

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD
OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS



Newsletter
March 2011

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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 : **27th 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

AGM's have come and gone for another year. Most posts have been filled in the branches, many by people who have held the posts before, but there are some new people and I wish all who have taken on a post for the first time all the very best.

I hope all members will support their branch meetings as time is spent on planning and arranging all activities and you could even enjoy them and learn something new.

It has come to me recently how quickly the fortunes of a tower can change. At Rushden we have lost three back-end ringers, two through illness and sadly the other through the death of Bob Whitworth, who had been a mainstay of the band since 1953.

The teaching of new people to ring is always important and we need to make sure that this continues at tower, branch and Guild level. I have just come back from a Kettering branch training afternoon where the emphasis was on raising and lowering in peal. It was great to see so many in the belfry and with such a wide age range from young to not so young. (I include myself in the latter category). If you have any ideas for recruitment do share them with everyone by sending your ideas to the Report Editor.

I was saddened to hear of the death of Canon Ernie Orland. He learnt to ring at Long Buckby and I was reading his name on a peal board there, only the other week, which he rang in 1952. He was the president of the Guild for 18 years and I remember him running meetings in an excellent way. He had spent the last 10 years out of the Diocese in Market Deeping in Lincolnshire and had become involved with ringing there and in the Lincoln Guild. I was very sorry not to be able to attend his funeral service in Stamford or his memorial service at Market Deeping but I was out of the country. The Guild was represented by Alan at the memorial service along with several other Guild members. The churches were packed at both services.

I hope you all have a great ringing summer.

Brenda Dixon



FROM THE MASTER

Spring is beginning to break, and hopefully some warmer weather is on its way. What does this mean for me? Well, personally it coincides with the end of my most recent University studies (as a mature student) and therefore hopefully gives me more time for ringing, and all those other things that I had to put-off doing. The un-moderated results look good, but I'd rather wait for the final moderated results before celebrating. It's a bit like a plain course in a new method, a touch rung for the first time, a quarter peal or a peal – it just isn't completed until the conductor calls "That's all!" So I'm listening out for that call from the University examiners.

And in ringing? We've just held a very successful quarter peal day in the Daventry Branch and have been on an equally successful tower and friends ringing tour in Lincolnshire for three days. More than one person remarked to me during both these events that while the weather is grim on the outside what better activity is there than ringing inside? Well as the weather warms up, this remains to be true. Spring is a time for ringing outings and the first of the year's Guild meetings, with the Spring Festival and 6 bell striking competition to be held in the Northampton Branch. With the central location within the Guild this is a good opportunity to attend a Guild event if you would like to and have not done so before. Don't forget the annual sponsored bike ride and ramble on the Saturday before Easter Sunday – it's specially held on that day so as not to clash with any ringing events and benefits the Guild Bell Fund too. The Guild's AGM is to be held in the Daventry Branch in June –that's my own Branch so I would like to welcome as many of you there as possible. And watch-out for the Guild's Summer Festival and inter-branch 8 bell striking competition in September.

Also, have you ever thought of organising a day or even an evening's outing? It's not that difficult really – all you need is an up to date copy of the Guild Annual Report for the list of tower contacts, an enthusiastic group of ringers and a means of transport. You don't have to go far afield, and you don't have to be the Tower Captain to suggest it or organise it either. A leisurely day might include five or six towers or two local towers in an evening. A pub meal could be included. It could be an opportunity for others in the band to share running the ringing too. It is customary to give a monetary donation to each tower you visit "For the use of their bells". Many Branches of our



Guild hold a Branch outing, with a few still organising a coach to give the car drivers a day off. With a coach, it is worth using a truck drivers' road atlas which shows width and height restrictions for bridges, as your driver can only squeeze under so many low bridges as we found in Derbyshire last year!

I am continuing my journeys around the Guild to visit the Branches, so if I haven't been to see you yet, I hope to do so soon. You may contact me by e-mail via the Guild website www.pdg.org.uk using master@pdg.org.uk or alternative contact details are given in the Guild Annual Report. As well as the Guild events highlighted above, other Guild run activities are in the planning stage with more details to be given in due course via your local Branch Ringing Master and Secretary.

Wishing you all every success with your ringing.

Ian Willgress

News from the Branches

CULWORTH

BODDINGTON.

Boddington tower continues to progress , with Practices taking place each Monday evening and also some Sunday Service ringing is being achieved. Tower captain Ron Goodey with the help of Paul Richardson, who lives in Woodford Halse is still busy training learners. Call changes, Plain Hunt and a plain course of Plain Bob Doubles are now being rung on Practice night. Unfortunately Mrs. Sandy Pattenden slipped and broke her ankle whilst painting the Church Paschal Canle stand in her Garden . Sandy is both a ringer and one of the Boddington Church Wardens,. We all wish Sandy a speedy recovery and return to the tower.

WOODFORD HALSE .

Thursday Practices are progressing well at Woodford , with ringing still taking place at Chipping Warden on the first Thursday of each Month .We are now able to ring Grandsire Doubles, Plain Bob Doubles and Minor and a Plain course of Steadman Doubles . Little Bob minor is now being attempted on practice nights.



HELMDON

Progress in helmdon tower continues to be ongoing. There has been more work done on the tower, and improvement to the ringing circle is planned for the future. Chris Klein Wassink reports that they are very grateful from the help they receive from Malcolm Taylor from Brackley and Paul Bennett from Evenley. The Helmdon learners still remain very keen, and Sunday Service ringing is regular and going very well.

GREATWORTH & MARSTON ST. LAWRENCE.

A very good standard of ringing continues at Greatworth and Marston. Greatworth are greatly helped with a new ringer who has recently moved into the village and is attending practices. The combined towers are reviving their annual tower outing again this year also. It is also pleasing that there is a new learner at Chacombe also, which works closely along side Marston and Greatworth.

EVENLEY.

(From Paul Bennett.)

Evenley has never before been featured on the President's cup. The ringers at St. Georges Church Evenley have been quietly getting on with the job of ringing for each Service, and attending practices at local village Churches in Aynho, Kings Sutton, Croughton, Whitfield, Lois Weedon, and more, enjoying branch outings and travelling for Wedding "Rings" as needed. None of this in the hope or expectation of recognition in the form of the branch cup. At our own tower practice on the first tuesday in February we welcomed 13 ringers. The neighbours to the Church see a lot of the tower captain as he also shins up the tower to wind the clock, and as Church Warden does a lot of dogs body jobs in and around the Church. [as well as serving on the branch committee. It was a great pleasure and surprise when he was called to receive the cup this year at the A.G.M, the ringers are still celebrating, and in case this was a "mistake", the cup has already been engraved.

BRANCH PRACTICES.

Since the last Guild Newsletter, there have been 5 branch practices namely at Chacombe, Charwelton, Evenley, Brackley [A.G.M], and Chipping Warden. [The December Practice at Marston St, Lawrence having been cancelled due to the snow] and 2 eight bell practices. All have been fairly well supported by branch members and friends, particularly the recent February practice at Chipping Warden.

A.G.M.

The A.G.M. took place this year at St. Peters, Church in Brackley. Owing to some oversight by the local Clergy, the writer [Graham White



feels highly honoured to be asked to stand in and lead the Service.

Following the Service a superb tea was served by the local ringers and helpers in the new Church room . We were treated to jacket potato, cheeses , salad, quiches etc. followed by apple pie and cream .

During the business meeting our treasurer ,Richard Gale from Marston St. Lawrence decided to stand down from the position as Hon. Treasurer . Richard was replaced by Geof Stretton from Eydon , who was quickly on hand to collect in the Guild subscriptions and donations .Also it was good to welcome Anne Berrington back on to the Branch Committee, and thanks to Howard Oglesby who replaces Anne as independent examiner . Many thanks were also given to Marlene and Peter Phillips from Aynho for their many years of service on the Branch Committee ,as they retire from the committee.

It was also a great pleasure to welcome 11 new Guild members , Namely ; - Diane Tims, (Marston St. Lawrence), Bo Wallace, (Whitfield), Ian Duffield (Syresham), Sarah Webb, David Abbott, Gillian Baird and Michael Stroten (Lois Weedon),Chris Colles, Kate Colles (re - joined), Christine Copeman and Peter Marsh from Upper Boddington .

BRANCH TOWER OPEN DAY.

A reminder that the Culworth are holding a tower open day to raise money for the Guild Funds. This will take place on Saturday 7th, May 2011.

Plans are ahead to ensure that all of the ringable towers in our branch are open for one hour during that day .Please contact Phillip Curtis

(01869277526]or Graham White (01327264393)

email grahamwhite1962@btinternet.com for further details.

