

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD
OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS



Newsletter
March 2016

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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 : 31st August 2016
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 Preamble

My thanks go to the tower captains and correspondents of our nine 10 and 12 bell towers for enabling the Guild ten-bell practices off the ground in January last year. Their support was essential and quickly forthcoming. Also thanks to Richard Allton whose expertise and acute hearing has steered us. Initial support was huge and we have thereafter discovered where people are keen and not so keen to go! Andy Timms took over in November and I look forward to the practices developing to meet members' needs. By February, the average attendance for 2016 was over 23, so that is encouraging.

This left me a bit of time for my next project! I want our combined expertise and talent to be better known to our stakeholders.

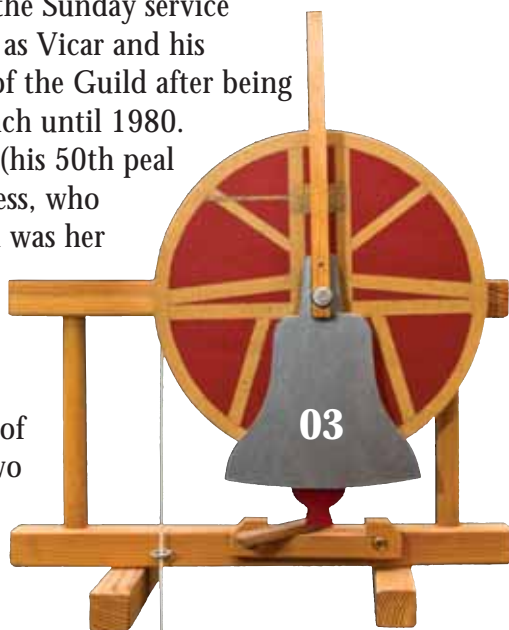
My first initiative was to address a curates' training group and to seek a similar small slot on a churchwardens' training day. My aim is to encourage PCCs, especially those without active ringers, to contact Branch Stewards whenever they contemplate work in and around the tower and the Branch Ringing Master when they want to recruit and train a new band. I also have diocesan architects and electricians in mind. The leaflet I used can be seen on the Bell Maintenance page of our website – click on PDG in line 4.

The Revd Canon Michael Wilson, was the one name on the list of our Life Honorary Members that I didn't recognise. Shortly after learning who he was, I learned that he had died in December in Norfolk. Trying to discover more, I came across a peal rung in 1983 by the Sunday service band at Rushden to mark his farewell as Vicar and his election as a Life Honorary Member of the Guild after being chairman of the Wellingborough branch until 1980.

That peal, conducted by Terry Smith (his 50th peal for the Guild), included Freda Willgress, who sadly also died in December. The peal was her daughter Alison's, first peal attempt and Ian's first of Plain Bob Major.

There were many ringers at Freda's funeral at Kilsby with good representation from the Ladies Guild of which Freda had been President on two occasions.

Congratulations to Sally Collop, Ian Larter and Philip Saunders, all from



the Peterborough Branch, who rang their first peals in 2015, contributing to the record of 387 who did so in the CCCBR First Peal 2015 challenge to mark the 300th anniversary of the first peal.

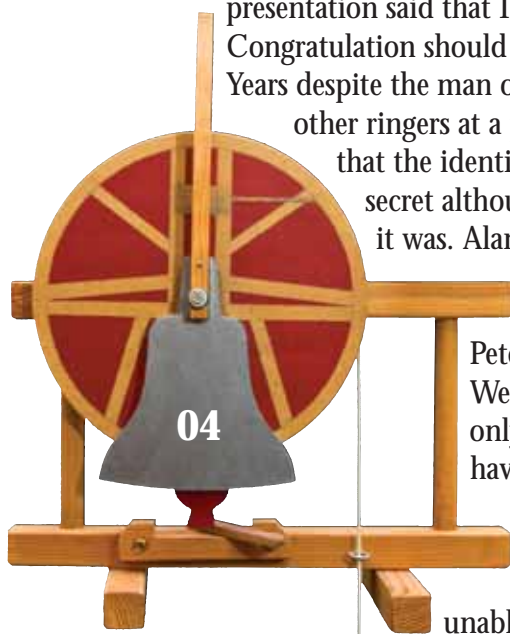
Geoff Pullin

Master's Missive

As Guild Ringing Master I have three main 'gigs' a year. These are of course the Spring Festival, Guild AGM and Summer Festival. At all of these meetings there is Open Ringing and this is the chance for members of the Guild to meet other ringers from outside of their own Branch. Unfortunately these sessions are not that well attended. I understand that all three days can be quite long and people are 'ready for home' once the main proceedings have taken place. Can I make a plea for more people to come to these sessions? I particularly would like to see some of our less experienced ringers attending. The Guild ringing evening sessions are for everyone not just the 'experts' so please come along. You don't even need to have attended earlier events. To make an interesting and fun practice we need a selection of ringers of different abilities. If you are only ringing Rounds and Call Changes or learning to Plain Hunt you will be very welcome.

The Summer Festival last September seemed to go quite well. I have to admit to being very nervous but those who attended the results

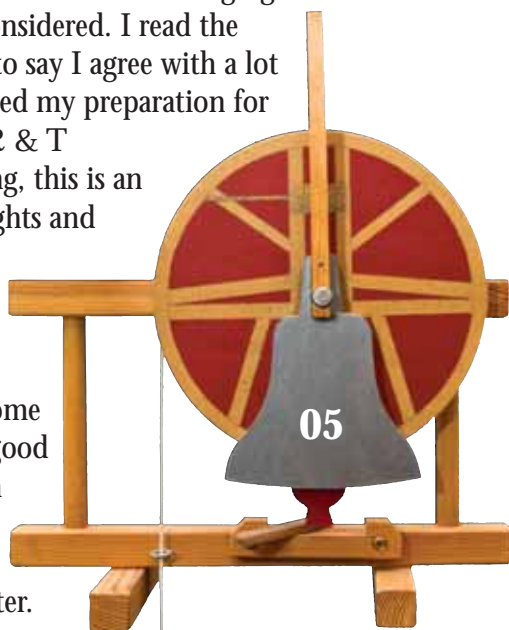
presentation said that I seemed to deal with it quite well. Congratulation should go to Daventry on their 3rd win in 4 Years despite the man on the Tenor doing his best to push the other ringers at a pace they didn't want to ring at. I think that the identity of this Tenor Man should remain a secret although I think most of you can guess who it was. Alan Winter gave a very good summing up of the competition ringing so my thanks go to him. Also thanks to the Peterborough Branch for hosting the day. We now look forward to a busy year, not only do we have the usual three 'gigs' we have a fourth. The Ridgman Trophy is coming to the Peterborough Guild. The event should have been held in Hertfordshire this year but they were unable to get a tower so we were asked, at



short notice, if we could host it. This is a striking competition on ten bells and involves teams from the various Guilds in the East of England. This will be held in Daventry, a tower at which I ring regularly. To be honest it was a bit of a struggle to find a tower that was free from weddings and other events. I was worried but a big thank you to Daventry who came to my rescue. For me Daventry does have some advantages, I know the area, I know the tower and it has easy access from both the M1 and A14. I would like to put on a small festival of ringing to advertise the art of bell ringing in the hope of attracting a few more recruits, but it needs some thought and we are short of time, more on this later. The Guild will be entering a team. All teams will ring the same test piece which will be a touch of Erin Caters. If you want to hear some high quality ringing then make a note of the date, 4th June 2016, and come along! The Spring Festival will be at Seaton in the Rutland Guild. The Spring Festival comprises a 6 Bell Striking Competition (closing date for entries 17th April 2016), a Buffet Tea, Guild Business Meeting and open ringing. There is open ringing at two towers, Caldecott and Glaston, before the competition ringing. Evening ringing is at Uppingham so bearing in mind my earlier comments please come along and have a ring on this excellent '8', whatever your ability. The details of the day are available on a poster which has been circulated around all of the branches.

Recruitment and Retention of ringers is still the biggest issue we face. Recent discussions in the Ringing World about the future for ringing are 'food for thought' and should be considered. I read the recent articles with interest and I have to say I agree with a lot of the comments. Once I have completed my preparation for the Spring Festival, Ridgman Trophy, R & T Committee Meeting and GMC Meeting, this is an issue I would like to look at. Any thoughts and comments you have on this topic would be appreciated as I really could do with some ideas about activities we could use to attract new ringers. I can come up with a few ideas but I guess some of them you have tried so it would be good to know which have worked and which have not.

On a personal note, I have enjoyed my first few months of being Ringing Master.



Many aspects of the 'job' have turned out to be very much as I expected. It is harder work than I thought it would be but I hope I am growing into it. It is also quite interesting so if you think you would like to get involved at Guild level I can recommend it.

I look forward to seeing more of you at the open ringing on Spring Festival, AGM and Summer Festival days. Please!

Best Regards, Andy Timms

News from the Branches

Culworth Branch

The Culworth branch annual dinner was held on 24th October at the Fox and Hounds, Charwelton. It was very well attended and 45 people enjoyed an excellent meal and evening together.

A very successful Helmdon annual tower meal was organised by David Powell and was held at the Red Lion, Eydon on 5th December.

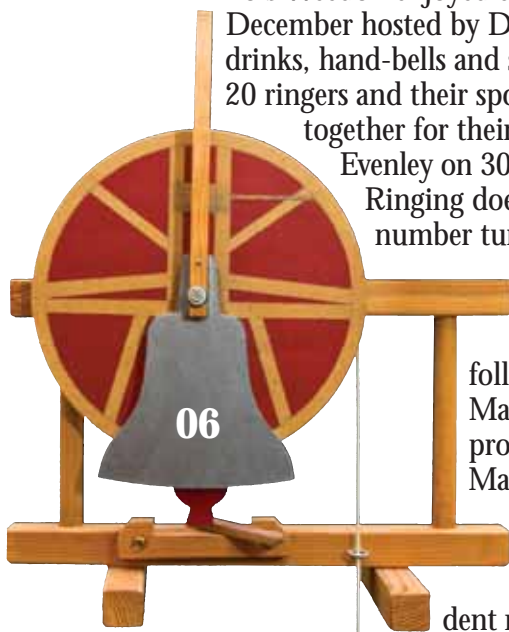
Rev James McDonald led the Ringer's Carol Service which was held on Monday 14th December at Brackley Church. Phil Curtis played the organ to some hearty singing. Afterwards mulled wine and mince pies were served by the ringers of Brackley. Ringing took place before and after the service on Brackley 8. It is hoped this will become an annual event for the branch.

Lois Weedon enjoyed their Christmas party on 16th December hosted by David Abbott and Gill Baird, food, drinks, hand-bells and singing featured during the evening. 20 ringers and their spouses from Whitfield joined together for their annual tower meal at the Red Lion, Evenley on 30th January.

Ringing does feature within the branch and a good number turned out for AGM ringing at

Greatworth, it was good to see our 90 year old ringer Derek Thornton from Woodford Halse join us. A service followed at Greatworth Church then off to Marston St Lawrence for an excellent tea provided by the ladies of Greatworth and Marston St Lawrence.

Helmdon Tower are pleased to welcome Matthew Dunkley (15) into their band. Matthew was elected a student member at the Branch AGM in January.



He undertook a weeks course with branch ringing master, Ian Chapple, in his summer holidays and was ringing with the rest of the band after 5 days. Well done Matthew. Congratulations also go to Helmdon tower for winning the Presidents Cup for the year.

Eydon Tower report that the beautiful curtains found and hung across the ground floor ringing chamber of St. Nicholas and at very little cost last year are now proving to be a problem. They are so well made that the thermal inner lining is now attempting to absorb every drop of moisture from within the walls of the church. They grow heavier by the day. It would be vandalism to cut this lining out but it may have to be done as a last resort. In the meantime we are running a de-humidifier 24/7 until the better weather returns.

Their band numbers have reduced again as Verena Jackson returns to her university studies in the city of Kosice in Slovakia. Her previous attempt was interrupted 2 years ago following a car accident while home on holiday. Good luck with your studies to become veterinary surgeon and we look forward to your return.

Geoff has posted notices in the village news and to organisations looking for new ringers in Eydon. The carrot being dangled is - Would you like to join the rest of us on 21st April and ring a bell for the Queen's 90 birthday.

