bence was the winner and was presented with a bottle of wine by Liz Adcock.

Branch Annual General Meeting.

Due to snowy weather conditions this was re-arranged at the last minute to take place at the Trinity Centre at Rothwell instead of Stoke Albany on January 9th. Only 23 people braved the wintry weather and the meeting took place after the hot supper.

The branch officers remain the same with the addition of Jane Marsh replacing Tony Williams and we decided to elect Kate Wallis as a

younger member to enable us to get the views of our younger members and give us feedback. Chris and I changed roles, with me now Press Correspondent allowing Chris the time to put the Guild Newsletters together.

Liz Adcock was elected as an Honorary Member in recognition for the many years of support given to the branch, Liz was delighted.

The first committee meeting of the year followed closely on January 26th at Chez Bence to arrange the programme of events for the coming months. Chris has now received these details from Murray and has put them together on handy-sized cards and they have been circulated to the branch towers. Further details will be advertised in due course.

News from the Towers

BARTON SEAGRAVE

Practices and service ringing continue under the supervision of Derek Sibson with him having to contend with 5 husband and wife ringers but luckily very few domestics. Edward Groome is progressing well and now ringing Plain Bob Minor inside and new ringer Bethany is now ringing the treble to Plain Bob Minor.

BURTON LATIMER

Practices and service ringing continue under Mike Cullington with new ringer Olivia Brimley age 9 progressing very quickly. Olivia only started to learn in November 09 and in January rang Plain Hunt on 6. She also rings at Wadenhoe and really loves it.

DESBOROUGH

Continues to thrive and Bill is kept busy with his learners consisting of adults and youngsters all of them achieving quarter peals last year.

KETTERING

Service ringing and practices draw a good crowd, Jane Sibson has her hands full with 5 adults, all who have now progressed to ringing Plain Bob Minor inside. Practice nights are fun with us being able to ring Plain Hunt and call changes on 10 & 12 with learners gaining valuable experience ringing on 10 & 12 bells.

PYTCHLEY

Margaret Pridmore is the tower captain here and has a very small group of ringers for the services and practice night.

ROTHWELL

A hive of experienced ringers gather here regularly ringing many surprise methods. Kate Wallis is progressing at great speed with Toby

Bence age 9 ringing his 1st quarter of Plain Bob Royal 1260 changes, on the treble at Rothwell on December 4th.

NICK'S JAM

Nick has sold his homemade jam both at our Branch Striking contest and Guild 8 Bell, plus some he sold at work. He has raised £51 for the Guild Bell Fund. If you get a chance to buy some, do, it is delicious.

OBITUARY

Albert Stanton a ringer at Ashley has passed away, there was lots of ringing at his funeral and a Peal rung in his memory in October.

Some new methods are also to be rung and named after fruit and vegetables as Albert was a very keen gardener.

HAPPY RINGING

Frances Pearson - Kettering Correspondent.

NORTHAMPTON BRANCH

The AGM was held on 23 January 2010 at St John the Baptist Church Boughton. It was attended by about one third of our members which I think is pretty good for an AGM. If people had known how good the food was going to be I think there would have been a few more present. Ringing started at 3pm followed by a service conducted by Fr Stephen Trott at 4pm. An excellent cottage pie supper followed with tea and cake.

People

It is with regret that I inform you that Noel Morton (Dallington) who was admitted to Cynthia Spencer hospice on 22nd Feb died around 2am this morning, 1st March.

Colin Stopps (Cogenhoe) is recovering after his abdominal operation in January. However, he has to have further treatment over the next few months.

Please remember both of them in your prayers.

I'm pleased to quote from a letter recently sent to me by Maureen Basford "I would like to join in to express my thanks to Dorothy Stopps for her support and encouragement to me with learners. We have met in many towers and she was always willing to help and give advice where

needed. So thank you Dorothy and I hope Colin is soon 100%."

This brings me to my next point. We have filled all the roles we need except for a ringing master and assistant. These are very important roles and we would like to fill them as soon as possible. Would anyone who feels able to offer their support please contact Trevor.

Peals

A half-muffled quarter peal was rung on the 17th of February in memory of Robert Deacon (who had attained just over 100 years) who was churchwarden for over 30 years and Malcolm Tyler organist, chairman of Northampton Festival of Music and Drama, lay reader and bell ringer among many other things. St Mary the Virgin Little Houghton
1320 Plain Bob Doubles, Grandsire Doubles, and Reverse Canterbury Pleasure Doubles

1 Bridget Paul

2 Dorothy Stopps

3 Alan Paul

4 Graham Paul

5 Nick Parsons (c)

LITTLE BOB SPECIAL PRACTICE:

12TH FEBRUARY AT DALLINGTON

The Little Bob Special Practice was a very good evening. There were eleven of us, including two visitors who used to ring at Hanslope; Andrew, a student at Nene College, whose home tower has 10 bells; and Titch Parsons, who was visiting the area.

