

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS



NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2026



Guild Officers

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Newsletter News

Welcome to a new look for the PDGCB newsletter. My name is Duncan Lilly, and I'm taking on the role of Newsletter Editor for the Guild; following in Jonathan Stuart's mighty footsteps.

Some of you may already know me from my habit of turning up at any branch and guild practices that I can make! I would like to thank Jonathan for his tenure in the role, and I hope I can continue his work; with a few design changes to hopefully catch the eye.

Perhaps the most noticeable change is the use of a photograph on the cover - I hope this will make people more likely to pick up this newsletter and read it! I've gone with Peterborough Cathedral to open with as the home of the Guild, but I'd like to feature different branches each issue - so if you have a high resolution image of a tower, bells or any ringing-related items in your branch

(one that you took and therefore own the copyright on) and think might make a good cover, please let me know! To misquote the mighty Tony Hart; I can't promise to feature every submission, but I will look at every picture!

Speaking of photos, if you're submitting anything for print, please include the original images alongside your text - if I need to crop or otherwise tweak an image, it's much better to work from an original to preserve the quality.

Please send any comments, constructive criticism or contributions for future editions to newsletter@pdg.org.uk. All copy for the January edition must arrive by Saturday 12th December at the latest (ideally earlier if possible, please!) Thank you.



Duncan

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President's Piece



The AGM went off without any arguments this year, I am glad to say. The event was well hosted by the Wellingborough branch at Ilchester. Thanks to all who attended.

Many thanks to Cathy Dixon for taking over the Training Officer role, and to Duncan Lilly for taking over the role of Newsletter Editor.

However that still leaves five Guild Officer roles currently vacant, crucially the roles of Secretary and Master, which are Executive roles.

This leaves the Executive with three members – which is only just quorate to enact the ongoing business of the Guild. Thus the Guild urgently needs at least a Secretary to continue to support ringing across the Diocese.

We need members to seriously consider standing for the vacant posts, or maybe nominating someone else for a post, so that the Guild can continue in the years to come.

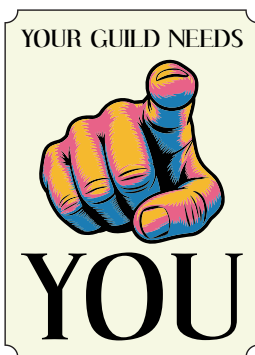
So if you are thinking about standing or can recommend someone to stand then please

talk to any one on the Executive – see contact details on the inside front cover. Please feel free to contact me to discuss it at any time.

The vacant posts are:

- **Master** (Executive post)
- **Secretary** (Executive post)
- **Report Editor**
- **Public Relations Officer** (could be split)
- **Youth Officer**

You can find the current Role Descriptions on the Guild website against each post on the **Officers** page, but this can be varied by discussion with the Executive.



See also my update from the AGM on page 8, under the heading **Join the Team**

The Guild can only run as it currently does through the voluntary support of a great many Members – so please do give it some thought. Thank you.

Alistair

Treasurer's Tally



Guild Admin Matters

The three members of the Executive Team have recovered the majority of the papers and files from the Master and the Secretary. We have shared the tasks out between us and will continue to do so. The quality of service may reduce, but we will try our best for the good of the membership.

Many thanks to Cathy and Simon Dixon, who have added the Training Officer role and New Member Packs to their portfolio.

If anyone else thinks they can pick up elements of the vacant posts, please contact Alistair, John or myself. If it is a logical change, we will consider it, but it is not our intention to create too many separate roles.

Member Update Forms

I have not received many member update forms this year. Can all secretaries or treasurers in charge of membership renewal please ensure that I have a copy of any completed forms? This will help us keep contact and maximise the Gift Aid receipts

we receive from HMRC. I am happy to receive them either in hard copy or by email.

Remember that with the recent changes in the freezing of tax-free pay, many pensioners now potentially fall into Gift Aid schemes, so please encourage them to complete the forms.

Lloyds Bank Charges

Lloyds Bank have changed their approach to charges for charities. We have moved from totally free banking to a situation where we are only allowed to class one entity as the charity bank account, so all our branches are now being charged for some activities.