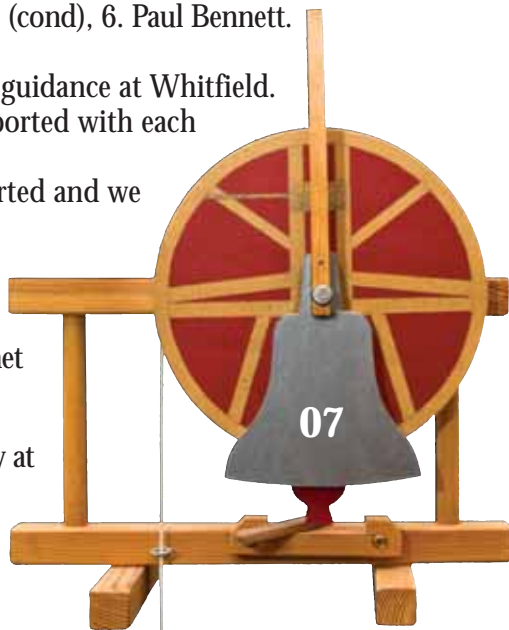
Aynho bell ringers have a busy year ahead with 13 weddings already booked this is due to the Park House wedding venue next door to the church.

Joy Kirkham rang her first quarter peal of Bob Doubles at Lois Weedon in November, thanks must go to those who rang with her and kept her on the "straight and narrow". 1. Sara Chapple, 2. Joy Kirkham, 3. Julie Blencowe, 4. Phil Curtis, 5. Ian Chapple (cond), 6. Paul Bennett.

Three new ringers from Syresham are learning the ropes under Ian Chapple's guidance at Whitfield. Individual tower practices are well supported with each tower trying to learn new methods.

Branch practices could be better supported and we are grateful to the visitors who join us.

We are sad to report the passing of Janet Copley who was a long standing member of the branch and a highly valued ringer at St George's, Evenley. Janet passed away on 26th January 2016 after suffering a riding accident. A private funeral service was held on 10th February at St Georges and the bells were rung to her memory. A memorial service will be held at a later date where her friends from her many circles of activity will be able to pay their respects.



On Saturday 20th February a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung at Marston St Lawrence to celebrate the 90th birthday of Phil Curtis from Marston. Those involved were 1. Diane Garrett, 2. Clare Jakeman, 3. Richard Gale, 4. Mick Scott, 5. Alan Garrett (cond.)

Do you have any Bagley bells in your Church?

Did you know that Henry Bagley, the bell founder is buried in Chacombe churchyard?

Chacombe would very much like to restore the small ornate headstone of Henry Bagley which is in the churchyard. He was the founder member of the Bagley family living in the village who started the Chacombe Bell

Foundry which was in business for 153 years. The inscription as follows is now becoming illegible and requires re-lettering at the approximate cost of £750.00.

HERE LYETH THE BODY
OF HENERY BAGLEY WHO
DEPARTED THIS LIFE
THE 1 DAY OF JAN 1683
TO PERPETUATE YE MEMORY
OF AN INGENIOUS BELL
FOUNDER
THIS STONE WAS REPAIRED
AD 1796 RESTORED AD 1892
AD 1958



Have a look to see
if you are ringing one of Henry's bells.

If you can help us restore this grave an appeal fund has been opened and any contributions no matter how small should be sent to Chacombe PCC (Bell Fund), c/o Michael Alcock, The Old Farmhouse, 29 Banbury Road, Chacombe, Banbury, Oxon OX17 2JN Tel: 711303.

Joy Kirkham



Daventry Branch

September

We won the Harry Wooding Trophy at the Summer Festival for a consecutive year for the first time and the trophy was back on display in Daventry tower after the day's outing to Castor! Jim White organised a successful quarter peal

of Grandsire Triples in the morning at Crick and the same team rang the same bells in the competition, conducted by Ian Willgress.



Jim White receives the Trophy on behalf of the Daventry Branch from the judges Adrial Walton and Alan Winter.

The winning Daventry team, clockwise from treble bottom right:

Gwynneth White, Carole Pullin, Alison Willgress, Justin Baker, Geoff Pullin, Jim White (Bugbrooke), Ian Willgress, who conducted the piece and Andrew Timms



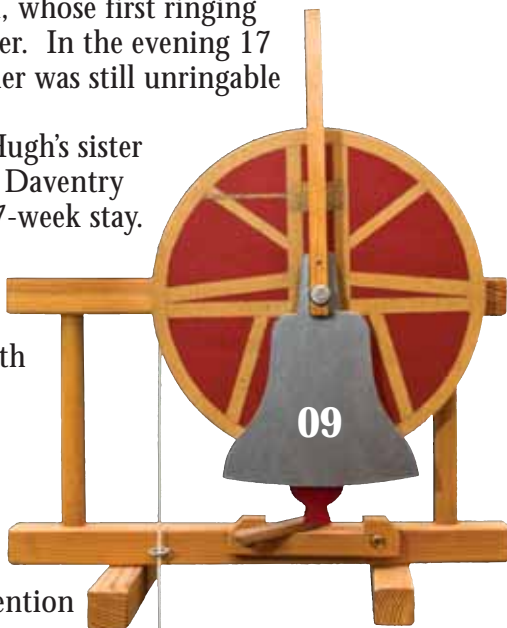
Welton ladder was a deterrent in September, so only 8 rang and 16 didn't – however 'Riding and Striding' and five weddings caused several to arrive just in time for tea. Carole looked after the ringing for Jim. The Revd. Chryst replaced the confession with a thanksgiving in our very short service. After a very ample tea, we learned that Mara Griffiths (Daventry) had given birth that afternoon to a daughter Bronwen, whose first ringing encounter was at Hellidon 31 days later. In the evening 17 rang at Whilton. Janet Bower's shoulder was still unringable and remains so.

We said farewell to Hilary Chama's (Hugh's sister from Beirut) after ringing regularly at Daventry on Sundays and Tuesdays during her 7-week stay.

October

The branch dinner at Barby attracted 21. Christine's 'tween courses photo competition ranged over the world with two achieving only 18/28, and a tie-breaker to win.

26 managed to park at Badby and 23 rang including (deliberate) firing to mark Michael's birthday. The short service was taken by the Rev Sue Faulkner, who, as requested, didn't mention



bells, with member Eleanor Ramsbotham at the organ. The Secretary lost one contact lens and needed help to read the highlights of the F&GP Committee minutes. Ian Willgess reported that Heyford treble headstock was removed for gudgeon repair by Taylors last month. The treble bell was perched on the frame obstructing any ringing. We learned that Ted Garrett, has spent many months in Northampton hospital. In the evening 19 rang at Daventry. The branch Sunday quarter peal was Cambridge S Major at Holy Sepulchre, Northampton, conducted by Jim White. It was a belated complement for Shirley and Richard Waterhouse's silver wedding anniversary in August. A quarter peal of Plain Bob Triples at Daventry on the 25th, conducted by Jim, was arranged as a welcome to 6-week old Bronwen, who met the band beforehand and was serenaded whilst being pushed around the town centre by mum and dad. Congratulations to Leanne Martin who rang the treble for her first quarter attempt.

November

Our Byfield meeting attracted a cosy 23 to ring, and 5 who didn't ring. Copious tea ensured that the new toilet facility was appreciated! The Rev Stevie Cross took the service with lapsed ringer Eric Bates at the organ. We welcomed Kaye Adams as a new member from Bugbrooke.

Jim White reported the branch half-muffled quarter peal of Grandsire Caters conducted by Ian Willgess on November 8. We agreed that half of the branch bell maintenance fund should go to Nether Heyford towards the headstock, pulley restoration and clapper re-profiling. Ian reported that

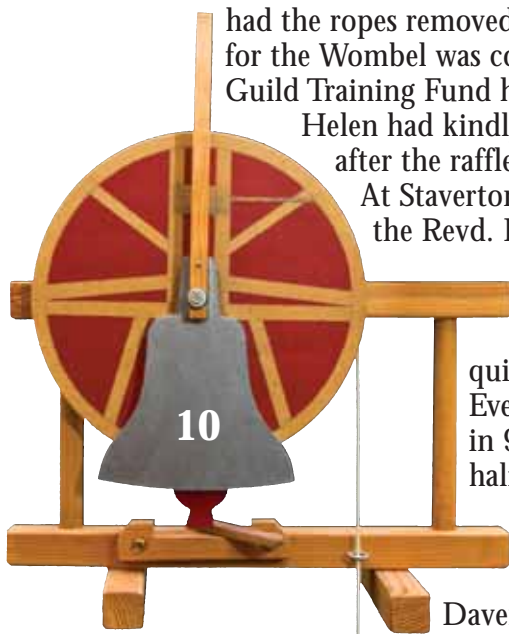
Church Stowe bells are now unringable and the PCC have had the ropes removed. Gwyneth reported that the funding for the Wombel was complete. The 50% grant from the Guild Training Fund had been gratefully received. Jo and Helen had kindly offered to complete the funding after the raffle today.

At Staverton in the evening we were welcomed by the Revd. Roy Kilford and some 19 crammed into the tower, before retiring to the Countryman.

Brian Clark organised the branch quiz with Hilary Aslett as quizmaster at Everdon on the 28th with 39 taking part in 9 teams of 4 or 5. There were half-time fish and chips and an interesting double tie breaker at the end between the usual rivals.

December

Daventry tower held an open day in



conjunction with the church on the 5th. The morning was particularly hectic with a steadier flow in the afternoon.

Visitors were shown the belfry with the muffled 7th ringing, could try the simulator and saw a demo of ringing on the front six. The church hosted choirs, organ, handbells as well as craft stalls.

Also on the 5th the Weldon handbell orchestra gave a concert at Nether Heyford Church. The audience of seventy helped raise money for their bell fund. The treble headstock was returned and refitted by Taylors with great effort by Brian Foley and the bells were rung for Christmas. The clappers and pulleys remain outstanding.

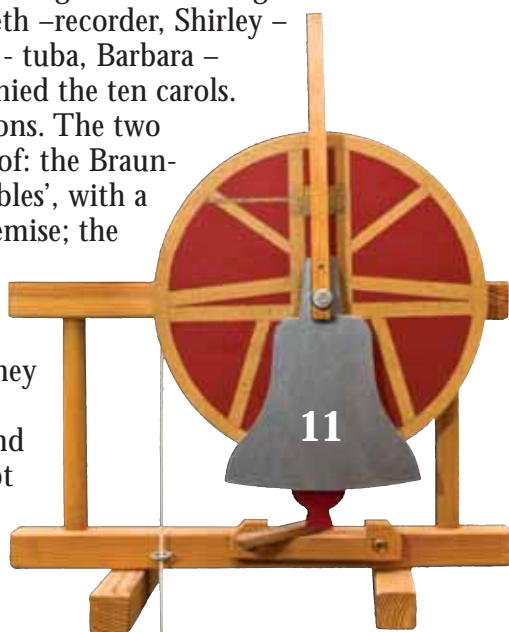
The branch quarter peal on Sunday 14th afternoon was Plain Bob Triples for Theresa Baker at Whilton conducted by Jim White.

There were 43 at Weedon for our meeting of whom 29 rang. Near teatime, an unauthorised modification to the 3rd stay ended the ringing early! The tower captain cum branch steward was already away collecting the large order for fish and chips but investigated and rang six bells up again ready for Sunday whilst we enjoyed very ample portions accompanied by plenty of cups of tea. We elected and welcomed four new members: Hayley Davies for Weedon; Frances Bird for Byfield; Jackie and Kim Gibbard from Willoughby. Finally Margaret Dean's endeavour and enterprise enabled a very fine Christmas cake to be auctioned, by budding auctioneer Barry, to Hilary for a handsome bid. The carol concert followed at 7pm. The programme was produced by Gwynneth and the smart green clerically shirted Revd. Michael Houghton led us with prayers and the Revd. Jan Collins gave the blessing.

Alison B's musical ensemble (Gwynneth - recorder, Shirley - clarinet, Alan - trombone and Alison - tuba, Barbara - piano and Michael - organ) accompanied the ten carols.

There were 13 intervening contributions. The two multi-person performances consisted of: the Braunston Monday Club singing 'Bob Doubles', with a new verse marking Peter Wenham's demise; the Heyford players minimalist

presentation of Cinderella in which Jan was the announcer, Shirley ("Al-right") as Cinders, Chris and Ian ("They fit") were the Ugly Sisters, Alison as Prince Charming ("No they don't") and Jane as the fairy godmother. The script could probably be written on the back of an envelope but the 'stand and sit' stage directions must pad it out to several sides! Peter Wenham's



limericks were scattered through the programme and Alison the Sec read his poem about a past infamous branch dinner Christmas pudding, deemed fit to use as muffles. The evening was rounded off with Deena and Hugh's hot mulled wine.

January

The Sunday branch quarter peal was rung at Weedon in thanksgiving for the life of Freda Willgress, Ian's mother, who formerly rang at Rushden and Higham Ferrers but whilst living at Kilsby House has been an unattached member of our branch. It was Yorkshire Surprise Major conducted by Jim White. At least 24 of the many mourners from various parts of the country rang on the four bells before Freda's funeral held at Kilsby taken by the Rector of Heyford. While the family went to the crematorium, hot soup and refreshments were very welcome at The George on this cold but unusually sunny dry day.

