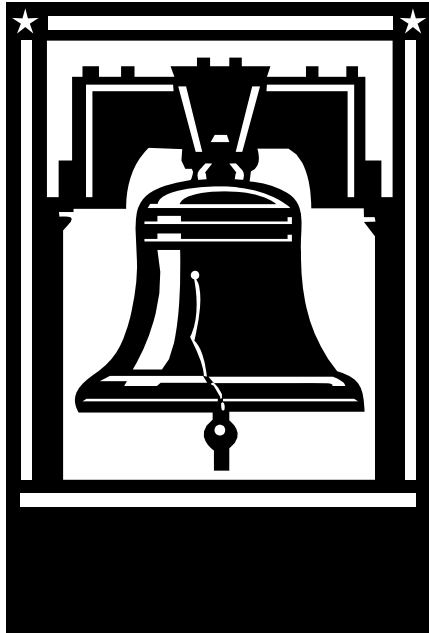


Peterborough Diocesan Guild of
Church Bell Ringers



Newsletter

February 2008

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The Newsletter is rather thin this time. Perhaps the deadline so soon after Christmas caught some people unawares?

THE NEXT DEADLINE IS 25TH APRIL 2008 so, Branch Correspondents, please put this date on your calendar/in your diary and tie a knot in your hankie.

Anyone can send a contribution for the Newsletter and it would be particularly pleasing if we had news from all the ten branches next time.

Jill Harvey, Editor

Please send your news to jillvharvey@yahoo.co.uk.

I always acknowledge your contributions, so if this does not happen please ring me on 01327 340666.

This Newsletter will appear on the PDG site (www.pdg.org). If you would like a copy mailed to your email address, please let me know and it will be done!

For the non computer user, contributions in writing are also welcome!

Why Do People Ring?

Change ringing is a non-competitive and non-violent team activity that is highly stimulating intellectually and mildly demanding physically, and makes a beautiful sound. It develops mental and physical skills in a context of communal effort. The intense concentration required brings euphoric detachment that cleanses the mind of the day's petty demands and frustrations. Many people ring as a contribution to church life.

In addition, there is the companionable nature of ringers. The interdependence among individuals creates a tremendous fellowship. Visitors to a change ringing session will invariably be asked to join in if they are ringers. Almost all ringing sessions include time for socializing.

Extracted from an American ringing site, showing the worldwide appeal of ringing.

THE PRESIDENT'S PIECE

January is the time for Branch AGMs and I have attended three this year, ringing, service and tea. All three were very different but in some ways the same. The difficulty in some branches to get members to take on roles for the smooth running of the branch - while other members are prepared to do several jobs - was interesting.

The services and the takers of services were also very different, although all used the Guild service. At my three, the people taking the service were the Rector or the parish where the service was held, a Reader and a retired clergyman. All had thought hard about what to say to a group of ringers and all were helpful. Although using quite different passages, the messages were the need for unity within the band, the encouragement of each other for each other and our role in telling people the Church is here.

The accompaniment to the singing was different in each case, someone pressed to play at the last minute due to the organist suddenly having to work, a ringer/organist, and finally a young trumpeter. The last gave us a very good lead and the first line of Unchanging God sounds great on the trumpet.

The Guild Quiz in November was both most enjoyable and rather disappointing. The Thrapston branch provided an excellent jacket potato supper and super puddings, Simon and Cathy Dixon gave us a very wide variety of questions (children's TV being the downfall of several teams) and there was a good raffle. Unfortunately not many people came.

Modern communication methods are great and emails are a quick and easy way of getting information to a lot of people or just to one. Our ringing members are an ageing population and it came as a surprise to me that nationally only 29% of over 65's have access to the internet. When making decisions to use email only, please remember that this may mean that some people will not hear about events or be able to respond to requests.

All the very best for 2008.

Brenda Dixon

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

CULWORTH

Autumn/winter has been a fairly quiet time for ringing here in the bottom end of the Guild. There have been a few quarters - mainly when we could think of a good reason for ringing one, so we have celebrated a 60th birthday, a couple of lives, a new grandson and a special service or two.

The wedding season now extends into December, so some otherwise quiet towers have had their bells rung. However, we haven't done well at recent branch practices. The idea of holding afternoon practices during the cold, dark winter was supposed to get more people to come and ring, and some said they would. However, we all lead busy lives, and attendance has dropped to the point where it is sometimes scarcely worth ringing up.