If you have an opportunity to pay to any of the Guild bank accounts electronically (free), we would ask you to take it and be sure to put a relevant reference on the payment to identify it. Any cheques paid cost 50p, which makes a hole in the 100 Club surplus, and the same applies for clothing payments.

Youth Ringing

RWNYC 2026

The Ringing World National Youth Contest 2026 was held in Nottingham on Saturday 4 July. 325 young ringers attended in 43 teams. The winners in the 6-bell Call Changes (the *Linda Garton Trophy*) were Guildford Young Ringers, followed in second place by Daventry PDG Young Ringers, followed by the nine other teams in this class. Very well done to Justin and his team!



The PDG Daventry team with supporters.
l to r: Flynn, Zack, Kaiden, Daniel, Sahib, Helen, Olivia, Emma, Theresa, Caitlin and Justin.

Coordination

We would like to ensure that all pockets of youth ringing in the Diocese are connected, to encourage them to strive for excellence and to continue through their tertiary education and beyond. The coordinating role of Youth Officer remains vacant, and we would love to hear from anyone who feels they can contribute to the cause. DBS checks would be necessary.

Bell Fund

Grants paid

I am happy to report that bell projects in Badby (£8,400) and Corby (£2,000) have benefited from Bell Fund grants and are now complete. I hope that the ringers are happy with the results of the work.

Donating for free to the Fund

The three initial members who signed up to the **Easy Fundraising Scheme** have raised over £850 for the Bell Fund over the last 3 years. If all members were signed up, that would have been £283,000!

After slow recruitment initially, we have been able to recruit another seven to the scheme in 2026, so we hope to expand those donations. We have just received the 3rd Quarter payment of £145.

Under the scheme, companies that members buy from online give donations to the Bell Fund, and recently a small number of retailers have added in store purchases as well. Please see an extended description of the scheme at the PDG website on pdg.org.uk/latest-news/free-donations-to-the-guild-a-call-to-arms.

If you feel that you could add to these free donations, please check out the process on the Guild Website at www.pdg.org.uk. Should you have any concerns, contact the Treasurer on 07761 180369 or treasurer@pdg.org.uk.

100 Club - or should that be 200 Club?

Well done to Cathy and her team for getting the membership of the monthly draw up to over 200. Please keep supporting the team to raise funds for the Bell Fund – contact your local 100 Club coordinators.

Annual Paper Quiz

Cathy and Simon are nearing the conclusion of writing the latest Guild Paper Quiz. I know some of you are big sellers. The quiz will be launched at the Guild Summer Festival. If anyone would like to take part; please buy one there; or contact your local branch representatives.

Master's Travels

The highlight of April was the Spring Festival hosted by the Rutland branch. Brooke and Braunston towers proved to be excellent locations for the two competitions with 11 teams taking part. The certificates were presented by the High Sheriff of Rutland who came to see what bell ringing is all about and rang some backstrokes to confuse the judges.



The winners of the Rounds and Calls competition were The Welland Valley Benefice team. The High Sheriff of Rutland, Susannah Fish, presented the Centenary Trophy.

The cathedral retained the Weaver's Shield and Welland Valley won the Centenary Trophy. The afternoon was recorded by Rutland and Stamford Radio and my interview was broadcast on Sunday morning. The splendid tea and arrangements by the

CCCBR Matters

Developments at CCCBR over the last few years have started to bear fruit. Amongst other things the assistance is available on the CCCBR website under the "Resources" menu to assist with:

- Recruitment and retention
- Learning and development
- Noticeboard basics
- Bell ringing Branding and Publicity

Chris FitzGerald
treasurer@pdg.org.uk
07761 180369

Rutland branch made the afternoon a huge success; thank you to everyone who helped.

A ten bell practice was held in May at Peterborough Cathedral. Fourteen ringers gathered and enjoyed ringing on 8, 10 and 12 bells. We rang rounds and call changes, Plain Hunt on 7 and 9, Grandsire Caters and 3 spliced Surprise Major. It was lovely to see people from all corners of the diocese.