Graham White - Culworth Correspondent

DAVENTRY BRANCH

MEETINGS

Our Flore meeting in September attracted 34. After the service, led by the Rev Andrea Watkins, Flore ringers served a splendid tea. We were pleased to see June and Ron Fonge. Hugh Johnson brought his sister Hillary along, who was beginning a three month visit from her home in the Lebanon and she rang with us throughout her stay. We elected Hannah Prior as a new member from Church Stowe and Mark and Emily Marriott transferred to Flore. There were 27 at Dodford in the evening, including ten from the Rugby branch.



Newnham attracted 37. Graham White took the service with Eleanor Ramsbotham at the organ. Ivy and David Cooke served a splendid tea having postponed their trip to Scotland specially! Bob Wallis, Gill Horrall, Gill Handley and Debbie Smith were elected members from Kislingbury. Some 18 rang at Daventry and would still be there if Peter had not noticed that the belfry clock had stopped! Yorkshire S Royal went well at the second attempt.

At Harpole 23 climbed the ladder to ring, including a rare visit by Deena Johnson, and another 12 wouldn't. The Vicar gave a run down on Star Trek and used two different ringers' hymns on the internet. Bridget Paul served splendid filled baked potatoes and her home-made cakes in the comfortable Methodist Church. Alan Paul was a very efficient tea pourer. Jackie Bailey from Byfield was elected a member. Cecil Swann opened St Peter's, Northampton, now in the beneficent care of the Churches Conservation Trust. Whilst there were only 14 ringing, the bells were kept going with lots of Stedman Triples and a long touch of spliced surprise major.

The Christmas Tree Festival at Weedon set the scene for our December meeting. 39 people rang before and after tea, including rare performers Pam Eve and Anne Foley! A hot meal for over fifty was served in the chapter house by Val and Ian Calvert and eating overflowed into the church. The Revd Helen Rayment, led the programme arranged by Janet Bowers and used the colourful leaflet prepared by Gwynneth White. Fifteen outsiders enjoyed the concert, encouraged by local adverts. There were nine carols and 13 'performances'. Hugh and Deena served mulled wine. The collection for the Guild Bell Fund came to a munificent £142.62.

Daventry tower hosted our AGM with 51 present, 30 of whom rang from call changes to Lincolnshire Surprise Royal, helped by Colin Lee and Zoë Roberts. Ted Garrett drove his car after his licence was restored (following withdrawal for medical reasons) by post that day! Canon Michael Webber took the service with Michael Haighton at the organ. Richard Chater was re-elected a member now for Daventry and Sandy David elected for Everdon. Gwynneth replaced Ian Willgress as the branch's representative on the Guild's GMC. The favoured outing was to replicate that of 50 years ago, which Alison Willgress found in her Mother's cookery book!

Jim White quoted the Bell News of 120 years ago when the Daventry and Weedon District Association held its first gathering in Daventry when 45 sat down to dinner at 2pm on a Monday. He was pleased to tell us that the only change ringing performed was a six-score of Grandsire Doubles by the Bugbrooke band. The Daventry ringers



finished that day by ringing Home Sweet Home “very cleverly”! We made do, later, with Cambridge Royal!

A fine day caused two ringers to walk to Great Brington in February. Altogether 25 people rang. The congregation left the front pews empty, so the Revd Sue Kipling, urged us into the choir stalls for the service accompanied by Hiliary at the organ. A good tea and meeting took place in the back pews. Ian Charters was elected a new member for Byfield. In the evening there were 21 at Long Buckby where ringing ranged from call changes to a course of London. The welfare gathering was at the White Horse, Norton.

We look forward to welcoming crowds to the Guild AGM at this church in June! We thought it was an interesting and different venue, being the grand church of the Spencer family and over the years has been in three branches of the Guild!

DAVENTRY TEAM MINISTRY

Daventry bells were rung on Dec. 5 for the Town Mayor’s civic service which involved town churches, primary and secondary schools. Gwynneth White coaxed eight children from Falcolner’s Hill Primary School to ring call changes on fun-bells. Daventry practices vary in numbers quite a lot, but touches of Grandsire Caters, and courses of Stedman Caters are becoming less rare. After the canal ice thawed and the gales abated Sue Merrett and her dog Bella sailed towards Burton on Trent in February after ringing on Sundays and at many practices around the area during the last year.

An upgrade to the lighting at Braunston has given the Monday club new vision! However Peter Wenham missed his footing on the steps coming down into the ringing room on Jan 31. After attention by an ambulance crew and a week in Danetre hospital he got home with a hairline crack in his left wrist and badly rearranged leg muscles which are currently improving. Braunston and Ashby will be welcoming the Revd Sarah Brown as Team Vicar on Saturday, June 18. Sarah admits that she “was for some years a deeply untalented member of the band at Yelvertoft and was a Guild member for about two years”!

Hellidon tower captain Rosemary Davidson is handing over to Lynne Bowler but gradually to make sure that some of her inimitable style of getting things done is transferred as well!

Staverton practices continue to progress. Monday morning, Tuesday morning monthly minor and Thursday evening practices are meticulously planned by Richard Hartley, even down to the touches to be attempted by who! Just after the ringing for the Staverton School carol service, there was a blizzard around Daventry. It brought the southward A361 to a slithering halt



for three hours. Ringing for Badby School carol service at 1pm was cancelled as the children were sent home, only to have the rest of the day playing in the deep snow and glorious sunshine!

KNIGHTLEY PARISHES

On Saturday, Nov. 6, the Revd Sue Faulkner was licensed as priest-in-charge of the Knightley Parishes (Badby, Charwelton, Fawsley, Newnham and Preston Capes) at Newnham Church, thus ending over two years of inter-regnum. The next morning a quarter peal of Plain Bob Minimus preceded Sue's first service at Fawsley. On Remembrance Sunday at Badby, Plain Bob Doubles followed the family Remembrance service, enabling Tim Woodliffe to ring the tenor for his first quarter peal.

WEEDON, EVERDON & DODFORD

A special quarter of Yorkshire Surprise Major was rung at Weedon on Jan. 29 as a retirement compliment to the Revd Helen Rayment, vicar since August 2002 and her husband the Revd Andrew Rayment who are moving to Ketton.

At Everdon on Sept. 25, a quarter of Plain Bob Doubles rang out during the internment of ashes of Russell Beaven. Russell and his former wife Janet used to ring at Everdon and helped at Badby in 1981-2. They had lived at Staverton in the meantime.

Our September ring at Dodford was the last time that we saw churchwarden John Day who died unexpectedly on Nov. 16. He was very active in restoring the church and very appreciative of the work that Richard and Harold did to enable the bells to ring regularly. At a very cold funeral, his coffin was tolled in and out with nice call changes following.

A quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles was rung on Nov. 21 to celebrate the life of Joy Balderson, a life long Everdon resident. Geoff called the bobs except the last one urgently called by Carole! A quarter of Stedman, Grandsire and Plain Bob Doubles marked the birthdays of Anne Ford, Val Hartley and Dorothy FitzGerald, all on Jan. 20.

NETHER HEYFORD & FLORE

A quarter of Plain Bob Minor was rung on Jan. 23 in memory of Mark Tanton (friend of Daniel Waterhouse), who died of meningitis in September and would have been 15 years old on Jan. 11. His parents live and attend church in Flore, and are well known to Shirley Waterhouse (conductor) and Ann Maud (treble).

Shirley will be running the London Marathon sponsored for Meningitis UK.

A Ladies Guild quarter peal at Nether Heyford on Feb. 3 was a compliment



to our members Hilda Collins and Mary Williams (Southam) who have been ringing 66 and 62 years respectively! Waited for us to ring. Thanks Jane

Left to right at Frampton: Hilda Collins, Jim White, Jane Rands, Dorothy FitzGerald, Sarah Waterhouse, Alison Willgress, Geoff Pullin, Shirley Waterhouse, Bethany Earle, Ann Maud, Ian Willgress, Gillian



Earle, Gwynneth White, Hannah Prior, Jane Wincott, Chris FitzGerald. Missing: Carole Pullin (photographer).

Jane Rands organised a Heyford Jaunt in February – three days in cold, damp and misty Lincolnshire, staying for two nights in a very comfortable 18-sleeper house with magnificent self-catering. Eight towers were visited – all ground floor rings except one. The front five bells at Welbourn are in order of weight: 3 the lightest then 2, 5, 4 and treble! We wanted to bring Alford bells home but the local tower captain wanted us all to move there! Geoff wanted to ring ‘Higbold’ – the 6th bell at Ingoldmells and did. Luckily nobody had to put the second bell right – it was called ‘Robert’. Wainfleet St Mary church is very remote from the village. A recent theft of lead allowed a torrent of water to come through the roof during a storm. We were let in by a man who was about to climb Frampton tower to evict the jackdaws.

