

Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers



# Newsletter

January 2009

## Contents:

The President's Piece .....	3
News from the Branches:	
Culworth.....	4-9
Daventry .....	10-15
Kettering.....	15-17
Northampton.....	17-21
Peterborough.....	21-24
Rutland .....	25
Wellingborough .....	26-27
Public Relations Officer's Piece.....	27
Summer Festival 2008.....	27-29
Ex-Steward's Stutterings.....	29
Harvest Time at Everdon, A Special Reunion .....	30-32
Maureen Basford's Birthday.....	32-33
Do you recognise this man? .....	34
Guild Website.....	35
Guild Events 2009.....	36

As you may know, this is my last issue as Editor of the Guild Newsletter. Now that I am spending more of my time abroad, it has at times been hard to complete the multitasking required. In addition my computer equipment lacks the bells and whistles of more modern models.

Chris Pearson from Burton Latimer has kindly agreed to take over the reins for the next issue and I send him my best wishes. He will be contacting you in due course with deadline information. Please continue sending material as and when it is ready.

email - [christopherpearson@btinternet.com](mailto:christopherpearson@btinternet.com)  
and phone no - 01536 420822

Thanks for working with me over the past few years, and best wishes for 2009 and beyond.

Jill Harvey

## **THE PRESIDENT'S PIECE**

Wishing you all good ringing and a happy 2009.

2008 was a difficult year with no Treasurer for much of it. Many thanks to Branch Treasurers for their patience.

A new Treasurer was appointed by the executive at the Summer Festival and Alan Marks has been working hard since to computerise the accounts to make life easier. Any money can now be sent to Alan at any time of the year.

All Treasurers know his address and telephone number. If you gift aid your subscriptions etc you may be asked to fill in a new gift aid form as there have been some changes since these were introduced. If you have never gift aided and are a tax payer, please think of doing so. I personally wish to thank Alan for taking on this job.

This is Jill's last Newsletter. I'm sure you will agree with me that she has made an excellent job of it. Many thanks Jill.

Chris Pearson was asked by the executive to become Newsletter Editor and has agreed to do so. He will be in contact with Branch Newsletter Correspondents in the near future.

### **Keep these dates free:**

April 25<sup>th</sup> - 6 bell Striking Competition

June 13<sup>th</sup> - Guild AGM

September 19<sup>th</sup> - Summer Festival and 8 bell Striking Competition

Hope to see you there.

Brenda Dixon

# NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

## CULWORTH

Happy New Year to all Towers.

As planned, following the raising of some £29,000, **Chacombe** bells were removed in July by Whites of Appleton and sent to the Whitechapel Bellfoundry for re-tuning in August. It was then discovered that the tenor bell could not be tuned and would have to be recast at a further cost of £8,200.

Mike Alcock has since heard that someone from the Village of Chacombe who wishes to remain anonymous has donated £8,200 for the new bell and has already sent a cheque for that amount to the foundry. It goes without saying that the Chacombe Tower ringers are very grateful to this person and thank him/her for their generosity.

The new tenor bell will be inscribed with the names of Ted and Norma Garrett, the former Tower captain and his wife who instigated the formation of the bell fund to raise monies for the restoration of the bells, both having sadly died before seeing the fruits of their dream fulfilled.

Work on the rebuilding of the spire tip at **Whitfield** was scheduled to be finished in mid June, but the builders uncovered snags in the form of additional rusted ironwork embedded in the stone. Delay followed delay and as Sara Chapple writes, the Whitfield ringers were on tenterhooks as the one wedding of the year was booked for 16th, August, with a branch Practice at Whitfield the same evening. With a deadline in view the builders declared that they could remove the scaffolding on the Monday of that week.

To celebrate, Will Adams organised a revival of the "jumping over the weathercock" ceremony. Children from Whitfield and several surrounding villages gathered to take part, with events being filmed and later televised by Oxford TV. All the children, one dog, and several young at heart adults can now boast that they can jump over the weathercock, which was then carried to the top of the steeple and put in place. Access to the belfry was finally regained on the Friday morning, which was spent removing dust and dirt from the bells, ready for the first Friday Practice at Whitfield for four months.

The wedding ringing the following day aroused much interest from a contingent of relatives from Holland. They said that at home someone presses a switch and it is all done electronically. This prompted a chance being offered by the Whitfield ringers for the Dutch visitors to chime the bells when they had rung down. The visitors had broad smiles on their faces as three of them chimed haphazardly, and the photographer was asked to come and take photos. As a result the Bride and Groom joined in as well. Whitfield now wonder if this should become a part of Wedding celebrations!

(Sara Chapple)

David Bennett is moving after many years in **Brackley** where he was tower captain in the 1970s. Together with some friends David conducted a quarter peal of Bob Minor at Whitfield on Sunday 24th August this year.

We all wish him better health and happiness in his new home in Swansea, South Wales.

Following a unexpected illness resulting in a long spell in the Horton Hospital, I am very pleased to report that Marlene Phillips of **Aynho** is continuing to make a slow but sure recovery.. Peter tells me that they have received a great deal of support from friends and neighbours. We all wish Marlene a speedy and full recovery in 2009.

Following 17 years of fundraising, **Charwelton** bells were finally removed from the Tower on Monday 24th November and taken the next day up to the Taylor Eayre & Smith Bell Foundry in Loughborough for augmentation and rehangng.

Most of you will already know that a few years ago I received a phone call from David Kelly from the Keltek Trust offering us two bells to augment Charwelton. Sadly I pointed out that we were still raising the money to re-hang our present four bells in a new frame, and that we could not at that stage consider that option. However David quickly informed me that the Trust had such a frame that he thought would fit our bells. The snag was that the frame was sitting in the Vicarage garden at Longworth in Oxfordshire, and that the present Vicar was about to leave the Parish (Longworth had decided not to use the frame), and so action was needed to transport the castings from Longworth fairly sharply.

A team of five locals set off to Longworth and collected the frame (which had served as the frame to the five bells at Steeple Langford in Wiltshire until a new frame had to be installed to house the present ring of six).