The Kettering branch open day in May was a huge success- raising funds towards the restoration project at Stoke Albany. Sarah and I stewarded at 3 towers on the day including Medbourne - an extra tower in the Leicester Guild. The day was a huge success and a great way to finish my year as master.

In July we held an eight bell practice at Welford. On a hot Saturday morning members gathered to ring Stedman, 4 Spliced Surprise Major, Grandsire Triples, Plain Bob Triples, Cambridge Surprise Major. Tea, coffee and biscuits kept everyone comfortable and several people tried something new.

Thank you to everyone who has supported me and the events during my year as Master. It's been a pleasure.

Jim

Annual General Meeting



We had a good AGM meeting at Irchester on Saturday 13th June, many thanks to the Wellingborough branch for hosting us.

At the service, taken by Reverend Debbie Smith-Wilds, the following names of members who had died in the last 12 months was read:



Will Adams (Whitfield), John Beadman (Brooke), Janet Bowers (Whilton), Alan Chantler (Yelvertoft), Ellena Christie (Hellidon), Len Hallifax (Lowick), Roy Hibbard (Castor), Tim Holt (Great Casterton), Michael Hurst (Twywell), Janet Ingram (Lyddington), Phillip Lindley (Yardley Hastings), Bert Ogle (Willoughby), and Stella Wilkinson (North Luffenham)

The following were congratulated on being members for 50 years:

- Richard Beadman, Braunston, Rutland
- Tony Brunton, Brixworth, Guilsborough
- Claire Yates, Potterspurty, Towcester

Admin

Subscription rates remain the same at £10 for Adult members and £5 for those in Full-time Education.

Peal fees remain as zero pence per rope; and Reports £5 unless pre-ordered by the end of February.

Bell Fund Grants

- A Grant of £5,300 was approved for major work at Stoke Albany.

- A Grant of £350 was approved for minor works at Maxey.
- An "ex gratia" Grant of £200 was approved for minor works at Brixworth.
- The Steward was given authority to approve up to £2,000 on minor works.

A Grant request from All Saints Northampton was declined by the Committee: Giles Willson offered additional background information and asked that that decision be reviewed.

Election of Guild Officers

The results of the Elections are as listed in the Guild Officers table on page 2.

The Central Council representatives are confirmed as: Nick Elks; Simon Dixon; Sarah Bence; Alistair Donaldson.

The Secretary reminded the Meeting that under the Guild Rules, the Executive can make an appointment to a Vacant position at any time and that is then effective until the next AGM.

Noted that the current Roles (see website) can be adjusted to suit what members feel they can offer, and that delegation of particular elements is encouraged in the current Role Descriptions.

The President thanked the Secretary for additionally covering the PRO role over the last year, but felt this should not continue.

The Executive had discussed forming a team under the PRO to take on Social Media, Communications to outside parties, and News Collation for Website and Newsletter.

In the coming year the Executive will look again at adopting computer systems to lighten the load of both Guild and Branch Officers. If any member would like to be involved in selecting appropriate systems please contact the Treasurer.

Safeguarding

Copies of the Safeguarding Officer's Report and a new form to be completed by Visiting Ringers were circulated for comments as the Safeguarding Officer will be meeting the Diocesan Team in the next few weeks.

Any Other Business

Andrew Gunstone proposed that the Executive look again at the Structure of the Guild with a view to better matching the number of roles available across the Guild with the number of volunteers coming forward. Please would each Branch nominate a representative to join a Review Group to consider this.

Join The Team

Since the AGM the Executive have met to discuss how to cover the five vacancies noted above.

In order to keep open lines of communication within the Guild and to the outside world the generic Guild Email addresses of the vacant positions will be re-directed as follows:

- Master & Youth to the President
- PRO to the Steward
- Secretary & Reports to the Treasurer.

In addition a new email address will be created membership@pdg.org.uk in order to streamline processing of both new membership forms and of renewal forms. Please speak to the Treasurer before sending in any newly completed forms.

Any Member who could consider taking on any part of the vacant roles listed above, maybe joining a team as outlined under PRO above, are encouraged to contact a member of the Executive to discuss what they can offer to support the Guild in the coming year.