OTHER PARISHES

Byfield entered an interregnum in August and will become part of the enlarged Byfield, Aston le Walls, Boddington, Eydon and Woodford Halse benefice. There are signs of resurgence with two keen new village recruits and with Paul and Emily Richardson from Surrey moving into the new benefice as well as new ringers at Boddington venturing out. After many years as tower captain at Litchborough, John Guy retired and Christine Rodhouse was elected.

QUARTER PEALS

A branch band ventured out to Winslow on Oct. 3 to ring Yorkshire S



Major on the patronal festival. In December Plain Bob Triples for Theresa Baker and Janet Bowers came round at Whilton in 46 minutes. Grandsire Caters was successful at Daventry in January. Earlier that afternoon, five of this band contributed to Plain Bob Major at Holy Sepulchre, Northampton by special request to commemorate over 20 years service there by the late Reg Holland (verger) and Peter Robertson (server) also to celebrate the 60th birthday of parishioner Steve Williams. The quarter began with two rows of seated spectators!

Alison Willgress organised a branch quarter peal day on Feb. 19 with 22 ringers taking part and with special thanks to the four conductors especially Jim and Ian who unpicked several tangles. There were 11 attempts, and 11 scored! Wow! Six were of Doubles, indicative of a number of branch participants' requests, two of Minor; one of Triples and 2 of Major (one Surprise and the other even more of a surprise). Ros Atchison rang her first quarter peal and seven scored a first in their next step forward. Ten met afterwards at the Olde Sun, Heyford including Richard Hobbs visiting from London

ANNIVERSARIES

Peter Box was 80 on Nov. 23. He held a party in Barby village hall on the following Saturday heralded by a nice quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles. Rugby ringers provided handbell tune ringing four-in-hand. Graham White gave a short (yes!) speech about Peter's good works as a ringer and very practical church warden over the years and proposed a toast.



Peter Box cuts his 80th birthday cake.



Mike Cook, Carole & Geoff Pullin, Jim White (conductor) and Dominic Sinclair rang in the quarter peal.

On Saturday Nov. 13, John Townley organised

a quarter peal of Plain Bob Major at Whilton to mark his 50 years membership of the Guild. He has membership cards signed for every year to prove it! A Guild certificate was presented to him. John joined the Guild at Whilton. Bells 2 and 7 of the new 1994 octave bear the Townley name as donors. Visits to Staverton practice led to his first peal in 1967. He was a founder member of Handbell Ringers of Great Britain with Stan and Iris Webb. After moving to Long Buckby in 1998, he rang rarely, but kept his hand in at Great Yarmouth on holiday visits! After answering a call to ring handbells with some Chernobyl children in 2010, John has been encouraged out again for a monthly ring.



The quarter peal band: John Townley, Geoff Pullin, Richard Hartley, Dorothy Knight, Nick Parsons, Mira Parsons, Ian Willgress (conductor).



John Townley receives his 50-year membership certificate from the branch chairman.

AND FINALLY

On Guild Summer Festival day, our branch team rang a good quarter peal of Grandsire Triples at Cottesbrooke in the afternoon as a warm-up but could only manage second place in the competition.

New Year was rung in at Badby (on 6 bells) with lots of firing after the traditional 12 'fires' for midnight, and at Barby (5), Byfield (8), Litchborough (4), Weedon (5) and maybe elsewhere. It seems a long time ago now!

Geoff Pullin - Daventry Correspondent

GUILSBOROUGH BRANCH -no news this time



KETTERING BRANCH

Half-Day Outing 9th October 2010

This was a resounding success with an attractive route arranged by David Madams to include ringing at Brinklow, Church Warden, Woolston and Monks Kirby. A great outing for all who attended and our thanks to David for a most enjoyable time.

Beetle Drive 13th November

Again a fantastic evening with a good turnout. Thanks go to "Bill's Ladies" for once more turning out a wonderful selection of hot suppers and sumptuous puddings. The meal and beetle drive was supported by a record 60 or more people and was won by our friend Chris Rose who is now being taught to ring by my husband Chris at Burton Latimer, another way of recruiting. Thanks to Bill for organising once more.

2011 AGM

This was held at St John the Baptist Corby and was attended by 29 members. The Revd. Jan Collins took the Guild Office and delivered an address. The meeting was short and sweet although we had no replacement for Michael Wallis who stood down as our Ringing Master. Thanks to Pat and her helpers from Kettering who served a welcome hot meal on such a cold day. Ringing continued until 7-30pm.

Committee Meeting 2011

This was held at Bill and Liz's home and it was decided that each committee member would take a turn being in charge of one of the future events which were arranged that evening, including outings and Saturday practices around the Branch Churches.

NEWS FROM THE TOWERS

BARTON SEAGRAVE

This continues to be a good practice with a much welcome tea and biscuits and a chance for a natter at the end.

Edward Groome and Bethany English have now progressed to ringing PB Minor inside. Maurice Haynes has picked up his ringing after a break of more than 20yrs and is doing well.

BURTON LATIMER

Friday evening practices are steadily improving with us moving on to ringing Ipswich now. Olivia aged 10 continues to impress us with her ringing skills in such a short time. She rings quite a few minor methods including a touch of PB Minor and will have a bash at anything, well done.

Our new learner, Chris Rose is ringing rounds now and enjoying the experience. We had our annual dinner at the Thornhill Arms on Sunday 29th January. Mike decided it best if we did our ringing at Rushton Church before we had our



meal and drinks, that proved the better option as we were all sober and rang much better. Our thanks to Mike once more for a fantastic afternoon and evening, we all then went home for a welcome kip.

KETTERING

A well attended practice run by Jane Sibson with 3 new ringers all now moving on to rounds and call changes. Wayne Bryan rang his first quarter, this was inside to Plain Bob Minor and he was presented with his certificate at the AGM, well done Wayne. Jackie, Simon and John are working toward their first Quarter but as it will be rung inside it takes a little more practise. Some weeks we manage to ring on 10 or even 12 bells.

ISHAM

This report was provide for me by Margaret Buchanan.

I had a dream for 2010-to get the bells ringing again for Sunday Services at St Peter's Isham! Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could welcome in 2011 with the bells rung by an Isham band. This was achieved, well done to all new ringers. Practice is on a Monday 7-30-9pm, visitors are always welcome.

PYTCHLEY

Practices continue on Fridays until early April when building work starts on a new kitchen and toilet. For those of us who remember the ladder, well that will be no more and the last stage of work will be installing a brand new staircase for access to the belfry. Work is expected to be complete by around June. We have a session booked already to try it out, thanks to Margaret Pridmore the tower captain.

ROTHWELL

I have now started to go to Rothwell each week and really enjoy Murray's evening with a good variety of methods being rung.

Practice starts at 7pm with learners and improvers, moving on to more experienced ringers from 8-9pm. This is a really good session for them to ring new and old methods on 10 bells and is well attended.

Toby Bence called his first Quarter peal at Rothwell on 14th November aged 11 (just) well done Toby.

At 9-15pm it's over the road for a well earned pint (or two) and a chat.

WILLBARSTON

After many years of ringing Tony Bolton has decided to retire due to ill health. The ringers presented him with a gift in recognition of his work for all the Welland Valley towers. His enthusiasm and organisational skills will be sadly missed.



NICK'S JAM

A thriving little business going on here. Nick raised a further £145 for the Guild Bell Fund. A big thank you to everyone who donated jars, fruit and sugar. A BIG THANK YOU to Nick for his cooking. Keep on buying everyone, it is delicious. Enjoy the summer ringing.

Frances Pearson - Kettering Correspondent

NORTHAMPTON BRANCH

AGM meeting report

This year's AGM was held at Brafield-on-the Green and included the usual programme of ringing, service, AGM meeting and tea, followed by more ringing until 9pm.

We were graced by the presence of both the Guild President, Brenda Dixon, and the Guild Treasurer, Alan Marks. They both brought some insights and knowledge to the meeting and helped considerably with the ringing. We were very appreciative of their presence and it was nice to see them.