Time passed by and fundraising had taken a considerable pace, when by kind permission of the Daventry Branch, in August of 2007 we were invited to open our tower and sell teas in aid of our bell fund as part of their "Rare Towers" open day. One of the first visitors to Charwelton that day was David Kelly who, prior to the ringing, went up the Tower armed with his tuning forks and recorded the notes of our bells.

On a down side I handed a letter marked "Heritage Fund" to Fiona Spencer our bell fund secretary. Sadly we read that the National Lottery Heritage fund had decided not to fund us. What next? Things soon progressed swiftly, David Kelly had been notified by Graham Nabb from Kineton in Warwickshire that they had decided to raise money to augment their bells from six to eight, however their treble bell was in fact heavier than their fourth, weighing five and a quarter hundredweight.

This was just right for Charwelton. However our costs had suddenly risen causing the bells committee to think that a fifth bell may be a future aim. However as with Chacombe, a local person [who wishes to remain anonymous] has kindly bought the Kineton bell, and the

Bell foundry came up with a good deal, and so the order was quickly placed and the rest is history. Charwelton's ring of five bells are expected home on the 1st and 2nd of March.

There are very many people to thank - not least our benefactors, and Simon Shepherd, Martin Rowling, Alan Mayberry, Maurice Shepherd and Harold Thompson [I was about of course!], who carried out much of the preparation to lowering the bells volunteering much of their time and expertise to the job, and working alongside Andrew Ogden from the Foundry on the two days.

Thanks to Fiona Spencer and the other Bells Committee members over years who have helped our dream to come true, not forgetting our Guild and the many local ringers for their great support and generosity.

### **RINGING HOLIDAY and DAY TOUR**

Again Ian Chapple assisted by his conscientious team, set about organising a autumn Ringing Holiday. The departure date was Sunday 14th September 2008 and the destination was Northern Ireland. Having been transported to Heathrow Airport by the Claydon Fox, we were soon on our way from Aldegrove Airport to ring at our first Tower. Carrickfergus is a superb 13cwt eight, hung in a detached Tower over the Church gate. Proceeding from this superb ring on to Bangor, our next Tower and another good eight. Ballymena, a light 12 was our final Sunday ring, where we rang these perfect bells assisted by two local ringers.

The Tullaghan Country House Hotel was our destination and was centrally situated between Cookstown and Dungannon in Mid Ulster. This was the home of the late Harry Ferguson of Ferguson Tractors fame, and there is much memorabilia of the great man at the Hotel. The Monday towers were Belfast Thomas [8] another good ring where the Rector took great pleasure in showing around his re-ordered Church. We were led through the city to St. Donards, a nice 6 in a very cosy tower, before having lunch in a nearby hotel and ringing at the final city tower, St. Mark's, where the box system at this easy going 12 cwt ring of ten proved a challenge to some.

Hollywood, [not California] were another fine 8 in a leafy suburb of Belfast close to Belfast Lough. Finally Grey Abbey by the shores of Strangford Lough was Monday's finally tower. Graham made heavy work of raising the treble of this two and a half hundredweight ring of six. Grey Abbey bells were greatly enjoyed by all along with most of the Northern Irish towers.

Bally Lesson another good 8, Hillsborough a delicate 10 in a picture postcard setting and the majestic 10 at Enniskillen Cathedral were also rung. Up north crossing the Skerrin Mountains to ring the 32cwt 10 at Derry Cathedral was followed by the excellent 20 cwt ring of 8 in Coleraine. Wednesday also saw a no-ringing afternoon at the Giants Causeway [in warm sunshine] which had followed lunch in the famous Bushmills Inn.

Some took an excursion on the way home via Portrush and Port Stewart before returning to our superb hotel. Lurgan was the Wednesday morning Tower where the unusual ascent to the ringing room along with the nice sounding 21cwt 8 bells proved a bit of a challenge.

Following a lunch at the Oxford Island Nature Reserve on Lough Neagh we returned to Aldegrove Airport and home. This was the end of a well organised and thoroughly enjoyable ringing holiday, which was enjoyed by ringers from Whitfield, Brackley, Eydon, Helmdon, Charwelton, Badby and Newnham.

----oOo----

On Saturday 22nd November a small group of both keen and dedicated ringers from the Culworth branch [and one visitor from York], set out to ring at five towers in the Coventry area. Allesley was the first tower where the easy going 12 cwt ring of eight proved very popular and good ringing was achieved here. Keresley was the next Tower, where St. Thomas Church contains a very light ring of six with a tenor weighing only 3-3-10. However despite their daintyness the ringing was also good here and all agreed that bells both sounded good and handled very well [perhaps helped by our number knowing that the bells are fitted with soft steel stays!]



Fillongley was the last tower of the morning where the pleasant, easy going eight with a tenor of 10-3-23 again were much enjoyed. The lunch venue was the Manor House pub which stands nearly opposite Fillongley Church. Bedworth bells, with a tenor of 14-0-18 , proved to be a stately eight with triples methods being nicely struck here. Although Bedworth Church is a neat mid-Victorian building, recent interior alterations have made this a both comfortable and very usable Church.

Finally we approached the eastern edge of Coventry for our last Tower, Exhall, [where those using their Satnavs had been initially directed to Warwickshire's other Exhall which lies to the west of Stratford upon Avon and does not contain a ring of bells]. However this Exhall which houses a very nice 6-2-6 ring of six bells proved to be a fitting last tower to a very well organised and extremely enjoyable outing. Many thanks to Nick Chatt for all his hard work in organising this event.

### **BODDINGTON UPDATE**

As many will already know, the five bells were fairly suddenly stopped from ringing over four years ago owing to an Architects inspection on the Tower, which among other things found the tower roof to be in a poor way. I am told that work has begun on restoring the Tower at a cost of £80,000, which has been assisted by a substantial English Heritage Grant.

The Bells For Boddington Appeal have held a great deal of fundraising events , which have included a recent Carol Concert which took place on 7th December in the church, where the carols were accompanied by the Kidlington Brass Band. The planned bell work, I am informed, will follow the completion of the tower work, and will aim to rehang the present five bells with the addition of a treble.

# DAVENTRY

## MEETINGS

It was very wet and cold for our August meeting. Three long distance tower grabbers were among the 16 who got through the long grass to Fawsley church. Simultaneously and later, 23 rang and five didn't, at Preston Capes. Revd Michael Petitt took the service. A substantial tea was served in church. Later at Litchborough 14 rang. Janet locked her keys in her car, so Jim and Gwynneth White kindly took her home to get the spare set. During this trip the idea of Gwynneth giving a talk during the next service emerged.