So...

- 👤 If you think the Guild does a good job; please come on board to help keep it running. There are several proposed events and activities that may not take place without volunteers coming forward to help.
- 👤 If you think the Guild could be improved; do come on board and tweak or radically shake what the Guild does.
- 👤 If anything is holding you back from volunteering; please let us know and we may be able to resolve that.

Finally; grateful thanks to all those Officers who have kept the Guild running so well over the last year.

Alistair Donaldson



How to Progress in Ringing



Some thoughts from the Guild Training Officer... I was fortunate enough when I learnt to ring (many decades ago!) to do so in a tower which had, at that time, a very healthy band with a number of very experienced ringers. This meant that, not only did I learn to handle a bell quite quickly, but also I had people on hand to teach me how to ring methods and who were willing to take me to other practice nights and branch meetings to get the experience needed to make quite rapid progress.

I suspect that this is not the case for a lot of ringers. But is it necessary?

There is a lot of talk about recruitment. For example, it is one of the key parts of the Central Council 2030 scheme. And rightly so – if there is not a large enough pool of ringers, how can we hope to keep all our tower bells ringing?

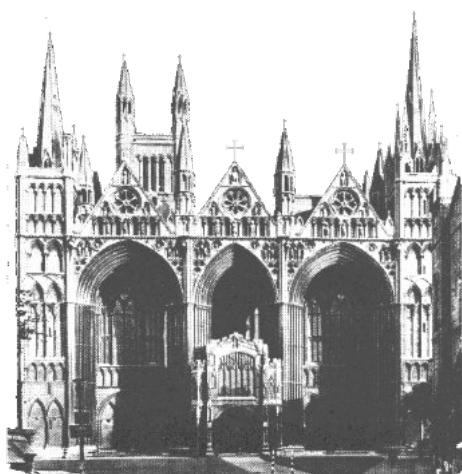
But I believe it is also important to talk about retention of active ringers. The Guild constitution states that our aims include *“encouraging the art of change ringing”* and *“helping ringers improve their standard of ringing”*. If we can meet these aims then I am sure that more individual ringers will be able to enjoy their hobby and therefore be less likely to quit.

Where does formal training come in? If, like I did, you learn to ring in an active well-established band, it is fun to learn – as you feel you have the support on hand to make progress at your own pace. However, if you have a band that consists of a lot of relative newbies, maybe as a result of a recruitment campaign e.g. *‘Ring in 2000’*, *‘Ring for the King’* or as a result of local work done on the bells, it may be more difficult. As you attempt something new, you may have one or two others in the band each time who are also less than totally confident of what they are doing. A training course may be the answer to help you make progress.

On a dedicated training course, you can expect to have some clear instruction about how to approach the next step, then a chance to ring with an experienced band ringing around you, followed by some personal feedback on your ringing. You can then return to your regular band with increased confidence to get more practice. Many of the branches are now putting on training courses and until the end of 2025 Simon and I organised a range of Second Saturday Sessions around the Guild.

I am no longer in a position to organise courses on a monthly basis but I do want to help. So, if you, as an individual or part of a band, want some guidance on how to tackle the next step, do get in touch and I'll see what support can be offered.

Cathy Dixon,
Guild Training Officer
training@pdg.org.uk



From the BellBoard Footnotes

Firsts

First Quarter

Duncan Lilly (*Middleton Cheney 25th May*)
Chris Lines (*Middleton Cheney 25th May*)
Nikki Payne (*Crick, 11th July*)
Stuart Payne (*Crick 11th July*)
Aubrey Hutton (*Barton Seagrave, 18th July*)
Mick Patterson (*Barton Seagrave, 18th July*)
Carl Johansson (*Duston, 18th July*)

First Quarter - Minor

Daniel Counsell (*Desborough 19th April*)

First Quarter – Major

Kaiden McCreath (*Daventry 19th July*)
Liz Heath (*Daventry 19th July*)

First quarter behind

Clara Pedersen (*Peterborough St Mary, 10th May*)

