

**PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD
OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS**



Newsletter
September 2019

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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 : 28th February 2020
Please make a note of this date in your diary*

Please send your contribution either through your
Branch Press Correspondent or direct to :
e-mail : christopherpearson@btinternet.com or Tel : 01536 420822

The President's Preamble

An unexpected email arrived in my inbox on April 18 from the President of the Central Council of Church Bellringers indicating that I could expect an invitation to a reception for bellringers at the residence of the US Ambassador to the UK, Robert Wood ("Woody") Johnson. It arrived within 24 hours!



I learned later that the Ambassador had been delayed from leaving St Paul's Cathedral after giving his annual speech on Independence Day and was impressed by the bells ringing. He eventually asked how the sound was made and ended up in the ringing chamber. He enquired whether there were enough ringers in the UK for him to entertain a group of 100 or so. On learning that there

were possibly 40,000, he asked St Paul's and the CCCBR for a list to represent the exercise. Hence my invite as your resident and similar invitations covering the country as well as the bell trade and handbell change ringers!

We started to gather outside Winfield House in its 12 acre woodland corner of Regent's Park around 6pm on Thursday, May 9. Eventually around 130 of us were security-checked and could wander around the ground floor with its grand rooms opening onto the rear patio and lawn. After drinks and canapés, the Ambassador circulated and then gave us a brief welcome and talk about his introduction to, and wonder at, the sounds of bellringing. He mentioned that President Trump would be arriving in three weeks time to mark the 75th anniversary of D Day, a highlight of the special relationship. Chris O'Mahoney responded on our behalf and with thanks. He then introduced a team who rang a touch of Stedman Cinques on handbells. Woody succeeded in ringing two bells to rounds afterwards!

I came across ringers representing all parts of the British Isles as well as the USA and bell founders and bell hangers, before slipping away at 7.30pm. A very different evening and a privilege on your behalf.

I hope you are all looking around for a suitable candidate or two who are willing to stand as your President from June 2020!



Geoff Pullin

The Secretary Says...

Hello! Having been elected as Guild Secretary at the AGM, the last few months have been quite daunting, as I work out what it was the Sue did so effortlessly for so long. I will no doubt make some mis-steps until I find my feet; or ask some odd questions, for which I hope you will be forgiving. In the meantime, I would like to thank those who have taken the time to welcome me to the role. One change since becoming secretary is that our spare bedroom wardrobe has acquired a number of boxes of guild materials. If any branch needs more welcome packs, latest reports or Executive Committee photo pages for existing packs, please let me know and I will get them to you.

Since being elected I have tried to get out and meet the guild. If nothing else, taking on this job will improve my navigation and geography no end, I've already found myself in parts of the diocese I've never visited before. Sally the Satnav is working hard to make sure I appear in the right place and then make it home again. Of the 10 branches I have been to practices or branch meetings in 6 of them since July and I can only hope that those I have not yet visited are not feeling left out. Getting out and about is an important part of ringing. Each ring of bells has its own charms and foibles, some of which we find easier to manage than others. Every ringer we meet has the ability to influence our ringing and our life in general. It also provides a ready-made set of acquaintances when we move somewhere new and take that first step into a new tower. Visiting towers and making connections makes us stronger, be that as a branch, guild or ringing community.

I'd like to start my time as secretary by taking stock of the manner in which the guild communicates, both internally and externally.

To that end I've asked each branch to add me to their e-mail list, so that I can keep in touch with what's taking place in each branch – and thank you to those branches that have done so.

There are some branches that appear to have very effective communication methods and I want to try to encourage those areas to share their experience with others such that best practice can be spread more widely. If there is anything you want to circulate beyond your branch, please feel free to let me know and I will forward it on. I want to help the guild come together and be more than just the sum of its parts. If there is ever anything ringing or guild related that you want to ask, suggest, propose, or even just have a moan about, my e-mail is pdgsecretary@allton.org.uk.



Our next guild event will be the Summer Festival on 21st September; you should have seen the posters circulated to the branches already. It would be good to see you there.

Helen Allton

News from the Branches

Culworth Branch

PHILIP CURTIS

Philip passed away on 21st August having battled with severe disability following a brain haemorrhage in early May. Sadly he was unable to recover despite very intensive rehabilitation. He was sixty years of age.

Phil (as he was always known) joined St Peter's ringing team in Brackley in the mid 1980's when he lived in Brackley for a short time. He became a member of the PDG Culworth Branch almost immediately and became Tower Captain at Brackley. He went on to become a long term Branch committee member serving as deputy chair and GMC rep. He arranged the first successful ringing tour to Southern Ireland which led to the formation of the Brackley Area Ringing Tour, this ran for twenty years and he was one of only three people who went on every trip. We travelled from The Channel Islands to Scotland, Cornwall to Norfolk. Phil also did a short spell as Guild Ringing Master.

Phil was a very experienced ringer who taught many people; young and not so young, to ring. He was much called upon to conduct quarter peals and also called several peals over the years. He was always encouraging us to learn new ringing methods and once we'd achieved one goal he'd swiftly urge us on to another!

Phil was also an experienced organist and he played regularly at his local Church in Stratton Audley. He was called on to play the organ for Branch ringing meetings and also for our annual Carol Service.

Philip will be sorely missed here in the Culworth Branch, the



Diocese and the wider Bellingring community.
May he rest in peace.

CULWORTH RINGERS BRANCH OUT FOR A TIME

When rehanging Moreton Pinkney was first discussed the bells were standing on the floor at the back of the church, and the church clock was up in the tower. About 20 years ago the bells had been re-hung in the tower and the clock, which was in the space required for the bells, had been removed to the floor at the back of the church.

Since that time there has been much discussion about recommissioning the clock to a working state. Funding was volunteered for a new clock case, and a faculty for the work was requested. While the DAC considered the matter (for five years) Ian Chapple and Martin Rowling set about problem solving. The previous pendulum was too tall for the proposed cabinet, and there were significant difficulties if it were mounted on the wall with some sort of new connecting mechanism. Ian came up with the idea of constructing a shorter “compound pendulum”, which had a weight at both top and bottom thereby reducing the required length. While not an unknown method, it is uncommon, and raised some eyebrows among “the powers that be”. However the pendulum was constructed and tested in the hope that permission would be granted. Interestingly the following year a clock with a compound pendulum was installed by the National Trust as Canons Ashby, about a mile away.

Late in 2018 the faculty was granted so Ian and Martin, aided by Richard Gough the Moreton Pinkney tower captain, spent many winter days stripping the mechanism, cleaning it, and then putting it back together. Needless to say the task was not without its hiccups, with modifications needed to the cabinet design as work progressed. Thanks to Steve Walker, who co-operated so well with the team.

Finally everything came together (bar the glass panels) two days before the dedication on 24th February when the Archdeacon Michael Ormston congratulated the team on their efforts.

Moreton Pinkney clock group.

