

**PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD
OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS**



Newsletter
March 2018

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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**
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

PRESIDENT'S PREAMBLE

Over one hundred turned out for the Summer Festival in September. Well done the Northampton Branch for putting 'festival' back into the day, it paid off very well! We can do with lots of new thinking and challenging of the status quo and there are signs of it developing in some branches.

The Guild needs up and coming members to fill the posts of Guild Officers with all the existing executive officers indicating that they want to retire this or next year. What can you contribute?

The need for new ways of nurturing our art and science has already been taken on board by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers with a huge review of its structure due to be implemented in late May.

Geoff Pullin



News from the Branches

Culworth Branch

Evenley team attended a Hobbies event at the local secondary school in September. It was organised by NAYC. In the hall and gym 30 organisations were represented. These included the local brass band, four dance schools, St Johns Ambulance, Scouts, etc.

The noise was tremendous but the Worcester Cathedral Ringing video rang out above it all. Parents were happy to sign Permission to Ring forms (ART) and as a result 1 student is learning to ring. The free standing displays from the District were admired and the DVD useful. If you get the invitation to attend similar events they are worthwhile and good fun.

During 2017 seven ringers in the branch have received their ART Level 1 certificates for bell handling. Congratulations to Trevor & Louise King, Ruth Peters, Carole Girling, Brian Sinclair, Trevor Field and Maria Bradford. Congratulations also to David Kirkham who has completed his Level 1 teaching bell handling to become an associate member of ART.

47 attended another successful Annual Branch Dinner in October.

Snow and ice hampered the attendance at the Branch Carol Service on 11th December at Brackley but those that braved the conditions enjoyed the service led by Rev Will Adams and the ringing and refreshments afterwards.

It is with sadness we report that Howard Oglesby passed away peacefully on 17th December 2017. The funeral took place at St Peter's Church in Brackley on Tuesday, 9th January. Ringing took place before and after the service. Howard joined the Guild as a member for Brackley in 2010 and was branch independent examiner from 2011-3. They moved into the area from Sunningdale. Howard had rung several peals, including two for the Zipper Society and quarter peals at the Curfew Tower,



Windsor.

An excellent tea was organised by the ladies of Evenley tower for the branch AGM in January. 5 new members were elected to the branch and Lois Weedon tower were awarded the Presidents cup.

Good news that Geoffrey Stretton is back ringing again after his bicycling accident with a tractor! Geoff reports that Eydon tower are happy to welcome a new resident to the village, Sally Stevens, who has been along to their practices as an able ringer, albeit of some many years ago – 35 to be exact. However, it's like riding a bicycle you never forget how to do it and within a few practice nights she was able to ring in rounds and call changes and is just starting to understand Plain Hunt, having come from a tower that never rang methods. Additionally, Peter Keenan, a resident of some years has, after taking early retirement, decided he needed that ultimate challenge and have been under Geoff's watchful eye daily with hour long lessons and is making excellent progress. Things are beginning to look up in Eydon.

Joy Kirkham - Culworth Correspondent.

Daventry Branch

PEOPLE

A Routemaster bus and 'our' outing coach arrived at Newnham church on October 21 transporting guests for Dominic Sinclair's wedding to Shannon. Groom, father, mother (with splendid hat removed) and uncle were only available to ring for a short spell before the service, but the couple were well rung in and out by a Staverton practices team.

Harold Thompson died aged 83 on December 2. His funeral was taken by the Revd. Canon Sarah Brown, one of her last duties before moving to Peterborough.

Harold moved to Braunston from Southall in 1969.

He learned to ring and was elected a member at Welton in 1998. From 2005, Harold assisted in restoring our four branch unringables and with the restoration of several rings across the diocese, including locally Everdon,



Long Buckby, and Charwelton.

He was tower captain at Welton from 2007 and a keen supporter of the Daventry Branch and would arrive early at meetings ready to raise the bells. In recent years, he has supported Tuesday mornings at Hellidon, where he last rang in July and last visited for coffee on November 28.

After five years organising bands to ring for the many weddings at Dodford, Nikki Butt wanted to pass on the job. Brian Clark has succumbed to gentle pressure. Two new clergy have been rung into the branch area: the Revd. Tim Fernyhough inducted to the Lambfold Benefice at Blakesley on September 2; the Revd Canon Mary Garbutt licensed at Staverton as team vicar for Catesby, Hellidon and Staverton within the Daventry Team on October 11. News from our waterbourne division has varied. Soon after Sue Merrett moved moorings to Rugeley, age caught up with Bella and she died in November. Sue is headed for Rugby for boat maintenance and is looking for a replacement for Bella.

Ed Mortimer reports that after cruising across Scotland, he spent some time in Newcastle upon Tyne and resurrected his ringing skills. He is over-wintering in Hartlepool for boatyard attention and has lots of ringing opportunity there. Ed was back in Canada for six weeks over Christmas.



QUARTER PEALS

Branch organised 6-bell quarter peals have continued on Fridays with Little Bob Minor on Friday, September 15 at Creaton. This was arranged for Brian Clark, but he went to the trouble of breaking his wrist at Everdon fête, so Christine Rodhouse kindly stepped in, for her first in the method.

On November 25, Michael Haighton rang his first of St Clements Minor, at Stretton on Dunsmore. Plain Bob Minor was next on January 19 at Boddington belatedly for Paul Richardson's 90th birthday with Paul ringing the third.

Dorothy FitzGerald rang her first of Kent at Lois Weedon on February 23.

The practice quarter peal for the Summer Festival competition was Grandsire Triples at Rugby and was also a birthday and early retirement compliment to

Alison Willgress. We did not retain the Harry Wooding Trophy at the Summer Festival, which was very well hosted by the Northampton Branch. We came a close second. Daventry belfry looks a bit bare without it, after three years!

Plain Bob Doubles was organised and conducted by James Grennan at Braunston on January 28 with the branch's congratulations to the Revd. Canon Sarah Brown, former vicar of Braunston and Welton as well



as Daventry Rural Dean, who was installed as Canon Missioner at the Cathedral the previous Sunday.

Other quarter peals marked personal progress or special occasions. On August 30 David Foster rang his first inside with Plain Bob Doubles at Flore and on October 8, another was rung as an 80th birthday compliment to Liz Wardley. Miles Baker rang the treble to his first on eight ringing Plain Bob Triples at Daventry on September 3. Heavy snow in December led to a quarter at Daventry being cancelled. This was to be Miles' first of major for which he was prepared to walk through the snow from Whilton! He succeeded on January 21 by ringing the treble to Plain Bob Major at Long Buckby celebrating Harold Thompson's life and especially the help he gave during the augmentation to eight in 2000.

An earlier quarter peal to celebrate Harold's life was rung at Welton on January 6, with a group of Welton parishoners and Hellidon ringers listening with tea and cake in the church.



Remembrance Day was marked with half-muffled doubles at Litchborough and on the Sunday, Plain Bob Caters at Daventry. On October 29, Plain Bob Triples marked the retirement from Weedon, Everdon and Dodford of the Revd. Canon John Knight, which was the first of triples for Jill Faiers. The royal platinum wedding was marked at Harpole, Daventry and Weedon in November. On October 1 Harpole harvest festival was marked with Reverse Canterbury. Jenny Lunn rang her first quarter peal of Plain Bob Minor at Blisworth on September 10. The birth of a second granddaughter for Mike and Jill Harvey was celebrated on February 16 with Plain Bob Triples at Weedon.