So it was in September that we met at Great Brington, where Janet took the service in which Gwynneth gave a talk about belonging and Hilary played the organ. 28 rang under Ian Willgress's direction. The branch ringing master was photographing her daughter's balloon flight across the countryside and arrived late! Brington and Whilton ringers served a splendid tea in the Reading Room. At the meeting, it was agreed that PCCs (through their ringers) can apply for up to 10% grants from our branch maintenance fund for running costs, like new ropes. Young Alan Rodhouse brought his own box to ring at Brington and Hilary presented him with his Ambitious Apprentice badge from the Bell Club scheme. Twenty rang at Whilton in the evening.

On October 4, the branch dinner was again held at Barby Sporting Club. A good evening was had by the 26 participants. At the following branch meeting, an eloquent plea was made, deprecating the poor behaviour that developed on one table when paper darts were launched, to beseech the chairman and branch ringing master not to be away next year, so they could keep order!

The October meeting started at Staverton with 22 ringing, and seven not. Before the service, Revd Liz Cowley explained that the unusual smell of incense was an effort to frighten bats away! Then we moved on to Charwelton village hall where a scrumptious tea greeted us. The profit of £57 went to Charwelton bell restoration and was doubled from our branch fund. The evening gathering at Byfield was of only 11, who rang Stedman, Double Norwich and 5-spliced surprise major. The

Guild Master caught up with us here after dealing with his bike which collapsed on the way in the afternoon.

Our November meeting was held at Weedon with 43 present. The bells were half-muffled and the service concentrated on remembering former ringers. The meeting was excited by debate on whether to continue raffles for the branch bell maintenance fund or to give it a rest until the fund had been reduced by spending. The raffle continues! Peter Wenham's offer to make motor-bike tyre clapper muffles brought forth an enquiry as to their expected life – '25,000 miles' said the branch wit. (This item became a snippet in the RW!) Everdon bells were also half-muffled in the evening, and courses of Sedgfield and Everdon Bob Doubles came round. Ringers from nearby Farthingstone acquitted themselves well despite the treble at Everdon being half as heavy again as their tenor.

In December, we met at Flore where 37 rang. After a fine buffet repast, the business meeting was unusually brief! Our Carol Concert began at 7pm. Revd Ann Slater set it off and the splendid colour-printed programme organised by Gwynneth, guided us through. Over 50 of us enjoyed hearty singing of eight carols, plus two more played on handbells and 12 recitations and musical items. It was well planned by Janet Bowers and the organ and piano were played by Michael and Barbara Haighton. Hugh and Deena Johnson produced hot mulled wine afterwards.

## TRAINING SESSIONS

After a rest of many months, training sessions started again on September 27 which was Gwynneth White's debut as 'runner' for plain hunting with four trainees and seven helpers at Braunston. She thought it had a rocky start but had improved by the end! In the afternoon, Ian Willgress ran a raising and lowering in peal session – Heyford bells up and down nine times - for four trainees with six helpers. Geoff had Plain Bob Doubles and plain hunt thrashed to near death at two sessions at Braunston on October 18 by nine trainees. The equipment behaved itself, despite Peter being in Dorset! Sally Thompson provided cakes instead of the usual biscuits. Geoff ran plain hunting again on November 22 and Jim White ran Plain Bob Doubles in the afternoon.

Peter Wenham comments that he would like to see more use being made of the Braunston simulator for individual training in counting, listening and rhythmic ringing. Individual practice in these skills, while not perhaps as sociable as team ringing, can be a great help to individual development and to the enjoyment of one's regular ringing. Give it a try – there's nothing to lose – phone Peter on 01788 981935! The Monday Group continues to thrive using the simulator, despite its

having been formed to help 'Ring in the Millennium'. Call changes and Bob Doubles still feature strongly, however some of the more adventurous are reaching the dizzy heights of Stedman Doubles and are experimenting with St Clements Minor. Thanks are due to Hilary and Geoff for their regular help, also to those who, having passed through the earlier learning stages, are now of help to others.

## PEOPLE

Joy Harding of Newnham died on August 15. Cancer finally spread to her brain after a four-year stalwart battle that chased it around her body. Badby practice was traditionally half-muffled on the following Wednesday, poignantly just a year after the last occasion, for Harriet Piner. Some 200 people packed into Newnham church for Joy's funeral on August 27. She lay in the church, whilst John and sons Michael and Richard greeted everyone. Burial was in the cemetery to the sound of a half-muffled quarter peal of five doubles methods rung in 56 minutes. During this, a large gathering crowded into The Romer Arms. That evening there were 24 at Badby practice including John and Michael, who proved he could still ring Cambridge. Joy's cheery organising ability was immediately missed as we tried to make space in The Windmill! A quarter peal of Single Court and Plain Bob Minimus was rung on Sunday August 31 at Fawsley in celebration of Joy's life, conducted by Graham White. Another was rung at Everdon on September 8, Plain Bob Doubles with four of the village band, conducted by Alan Marks. It was Brian Clark's first "inside".

The same people who rang the first peal on the bells back in 1977 rang a peal at Everdon for harvest festival and as a thanksgiving for Christopher Dalton's life, on Sunday September 21. There are further details in the item 'Harvest Time at Everdon'.

Hugh Johnson went into hospital on August 28 for his right hip replacement. He was ringing again in early October at Hellidon's Tuesday morning practices (with cake), but has yet to climb Daventry steps. Hilda Collins had an operation on her other knee on November 21 and her first outing was to our Flore meeting and concert.

On October 25, I celebrated fifty years of ringing (first lesson: September 9, 1958) with a peal of Plain Bob Major at Bristol Cathedral in a band of all Cathedral School former pupils. It also marked 50 years of the bells being in the tower, the reason for me taking up ringing!

Several ringers were pleased to be among fifty family and friends invited by Margaret Dean to a lunch at Kilsby village hall to celebrate her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 30. We learned amongst other things, that when she was Mayor of Greenwich in 1980-1, Margaret gave the order to fire the cannon that set off the first London Marathon!