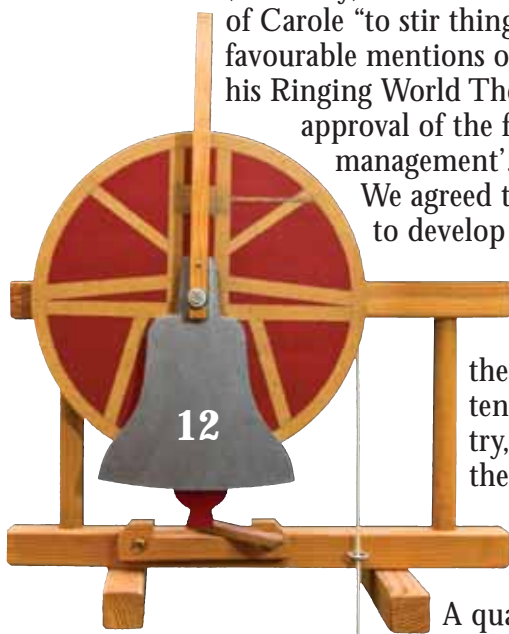
Ringin at Daventry before our AGM was busy with 29 ringing and 15 who didn't ring! 16 rang in the evening, including call changes and Yorkshire Royal (thanks to Brenda Dixon for coming from Rushden!). After the service taken by Canon Michael Webber, in which we remembered Freda, we adjourned to a new venue - the church hall - for hot soup and ringers' tea and the AGM. Everyone could hear! Brian Clark gave the vote of thanks to the Rector and to Michael Houghton and Barbara at the organ, Deena and Hugh and helpers for tea. Odette Dawkins was welcomed a new member for Byfield. Alison Willgress was swiftly returned to the chair. Leanne Martin

(Daventry) was added to the committee on the proposition of Carole "to stir things up". Michael Houghton, after his favourable mentions of the Daventry branch during 2015 in his Ringing World Thoughts columns, gave his grateful approval of the first year of the branch under 'new management'.

We agreed to continue monthly special practices to develop 8 and 10-bell rhythms. Branch

members make a special effort to assist the local practice night at our three eight-bell towers in turn during the last week of each month. Average attendance has been about 14. At Daventry, the branch ringing master takes over the practice from 8pm on the second Tuesdays for 10-bell ringing only, when average attendance has been 15.

A quarter peal of Plain Bob Triples, con-



ducted by Jim White at Daventry marked Richard Waddy's 80th birthday on the 12th.



L to r: Alison, Richard, Leanne, Gwyneth, Geoff, Andy, Jim, Carole.

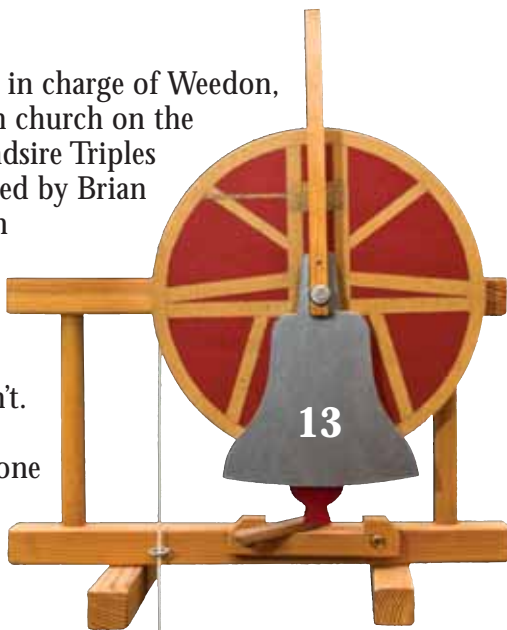
Geoffrey Weller, one of 'Fred's Byfield lads' before and after the rehanging of the bells in the 1990s, sadly took his own life aged 38. In 2007, the bells (the treble includes Geoffrey's name), were rung late at night to coincide with his wedding in New York. The half-muffled bells were rung for his funeral by a band incorporating some of his lapsed 1990s ringing contemporaries.

Daytime practices got off to a good start in 2016: Staverton Monday mornings average attendance is 10, up from a regular 6 or 7 in the autumn; Braunston Monday afternoons simulator averages 15; Hellidon Tuesday mornings coffee-with-ringing averages 14 despite the cold and a gentle attempt towards a local leap forward to plain hunting on 4!

Hilary Aslett completed 60 years membership of the Guild and marked it with a quarter peal of Cambridge at Helmdon, conducted by Chris Bulleid, on the 26th.

February

The Revd. Canon John Knight, priest in charge of Weedon, Everdon and Dodford, was in Weedon church on the 4th listening to a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples to celebrate his 80th birthday, organised by Brian Foley, conducted by Ray Watkin. John entertained the ringers afterwards with hot cross buns, coffee and a few tales from his many years in Africa. At the Whilton meeting, despite the miserable weather, 34 rang and 4 didn't. Jim was kept busy sorting out ringing from call changes to Cambridge (but one member of that band persisted in ringing Yorkshire!) The Revd Sue Kipling arrived with a shopping basket holding 'Temptation' tomatoes and



chocolates and spoke about Lent and temptation! The village hall was nice and cosy for sandwiches, including hot bacon and sausage, and rolls and cakes with very busy teapot operators. Chris Lunn gave the vote of thanks before the rector departed. We elected David Foster as a new member from Flore. With two visitors from Bedford we had 16 to ring in the evening at Great Brington, where a missing trap cover made the stately ring even louder than usual! The pub at Little Brington provided a nice warm après-ring to 10 of them.

Carole said that I should never have attempted to call a quarter peal for Ken Ramsbotham's 70th birthday on February 12 and indeed I miscalled Cambridge at Badby very near the end. We rang for 50 minutes but the thought was there – and thanks for the glass of bubbly afterwards! Something also happened to Little Bob Royal on the next Sunday, resulting in 48 minutes of ringing that didn't come round properly!

February half-term heralded the usual Heyford Jaunt. Jane Rands organised for 16, including ex-patriots Ian & Val Calvert, to stay in four holiday barn-conversions at remote Ilam, Staffs, in the Peak District National Park. The three ringing days were freezing, with two sunny and one of continuous rain. From the 14 towers, the highlights were: the RC church by Pugin in Cheadle; the very costly update to Dilhorne church and its octagonal tower, including underfloor heating, LED lighting and high quality glass

partitioning of the north aisle; Wetton with each of the six bells cast in a different century; Ashbourne, where the eight are rung from the central crossing showing rather a scary lot of rope and the chime pull-off is placed at the end of the north transept – a long way from the tower; and the nice steel spiral stair to ring at Brailsford where the treble stay had been broken and the rope left wrapped over the wheel – we had no permission to access the diagonal frame to enable stay-less ringing! At the last tower, Osmaston, Jane was thanked for all her work in sorting the accommodation, catering and tower arrangements.



The assembled company outside

Osmaston tower, l to r: *Dorothy, Chris, Ann, Gillian, Jane, Barry, Gwyneth, Geoff, Carole, Ian, Alison, Jim, Ian, Val, Jane and Peter.*

The Guild 'paper quiz' results showed Chris & Dorothy FitzGerald from Farthingstone drawn first of two all-correct entries and Jim & Gwyneth White from Bugbrooke were third out of the 73 entries.

Future

Sally Thompson has had a go at setting up a branch Facebook page. There wasn't much feedback at first, so we wait to see whether it is effective. We are all looking for local events suitable for the deployment of our Wombel. It is presently booked for Welton hobbies festival on April 16. We look forward to hosting the Ridgman Trophy at Daventry on June 4 and hope to use it to bring ringing to the town's attention and hopefully gain more recruits to join the ranks.

The CCCBR has linked-up with Heritage Open Days and we hope to take part in one way or another from September 8 to 11.

We look forward to greeting you to the Guild Quiz at Weedon Village Hall on Saturday, October 29.

Geoff Pullin

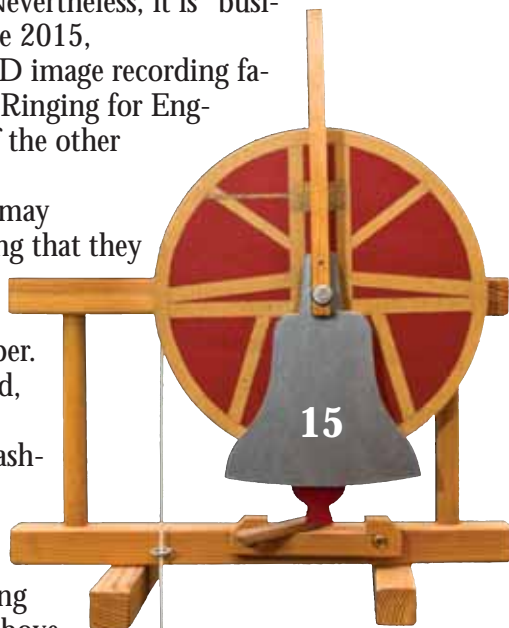
Guildsborough Branch

Lilbourne.

At the time of writing, All Saints' Church nave roof is still under the cover of tarpaulin awaiting a faculty approval. Nevertheless, it is "business as usual" inside. We have, since late 2015, installed a 24/7 security system with HD image recording facilities. Once again, Lilbourne will be "Ringing for England" on April 23rd plus many or all of the other national celebrations.

Laterally thinking, visiting bell-ringers may possibly be briefly beguiled into thinking that they are walking into someone's

□ minimalist living room when approaching the open plan ringing chamber. With its carpet, woollen mats, cupboard, server trolley, a choice of trendy red, or two-tone grey plastic chairs, dangling fashion conscious furry ceiling accessories, (cousins to furry pink dice in cars), strange looking stove-pipe appliance, radio controlled clock and mood setting wall light with a brighter space light above,



on the face of it, it would appear that the Tower Captain has other things on his mind rather than ringing bells !

Not so Taking another look reveals a different, more sobering story. Carpet = sound control; mats = tail-end rope protection; cupboard = storage; server trolley = mobile table for laying out method sheets; trendy chairs actually belong to the Church; dangly items = bell ropes; stove-pipe = rope warmer; mood lighting = existing lighting; space lighting = fluorescent tube fitting. All for free. (with warm thanks to Kelvin B, for the tube fitting & clock, Nick H, for the rope warmer and the Churchwardens' permission for the makeover). The rest of the items were acquired from a friend's local house clearance.

Not rocket science or original, the moral of the story portrays, some creature comforts can be obtained & aesthetically put together to enhance the ringing chamber & bell ringing in a practical manner, apart from the near-arctic conditions of the Church in winter months.

Crick.

2015 started slowly as there was a change afoot with the way the ringing was going to be reorganised. Service ringing had lapsed since the tower was repaired a few years ago. In May, Nick Hiams took over as Tower Captain and started to make plans to build a new band of ringers at Crick.

Nick and Anthea, his wife, organised quite a few tied bell sessions in June, July and August for our 4 new recruits and they were soon able to ring rounds along with other experienced ringers. Saturday morning "Rising Ringers"

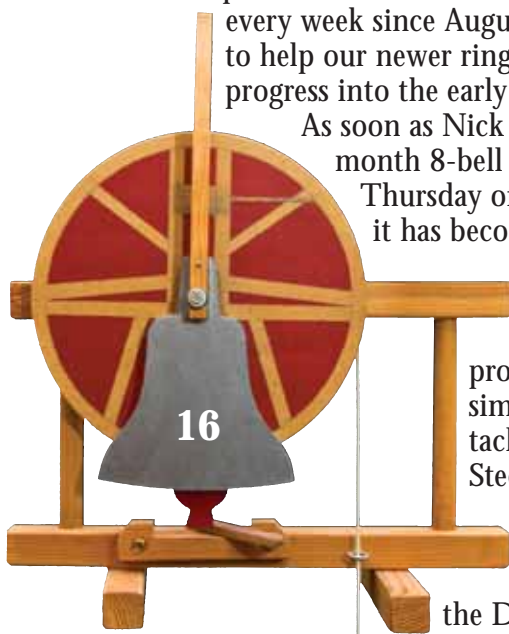
practices have been established and have been taking place every week since August. This is the practice which we use to help our newer ringers (and others from local towers) to progress into the early stages of change ringing.

As soon as Nick took over at Crick, a regular once a month 8-bell practice was established on the 2nd Thursday of each month. This has continued and it has become a place for those ringing changes

on 5 or 6 bells to gain more experience on 8 bells. Several of those attending have now made progress to comfortably ring touches of simple Triples methods. Now they are tackling more challenging things such as Stedman Triples and Oxford Bob Triples.