MEETINGS

In September, nineteen rang, including Peter Box and seven didn't, including tower captain Brian Clark, who welcomed us to Everdon's easy-going heavy bells, sporting a very snazzy arm sling. The Revd. Canon



John Knights sat and listened to us ring all afternoon and let us know that he had learned only today that Everdon bells were heavy! John retired later that month, aged an active 81. After a good tea, Staverton bells were in action earlier than expected to suit the 13 there. In the pub afterwards, we were entertained when Kim asked a young couple if we could use vacant chairs at their table. He discovered that he had rung for their wedding at Dodford a month ago and there was a mutual sharing of John Knights' enthusiastic approach to singing! Litchborough village hall was the assembly point in October for a striking competition waiting for a wedding to end. Four teams were eventually formed, flagrantly ignoring the published rules (!) and were successively sent off to the church to ring! After a hot tea and lots of cakes came the results and meeting. Simon Dixon, Guild Master, kindly came to judge and noted that a vast loud tractor and muck-spreader had passed three times but luckily always during a practice piece! Simon perceptively noted that the first team rang briskly as if they were accustomed to the bells!

The Ron Woodward Trophy went to the team comprising: Christine Rodhouse, Gwynneth White, Richard & Val Hartley and Ann Maud (who went before the photo was taken). Fourteen rang at Byfield until 8.30pm and afterwards visited the Cross Tree.

Our November meetings always coincide with Remembrance weekend. Only eleven and one visitor from Bedfordshire rang Welton's



half-muffled bells, but there were fifteen more who didn't ascend the ladder.

The Revd. Canon Sarah Brown took our service with the theme of angels. Sally prepared lots of hot soup and cakes for tea.

In the evening, there were only ten of us, including Peter Clifton, who greeted us with Long Buckby bells already up and half-muffled. Bobby, having conquered the ladder at Welton, found these stairs easier and eventually was prepared to ring standing on the trap door!



In December, it was rather colder than Badby's church heating can presently cope with. During the afternoon and evening 36 people turned up and 23 of them rang, including 86 year old Jim Lilley who came by train and bus from Shoreham by Sea to grab the tower, ringing one-handed! Buffet tea was served in church,

with people finding the warmest pews. Frances Williams was elected a new member for Badby. The final business was the presenting of Paul Richardson with a surprise 90th birthday cake incorporating the Guild badge to mark his birthday on December 17. There was time for further ringing until 7pm, when the Revd. Sue, hot-foot from a Milton Keynes charity endurance karting event, set off our carol concert to Gwynneth's usual good programme with a variety of ten carols and six tower items. The musical ensemble consisted of Michael - organ, Barbara - clavinova, Alison B - flute, Abi -viola, Shirley - clarinet, Chris Buck -tuba. During prayers we remembered Harold and Sal and Sue's loss of Bella. By 9.15pm we had enjoyed Paul's cake and Chris Buck's mulled wine and were able to lock up, leaving the bells up for Sunday morning. We were very surprised to wake up to six inches of snow. The service was cancelled so I lowered the bells which had clearly collected snow as they rang very muffled for the first two swings!

At the Branch AGM there were 18 who came to ring at Daventry and another 19 who were busy preparing tea and chatting. The Revd. Dawn Stokes took a commendably short service, before we assembled in the very warm church hall for a hot soup tea organised by Deena and Hugh Johnson. The prevalence of coughs and colds kept our chairman, Jane Rands, away. Jane had asked Ian Willgress to take the chair and the meeting proceeded in an orderly manner, re-electing all officers and committee, after which there was a general exodus leaving only 12 to ring who were thankfully joined by Mike Harvey, Brenda Dixon and Alan Marks.

How nice and warm Byfield church was in February! So much so that eight didn't climb the tower, but 21 did, including two visitors from Milton, Oxon and Badby's Frances grabbing her second tower. The Revd. Stevie Cross led our short service, after which a filling buffet tea was served in church. Before the meeting began, Richard Waddy proposed the vote of thanks. At the meeting we elected brothers Alfie and Jack Wilkinson of Byfield to membership.

Branch assisted monthly 8-bell practices are continuing to rotate around four towers coinciding with their practice nights. Some are more successful than others! The Branch Quarter Peal Day will be on Saturday March 24. Methods will be modest and decided after consulting with the conductors available.

There was plenty of time to get to Boddington where 16 rang and Alfie and Jack grabbed their second tower!

SOCIAL & OUTING

In November, 27 came to the branch dinner at the Old Red Lion, Litchborough and Frances Bird from Byfield won Christine's quiz with 9/17, after two with higher scores had been eliminated for having inside information about family connections! The photos that we had to identify ranged the world from



Aberdeen, Scotland to Aberdeen, Hong Kong! We had good wholesome food steered to the correct location by the local master of ceremonies. Chairman Jane thanked Alison B for organising it and Christine for the quiz. Indeed it was good to see Alison present, recovering from a laser repair to her retina.

Litchborough, Kilsby, Heyford and Badby rang in the new year. I had a call from a couple of narrow boaters moored at Braunston, who had phoned around desperately seeking a tower. They made us up to 8 at Badby. Neighbours of the tower also arrived with a bottle of port and glasses to celebrate all our Wednesday ringing during the year! Their visitor confessed to having rung until she was 15 and was promptly put on a tail end and rang both strokes to rounds within a minute!

Twenty-one set off on Monday, February 12 for the Heyford Jaunt based at the grand country house of Sedgeford Hall in NW Norfolk. Jane Rands organised the jaunt and supervised the splendid self-catering arrangements in these elegant surroundings. On Tuesday, the bells of Walpole St Peter, Terrington St John, Terrington St Clement and Tilney All Saints received attention. On Wednesday it was Clenchwarton, then a play with the Vicar's mobile mini-ring (tenor 2lbs) resting in his garage roof, followed by St Margaret's Minster and St Nicholas, Kings Lynn and Gaywood. Thursday was a half ringing day. After Dersingham, it was the anti-clockwise five at Great Bircham and the five at Holme next the Sea, which has a very uneven stone ringing floor despite being high in the tower. Despite the sun, the wind called for an indoor photo!



l to r: Carole, Jim, David, Jim, Geoff, Ian, David, Richard, Alison, Caitlin, Bobbie, Ian, Jenny, Shirley, Peter, Jane, Jane, Gwynneth, Val, Chris, Gillian, Ann and Liz



With Badby maintaining its recent reputation for cold weather, the branch quiz took place in the village hall on February 24. 48 contestants in nine teams battled over Hilary Aslett's questions. The smallest team "One Short" (because they should have been four) won. The Clangers won the booby prize of a wise owl!

Geoff Pullin - Daventry Correspondent.

Guilsborough Branch

Technical tales around Guilsborough Branch Towers.

2017 has been an eventful year for the inspection & maintenance team, touring around our branch towers. The most engaging activity encountered has been “loose clappers” followed by ground pulley irregularities, highlighting the importance of regular attention to our heritage bell collection.

I am critically aware that the politics of the Church of England does not necessary lead to importance when it comes to the west end of the building, namely the bells & their associated fittings, although it is expected that the bells will or should be rung for Church orientated occasions.

It therefore falls onto the shoulders of tower captains, steeple keepers & the Guild’s representatives to attempt to make good any imperfections. It is extremely pleasing to learn that I am not alone in my concerns.

Below, is a concise description of observations we have either rectified or will be attending to in our 2018 & beyond, maintenance programmes.

Brixworth & Long Buckby

At both of these towers, I am assured by the respective tower captains that the bells & their fittings are regularly maintained. I have been invited to inspect the installations.

Watford

Still marked as unringable on Dove’s Guide, limited work in the form of re-conditioned ropes & new stays have enabled the bells to ring out once again. Ground pulleys, clappers etc to be inspected 2018 onwards. There will always be a limit as to what can be achieved at this tower, however, it is just feasible, the team can make some improvements to the running of the bells, although the resultant sound of the bells will remain out of tune. Preliminary discussions have been made to make the bells more audible within the ringing area. Many thanks to Peter and Dan.