For this reason we will be reverting to evening (7.30 - 9.00) practices throughout the year after our AGM.

The more active among us are busy planning ringing for 2008, and at least three people are starting the way they mean to go on, with a New Year's Day trip down to the Bath area open tower day.

This is my final newsletter report as I am standing down at our AGM. We don't yet know who will be persuaded to volunteer for the job, but I hope he/she enjoys the task of thinking up interesting and fun things to say about life in The Culworth Branch.

Sara Chapple

DAVENTRY

MEETINGS

Our November meeting attracted 45 to Hellidon, where Revd Liz Cowley led a Remembrance service. After a splendid tea in the refurbished village hall, we elected Susie & Paul Goudime and Lynne Bowler as members from Hellidon.

On a very wet day in December, 32 crammed into the belfry and rang at Byfield. Another 18 didn't ring but were helping with the teas and concert preparations. The service sheet was specially prepared by Gwynneth White and the programme of nine carols or hymns and 12 recitations or other items flowed through with Michael Haighton taking the opening and closing prayers. Hugh and Deena organised mulled wine and mince pies afterwards.

At the AGM at Daventry, ringing on the ten included many rounds and call changes rung well and a good touch of Stedman Caters afterwards. Fifty one were there in the afternoon. The meeting was conducted with a microphone! Sally Thompson and Alison Buck left the committee and Christine Rodhouse joined. Janet reported that Great Brington PCC had requested a transfer to our branch, which was agreed for the GMC to ratify. A proposal by Tom Anderson to set up a branch website was accepted.

PUB GAMES EVENING

Jill Harvey organised our first pub games evening for a while and did a good job of keeping 22 adults and two children playing games on November 17 at the White Hart, Flore. Winner was Ken Ramsbotham and the raffle winner was Ted Garrett. The picture quiz was won by Shirley Waterhouse. £20 was raised plus £50 from the raffle for branch funds. Thanks to Jill and Mike for organising it, before escaping to Spain the next morning!

PEOPLE

Canon Owen Page, Rector of Daventry since 1999 and Rural Dean, left the Team in mid November. A commemorative quarter peal unfortunately failed, but there was good ringing before his final evening service. Revd Ann Slater became Rural Dean in January.

On November 24, Barry Thompson rang his first quarter, ringing the tenor to Grandsire Doubles at Badby conducted by Ian Willgress. This celebrated Ken & Eleanor Ramsbotham's silver wedding, for which drinks were provided afterwards in the belfry. The next day the family service was designed around them retaking their marriage vows and the congregation, swelled by family and friends, was over 100, and they were rung out as well.

Peter Wenham was 80 years old on December 14, when he was roused before 7am to receive six new ropes for the tower! In the evening a quarter peal of Grandsire Caters was rung at Daventry by the 'regulars', Jill Harvey's first inside to Caters, conducted by Colin Lee. After a well attended practice the previous evening, Peter played host to 30 ringers and families at The Old Plough including a surprise appearance of son Nick. Elizabeth Gwynne presented a token for a helicopter trip on behalf of Braunston ringers.

Hugh Johnson was in hospital from October 14 for his knee operation and was let out at the end of the month and started driving in January despite a fall on Christmas Eve! He rang at Hellidon on January 22. Angela Elliott of Southam followed on November 9 for her knee operation and was expected to be driving again in the New Year. In January, Richard Waddy had a hernia operation and Joy Harding and Pauline Thompson started chemotherapy treatment - we wish them well.

Rhona Anderson's fame became nationwide with publication of her Christmas card in the *Ringling World*. Christine Rodhouse rang her first quarter peal on December 28 on the treble at Staverton to Plain Bob Doubles, conducted by Ian Willgress.

Vic Perry died on November 2, aged 91. Vic lived in Weedon all his life and was a branch member from 1938 to 1962 before changing his

membership to Culworth Branch when he married. He was elected a Guild Life Honorary Member in 1991. He had not rung for a few years and had more recently lost much of his memory. Graham White gave an oration at the funeral. The bells were rung open, as requested, by some of the 17 ringers present from five branches during his burial.

Dick Speed died on November 22. He was our branch ringing master from 1973 until 1980, when he moved away. On the day of his cremation, a quarter peal was rung at Hillmorton, his former home, including John Foot, David J Marshall and Mary Horsley who from 1965 rang with Dick at Daventry.