RINGING TOUR 9TH MARCH 2019

An early sunny start, whilst waiting on the verge of a country road, somewhere deep in South Northamptonshire, the minibus



loomed over the horizon and we soon scrambled on and set off for our last couple of pick-ups, before heading north in the county. It wasn't long before we arrived in the narrow streets of the civil parish of Cogenhoe and Whiston, overlooking the valley of the river Nene, a boot and shoe village in the 19th century and also a mining village of iron ore and limestone. We parked a good 5 minute walk from the 13th century, St. Peter's Church, built by crusader Nicholas de Cogenhoe and blue skies awaited us as we headed to a belfry of 6 bells ranging from 3cwt 3qtr - 8 cwt 3qtr, rehung in 2003 by Taylor's of Loughborough. We met with Harry and Graham visiting from Hampshire, (who had joined us on last year's tour) and we launched into rounds, call changes, Grandsire and some Cambridge Surprise, before ringing down to set off to our next stop. As we stepped out of the church, a glance back noted a growling black cloud, but it wasn't until we started our return walk, that we noted a swirling grey sky surrounding us, a battering of hail and then nothing short of a cloudburst, meaning a damp, steamy journey to Brafield on the Green! Cold and wet, we were met by the 750 year old St Laurence Church, much of which was rebuilt in Victorian times, a challenging staircase to the ringing chamber, but more importantly . . . the radiators were on!! Six bells, with a tenor of 12cwt. in a large, ringing chamber gave us all a chance to dry out, warm up our muscles and under Ian's persistence, give us all a chance to ring a variety of methods again.

By this time, we were all warm and supple and in the now early-spring sunshine again, we travelled to Yardley Hastings, which according to the Domesday Book, was a fairly substantial village, but with no evidence to suggest there was an Anglo-Saxon church. The present church being dedicated to St. Andrew, patron saint of Scotland, gives a clue to its origin, for the lordship of the manor of Yardley was owned by the Scottish royal family between 1114 and 1237, with the tower being the oldest part of the church. The six bells in the tower (with an 11cwt tenor) were originally cast by Henry Penn of Peterborough in 1723, each bearing the arms of George, 4th Earl of Northampton and rehung in the 1990's. In the bright, white-washed ringing chamber, we worked up a hearty appetite for lunch at the The Rose and Crown and after a swift ring-down, we trotted off over the wooden bridge over Grendon Brook, to a welcome pint! After being suitably recharged



in every sense, with a wonderful meal and convivial chatter, we boarded the coach with a heeded warning, "If you have any problems with grip or handling, these next bells are NOT for you!" A winding journey to the top of an escarpment overlooking the valley of the Nene, we arrived in the village of Castle Ashby, a village set up to service the needs of Castle Ashby House, the seat of the Marquess of Northampton (and the fictional country house of Jane Austen's 'Mansfield Park'). St. Mary Magdalene Church lies adjacent to the House, (but antedates it by some 400 years), the oldest part of which is 12th century, the remainder being 14th and 15th century, had a peal of 5 bells, a long draught and a tenor of over 19 cwt (!), which proved a match to all men to stand it! "Let's stick to something simple!" exclaimed Ian, as he put me on the 2nd and then declared we'll do a 'touch' of Reverse Canterbury Doubles - if you're going to go wrong, then these were the bells to do it on, I reckoned, having never attempted this before! But amazingly, a full (if but a few clangs) course was completed (thanks mainly to the strong band around me!) However, not to be daunted, most of us had a ring, which sufficiently worked off any previous over-imbibement at the hostelry and we were soon on our way, down the valley to Grendon. The church of St. Mary on the corner of Church Way, had a short wooden staircase to its ringing chamber of 6 bells. The ringing balcony (installed in 1999 for the Millennium when 2 new bells were cast by Taylor's of Loughborough and the others rehung), overlooks the nave of the 12th to 14th century church and with a tenor of 14cwt, we tackled another long draught (and a rather pedantic 4th!) and blasted out some Bob Minor and plain courses of Grandsire Doubles.

By this time we were feeling 'old-hands' at this ringing malarkey and arriving to a tower in the centre of a carpeted, centrally-heated church, servicing tea, coffee and biscuits, was like a dream come true!! Wollaston is noted for its shoe industry and is the home Scott Bader chemicals and of 'Doc Martens' until 2003, but we were here visiting St. Mary's church, originally built in the 13th century and held by Delapre Abbey until the Dissolution of the Monasteries. With a 16cwt tenor, a hot drink and a biscuit, it was a difficult motivation for a few of us to ring, after such an action-packed day, but the stoic few took the ropes and sailed into some Bob Minor.

We set off home, literally into the sunset, after a magnificent day



of ringing, with great thanks to Ian and Sara Chapple for organising so seamlessly, such a wonderful tour of some of the prettiest villages in Northamptonshire and giving clear and precise instruction when needed - a 'Ringing Success' all round and boy, did we sleep well that night!

Jenny Griffiths- Greatworth

Other News from the Branch.

Croughton and Kings Sutton had lead stolen in June, several churches were targeted in the area.

The 75th anniversary of D-Day was commemorated on 6th June at Chacombe when a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung by 1. Joy Kirkham, 2. Sara Chapple, 3. Ian Chapple (C), 4. Chris Cox, 5. Paul Bennett (first inside), 6. Richard Solesbury-Timms (first quarter peal).

A good number of ringers gathered for the half AGM and tea at Sulgrave on 20th July, some had their first ring on Sulgrave bells after which the service was led by Rev Brian Fairbank and a delicious tea was provided for us by the ladies of Sulgrave.

Joy Kirkham – Culworth Correspondent

Daventry Branch

People

On February 19, Daventry practice had its highest attendance for 15 months, so it was an appropriate evening to visit Wetherspoons' and expend the £50 that Richard Waddy had bequeathed towards drinks for the regulars.

Cheers Richard!

l to r: Jim, Ann, Kim, Jackie, Mark, Brian, Geoff, Carole, Leanne, Hannah, Justin, Teresa and Miles (Selfie by Hannah using Leanne' phone)



To mark the retirement of the Revd Canon Michael Webber as Rector of the Daventry Team and Rural Dean on March 3, an inscribed model bell was presented to him during his last service by Deena Johnson on behalf of the ringers with thanks for his encouragement and support. Carole Pullin was elected Tower Captain at the Daventry belfry meeting later in March. After five months with us, our waterborne member Sue Merrett and Cassie her new dog, boated northwards in March.

Steeple

Perhaps the operational plans are not so detailed as Richard Waddy's, but maintenance team action has continued at Daventry. A recent 'first' was the need to replace one of the four bolts holding the ball onto the wooden shaft of the tenor clapper! 22 people came along when the tower was open on June 22 as part of Daventry Arts Festival.

Weedon headstocks came back from Loughborough on March 25. The back five headstocks have been converted to ball bearings. All eight have been fitted with twiddle pins to adjust clappers and a new set of ropes fitted.

Flore bells are out of action while £360,000 masonry work is carried out.

Brian Foley has fitted oil retaining pads to Dodford bearings to extend the oiling period from one to three weddings.

Nether Heyford tenor clapper holding bolt snapped at the collar fixing in mid-July, necessitating a new clapper and crown-staple.

Branch Meetings

At Whilton in March, 21 rang and six didn't. The Ven. David Painter took our service, for the last time before he retires again and Michael at the organ had a clear vision of tea as the four hymns proceeded with gusto. Beth

Tremayne was elected as a new member for Daventry. Later, 15 gathered at Great Brington where Joan had kindly cleared the ringing room. There was an interesting episode when Daventry steeple-keeper Leanne was lying on the roadside, ably assisted by new member Beth, to make a get-you-home repair to a broken bumper on a visitor's car!