First quarter away from cover

Zack Pope (*Daventry 26th April*)
Dan Bulley (*Guildsborough 13th May*)
Kaiden McCreath (*Daventry 19th July*)

First Quarter inside

Jonathan Gibbs (*Lyddington, 26th April*)
Siobhan Lovell (*Wilbarston, 5th July*)
Jackie Brandon (*Bozeat 18th July*)

First Quarter – Surprise

Flynn Spires (*Weedon Bec 25th April*)
Nicholas Lowe (*Pattishall 30th June*)

First Surprise Major inside

Theresa E Baker (*Towcester 17th July*)

First Peal

Holly Pedersen (*Castor, 12th July*)

First peal inside

Clara Pedersen (*Castor, 12th July*)

First peal on 12

Tessa Preston (*Towcester 27th June*)

First as Conductor

Nigel Buckby (*Higham Ferrers 17th May*)
Jane Bloomfield (*Harpole, 7th June*)

First Minor as Conductor

Jess Pumphrey (*Cotterstock 19th May*)

First Surprise as Conductor

Robert Child (*Woodford 15th April*)

Church & Clergy Events

Rev Josh Jackson was welcomed to Isham with a quarter, 20th April.

Jo Ognjanovic was welcomed to the Benefice of Bugbrooke, Harpole, Kislingbury and Rothersthorpe with quarter peals rung at all four churches between the 4th & 11th June.

Ali Williams was installed as Rector of the Seven Churches Benefice on May 24th and this was marked with ringing at Wadenhoe, 17th June.

The ordination of Rev Brenda Eldred was marked with a peal at Higham Ferrers, 28th June.

The Revd Canon Allison Twigg was welcomed to Uppingham with a quarter 5th August

Rev Canon Jane Baxter's retirement as rector, and her birthday, were marked with a quarter at Lyddington, 26th April.



Revd Mandy Marriot's retirement as Duston and Upton Parish was marked with quarter peals at Duston, 16th and 18th July.

Weddings & Anniversaries

30th: Jim & Sarah Bence (*Wilbarston 9th April, Rothwell 10th April*)

55th: Jim and Gwynneth White (*Towcester, 15th August*)

Diamond: Gillian and Alan Wilson (*Castor, 7th May*)

Anniversary: Rev. Louise Bishop and her husband Alan (*Higham Ferrers, 25th July*), Chris & Frank Jenkins (*Thrapston, 20th August*)

Other Milestones

Ben Gooch's new knee was welcomed to quarter peal ringing, at 23 days old (*Rothersthorpe, 19th June*)

Obituaries

Michael Downham

My name is Darren Moore and I'm the Rector of Yarm in Teesside.

One of my parishioners, Michael Downham, died on the 25th June at the age of 104 years. He had been resident in Yarm for the best part of twenty years but back in the 1980s and 1990s rang at Barton Seagrave and was Tower Captain of Warkton.

Given his great age I suspect there won't be too many who remember him but I just wanted to pass on this information, just in case there are those who may have known him or known of him.

I used to take him Communion and, being a ringer myself, we always ended up talking about bells and ringing and ringers and he clearly had very happy memories of his time at Barton Seagrave and his membership of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild.

Michael is now reunited with his wife Lilian who died a couple of years ago so they are now both at peace.

Many thanks and every blessing!

Andrew Gunstone organised a Quarter Peal at Isham in Michael's memory, and Caroline Mitchell organised ringing at Barton Seagrave to coincide with the time of his funeral on July 13th.

Alan E Chantler



Alan was born in Headcorn, Kent, into a family of hop farmers. In 1973, he and his wife, Margie, moved to Yelvertoft for work and soon became firmly established in village life.

He became closely involved with the church, serving on the Parochial Church Council, singing in the choir, and taking up bellringing.

He was elected to the Guild in 1974 and rang his first quarter peal at Yelvertoft in 1977 to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

After a break from ringing during treatment for cancer, Alan returned to the tower and, in 1989, rang his first peal, Grandsire Doubles. It was the first peal rung by a local band, and he went on to ring 24 peals in total.