Several new members were enrolled into the branch at this meeting. Davina Buckle, from Milton Malsor, Kieran Davies from Cogenhoe, Tracey Bryant and Ethan Bryant from Cogenhoe, Lesley Flood from St Benedict, Chris Clayson from Courteenhall, Elizabeth Woodrow (unattached) and Matthew Rogers (unattached). All new members were welcomed, and it was particularly nice to see an instance of mother and son learning to ring the bells together. We were also joined by ringers who we do not usually see from towers both within the branch, and from other branches, and they too were very welcome and we were pleased to see them.

We had a reasonably long meeting, hopefully covering all aspects of branch business to everyone's satisfaction, and a nice tea which was provided by our hosts, Ray and Ann Henman.

One particular point raised in the meeting was that, due to various reasons, we did not have a tour in 2010, and Anne England has very kindly offered to organise one for this year. This is likely to happen on Saturday October 8th, and additionally we hope to have a mini-tour and evening meal in a pub sometime during the summer. Watch out for future announcements on these events once the details have been confirmed.

Over the day, both before and after the meeting, we covered a variety of ringing that enabled all those who attended (with a couple of exceptions – see below) to have a good go at ringing both familiar and some unfamiliar



methods. This ranged from ringing rounds on unfamiliar bells for the learners, through the opportunity for those advancing in their repertoire to ring plain hunt on the treble during methods, to ringing London which is not usually possible at our branch meetings. We also went through our usual repertoire of Bob Doubles, Bob Minor, and Grandsire, and even a touch of Stedman was managed – with thanks to Brenda for calling that for us. I am sure we covered other methods too, but it is hard to recall exactly what was rung. We certainly managed a large variety on the day. There were a couple of unfortunate people who were not able to partake in the ringing. One was not too keen on ascending the ladder, which, if you are at all familiar with Brafield then you will appreciate that this is not a task for the faint-hearted! And there was one ringer who unfortunately was unable to gain access to the ringing chamber because we had to keep the door closed during ringing. We are very sorry this occurred, we did make efforts to include everyone who wanted to ring, but did not succeed in this case. We will endeavour to improve on this in future, but do please make your presence known if you wish to ring.

Overall, a very long day, as AGMs can be. Everyone who attended played a part in this successful meeting, and it has not been possible to name everyone who came, but for those that did, your presence was appreciated. We hope you all had a good time.

Nick Elks, Ringing Master

Branch Meeting Report – February 12th at Kingsthorpe

This was my first Branch Meeting as Ringing Master, and I hope that those who attended enjoyed themselves. Kingsthorpe bells are reasonably heavy, as Christine discovered, but once going they ring reasonably well and make a nice sound. The layout of the circle is very good here offering good visibility of all the ropes, no matter which one you have grabbed.

We did not ring anything too exotic on the night, mainly Bob Doubles interspersed with Grandsire and a couple of touches of Bob Minor. Of particular note was that Ian Leatherland was able to get a large amount of practice in on ringing the treble to both Doubles and Minor methods. This was following on from his successful efforts at the AGM the previous month, and he is to be congratulated on his substantial progress. He has now proved both to himself and to others that he can successfully ring the treble unaided by standers-by. Well done Ian!

We did not have too many attend this meeting, and most of those that did attend were Committee members. It was, however, nice to see Colin Payne - he travelled all the way from Rushden to come and join us! It would be good to see future Branch Events better supported by ringers of all abilities within the branch. These meetings are an opportunity



for you to meet other ringers and to attempt ringing and methods that may not normally be possible at your own tower. It is, after all, a practice night, and the ringing will always be geared towards the abilities of those who attend – and this includes rounds and call changes. As mentioned above, Ian has managed to make use of the Branch Practice to make an improvement in his ringing, and it is possible for others of you to use these events to make similar progress. We do realise that not everyone can attend all the meetings, but please do make an effort to come to some of them where possible.

After the meeting both Geoff and myself went to the pub for a drink – something that is usually a traditional happening after bellringing, but which has not recently been a part of Northampton Branch meetings. Not everyone was able to go on this occasion, but I hope that more will in the future, as I mean to make a post-ringing trip to the pub a regular part of future Branch Practices.

Striking Training

On 26th February 2011, the Branch hosted a Striking Training session which was designed and run by Geoff Pullin from the Daventry Branch. This was attended by eighteen ringers, and was pretty evenly represented by both learners and those with more experience, including some members of the Guild Committee! It was good to see so many keen to improve upon their ringing, and for those of you that were not able to join us, I have to say, you missed out on some excellent training.

The session was split into two parts. In the first part, in the 'schoolroom', Geoff introduced us to the concepts of good striking, what to do, what not to do, and how to listen. He utilised the Abel bellringing simulation program that was running on a laptop he had brought along, to demonstrate typical striking errors. We had great fun trying to work out the error(s) in otherwise perfect rounds just by listening, and we each were given a 'scorecard' on which we could write down what we thought the answer was. This included identifying which bell was at fault, and whether the error was at handstroke, backstroke, or on both strokes. There was no marking of the answers, but we were encouraged to discuss what we thought the answer was, and to note the effect it had on the ringing.

The second half of the session, in the ringing chamber, was when we were given the opportunity to put into practice what we had (hopefully) learnt – i.e. to ring rounds on real bells, to listen out for errors in the striking, and to make corrections. I'm afraid to say that, particularly at first, we did not appear to have completely taken on board what we had just been taught. But then Geoff did say that we would not instantly learn to strike perfectly. However, as the session went on, there did seem to be a



marked improvement in the striking. The important thing we took away with us was an appreciation of how to listen to the ringing, and to make suitable corrections.

Thanks go to:

Abington Church for allowing us to use its facilities to host the event.

Dorothy, Marcia, Chris and Gill for organising the tea, sandwiches and cakes.

And especially to Geoff for his patience with us and for his excellent tuition.

Branch Practice at All Saints, Northampton

On the evening of Saturday 26th February, straight after our earlier Striking Training, we had our monthly Branch Practice at All Saints Church in the centre of Northampton.

There is a very nice ring of ten bells there, and it was a privilege for us to be able to ring them. Sixteen ringers attended this practice, though a good proportion of those that came were from outside of the Northampton Branch - it would have been good to see more 'local' ringers. We managed to ring a variety of methods, including Plain Bob on six, Cambridge, Stedman and Grandsire on seven/eight and rounds and call changes on ten. Everyone had a go, though some of us were waning towards the end after a long day of training and practice. Thanks go to Bridget Paul for opening up and allowing us to use the tower for our practice.

Branch Diary

For those of you that have access to a computer, you can now see forthcoming Branch events in the diary on the Campanophile website.

The address of the website is www.campanophile.co.uk

If you have not already done so, you will need to register on the website to gain access to the Diary, but that is a straight-forward and painless exercise. In the left-hand pane click on the link to the Diary, and search for events listed under 'Northampton Branch'. The Branch programme may be published elsewhere, but this is where the latest changes to the programme will be published and recorded.

As already mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, a regular feature of future Branch Practices will be a visit to the pub afterwards for some social interaction, chewing the cud, and imbibing your own particular favourite tippie. We hope you will join us!

The next Branch events will be a special Kent Treble-Bob practice at 7:45pm on Monday 7th March at Cogenhoe, then the Quarterly Meeting at Duston on March 19th at Duston, starting at 3pm. There will be an opportunity to discuss Branch business at Duston, so we would encourage as many of you as possible to attend. There will, of course, be ringing there as well!

What next after rounds?

In his introductory email, Nick Elks talked about the different styles of calling call changes used in the branch.



Call changes are the usual next step after rounds. Certainly that's what I was taught (many years ago now!!) and until fairly recently it's what I taught too. But at the Ringing Road Show a couple of years ago I came across a system called "Kaleidoscope Ringing". It has been developed as an alternative to call changes, with the aim of developing the skills needed in change ringing. So I bought the booklet (£2.00) and we've given it a try. We don't quite use it as described, but with our local variations it has been a great addition to our repertoire.

What is Kaleidoscope Ringing?

It comprises three basic techniques:

Long places (2 whole pulls), Short places (1 whole pull), Dodging.

Depending on the skill level of your band you can just involve one pair of bells ringing long places, which teaches the newish ringer a bit about places and rope sight, and about holding up or pulling in the bell. There is a stepping stone, too, for a developing ringer to follow the pair of bells who are changing. They have to continue ringing in the same place, but the bell they follow keeps changing. Since everyone else is ringing rounds it is easier to focus on the learner(s), which is a bonus if you are new to the job of developing a band. And if you go one step on, if you think about it, short places is the same as plain hunting on 2!!

Or you can develop more complex combinations of work for each pair of bells. We have a local variation we call "Little Bits" where 1-2 dodge; 3-4 make short places and 5-6 make long places. We may not be able to ring Little Bob, but.....