Twenty seven rang at Everdon in April and 11 more came for the service, tea and meeting. The Revd Barbara Gallagher, taking her first ringers' service, outed herself as a lapsed ringer and came complete with her blue Dove and quarter peal cards. Her experiences of ringing led to an appropriate address before ending with "Before you ask, no, I don't have time to ring.." Tea was under the direction of Jan Clark, famous for her cakes. We elected local ringer

Louise Dungate as a new member. In the evening, 19 gathered cosily at Woodford Halse and nine finished off in the Kings Arms, Farthingstone.



In July, 17 rang and nine didn't at Braunston. Our service was led by the Revd Nat White accompanied by Simon Galt of Barby rattling the windows with the big organ. Braunston ringers served a plentiful tea at the west end. Apologies included a message from Ed

Mortimer, still exploring the inland rivers of eastern France. Anne Brown was elected a member for Braunston. The Secretary reported a request from Harpole seeking our permission for the tower to move to the Northampton Branch. There was willing support. This then led to the transfer of the November branch meeting from Harpole to Litchborough – whose desire to move into this branch was thwarted in a similar process! There were 18 ringing under Gwynneth's direction at Willoughby in the evening, with eight finishing up at The Boat House.

The August meeting was much re-organised! Due to tower work at Flore the venue had long been moved to Nether Heyford. Via Radio Northampton, the chairman discovered a concert was co-timetabled for evening ringing at Weedon so the ringing was swapped at short notice. Unfortunately we forgot to let Margaret Dean know but she arrived at Weedon via Heyford with Peter Box bringing the total to 27, of whom 21 rang. Finally at 4pm the Vicar of Weedon appeared with a message from the Revd Michael to say the A5 was closed, his sat-nav wasn't working, he was lost and was returning home! So Ian Willgress stepped in to lead the service, without sermon, and Jane operated the music player. Guild Master, Simon, and his wife Cathy, the new Guild 100-Club Coordinator, were greeted at the meeting and later the August draw for the 100-Club managed a win for the same Ian Willgress! Christine, our branch treasurer, has reported practical difficulties of paying in cash and cheques to Santander and the Post Office, so she was authorised to open a single replacement account with Lloyds Bank. For the ringing afterwards at Nether Heyford, more stayed than usual - of 27 present, 21 stayed to ring and 13 ended up in The Sun.

Quarter peals

Justin Baker was persuaded to conduct a quarter of Plain Bob Triples at Whilton in February. More Plain Bob Triples was conducted by Jim White on March 17 at Daventry upon the retirement as Rector of the Revd Canon Michael Webber. Plain Bob Royal conducted by Jim White on April 4 was rung in response to a request to mark the 60th wedding anniversary for a couple from the congregation at Daventry.

There, on May 12, Beth Tremayne rang her first quarter peal, ringing the treble to Plain Bob Triples, with Poppy her dog, lolled out on the floor throughout, conducted by Jim White. The Revd Michael Haighton rang his first quarter in three methods



(Kent and Spliced Plain and Little Bob Minor) at Clifton upon Dunsmore on May 16, conducted by Gwynneth. Helen Camps rang her first touch of Grandsire Triples being a quarter peal conducted by Ian Willgess at Whilton on May 19! Yorkshire S Major, conducted by Jim White at Weedon on May 26 was the first on the rehung bells. In June the branch six-bell quarter migrated to Leicestershire for Jan Collins' to ring in two quarters around her new home - St Clements at Saddington and Oxford and Kent at Great Bowden both conducted by Gwynneth. Plain Bob Major at Daventry on July 14, with Jim White conducting, celebrated Brian Foley's 75th birthday. Brian planned to be in it until he became aware of a birthday present trip to Duxford!

Socials and Outings

Fifty turned out for the quiz on February 23 run by Hilary Aslett which ended with a tie-breaker – allowing Everdon to beat its Litchborough challenger. Held in Daventry Band Hall, it made a profit of £177.90.

This year's Badby May Day ringing rally was to seven light rings of six in Berkshire. 21 people visited Brightwalton, Great Shefford, Speen, the Hare and Hounds at Speen for lunch in nice hot surroundings then Shaw, Peasmore, Beedon, where there is a turret over the timber frame which starts at ground level, and finally Yattendon.



At Beedon l to r: *Brian, Jackie, Richard, James, Jim, Ken, Ann, Geoff, Kim, Graham, Andy, Nick, Gwynneth, Anthea, Carole, Daphne, Frances, Chris and Dorothy. Missing: Heather and Eleanor*



The branch outing was successfully organised by Alison Buck, using a 26-seater Poynter's coach driven by the new managing director himself, Dominic Sinclair. Timing was thus immaculate as we visited Kingsbury, Drayton Bassett then The George & Dragon, Alrewas for lunch. We walked to the church where we were joined by Sue and Cassie. With them on board, our next stops were Whittington and Elford. Our final journey along yet more characteristic narrow roads with hump back bridges over canal, rivers and railways brought us to Polesworth Abbey. We a

assembled for the photo after ringing, walked to the Spread Eagle for refreshment and arrived home at 7.50pm.



Outside Polesworth Abbey, left to right: Carole, Geoff, Lyn, Frances, James, Graham, Brian, Jan, Robbie, Jane, Frances, Peter, Angela, Jim, Chris, Gwynneth, Barbara, Doug, Michael, the Vicar, Jenny, Cassie (Sue's dog), Chris, Sue, Alison, Shirley and Kim. Missing: Dominic who took the photo.]

Alison Willgress organised our 'walk and ring' for July 6, the only wet day in three weeks! 14 met at Charwelton to ring then walk to Fawsley where three non-walkers joined in. The walkers ended up at Everdon with damp legs from the 4ft high barley crop in the final footpath. Ten attended the optional evening pub meal at the Heart of England, Weedon.

Geoff Pullin

Guilsborough Branch - No news this time

Kettering Branch

For our March event, we gathered at Maidwell Church and rang a variety of items on the six bells, which ranged from rounds and call changes to some lovely Beverly Surprise Minor. The ringing was followed by a delicious meal at The Stag pub just down the road (free bit of advertising for them!).

There was no branch event in April but teams from Rothwell and Desborough entered the Guild Striking Competition at Cotterstock on April 27th. Out of 17 entrants, Desborough came 10th and Rothwell came joint 3rd. Well done to both teams!



In May, 18 of us went on Colin Ashworth's fantastically well organised outing around towers on the outskirts of Cambridge, 'Saints and Sandwiches'. We visited six towers: Great Gransden, Little Eversden, Orwell, Meldreth, Bassingbourn and Litlington. Journey times had been calculated to the second and we moved between each tower with military-styled precision, and a local with a key meeting us at each church. There was something for everyone with new towers and ringing ranging from Rounds and Call Changes all the way up to Surprise Major.

In July, 23 branch members visited Lamport Hall and had a wonderful guided tour of the House before being able to visit the gardens and the estate church; there was much to see including a surviving Victorian garden gnome! With no ringing available in Lamport Church, a contingent of us then travelled to Haselbech where we rang a variety of different things, ranging from Plain Hunt all the way to Cambridge Major.