We warmed up with call changes and then seriously tackled Little Bob until we had all rung a plain course successfully.

Having done that we looked at Treble Bob Hunting, which was also on the programme that evening. We tried Treble Bob Hunt with all six bells - to help Mike who wanted to learn how to ring it, but found how difficult it is when you are used to ringing the treble or an inside bell to a method! Mike did exceptionally well. The rest of us saved our blushes by ringing a course of Kent Treble Bob to prove we did know what to do. We finished the evening with the icing on the cake - a touch of Little Bob...

BRANCH PRACTICE CHURCH BRAMPTON: 27TH FEB

This was attended by at least 16 people who had a good time ringing once Cecil and Nick had sorted out the ropes which seemed to have

shrunk in the damp weather. Spirits were high, not hindered by two members who came direct from Franklins Gardens where Saints had just defeated Tigers to go one point from the top of the table...

Forthcoming events

THE NEXT SPECIAL PRACTICE

On Saturday afternoon, 13th March we shall meet at Pitsford at 2:00p.m. for a three hour session learning Kent Treble Bob. This is a Special Practice so there will not be a trainer, but we will arrange for refreshments during the afternoon, so NAMES, PLEASE, TO DOROTHY ON 01604 890638 by 9th March. As it is a DIY afternoon please be sure to do some homework before you come. It does not matter if you have not rung Kent before, as long as you have looked at the method (other bells as well as the second), we will all give it our best.

QUARTERLY MEETING

The Quarterly Meeting will be held on 27th March this year, at Duston as usual, where we have the most scrumptious tea - don't miss it. If you have any new ringers who missed out on being elected into membership of the Guild at the AGM now is the opportunity to put that right.

Ringling starts at 3:00p.m, the Service will be at 4 o'clock and immediately after we shall all descend on the tea. Names for tea, please, to Cecil Swann 01604 756503. A short meeting will be held before we carry on ringling (hopefully) until 8:00p.m.

SIX-BELL STRIKING COMPETITION

This year May is the chosen month for the 6-bell Striking Competition, which will be held at Dallington on Friday 7th May starting at 6.30p.m. The rules will be circulated later, but in the meantime put in some practice at ringling 120 changes or your choice of 120 rows of call changes or rounds so that you can come and take part. Last year only three towers entered; let's see if this year we can have a repeat of 2008 when almost every tower in the Branch rang. Put it on your calendar now.

BRANCH OUTING

This is another date to go on your calendar - Saturday 22nd May. Anne England is arranging another of her wonderful outings. If you have not already been on one of Anne's Outings now is the chance to catch up on what you have missed. They are really enjoyable days visiting churches you probably have not visited before, seeing beautiful countryside and having a good day's ringling with friends, not to mention a good lunch at a village pub along the way.

Contacts

I have around twenty email addresses and I would like to add more to my list. I'm very happy to send email newsletters to readers outside of our immediate area as I know that ringers are not constrained by borders! If you would like your email address added to my circulation list please contact me on joanne@wilde1362.fsnet.co.uk.

Finally

I was listening to some lovely striking on "Bells on Sunday" this morning (28 Feb) and was delighted to hear that they were recorded at St Lawrence's Church, Towcester.

Ivor Wilde - Northampton Correspondent

PETERBOROUGH BRANCH.

We held our AGM on the third Saturday in January at Castor, and were pleased to welcome the Guild Secretary, Sarah Bence and her son Toby.

Afternoon and evening ringing took place at Castor and the local ringers did us proud with superb refreshments in the Church Centre. At the meeting the Chairman and Secretary stood down so we welcomed Robin Rogers as our new chairman and Marilyn Jenner as our new secretary.

Judith Rogers kindly stepped in to the post of Ringing Master following the departure of Richard Laing to Birmingham part way through 2009. Although no one at the meeting was willing to be Steward John Riley had his arm twisted by our Chairman and has agreed to hold this position. The new committee held its first meeting in February and is planning some extra events during the year for members along with the regular first Friday of the month 8 bell practices at Castor.

Bulwick

In November the ringers held their annual dinner at The Black Horse, Elton where seventeen of us enjoyed a convivial evening. The night began with pre dinner drinks and nibbles at Tony & Rosemary's home in Sutton. We then moved on to Elton where, after the main course but before the pudding, Andrew and Sue presented everyone with appropriate gifts.