Cottesbrooke

We are aware of some form of issue with the treble bell handling characteristics. To be inspected, 2018.

Creton, Spratton & Ravensthorpe

To be inspected, 2018 onwards.

Maidwell

One remaining bell & associated fittings to be inspected, 2018 onwards.

East Farndon

Adjusted rope lengths at last inspection. To be re-inspected, 2018 onwards.



Great Oxendon

This tower will require 3 people present owing to the lack of ladder fixings to the wall. Church officials have been made aware of the issue. To be re-inspected, 2018 onwards.

West Haddon

Rope guide routing problem through ring chamber ceiling & other mechanical issues. Church officials have been made aware of the issues. To be inspected, 2018 onwards.

Walgrave & Scaldwell

In good running order due to previous extensive maintenance work in previous years. Some further ongoing maintenance work to be carried out when everyone is mutually available. Additionally at Walgrave, rope spider pulleys to be re-aligned. Continual ingress of rainwater into belfry from spire openings has created historic (& current) deterioration to the metal frame components. Church officials have been made aware of the issue.

Cold Ashby

We are aware of a slider/stay/clapper issue. To be inspected, 2018

Thornby

In running order but continual ingress of rainwater into belfry has created deterioration to the wooden frame. Church officials have been made aware of the issue.

Guilsborough

Awaiting overhaul. Continual ingress of rainwater into belfry from spire openings has created deterioration to the metal frame & fittings. Church officials have been made aware of the spire issues. This particular tower has to be a beacon reminder when essential repairs to the fabric of the building are neglected for whatever reasons.

East Haddon

Recently, the ringing chamber has been relocated to a first floor making way for new ground floor toilet facilities. Upon a chance visit, we noticed that at least 5 of the 6 clappers require retightening to the headstocks, some quite loose. I can confirm the bells now ring much better from the new ringing chamber, despite the prevailing mechanical issues. Bells have good tonal qualities.



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Crick & Lilbourne

I regularly inspect these towers as the designated & official steeple keeper. Recent remedial adjustments include tenor clapper slightly loose at Crick. At Lilbourne, No. 2 clapper has been subjected to ongoing investigations for handling difficulties. We are due back at Crick when it's a lot warmer.

Welford

Inspected 2017 prior to the Guild's AGM. 4 clappers loose & re-tightened. Hastings stay replaced. Rope lengths adjusted for optimum usage. Tenor rope tail was recently exchanged and re-spliced by Robin Wilson, prior to a (successful) peal attempt. Thank you Robin for your prompt attention.

Sibbertoft

Stay replaced, others tightened, clapper loose & re-tightened. I am reliably informed that the nesting material has been removed from the bell chamber floor. Metal sub frame corroded at west end of frame. Bells have good tonal qualities. Thank you Alistair and friends.

Marston Trussell

Treble ground pulley & associated hardware require stabilising rectifications. No.2 clapper requires re-alignment. The vicar remarked that the "customised & unorthodox" Hastings stay breakaway mechanism requires changing to conventional methods. This will be a time consuming & precision task, although perfectly capable. Further discussions are required to finalise critical points.

Yelvertoft

As both David the current tower captain who also was a former branch steward & Robin, the previous branch steward, have better local knowledge than myself, I have deliberately left this tower to their assessment abilities. My limited observation is that the steel frame requires painting. However, to fulfil my job as steward, I would like to be invited to personally inspect the installation. I am informed that the ropes are due to be replaced, most probably in early 2018. Bells have good tonal qualities.

Clipston, Naseby, Haselbech & Kelmarsh

These towers are under the tower captaincy of Ken Rutland who requested a visit to carry out inspection duties at each tower. We have partially inspected all of the towers with a proviso to continue to rectify any outstanding issues. Haselbech requires several loose clappers to be re-tightened, dry ground pulley bearings to be investigated. Having stripped down No.7 clapper bearing for incorrect pivot movement, we will observe any future discrepancies arising. No.8 clapper bearing lubricated but worn beyond repair & will require replacement. Some shrouding re-fixed to wheels. Rope lengths have been optimised for better handling.

The wheels at Naseby have undergone shroud re-fixing using st.st. screws but will require further ongoing remedial work on lower unreachable sections with custom precision tooling. Also, we have attended to



one breakdown to fit a new No.3 slider end block, highlighted in a previous inspection. No.3 clapper loose, new leather washer fitted & re-tightened. The associated No. 3 slider will require replacement due to end wood rot. The No.3 fitting issues are no doubt due to weathering from the close proximity of the adjacent window opening. A water ingress problem regarding the spire, beyond my remit, has been forwarded to Naseby Parochial Church Council. We also effected a temporary repair to a weather board which had fallen onto No's.1 & 5 bell wheels. Several more clappers require re-tightening to headstocks.

Kelmarsh will be totally inspected in 2018. We are aware of certain issues including wheel shroud re-fixing. Steps forming the spiral stairway are badly worn.

Clipston has been provisionally inspected but a further re-inspection will occur in 2018 to ascertain a more exacting in depth look at an older bell installation. I would very much like Robin to be present at this inspection as there are specific aspects of which, require extra consultation.

Winwick

Rope spider line re-fitted and other remedial tasks carried out by Peter Clifton and friends. Thank you Peter and colleagues.

Steward's personal comments.

Many thanks & appreciation to the core team of Colin Sim, Gordon Ball & consultant Robin Wilson, without whose assistances, this valuable work would not have been achieved in the desired manner or higher self-imposed standards. Equally, my thanks also go to other associated people along the way who have contributed in some form to promote the ongoing maintenance within their respective towers.

The branch maintenance programme regrettably was curtailed earlier than expected due to my skirmishes with shingles, fractured finger & twice twisted ankle to mention just but a few ailments.

No promises for 2018 but would like to re-commence in warmer climes with Ken's quartet of towers interlaced with initial inspections of some of the remaining towers listed above.

Mobile phone / wi-fi masts.

During the last week or so in February 2018, a news report from the C of E and H.M. Government indicates an agreement for increasing the number of mobile phone/wi-fi masts within Church spires and / or towers, externally or internally attached. I have read the lengthy publicly facing reports so whilst I have no counteractive issues with this directive and understand the need for Churches to cash in on much needed revenue to maintain their buildings, I do have, like any



other person who works or visits a tower or spire, a vested interest in the Health and Safety aspects associated with very, very high frequency radio waves / microwaves and so on. This area of technology is not clear and not all that well researched when it comes to how these selective radio waves act upon the human body. I have a duty to ensure health and safety in the visited bell towers not only for myself but also for my fellow team colleagues. It therefore follows we will decline all inspections and maintenance requests where any such future radio equipment is installed in any of our branch area towers. These actions may appear somewhat premature, selfish or any other descriptive words you may choose at first light, but nevertheless this is how we have decided to react to this topic.

Our revamped 2018 mainly technical website can be found at :-

www.guilsboroughbranchbells.wordpress.com

Our e-mail contact addresses and phones are as follows :-

News – guilsboroughbranchnews@gmail.com

Stewardship – towersandbells@gmail.com

Mobile 1 – 07926 15 18 11 (talk and text)

Mobile 2 – 07927 46 81 18 (text)

Crick News.

First Quarter Peals.

Three of our members rang their first QP's. Lucy Sendall (Yelvertoft), Liz Sweeney (Crick) and Vikki Fry (Crick) all successfully Trebled to plain bob doubles.

Welford News

Alistair put together a band to ring a Peal for John Haynes on Saturday 17th February 2018.

John died on 8th June 2017 aged 84, having served at St. Mary's Church Welford as Churchwarden for 50 years. He had lived all his life in the village and was a real pillar of the community, for example making the fold-away stage for the Village Hall which is still in use today and both writing and drafting the Guide to the village.