News from the Towers

At the end of March, several branch members attended a day's teaching course led by ART (the Association of Ringing Teachers). Those that attended can now begin the accreditation process and will have to pass various criteria (including teaching a learner from scratch to handle a bell safely!) before becoming ART accredited teachers.

On Saturday 16th March, the first peal was rung on the newly rehung and augmented bells at Wilbarston. The method was Cambridge Surprise Minor and took 2 hours and 35 minutes. The team was selected from those who had supported the project and also those who ring at Wilbarston. There were one or two notable footnotes about the team as indicated below. The team was:

Treble: Peter Chilton, 2nd: Ruth Gibbs, 3rd: Murray Coleman, 4th: Steven Millington, 5th: Neil Thomas and Tenor: Nick Churchman. Neil Thomas was Taylor's bell hanger from Norfolk, it was Peter Chilton's first peal for over 52 years, Ruth Gibbs' first peal for over 12 years and it was Nick Churchman's first peal of minor as conductor.

A "have a go" event was held during the village open gardens day on Sunday 5th May. The response was quite amazing with people waiting to have a go all afternoon. As a direct result we had 6 people "sign up" so to speak and come along to practices to learn more about the art; four for Wilbarston and two for Helen and Nick Churchman's new band at Weekley. Three of the beginners at Wilbarston are progressing nicely and the two at Weekley also. These beginners are our first to be taught using the new ART form of teaching and the progress has been quite remarkable. It should be



mentioned that Nick and Helen are now fully accredited teachers of this form. Foundations have also been laid to hold a Summer School for local children whilst they are on their summer holidays, the thought being that we need to attract some young blood into the ringing world. The idea has been discussed with the Wilbarston Primary School chair of governors who has said she will give us all the help we need next year and agreed the earlier the better. Hopefully we can report positively on this next year!

Following the branch outing to South Cambridgeshire earlier this year Wilbarston ringers were quite taken with one or two of the towers that had cameras up in the bell chamber with monitors in the belfry and they are now in the throws of doing a similar thing. There is a power supply in the bell chamber, a monitor ready to use. Once the cameras purchased, the installation can be completed. This is likely to be sometime during September.

By the time this newsletter is published, a similar project will have been completed at the Bell Tower at St John the Baptist Church in Corby. During the 'Ride and Stride' event in September, the tower will be open for anyone wishing to have a go at chiming and learn more about bell ringing. A new camera system is also being installed here and will give potential ringers a fantastic insight into the art of campanology. The Tower would like to thank Martin Steed for installing the system and to the Garfield Weston Trust who gave a grant to go towards a camera system and the Bell Restoration Project.

Kettering Branch towers should send their news to me at edgroome@live.com. If you want to be kept fully up to date with Branch activities, you can ask to receive the monthly newsletter by emailing our Secretary a

shaneward30@gmail.com. You can access our latest news and events on our online noticeboard where we 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. We also now have a Facebook group called 'Kettering Branch Bellringers'; all are welcome to join the group and see all the latest branch news and events.

Thank you for taking the time to read our segment! Until next time...

Edward Groome – Kettering Correspondent



Northampton Branch

Listening and Striking Wrokshop

I've been ringing for just over two years and had the opportunity to take part in a workshop highlighting the importance of listening to improve striking and my ringing in general. It was held at St Mary's church in Dallington, Northampton on Saturday 3rd August. 18 eager ringers, of varying experience, attended, looking for tips to improve their ringing. Led by Jennie Paul the afternoon began with some key theory concepts in relation to ringing and what can have an affect on striking. This included topics such as the size of the bell, the timing of your pull, and whether you are ringing a big bell over a small one and vice versa. The importance of being able to hear your bell when ringing was also covered with a couple of techniques to achieve this, such as making sure to count your place in rounds and watching where your hands are when your bell sounds. There was a very interesting and sometimes challenging exercise of listening to a number of recordings with reducing degrees of error, which helped in tuning me in to which bell was either slow or fast, and whether this was at handstroke, backstroke or both. Whilst I'm generally a fairly co-ordinated person, a clapping exercise for placement, timing and rhythm seemed almost beyond me, but it showed the importance of listening and working together. Then it was on to the bells themselves. This was somewhat of another challenge for me, having not rung for the best part of three months. As the experience in the group differed quite a lot, we started off quite tentatively, but by listening, our striking and rhythm improved as we went along. As Jennie pointed out, you have to be able

to hear your bell, recognise the error, so that you can improve your future blows. Having had a break for tea, we moved on to the mini striking competition. Being slightly handicapped, my group had a go at handbells. The same concepts apply, and it was a little easier on my shoulder. We practised away in our corner of the church, and then performed a short series of rounds. Of the three teams, we were judged to have won. Another certificate for my growing collection.

All in all this was a fabulous afternoon. No matter how experienced or inexperienced you were, you could learn something from this workshop. For me, one of the most important things was to keep doing what I have been doing, and that is watching and listening when I'm not ringing and counting away to methods that I know.

Ringing is a team effort and if we all listen a little closer we can improve ourselves and help others around us.

Charlotte Brierley



Peterborough Branch

Branch Ringing Master's Report

It's been a busy six months with Branch events. At the 8 bell practices held on the first Friday of each month at Castor, we've had a minimum of 10 ringers each time, with up to 16 on one occasion. Whatever their ability, everyone is made very welcome. This means we ring from rounds to surprise methods. Newer ringers are encouraged to attend, and learn to ring on 7 and 8 bells, initially developing their ringing from rounds to plain hunt, and we will soon be moving them onto other methods.

A visit to the Cathedral in January to ring for Evensong was a great success, and I was asked to arrange another visit in June. A very successful conducting Workshop was held in July for those who can ring Bob Minor and wanted to learn to conduct.

Some twenty ringers attended the Branch outing in August, visiting Barrowden, Uppingham, Braunston, Oakham, Greetham and Great Casterton churches. We received a warm welcome and had the opportunity to ring their bells. We travelled through some very beautiful countryside and it was heartening too to visit churches that were so well kept and with such pristine ringing rooms and bells in such good order. The renovations at Barrowden are spectacular and well worth a visit.

We were joined along the way by several visitors: a tourist in Uppingham, some local ringers, and most surprisingly by Jim Lilley who made a very lengthy journey by train from Shoreham on Sea to come and ring with us, notching up his 3,400th tower at our final ring of the day in Great Casterton!

I would particularly like to thank the more experienced and skilful ringers who come along to branch events and who spend a great deal of time supporting and encouraging the less experienced.

Without their greatly valued input our events would not be such a success and we all appreciate them very much.

Hilary Hardie, Branch Ringing Master.

Glinton Tower August 2019

As always, we are indebted to our many non-resident ringers who continue to help us out for special events as well as stalwart members who regularly arrive for Sunday morning ringing – often travelling quite a distance to attend.

When we are able, we still help Maxey ringers, who in turn regularly attend practice night at Glinton and are always very



welcome. Indeed, we all met up at the bells' annual dinner, a lively affair despite starting on a sombre note as we tolled in solidarity for Notre Dame on Maundy Thursday evening.