We had used short places and dodging exercises before, as they are part of the "one-per-learner" scheme, but we've found the Kaleidoscope Ringing approach has encouraged us to be more creative. I've even rung Cambridge places with someone, whilst everyone else has rung rounds. I think that all of our band, from newest recruit to the most experienced have found a way of using Kaleidoscope Ringing to improve their skills.

It doesn't have to be a static pair of bells, either. When I was asked to write this, I googled "Kaleidoscope Ringing" and found the following article, which includes something called "Mexican Wave". We've had great fun learning to ring this, and will be developing it over the next weeks and months. Follow the link to find out more http://www.cccbr.org.uk/education/practicetoolkit/pdfs/fs_kaleidoscope.pdf

The proof of its effectiveness has come recently, as our most recent learners have progressed to ringing plain hunting and have done so with amazing ease and confidence (and that isn't because they are teenagers)!

Ivor Wilde - Northampton Correspondent



PETERBOROUGH BRANCH.

The Branch has enjoyed a lively programme of activities over the last six months culminating in a very well attended AGM in January. In October we 'Rang for our Supper' at St. Mary's, Peterborough, Ginton and Maxey and then worked off our excesses at the monthly eight bell practices at Castor. The AGM began with ringing at the Cathedral followed by a service led by the Dean. In his address he spoke of how early Christian gatherings must have been noisy occasions, with great praise and rejoicing, that must have annoyed some of the neighbours, and stressed that ringing church bells is not just a call to worship but an expression of Christian praise and thanksgiving, and urged the ringers present to keep up the good work. Les Townsend, Secretary of the Lincoln Guild, played the organ and the handbell band from Castor gave a magical performance of Hyfydol (Alleluia sing to Jesus) and a short excerpt from Trumpet Tune (Purcell). The Dean then provided a glass of wine to toast the Guild and we all sat down to an amazing tea provided by the local ringers. The meeting began by remembering the contributions made to ringing by Jim Brown and Marion Joseph who had died during the past year. Eleven new members were elected. Jill Cowcill, Sue Jones and John Riley resigned from their roles on the committee and were thanked for their hard work. Alex Dyer was elected as Branch Steward, Pat Teall as Press Correspondent and Elaine Wilkinson and Shirley Hodgkinson as new Committee Members. The day was rounded off by some very enjoyable ringing at St. John's.

It is good to be able to report that excellent progress has been made on the bells at Benefield and they are due to be dedicated on Sunday 29th May. The ringing centre at Castor continues to be well used on a Saturday morning for a training session for learners across the area. There are regularly five or six trainers to ten learners and the sessions cover raw recruits to touches of Plain Bob with an emphasis on technique and good striking.

The Cathedral

Practices continue to be well supported (often 20+), with new faces and a good number of young ringers. We have 35 elected members who support our activities, many of whom travel some distance to be with us. The recipe is Rounds, Call Changes, Plain Hunt, Cambridge Royal, Grandsire Caters and Cinques, Plain Bob, Stedman Caters and Cinques, and Bristol Surprise Major. The standard is not always wonderful as many people are on learning curves, but we have a happy and progressive belfry which continues to attract much support.



We attempt two quarters a month for evensong and have been concentrating on ringing 10 and 12 bells well to quarters of Plain Bob and Grandsire. We are pleased to have recently agreed dates in 2011 for Rutland, Daventry, and Wellingborough Branches to ring for Sunday afternoon evensong. Other branches are very welcome to visit (please!).

Advent and Christmas was as usual a very busy time for the Cathedral ringers, and we rang for most major services. The Dean sent a card of thanks for all the ringing "much enjoyed by many". Alex (representing the ringers) read a lesson at the packed Christmas Eve carol service.

St. Mary's, Peterborough

At St Mary's we have had quite a busy year. We have managed to ring for most Sunday morning services and 13 quarter peals, but our numbers were rather depleted with the death of Marion Joseph last July and the departure of Andy Walker to Street at almost the same time. We are hoping to hold a taster session on a Saturday morning to see if we can interest some members of the congregation.

Socially we have enjoyed a Chinese meal, a visit to the Greyhounds and our usual DIY dinner at the Christie's home, with many thanks to Andrew and Gillian.

We raised £128 for Sue Ryder on our Christmas Card Tree which we gave in memory of Marion.

We have raised £1200 for Peterborough Streets (formally St Theresa's charity for the homeless) by cooking a Sunday lunch for the parishioners, the sale of greetings cards and extra money raised at the Greyhound evening.

This coming season we have planned a 3 day ringing outing to Somerset to catch up with Rev Sharon and Andy and an outing to the Biggleswade area on June 18th to catch up with Rev Guy and family now that they are back on the mainland. Also, what has now become an annual event, a visit to Tolethorpe to see a Shakespeare play. There is also some talk of a ring on the 6 at Woodston, followed by a visit to the Oakham Ales brewery which just happens to be nearby! (I can't think whose idea this might be!)

St John the Baptist, Peterborough

We spent a fantastic evening recently letting in a peal band, admiring the floodlit building and impeccable ringing, including a trip to local inn and also local restaurant and still the ringing continued. That's my idea of fun, but if it were not for others who enjoy 3 hours 25 minutes concentration and application, well it just is not the same.

A long time has passed since last a report was sent from St John's. We have passed through a period of difficulties during which we managed service ringing most Sundays, thanks to the Cathedral-St Mary's-St



John's Sunday morning team, but little else. We are still very much indebted to this dedicated group. Ringing was suspended altogether for much of last year during demolition of the Post Office building and during part of St John's refurbishment. The result is stunning! Even though not completed, the view and access to the West front, clearing away the railings, the floodlighting and it's not finished yet. So, we continue supporting Saturday morning teaching at the Castor learning centre and welcoming "graduates" from this centre to join St John's on Sundays. We also welcome many ringers from the "Ely" side of the river Nene. With numbers swelled in this way we look forward to further progress in 2011.

Bulwick

We have had a busy six months with numbers at our practices frequently exceeding the capacity of our limited space, despite the cold. Our repertoire continues to grow, ranging from Bob Doubles to a good selection of Surprise methods. We are grateful for the support of our many visitors who make all things possible. It has been a pleasure to welcome a number of visiting bands, one of which is to be congratulated on their peal. The high standard of service ringing has been commented upon by the locals.

Our social life has not been neglected. In November, following drinks with Tony and Rosemary in Sutton, twenty of us went to The Chequered Skipper in Ashton for our annual Tower Dinner. After a technical hitch which involved Sue limbo dancing to extract herself from a jammed seatbelt in the minibus, we all enjoyed an excellent meal followed by much hilarity when the prezzies selected by Keith and Marilyn were opened. Over the Christmas period two un-named gentlemen in our number reached pensionable age and the events were duly celebrated with a drinks do and a weekend in Norwich. Sue and Andrew invited us all to maintain our alcohol levels by joining them for a celebration of the post-Christmas season. Eleven of us rang in the New Year after a meal at Sue and Derek's which culminated in an honourable draw in a ladies v gents Game of Trivial Pursuit.

Castor

Castor's AGM was held 19th January at the Cedar Centre. This was William Baxter's sixth as tower captain. The band had rung for 77 services at St. Kyneburgha's during 2010, 8 at Wansford, 4 at Thornhaugh, one at Elton and one at Barnack. This was only possible with the fantastic support of ringers from other towers for funerals and weddings, in particular Mick and Mandy Loveder and Joan Parker.

We had 48 practices of which two were away, one at St. John's and the



other at Wansford. Slow but steady progress has been made. We rang only two quarter peals at Castor, but enjoyed visiting ringers successfully completing two excellent peals; we hope we have more this year. We hosted four visiting bands and again hope to see more coming here.

St. Kyneburgha is delighted to continue to host the Branch Eight Bell Practice on the first Friday of each month, they are most welcome, and the Training Centre on Saturday mornings, which is doing great work. It was a pleasure to host in January last year the Branch AGM, and the Ascension Day and Retired Clergy services.

Mike Kennedy arranged another very successful ringing fund raiser, previously for Help the Heroes and Henley Court, this time for the Sue Ryder charity.

Jon Ardron our treasurer confirmed our excellent and sound financial position, sufficient to meet most eventualities, maintenance and enhancements. Steve Reed our steeple keeper reports we have more than sufficient stock of stays to meet the next few years of the Training Centre which in fact is breaking very few indeed.

Captain of our Hand Belles Maggie Noble noted that they had rung at four services and four public venues, as well as again winning the Salisbury Cup at the Oundle Music Festival. They concluded the season with an invitation to ring at the Branch AGM service at the Cathedral.