This was the first peal in the method, Haynes Treble Place Major named for John, designed by Murray Coleman and appropriately based on Welford Surprise Major. A Treble Place method has the treble making places 887788 at the back instead of 878878 treble bobbing.

Murray's elegant composition made use of Singles in 56 places as well as 4th place bobs, with a few "Bob AND Single" calls where bells make 4th 5th and 6th places.



Guild Events

The Branch entered a team for the Summer Festival, but, though we had an enjoyable day in the town and at the Festival in the Hall, the bells proved too much of a challenge for us and we didn't win. It was good to be able to take part in the Guild Quarter Peal of Grandsire Caters at All Saints' in the morning.

National Events

The Branch marked the Platinum (70th) Wedding Anniversary of the HM The Queen and the HRH The Duke of Edinburgh on 20th November by ringing a very nice Quarter Peal of Plain Bob and Grandsire Doubles at Brixworth involving ringers from across the Branch.

Rob Palmer - Guilsborough Branch Steward.

Kettering Branch

Well, firstly the Branch news and as usual we have been very busy since the last newsletter.

Our September meeting took the form of a short outing to Ecton, Grendon and Irchester. This gave even some of our more experienced ringers the opportunity to visit somewhere they had never been before. Sixteen branch members were joined by two Guild friends and two visitors and enjoyed a good afternoon with ringing for all abilities. Thanks are due to our Ringing Masters for organising this.

Also in September a number of Branch members attended the Guild summer festival. A team consisting of Sarah Bence, Jim Bence, Helen Churchman, Nick Churchman, Murray Coleman, Rob Sandy, Kieran Nunley and Edward Groome entered the 8 bell striking competition and were placed a creditable fourth. Rob, Kieran and Edward were all representing the Branch for the first time.

In October our Branch meeting was held at Geddington, with seventeen members enjoying a good afternoon with ringing ranging from rounds and call changes to Cambridge and Norwich.

In November fifteen members attended a practice on the ten at Rothwell in order to prepare themselves for the following week when we made our annual visit to Peterborough Cathedral to ring for Evensong. On this occasion twenty six members rang and we were particularly pleased that this included a good number of our junior members as well as a creditable performance by one ringer still in his first three months of learning. December was the month for a social event and our famous supper and Beetle Drive. We began with



ringing at Desborough where twenty of us crowded into the tower and had a good ring despite breaking the stay on the second. We were then joined in the community centre by about another twenty five friends where we enjoyed a magnificent hot supper, thanks to the Desborough ringers. Then there was a frantic hour or so of dice rolling and whistle blowing before Jim Bence emerged as the triumphant winner of the Beetle Drive. Thanks are due to Bill and Liz Adcock for their organisation of the whole event.

Our AGM was held at Rothwell in January and was really well attended with twenty seven ringers in the tower. Ringing ranged from rounds and call changes on ten to Stedman Caters. Thirty six members enjoyed a hot tea followed by the meeting.

Shane Ward has taken over the job of Secretary, Toby Bence is now helping him in the role of Steward, Sarah Bence has taken over as GMC Rep and we welcome Edward Groome, Kieran Nunley and Colin Ashworth onto the committee.

Edward Groome was presented with his first peal certificate; Sandra Lewis, Rob Sandy and Maggie Dainty received their first quarter peal certificates and Louise Sandy and Margaret Buchanan were awarded special ringing master's awards.

Finally for this report, we met in February at Burton Latimer. There was an attendance of twenty four and a really varied practice with ringing ranging from call changes through to spliced Cambridge and Yorkshire and even a course of Bristol.

We would like to thank all churches for the use of their bells for the events described and the various members of the committee for their roles in organising our programme. We look forward to the publication of our next year's programme and to seeing everyone at new interesting activities.

We move on to news from around our towers and I can report that two quarter peals have been rung for the centenaries of Guild members who were killed in the First World War. The first was in August at Desborough where a large group from the family of Private John Deacon gathered to listen to his nephew David Loake ring in a quarter of Plain Bob Minor in his memory. We were delighted to hear that this resulted in family member Kim Beasley resolving to learn to ring. The second was at Isham in November when Rob Sandy and Sandra Lewis rang their first quarter in memory of Corporal Frank Septimus Andrew.

In October the ringers from Desborough held a most enjoyable tower outing to London and would like to thank all friends from our Branch and other Branches who joined them and helped to make it a success. You may have read about this adventure in the Ringing World in November. Highlights included ringing at St Clement Danes, the official RAF church, where we



heard Oranges and Lemons played on the carillon, ringing at St James Garlickhythe on the bells that were in the Jubilee River Procession and St Saviour's Pimlico where six of the bells were originally from St Mary's, Peterborough.

Rothwell ringers were sad to note the death at the end of September of Betty Cobby at the age of 96. Betty was born and bred in Rothwell and everyone knew her - mainly from her work with the youth club and its legendary Christmas pantomimes. She didn't learn to ring until she retired aged 60; it was a bit of a challenge teaching her and she still holds the record for the most broken and bent stays but she eventually mastered it and soon became a regular and much loved member of the band. Although in later years she could no longer manage the stairs she still remained an enthusiastic supporter and would always stop for a chat before ringing on Sunday. The church was full for her funeral and the bells were rung open after the service by the local band with the help of a few friends including Rev Roger Smith who had come all the way from his home in France to assist with the service. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

The Branch has also sadly noted the death of Bill Edmonds of Barton Seagrave. The ringers of Wilbarston have continued to be actively engaged in fundraising in order to raise £32,000 to replace their fittings and add an extra bell. In October Siobhan Lovell raised £1000 running the Leicester half-marathon. A raffle and a number of grants received have also contributed to reaching the total. Well done to them! The new bell was cast in February and it is expected that the bells will be taken out at Easter and returned at the end of June. Although no longer Branch Secretary, I am still writing the newsletter report, so towers should continue to send their news to me at

thewallisfamily@hotmail.com

If you want to be kept fully up to date with Branch activities you can ask to receive the monthly newsletter – just email **shaneward30@gmail.com**

You can also access our online noticeboard where 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 - Kettering Correspondent.

Northampton Branch - No news this time



Peterborough Branch

Bulwick.

Over the past twelve months we have been delighted to welcome a number of new visitors and sad to lose a couple of old hands. Combined with the changing circumstances of a number of our regulars our practices must at times have set Andrew quite a challenge. We have added quite a varied selection of new plain methods and one or two new surprises!

Sunday service ringing has been more of a problem as the service time of 11:15 is not very convenient. However, it has generally been possible to field a team. On the social front the pub in Bulwick remains closed, although there is hope on the horizon. In the meantime, we have been made very welcome at the Shuckborough Arms in Southwick and we will have a difficult decision to make when Bulwick re-opens. On New Year's Eve six of us enjoyed a superb meal and good company with Sue and Derek, reminiscing long into the night.

Pat Teall.

Fotheringhay

Extensive work is taking place at Fotheringhay and the entire church and its roofs are covered in scaffolding. The church remains in use but the tower is now out of bounds. Repairs to the tower roof revealed that the supporting timbers had decayed and new beams and wall plates need to be installed. This has meant even more scaffolding, this time inside the tower: this scaffolding has to be hauled up 140 feet then lowered 60 feet into the tower through the roof opening. The scaffolding itself has become quite a tourist site with many people seen stopping to photograph this impressive structure. The belfry is now a building site and we don't know when we will be able to ring again.