My road atlas has been much appreciated and I would like to assure everyone that I now know the difference between the Orkneys and the Scillies! Our carriage (mini bus) arrived for us at 11pm and duly

deposited us at our doors before midnight so none of us were left with the pumpkin! Sadly Chris and Karen were unable to be with us so their gifts were presented to them on New Year's Eve. I'm sure Chris will find his heatproof gloves most useful when we descend on them in the summer for a BBQ.

New Year's Eve saw us at Pat and David's home in Blatherwycke where we enjoyed their hospitality and between us provided an excellent four course meal. We then duly rang in the New Year at Bulwick.

Practices on a Wednesday night regularly attract around a dozen people and we are slowly building up our repertoire of minor methods. We regularly ring about 17 different methods of which nine are surprise.

Sue Jones

Castor Ringing Centre.

In the Spring of 2006 I had a request to train a new band of ringers for Wansford and Warmington using the bell ringing simulator at Castor. I got a few trainers together and invited the new would be ringers to join us at Castor - 10:00 am on Saturday 22nd April 2006. We started off with 4 beginners from Wansford and 1 from Warmington and by the end of the summer, they could all handle a bell without assistance and starting to ring calls changes and plain hunt. Then we lost them, they all packed up ringing and haven't returned. In the meantime, other people had news of our Saturday activities and joined us, some complete beginners and an increasing number that had learnt some of the basics but were not progressing – they wanted to learn how to handle a bell properly and to progress to call changes, plain hunt and methods. That was in 2006, now nearly 4 years on and some 190 Saturday mornings behind us we are still going strong. During this period we have taught 32 people to ring from scratch, have helped 17 people to master plain hunt and method ringing and this has been achieved with help of 17 different trainers and helpers although several only made two or three appearances. We have had up to 8 regular helpers but this number is down to about 5 currently, a few weeks ago we lost Richard Laing who has been a real stalwart and very regular on Saturday mornings. The people that we have attracted represent 14 different towers/villages plus unattached and includes three different Dioceses namely Peterborough, Ely and Lincoln. The towers/villages include Warmington, Wansford, Nassington, Barnack, Glington, Castor, St. John's, St. Mary's, Cathedral, Crowland, Elton, Bulwick, Stanground and Kings Cliffe. We have also trained two Duke of Edinburgh award seekers. I believe that this exercise has been one of the best activities for bell

ringing in the area and we intend to continue whilst there is still a demand, it would help a great deal if we had more support from other trainers and helpers, capable of competently ringing plain hunt, plain bob and grandsire, at times we do struggle.

Tony Evans.

Glinton

We were delighted to welcome Peter and Jan Marshall back to Glinton at the end of last year. They were visiting friends and family in England before returning to their new home in Australia. Despite not ringing at all for the past year or so, they were soon “back in harness” and ringing as if they had never been away. A social time over lunch enabled us all to catch up with their news and check up on any air miles we might have!

Unfortunately when they returned, it was to find the red dust of the desert had infiltrated the house and garden so they had their work cut out clearing up.

The Heritage weekend at Glinton was well attended, with a number of visitors showing considerable interest in the bells’ display and in ringing. The bells are still at the centre of the village events calendar, none more so than at the annual “switch-on” of the Christmas lights when we rang with a church full of adults, children (and pets)!

Our practice nights still attract about twelve to fourteen ringers. We have more beginners and a “returnee” ringer to swell our numbers. We have had three visiting bands, all of whom commented on Glinton bells’ beautiful quality of tone, something we never take for granted; we look forward to welcoming other bands booked for 2010.

Jill Cowcill.

Nassington

Like many towers in our branch we do not have enough ringers to make a local band; there are just three ringers from the village. However, with the kind help of ringers from the Bulwick and Gidding towers, we have managed to maintain a pretty regular bi weekly Monday evening practice, alternating with Kings Cliffe. Our practice evenings have been very good, helpful, and worthwhile. But most importantly, we try and ring for Sunday Services.

We regularly try to recruit people that we think might be interested in learning, but we haven't got any learners at the moment and it's not for the want of trying. If any ringers are free to join us on Monday evenings they would be most welcome.

We do have visiting bands occasionally and they are always welcome.

We have a kitchen (and toilet) in our church so we can make them a coffee and biscuits.

Some of us join in the activities of the Branch and other towers which we enjoy.

Keith Underwood.

Peterborough Cathedral

Things are going well at the Cathedral. Last evening we had 27 at practice night, ringing call changes, lots of Plain Hunts, Erin Caters, Cambridge Royal and Stedman Cinques.