QUARTER PEALS

On the first Sunday in November, sickness reduced Stedman to Triples from Caters but failed after 25 minutes nice ringing. In December, spliced Lincolnshire, Yorkshire & Cambridge Surprise Major was rung at St Peter's Northampton - remembering Jackie Downing, ringer at Holy Sepulchre who died aged 77 the previous week. A similar dedication was given to a quarter peal at Dallington on December 20 organised by Hilary and followed by one at Flore where all members of the band called something! In January the quarter was brought forward to new year's day and was Cambridge Surprise Major at Whilton.

IN THE TOWERS

Byfield ringers assembled to ring at 9pm for the wedding in New York of former Byfield ringer Geoffrey Weller. The sound was to be transmitted by mobile phone. However, the bride was 30 minutes late! So the ringing had to be greatly curtailed because the tower's neighbours had only been warned of ringing till 9.30pm!

Five learners started in November at Farthingstone on Thursday evenings. Welcome to Dorothy, Chris, Sarah, June and Paul! It is encouraging to report that all three restored rings (Farthingstone, Church Stowe and Dodford) were rung for Christmas services.

At Staverton school carol service, certificates were presented by Revd Liz Cowley to Ashley, Chloë, Faith, Lauren, Molly and *in absentia* Zoë at the end of their 12 week ringing sessions. Five of them were ringing for the

service. Thanks to Peter Wenham and Sally Thompson for constant help with their training. The rest of year-six started their ringing sessions on January 8!

UP THE TOWERS

Newnham have a new burgundy coloured carpet which had to be hoisted up through the floor from the outside below the tower. The jumpy 5th rope disappeared on November 30 when the terylene was diagnosed as the culprit - the rope (with a single blue marker strand) had gone almost rigid. The wheel for Ashby St Ledger third bell, rebuilt by Harold Thompson, was on display at our November meeting. Richard Hartley reported that reels of pre-stretched terylene rope had been purchased and rope was available to towers at a very competitive price. After clapper checking and repair in the first week of December, Ashby St. Ledger bells were rung up singly but it was not until January 16 that the tenor was finally raised above frame height!

Fund raising to repair Kislingbury's second bell gudgeon included a successful concert on December 9. As mentioned above, Braunston has new terylene-topped ropes. They have unusual sally colours chosen by the ladies, Peter says, so make sure you see them by entering the Spring Festival competition in April!

Geoff Pullin

NORTHAMPTON

Abington Church has changed its practice night to TUESDAY.

Plain Bob Training sessions - Dorothy (890638) is organising new sessions this Spring. Please contact her if you would like help with Plain Bob Doubles and pass on this information to others who may be interested.

Branch Practices have been well attended, averaging 15 ringers, with something for everyone in the programme. There are always plenty of rounds and call changes as well as more 'fancy' stuff, so please do come to these practices - you will be most welcome. If the Branch Practice is at your tower be sure to be there to ring your favourite methods.

Forthcoming events:

23rd February Ringing at Piddington from 7.30 pm

29th March, Quarterly Meeting at Duston starts at 3 pm

26th April Ringing at Abington from 7.30 pm

Fundraising

The Guild Bell Fund needs your support. It is always there to help when bells need major or minor work, but we need to keep it in good heart for when **your tower** needs it. In 2007 only two towers participated in the annual Sponsored Walk. They did well, raising £258 but think how much more it could have been if your tower had taken part.

Similarly the take-up of the Quiz Sheets was not too good. Yes it was hard but £2 is not too much to pay for

challenging the grey cells. Why not have a go next time. And for those who would rather not tax the brain there is always the 100 Club. For £12 a year you could win a worthwhile cash prize. Contact Norman Pope (7674546) and try your luck!

Advice from our Branch Steward - It has been found that where the headstocks on new bells are fitted with galvanised nuts and bolts these can work loose over time. Cecil advised Tower Captains with newly fitted bells to check regularly the nuts and bolts in the headstocks.

Trevor Jarvis and Dorothy Stopps

RUTLAND

As our last report somehow missed publication, I must mention that 2 young ringers achieved their first quarters and a new group of learners has been started at Uppingham School. We have several other young people ringing rounds now and our average age is happily coming down. This is due to untiring work by those who run the training sessions, and we are grateful that they are prepared to give so much time.