Several quarter peals have been rung including some of Triples and

Surprise Major by mostly ringers in the Daventry branch. Local bands have also



rung quarters of Grandsire Doubles Plain Bob Minor and St. Nicholas. It is hoped that more of our home-grown ringers will be attempting and succeeding in quarter peals in 2016.

We have rung for some local and national special occasions this year. VJ Day, the Queen becoming the longest serving monarch, the scarecrow festival and this continued up to midnight on 31st when we will “Rang in the New Year”. In 2016 we will be “Ringing for England on St Georges day” amongst others. A ringing simulator has been “In construction” for some time and we sometimes use a single bell for tied practice. It is hoped that a stable system can be built that will enable silent practice to be carried out without disturbing residents at any time. This is however still dependent on a few other factors so may not materialise imminently.

Visiting bands are always welcome and a quarter peal was rung on 1st January 2016 by one such band. So far we have continued with regular attempts at quarter peals on Saturday evenings but have not yet managed a quarter in a Surprise Minor Method – watch this space.

Nick Hiams

Ravensthorpe.

This tower, like many others, is in desperate need of regular bell-ringers. The branch, through the successful “Roving Ringers” programme of 2015 very much hopes to ring here on national occasions such as “Ringing for England” etc.

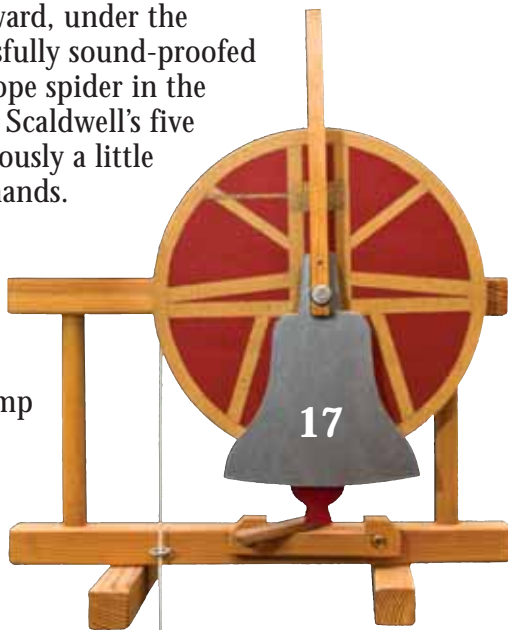
Scaldwell.

The intrepid ringers and a roving steward, under the watchful eye of Elaine G, have successfully sound-proofed the clock room floor and installed a rope spider in the ringing chamber. The tonal quality of Scaldwell’s five bells is subjectively good, albeit, previously a little loud for the ringers to hear call commands.

Sibbertoft and Marston Trussell.

Both of these have become some of the latest towers to succumb to the continuous toll of lead thefts to sweep through our area.

At Sibbertoft, the existing pendant lamp illuminating the ringing chamber has been superseded with an integral fluorescent fitting incorporating an emergency light, along with a 13A power point and further lighting in the upper parts of the tower.



Thornby.

The bells are still temporarily un-ringable. Warmer weather and materials will hopefully allow work to re-commence & bring these bells back in to service.

Walgrave.

This is another tower greatly in need of Sunday Service ringing activity. Part of the same benefice as Scaldwell, the visiting ringers from Scaldwell would like some assistance from time to time. If anyone can spare time to ring occasionally, then that would be greatly appreciated. The bells, especially the tenor may be regarded by some as heavy but the rewards of their tonal qualities far outweigh this practicality.

Welford.

Our 2nd Sunday quarter peal ringing prior to the Evensong Service is now proving successful.

Yelvertoft.

Regular & established Sunday Service ringing with Friday night practices, sound out over the village as in deed they have done so for many, many years.

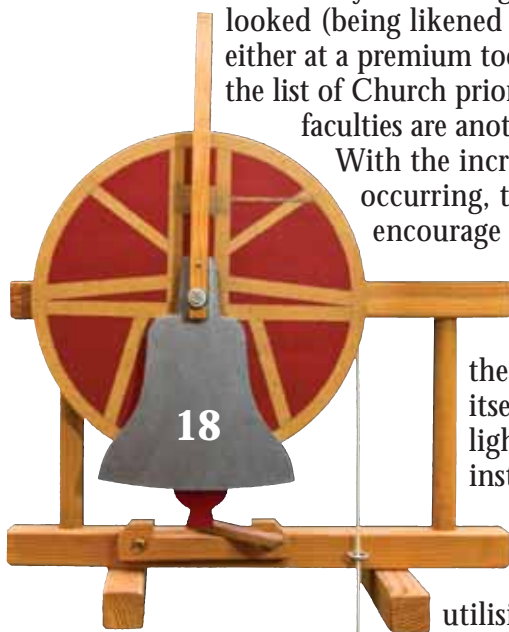
The Branch Steward writes

One of my topical contributions of nouns, verbs, adjectives etc for this magazine is “Have you seen the light?” Sounds like it could have originated from the east end of the Church, but in reality it homes in on the ubiquitous internal tower illuminations.

Good lighting in the ringing chamber, bell chamber & anywhere in between is considered essential by some & not

essential by others. Lighting requirements are often overlooked (being likened to loft spaces in houses) & comes either at a premium too high to contemplate or lower down the list of Church priorities at PCC meeting level. Obtaining faculties are another hurdle to cross as many will testify.

With the increasing amount of lead thefts occurring, the insurers can “demand” or strongly encourage Churches to install security features to protect themselves etc. In a lot of cases, this means an extra electricity supply has to be installed to feed these devices & may be in the tower itself. It is at this ideal time a beneficial lighting system to all parties can be installed alongside other installations. It can be successfully debated that lighting is required for the safe servicing of the security system. By utilising this lateral thinking method of



obtaining the desired illumination, is exactly what happened at my home tower of Lilbourne.

I conclude with another phrase :- “Ringing in the rain !” What I imply is :- “Water ingress in to the Church”. The message I send out to all steeple-keepers, tower captains or other Church officials is :- Please regularly visit the upper parts of the tower & immediately notify your PCC of any water ingress from the tower, steeple or anywhere. The resultant water damage not only effects the bell installation but more importantly is the inherent damage to the structure and fabric of the Church. Although the Branch steward is not a structural engineer and equally has no power whatsoever to demand compliance on any subject, he will, free of charge, if you wish, inspect your bell installation and report back all other viewable issues accordingly. If you want to look inside the tower for your piece of mind or other reasons and have no one available to ascend with you, then please contact me, I will only be too pleased to assist. Thank you.

“Ringing ,fixing, talking and now writing for England”

Rob Palmer, Guilsborough Branch Steward,

e-mail : towersandbells@gmail.com

Kettering Branch

Here is our report about what we have been doing since the last newsletter. Our autumn/winter programme began in September with an outing. We would like to thank Shane for arranging this for us. It was his first experience of organising an outing and went very well so it is good to know that our younger members are gaining the experience that will ensure the future of our branch. We rang at Newport Pagnell, Emberton and Olney and enjoyed a picnic tea at Emberton Country Park. Unfortunately only 12 branch members were able to attend which left us a little stretched, particularly for the 10 so we are grateful to local ringers and to Alan who helped us out. It was particularly pleasing to see Leigh and Alice do so well on their first trip away from their home bells.

In October we held our annual Hot Supper and Beetle Drive at Desborough. If you haven't been to one of these fast and furious events, you haven't lived! There was much



discussion this year over whether it was right to reduce the number of legs on a beetle in order to shorten the length of the game – the debate continues! Anyway, as usual it was fun for all the family, with congratulations going to Alice Parkin for winning and thanks of course to Bill for organising the game and Liz for organising Bill – we couldn't do it without you! Thank you also to the Desborough team for a magnificent supper.

Our November practice was replaced by an opportunity to ring for evensong at Peterborough Cathedral. Many of us rarely ring on larger numbers of bells but we rang plenty of rounds and call changes so that all could enjoy the experience. A special mention goes to Evan Thomas whose achievements were noted by the Headmaster at school – it is really great when your hobby allows you to shine in a different way.

In December 18 of us assembled for a practice on the simulator at Rothwell and as usual at that time of year we enjoyed seasonal refreshments.

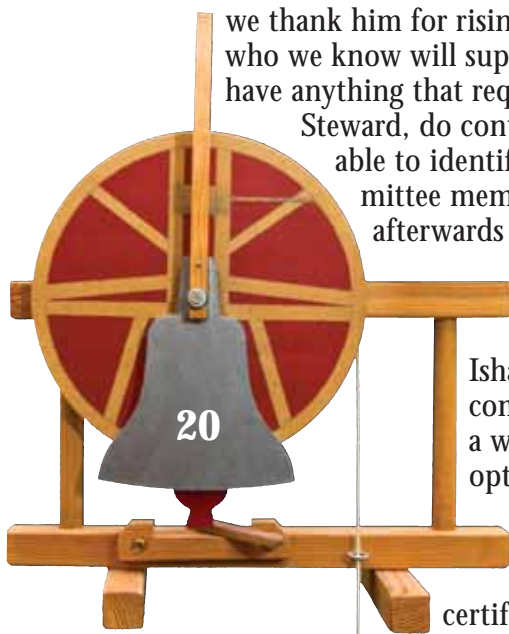
Our AGM was held in January at Barton Seagrave. Thanks go to Derek Sibson for ensuring all arrangements were in place and to all the ladies who provided us with a splendid hot supper. Also special thanks to another of our younger members, Ollie Rice who played the organ for our service. 36 members attended. We were pleased to elect two new members – Jane Gowen from Isham and Evan Thomas from Desborough. Our committee were all re-elected as previously, with the exception that Shane Ward has agreed to take on the role of Steward. Whilst Shane may be a little inexperienced in these

matters, it is an excellent opportunity for him to learn and we thank him for rising to the challenge and thank those who we know will support him along the way. So if you have anything that requires the advice of the Branch

Steward, do contact Shane. At the AGM we were unable to identify a Ringing Master or any new committee members but we were delighted that

afterwards Helen Churchman and Sarah Bence approached the committee and offered to take on the Ringing Master role jointly and Louise Sandy from Isham expressed an interest in joining the committee. There is nothing better than a willing volunteer so all were duly co-opted to the roles at the first committee meeting of the year.

During our AGM we were pleased to present four first quarter peal certificates to four of the youngest



members of our Branch - Keelan Peak, Rhys Skillman, Sophie Frostwick and Alice Parkin – our congratulations to them all.

The AGM noted with sadness the passing of Ray Berryman from Kettering, a long-term member of the Guild. The committee agreed to find a home for his commemorative mug and plate from the Guild Diamond Jubilee in 1984 and this is now in the proud possession of one of his many old friends within the Branch.

Our February meeting was a great start to the new year as it was attended by 37 people including friends from Thrapston, Wellingborough and Culworth. We would like to thank Murray and his helpers for extremely clear and useful instruction on rope splicing. Over half those present chose to practice a short splice and observe a long splice, while others enjoyed the opportunity to ring with our new Ringing Masters.

The committee has now met to consider the programme for the next year so we look forward to seeing lots of Branch members and friends in the coming months.

If you want to be kept fully up to date with our activities you can ask to receive our monthly newsletter – just email ***thewallisfamily@hotmail.com***

We also have an online noticeboard on which you can post images, post-it notes, files and videos to share with each other. If you would like to use it you will need to create an account at www.linoit.com and then email ***nick@firedout.co.uk*** for an invitation to view the Kettering Branch Board.

Deb Wallis

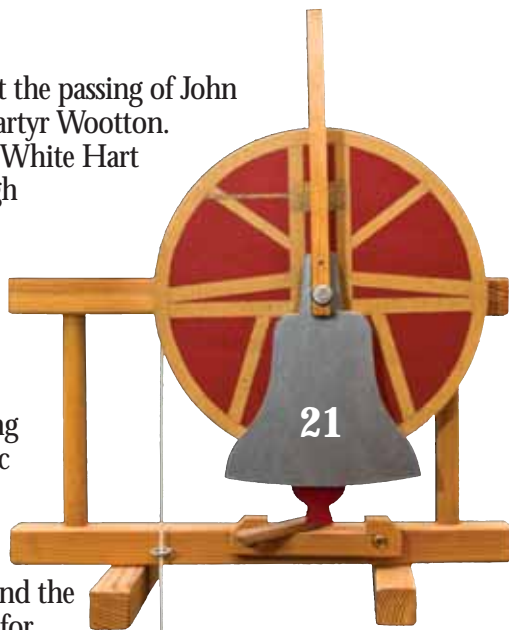
Northampton Branch

Since the last report we are sorry to report the passing of John Page, Tower Captain of St George the Martyr Wootton.

The Branch dinner was again held at the White Hart Hackleton. The food was of the usual high standard and quantity.