We have had a busy time with many Christmas services, and it was nice to know that our efforts were appreciated. The Dean sent me a card which said: "Happy new year to you and all the ringers - and many thanks to the band for the ringing over Advent and Christmas. As always, much appreciated - and the bells would certainly be missed if not part of the season. So please pass on our thanks to all up there on the flight deck!

With every good wish,

Charles Taylor."

You can't receive better encouragement than that! If anyone wants to join us you know where we are, West Door, 7:20pm on Monday evenings.

Robin Rogers

Sue Jones - Peterborough Correspondent

RUTLAND BRANCH

Weeks of snow in January, with foul driving conditions and frost continuing through February, did nothing to encourage ringing activity at the start of 2010. Quarter peals were nevertheless rung on New Year's Day at Brooke and Lyddington.

Our AGM at Edith Weston in mid-January attracted a fair turn-out, with ringing at Empingham, Edith Weston and North Luffenham. The Master commented on the broad spectrum of ringing events that had taken place throughout the Branch's patch, though attendance had been somewhat lower than previously. A Quarter Peal Week in November had generated 8 successes, including several "firsts" for both ringers and conductors - an encouraging reflection of a wider spread of developing skills. A visit to the Cathedral to participate in ringing for Evensong had been an especially welcome innovation which we plan to repeat in June.

Difficult to remember back to the autumn? Maybe! The weather was certainly warmer and members not tempted by the counter-attraction of the Burghley cross-country event enjoyed a tour of towers along the A47 at Thumby, Billesden, Belton, Uppingham, Glaston and Barrowden. Our team at the 8-bell striking competition at Rothwell held onto fifth place (same as 2008) in face of strong competition, taking on board the need to lift our game for 2010.

Two noteworthy peals deserve mention. At Uppingham in October, Janice Atkinson and daughter Molly (13) jointly celebrated the 30th anniversary of Mum's first peal and Molly's very own first – a memorable family event; and at Whissendine in November, a joyous celebration of 400 years of bells in St Andrew's church.

More generally, the 6 peals and 27 quarters rung in the Branch over the year reflect an encouraging level of active involvement in ringing, with a growing interest in calling and conducting. That said, continuity remains a matter for some concern. Whilst there are currently a reasonable number of learners in the Branch retention, particularly of youngsters, seems likely to be an on-going challenge.

With first sightings of green shoots in the garden as I write, we can now look forward to enjoying another active programme through the summer and beyond.

Giles Hopkinson - Rutland Correspondent

THRAPSTON BRANCH - no news this time

TOWCESTER BRANCH.

With the worst of the winter now firmly behind us September seems such a long time ago and since our intra-branch 6-Bell striking contest and Branch autumn meeting hosted by Greens Norton. Many thanks to the judges, all the attendees and especially to the generous souls who made the day complete by preparing and providing the teas.

What is very fast becoming a traditional custom now within the branch is the quiz night, complete with the "fish and chip supper". Once again the Whittlebury Reading Room was the venue, once again the questions were sufficiently challenging and once again the honour was highly contested by the usual bright sparks who on this occasion comprised a ladies quartet from the neighbouring North Bucks branch. This is always a very popular event and of course we all adopt the approach of "it is not

the winning but the taking part...”, but as expected, we are bound to!!

On the first Saturday of December the Branch members, friends and invited guests converged on The Walnut Tree, Blisworth, to partake in the yearly bun-fight otherwise known as the Annual Branch Dinner. The evening was introduced by a select assembly of musicians within the branch, highly entertaining speeches given by Father Peter Boyland, Mike Stretton, Laurence Gibson and the Chairman, Chris Bulleid. A rendition by a hand-bells band in addition to being a surprise, I am sure, to the other visitors to the restaurant was a surprise to the rest of the gathering by showing so few side-effects of the table wine.

Formal business of course is an essential component within any branch and the Towcester Branch annual meeting was hosted, watered and fed by Holy Cross Church, Pattishall with additional ringing at Gayton. There were a number of changes to the official posts within the branch, all those in attendance and those who were not able to be at the meeting are extremely thankful to the retiring Chairman, Chris Bulleid, Treasurer, Stan Watterson and Committee Member, Doug Holloway for all their hard work over the years. Chris is not able to relax too much however as he has taken on the role of Treasurer, I hope he enjoyed his 2 minutes of complete retirement!! We all wish our new Chairman all the very best in his duties within the branch and I would like to introduce the readers to John Pardoe of Greens Norton in this capacity.

One of the formalities at the AGM is to confirm the programme for the coming year, from the schedule below I am sure many will be envious of the walking tour of Oxford, we just hope and pray the April Showers are diverted for the day.