#### WHERE HAVE ALL THE CLERGY GONE?

Geoff conducted a quarter peal of Plain Bob Minor at Great Brington on August 3 as a farewell to the Revds Chris and Sharon Goble who celebrated their last service in the Spencer Benefice at Whilton that day before moving to Ilmington to minister over eight parishes in South Warwickshire.

Immediately after Revd Michael Pettitt celebrated his last service in the Knightley Parishes at Badby on October 26, a benefice band rang a quarter peal of Plain Bob Minor as a farewell. Bob Sinclair conducted and after 56 singles (no bobs!) Sally and Ken were dared to say that they do not know singles ever again! During his ten years, Michael has taken a dozen meeting services for us and is now based at Guilsborough covering eight parishes, with seven rings of bells.


At the time of writing, Daventry Team still remains short of a Team Rector, a Vicar and a Curate!


#### QUARTERS


On July 24, Hilary arranged a quarter peal at Pattishall which celebrated the Ruby Wedding of Ian and Val Calvert on July 20. Our previously reported quarter at Oundle was also so dedicated but I forgot to say so. Sorry!

The first-Sunday-in August quarter was Plain Bob Major conducted by Brian Foley at Weedon. Those in September, October and November were all lost! In January, it was again Plain Bob Major this time at Whilton, conducted by Jim White, and rung as an endurance test in low temperatures!

Congratulations to:

 Richard Hartley who rang the 4<sup>th</sup> to Grandsire Triples for his first quarter peal on eight bells, at Easton Neston on October 30, conducted by Alan Marks;

 Val Hartley who followed suit on the 4<sup>th</sup> at Weedon on the first-Sunday-in December, conducted by Ian Willgress; and

 Chris Woods who rang his first quarter by ringing the 3<sup>rd</sup> at Fawsley to Plain Bob Minimus before benefice communion on December 28, conducted by Graham White.

After ringing a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples at Cottesbrooke for practice, our branch eight-bell striking competition band went straight to Rushden to ring first of the seven branches who had entered. Ben Ricketts placed us second, with 22 faults. At the meeting, we heard that Margaret Dean was a joint winner of the quiz sheet and yours truly won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize of £23.75 in the 100-Club draw. In the evening over thirty enjoyed ringing on the majestic eight at Higham Ferrers, including Dorothy and Chris FitzGerald from Farthingstone.

## TOWERS

New recruits appeared this Summer with heartening regularity! The Harry Wooding Trophy was on display in Daventry Library for four weeks in July and August (before being surrendered to Kettering Branch!). A volunteer appeared at Daventry during Sunday ringing but health has stopped his progress although another two have turned up since. Four lads turned up at Badby and have progressed to ring for services. Two recruits turned up at Farthingstone and 9-year old Alan Rodhouse had his first lesson. Two more potential ringers looked into Badby practice night, both from Daventry, who saw the invitation in the library exhibition but now unfortunately don't have enough time to follow up! Rhona continues to harass fellow postmen to ring. We try our best to attract new recruits to all towers, especially Daventry. Daventry bells would be silent on Sundays were it not for surrounding villages, including Long Buckby. Despite a confusion started by the Knightley Parishes magazine over the time of the Deanery Advent Carol service, eventually 16 turned up to ring at Daventry for it! Thankfully, a good number of practices in the branch continue to provide mutual succour to surrounding towers. We are very thankful for the willingness of ringers to attend two or more practices and service rings each week. The continuing daytime practices at Braunston, Hellidon and Staverton also help us to progress whenever people are available.

Braunston reports that they continue to ring regularly on Sundays. However the lack of experienced ringers (work is the ruination of ringing!), makes it difficult for much progress in standards or repertoire. Their early beginners' practice is thriving, where Alison and Pat(rick) have been welcomed into the band. John Davies and Adrian from Ashby St Ledgers are still attending, and they have now brought Anne Brown with them. All this makes for plenty of rounds and call changes in the practice proper!

Farthingstone has five active ringing villagers, who can ring rounds for service as well as the Rector who joins in and young recruits who started to learn in October. Then on November 12, after advice from Richard Hartley that something more long-term needs doing to the second and tenor, the churchwardens stopped all ringing. Later in the month the PCC resolved to seek a structural survey and options for restoring the bells. In the meantime more ringing time is based at Staverton. A peal rung at Badby on November 15, included a new surprise minor method [e -3-4-2-3.2.234.2.3] rung for the first time, which was named by Paul M Mason's band as 'Farthingstone' – an omen?

Another five year-six children from Staverton School rang for their school carol service and received certificates after 14 weeks training. They had about 3½ hours of rope-time each. One was ringing rounds well with no help. Geoff, Peter and Sally are now working on the second five from year-six!

The tradition at Weedon of ringing for Advent on Monday mornings at 6am was made more comfortable this year by changing to 6.30pm, followed by Compline.

When I splice ropes for our Steward, I am compiling a record of the length of ropes and untucked tail ends for branch towers so that new ropes can be ordered to a suitable specification. I am somewhat surprised to find that Badby and Norton need the longest ropes in the branch. More of our branch stock of pre-stretched polyester rope was used for Litchborough and Whilton in August. Then, to keep Richard busy, I set him on a long-range project at Barrow-in-Furness! But that's another story – yet to unfold!