Our outing was reduced to an afternoon and early evening in the Rugby area. There was a good attendance, some nice bells and for those who bought them some wonderful Christmas puddings. The summer evening was warm and sunny allowing for a picnic tea to be enjoyed by the canal.

Monthly branch practices continue with good attendances. There was no practice in December due to Christmas and the amount of extra carol services to be rung for.



The AGM was held at Brafield on the Green. A nice ring of 6 in the newly refurbished tower. Ray and Anne Henman and assorted cake bakers provided a good ringers tea. Attendance was good as was the ringing and new offices were elected. After a gap of 12 months we have a new Ringing Master, Giles Wilson assisted by Robin Hickmott.

Mark Rogers

Peterborough Branch

Castor Ringing School

The Castor Saturday morning Ringing School is entering its 9th year of continuous training of novices through to advanced method ringing. During this period we have had about 90 trainees from a large number of different towers from as far afield as Kings Lynn, Huntingdon and Rutland. We currently have trainees from Warmington,

Nassington, Polebrook, Barnack, Ufford and Stamford. We have a “hard core” of half-a-dozen regular trainers/helpers with a further 3 or 4 that will fill in when we are short.

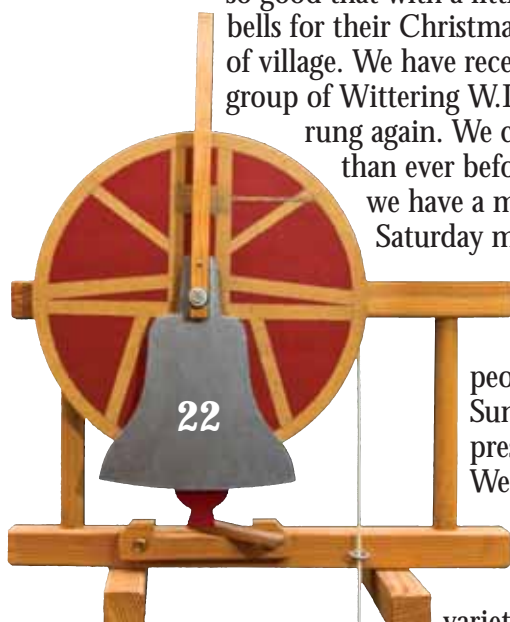
July last year we had a request from Barnack to train a new band of ringers as the have been silent for some time. We took the opportunity to use the normal August break to start the initial training programme so that by the time normal sessions started again in September they would have covered basic bell handling and be able to join the other regulars. Although a number of the original beginners dropped out early on, a core remained and have made good progress,

so good that with a little support from a few of us rang their bells for their Christmas carol service much to the appreciation of village. We have recently had a further request to train a group of Wittering W.I. members so that their bells can be rung again. We currently are handling more trainees than ever before; our biggest problem is ensuring that we have a minimum of six trainers/helpers each Saturday morning.

Peterborough Cathedral

Peterborough Cathedral ringing is in good heart. We usually get around 18 people on practice night, and at a recent Sunday morning there were 17 ringers present!

We have rung 6 quarters for Evensong over the last 3 months, up to Cambridge S Royal; in fact we have rung over 20 quarters in the last 12 months in a variety of methods usually targeted in



providing opportunity for someone to improve. This is a tower where you can get 8 spliced S Major on practice night. There were 6 new Cathedral Company members elected at a recent meeting which reflects opportunity and progress over the last 3 years as well as people moving into the area. We enjoy good co operation with St Mary's and St John's.

King's Cliffe

Over the past six months our activities have blossomed. Sunday service ringing has become more predictable as a result of an on line sign-up sheet for each month which enables us to see how many and who will be available for each service. This was particularly useful in planning the Christmas ringing. As a tower we are blessed with eleven members of the regular congregation who ring but they all have other service commitments (churchwardens, reader, choir, Sunday school, etc.) which can curtail their ringing.

The numbers attending our practice nights on the second and fourth Monday of each month have grown with regular visitors, a number of whom have graduated from the Castor Ringing School.

Touches of Plain Bob and Grandsire are interspersed with Little Bob, Single Oxford, Stedman and Cambridge, giving opportunities for everyone.

During the course of the year we have rung for a number of weddings.

Notification of the bride's arrival has always given us a headache but the introduction of a wireless CCTV camera has now solved that problem.

In October we finally managed to arrange the first quarter on the rehung bells.

The initial attempt at Cambridge proved to be over ambitious but we achieved

1260 of Plain Bob Minor successfully, with grateful thanks to

Murray Coleman as conductor. The event also marked Pat

Teall's 60 years as a ringer.

Bulwick

Our practice nights continue to be very well attended and the ringing as diverse as the band. It has been a

joy to welcome two new learners, John Denning

and Phil McCrone, and on occasion to welcome

back Phil's daughter Claire who now

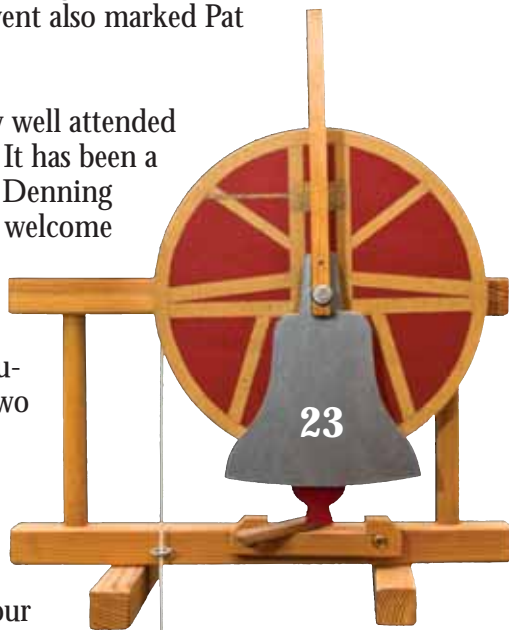
lives in Spain. Methods range from rounds and call changes to spliced surprise.

The year has seen both weddings and funerals, with the passing bell tolled on two occasions.

Our tower dinner held at the end of November in Warmington was a great

success, 20 of us sitting down to an excellent meal and lively conversation.

We completed the year by celebrating our



Tower Captain's 70th birthday at a party in Weldon. This week Derek Jones will also be toasting his 70 years with Sue on the high seas.

Glington

Having enjoyed some notable "firsts" last year, we then unfortunately lost two of our more faithful ringers – one who moved away from the area, the other who left to go to university – both are still ringing which is the most important thing! It does, however, mean that our numbers are somewhat depleted.

We look to our beginners to carry on the ringing tradition. We have started training four new ringers including one young man learning for his Duke of Edinburgh award. The new ringers were welcomed in enthusiastically and Mpho, in particular, is progressing well.

We were delighted to welcome back some old ringing friends in October. The band rang a peal of Surprise Minor, marking the centenary of the execution of Nurse Edith Cavell by German forces in World War 1 (Sent for publication in The Ringing World and printed in issue 5456, page 1154.) The peal took nearly three hours and was received with enthusiasm by residents of the surrounding villages who came to listen.

As a tower we helped celebrate the special milestone of an 80th birthday last year, with a surprise party for one of our most supportive ringers from Deeping St. James. We look forward to another milestone this year, our steeple-keeper's golden wedding anniversary. Speaking of our steeple keeper, we bit the bullet and bought new ropes from Ellis and Pritchard which were duly fitted and are surviving well - despite causing a bit of havoc for those ringers with more

delicate hands! Unfortunately there was no ringing for the carol service this year, as a breakdown in communications led to the choir placing an organ and speakers in the middle of the (ground floor) ringing chamber. Hopefully the same situation will not be occurring in 2016. As ever, despite this, we had some joyful Christmas ringing; the Christmas tree lights' switch on, midnight mass, and an unusual wedding celebration on New Year's Eve at 6pm in the dark. All were well attended, happy occasions.

We would be happy to see anyone at our Thursday evening practice – 7:30pm until 9:00pm. If the door is open – we are there!

Warmington

Since I last wrote a report for Warmington we have been pleased to welcome three more learners and have regularly been joined by more experienced



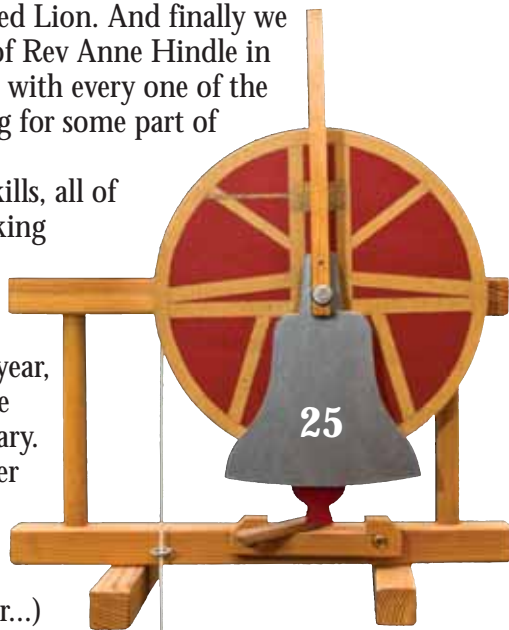
ringers to help us progress. Our Friday practices are often quite crowded these days, which is great to see. All of the original learners are now ringing confidently and there was one week recently when Alex remarked in surprise “We haven’t rung any rounds tonight; everyone of you has moved on to learning the next stage.”

We have rung for several weddings in 2015 and on one occasion were astonished to realise that it was entirely a local band, all of us taught by the dedicated team at the Castor ringing school and at Warmington. We also were able to commence ringing regularly for Sunday services. Like ripples in a pond the Warmington ringers have spread out, ringing for services and for weddings at other churches in the Warmington benefice (Fotheringhay and Cotterstock) and at our neighbouring villages, Elton and Nassington.

We decided to clean and decorate the ringing room, and it was indeed a revelation to find that the window was not, as we thought, opaque glass, but perfectly translucent. One of the ringers kindly donated a new fitted carpet and the room is now looking smart and welcoming. We also raised enough money to have the electrical wiring to the tower renewed so that we now have a HEATER! We have rung three quarter peals at Warmington recently, all kindly conducted for us by John Riley. The first was a personal one, to celebrate the birth of a baby girl whose mother, grandmother, great grandfather and great great grandfather have all been or still are ringers at Warmington. We can only hope she has inherited the bell ringing gene! Then we had to say farewell to Rev Brian who had been at Warmington for over 20 years and who had encouraged us to start ringing again at Warmington. He came to listen to the quarter peal then joined us for a drink at the Red Lion. And finally we were pleased to ring for the induction of Rev Anne Hindle in January 2016 This was a busy weekend with every one of the Warmington team coming along to ring for some part of the celebrations.

In our efforts to improve our ringing skills, all of the team have attended the branch striking workshop and the raising and lowering in peal workshop. (We still can’t do it..but we don’t give up easily.)

We also hosted two branch events this year, the Ring for your Supper evening in the summer, and the branch AGM in January. The start of 2016 saw us up in the tower again, as we rang in the New Year at midnight then drank a toast together, and made our new year ringing resolutions (something to do with bob minor...)



Thanks as always to Alex Dyer, John Riley and Yvette Halewood, whose constant support and help has got Warmington bells ringing again.

Oundle

Work continues on the tower to deter the pigeons. The lead work has been completed and the new floor above the bells is almost complete. Once everything is finished it is hoped the bells will be given the once over by Taylors of Loughborough.

Glaphthorn

We continue to chime the 3 bells for Sunday services, and are looking forward to ringing them at a wedding in September.

Nassington

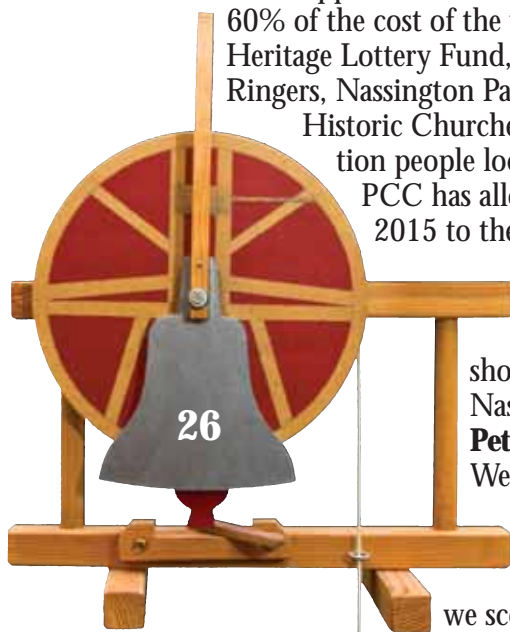
The last year has been a particularly notable one for the Nassington Tower. This has been for a number of reasons. We now ring all the bells every Sunday for service. We have increased practices from once a fortnight to regular weekly practices. The attendance at these practices has also increased and been reinvigorated, so that now we have in excess of eight ringers each week and often more than fifteen. Many of these have been ringers from the Bellringing School at Castor who are able consolidate their learning and get more practice. The quality of the ringing has also improved over the year, both in the complexity of the ringing and also in the striking.