'The Voice of the City'

Jim Daley of Peterborough City Council Planning Services contacted me in 2016 and asked 'did I mind if he gave my name to Stephen Broadbent' who had been asked to create a sculpture to be placed in Bridge



Street near to the town bridge. I was to be his adviser. Stephen had chosen Henry Penn (1685-1729) Peterborough bellfounder. Why! Was my first question to him. He replied. 'I walked through the Rivergate shopping centre and came out on Henry Penn Walk. At the end I found a plaque giving details about a man who impressed me very much.' The plaque had been set up by Peterborough Civic Society and sponsored by Fotheringhay bellringers. Constant communication was kept with Stephen who sent this writer differing designs for suggestions. Problems with placing a heavy sculpture over water pipes seemed to put paid to the whole scheme. Late 2017 things moved on and what was to be named the 'Voice of the City' gradually came to shape. I was quite astounded and proud at what had been produced and at twelve noon on the 20th December the 'Voice of the City', sited between Peterborough Magistrates Court and the entrance to the Rivergate complex, was opened. The sculpture sits on a plinth over an interesting pavement manufactured by Scribble Stone with some reasons for ringing church bells inscribed around the outside edge. A large bell in the stages of being cast sits in the centre. Three strickles (bell mould formers) are looped over the cope (the outer mould) carved from local Clipsham stone. A cut out section shows the bell which has been cast in bronze with the inscription **ARISE AND BE ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS: HENRY PENN MADE ME PETERBOROW 1709**. A plume cast from bronze rises to a total height of five meters representing bell metal being poured. It has an internal light for night time display. The plinth on which it stands has the words **'THE VOICE OF THE CITY' THE CATHEDRAL CLOCK BELL FOR OVER 300 YEARS**. The bell sits above the change ringing bells in the NW bell tower and has always been used as the clock bell. It has a Latin inscription not used in the scheme. The inscription used represents Henry Penn as being the first heavy engineer of Eastern Industry Peterborough. Near to the sculpture is a bronze freestanding plaque. On the side facing the bell is the writer's map of the 100 known places where Penn worked. The other side has an ancient map and an explanation of the area. It has two sets of bell inscriptions cast into the sides, one from All Saints, church Holcot, Northamptonshire Penn's first known bell and another from St. Mary the Virgin Wrangle, Lincolnshire including the words that **ALL SIX WERE MADE IN PETERBOROW BY HENRY PENN FOUNDER 1714**. Plaster casts were taken from the bells for this work.



The complete area of lower Bridge Street from the sculpture to the bridge has been used. The underpass, fronted now by three Totem Poles with carved water scenes, leads to Bishops Gardens and the site of Penn's foundry. It has been named Foundry Walk.

Four nameplates with a gold bell at each end show the way. The railings in the area are capped with bells. A beautifully made planter sits at the foot of the bridge. It represents the quay or landing stage from which Penn floated some of his bells onto the River Nene.

If, as bell ringers, you come to have a look do not forget that this scheme not only represents the city of Peterborough but all who have bells which were and are still the **'Voice of town and village.'**

Just one last thought. You could visit St. John's with the fantastic ring of eight bells. Whilst inside, just for a moment remember Dinah and Henry Penn and their eight children who were baptised in the church.

For more details go to www.pennhenry.co.uk

Michael Lee 2018 pennhenry@rocketmail.com.



Glinton

Glinton practice nights have a steady number of ringers, and we have maintained the interest of our youngest member who is confidently ringing plain hunt. We have also gained another learner from the village, who is making excellent progress. On November 20th a quarter peal was rung for the Queen and Prince Philip's platinum wedding anniversary. We rang St Simon's Bob Doubles in 47 mins and submitted it under the Guild quarter peal week performances as well as for the 70th Wedding Anniversary of HM the Queen and HRH Prince Philip.

Also, in November, Glinton ringers rang at Maxey for the benefice confirmation service, and were thanked afterwards by the Bishop. Maxey ringers have been coming to Glinton recently, renewing old friendships and bringing a new energy to our group.

We rang for Christmas services; the Christmas tree lights' switch-on event, and the carol service, but the midnight Eucharist was missed this year as so many ringers were away.

Looking forwards, we are hoping to ring a quarter peal in July to celebrate twenty years since the inaugural quarter was rung on the refurbished bells. Two of the original members have indicated they would like to



ring – so the methods book will be out!

We meet every Thursday from 7:30pm until 9:00pm. If the lights are on do come on in!

Jill Cowcill

Kings Cliffe.

We continue to thrive as a tower, ringing for service almost every Sunday. The standard is generally good with our methods varying from Stedman Singles to Cambridge Minor. Our practices on the second and fourth Monday of the month are always well attended with support from a number of regular visitors. Since Christmas we have made an attempt to broaden our repertoire by including Kent and later Oxford.

At Christmas a home band rang for both the Midnight Mass, Cambridge on Christmas morning and a wedding on the previous Saturday. After so much practice we felt competent to ring in the New Year and celebrate our achievements with a glass of bubbly!

Pat Teall.

Cotterstock.

The last few months have been relatively quiet after the excitement of the Summer and the Rededication of our bells but there have been some things worthy of note. Probably the most significant was the service on Remembrance Sunday. Our bells were rededicated as a War Memorial and so the names of the fallen are cast into the headstocks. At our service we rang the appropriate bell half muffled as each individual name was read out and a cross placed on the Altar. Because we have a CCTV with a camera in the tower not only could the congregation hear each bell but they could actually see it ringing. It was a very moving occasion and appreciated by a large congregation which included the local MP. We have had several visiting groups and we were delighted to welcome the Peterborough branch of the Diocesan Guild as part of their AGM. This meeting was shared with Nassington, so people were able to experience both of the towers that have had their bells renewed and augmented recently. For all our visitors the CCTV has proved popular and seems to be a good teaching aid. Most importantly of all we have a small band of enthusiastic people beginning to learn how to ring the bells. With the help of the Warmington tower and friends from other local Churches together with the ringing school at Castor we hope to have some home-grown ringers of our own before too long.



We are so grateful for all the help and encouragement we get from so many people.
David Bond.

Nassington.

This has been a particularly good four month's for Nassington Tower.

We have, at last, finished all the ancillary work in the tower as part of our Bells Restoration Project. It has taken some time to finish this additional work, but it is now all complete. A big thank you and Well Done to those who have pushed this through to the end.

Now that we have a tuneful and easy to ring peal of six we have started to expand our ringing.

The Branch AGM was held at Nassington in January 2018. Following ringing at Cotterstock, we had 44 ringers from 14 different towers ringing at Nassington both before and after the AGM, which was held in the Village Hall. This included a very enjoyable fish and chip supper with amazing desserts made by members of the Nassington band.

We have successfully rung four Quarter Peals. The first of these was the first SIX bell method rung by the Nassington ringers and three others were a part of the Branch Quarter Peal Week. Two of them were 'back to back' which gave three of our ringers, Hilary Hardie, Terry Wright and Angela Whiteway the opportunity to ring a 'half' peal. The other QP was a first Doubles method for another of our ringers, Ronnie Fraser.

The bells have been rung by two visiting bands, and the local band have rung for three weddings and a funeral.

Another advancement at Nassington has been the development of four new teachers, Hilary Hardie, Terry Wright, Angela Whiteway and Sylvia Upex. They have attended their ART courses and are now able to carry through this teaching into the regular weekly practice sessions at Nassington. It has also led to greater links with the Saturday morning Ringing School at Castor and other towers in the area, such as Warmington and Elton. Weekly practice sessions now regularly have over a dozen ringers, which is very pleasing to see. This allows us to have enough ringers not only for every service here at Nassington, but also to ring at other churches in the Benefice, such as Yarwell, as well as supporting the ringers at Barnack once a month.

Our two new ringers, Helen Cornford and Jane Webb have 'come on' so well because of the links mentioned above and are now ringing regularly for services. In addition to this, we have another person who has very recently started learning to ring at the Ringing School at Castor.

Thank you to all those who make Nassington such a friendly, welcoming and improving tower.