Wed 24 March - Practice, Bradden, 7:30

Sat 24 April - Walking Tour of Oxford TBC

Tue 18 May - Practice, Wicken, 7:30

Sat 12 June - Guild AGM, Paulerspury

Sat 03 July - Striking Contest with N Bucks, Wicken

Mon 02 Aug - Practice, Whittlebury, 7:30

Sat 18 Sept - Guild Summer Festival & 8 Bell Contest

Sat 09 Oct - Quiz & Fish 'n' Chip Supper, Whittlebury, 7:00

Tue 19 Oct - Practice, Roade, 7:00

Sat 20 Nov - Joint Practice with North Bucks, Olney, 7:30

Sat 27 Nov - Annual Dinner

Sat 29 Jan 2011 - AGM, Blisworth

Wed 17 Feb 2011 - Practice, Blakesley, 7:30

Wed 17 March - Practice, Pattishall, 7:30

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

Ivor and Jean Dickin from Irchester celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on September 12th 2009. Ivor has been an active member of the branch and a member of the committee for many years and continues to be so. He has been the loyal Tower Captain at Irchester for 45 years. Of course, Jean also shares his interest of bell ringing and is also an accomplished ringer. To mark the occasion a quarter of :-

Grandsire Triples was rung on 13.9.2009 at Irchester.

1 Rod Walker	5 Kevan Chapman
2 Ken Wildman	6 John Beresford
3 Tim Samson	7 Alan Marks (C)
4 Harry Curtis	8 George Whiting

I know I speak for all branch members when I say congratulations and may you have many more happy and healthy years ringing together. The branch was sad to learn of the death of Meg Boatright on November 9th 2009 at a Nursing Home in Warrington, where she had lived for the past few months. Meg was a member of Rushden St Mary's and a faithful ringer for Sunday services before she moved out of the county a few years ago; to be nearer her family. In addition to being a guild member, she was also a member of the R A F and Ladies Guild.

The Branch A G M took place on 16th January at Moulton where some 40 members attended. An excellent hot meal was provided by the band and enjoyed in the very pleasant and spacious church rooms. During the meeting a further 3 new members from Yardley Hastings and 1 new member from Orlingbury were elected. This brings the total during the year to 16. The ringing year also saw 5 members ring their first quarters and we hope that they all go on to ring many more. The

majority of the committee were willing to stand for a further year, with the exception of the post of Assistant Ringing Master. John Beresford wished to stand down to concentrate on his role as Treasurer. Therefore, Kevan Chapman took over the position of Assistant Ringing Master and in addition two additional committee members were appointed.

Congratulations were extended to Barry Care from Moulton, who in his 53 year was awarded with a certificate for 50 years service to the Guild.

At the A G M in January 2009 it was proposed that the May and September meeting format should be changed from ringing/service/ meeting/tea/ringing to a 3 hour ringing session with a short break for tea and biscuit and the issue of a newsletter in place of the formal meeting. This appears to be well received by most members and the attendance at these sessions has been good; therefore it was decided to continue this format for 2010.

Out and about in the Towers we see that Higham Ferrers has launched an appeal for £76,000 to rehang their current 8 on headstock and add 2 new trebles. From various funding initiatives, they have already raised £10,000 and have a number of money raising events organised.

Easton Maudit has completed some restoration work during the later part of 2009 which should make for more comfortable ringing at the tower.

The surprise minor and major practices have continued to be well supported during the year with a dedicated band turning up for each practice and therefore making good practice ringing in a variety of surprise methods.

The next practice will be at Kettering on March 20th at 10.00 a.m.

followed by May 15th at Holy Sepulchre Northampton.

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

Congratulations to our Newsletter Editor, Chris Pearson, for winning the competition by the Ringing World to design their Christmas cards for 2009.

EXTRA DATES FOR RINGING

Our new Patron became legally the Bishop of Peterborough from Thursday, February 18. He will not be in bishop's orders until his Consecration at St Paul's Cathedral on Thursday, March 25 at 11am. Bishop Donald is then due to be installed in Peterborough Cathedral after Easter, provisionally on Saturday April 17, at 3.30 pm.

Several of you will already have received a message from Libby Alexander to ask bellringers countrywide to ring to celebrate St. George's Day on Friday, April 23rd. It seems that very few bishops are enthusiastic, so it's up to your vicar! Libby suggests that the effect would be greatly magnified if all bells were to ring out in unison around 6 - 6.30 pm. Let me know in advance if you are ringing, so I can make the most of it in the press etc.

The Guild received the following letter in October 2008 by way of advanced planning! Although this refers to Rutland branch, I am sure there will be similar arrangements in Northamptonshire and Peterborough.