During 2016 we shall increase our peal from five to six and also replace the bell frame. This is a major undertaking and has meant both raising the necessary funds, in excess of £70,000, and also receiving all the required permissions.

Grant applications have been approved, amounting to over 60% of the cost of the works. So a big thank you to The Heritage Lottery Fund, The Peterborough Guild of Bell Ringers, Nassington Parish Council, Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust and The Sharpe Trust. In addition people locally have been very generous and the PCC has allocated 50% of wedding collections in 2015 to the bell project. This has all taken longer than expected, but everything is in place for the work to be commissioned completed during 2016. Next year should be an exciting one for all of us at Nassington.

Peterborough St John's

We continue to ring for service each Sunday with our regular ringers and occasional support from others, and attempt regular quarter peals. In 2015 we scored twelve quarters of anything from



doubles and triples to plain and surprise major, including one where the treble ringer last touched a bell rope 17 years ago! We also managed to score a peal of Grandsire Triples which has been an ambition for a while now of a few of us who regularly ring at St John's. We also took part in collaboration with the Council in the City centre celebrations for the 70th Anniversary of VE day.

Improvements have been made in the tower - noise damping has been improved by putting more carpet under the bells, regular maintenance of the bells is carried out, we have a new rope on the seventh which has helped with the handling and go of that particularly awkward bell, and we have a smart new carpet in the ringing room. There is only a practice once a month (2nd Weds) and of late that has been poorly attended - we do however take pride in the fact that we continue to regularly ring out the changes on what are the city centre's most prominent bells.

Peterborough St Mary's

2015 has been a varied year. Sunday ringing is an important part of our commitment to St. Mary's, and has remained consistently strong throughout the year. The regular band is supported by ringers from the Cathedral and St. John's and vice versa. Thursday night practices have fluctuated, but we have been delighted to welcome ringers from other towers who are pleased to take advantage of the convivial conditions offered at St. Mary's. There is now a monthly advanced practice run by John Riley offering local ringers the chance to try more challenging ringing.

There have been 5 peals and 14 quarter peals rung during the year. We were particularly pleased to celebrate the 300th Anniversary of the first recorded peal by ringing a peal in the same method on 2nd May. This was a sponsored peal and we were able to send £100 to 'The Mancroft Appeal'. (St Peter Mancroft, Norwich where the first peal was rung). One of the aims of the Central Council [the bell ringers' governing body] in 2015 was to get 300 ringers to ring their first peal. Significantly, St Mary's was allegedly the only tower in the Peterborough Diocesan Guild which supported this aim, being successful in guiding three ringers through their first peal. They were Sally Collop, Ian Larter, and Philip Saunders. Congratulations to them and also sincere thanks to Andrew Christie, who organised the peals.

Finally, grateful thanks to all those who



support the ringing at St. Mary's and especially Tony Evans [Deputy], Joan Parker [Secretary], Nick Elks [Steeple Keeper], and not forgetting Michael for leading our prayers on a Sunday morning.

Castor

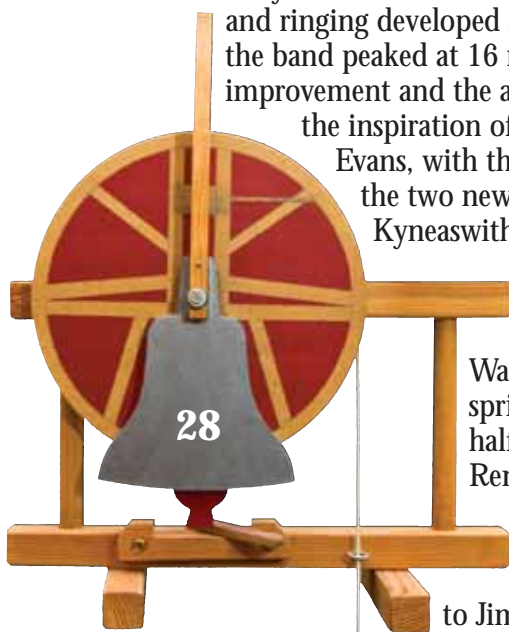
The ringers of St. Kyneburgha rang for 77 services in 2015, which I think you will agree is a magnificent effort by all of our band. We now have only 9 regular Castor ringers, plus Inga Moon, when her recently born son Louis allows. We did not fail to ring for a single service, despite holidays and illness.

This is William Baxter's eleventh year as Tower Captain. We rang for 11 weddings at Castor, and 6 funerals. The Band also rang for 3 weddings at Wansford and Thornhaugh, and 2 at Barnack. As usual we have been brilliantly supported at our additional towers by Joan Parker and Nick Elks. We have had just one away practice in 2015 and that was at Barnack. We held 45 practice evenings. We had guest ringers at most practices, notably Joan Parker of St. Mary's at three quarters of them, and a new comer recently Ian Larter, without them it would have been mundane.

This was the year in which we said good bye to Lt Col The Revd Cannon William Spencer Dwerryhouse Burke, in February, our Rector for the last twenty years. William was a constant and enthusiastic supporter of the bells and our ringers. We rang for his last service and a quarter peal afterward. He always said he would have liked to find time to learn, but as we know there are only 24 hours in a day and he was using every one of them. Nevertheless Diana, his wife, did join us and was a key member of the band for ten years. William arrived as

Tony Evans and Steve Reed were re-establishing the band here and ringing developed and bells were rung for every service, the band peaked at 16 ringers. William oversaw this big improvement and the argumentation of our bells from 6 to 8, the inspiration of our previous Tower Captain Tony Evans, with the casting, baptism, and dedication of the two new Trebles St. Kyneburgha & St.

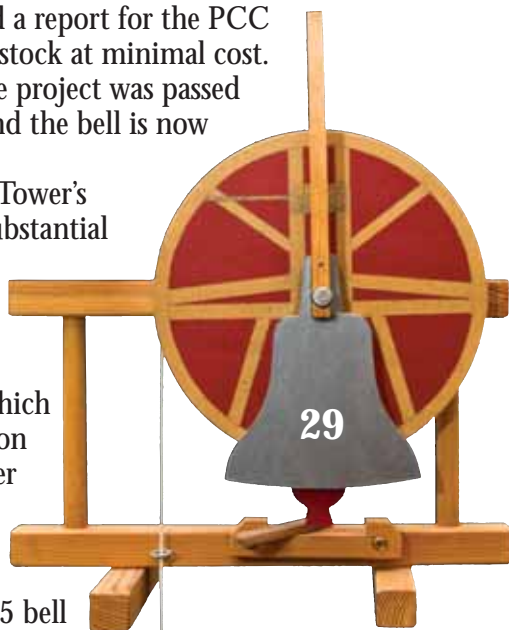
Kyneaswith. He also saw the ringing for every wedding here, including his own daughter, with the "firing" of the bells. Set aside for the Rector, Church Wardens, and bell ringers and their offspring. Also he saw the reintroduction of half muffled ringing for All Souls, Remembrance Sunday, funerals and other sad or reflective days. He had the offices of the day chimed automatically by the new clock mechanism, thanks to Jim Fell, 7.30, 12.00 and 6.00 and the



Angelus and Sanctus bells, manually or automatically. In fact during his tenure the St. Kyneburgha bells were rung more than at any other time since their installation in 1700. We are proud that the sound is exactly the same as it was then, with no sound suppression. There was only ever one complaint about the bells and that was with one resident with a severe hang over, William dismissed it with a rebuke. The bells had been rung over 3,000 times during his leadership. At his last Ringers' AGM we presented him with a bronze bell inscribed with "Ubi caritas et amor Deus ibi est"

Again this has been a year when we have been well supported by David Banks and Edward Baxter. David has introduced "method of the month" which has driven us into improving our repertoire, and striking. Stuart Weston, who has carried us all through the last ten years, has at last someone to share the burden in conducting and Our Band rang seven quarter peals this year, more than any other, and at last we rang one triples which has been on our target list for years. We had four guest bands ring here, plus three peals. Edward Baxter, our Steeple Keeper has maintained the bells in excellent order, and seen that we have an ample supply of stays so that the inevitable broken stays do not disrupt the Training Centre. With the exceptional usage of our bells, the ropes, after 15 years, are getting to the end of their life. Three having recently spliced tails by Robin Rogers. Edward Baxter has ordered a new set which is hope will be installed within the next two months. Our Steeple Keeper was requested by Stibbington PCC to free off the seized clapper of their outside bell. Whilst removing it to be re-bushed Edward reported that the oak head stock was in rotten state. Although the serviced clapper rang well on re-installation he thought it unwise to ring and produced a report for the PCC for the programme to replace the head stock at minimal cost. Under Richard Winfrey of the PCC the project was passed onto professionals, funds were raised and the bell is now fully restored and ringing again.

Jon Ardron, our treasurer reported the Tower's finances are in sound condition with substantial reserves. We were able to make a large donation to the restoration of the Church Clock. Mike Kennedy, our social secretary, arranged our excellent Christmas supper at The Woodman, which was a great success, with the introduction of our new Rector David Ridgeway after eight months of our interregnum. The Training Centre held 40 Saturday training sessions, and is both training beginners, teaching better striking and 5 bell

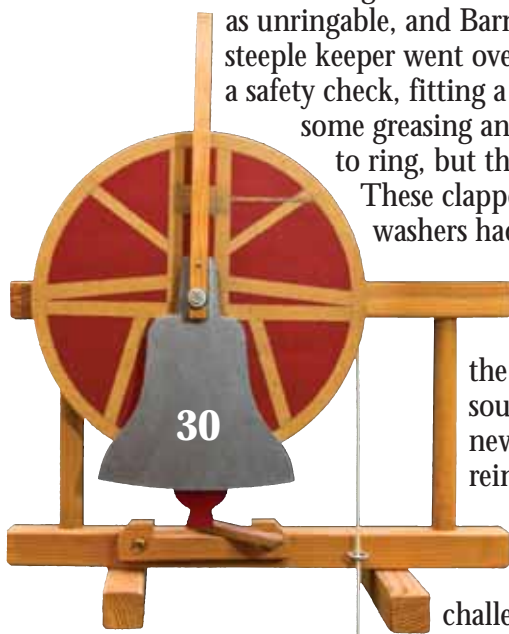


methods. Attendance has risen sharply, sometimes standing room only, supported by a dedicated team of Tutors. The Branch held 10 monthly Eight Bell Practice evenings on the first Friday of Our Ringers' summer lunch was hosted by Annie Baxter in her delightful garden with reasonable weather. As with last year's announcement by Inga Moon, Edward and Shelley Baxter were able to do the same and make the afternoon very special, announced they were expecting their second child around the New Year. Alice duly arrived New Year's Eve, and Edward joined us in Ringing out the Old, and Ringing in the New at midnight, but it was more a celebration for Alice. The Heritage weekend in September was cancelled, there had been no publicity, nevertheless we hosted Ride & Stride for the Cambridge Historic Churches Trust, which have been very generous to the church. This was organised by the St. Kyneburgha Trust.

I am extremely grateful for the support given the tower over the past year. I would wish to thank Maggie Noble, Jon Ardron, Michael Kennedy, Stuart Weston, Edward Baxter, Vera Smart, Roy Hibbard and David Banks. I would like to particularly thank Joan Parker, Nick Elks, Sue Marsden, Ian Larter, and Andrew Christie who have turned up so often to help us, whether for weddings, funerals, or practice nights. Finally, this coming year's sole project is recruitment. We are now at a critical point with the number in our band. We have 9 regular service ringers without Inga Moon, and not all can be available for every service. We need to get back to fourteen ideally.

Barnack

St. Kyneburgha's Band of Ringers had been asked in the spring by the Barnack PCC to ring for a wedding, but the bells had been scheduled as unringable, and Barnack have no band. Edward Baxter our steeple keeper went over and did a survey and confirmed after a safety check, fitting a new stay to replace the cracked one, some greasing and bolt tightening they were satisfactory to ring, but the fifth and sixth clappers were loose. These clappers were removed to find the leather washers had perished and the thin shafts had loose connections to the clappers. The PCC agreed that they be removed and Thorney Precision Engineering replace the shafts with more substantial ones with sound tight fittings. Edward also made new leather washers and the clapper were reinstalled in time for the wedding. All the work done at cost and free labour. The Castor band rang before and after for the wedding, which was a little more challenging as the bride was 30 minutes late.