Although his cancer later returned and eventually brought his ringing to an end, Alan remained actively involved. He served for many years as a Central Council representative, was a member of the Complaints Committee, and represented the Guild on the Deanery Synod until his death.

Alan leaves his wife, three sons and six much-adored grandchildren. He will be greatly missed throughout the community and will be a very hard act to follow.

Aidan Francis Favell

We were sad to hear that Aidan passed away on the 7th June. He rang at Byfield in his younger days and was our driver of Adkins' coach for Daventry branch outings a few times. He was a member of the Guild at Culworth from 1979-1988. He moved to Sussex after that.

The earliest record of his ringing on BellBoard is a quarter peal of plain bob minor at Byfield in January 1983, which was his first of minor and for Christine Warner (now Kershaw in NZ) and Catherine Kemp (now Jones in Newport, Gwent) conducted by Carole Pullin! It was rung as a farewell to Catherine, leaving to work in Cwmbran. Aidan continued ringing in Sussex, ran coaches and made very occasional return visits to Byfield.

His funeral was held on Friday 24th July at St Peter's Church, Cowfold, Horsham, West Sussex at which Martin and Josie Rowling represented Northamptonshire ringers.

International Ringing



We recently heard from Delia Smith, who with her husband, the Rev Roger Smith, were key members of the Rothwell band some years ago. Some members may remember them. They have since moved to France but continue their association with the Guild – Roger as a Life Honorary Member.

Thank you very much for sending us the 2025 Annual Report. We are still interested to read how things are going, who's still around, who's still ringing peals, etc.

Our link to ringing was renewed a few years back when Roger began taking services at Vernet-les-Bains. When it was first suggested to us that we might do a four hour round trip to ring on the only ring of British-style bells in France we declined. It is a long way but lots of English ringers come so much further and it is worth it; they are an excellent light ten. The church and village too are well worth a visit; a typical English village church at the foot of a mountain which has snow on it for much of the year. We get to see The Ringing World there from time to time. I was delighted to spot Bill Adcock in a photo one time.

Thanks again. Best wishes,

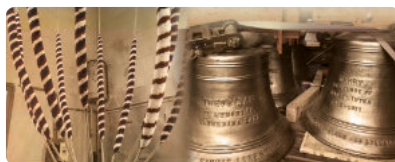
Delia

The ring mentioned by Delia is very interesting, given its unique nature and has a website: vernetbells.com.



St George's was built in 1912, when Vernet-les-Bains was a popular spa destination for British visitors. The church has always had a tower but no bells were ever installed.

The idea of installing bells in its empty tower came from Jeff and Catherine Ladd, who bought a second home in the village in 2001. Both had been bell-ringers since their teenage years and saw an opportunity to bring the tradition to St George's. Sadly, Catherine died in August 2014, shortly before essential church renovations made the project a realistic possibility.



After four years of planning and fundraising, the bells were cast and installed by John Taylor & Co of Loughborough. Six bells were dedicated to Catherine and funded by donations from family and friends, while others commemorate fellow ringers Harry Winter, Roger Green, and Lancelot and Elizabeth Barrington. The final bell is dedicated to Saint Dunstan, the patron saint of ringers.

The bells were first rung on Palm Sunday 2019. Four days later, on Maundy Thursday, they marked their first quarter peal in response to the Archbishop of Canterbury's appeal for churches to ring their bells following the fire at Notre-Dame Cathedral.

They are a very active tower - as can be seen from their BellBoard entries! (at bb.ringingworld.co.uk/search.php?place=vernet-les-Bains)

Should you happen to be heading to the south of France; St Georges would be delighted to welcome visitors.

Association of Ringing Teachers



The Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) is delighted and proud to congratulate Pip Penney on being awarded an MBE in The King's Birthday Honours List.



Pip was ART's first Chairman and the driving force behind the formation of the Association. Building on her work with the Central Council Education Committee and alongside other prominent ringers, she brought together

a wealth of experience and expertise to create an accessible, inclusive, and effective approach to teaching bell ringing. Her vision and determination laid the foundations for an organisation that continues to support and develop ringing teachers across the country.

Congratulations, Pip. We are immensely proud of your achievement and grateful for everything you have done for bell ringing and for ART.