In those late summer months we also had a ringing holiday in Derbyshire and a very enjoyable outing to Taylor's Bell Foundry. Several members have worked hard to produce a more user-friendly website, and this came on stream in October – thanks to David Couldwell you will find our regularly up-dated information on www.rutlandbellringers.co.uk. David also circulates a monthly newsletter to all our members, which has helped improve our in-branch communications considerably.

Our annual Ring-for-your-Supper was, as usual, much enjoyed and we also had a successful and well attended training afternoon for those doing rounds and call changes. It included pencil and paper work, followed by such comments as, 'Oh, now I see how it works!'

October, November and December saw 9 quarters rung, mostly as celebrations, and during December we made an effort to ensure that every church with bells heard them rung for at least one Christmas service.

Monica Spence

WELLINGBOROUGH

It seems only a matter of days since I was rushing the last contribution off to the editor and here I am preparing another one. I know I was a little late with the last dead line but where has the time gone and what can I say; that I have not said before?

"Two Heads are better than one" but in the Branch Quiz "Three Heads are better than four".

Some 8 teams met at Earls Barton Church Hall on Saturday 8th December to contest the annual competition. The competition was very close with the top 4 teams changing places on many occasions. The quiz master and referee for the evening were Brenda and John Dixon. At the end of the 10 rounds two teams were on equal points and after the tie breaker which was something like " What was the ftse index at 6.00 p m On Friday 7th December', the nearest answer was provided by the three representing Rushden. Well done!

The evening was broken up by an excellent supper prepared by Brenda who provided everyone with more than enough to eat. The raffle went on for some time as some 20 prizes were drawn.

Unfortunately, the winning tickets all seemed to be on two tables and after the embarrassment of winning too often they put the prizes back only to be selected again and yet again... We just wondered what time would we get away.

The various practice sessions have been well supported by members and visitors. At the practice in November at Yardley Hastings it was pleasing to see several new recruits from the Yardley Tower take the opportunity for additional practice. Hopefully, they benefited from this and we shall see them again at the AGM in January and the Grendon practice in February which is only just up the road from Yardley.

The professional, dedicated ringers (take no notice I am only envious of their repertoire), I refer to the Surprise Major and (Minor) group who meet on the third Saturday of each month; gathered on Friday 28th December for an "After Christmas Escape".

The group of approximately 20 representing Beds, Northampton, Daventry and Culworth visited some 7 towers in the Cambridgeshire/Bedfordshire area.

At a reasonable time in the morning the group gradually assembled at Eynesbury on the edge of St Neots to pull on the long, soggy sallies for Eynesbury of course. It was then on to Croxton which was a first for most of the group. This church was accessed down a very quiet hamlet of Georgian houses, many beautifully thatched, through a gated road, parking at the entrance to the Manor house and a walk to the churchyard. These bells are only rung by visiting groups and are maintained by the Huntingdon Church Bell Restoration Society. These proved to be the most difficult challenge of the day and after a course of Bob Minor, rounds and call changes were the limit. This was followed by a short drive of 5 miles to Caxton St Andrew.

It was then time for lunch at the Crown and Cushion before ringing at Great Gransden. These bells were generally felt to be

the "best" of the day and had in the last few years moved to an upstairs ring. The wall between the church and tower was elegantly carved in light wood with stained glass windows. The furnishings within the tower were also matching in this light wood. It was then off to Gamlingay for the only 8 of the day and half a course of Yorkshire, and then into Bedfordshire for Potton and Sandy.

During the day various bands produced varying successes of London, Carlisle, Yorkshire, Norwich, Beverley and Surfleet together with a variety of standard methods.

With no lock outs, short distances between towers, good organisation and good company the day again proved to be a success.

For all forthcoming events log on to: _

www.wellingboroughbranch.org.uk

Tanya Clayton



Needed!

Could you do this job?

Guild Treasurer

Ring Brenda Dixon on 01933 358982

for further details



Ringing Roadshow 2008

The 2008 Ringing Roadshow will be held on Friday 5th and Saturday 6th September 2008 at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire. This will be the 6th Roadshow and promises to be the biggest yet. with attractions for ringers and non-ringers alike.

We are asked by the CCCBR to include it in our programmes for 2008 and to avoid scheduling any Guild events for either of those days if at all possible.