In the year 2010 GIRLGUIDING will be 100 years old and on the 20th October 2010 at 20.10 hrs everyone who has made a promise as a member of the movement will be asked to renew their promise. In Leicestershire we are hoping the bells will be rung at as many towers as possible. As Rutland is part of Girlguiding Leicestershire we would like to know if this was possible in Rutland. Leicestershire president is putting it to all the towers in Leicestershire. We do hope you will be able to help us. Thank you. Ann Barsby, Loughborough Division Commissioner. e-mailing on behalf of Girlguiding Leicestershire.

Perhaps a guider can log onto the website for further information and let me know so I can publicise any relevant ringing.

MAKING PROGRESS?

I'm not sure that I did a lot for publicity for the Guild and bellringing in 2009. There was however a good run of national and regional press, television and radio references to our exercise. At the end of 2009 The Independent had a good article about bands of ringers dashing about from church to church to ring the bells for Christmas services. It raised the point that although recruits are forthcoming they do not stick with it and one reason is that there are insufficient experienced ringers for newcomers to make satisfyingly steady progress. Hopefully your tower has recruited a learner or two in the last twelve months. If so, have they

been able to make progress? Have opportunities been made for them to ring elsewhere? Have branch meetings or training sessions been used to help them? Have opportunities for them to make advances been provided with a steady band around them whilst they falter in the early stages?

Geoff Pullin

SUMMER FESTIVAL

The Guild's Summer Festival was hosted by the Kettering Branch at Holy Trinity Church, Rothwell. The main body of the church is built of local Northamptonshire sandstone and dates from the 13th century, although the oldest part was built in Norman times. It has the longest nave in the county. Our inter-branch eight bell striking competition was held on the back eight bells in the massive squat tower at the west end of the church.

The draw was made in advance, so the Daventry Branch presented themselves on the dot of 4pm to set proceedings off, just as they did last year and again straight from a successful quarter peal of Grandsire Triples, this year at Kettering. Six of the ten branches produced a team and the ringing flowed through the afternoon, curiously though, with the Guild Steward acting as marshal.

There was a running buffet tea in the church with copious cups of tea. Some made a trip to see the crypt or charnel house, conducted by Murray Coleman. It contains the remains of around 1,500 individuals, mainly skulls and thigh bones which, according to medieval superstition were necessary for the Resurrection. Others studied the stunning year-old stained glass Jessie Cleaver window designed by Helen Whittaker of Barley Studios in York.

Before the results were announced, the 100-club draw was made with two of the three prize winners actually present and this was followed by the mammoth Summer Festival Prize Draw. Murray Coleman had volunteered to reintroduce this after a rest and sales appear to have been refreshed.

There were 19 prizes, seven of which went to tickets sold by the Culworth Branch who were not even represented at the occasion!

Finally, came the results. The absence of the Guild Master was now explained. He had decided to judge this, his last 8-bell competition in post, all on his own. He worked on the principle that he has moved to Adderbury in the Oxford Diocese and is thus not attached to any branches! After giving an account of each piece of ringing and

explaining his marking system of 4 points for a perfect row .. 1 for a full clash, he announced the ratings:

1. Kettering	87.4%
2. Daventry	86.8%
3. Guilsborough	82.4%
4. Wellingborough	80.8%
5. Rutland	79.6%
6. Thrapston	77.6%

Colin presented a certificate to each team and the splendid Harry Wooding Memorial Trophy model bell to Michael Wallis who arranged the Kettering Branch team. This was the tenth time that Kettering has won the trophy in its 24 years existence. The placings were all the same as last year but Towcester Branch were missing. It fell to Chris O'Mahony of the Rutland Branch to express our thanks for the organisation of the day, which he did to our full satisfaction. Ringing then transferred to Desborough for the evening, under the Master's direction and covered a wide range of methods including eight-sliced surprise major, Double Norwich Major, Oxford Bob and Erin Triples.

GHP



Michael Wallis receives the Harry Wooding trophy back again on behalf of the Kettering Branch from Guild Master, Colin Lee (left).