Brian Hardie, Tower Captain.





Castor Ringing School

Report for Guild Newsletter - February 2018

The core beliefs that underpin our approach to teaching are stated on our website as follows:

At the centre of Castor Ringing School's approach to teaching is the understanding that no one gets anything wrong on purpose. Whether it be an aspect of handling, ringing a method or accurate striking, if one of our learners does not yet have the necessary skill to get it right, our task is to help them acquire that skill so that they can, no matter how long that might take. In pursuit of this task we promise to keep our advice constructive and supportive and never to be impatient or derogatory in either tone or manner.

This approach has produced a steady stream of new pupils over the years including five new recruits since the last edition of the Guild Newsletter. This is a good start to the CCCBR campaign to recruit 1,400 new ringers in memory of the 1,400 known bell ringers who lost their lives in action in the Great War. We hope to welcome many more during the year.

The success of our teaching is entirely due to the dedication of the Tutors and Helpers who give up their time week after week to make up the band, and guide and encourage our learners as they acquire the physical and mental skills necessary to become change ringers. They are all members of the Peterborough Branch and I would like to thank them, along with the Rector, PCC Members, Tower Captain and Steeple Keeper at St Kyneburgha's whose support make it possible for us to run our sessions.

David Teall, Head Tutor

Peterborough St John the Baptist.

We continue to ring for service (almost) every Sunday at St John's so the bells are regularly ringing out in the city centre, but we have no regular practice, quarters or peals. A couple of notable exceptions were a quarter peal of Pudsey Bob Triples (a new method, slightly tricky but nice to ring - recommended) for Children In Need; we also rang in the New Year at the Council's



behest (including remuneration!) to mark the start of Peterborough 900 celebrations in 2018 and the ringers got invited to the official Civic Party. The bells are readily available if you fancy coming to make some majestic noise right in the heart of Peterborough.

Nick Elks - Tower Captain

Oundle.

The tower has now received an inspection and quotation from Taylors and the PCC are considering remedial work to keep the bells in ringable condition.

Nick Elks, Branch Steward.

Henry Penn Bell Sculpture ‘Voice of the City’

On 20th December 2017, a new work of art was unveiled in Peterborough City Centre at Lower Bridge Street, just a few hundred yards from the main shopping centre and Peterborough Cathedral. The ‘Voice of the City’ is a depiction of a bell in the stages of being cast and is a monument and tribute to Henry Penn (1685-1729). Penn’s life was relatively short, just 44 years, but he cast bells for as many as 100 churches and houses. Most of these places are shown on the map in the bronze upright case, which was drawn by local historian, bellringers and Henry Penn enthusiast Michael Lee. The sculpture was created by artist Stephen Broadbent and is situated close to Penn’s foundry at Bridge Street where he cast over 250 bells. It was located near to where the Peterborough Magistrates’ Court stands today. The underpass running between Lower Bridge Street and The Lido has been re-named Foundry Walk in his honour, and a canal called ‘Bell Dyke’ ran to the rear of the foundry joining the River Nene on which many of his bells were floated to their destinations.

In 1709 at the age of 24 he cast the first ring of 10 bells in Northamptonshire for Peterborough Cathedral. The largest of these 10 bells, weighing 30cwt, is now called ‘The City Bell’. This is the ‘Voice of the City’ of the sculpture and strikes the hour on the Cathedral clock and is swung electronically before most services as a call bell. It is the only one of his bells remaining at the Cathedral, the other 9 having been sold at various times. The five lightest bells were sold in the 19th century, and four more when the current ring of bells was transferred to the Cathedral from St John the Divine, Leicester.

Penn was apprenticed to his uncle, bellfounder Henry Bagley at Ecton, Northamptonshire and came to Peterborough to establish his foundry. He and his wife Diana had eight children who were baptised in St John’s Church, Peterborough, just behind the Market Square. The end of Henry Penn’s life was controversial;



in 1723 he had cast a ring of 8 bells, tenor 18cwt, for St Ives, Huntingdonshire. The churchwardens did not pay him the full amount owed as they said the bells were not properly in tune. The subsequent court case was not resolved until 1729. The judge found in his favour as the church had been ringing the bells during that time. In the courtroom Penn's last words were said to be: 'I am sick to death. The whole thing will do me no good', which proved correct, as he died while mounting his horse shortly after. These bells were subsequently destroyed when a plane crashed into St Ives spire in March 1918, but many Henry Penn bells still remain at various churches. He was known for his colourful bell inscriptions; the old 5th at St Ives said 'When backward rung we tell of fire, think how the world shall thus expire. This year Peterborough Cathedral is celebrating its 900th anniversary, so if you are visiting this wonderful building, do walk the few hundred yards and see the sculpture; it is well worth a visit.

The project was supported by, the Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership & the City Council.

Sue Marsden, Branch Ringing Master.



WARMINGTON

Friday practices at Warmington have continued to be a great success with the whole band making good progress and our numbers increasing, although we were sad that one of our young ringers, Rosalind, moved away from the village and probably won't be able to ring with us much in future. Recently two of our ringers, Chrissie and George, rang their first quarter peals, one at Warmington and the other at nearby Nassington. Two other members of the band went on an ART training course which they found very enjoyable and informative and one has decided to continue the course to gain accreditation as a teacher



of bellringing. After our awful year with the ceiling falling down on us we have had a much better time lately with the repairs finished and have even been able to begin work on improving the bells, both by cleaning and repairing them and by getting a new crownstaple made by Taylors to improve the striking of the 5th bell. We were grateful to the Guild for helping us to finance this. The construction work going on at Fotheringhay meant a lot of weddings were relocated to Warmington and we had a very busy few months of ringing for these, sometimes twice in one day or two or three days running. We have also been able to ring for several special occasions in the village including for the Historic Churches open day event when the ringers were delighted to welcome a surprise guest, Rev Richard Coles, into the ringing room (see photo) As usual we began the new year by ringing in 2018 at midnight after enjoying the evening together. Although our ringing is thriving, it is sad to report that Warmington church had a major setback in December, the victim of lead thieves who have taken the roof and caused extensive water damage to the interior of the church, the electrics and the organ. Recovering from this despicable crime is going to be very hard work and enormously expensive.



Sylvia Upex, Tower Captain.

Terry Wright - Peterborough Correspondent.

Rutland Branch

Over the recent few months we have enjoyed celebrations, paid our respects in commemorations and mourned the passing of friends.

In Memorium

Ernest A Kellett 21 August 1929 – 3 October 2017



Ernest Kellett and his wife Val, were taught to ring by George Dawson, tower captain at St. Mary's Nottingham, when they lived in Willoughby on the Wolds. Ernest had heard the bells from Doncaster station and thought they sounded great and resolved to acquire that skill.

He eventually became Chairman of the South Notts district of the Southwell Guild of Bellringers.

He and Val (a partnership of 64 years) continued ringing after they moved to Hoyland Swaine, near Barnsley, Yorkshire. Ringing first at Hoyland Swaine and later at Kirkheaton near Huddersfield. In 2001 they moved to Market Overton, again they continued ringing, with Ernest becoming secretary of the Rutland Branch of Peterborough Diocesan Guild.

His wife, Val, continues to ring regularly at Brooke and Braunston.

Reverend Brian Nicholls. 25 November 2017. Aged 78

Brian, with his wife Liz, was a proficient and active ringer at All Saints Oakham prior to his ordination. He was Priest in charge of the parishes; Edith Weston, Empingham, North Luffenham, Manton, Lyndon & Whitwell until his retirement. Brian died in Peterborough hospital on 25th November 2017 after a long period of illness.

Celebrations

Mary and Andrew Davidson celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary at Caldecott on Saturday 9th September. Without Mary knowing, ringers from the towers she regularly rings at assembled at Caldecott to mark the occasion.