ART continues to build on the work that Pip started. Over the past year, we have upgraded many of our IT systems, making it easier for members to access resources and support. We continue to run training courses across the country, delivered by our dedicated team of volunteer tutors.

One of our most popular initiatives has been the Learning the Ropes Festival. A festival will be held at the Mancroft Ringing Discovery Centre this summer, with a further event planned at the Loughborough Bellfoundry in April 2027.

We also keep in touch regularly with those who have attended a course or have been enrolled by a trainee teacher through our Tower Talk communications.

We would like to thank all the Guilds and Societies that support their members in attending courses and developing the teachers of the future. We are also working closely with the Central Council to help recruit and train new ringers in support of its *Ringling 2030* programme.

As the fifth Chairman of this growing organisation, I am proud of what ART has achieved. We are always looking to develop new initiatives to support ringers, and we are delighted to have more than 815 members who volunteer their time and expertise to encourage the growth and sustainability of bell ringing.

If you would like to know more about ART and its work, please do get in touch. Details can be found at www.bellringing.org

Neil Jones - ART Chair

ART courses in the PDG

Over the past few years several ART *Module 1 – Teaching Bell Handling* courses have been put on in the Guild and a number of people have gone on to become accredited teachers using the ART scheme. I have organised another M1 course for this autumn which is already full and there are a few people who are interested in attending but could not make that date. I am happy to hear from anyone who would like to join a waiting

list and, if there are sufficient numbers, I will organise one in the New Year. Also, if any budding teachers would like a *Module 2F – Teaching from Rounds to Plain Hunt* or *Module 2C – Teaching from Rounds to Elementary Change Ringing* course to be arranged locally, please get in touch.

Cathy Dixon
training@pdg.org.uk

150 Years of Mothers' Union



I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all those tower captains and contacts who have taken up my challenge and rung in celebration of 150 years of Mothers' Union.

As this was publicised in *The Ringing World*, it is good to see that other associations and towers have joined in. The Mothers' Union is celebrating for the whole year so if you haven't managed to get a team together yet, there is still time – a Quarter Peal would be a great achievement, but even just general ringing of rounds and call changes or Plain Hunt would be wonderful. Your Mothers' Union branches really appreciate the effort it takes to get a band together, and I hope ringers have been rewarded with refreshments following their endeavours.

The Mothers' Union was started by Mary Sumner in 1876 and is a Christian charity open to both men and women, who support marriage and Christian family life. They fund projects that meet the needs in local communities, like supplying free holidays to disadvantaged families, give food bags

during school holidays for children who would qualify for free school meals, and support the local prisons and Chaplaincy Teams, as well as many other local projects in the villages and towns across the country, and indeed the world. There are over 4 million members in 84 countries, so it may well be that the ringing for this special year will be an international event.

If you haven't rung for Mothers' Union yet, please do consider getting a band together to ring for this historic occasion. Thank you again for all those who have rung for Mothers' Union, it is very much appreciated.

If anyone would like more details about the Mothers' Union or Mary Sumner, please contact me.

Jean Rose, Diocesan Secretary
Mothers' Union Diocese of Peterborough
Email: jeanerose@btinternet.com

Ringling by PDGCB towers to mark the 150th anniversary of Mother's Union

Date	Tower	Methods
13 th August	Uppingham (St Peter and St Paul), Rutland	General Ringing
6 th August	Irchester (St Katharine), Northamptonshire	General Ringing
1 st August	Wollaston (St Mary), Northamptonshire	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
25 th July	Higham Ferrers (St Mary the Virgin), Northamptonshire	1260 Grandsire Triples
24 th July	Brackley (St Peter), Northamptonshire	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
19 th July	Daventry (Holy Cross), Northamptonshire	1280 Plain Bob Major
19 th July	Irthlingborough (St Peter), Northamptonshire	1260 Plain Bob Triples
18 th July	Guiltsborough (St Etheldreda), Northamptonshire	720 Cambridge Surprise Minor



Wollaston

Harry, Paul, Thomas,
Jack, John & Ben
(Image: Jean Rose)