The St. Kyneburgha Ringing Centre are new Barnack ringers, so the Castor Band switched one of their practice nights to Barnack so that these ringers could have 90 minutes practicing on their own bells. This was very enjoyable and successful, and it gave those young ringers confidence to ring for their own carol service, which the Castor Band came to supplement their band. We rang for another wedding at Barnack which I hope the congregation and the village enjoyed to hear their bells again. The St. Kyneburgha Band will remain in support of Barnack until they have established their own resident band.

Nick Elks

Rutland Branch - No news this time

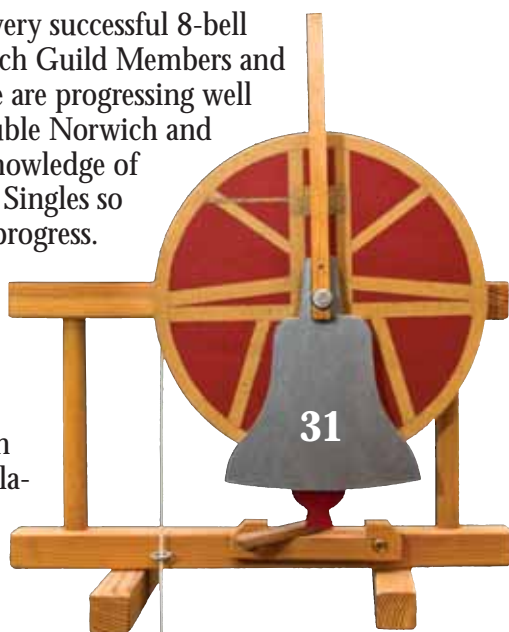
Thrapston Branch

The latter half of 2015 has been a busy time for The Thrapston Branch. Our numbers attending Branch Meetings continue to improve and it is good to see youngsters coming along and gaining more experience.

Our own Striking Competition at Wadenhoe in November was very successful with 7 teams taking part. We were delighted to ask Derek and Sue Jones to be our Judges and present new Trophies to the winning teams. Chris Pearson kindly designed and made them so very special thanks to him. The old 'Loxton Memorial Trophy' and The Sunday Service Band Trophy were both increasingly suffering from 'old age' so we thought it was time to 'withdraw them from service.'

The Branch is continuing to hold our very successful 8-bell advanced practices at Woodford to which Guild Members and Friends are very welcome to attend. We are progressing well with Cambridge Major, Yorkshire, Double Norwich and Duffield as well as consolidating our knowledge of Stedman and Grandsire with Bobs and Singles so we are generally very pleased with our progress.

The monthly 6-bell practice at Wadenhoe is developing well especially for less experienced ringers. It has also provided an opportunity for quarter-peal ringing for those who are ready to progress. Our thanks go to Iain Hayden for organising these. Congratulations go to all those who have rung their first quarters inside and out. Some of the Branch Members have also enjoyed participating in the Guild



10- bell practice. Thanks again to Geoff Pullen, Richard Alton and Andy Timms for organising these. We like to think we have made progress with 10-bell ringing and have been pleased to have the opportunity to ring on some delightful bells.

We have continued to hold regular monthly Branch Meetings with an increasing number of new and returning Ringers joining us. We also held a very successful Annual Branch Dinner in November with a wonderful meal and home-grown entertainment including Sam's old -time sing-a-long with his Ukulele!

2016 also started well with a very successful AGM at Woodford where we were able to welcome new members to both The Guild and the Branch Committee. We have many events to look forward to during the next few months including ringing for St. Georges' Day, Celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday and ringing at The Cathedral for Evensong – always a very special event in our Ringing Calendar.

At our 'home' Branch Tower-Thrapston St.James' we have two exciting developments to look forward too. Our new ropes have finally arrived from Taylor's of Loughborough. They have done a terrific job with them and complete with very handsome burgundy sallies they have stretched out well.

The 'simulator project' is now also nearly completed – we are just awaiting the arrival of the software.



Our thanks go to The Guild Training Fund and Thrapston St.James' P.C.C. for their invaluable support in getting this project on its way.

We are very pleased to welcome new and old ringers and visitors to our meetings and look forward to another very successful Year of Ringing.

We would also like to thank all our branch members for their continuing support in helping to keep our Branch so lively and active.

On a sadder note, John Priest, from All Hallows Hargrave sadly passed

away in the autumn. John learned to ring at St. Peter's Raunds and was a faithful ringer and Churchwarden at All Hallows. He will be sadly missed.

Happy Ringing!

Alison Byrnes : Assistant Ringing Master.

Towcester Branch

The Branch's Summer Outing in August, organised by John Stanworth, visited

Morton Pinkney (6), Eydon (6) and Chacombe (6) and around twenty members enjoyed both the ringing and the lunch at The George and Dragon at Chacombe.

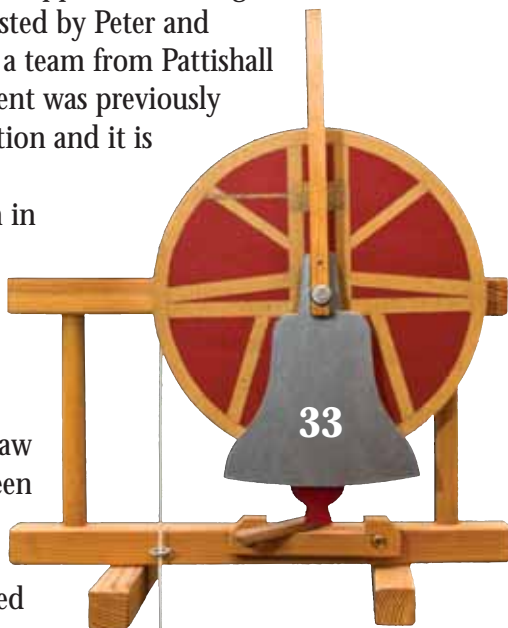
Despite last minute changes to the crew, which resulted in a team that had not rung on 8

together previously, the Branch improved on the previous year's result, gaining second place in the Guild 8 Bell Striking Competition at Castor in September. The Surprise Minor practice at Wappenham the same month was also successful, with welcome support by visitors from other branches.

October's Quiz Night and Fish & Chip Supper was held again at the Whittlebury Reading Rooms, hosted by Peter and Evelyn Nicholson. In a strong turnout, a team from Pattishall took the trophy (tin of sweets). This event was previously preceded by the Branch 6 Bell competition and it is hoped to reinstate that event in 2016.

Branch practices were held at Blisworth in October, and at Potterpurty in November, providing opportunities for ringers to benefit from the support of Branch visitors.

Also in October, a ringing weekend in Somerset, organised by Chris Bulleid, saw a band of eighteen ringers take in thirteen towers, from 6 to 12 bells, including the 22cwt 8 at Illminster and 27cwt 8 at St Cuthbert, Wells. The tour included



ringing at Puckington (6) in memory of Bob Madge, a local ringer and brother of one of the visiting band, who died in 2014. The Annual Dinner in December at the Saracen's Head, Towcester, was a success with 48 attending and, unlike the previous year, no medical emergency in the kitchen!

Members and guests were treated to a ringing toast on handbells by Chris and Margaret Bulleid and Nigel Williams, and a reply on behalf of the Church by Rev Lulu Pelly. Celia Wood proposed a toast to the visitors and Prof Sebastian Lucas replied with interesting and amusing stories from his career as a pathologist in Africa and the UK.

This year's AGM was held at St Mary the Virgin, Gayton, at the kind invitation of Andy Hartley. The afternoon started with ringing on the 6, including Stedman, Grandsire and surprise minor. The service was led by Rev Marion Reynolds, with an address inspired by her background as a mathematician. An excellent tea was served in the church, provided by Viv and Andy Hartley with cakes by Margaret Bulleid, helping to counter the limitations of the heating system. Nigel Williams stepped down after long service as Steward, with Nic Boyd and Andy Hartley joining the committee.

The Guild was represented by Andy Timms, Guild Ringing Master. February's Branch practice was held at Paulerspury, welcoming two visitors from Northampton branch.

The Branch continues to support recruitment and training and it is encouraging that several towers now have regular ringing school for learners of all ages.

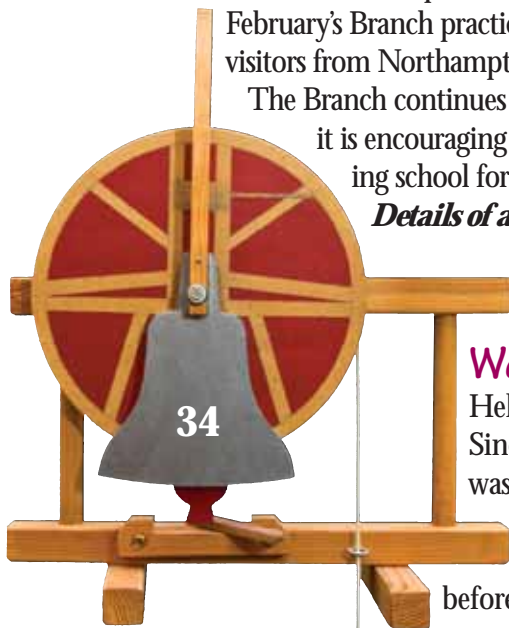
Details of all towers and practice days at
<http://www.towcesterbranch.org.uk>

Wellingborough Branch

Hello again

Since the last newsletter a surprise practice was held at Wilby, where there was the opportunity to experience some Devon call changes called by a visiting ringer, before moving on to Cambridge, Ipswich,

Ringing weekend in Somerset

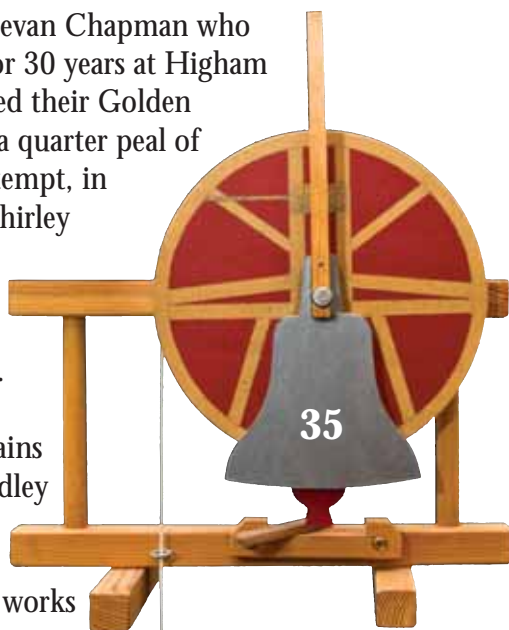


Norwich and Superlative. Very well supported surprise practices were also held at Yardley Hastings and Rushden. Branch practices were held at Irthlingborough, where over 30 people rang rounds and plain hunt to Erin and Cambridge Major; also at Stanwick (24 people turned out on a freezing day). Six quarter peals were rung over the Quarter Peal weekend and in October 16 members rang at Peterborough Cathedral for evensong.

Rushden came first at the Guild Quiz. Many thanks to Brenda and her team for a wonderful spread. The branch quiz was held again at Earls Barton where Rushden won (again!!). Thanks to Brenda and John for setting some testing questions and to Brenda and helpers for a delicious supper. I would encourage more members and guests to attend the next quiz. It really is a fun evening with a lovely meal and for next to nothing cost wise. The Wellingborough Branch team came 5th in the Guild 8-bell competition; Rushden rang a quarter on New Year's Eve and Irchester rang in the New Year with their own band – the first time for over 10 years. A peal of a new method “Freda Surprise Major” was rung at Earls Barton in January, to commemorate the life of Freda Willgress, a branch member and ringer at Rushden and Higham Ferrers.

Congratulations to Mark Curtis-Rose for ringing his first quarter at Ecton (he has since rung a second quarter to mark his 14th birthday), Lily Gavin who rang her first at Yardley Hastings and Neil Oxlade, Gwawr Evans and Laura Morgan who rang their first at Bozeat.

Other notable achievements include Jacob Haseldine's first quarter inside for Bob Minor and to Kevan Chapman who rang his first peal (Grandsire Caters) for 30 years at Higham Ferrers. Rod and Rose Walker celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in October and a quarter peal of Bob Triples was rung, at the second attempt, in November to mark their celebration. Shirley Berrill attempted to ring her first quarter inside at Irthlingborough on the eve of her 80th birthday and managed 600 changes of Bob Doubles. Quite a feat for her. Harvey Welch has taken over from Tony Finke (who remains tower contact) as ringing master at Yardley Hastings. Many thanks to Tony for his devotion over many years and good luck to Harvey. The remodelling works



at St Mary's Wollaston is finally complete and ringers were able to have their first practice in January and have now reinstated their regular Wednesday night practice and Sunday morning ringing.

35 people attended the AGM where Simon, Christopher and Rebekah Elvin from Earls Barton, Alan and Margaret Fuller from Irchester Bo Hollingshurst from Rushden were welcomed as new members.