General ringing commenced at 12.00, continuing for about half an hour, to coincide with the start of their party celebrations in the village hall. Much to the delight of Mary and the party guests.

Commemorations

On Saturday 12th August 2017 a Peal was rung at All Hallows, Seaton, honouring the 100th anniversary of the death of Corporal Frederick Herbert Northen.

It was rung in thanksgiving for his life and of the six other men from Seaton (including his brother George) who were killed fighting for their country 1914-1918.

We will remember them.

Corporal Northen's niece and other family members were present during some of the peal.

On the 22nd November several branch members met to ring a commemorative quarter peal to mark the centenary of the deaths of Corporal Alban Jarman and Private Charles Edward Reeve, bell-ringers of Belton who both fell in The Great War, on the 14th November and 30th November 1917 respectively.



Autumn ringing tour September 2017

A friendly welcome on a warm, dry Saturday in late September was received by the Rutland Branch of ringers in the picturesque towns and villages of Lincolnshire.

The churches were a hive of activity preparing for harvest festival with beautiful flowers and produce. It felt as though we were adding our bit to the celebration by accompanying their efforts with the joyous sound of bells.

The tour had been meticulously organised by Alan Ellis, deputy ringing master, ringing first at Greatford, then Market Deeping. The experienced ringers had an opportunity to ring more advanced methods, beginners were helped and encouraged in their development by being supported with rounds and call changes. Two more towers were visited after lunch, West Deeping and Barnack. A successful and most enjoyable day.

Prior to the AGM in January, the Ringing Master, Louis Totaro, held a meeting of Rutland tower captains. He plans for this to become a regular feature, perhaps meeting either 6 monthly or annually, with the aim of promoting communication and stronger links between towers. A number of topics were identified for particular focus, most notably safeguarding, health & safety and teaching.

Since the September newsletter, 17 Quarter Peals and 1 Peal have been rung in Rutland towers. At the Branch AGM in January, nine individuals received a certificate for the ringing of their first quarter peal.

Our regular Branch practices continue on a monthly basis, alternating between Oakham and Uppingham. These are generally well supported by all level of ringers from towers across the county. We are looking forward to a year of enjoyable ringing with a full and varied programme planned for 2018.

Sue Webster - Rutland Correspondent

Thrapston Branch

2017 has proved to be a very eventful year with many highlights.

Our year started with a very merry group ringing in the New Year at Woodford. A very successful A.G.M followed a few days later when a busy and varied ringing programme was agreed for the Year, including continuing our very successful 8-bell advanced practices at Woodford and our 6- bell monthly practices at St. Nicholas Islip.



A joint practice with the Huntingdon District Association to concentrate on Surprise Methods is also proving to be successful. Our thanks to Iain Hayden for organising these practices.

St. Peter's Church at Raunds is now well on its way to being structurally sound again and it is hoped to be able to ring there again in the near future. The refurbishment of St. Mary's Ringstead is now completed and it was a pleasure to be able to use the new facilities and hold our A.G.M. there this year.

May brought a very successful Ringing Outing to the Leicestershire area with, of course, a celebration meal at one of the local watering-holes. Our thanks to Chris Jenkins for organising this.

We were also able to ring at The Cathedral for Choral evensong and The Civic Service as well as enjoying the sights and sounds of their 'Heritage weekend.' Our thanks to the cathedral ringers for making us so welcome.

July brought more celebrations with our Summer barbecue at Ringstead, wonderfully hosted by Rachel and Richard at Woodford. Again another special event to remember.

As our Ringing Year draws to a close the Thrapston branch is very much in good heart. Several of our members including Ted and Diane and Chris and Frank have now joining the ranks of retired ringers. Congratulations to them all and hope they have many happy ringing times ahead. We are welcoming new and old ringers and visitors to our meetings and look forward to 2018 beginning another very successful Year of Ringing.

Alison Byrnes – Thrapston Correspondent.

Towcester Branch

It is really nice to start this newsletter with a success! Towcester Branch were the winners of the Guild 8 bell competition held at the Guild Summer Festival in Northampton last September. The winning band comprised of Catherine Stanworth, Richard Yates, Margaret Bulleid, Andrew Spencer, Chris Bulleid, Michael Tinsley, Richard Allton (C) and John Stanworth with a score of 29.5 faults and ringing Grandsire Triples. Well done Towcester! The festival day was a real success with interesting displays and open ringing at St Peter's and Holy Sepulchre. John Pardoe represented the Branch in the Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Caters at All Saints.





Our outgoing ringing master, John Stanworth, receiving the Harry Wooding Memorial Trophy.



The Winning Team!

Other events this half year have been our Annual Joint Practice with Northampton Branch, this year held at Abington on an autumn Saturday evening. This was well attended and both branches enjoyed mixing together and meeting new and old ringers!

In October, Peter and Evelyn Nicholson hosted the Annual Fish & Chip supper and Quiz night at Whittlebury which included the Branch Autumn Meeting. The 'Toasters' team won the quiz and questions were provided by John Pardoe. A few of us enjoyed some open ringing on the 5 at Whittlebury before the quiz - it's a reminder that it's always nice to take the opportunity to ring in our branch towers whenever possible.

One of the big events on the branch calendar is the Annual Dinner. Again this event was well supported by approximately 50 members and guests. Following on from last years successful fundraising for Strike Back against Blood Cancer, the branch decided to have another ringing challenge for 2018- this time for Warwickshire and Northants Air Ambulance. Quarter



peals of Cambridge Sur-prise Royal, Major and Minor were attempted at Towcester, Easton Neston and Pattishall respectively and despite losing one quarter, £289.50 was raised throughout the day. A thoroughly enjoyable evening was had at The Boat Inn in Stoke Bruerne with good food, good beer and lovely handbell ringing from Chris and Margaret Bulleid and Andrew and Anne Spencer. We are already looking forward to our return evening next year. Our AGM this January was held in Paulerspury. We enjoyed ringing the bells of St James the Great and a lovely Service of Evening Prayer taken by Reverend Paul Mcleod. Also enjoyed was the organ playing by Michael Tinsley and tea provided by Jane Sawbridge and her helpers. Nick Churchman attend the meeting as representative of the Guild Officers.

After 4 years as Ringing Master John Stanworth stepped down from the role. John has been a strong and diligent committee member and put a lot of work in to the branch as Ringing Master. We will miss his expertise and experience but with a wedding in April and now living outside the branch area it is the right time to move on. Our new Ringing Master, Alan Faiers was duly elected. The committee are delighted we have someone so keen on bellringing and indeed he does seem very enthusiastic about his new role. Another addition to the committee was Margaret Bulleid. Not only will she add another female face to the table but is also very keen on training and recruitment, something the committee would like to concentrate on in 2018.

AS a swansong to leaving his committee post and to complement the surprise sponsored ringing completed in December, John Stanworth organised and conducted a quarter of Surprise Maximus this February. The band was made up of just Towcester Branch ringers; possibly the first quarter of Surprise Maximus by a branch band?

<http://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1215891>

Richard Yates (chair) also took time to congratulate Ruth Stokes on achieving her 1000th peal in 2017 and at the other end of the scale Nic Boyd for achieving ART (learning the ropes scheme) level 5.

The branch is still very keen on promoting the Learning the Ropes scheme. We have had several members of the band at Pattishall Tower achieve ART levels 1-5 and as one of those recent re-cruits to ringing and learning it is exciting that we are looking to develop our scope of recruitment and training this year. We would be interested to discuss any ideas or experiences within other branches.