**Geoff Pullin**

**GUILSBOROUGH - NO NEWS THIS TIME**

## **KETTERING**

*2008 proved once more to be a busy and most enjoyable year within our ringing circles.*

### ***TRAINING SESSIONS***

*These continue to be held at Roth well Training Centre, 2-4pm on the first Saturday of each month unless replaced with another event.*

*These were well supported with between 13-20 attendances and were followed with evening ringing at Warkton with an attendance of 16, Corby with 11, Weston-by-Welland with 13 Arthingworth with 15*

*and Burton Latimer in December with only 9. Our Branch are very grateful to all who give us the privilege of ringing at their Church.*

*On May 10<sup>th</sup> our outing was a full day out in the North Oxford and South Northants area and was well supported by members and friends. The weather was kind and ringing was enjoyed at Bodicote, Banbury, Shotteswell, Mollington, Cropredy and Greatworth. Lunch was followed with a game of cricket organised by young Toby Bence in the playing field and some of us even had a go on the swings and slide. As a result afternoon ringing saw a few green and brown skid marks on clothing. Picnic teas and home-made cakes were a special treat later. Our thanks to Helen and Nick Churchman for a well planned and most enjoyable day.*

*On June 7<sup>th</sup> we had a half day cycle tour/outing around the picturesque Welland Valley, this was arranged by Bill Adcock. A party of around 24 of us enjoyed a picnic tea on a village green relaxing in the sun and watching the ducks on the pond*

*On July 12<sup>th</sup> following the training our annual Barbecue took place at the home of Debs and Michael Wallis. This was thoroughly enjoyed by around 30 members and our thanks go to Debs and Mick for their hospitality.*

*On October 11<sup>th</sup> 25 or more ringers enjoyed a half day outing visiting towers at Sharnbrook, Felmersham, Riseley and Rushden. With lovely weather prevailing, tea was taken in the grounds of Riseley Church and refreshments were kindly provided by Deb's parents. We thank Debs for planning the outing which was a huge success.*

*November 8<sup>th</sup> heralded the infamous Beetle Drive organised by Bill Adcock. 50 members relished a fantastic selection of hot suppers and delicious puds provided by "Bill's ladies." (perhaps I should rephrase that) We did manage to finish the Beetle Drive amidst lots of fun and hilarious laughter. As usual it was MANIC.*



*CONGRATULATIONS to Derek Sibson who rang his 4,000th Peal in November and on a more personal note I would like to thank everyone (too many for me to name) who have given me help and encouragement over the past year, especially Derek for being my main mentor and guiding me through many peals. All of this has enabled me to be nominated to become a member of the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths.*

### **FUTURE EVENTS**

*10<sup>th</sup> January - AGM at Rothwell - 4pm.*

*14<sup>th</sup> February - Basic training at Rothwell - 2-4pm followed by evening ringing at Barton Seagrave - 7.30-9pm.*

*14<sup>th</sup> March - Basic training at Rothwell - 2-4pm followed by evening ringing at Cranford - 7.30-9pm.*

*The rest of 2009 brings us an action packed diary, more about these events next time.*

*Chris M Pearson*

### **NORTHAMPTON**

Being unable to support the annual Sponsored Walk arranged by the Guild, Boughton ringers organised their own, with support from the Church congregation. Five ringers, three wives, the Branch Chairman, two dogs and various villagers supported the walk round Pitsford Reservoir in beautiful weather on the morning of 12<sup>th</sup> April and between them raised £520. £270 of this has been donated to the Guild Bell Fund and the balance to Boughton Church.

Well done Boughton ringers.

## Branch Outing

Anne England organised an excellent outing on 17<sup>th</sup> May, but support was very poor, only nine. Nevertheless we had a wonderful day, starting off ringing the six at Wansford where we thought Anne had installed St Benedict's bells, just to catch us out! Lunch and our next tower were at Castor. For five and six bell ringers we didn't do too badly, ringing courses of Plain Bob Triples and Major, then an impressive lower. Our ninth ringer met us at Wittering, a pretty little church with a display of military shields in the side chapel. Our ringing was going well - but what about our navigating skills? Roadworks en route to Easton on the Hill put us to the test. This is another beautiful church where once again we had some good ringing. All good things come to an end but Anne had saved the impressive church at Bulwick to finish the day. It was a really superb day out, which you would have enjoyed. When you see an outing on the Programme next time, make a point of booking it.

## Branch Practices

Attendances at branch practices is unpredictable. Only five went to Rothersthorpe which meant they had a bell each for the whole evening. On the other hand, Pitsford enticed 13 away from the TV. We are very grateful to the lady from the Church congregation who so kindly gave up her evening to come and ply us with tea, coffee and the most delicious cake.

Look what you are missing if you don't come to branch practices!

The meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September was at Boughton. Eight ringers attended and we concentrated on Plain Bob doubles and Plain Hunt. We did manage to ring one plain course of Stedman Doubles to see if we could! Ten ringers came to Milton Malsor. Then on the last

practice of the year at Little Houghton eight attended ringing Plain Bob doubles, Stedman, Grandsire, Reverse Canterbury and St Simons before Geoff asked if anyone knew Antelope. So diagrams came out and we all had a go - successfully I am pleased to report.

Training for 2009 will include Plain Bob Doubles, Stedman, Plain Bob Minor and Little Bob, plus Kent Treble Bob if the demand is there.

### In Memoriam

The bells of Pitsford church were rung on 29<sup>th</sup> July before and after the Memorial Service for Dennis Isaacs. Dennis was an active member of Northampton Branch, being Vice-President from 1970 to 1972 and Chairman from 1973 to 1976. The ringers were Harold Fay (Maidwell), Stan Ruddlesden (Long Buckby), Noel Morton (Dallington), Cecil Swann (Duston), Colin and Dorothy Stopps (Cogenhoe).

We have also learned of the passing of Mr G Cole, Dallington.

May they rest in peace.

### Striking Competition

Five teams entered the first Branch Six Bell Striking Competition for many years. Ivor Dickin had been persuaded to act as judge and he was tucked away in a corner of the church listening to us doing our best.

The result was: (in reverse order)

Abington B - 46 faults

Abington A - 42 faults

Piddington - 37 faults

Cogenhoe - 17 faults

Holy Sepulchre - 16 faults

Well done everybody - we look forward to repeating the competition very soon.

## Quarter Peals

### Little Houghton

On 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1260 Plain Bob,  
Grandsire, Reverse Canterbury  
Doubles

1 Mira Parsons

2 Dorothy Stopps

3 Colin Stopps

4 Trevor Jarvis

5 Nick Parsons (C)

Rung for the Church Flower  
Festival

### Little Houghton

On 21<sup>st</sup> August, 1260 Plain  
Bob, Grandsire, Reverse  
Canterbury Doubles

1 Colin Stopps

2 Dorothy Stopps

3 Colin Sampson

4 Trevor Jarvis

5 Nick Parsons (C)

Rung for Mira Parsons on a very  
special birthday

## Brafield on the Green

On 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1260 Plain Bob Minor

1 Anne Henman

2 Marcia Morgan

3 Catherine Grubb\*

4 George Green

5 Reg Inman

6 Ray Henman (C)

\*first quarter of minor

Rung to celebrate the Golden Wedding  
Anniversary of  
Dorothy and Colin Stopps

## PETERBOROUGH

### Bulwick

Ringling practices continue on Wednesday nights with our regular visitors. The Cambridge six are being rung as individual methods. The challenge for some in 2009 is to ring them spliced. The Sunday service band can now ring London and we are looking forward to welcoming Guild members for the six bell striking competition on April 25th.