Since April Ginny Sheldon has been unable to give her usual total and unwavering support to the tower and we miss her, although she will attempt to make special occasions if she can get up the stairs. We have been without Bob Mann since October 2009 due to a shoulder injury.

We supplied guides for the European Heritage weekend in September, the number of visitors was better than last year.

This year we have already had 4 funerals at Castor and there are 9 weddings, as well as 4 at Wansford and 3 at Thornhaugh.

Our regular Sunday band has shrunk a little from 2009, gained two but lost three, so now just 12.

Easton on the Hill

We are proud of our record of ringing for at least one service each month and maintaining our practice night each week although in shortened form.

It has been a pleasure to welcome James Thorpe as a member of the band and we congratulate him on his first quarter peal.

Glington

October saw Glington bell ringers preparing vast quantities of 'beef in beer', as well as ringing in the second "Ring for your Supper" evening.

As usual the village hall buzzed with much chatter, before the ringers



moved on to Maxey for pudding at the pub. We were delighted that our Priest in Charge, Hilary Geisow, accepted the invitation to join the ringers; she observed that she had taken much pleasure in listening to the ringing outside the church. We still average about fourteen ringers each practice evening, welcoming two more new ringers in November 2010. One of our previous learners is hoping to ring her first quarter peal this year (April 4th) whilst the other was voted onto the Branch Committee at the AGM in January. We are also hoping to ring 100 changes in celebration of the Ringing World's centenary at a practice evening in March. We have had fewer visitors ringing our bells this time, although in December we did welcome a small group from Hertford who rang a quarter peal of Plain Bob Minor in 44mins. We have already had bookings for eight weddings this year, which is proving quite a challenge for us. Again we are always indebted to our many non-resident ringers who continue to help us out for special events.

King's Cliffe

In December we were saddened by the death of Jim Brown who had been a ringer in King's Cliffe for 80 of his 89 years. Thirteen ringers produced a glorious sound on his beloved bells as his coffin made its way through the village to a church packed with family, friends and over thirty fellow ringers. As the coffin left a local band began a half muffled quarter in his favourite methods, Single and Double Oxford, which was concluded as he was laid to rest. Everyone then retired to the Pub as he would have wished. Suitably refreshed a band of Peterborough Branch members rang a peal with the bells open in celebration of his life. This is believed to be the first branch peal for very many years. We continue Jim's tradition of ringing for Sunday service whenever possible and practising twice a month. Despite the weight of the bells and their heavy going we are pleased to report that our two young learners are making good progress.

Nassington

We are still able to maintain a fortnightly practice at Nassington thanks to the help of ringers from Bulwick, Gidding and a guest from Peterborough, who we are very grateful to. We ring quite a few doubles methods, including St. Simons, St. Martins, Reverse Canterbury, Grandsire and Bob Doubles. We ring for Sunday services and weddings and had a very good ring for the Deanery Evensong on 23rd January.

Like many towers we are not inundated with ringers and struggle at times to get a band together. Unfortunately, one of our long time ringers of fifty years, John Wilson, has had to stop ringing due to ill health and is greatly missed. Hopefully, he might be able to return sometime later this year. On the plus side we do have a local gentleman



who is very interested in learning to ring and is attending Castor training centre on Saturday mornings. He will be a most welcome ringer in our tower.

We would welcome anyone who would care to join us as a regular or a visitor.

Oundle

We have been working hard over the past year to establish a monthly practice at St. Peter's. We are most grateful for all the help and support we have been given by our fellow ringers. If anyone would care to join us we aim to practice on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 1930. It would be best to contact me to check: Pauline Davidson, Tel: 01832 273526, Mob: 07941621937, Email: davidson@leverton.fsnet.co.uk or paulineanddavidson@hotmail.co.uk

We have rung for a number of weddings and for the Deanery Service in October with the Bishop.

Pat Teall - Peterborough Correspondent

RUTLAND BRANCH

The Branch owes a considerable debt of gratitude to Alan Wordie who took over at short notice as Ringing Master from Christopher O'Mahony who moved to Harrow last August. Acknowledging that he could not bring the same level of skill and technical experience to the job as his predecessor, who was in a different league, his aims would be to ensure that we all enjoy our ringing, to bring on new entrants and to achieve quality ringing at whatever level, as far as possible. He has pursued these aims with an enthusiastic and infectious energy.

The start of the autumn programme is now a hazy memory blotted out by the unprecedented early arrival of winter snow and ice which lasted throughout December. The weather had, happily, been kind for the Branch outing into Northamptonshire in September, with ringing at Geddington, Stanion, Weldon and (a special treat) Deene, a Conservation Trust church where visiting ringers are not encouraged; we found the bells there in excellent condition and good to ring.

Our band for the Guild 8-Bell Striking Competition in October managed 6th place out of 7. This disappointing result has acted as a stimulus to encourage more members to attend practices at our two 8-bell towers at Oakham and Uppingham. Also in October, we participated in Rutland's first "Ring and Sing" day, a happy event which raised £800 for two Rutland charities.



There was a good turnout of 39 members for our AGM at Whissendine in January. Alan Wordie, presenting his first report as Ringing Master, said that looking around the Branch he saw “youth, smiles and heart”. In particular, he congratulated Ann Archer and Kate Riley at Great Casterton who had recruited thirteen new ringers, nine of them under 18. This impressive achievement had been the outcome of two “come and have a go” invitations linked to particular village events

At the end of March we will be participating in a tour of Rutland churches organised by Alan Wordie for John Lilley. This 79 year old Sussex stalwart, a one-armed ringer, has been travelling around the country, entirely by public transport, grabbing towers. We will be adding 5 more towards his target of 3,000 by his 80th birthday, later this year. Good luck to him!

Giles Hopkinson - Rutland Correspondent

THRAPSTON BRANCH -no news this time

TOWCESTER BRANCH.

Winter dormancy is not a term I would associate with the Towcester Branch and for very good reason as we try to remain upbeat during the season of declining daylight hours (and ringing chamber temperatures). Since the September issue we have responded well to a number of stimuli, one very notable occurrence being that of the Paulespury band and tower hosting the Guild AGM where over 50 ringers representing the breadth of the region enjoyed all that afternoon entailed. As a branch we thank all those who attended and of course all those who facilitated the event.

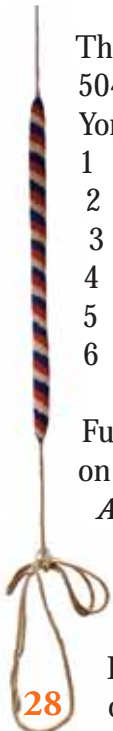
Another seasonal boost within the branch is that of the annual quiz and chips with striking contest, again the Whittlebury Reading Room was the venue for the former activity. There are some who feel they may under-achieve and those who feel they excel, despite the quizmaster, of John and Penny Pardoe, trying their damndest, the MT Nesters from one of the North Bucks teams struck gold in the quiz whilst the Pattishall Band did themselves proud in the striking contest. It has to be added though that there were certainly no losers as a great time was had by all.

Not only does the Whittlebury Reading Room offer a temporary seasonal retreat, the Walnut Tree restaurant in Blisworth does likewise, this being the venue for the Branch Annual Dinner. Joviality and the like were on the menu in addition to traditional Christmas fayre, the grace was led by Rev Tony Bryer. Entertaining speeches and a faultless display of handbell



ringing pre-empted the attendees of ringers, family, friends and invited guests raising their glasses in unison to toast Chris Bulleid for organising such a fine celebration. In addition to routine tower practices, branch practices have taken place at Roade and Blakesley, the branch continues to encompass a wider attendance at such events and hopes such future practices may encourage pro-active ringing throughout the branch members. The branch AGM was held in Blisworth on the 29th of January with ringing, a service and a very fine tea preceding the formal meeting itself. Ian Willgress represented the Guild and was accompanied by Alison during his afternoon away from Nether Heyford. I would anticipate items being of notable interest to fellow readers being the change of Officers. After many years service, our thanks go to Phil Cahill who has decided to hang up his pen and stand down as Branch Secretary, he has done a very fantastic job indeed, this task is now being taken by John Pardoe who consequently vacated the Chair. The Chair of the branch is now the remit of a gentleman who I am sure is known to you all, Richard Yates.

At the time of our AGM, we were saddened to hear of the passing away of a colleague and friend to many in the branch, Cannon Ernest Orland. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and the following Peal was rung at St Mary the Virgin, Gayton, where he was Rector and ringer from 1965 to 1969.