We have rung for one wedding already this year, and there are two more planned for late August and September.

St. Mary's ringers often join us during August, for which we are always grateful. Six of their band arrived in early July to ring a quarter peal of Mr Frosty's Centenary Doubles in celebration of Elaine and David's birthdays. Then a week later five St. Mary's ringers came to Glinton to support Bob in conducting his first (and, he says, last) quarter of 1260 Doubles. Following the quarter, a touch of St. Benedict Doubles was rung to celebrate St. Benedict's Day. Much cake was then consumed! Bob was congratulated by the tower the following practice night.

The national trend, as commented on in "The Ringing World", is that ringing has serious issues to address on attracting younger ringers. Well, although most of our ringers are representative of an ageing population, we have been fortunate in having several younger ringers coming to Glinton and wishing to continue the exercise either here or at University. Our latest youth members seem to be very keen to continue.

One of our band has recently given birth to a beautiful boy (our next tenor ringer one lady observed mischievously), and we have all been invited to his Christening in August and will ring joyfully before the service.

Our next planned outing will be a tower visit to the Cathedral. The last one was several years ago but much enjoyed by all. We look forward with great anticipation to this event.

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

Jill Cowcill. Tower Correspondent.

King's Cliffe

At the end of March, the much loved and respected Reverend Canon Doctor Lloyd Caddick died peacefully at home. On the evening of April 1st, the passing bell was rung for 87 strokes as his coffin entered the church where it rested overnight in the chancel prior to the funeral the next day.

On April 18th, Maundy Thursday, at 1900 three of our band tolled the tenor for seven minutes joining others doing the same across the country to show solidarity with the people of France following the devastating fire at Notre Dame Cathedral.

Prior to the Sunday service for Christian Aid week a quarter peal of Bob Minor was rung to celebrate the engagement of Tom



White and Amber Yates. The band included Tom's Dad and Grandparents. Tom was a regular member of our band until he went to university last year. We continue to practice on the second and fourth Monday of each month welcoming a number of regular visitors. Our repertoire is gradually building, and we can often include a plain course of Cambridge. Sunday service is generally heralded by the bells although the numbers can be depleted due to our regulars having other church commitments.

Pat Teall. Tower Correspondent.

NASSINGTON TOWER REPORT AUGUST 2019.

We continue to ring with a full band for all services held at Nassington, including two funerals. We see our main purpose as ringing for the Glory of God and calling the faithful to prayer, and this is why we have all our practices on both Monday on open bells and Friday on muffled bells. These are always popular, allowing us to support our leaners as they make progress. Whilst we have concentrated on Bob Doubles over the last few months, we've also had some specific Grandsire practices.

We rang the bells to celebrate the opening of the Nassington Open Gardens weekend at the end of June and tolled for Notre Dame Cathedral. We rang a quarter peal of St Felix in March in celebration of Paula and Terry Wright's first grandchild, Felix.

We also support other local towers where necessary. We rang for two weddings at Barnack, two at Wansford, and one at Yarwell. We rang at Wittering for their Flower Festival.

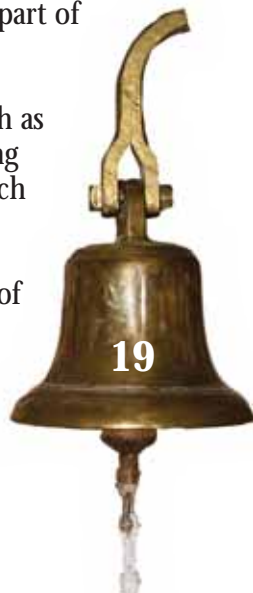
The Guild Spring Festival at the end of April started with ringing at Nassington, and we had 22 ringers from various towers. As part of this, we entered a band in their first Striking Competition at Cotterstock, where we were the most inexperienced.

Ringers from Nassington have supported Branch events, such as ringing at the Cathedral and attended Workshops for learning Bob Minor, and for Conducting. We also went on the Branch outing to ring at Barrowden, Uppingham, Braunston in Rutland, Oakham, Greetham and Great Casterton.

The Tower AGM was held in April and included a clean up of the Tower, before we had afternoon tea at the Vintage Tea Shop in Nassington. We had our own tower outing to Irchester, Rushden and Stanwick so this half year we have rung in more towers than ever before.

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

Brian Hardie Tower Captain



Ufford.

St Andrews Ufford rang on Friday 26th July to celebrate Peter Aires of The Churches Conservation Trust visiting 50 churches in 50 hours marking the 50th anniversary of The Churches Conservation Trust. Peter visited Ufford from St Johns Stamford having arrived by helicopter on the meadows in Stamford. He then left by car to go to East Anglia.

Sally Hudson. Tower Correspondent.

Warmington August 2019

This has been an unusually quiet summer at Warmington with no weddings to ring for, the first time this has occurred. We have continued to ring for Sunday services and our Friday evening practices have been very well supported with the whole band making good progress and rising to new challenges.

This year for the first time ever we decided to enter the Guild striking competition in April. Our brave (nervous) volunteers did well though of course nowhere near the top bands, but we were pleased with our efforts and those of us who didn't ring were very proud of them all. Perhaps more importantly the whole band benefitted from the striking practices we held, tutored by John Riley, and this has gone a long way to improve our ringing on Sundays and at practice evenings and has definitely made us listen harder to our ringing.

In April we also held our annual dinner at the Red Lion, Warmington, and in June we went on our local tour. It was a hot day, but our first stop, ringing the beautiful bells at Finedon, was greatly enjoyed by us all and we were still feeling fairly energetic then. Later we moved on to one of our favourite spots,

Wadenhoe, and after ringing there we sat in the shade overlooking the scenic valley and ate a picnic that proved to be a veritable banquet. With the temperature now climbing well up into the 30s, we did manage to ring up the bells at Stoke Doyle that afternoon but couldn't muster the enthusiasm or energy to ring very much so soon after retreated to Elton garden centre for tea. In late August we will be ringing to say farewell to our vicar Anne Hindle who is retiring. Ann always says she loves the bells and has been very supportive and appreciative. We wish her a very happy retirement.

Sylvia Upex. Tower Correspondent.



Rutland Branch

The Branch Annual Dinner

Thirty three members, from teenagers to octogenarians, attended a very pleasant and entertaining evening in March, at the Wisteria

Hotel in Oakham. After dinner entertainment was provided by our Chairman, Alan Wordie, who gave a fascinating presentation on Shackleton's Endurance expedition to the South Pole, 1914-1916. Alan's grandfather, Sir James Wordie, was the chief scientist and geologist on the expedition.

Ringling for Notre Dame

Following the devastating fire at the Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris on 15th April, eleven Rutland towers responded to the call for bells across the UK to ring out on Maundy Thursday 2019. With most towers opting for tolling, Caldecott; Cottesmore, Gt Casterton, Ketton, Langham, Lyddington, Oakham, Ryhall, Seaton, Uppingham and Whissendine rang on that day in solidarity.

Branch Striking Competition

In May four church teams took part in the branch striking competition for the Beadman Trophy, our hosts for the event being Gt Casterton.