We took the tower out for its annual dinner in November when eighteen of us sat down to a superb meal at the Black Horse, Elton. The evening began at 5.00pm with pre-pre

drinks at the Jones. Our chauffeur for the evening, David Teall arrived with his carriage (Kings Cliffe church's mini-bus) and we then set off for Tony & Rosemary's house at Sutton, where we enjoyed sampling Tony's homemade wines, beer and nibbles! We then moved on to Elton. After eating it was time for the annual gift ceremony where suitable gifts were presented to one and all accompanied by a poem written by David. The highlights this year was a personally made bum-bag for our Ringing Master so that he didn't mislay his bank cards! David and Pat were duly presented with cutlery for their boat which was attached to string and clothes pegs so their visitors would not drop it into the canal! After a pleasant evening we were then chauffeured home before the carriage turned into a pumpkin!

New Year's Eve saw us meeting at Pat and David's house for supper. As usual everyone had over catered, but we all enjoyed sampling the wide variety of food and the home made mulled wine and beer. As midnight approached we went to ring the New Year in at Bulwick with Pat and David going to King's Cliffe, where the local band rang the New Year in for the first time in a few years.

Sue Jones

### Glinton

This autumn we welcomed Revd Hilary Geisow to the parish as priest in charge. The bells were rung for her induction and to welcome her to the parish. One of her first duties was to take the Armistice Day service at St Benedict's

when Ginton's Roll of Honour was unveiled. The bells were rung, not only on Remembrance Sunday, but also on the 11th November for the service of dedication. The church was filled to capacity as those servicemen from Ginton who had given their lives during both major conflicts and named on the village war memorial, were remembered and commemorated on the roll.

We were delighted that so many sections of the parish were represented in the ringing; Ginton, the parish council, the church, Ginton primary school and Northborough. It was a morning when fascinating stories, images and memories were combined.

Ginton has also been ringing at the Cathedral where 10 of us attended Monday practice. We rang rounds and plain hunt, everyone agreeing it had been a fascinating experience - definitely one to be repeated!

We welcomed three newcomers to the tower, who are all progressing well and enjoying learning the art.

Jill Cowcill

### Oundle.

On 11<sup>th</sup> October, branch members and Oundle regulars rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples to celebrate the life of Doug Johnston, a member of the band for many years. After the ringing we welcomed Jill and two of her and Doug's daughters and their families into the tower.

The band was: Susan Jones 1, Stuart Weston 2, Ray Banner 3, Richard Laing 4, Bob Gardener 4, Andrew Parker 6, Derek Jones (cond) 7, Barry Barcock 8.

Pauline Davidson

### Peterborough Cathedral

Ringling is buoyant at the Cathedral. We often have 20+ at practice nights where the development policy is to provide something for everyone whilst heading for excellence.

The last three practices for example have included Plain Hunt on nine, call changes, Yorkshire S Royal, Stedman Cinques, and Grandsire Caters and Cinques. We now (January 2009) are to start practising Yorkshire Maximus: one or two leads per week. Visitors are always welcome and recently we have welcomed the practice night band from Glington, and ringers from Rutland (Edith Weston/Wing/Uppingham).

Service ringling over Christmas has been hectic, and in the run up we rang seven quarter peals out of seven attempts. We were also on the two BBC live TV broadcasts from Peterborough Cathedral. It was very uplifting to have 17 ringers for a Kings School, Peterborough, Carol Concert, most of which were pupils and parents. Many were ringling at the Cathedral for the first time and we rang good rounds on 12

If you want to help yourselves, and help your Cathedral, practice night is Monday, with let in times 7:25pm and 8pm.

Robin Rogers, Bells Master. Peterborough Cathedral



## RUTLAND

August began with Janice Atkinson's celebration of 30 years ringing with a peal of Rutland Surprise Major. Janice can be justly proud, not only of this, but of her two children, Jack and Molly, both of whom are making great strides up the ringing ladder. The Wing team enjoyed another successful ringing holiday in Derbyshire and have already planned one in Norfolk for next year. The Ringing Roadshow gave inspiration to those who went, and they included a new group of ringers from Uppingham School. Indeed, we seem to have an encouraging number of young ringers at present, including two who are now conducting quarters.

This Autumn has seen a number of firsts: David Couldwell conducted his first minor and first surprise quarter, Olivia Achurch and Diana Wordie rang their first quarters, Jack Atkinson and Alan Whitfield rang their first Cambridge Surprise Major and Rob Morris his first of Cambridge Surprise Minor, Molly Atkinson rang her first minor quarter and Jack conducted his first quarter. Having a Quarter Peal Week in October was new and spurred us to ring many more quarters than in the past.

On the lighter side, 25 of us enjoyed an evening of Ring for Your Supper, this year hosted generously by Brooke and Oakham. It was particularly good to see several ringers sampling 8-bell ringing for the first time.

With recruitment in mind, 2 towers were open one Sunday in November and 10 people dropped in to see what it was all about. Three have subsequently come to practices. For a cold November day, that must be quite encouraging.

And so to Christmas and the New Year with the usual ringing for carols and Christmas markets. Several towers rang in the New Year with suitable liquid refreshment afterwards!

Monica Spence

Thrapston and Towcester, no news this time

## WELLINGBOROUGH

A matter of weeks ago now; or so it seems; when the August newsletter was prepared I referred to the branch mini outing and anticipated that it would again be a good day of ringing - well, I was right yet again. The day started with an excellent pub lunch at the local pub in the village of Wansford and then it was a short walk to the village church of St Mary the Virgin to ring on their very light 6. We then headed in the direction of Peterborough where the biggest challenge of the day soon became apparent on the 6 at Stanground. Our next call was further on to Whittlesey and after parking in the main street we first visited St Andrew for a pleasant ring on their 8 followed by a walk across to St Mary for a further ring of 8. Tea was programmed in at this time and most moved on to Wittering where picnics were enjoyed by the side of the Church. The ringing concluded on the light 6 at All Saints Wittering. In total 25 ringers enjoyed all or part of the day and once again an excellent day had been organised by John and Susan Beresford. I can see that task coming your way again.