GUILD QUIZ EVENING

The refurbished village hall at Weedon was the venue for the Guild Quiz on October 31. The quiz was organised by Hilary Aslett with husband Peter as the score keeper. Fifty seven contestants fought for the winning platter, an engraved wooden plate (donated by the host Daventry Branch for future use) and to avoid the wooden spoon. Teams from Bedfordshire and Nottingham USCR complemented those from seven branches of the Guild. There were ten rounds, the sixth of which was a 'name the cathedral from pictures' to be undertaken whilst partaking of the buffet refreshments. With a running score to keep up the pressure, the final result saw the platter go to NUSCR (Adrian Sweeting, Nancy Surman, Jonathan and Ann Pawley) with a score of 96, pipping by one 'Universally Challenged' who have been known to win a few times before. The wooden spoon was treasured by the Baileys and Pearsons! There was some barracking from the biologists as to what is an animal and the largest English bird but otherwise calm prevailed. The raffle raised £95 and the event produced a further surplus of £365 for the Guild Bell Fund. Many thanks go to Hilary and Peter, the Weedon ringers for setting up the hall, many members of the Daventry branch for producing the buffet refreshments and donating raffle prizes and to Janet Bowers for making it all happen. It was nice to see Stan Ruddlesden and Alan Chantler walking again albeit with sticks.

GHP

PRO

100 CLUB

Month	1st Prize	Number	2nd Prize	Number
Oct 09	37-60	119	9-40	01
Nov 09	36-40	15	9-10	81
Dec 09	36-40	24	9-10	09
Jan 10	39-20	59	9-80	63
Feb 10	38-80	13	9-70	133

Prizes are based on monthly membership, with half the subscriptions going to the bell fund. There are three prizes in September to bring the total prizes to below 50% (47.1%) as required by the gaming licence.

Subscription is £12 per year, applications to go via the branch representatives. As can be seen, the membership has increased in January thanks to the efforts of the representatives.

Derek Jones.

RAISING-IN-PEAL

I learned to ring in North Somerset where raising over-a-ton eights or Wrington's 38cwt ten in peal was normal procedure. Sometimes the latter consisted of raising 1, 2, 3, 6, 8 10! The branch ringing master, Herbert Knight, was a splendid trebler-upper. He even trebled up the twelve at Exeter Cathedral with a North Somerset band on an outing. (We had some blacksmiths in the area then to get multi-ringer oomph around the back end. For much of my ringing career after leaving home, bells have been left up – St Nicholas, Liverpool; St Peter Mancroft, Norwich; All Saints Maidstone;

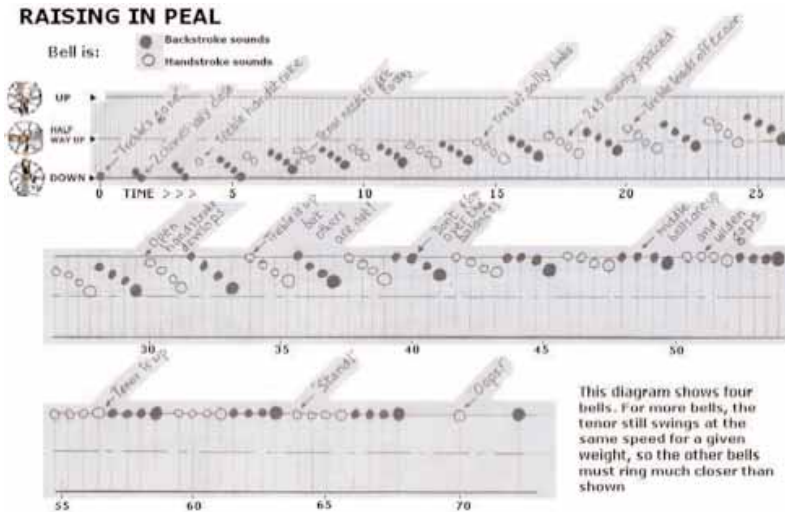
Preston parish church so there wasn't much chance to develop the art. I have always been frustrated at not being able to raise Badby bells in peal regularly. It is always the case that there are insufficient experienced ringers at the start of ringing to have a try and in any case the bells are such characters that to get them up right is in itself a challenge. So we settle on the compromise of raising 1, 3 and 5 first, then 2, 4 and 6 on the basis that it is easier to hear three than six and if they do perchance not stay in rounds the sound is more tuneful than six crashing around!

When I was asked to do a raising-in-peal training day for Northampton branch in 2009 and later was told there were 18 candidates, I took fright and went back to first principles! Even after splitting the group into two and asking Ian Willgress to run one group, there were still nine to cope with. I set about producing a chart, after taking some timing checks on the swinging speeds of our bells, which would highlight the basics quickly and show the basic mechanics and sounds!

I drew the diagram below (sorry, if it's not very clear!) for four bells to satisfy myself that what I was preaching had a physical basis! I hope that it may be of some use to others. Time is represented along the line – note that the gap between blows has to gradually increase throughout the raise. The swinging height of each bell between being right down and right up is shown by the height of its blob (solid for backstrokes

The diagram holds for eight bells by filling in the other bells between treble and tenor i.e half as close again.