As always we would welcome visitors to our practice evenings - details of which can be found at

<http://www.towcesterbranch.org.uk>



Wellingborough Branch

During Quarter Peal week five ringers rang their first quarters - Conor Finan and Michael Manktelow at Bozeat and Chris Elvin, Bekah Elvin and Charlotte Buck at Earls Barton. Nine quarter peals were rung altogether in the branch during this period. It would be wonderful if we could increase this number next year when we are having a quarter peal fortnight, is a target of 18 quarter peals achievable?? More fists since the last newsletter - I rang in my first peal, and I also conducted my first quarter peal. Having the opportunity and supportive ringers around me assisted enormously so thanks to all of them and thanks to all ringers who generally help, advise and support others to achieve their personal goals. A final achievement Brenda Dixon rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles to mark 50 years since her first quarter peal.



Ivor Dickin, who has been a member of the branch since the mid fifties has recently decided to resign his place on the committee and also as tower captain at Irchester. Ivor has been a mainstay in the ringing fraternity for many years. He has been a member at Irchester since 1974 and tower captain from 1976. His guild activities involved him holding various positions on the branch executive committee including press correspondent, deputy ringing master, branch ringing master and committee member. Along with Kevan Chapman, Ivor also established the branch the branch website and is renowned for the simulator he built and trailed around to various meetings and practices. Congratulations go to Ivor on his remarkable ringing achievements.

The annual quiz was held at Earls Barton; we were hopeful that there may be a change of winner along with the new question master, Bill Brophy, however this was not to be the case - Simon, Kathy, Pam and



Paul took the first prize again - congratulations to them, and the rest of us need to brush up on pop music, ding bats and trivia inpreparation for next year's quiz. We would welcome anyone to these events - members or not and branch or not please come and support and have a fun evening.

The AGM was also held at Earls Barton this year - many thanks to the Earls Barton group for a delicious supper and excellent service. Fun and games were had following the meeting when returnng to the ringing chamber one of our members, who shall remain nameless, decided to drop her handbag down the clock chime shaft. A period of time passed with Andy using a hook on the end of long lengths of rope and fished for it to no avail. Finally the following morning Andy rescued the said item by dismantling cupboards on the ground floor and accessing a door which had cleverly left for similar eventualities (Janet informed us that someone else had done the same 30 years ago). The shaft now has a lid!!

Until next time good bye - please let me have any news items. Thanks

Jude Coulter - Wellingborough Correspondent.

Public Relations Officer's Piece

In 2017, the Guild website had 46,045 hits (39,744 in 2016). After the home Welcome page, the most visited page was Towers, then in descending order of popularity: Latest Guild News, Events, Guild Officers, Bell Maintenance, Bits & Bobs, Obituaries, Competitions, Bell Fund, About this Guild, History, Learning to Ring, Peals and Quarters, Constitution & Rules, Guild Newsletters, Bell Ringing, Inventory, Guild Shirts, Making Progress.

Please help us all to keep up to date by notifying me of any changes to tower correspondents, practice nights and events as they happen.

The Central Council Public Relations Committee are producing a lot of new materials to help you all to promote bellringing and there are details of

promotions, such as Ringing Remembers. Any items notified from the Central Council are posted on the 'Latest Guild News' page of our website as soon as they arrive.

The two pop-up displays 'All about Bells' and 'All about Change Ringing' were used at seven (14) local events. They are free and good talking points at fêtes, exhibitions and open tower days. Please book them ahead with me.



I sold 21 Guild shirts in 2017. If you and your band want to order one or a set, please see the details and order form at <http://www.pdg.btck.co.uk/GuildShirts>. The prices remain the same. Delivery time varies, so let me know if you have deadlines and I will see what can be done!

Geoff Pullin
pro@pdg.org.uk

Guild 100 Club

100 Club Winners

| MONTH | No | 1st | Prize | 2nd | Prize | 3rd | Prize |
|-------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| SEPT | 120 | 118N | 60.00 | 43P | 30.00 | 78P | 12.00 |
| OCT | 119 | 03N | 47.60 | 89TH | 11.90 | | |
| NOV | 119 | 41N | 47.60 | 88D | 11.90 | | |
| DEC | 119 | 51G | 47.60 | 117TH | 11.90 | | |
| JAN | 112 | 68P | 44.80 | 120W | 11.20 | | |
| FEB | 113 | 21TH | 45.20 | 126N | 11.30 | | |

In a year, the Club raises around £600 for the Bell Fund. A big thanks to all who subscribe to it.

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. The varying amounts show the changing monthly membership, September being a busy month for renewals. Subscription is £12 per year, applications to go via the branch representatives

Derek Jones.

Other News and Events

SUMMER FESTIVAL 2017

Northampton Branch made a very special effort to put the festival spirit back into the Summer Festival. The programme started with a quarter peal at All Saints



intended to have a ringer from each of our ten branches. In the event the quarter peal of Plain Bob Caters was rung with the Master standing in for the Culworth Branch. It was the first on ten for the Rutland Branch representative.

100 people gravitating to St Giles Church Hall to hear the 8-bell inter-branch striking competition in progress on the back 8 bells and to look around the stalls and demonstrations before tucking in to the fine buffet tea provided and served with enthusiasm by the Northampton Branch.

The business included agreement to three Bell Fund grants: renewal of £3,200 to Wilbarston, £55.20 to Great Addington and £550 to Nether Heyford. The 100-club draw awarded £60 to no. 118 (Northampton Branch) and £30 to no. 43 and £12 to no. 78 (both Peterborough Branch). The judges, Sally and Richard Brown were finally found and introduced by the Guild Master Simon Dixon. They provided a commentary on each team and gave the faults in reverse order:

| | | | | | |
|------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|------|------|
| 7th | Guilborough | Grandsire Triples | peal speed | 3:44 | 120 |
| 6th | Wellingborough | Grandsire Triples | | 3:32 | 64 |
| 5th | Peterborough | Plain Bob Triples | | 3:22 | 58 |
| 4th | Kettering | Call changes | | 3:35 | 48.5 |
| 3rd | Northampton | Plain Bob Triples | | 3:27 | 43 |
| 2nd | Daventry | Grandsire Triples | | 3:27 | 34.5 |
| 1st | Towcester | Grandsire Triples | | 3:24 | 29.5 |

So Daventry were displaced after a three year run by Towcester. Richard Yates was presented with the Harry Wooding Memorial trophy.

All Saints bells were open for general ringing until 7pm after which a large contingent descended Bridge Street to the Albion Brewery Bar, the designated venue. Thanks for the magnificent organisation were proposed by Alistair Donaldson and greatly acclaimed.



GHP

Photos



L to r: Louis Totaro (7 Rutland), Robin Hicknott (8 Northampton), Brian Foley (10 Daventry), Sarah Bence (1 Kettering), Susan Marsden (2 Peterborough), Simon Dixon (6 conductor, Guild Master representing Culworth), Ted Buckby (3 Thrapston), Alistair Donaldson (9 Guilsborough), Kevan Chapman (4 Wellingborough), John Pardoe (5 Towcester).



The Towcester Branch winning team:

I to r: Catherine Stanworth, John Stanworth, Richard Allton, Richard Yates, Michael Tinsley, Margaret and Chris Bulleid, Andrew Spencer.]



The Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers Website



Welcome!



Bell Ringing



Learning to Ring



About This Guild



Latest Guild News



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Bell Fund



Bits & Bobs



History



Website Address <http://www.pdg.btck.co.uk/>.

GUILD EVENTS 2018

28th Apr

Guild Spring Meeting - *Daventry Branch*

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

9th Jun

Guild AGM - *Thrapston Branch*

16th Jun

RIDGMAN TROPHY

Anglian inter-Guild 10-bell striking competition at St Peter's St Albans.

22nd Sept

Guild Summer Festival - *Kettering Branch*

The festival and eight-bell inter-branch & youth striking competition at Rothwell (on the light eight)

See Guild Website/Posters for more details