The surprise major/minor practices have continued on the third Saturday of the month and attendance has been generally good. However, you would be most welcome if you have aspirations towards surprise minor or major or need additional practice on the treble for treble bob. The third Saturday also sees the branch training events and again attendance has been generally good.

September saw the Wellingborough branch organise the Summer Festival and 8 bell striking competition. The event went off very well and as usual we were able to provide plenty of assorted refreshments. Unfortunately, the branch team were unable to secure top spot.

Earls Barton was again the venue for the branch quiz on 13 December. Nine teams entered and the winning team scored 92 out of 100. Perhaps, this event should be organised in the summer when the Hedcocks and Simon Dixon are on holiday !!! The team from Bedford closely followed with 90 points.

Finally, if you have not done so recently then log on to [www.wellingboroughbranch.org.uk](http://www.wellingboroughbranch.org.uk) and look at the excellent work Kevan Chapman has put in to develop our web site.

Tanya Clayton

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER'S PIECE**

Our thanks are due to Alan Chantler for maintaining the Guild website. Since July 28, the website has included a section on the Guild Bell Fund, which was prompted by letters to the Editor of *The Ringing World* during the slanging match (sorry, 'debate') about Suffolk Guild membership fees!

After installing this new page, Alan underwent a successful operation to reduce the severe pain and disability that he had suffered from his back. However a subsequent infection left him in hospital for a further eight weeks. We hope all goes well now!

## **SUMMER FESTIVAL 2008**

The annual eight-bell inter-branch striking competition was held in sunny weather on Saturday, September 20, 2008 at Rushden. Seven of our ten branches entered and the draw was made in advance. Daventry branch were drawn first and arrived straight from a practice quarter peal. Tea was served after the competition, before the meeting and results were announced in the church.

Our President reported that the 2007 accounts had been audited and that Alan Marks was prepared to act as treasurer in the absence of an elected volunteer. Bell fund grants were agreed for Kingsthorpe (£200 for gudgeon box repair); Stanion (£6,820 for rehousing and augmentation) and East Carlton (£3,100 for rehousing). The host tower won first prize in the 100-Club draw!

Our Guild Master thanked the seven branches for entering and introduced the judge, Ben Ricketts. Ben gave a brief description of each piece of ringing and then the results:

1	Kettering	15 faults
2	Daventry	22
3	Guilsborough	28
4	Wellingborough	30
5	Rutland	34
6	Towcester	38
7	Thrapston	52

# Congratulations!



The splendid Harry Wooding Memorial Trophy was presented for the ninth time to the Kettering branch and was received by Jim Bence on behalf of the band from Ben. Perhaps we can break all records this year with ten branches competing at Rothwell on September 19!

The festival ended with much ringing at Higham Ferrers, where over 30 rang on the majestic eight.

*Geoff Pullin*

## EX STEWARD'S STUTTERINGS

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to my 'leaving' present. For those who weren't at the Annual Meeting, when asked, I had requested a casting of the Guild badge as used on one of the new bells at the Cathedral. No, I don't know what I am going to do with it though I do need a new manhole cover in my garden but I don't think it will be big enough.

A few statistics. During my term I had the pleasure of working with 5 different Presidents, Secretaries and Ringing Masters and 6 different Treasurers. During that time The Guild paid out 177 grants totalling £197,015 plus funding the Cathedral bells. At least 10% the grants represent practically two million poundsworth of work. All an achievement of which I think the Guild should be justly proud and long may it continue.

Thank you once again.

Denis Pearson

## **HARVEST TIME AT EVERDON A SPECIAL REUNION**

From the early 1970s until the late 1980s, the annual visit to Everdon to ring a quarter peal for the Harvest Festival evensong was a regular fixture in the diary. It all began in 1968 when a band that included Richard Jones, Christopher Dalton and Geoff Dodd arranged a try-out of the then supposedly "unringable" five. They loved the bells and returned later in the year to ring a quarter for harvest. After Christopher and Susan Dalton moved to the village in 1973 quarter peals were attempted more frequently with visits continuing after they left in 1985 until the bells finally fell silent in about 1990.

During his time at Everdon, Christopher reawakened local interest in the bells and drew on ringers from Badby and other neighbouring towers to ring on suitable occasions often assisted by Richard - who once came under shotgun fire from a local farmer who saw the pigeons he was in the process of excluding from the tower by wiring the belfry windows! - Christopher also made gradual improvements to keep them in ringing order as a characterful heavy five. From then, with some effort, it was possible to coax some fine ringing.

After a few of these quarters and further work on the old frame and fittings, the suggestion of attempting of peal was made. The Queen's Silver Jubilee provided the occasion, and on 11th June 1977 we duly scored a good peal. Christopher, who did not enjoy ringing longer than a quarter peal, had chosen not to ring but he is named as tower-keeper on the framed memento in the tower. Suitable refreshment was enjoyed in celebration of our success, of course, but Geoff had further work to do afterwards. The deal for having the bells for a peal was that he should do some

plastering chez Dalton - an obligation that was well fulfilled in true G.K.D style despite a jolly good lunchtime session!

In time the annual visit developed traditions of its own - an afternoon walk in the fine countryside around Everdon, Jones's tea and cake in the churchyard, Daltons habitual quip "the Lord helps those who help themselves" when approaching the pile of Harvest produce, a well-struck quarter of Grandsire Doubles (rarely reported in *The Ringing World*, incidentally) and an entertaining evening in the pub at Farthingstone to end the day. Quite a few ringers took part in these quarters, but the core band included Jones, Regan, Pickford and, of course, Dalton.

By the late eighties there were worrying signs that the tradition might not continue for ever as before one of our attempts Christopher was to be seen marching purposefully towards the church with Mike Lowndes, carrying a large sledge-hammer. That year it did the trick, and after suitable treatment the wandering frameside in the tenor pit stayed in place for the duration of the quarter. The following year we were less fortunate, and the ringing had to stop just after half-way when the tenor would no longer go up at backstroke. It was clear that it would need more than running repairs if the bells were to be rung again.