The four tower teams were: Braunston, Gt Casterton, Uppingham and Ryhall. Also competing were two more teams comprised from the other teams, to including branch members who were not ringing with any team on the day, plus a ladies team and a gent's team. Christopher and Edward Groome were the judges, with Braunston retaining the trophy for another year. As a point of interest The Ladies had fewer faults than the Gents!

Guild AGM Seaton

It was Rutland's turn to host the 2019 Guild AGM. There was ringing at Belton, Uppingham and Seaton, with Seaton being the hosts for the service and meeting.

Two Rutland members were awarded honorary 50 year membership certificates, Roger Scholes and Peggy Jennings. Congratulations to both members.



Sue Webster Rutland Branch Correspondent

Thrapston Branch - No news this time

Towcester Branch

I am beginning to learn about all the different experiences ringing can bring, but I can only dream of being invited to Buckingham Palace! So, it was so lovely that one of our branch members had that experience this year - Jim Linnell, who along with his wife Betty, has been ringing at Greens Norton for many years. Jim was nominated to be invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace by residents of Greens Norton Village in recognition of services for the village including many years of bellringing. Jim learnt to ring during the war in 1943 and continues to lead and teach at practices in Greens Norton and Easton Neston. Unfortunately, Betty was not well enough to attend with him but he had support from his regular rugby (and ringing) pal Jon Lovell.



At the other end of the bellringing experience our novice and learner ringers, who now support Sunday Service ringing, are doing well. Katie Douthwaite, who started ringing last July, has now rung quarters on the treble and the tenor. We are hoping we may enable some other new ringers to achieve their quarters in the forthcoming branch quarter peal week. Towcester Branch has worked really hard to support all their learners, and we should thank the group of experienced ringers who give up their time to help develop our skills. This is shown in the successful new practices on Wednesdays (Bradden), Saturday mornings (Cold Higham) and 8 bell practice at Wicken. As a recipient of this time and effort it's not only lovely to develop bellringing skills, but also a fantastic way of extending friendship groups and having fun!



Our regular events such as shared branch practices have continued with mostly good attendance. It's always nice to visit another towers practice and offer support. This year we have had branch practices at Stoke Bruerne, Wicken and Blisworth. This is

another way of building links between towers and something I really enjoy. Something that I find more challenging is Striking Competitions. However, they seem to be an integral part of the ringing calendar so it was with some delight (and bravery on my part) that we all headed off to the Guild 6 bell completion, this year at Cotterstock. It was a very busy afternoon with 16 bands entering. Pattishall entered two bands who did not disgrace themselves but Towcester topped the rankings by winning with a deserving ring of Cambridge. Again, a fun afternoon, with



lovely teas and a great way of

catching up with familiar faces from around the County. Towcester Branch also enjoyed success at the long standing Inter Branch Striking Competition with neighbouring North Bucks. This year it was held at Wicken and although Towcester went home with the trophies, it was not a whitewash and North Bucks rang and won the call changes section.



This year we headed up to Lincolnshire for our annual outing. As always, our trip was well supported and offered all abilities options for some great ringing. My highlight was ringing Grandsire Doubles on the shockingly long draft of Crowland Abbey. More experienced ringers enjoyed ringing Crowland Delight Minor there, and then did a fabulous rendition of Bristol Maximus at the very crooked tower of St Laurence, Surfleet. Before lunch we fitted in another mildly wonky tower at Pinchbeck before moving on to Long Sutton, Gedney and then a lovely first floor ring of 6 at Deeping St James. Although these outing days seem like a big effort to get



there and are definitely a long day, it is just a fabulous way to experience different bells/towers and ring with lovely experienced ringers. Our other summer half day outings have been arranged more locally. Our outing in June was really to give our new ringers some tower experience. However unfortunately none were able to come with us so a small, but keen group enjoyed ringing together at Byfield, Cropedy and Wardington.

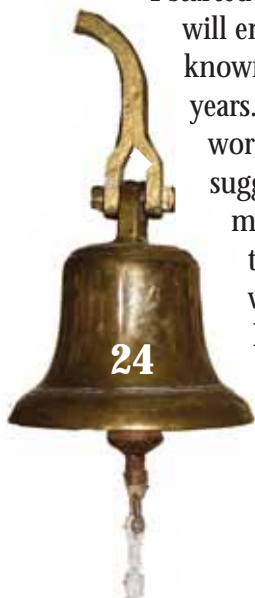


Our other branch news is that Helen Allton has been elected Guild General Secretary and I'm sure will do a very good job.

I started this newsletter talking about a senior branch member and will end it with news of another. George Green, a much loved and known member of this branch sadly died this August aged 90 years. When I rang Richard Yates to ask him to give me some words he gave me his Eulogy from the funeral service, suggesting I edit it. Not knowing George, and knowing that many of you will know him, I thought this was the best way to honour his memory. He sounds a very special man and I will attach a slightly shortened version of the script of the Eulogy to this article.

As usual we welcome any ringers to our practices or service ringing. All details can be found at www.towcesterbranch.org.uk

Nic Boyd.



George Ernest Green was born on 15th December 1928, at Wicken, indeed he was born in the house that he bought for his family home in 1957, and in which his son Andy now lives with his family. His father Albert John was a well-known Wicken Bell Ringer as was his grandfather who shared his name. It was only natural, therefore, that young George should be a ringer too. He was educated at Deanshanger primary school and Towcester Grammar school where he excelled in Maths and played an impressive game of Rugby. George sang in the choir in this church as a boy. From there he went on to London to train as a Maths teacher and was introduced to a better class of ringing with the band at St Mary Abbots, Kensington. He also rang regularly at St Pauls Cathedral and at other London towers that had not been damaged or lost through the efforts of the Luftwaffe. His first peal was rung at All Saints Poplar in 1946, Stedman Caters conducted by Thomas Taffender, one of the ringing 'greats' of the day. Soon after he was elected to membership of the Ancient Society of College Youths with whom he was to ring eight peals, the last being Grandsire Triples at Easton Neston in 2006, when Steph Warboys was master trying to ring with all the Northamptonshire members. However, George realised that teaching was not for him and he returned to Wicken. After a period of National Service in Aldershot, George returned once more to Wicken and joined his brother Jack in the family woodworking business. He married Margaret and they had five children. George moved on in his career to jobs in the Post Office and Lloyds bank, where he remained until retirement.

As well as ringing at Wicken, George had been a regular at the Monday night practice at Stony Stratford, where many of us benefited from his experience and conducting ability and kindness in providing lifts. Following retirement, he moved from Wicken to Hardingstone to a smaller bungalow and he started ringing at Piddington, Moulton, Nether Heyford and Pattishall, where his experience was much welcomed. Again, when Towcester augmented the bells to twelve George rang there, his experience on 12 helping the new band to gain experience in Stedman Cinques and Cambridge and Yorkshire Maximus. He always enjoyed an outing, and although he was only of small stature, he was a master on a heavy bell. On one outing they went to Exeter Cathedral, the second heaviest peal of bells in the world, tenor 72cwt. George, never shy of challenge, made straight for the tenor box, a very large box, he pulled the rope and the bell stayed still, he pulled until it came off



the balance and lifted him up off the box and deposited him on the flour. Not being one to give up George scrambled back onto the box regained control and rang the bell faultlessly. This story was always told to new ringers who came to Wicken in the Lych gate the rest of the band having beat a hasty retreat to the pub. The longest anyone has been caught by George in the Lych gate was 45 minutes. George went on many outings ringing in many towers and cathedrals, including a quarter peal at Wells. For those of you who like records, George rang 251 peals, conducting 58, he rang 49 of those at Wicken. His last peal was Yorkshire surprise major at Moulton on Trafalgar day 2007, there is a peal board in Moulton tower recording the event. I am proud to say that I rang in 50 of his peals.