Food for Thought from Tony Finke at Yardley Hastings

We have for the last seven or eight months enjoyed the company of Wollaston ringers on a Wednesday evening as St Mary's has been closed for re-ordering. I would like to say how much we enjoyed their company and a special thank you to them for tolerating our first hour of practice which we devote entirely to our youth band. That didn't mean they didn't get a ring but it did mean that before 8pm they could themselves with children on either side of them, a ten year old on the treble and our youth captain on the tenor.

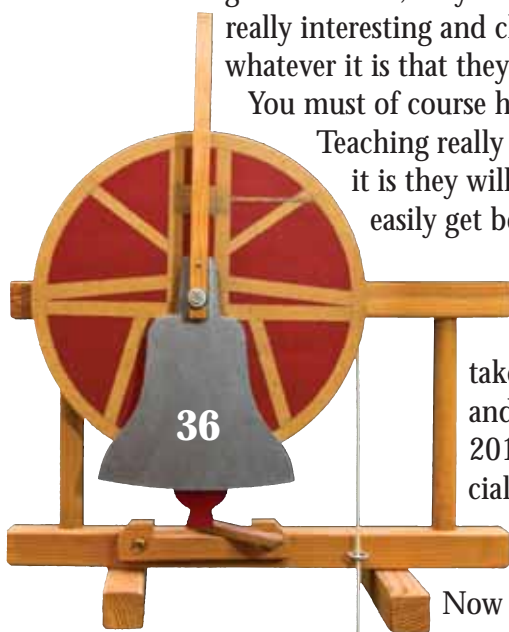
Our youth band continues to be the mainstay of St Andrew's ringing and I would encourage all towers to try to encourage some of the youth that surrounds them to learn to ring. However it is important that we do not adopt yesteryears attitudes to teaching children to ring they must be pushed forward quickly; they will want to ring properly sooner than later. They will have to thoroughly enjoy the experience and it is essential that one adopts practices that encourage them to stay with you. If you think about your own children or

grandchildren, they are now doing things at school that are really interesting and children have an expectation of enjoying whatever it is that they do and that has to apply to ringing.

You must of course have the time.

Teaching really ought not to be part of the practice. If it is they will take too long to learn and they may easily get bored waiting to get a pull. So you the teachers have to bend to them. You may be lucky and find a school that is prepared to allow a ringing class to take place at lunchtime as Mike Brown and I did at Grendon in the first half of 2015. But rest assured that schools, especially primary schools provide the best stock of potential ringers that we have.

Now of course some of you are not blessed



with child friendly bells but there are things you can do. The initial pull off weight of a heavy bell can be made to feel much lighter by adding a sliver of timber up to 10cm thick on the sides of the stay that touches the slider. Those of you with Hastings Stays I am sure can find a solution that would produce the same effect. Our tenor is now capable of being rung by the entire youth band bar the youngest. There is also another benefit in so far that the bell will be rung much more on the balance meaning you don't get tired children. Another small matter is a warm tower. Would you want your children to be in a classroom at between 10/16 degrees centigrade?

Much food for thought even if it is a fleeting thought of course there are problems but they can be overcome.

Harvey Welch, now known to many of you was our first Youth Band Captain and continues to surprise, literally the most recent being a plain course of Return of the Jedi Surprise Minor and our current Youth Captain Lily Gavin rang her first course of Stedman Doubles in Mid January. Special thanks to Harry Curtiss, Rod Walker, Geoff Brown (Northampton Branch) and Harvey Welch for providing the rest of the band. Most of our children ring Bob Double and Grandsire and hopefully will continue until something better our more interesting turns up. If they do go I shall know that I have failed to provide sufficient interest.

Finally, some of you may remember Marian Barker, a ringer of many years, from Mears Ashby. Marian sadly died recently. Wellingborough branch welcomes all visitors to any of its events-see the website for further details

www.wellingboroughbranch.org.uk

and I would be most grateful for any news items which can be sent to me at ***jude.coulter59@virgin.net***

***Jude Coulter-Wellingborough
Correspondent***



Public Relations Officer's Piece

National Publicity

This year there will be national publicity for ringing on St George's Day which is also the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death (April 23, before you go to the Spring Festival perhaps?), the Queens 90th official birthday weekend (June 10-12, especially 12 noon till 2pm on the Sunday) and Heritage Open Days (September 8 –11 – open your tower to visitors?) Please plan and let your local paper, local TV, or me know what you are doing so we can publicise your special event in advance.

Local Publicity

On September 9, Liz Leaman of Duston explained ringing and gave BBC Radio Northampton reporter Helen Blaby a go at ringing. When Liz responded to a query about the speed of the sally with "it travels at 60mph", it set me wondering! So I referred it to our Everdon dynamics analyst who calculated that 15mph is a more likely maximum speed for a sally, for most weights of bell! Thanks for the prod, Liz.

Winwick Country Church Fete & Family Dog Show was opened by two lapsed ringers and Peter Clifton ringing the three church bells, two of which are over 400 years old. Instead of the usual celebrity, the two young organisers had specifically asked for the bells to be rung.

Best excuses for missing practice (continued):

I will be about 15 minutes late tomorrow for ringing as I have a plumber coming to the house at 6 to look at a leak.
Hope this is OK. OD 9/9/15

Website (www.pdg.btck.co.uk) Wonders

The Latest Guild News page is always worth a scan – mark it as a favourite!. It has the 100-Club draw results each month and links to information issued by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and the Association of Ringing Teachers, as well as Guild news.

Since the September Newsletter, a new page for obituaries has been added.

Those already shown have been sourced from the Ringing World's on-line index and others submitted by



members. There are large gaps especially of past Life Honorary members, so if you can fill some of those gaps, please let me have copies or references to where they were first published and photos.

The 'hits' count for 2015 totalled 34,745.

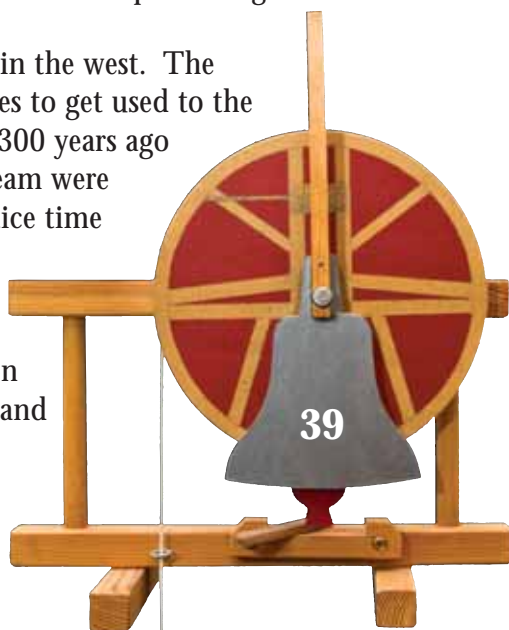
Individual pages: Welcome 11,457, Bell Ringing 677, Learning to Ring 810, About This Guild 874, Guild Officers 2,005, Latest Guild News 2,314, Branch Officers 2,999, Towers 3273, Events 2,028, Peals & Quarters 715, Competitions 991, Guild Newsletters 552, Guild Shirts 456, Making Progress 539, Bell Maintenance 1,675, Bell Fund 728, Bits & Bobs 999, History 906, Constitution & Rules 540 and Obituaries 207.

I have been asked to add details of the Guild's insurance. Please let me know anything else or useful links that can be added in. If there is anyone out there who would like to run a Guild Facebook or Twitter, please let me know! Finally, congratulations to John Webster for setting up a new version of the Rutland Branch website.

Geoff Pullin PRO

SUMMER FESTIVAL

The eight bells at St Kyneburgha's Church at Castor near Peterborough were very busy on Saturday, September 19. After ringing in celebration for a wedding, members of the Guild took hold of the ropes to compete in the competition. Six teams assembled, each team representing one of the branches that spread from Peterborough in the east to Daventry in the west. The teams of eight ringers had five minutes to get used to the fine bells, six of which were cast over 300 years ago in Northamptonshire. The winning team were later congratulated for using the practice time right up to 4min 59 secs! Then each rang a test piece for another five minutes. The two judges, Alan Winter from Cambridge and Adrial Walton from Brighton, listened to each piece and marked any deviations from a precise rhythm.



The judges announced the results in reverse order:

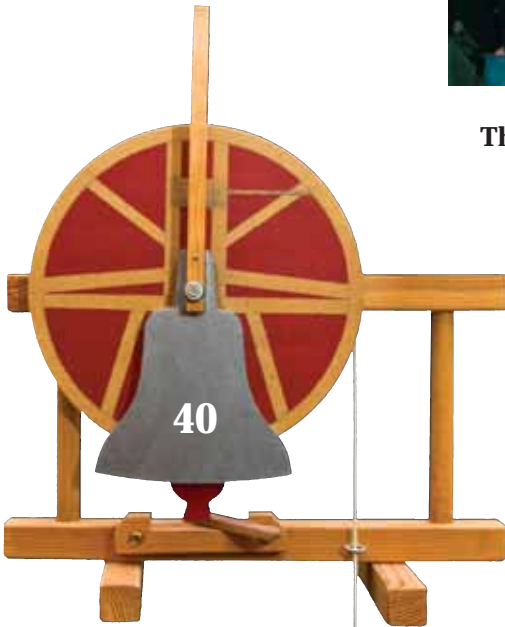
6. Thrapston Branch	60 faults
5. Kettering Branch	42
4. Wellingborough Branch	34
3. Peterborough Branch	33
2. Towcester Branch	32
1. Daventry Branch	25

The Guild Master, Andy Timms, invited the judges to present the Harry Wooding Trophy to Jim White, Ringing Master of the Daventry Branch and certificates to all participating teams.

Thanks were voted to everyone who had so well organised and operated the local parking, tower, running buffet, meeting room as well as the judges. Further general ringing took place until 8.30pm followed by a convivial drink or two at the Prince of Wales Feathers.



The host (Peterborough Branch) team



Guild 100 Club

January 2016:

No. 129 Towcester Branch	£46.80
No. 11 Wellingborough Branch	£11.70

February 2016:

No. 42 Wellingborough Branch	£47.20
No.118 Northampton Branch	£11.80

The 100 Club was started in September 1986 at the Summer Festival meeting in Northampton with 37 founder members. Since then the numbers have grown to an average of over 100 paid up members. The 100 refers to the limit on the prizes and not the number of members.

Around £15,000 has been raised for the Guild Bell Fund, and it provides a regular income with the chance of a cash prize each month.

Monthly draws

There are monthly draws giving prizes of 40% and 10% of the monthly paid up subscriptions, with an anniversary draw in September of 50%, 25% and 10%. This keeps the return in prizes to over 50% as required by the gaming laws.

If you are not a member already do consider joining. If you miss out on renewing then no back payment is necessary you just resume the following month. Each branch has a 100 Club Representative who passes monies and details on to the organiser, Derek Jones. See the Guild Report for details and accounts.

Subscription

Subscriptions are £12 per year. This cannot be gift aided. Individuals, groups and towers can join (over 16's only for individuals).

The winning numbers are published in the Newsletter and in the Latest Guild News of the Guild website.



The Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers

New Website



Welcome!



Bell Ringing



Learning to Ring



About This Guild



Latest Guild News



Guild Officers



Branch Officers



Tower Information



Events



Competitions



Guild Newsletters



Guild Shirts



Bell Maintenance



Bell Fund



Bits & Bobs



History



New Website Address <http://www.pdg.btck.co.uk/>.
(btck is BT Community Kit and comes free!)

GUILD EVENTS 2016

26th Mar

Guild Sponsored Ride/Walk Rutland Water

CYCLISTS: assemble at Whitwell Country Park, north shore for 10.30am start. Route is approx 26 miles (with a shorter 18 mile option). Cycle hire available.

WALKERS: Park and assemble at the Birdwatchers' car park Egleton for a 10am start.

Routes supplied on the day -approx. 5 miles.

More details from Monica Spence on 01572 820199.

Pub lunches available at the Horse and Jockey, Manton.

23rd Apr

Guild Spring Meeting - Rutland Branch

The festival and six-bell striking competition, open to all towers in the Guild. 2pm Caldecott; 3pm Glaston; 4pm Seaton 6-bell striking competition 7.30 - 9pm Uppingham

4th Jun

Ridgman Trophy - Anglian inter-Guild 10-bell striking competition and festival hosted by this guild at Daventry.

11th Jun

Guild AGM - Wellingborough Branch

GUILD AGM: Ringing at Higham Ferrers, service, tea, meeting and evening ringing.

17th Sept

Guild Summer Festival - Culworth Branch

The festival and eight-bell inter-branch striking competition at Brackley

29th Oct

Guild Quiz - Weedon Village Hall

7.30pm

See Guild Website/Posters for more details