So what we did at Cogenhoe was to start from chiming and raise until the tenor was about half way up and then lower again, several times. Everyone had several goes. This soon demonstrated the importance of close initial chiming, otherwise the totally uncontrollable treble handstroke crashes into the sound of the backstrokes. It also demonstrated that if the heavier bells start chiming too soon, they have difficulty checking in the clapper to keep it right-way and chiming fast enough. Trebling up starts with a quick rise whilst listening and keeping a watching brief to see if the tenor is able to physically cope at that speed of ascent and slow down when there are signs of difficulty. If you have over-egged it, don't come down, stay where you are so far as height of swing is concerned and let the tenor catch you up! The next problem is getting the intermediate bells to listen and as a team to adjust the gaps evenly between them and neatly contained between treble and tenor! I haven't solved that yet! It's like the middle-laners on a three lane motorway who reduce the motorway to two lanes. If the second or third bell leaves a big gap and the others follow instead of holding their proper place, then the treble might as well not be there



for his/her skill is being totally ignored and rubbished! The intermediate bells need to take a wider view and see what the bells behind them are up (or down) to!

I didn't get round to drawing the diagram for lowering as I was exhausted after getting the bells up! The biggest difficulty in trebling-down is when the tenor stops striking at handstroke. Herbert said, then you lead off the 7th (or generally $n - 1$ as the mathematicians would say) and then off the sixth until in theory you are left with the treble only striking at both strokes and everyone else chiming their backstrokes. For years I wasn't sure what Herbert meant, but once I had fixed in my mind that you lead by pulling off your handstroke as the tenor's backstroke rope is at its lowest point, it makes sense and is straight forward as you work round leading off middle bells in turn. In the latter stage the treble naturally accelerates down so as not to leave the back bells struggling to maintain chiming. On the other hand if the back bells, having got down, don't continue to chime closer and closer, the treble can't get down far enough for a safe miss and catch. I hope this may be helpful to some of you but don't forget that your ears are the final honers and arbiters!

GHP





Peterborough Cathedral

Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

is remembered at the altar in the Cathedral on

22nd December 2009

We hope you will join us in prayer on this day

**This is a copy of the certificate which Brenda received from
Peterborough Cathedral.**

**We are honoured to be mentioned in the prayers.
Please remember our Cathedral in your prayers.**

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**



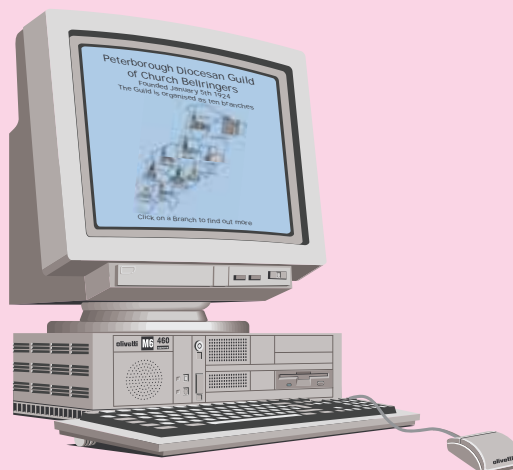
There is a section to help **tower publicity**



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



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



GUILD EVENTS 2010

3rd Apr Guild Sponsored Ride/Walk *Rutland Water*

CYCLISTS: assemble at Whitwell Country Park for 10.30am start.

Route is approx 25 miles (with a shorter 18 mile option). Cycle hire available.

More details from Keith Underwood on 01780 784343.

WALKERS: assemble at The Horse and Jockey, Manton at 10am. Route approx 6 miles.

More details from Dorothy Westerman on 01788 822598.

Pub lunches available at the Horse and Jockey, Manton.

24th Apr Guild Spring Meeting - *Culworth Branch*

The festival and six-bell striking competition, open to all towers in the Guild.

2.30 - 3.30pm Ringing at Brackley (8 bells).

4pm Striking Competition at Lois Weedon (6 bells).

7 - 8.30pm Ringing at Moreton Pinkney (6 bells).

12th Jun Guild AGM - *Towcester Branch*

2.30 - 3.30pm General Ringing at Wicken (8 bells).

3.15 - 4pm Service Ringing at Paulerspury (6 bells).

4pm - 4.45pm Service.

5pm Tea in Paulerspury Village Hall.

6pm Guild Annual General Meeting in Paulerspury Village Hall.

7.30 - 9pm General Ringing at Towcester (12 bells).

18th Sept Guild Summer Festival - *Guildsborough Branch*

The festival and eight-bell inter-branch striking competition at Long Buckby.