Wellingborough Branch

We begin with the sad news of the loss of Frederick Henry Walker (known as Eric), a member of this branch who rang at Wollaston. Following a request for all towers to ring in the millennium, a new band was formed at St Mary's Wollaston, and at the age of 79, Eric learnt to ring church bells. His tutor was the tireless Rex Line with assistance from Anne Hickling, Ivor Dickin and John Holmes. A team was formed and trained and did indeed ring in the millennium at St Mary's Wollaston.

Eric assisted with a big fund-raising effort to put in rope guides, change the bearings, refurbish the clappers and purchase new ropes. Under the guidance of Tower Captain John Beresford, Eric became quite proficient at the simpler methods and really enjoyed Grandsire. He lived ringing the bells and was delighted when a quarter peal conducted by Alan Marks was rung for his 80th birthday in 2000.

Due to health complications, Eric stopped ringing in 2011 but he was always happy to see the bells being rung for Sunday service and retained his membership of the Guild until the end of his life. Eric died peacefully in his sleep on 21st May 2019. The Wollaston ringers and friends rang his coffin into the church for his funeral on 14th June 2019 and also rang him on his way to the Nene Valley Crematorium. A quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles was rung in memory of Eric on



the day of the internment of his ashes in St Mary's Churchyard Wollaston on Saturday 27th July 2019.

On Saturday 13th July 2019, ringers from the Wellingborough and neighbouring branches took the opportunity to ring in a number of the college churches in Oxford. The tour was organised by Odette Dawkins who was able to arrange for two ringers from the University to accompany us and let us into all of the venues.

We were able to ring at four college churches including the Cathedral church of Oxford set in Christ Church College. We rang at two further towers in the city of Oxford which were not part of the University. There were approximately twenty ringers who took part during the day . We rang at Carfax Tower which has six bells the tenor weighing 15 cwt, Lincoln College with a 7 cwt ring of 8, three 10 bell rings and the twelve bell ring at Christ Church Cathedral where the tenor weighs 31 cwt.

Regrettably the first tower of the day at New College which should have been a ten bell ring we could only manage nine bells as one of the bells had lost its clapper. Despite this we had an enjoyable ring before moving on to Magdalen College. During the course of the day we rang a significant number of methods from Rounds up to Stedman Caters, some more successfully than others! We had plenty of choice for lunch venues and some of us enjoyed the benefits of a local tavern at the end of the days ringing. A very enjoyable day was had by all and we felt privileged to be able to ring in some very fine buildings set within the very impressive historic colleges.

Simon and Cathy Dixon recently celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary and a quarter peal of 1260 Grandsire Triples to celebrate this was rung on Sunday 18th August 2019 at Rushden.

Thomas Coulter-Brophy - Wellingborough Correspondent

Public Relations Officer's Piece

SPRING FESTIVAL

We met in the cold gales that followed the tropical weather of Easter at Cotterstock. The villagers organised afternoon teas in the village hall to welcome the mass influx, somewhat more purposeful than their usual tourists. The recently



restored bells provided a good venue for the Six-Bell Striking Competition. Earlier, Nassington, also recently restored, were available for general ringing.

Team leaders received a phone call from the Guild Master to tell them their start time. The message began with the startling news that there were 17 entries and practice time was thus reduced to two minutes! Not since 1989 have there been so many entries!

The arrangements worked well except the weather was not conducive to sitting in the churchyard. Only the judge and the Master (in the porch) heard all the teams – what stamina!

The village hall is a quarter of a mile walk from the special car park in the field beside the church and was not deemed big enough to host the results. So there was a surge back into the church at 6pm of those remaining and eager to spread the results phoned to their early-leaver colleagues. While the certificates were prepared, we held the draw for nine raffle prizes raising £89 for the Guild Bell Fund. The 100-Club monthly draw followed.

The President welcomed everyone and there was loud applause approving the vote of thanks. Nick Churchman on behalf of the Kettering Branch proposed it to Hilary and Brian Hardie for making the local arrangements for us to ring at Nassington prior to the striking competition and to Rev. Jane Tailby for the use of Nassington bells, to Rev. Anne Hindle for allowing us to hold the competition at Cotterstock and for the use of the bells after the competition, to

Rev. David Bond for being on duty welcoming and directing outside the church, to Sylvia Upex, the Peterborough Branch Secretary, for co-ordinating all the local arrangements and liaising with Dawn and her team of helpers for the teas, to Nick Elks for making the car parking arrangements, arranging a venue for the judges and other local arrangements alongside Alex Dyer, the Peterborough Branch Chairman and to everyone for coming!

Then, as Guild Steward, Nick proposed a grant of £1,100 from the Bell Fund to Weedon Bec towards the cost of replacing the plain bearings with ball bearings on the back five bells and to fit twiddle pins on the front three headstocks at a cost of £10,933 by John Taylor & Co. Everyone was in favour.

The Guild Treasurer reported that he had managed to transfer some Guild money into different accounts to earn more interest and gave a round-up of financial affairs. Future Guild events were



publicised (Summer Festival - Rushden on September 21 and the Spring Festival 2020 - Helmdon on April 25).

At last, Simon Dixon, the Guild Master was able to introduce the very patient judge, Christopher Groome, a Life Honorary Member and former Guild President. Christopher informed members that due to the large number of teams entering the competition he would only give the results but would be happy to talk to individuals after the meeting. He said that there were two main issues where teams lost points. They were lack of consistent open hand stroke leads and getting to grips with the odd struck 5th. Christopher launched into the results, last first and presented certificates for taking part to:

17th Nassington (this team included four Ringing Remembers recruits)

16th Peterborough St John

15th Pattishall A

14th Warmington

13th Daventry

12th Crick

11th Orlingbury

10th Desborough

9th Kings Cliffe

8th Yelvertoft

7th Pattishall B

6th Badby

5th Northampton

3rd= Rothwell

3rd= Rushden

2nd Thrapston

1st Towcester

Richard Allton was presented for the second year running with the Weaver Shield.

The Master presented Christopher with a bottle of wine to help him recover from three hours of continuous judging! The meeting closed at 6.45pm.

Ringing continued until 7.30pm when the gathering slowly dispersed with several groups finding their way to The Shuckburgh Arms at nearby Southwick!





Richard Allton receives the Weaver Shield from Christopher Groome.

Geoff Pullin

AGM

Guild AGM 2019

Despite, or because of, the atrocious wet weather there was a good collection of people gathered on June 8 ready to start ringing at Belton-in-Rutland and then on to Uppingham. At Seaton, there was ringing before the service taken by the Revd Canon Jane Baxter, which included different ringers' hymns. The collection at the service raised £165.69 (and 40 euro-cents!) for the Bell Fund.