Thursday, 3 February 2011 in 2h45 (13½)

5040 Surprise Minor 7m: 1 extent each London, Westminster, Beverley, York, Ipswich, Cambridge, Norwich.

- 1 Richard W Yates
- 2 Ian N Willgress
- 3 Christopher E Bulleid
- 4 A John Stanworth
- 5 G Nigel Williams
- 6 Richard I Allton (C)

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

It was with much regret and sadness that the branch learnt of the death of one of its most respected and long standing members. Bob Whitworth

died on 6th January at Kettering General Hospital after approximately 10 years of ill health during which time he maintained a positive spirit and endeavoured to carry on as usual. Bob was a ringer at St Mary's Church in Rusden for 58 years of which 40 of these were as Tower Captain. He had served on the Guild Management Committee and had been Chairman of the Wellingborough branch; in addition he was a member of the Society of College Youths. Bob rang his final quarter peal on Xmas Eve at Rushden.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to those he leaves behind, his wife Ann, sons Andy and Matt and grandchildren. At the Annual General Meeting, members paid their respect to Bob and a minutes silence was taken.

Approximately 50 members turned out to the AGM at Earls Barton, where once more the members were indebted to the Earls Barton ringers for a superb hot supper. At the meeting, Wollaston put forward 5 new members who had been recruited and retained from the recruitment drive during the summer. John, the Tower Captain at Wollaston has been devoting an additional night to these ringers in order to progress them and integrate them into the tower team. Well done to all of them. There was also one new member from Orlingbury and one returner to membership from Finedon.

Thanks were expressed to Alan Marks for all his dedication and commitment to his role of Ringing Master, a position he has held twice and currently for 9 years. Due to other commitments such as Guild Treasurer he did not wish to carry on. No one came forward to volunteer for this position so it was decided that the Assistant Tower Captain and Surprise Captain would cover whenever possible but failing that the Tower Captain at the venue be asked to take charge. Later in the evening a proposal was put forward that the position of Tower Captain be held jointly between the Assistant Tower Captain and Surprise Captain. Therefore, Kevan Chapman and John Berrisford were duly elected. A youth representative, Tom from Rushden was appointed to the committee and his ideas and thoughts will be most welcome.

In place of the quarter peal day, it was proposed and agreed that quarters would be rung over the weekend of the Royal wedding i.e. 29th/30th April 1st/2nd May; organised by the individual tower captains. This project is to be co-ordinated by Brenda and Simon Dixon who would try to assist by allocating callers or ringers if the Tower requires assistance. April will soon be here, so come on Tower Captains get organised, it would be great if every tower in the branch would take part.

There were several notable achievements from members of the branch



and our congratulations to them:-

Sam Chambers of Stanwick received his 50 year certificate to the Guild at the Training day at Stanwick.

Harry Curtis from Irchester celebrated his 70th birthday recently and rang in 2 quarters at Irchester, and Higham Ferrers and the third quarter at Rushden was dedicated to him. He rang his first in Steadman triples and also a quarter of Bob Triples. Harry returned to ringing when he retired from teaching some 5 years ago. Nicola Wildman also of Irchester, but now living in Scotland had a son Matthew which is the first grandchild for Ken Wildman who is a regular ringer at Irchester. News from the Higham Ferrers tower confirmed that 20 thousand had been raised by fund raising and they are on target for completion of the work on the bells in January 2012. Many other fund raising events are due to take place during the summer. It was reported that the work completed on the bells at Finedon approximately 2 years ago had developed a problem. The Tenor requires re-bushing, but the company who carried out the work have ceased trading. Finedon are extremely indebted to Taylor's of Leicester who have agreed to carry out the work "free of charge". Please log on to www.wellingboroughbranch.org.uk to view the forthcoming calendar.

Tanya Clayton - Wellingborough Correspondent

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER'S PIECE

SUMMER FESTIVAL

The weather deteriorated this year as we descended on Long Buckby for the Guild's Summer Festival and inter-branch eight-bell striking competition. Judges John and Lucy Gwynne from Warwick had a ring on the millennium eight then were housed in the porch. The weather belied the festival's name and became so dark and cold that the porch light had to be switched on and the judges needed warming up afterwards. This year we nearly had a record eight branches out of the ten represented but a late withdrawal left seven. Culworth appeared sporting the message "What striking competition? We're here for the tea!" Our new Master is intent on getting all ten branches along next year for tea and more!

The Guilsborough branch hosted the event and ran the good running buffet tea in the adjacent Church Rooms. John Pardoe from the Towcester Branch gave the vote of thanks on behalf of those attending. Formal business was confined to raising money for the Bell Fund and spending it. Twenty two winners were announced of the Summer Draw run by Murray

and Mary Coleman and three winners for the 100 Club draw. The first three draw prizes went to Mr Smith (Earls Barton - £100), Diane Garrett (Greatworth - £50) and Bill Adcock (Desborough - Whisky). A grant was agreed to Benefield of £3,830 towards repairing the suspected crack in the third bell and rehangng the currently unringable six bells on new galvanised beams and renovated frames by Whites of Appleton. This left a £55,700 balance in the Bell Fund for the big jobs expected to come up soon. Robin Rogers repeated the Dean's and his own invitation for branches and towers to ring at the Cathedral for Sunday services, especially on the 2nd and 4th Sundays and on regular practice nights.

The defrosted judges then gave their comments on each test piece:

Rang	Branch	Method	Faults	Position
1	Guilborough	Plain Bob Triples	47	4
2	Wellingborough	Grandsire Triples	41	3
3	Towcester	Cambridge Surprise Major	61	5
4	Daventry	Grandsire Triples	37	2
5	Kettering	Yorkshire Surprise Major	25	1
6	Rutland	Plain Bob Triples	127	6
7	Culworth	Grandsire Triples	set up	7

The judges presented a certificate to each team and the Harry Wooding Memorial Trophy to the Kettering Branch for the 11th time. The winning band was: 1. Jane Marsh, 2. Liz Betts, 3. Helen Churchman, 4. Jane Sibson. 5. Bill Adcock. 6. Michael Wallis. 7. Nick Churchman, 8. Murray Coleman.

Additional certificates were presented by the Master to Peter Clifton, tower captain of Long Buckby, expressing thanks for hosting the competition and to the two judges, with a liquid addition, for judging.



The winning Kettering Branch team less Helen: Bill Adcock, Liz Betts, Jane Sibson, Michael Wallis, Murray Coleman, Jane Marsh, Nick Churchman.





Lucy, Murray, Liz and John with the Harry Wooding Memorial trophy.

Evening ringing took place on East Haddon's recently rehung grand six bells. They were rung to a variety of methods at a variety of speeds. There were comfortable arm chairs in the gratefully heated church to cater for those waiting between rings. Afterwards the gathering dispersed for liquid refreshment and gossip.

SHIRTS

An order for 102 shirts was sent on September 22 and was delivered eight days later. There were 29 different legends, all but nine were tower names. Hope you like them. The split was 59 poloshirts, 33 sweatshirts and 10 T shirts. Most popular out of the 16 colours were navy, royal blue and black.

Shirts will be available again during 2011 with deadlines for orders to reach me by April 2, May 21 and August 27, 2011. Details of what is available and order forms appear on the Guild website www.pdg.org.uk <Guild shirts>, or contact your branch secretary. Sizing tends towards generous, so before ordering, it may be as well to try someone else's for size.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

There was some useful publicity in the Kettering Evening Telegraph of October 23 about Stanion bells and bellringing generally after a visit by reporter Laura Bird. The main photo showed the tower team of David Lafferty, Tim Kellett, Carl Hector, Anita Harris, Debra Drew and Tom Birkett.

RADIO & YOUNGSTERS

Did you hear the Radio 4 programme 'You and Yours' on December 31 about ringing? Replay was still available at the time of writing on BBC i-player at http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b00wrbrs/You_and_Yours_31_12_2010/ between 12.10 and 20.59 minutes. It included the point that youngsters are taking up ringing. A prospect that we need to nurture! Badby's young ringer wanted to join an under – 19 band to enter the Ringing World National Youth Contest on March 26 and I couldn't think of eight in the Guild!

A RELATED PONDER

Did anyone else notice that at the Spring Festival 2010, there was only one ringer taking part who was younger than the two judges? More food for action?

PORCH NOTICES

Sue, a waterborne itinerant ringer with her dog Bella, who has now spent several months around Daventry, reiterates how useful porch ringing notices are to her. Please check yours. If you need one, the choice is yours:

- ❖ Guild version: www.pdg.org.uk <Help with Publicity for Towers> <Ringing Times>
- ❖ CCCBR version: <http://www.cccbr.org.uk/pr/pubs/poster/poster.doc>
- ❖ or design your own!