Attempts by Richard Jones to make arrangements to have the work done proved fruitless, and our Harvest festival visits came to an end. However, the bells have since been fully rehung in new frames lower in the tower and the village now has a band of ringers of its own - something that was hardly possible with the bells as they were. Their fine sound is unchanged, but the "go" is very much improved.

Soon after Christopher died earlier this year, tower captain Rhona Anderson contacted me to suggest that the band that rang the first peal on the bells might like to come and ring another one in his memory. Initially we had thought of ringing the peal on the anniversary date or on Christopher's birthday. As it turned out, neither of these dates suited all the band and happily we were able to settle on Harvest time instead - an occasion with so many fond memories and pleasant associations for us all.

So, on 21st September the 1977 band duly reassembled to be welcomed by Rhona Anderson and Anne Ford and other ringers from the area – Geoff and Carole Pullin and Peter and Hilary Aslett – before the peal. On the font just outside the new ground-floor ringing room they had put Christopher's photograph among the apples and the framed record of the 1977 peal was on the floor with flowers and other harvest produce. Susan Dalton, son Thomas, his girlfriend Lucie and accompanying wives Heather Pickford and Sylvia Dodd were there too to enjoy the afternoon sunshine and listen to the peal from John and Anne Ford's garden nearby.

The peal duly rung and photographs taken, we all adjourned to the pub for an hour of chat and laughter - remembering Christopher, who was most surely with us in spirit, and reflecting on the bonds of ringing fellowship and mischief and fun that stemmed from "the Dalton years" and that peal 31 years ago. It was all just perfect - as good a commemoration of a dear friend as one might hope to have – and the "1977 five" express their most grateful thanks to the Everdon ringers for having the idea and for their generous and kind hospitality on the day.

CHRIS PICKFORD

## **MAUREEN BASFORD'S BIRTHDAY**

Earlier this year I discovered that Maureen Basford of Northampton was to celebrate her 70th birthday. Naturally, we could not let this milestone pass without recognition!

Maureen has been teaching people to ring on the heavy six at Harlestone for many years. The bells are not the easiest but she has taught many adults to handle them competently. Maureen's indomitable spirit and enthusiasm has kept the bells ringing for services and on other occasions. Recently she took on the even more demanding task of teaching on the six bells at East Haddon - not for the faint-hearted, but here again Maureen's determination has produced a band of older ringers.



On the evening before the big day, a group of locals rang a quarter of Cambridge S Minor. At the conclusion, when we opened the doors of the ground-floor ringing chamber, we were greeted by a burst of applause from many of Maureen's current learners, as well as the birthday girl herself! It was a delight to be able to pay this tribute to such an indefatigable lady.

**Harlestone, Northants.**

21 August 2008

1296 Cambridge S Minor:

Gwynneth White 1,

Hilary Aslett 2,

Geoff Pullin 3,

Jim White 4.

Jason Carter 5,

Colin Lee (C) 6.

Specially arranged to celebrate the 70th birthday of Maureen Basford, churchwarden and teacher of many bellringers over the years

HILARY ASLETT

-----ooOoo-----

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December I was invited along with a number of local ringers to Harlestone Church. A most pleasant evening had been arranged by Maureen Basford to thank us all for helping out with weddings and other special ringing throughout the year, and to acknowledge her special birthday. . We all enjoyed ringing a variety of methods and call changes, socialising with friends and

some warming winter hospitality. So thank you again Maureen on behalf of us all.

Jill Harvey

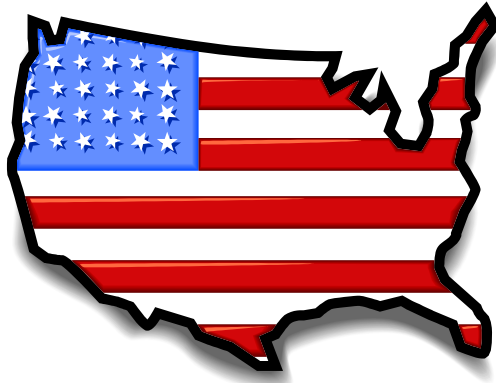
Maureen also initiated a two-page bellringing feature in the Northampton *Chronicle & Echo*, October 2, 2008, p8-9.

## SANTA ALAN MARKS



### Intrigued?

See website <http://tinyurl.com/97qzjh> for a long article 'Merrily on High: In Britain, Bell-Ringing's Eternal Peal' published on Boxing Day in the *Washington Post* about Santa Alan Marks, the Rushden ringers and ringing in England.



## Have you looked up [www.pdg.org.uk](http://www.pdg.org.uk) lately?

- 🔔 Latest and recent **Guild Newsletters** are there for all to read
- 🔔 There is now a section about the **Bell Fund**
- 🔔 The all-branch calendar shows regular **surprise major practices**
- 🔔 There is a section to help with your **tower publicity**
- 🔔 There is a copy of the **Guild badge** for documents or posters
- 🔔 There are direct connections to **branch** and other **ringing websites**



Thanks to *The Ringing World* for permission to reproduce items in this issue

## **GUILD EVENTS 2009**

**APRIL 11<sup>th</sup>**

### **SPONSORED WALK AND SPONSORED RIDE**

The sponsored ride or walk around Rutland Water will again be organised. Further details later.

**APRIL 25<sup>th</sup>**

### **SPRING FESTIVAL**

The festival and six-bell striking competition, open to all towers in the Guild, will be hosted by the Peterborough Branch.

2.30pm – 3.30pm Ringing at All Saints Church, EASTON-ON-THE-HILL (6 bells, tenor 11-0-16, cast by Taylors 1997)

4.00pm Striking Competition at St Nicholas Church, BULWICK (6 bells, tenor 10-0-27, treble new 2002). Running buffet tea at the Village Centre, Bulwick

**JUNE 13<sup>TH</sup> - GUILD AGM**

**SEPTEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>**

### **SUMMER FESTIVAL AND 8 BELL STRIKING COMPETITION**

More details later, ask at your Tower.