After a splendid buffet tea in the village hall provided by the Rutland Branch, the President loudly gavelled the meeting into life. An all embracing vote of thanks was proposed by James Thorp of the Peterborough Branch and passed in the requested 'raucous' manner.

Four members have reached 50 years membership and the President presented Peggy Jennings (Oakham), Paul Loxston (Bulwick) and



Roger

Scholes (Harrington & Ryhall) with certificates and that for Sue Parker (Bulwick) was saved for another day.



The Secretary proposed Alan Marks for Life Honorary Membership of the Guild speaking of his 10 years as Guild Treasurer, his willingness to visit branch practices, his wisdom, sense of humour and his attendance in the pub after any ringing event to socialise with members. Brenda Dixon, past President, seconded, speaking highly of his work

upon volunteering to take up the Treasurer's role, as well as serving various branch roles. All agreed and the President presented Alan with a certificate.

On behalf of the Thrapston Branch Alison Byrnes proposed, seconded by Ted Buckby, and everyone agreed that Len Hallifax also be elected as a Life Honorary Member for his outstanding service over many years.

The formal approval of minutes, accounts and the report was followed by agreement that subscriptions remain the same for 2020 (Adult £7, student £3.50, peal fee 20p per rope).

Nick Churchman, in his last proposal before retiring after 11 years as Steward, successfully sought £1,450 from the Bell Fund for Weekley to have John Taylor & Co to repair the frame. £1,000 was also agreed for the administrators to use for minor grants.

Geoff Pullin was re-elected President, for the last time he warned.

Simon Dixon and Chris FitzGerald were re-elected as Master and Treasurer respectively. With Sue Jones retiring, there were two candidates for Secretary: Alison Byrnes (Thrapston Branch) and Helen Allton (Towcester Branch).

Whilst the tellers were counting the votes, John Beresford was elected our new Steward. Paul M Mason was agreed as the new Peal Secretary while on holiday ringing peals, thus releasing Derek Jones from one of his two remaining jobs. His other job was 100-Club Coordinator, which he set up in 1986 and has run to raise money for the Bell Fund ever since. This was kindly taken over by Cathy Dixon.

With the result of the ballot revealed in favour of Helen, Alison



was prepared to be Public Relations Officer thus relieving Geoff of this job after 12 years.

Remaining as Webmaster he revealed that the annual hits had increased by 33% since last year with Latest Guild News, Towers and Events still the most often visited pages.

After agreeing expenses for representatives attending the CCCBR annual meeting, questions were asked about their role and number now that decisions are being made by the Council Executive with no votes taking place. The representatives will report back at our Summer Festival.

The President summed up two requests for help from Rob Palmer:

1. To complete for this diocese all the details, especially frames, for Dove on-line.
2. To update the Guild's Inventory of Bells published in 1989 and to record all the bell inscriptions, especially for bells cast since 1878.

Murray Coleman displayed items from the late Denis Pearson's collection of ringing books and records. A list of items still available until the end of the year is showing on the website Latest Guild News page.

The meeting ended with a presentation of a bouquet of flowers to Sue Jones to mark the end of her nine years as our Secretary.



There was more ringing at Seaton till 9pm under the Master's gentle marshalling and then The George & Dragon provided the finale.

GHP

Learning the Ropes Festival, Norwich. Sat 3rd August 2019

I first saw this event advertised in the ART July Newsletter. I was mindful of the fact that during the past eleven months I have been unable to attend any teaching lessons or to ring anywhere

except my home tower due to work and family commitments, and the event simply took my fancy because of those thoughts, also the cost was reasonable, it was for improvers like me and it simply looked like it might be good day out in a city I didn't know well, so why not give it a shot.

I was up early on the big day luckily it was a beautiful summers morning, I left home at 6 am aiming to be at the Norwich Park & Ride for eight. I had never visited Norwich city centre before so I was trying to give myself plenty of time to arrive, use the bus and find the venue for signing-on, all went smoothly with even time for a decent morning coffee.

At Signing-On I started to meet up with other ringers and teacher/helpers, some people were on familiar territory and others just like me carefully feeling their way forward not knowing exactly where to go or who to meet up with, but it was all relaxed and in good humour. Most people had pre-booked workshops for focused sessions; £5 for a half day / £10 for a day of two sessions. Those who needed them were issued with street maps and sent on their way into wilds of Norwich city centre.

I had booked Foundation Skills Workshop for the morning which mainly focused on Call Changes, which I have never really cracked, this was an excellent session, with twelve of us improvers in one tower with an experienced helper for each three/four of us. We had fun, many laughs, much open discussion and many tales of learning experiences good and bad ! The simulator was working overtime so no local residents were disturbedmuch.

We concluded our morning session at midday and off we went to find lunch which was easy, but the main attraction was an hour of open ringing at St Peter Mancroft, a very large parish church

(almost Cathedral like) slap bang in the middle of the shopping area of Norwich. All abilities were able to ring in the newly

refurbished ringing-chamber, it was light and airy with a huge pane of glass overlooking the interior of the church. There was a real buzz about this place and there must have 60/70 people



hoping to have a go. I enjoyed immensely ring rounds on the seventh for a few minutes with all age groups and abilities, I had never rung on twelve before and those few minutes alone made the two hour drive worthwhile.

In afternoon I booked "Say it out Loud" which focused on learning to use your voice assertively while ringingnot

exactly my forte either ! We heard explanations of the common ring terms ; "Look to" " Downwards" etc etc and all the variations were discussed . We got to practise all those and then moved on to when or at what point precisely the various instructions should be called during Rounds, Changes or Methods.

Everybody had a go, clearly some people find it fairly easy to address a group (especially school teachers it appeared) while to others it doesn't come naturally. It was another excellent session which I believe was enjoyed by all who participated.

At about 4:30pm Open ringing commenced at four towers in the city centre, two had been in use during day and two 'new' towers. I decide to try and get to all the three venues that I hadn't rung at earlier in the day, I managed this with a shortish walk between the churches; I rang a medieval bell cast in around 1450 if I remember correctlythose bells were a bit awkward, the Tower Captain seemed very proud of his difficult old bells ! In another venue the ringing chamber was very cosy, it felt like you could just stretch your arm out and touch the opposite rope. In my final venue we were surrounded by Antiques.....no not the ringers ! (it's an Antique Centre in old church) I imagine these bells are

not rung very often, the very light treble was a bit flighty. Some of the ringers were not antique, quite the opposite in fact , one very slight young lady had to stand on three boxes and her older sister managed with just two boxes, they were both absolutely confident at ringing, a joy to see.

I would like to say a big congratulations and huge thanks to the Organising Team and all the Helpers.

All in all I had a memorable day out, when it happens again I would certainly recommend it.

Ian Webb



Guild 100 Club

100 Club Winners

MONTH	Subscribers	1st Prize		2nd Prize	
JAN	111	110W	44.40	57N	11.10
FEB	111	135W	44.40	103K	11.10
MAR	110	01K	44.00	121K	11.00
APR	114	11W	45.60	112N	11.40
MAY	108	87W	43.20	01K	10.80
JUN	111	60N	44.40	120W	11.10
JUL	110	50P	44.00	97C	11.00
AUG	112	46D	44.80	13K	11.20

Cathy Dixon