HOLY CROSS +1?

Philip Denton is the bellringing parish priest of the modern RC church of Holy Cross, South Ockendon, Essex. On a visit to Daventry practice in April 2010, he told us that he was going to ring sponsored quarter peals in all 40 churches in the UK that are dedicated to the Holy Cross to raise money to install a ring of bells in his church. He has been working at it since April 22. He organised the four Holy Cross towers in our diocese, which are all west of Northampton, for Friday, November 26. Due to difficulties in timings and other distractions he was rather short of ringers a couple of days beforehand and a few of you got an e-mail seeking volunteers! On the very cold and frosty day, quarters were rung at Pattishall, Milton Malsor, Byfield and Daventry - not to mention another one at Cold Higham to fill a gap caused by rescheduling the Pattishall one to avoid a funeral! Ringers appeared from seven counties at various times and luckily someone volunteered to conduct each one! These were the 19th to 22nd out of the 40 - it won't be much longer before South Ockendon has a new ring of bells.

BURSARIES

It was good to see that Fliss had won a bursary to attend a Stedman ringing course... It might be useful to make Guild Members more aware that the Guild has, since my time as Guild Secretary, if not before, always



been willing to supply bursaries for its young members to attend ringing courses.

Jim Hedgcock 14/7/10

EXCUSES - A NEW COMPETITION


1. I am sorry but I probably won't make it tonight as we are having our front path and steps replaced and we will not be able to walk on the new slabs before tomorrow morning at the earliest - we're trapped! BT 5/1/11
2. Apologies for not coming this evening but we have a fête committee meeting to choose this year's chairman and if I don't go I might get elected in my absence! BC 26/1/11
3. I completely forgot that I will not be able to make this Wednesday as I shall be going to the Beetle & Puddings Night! BT 6/2/11

Geoff Pullin PRO

100 CLUB

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



Month	1st Prize	Number	2nd Prize	Number	3rd Prize	Number
SEP 10	55.00	17	27.50	16	11.00	84
OCT 10	42.40	65	10.60	64		
NOV 10	42.00	130	10.50	41		
DEC 10	41.20	15	10.30	118		
JAN 11	41.60	96	10.40	31		
FEB 11	41.60	07	10.40	34		

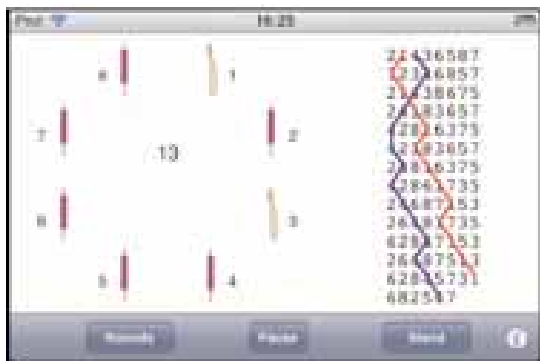
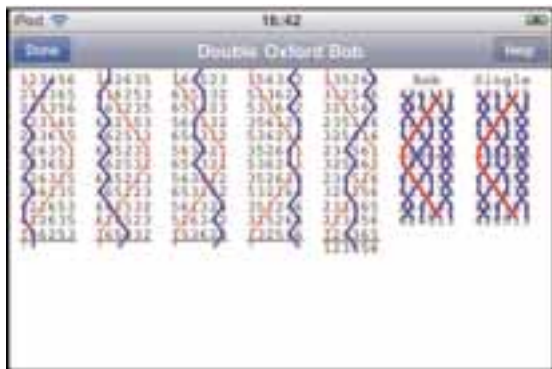
** 3rd prize only paid in September.*

Derek Jones.

MOBELISE YOUR RINGING!

Bellringer? Computer owner? Not heard about Abel (a computer bellringing application)? Go to www.abelsim.co.uk and find out! I have found Abel (or Mabel if you have an Apple Mac computer) to be very helpful in extending my ringing repertoire, but having inherited my grandson's iPod and explored the various apps available I was thrilled when my daughter discovered 'Mobel' – the Apple iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad version of Abel.

I had been contemplating purchasing a new 'ringers' diary' to replace my 1968 one, which is held together with a rubber band, primarily, just to have a small compilation of methods to hand. However, 'Mobel' provides this, and more, and for just £5.99. Yes, I know, I had to have an iPod first! There is a selection of over 17,000 methods from 4 to 16 bells that can be viewed as a complete plain course, just the blue line or as a grid depending on your preference. Moreover you can ring one or two bells, just like Abel, by tapping the screen. If you want to practise a plain course, a touch with bobs and/or singles or even attempt spliced surprise these are all possible and you can even call your own touch!



There are various options: display of sallies and tail ends with tower bell sound or handbells using handbell sound and the speed can be varied. You can ask Mobel to wait for you if you hesitate while ringing a bell or it can carry on in perfect rhythm



and a recent update will now even mark your striking out of ten!

Whilst ringing, the most recent few rows appear on the screen - useful if you fall off the blue line and can't hear where you are. Of course, 'Mobel' won't teach you to handle your bell properly and cannot replace the social repartee on practice night but at least you can go along with your homework properly done and with the extra confidence to attempt ringing new methods! Ropesight may not be quite the same as in the tower but, by getting you used to ringing in perfect rhythm, ropesight in the tower will become much easier. The sound quality may not be quite the same as Abel on a computer, particularly on higher numbers of bells, but it will enable you to get attuned to what good striking sounds like.



It could be heard from the other end of the pub - probably best to use earphones in public! No sooner than he was shown it, our latest recruit, a thirteen year old, got Mobel for his iPod. He understands the theory – can't wait till he's there with the bell control!

Gwynneth White, Bugbrooke, Daventry Branch

GIRL GUIDE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Wednesday the 20th October 2010 saw the culmination of a year of celebrations to commemorate 100

years of the Girl Guides.

A day where Guides and Brownies all over the country would be

renewing their Promises.



The Desborough ringers thought it would be appropriate to celebrate this event with some special ringing so a band of past and present local ringers – all ex Guides/Brownies or Leaders gathered for some general ringing. The band consisted of Maureen Easton, Jane Marsh, Jane Lund, Sarah Toseland, Lisa Adcock, Helen Burt, Jo Asquith and Helen Churchman. Some of us had learnt to ring whilst Guides (Maureen, Jane M, Jo and Helen C) and we had all achieved our Bellringers Badges. Jane Marsh was still proudly displaying hers as she actually arrived wearing her original uniform!!



From left to right :- Jane Lund, Maureen Easton, Jane Marsh, Sarah Toseland, Lisa Adcock, Jo Asquith, Helen Churchman, Helen Burt



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**



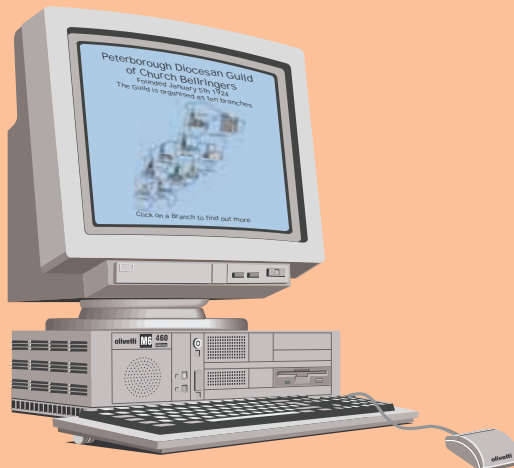
There is a section to help **tower publicity**



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



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



GUILD EVENTS 2011

23rd April 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.

30th April Guild Spring Meeting - Northampton Branch

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

Starting between 3 & 4pm Striking competition at **Dallington** (6 bells, 7cwt).

Buffet tea during competition and results to follow in hall.

Until 9pm - Evening Ringing at **Northampton St Peters** (8 bells, 12cwt).

11th June Guild AGM - Daventry Branch

2.45 - 3.45pm General Ringing at **Nether Heyford** (6 bells, 7cwt) and **Norton** (5 bells, 15cwt)

4.00 - 5.00pm Ringing at **Great Brington** (6 bells, 17cwt) followed by service, tea and Guild AGM in the Reading Room.

17th Sept Guild Summer Festival - Thrapston Branch

Eight-bell inter-branch striking competition at **Thrapston** (8 bells, 14cwt). More details to follow.

29th Oct Guild Quiz - Peterborough Branch

Woodnewton Village Hall, 35 Orchard Lane PE8 5EE, will be the base for the general knowledge quiz starting at 7.30pm.