Brackley

Andrew North, Jenny Griffiths,
Chris Lines, Paul Bennett,
Nigel Williams, Duncan Lilly.
(Image: Duncan Lilly)



Daventry

Geoff Pullin, Helen Camps,
Paul Bestwick, Gwynneth White,
Carole Pullin, Liz Heath,
James White, Kaiden McCreath.
(Image: Geoff Pullin)

Since the last newsletter was produced, we have done 5 draws:

Month	Number of paid up members	1 st Prize winner	1 st Prize value	2 nd Prize winner	2 nd Prize value	3 rd Prize winner	3 rd Prize value	4 th Prize winner	4 th Prize value
April	195	108Da	£40.95	10Ru	£27.30	40We	£19.50	11We	£13.65
May	198	115We	£41.58	190Pe	£27.72	149No	£19.80	156Ke	£13.86
June	193	69We	£40.53	79Pe	£27.02	174Da	£19.30	177Ke	£13.51
July	192	180Ke	£40.32	102Da	£26.88	18Th	£19.20	48Gu	£13.44
August	203	124We	£42.63	195Ru	£28.42	8Ke	£20.30	181We	£14.21

As you can see, the numbers entered into the draw each month do vary, as most people are reminded by email to renew their subs and I realise that it is not always convenient to do so as soon as the email arrives, especially if it coincides with other commitments such as holidays. However, I was very excited this summer when we

finally reached the point that we had over 200 paid-up members.

We can always accommodate more members, or individuals having more than one number; and set up payments by standing order (to avoid missing renewals), so please get in touch with any queries.

Cathy Dixon

“Which Tower Am I?” Quiz

Testing your knowledge of the Guild! Just for fun - you might find Dove's & the Guild tower list helpful! (pdg.org.uk/towers)

1. I'm a four-bell tower in the Daventry Branch, and Dove's gives me a rather special distinction: I'm the oldest ring of four, and also the oldest complete ring of four. My tenor is 11-1-4 in G♯.
2. I'm a six-bell tower in the Guilsborough Branch. My tenor is only 6½ cwt, but there's something much older hiding among my bells: my fourth is the oldest dated bell still hung for full-circle ringing.
3. I'm a four-bell tower in the Thrapston Branch, but my bells have an unusual quirk: my third bell, at over five cwt, is actually heavier than my tenor. My tenor is 5-0-5 in C.
4. I'm a three-bell tower in the Northampton Branch, but my bells have a remarkably long history: the tenor dates from about 1425, the second from about 1599, and the treble from 1684. My tenor weighs 13 cwt in G.
5. I'm a six-bell ground-floor ring in the Rutland Branch. My bells have recently been restored, and the restored weights range from just over 3 cwt to more than 8 cwt. Before restoration, every one of them was heavier.

Answers on page 35. And mail me at newsletter@pdg.org.uk with your score!

News from the Branches

CULWORTH

Tower Maintenance For All

The recent hot weather has taken a heavy toll on many of our bell installations. Stays have loosened and numerous clappers are now slack. Chris Lines and I spent two and a half hours in Syresham tower tightening more than 125 bolts. Wooden frames are worst affected, and I would advise all tower keepers to carry out checks soon. One stay in Whitfield was hanging on by a single loose bolt and was close to falling off. Even steel headstocks can be affected, as the pad between bell and headstock can shrink and allow stays to loosen. Older-style ropes are also very long at present and may need taking up; fortunately, many ropes now have polyester tops, which minimises the problem.

Ian Chapple

Culworth Branch's Prodigal Son

I imagine that all Branches have, from time to time, churches whose ringers are less engaged with Guild matters than we would ideally like, and may even feel adversarial or antagonistic on Branch or Guild issues. Possibly personalities have clashed, or historical incidents have sown distrust.

In Culworth Branch's case it was Middleton Cheney, All Saints, that tended to keep its distance and once even petitioned Central Council to recognise it as having a status independent from the Peterborough Diocesan Guild. The petition failed, but as a Branch we were still kept at arm's length and rarely got to ring there.

But a remarkable man, longtime tower captain and teacher of countless ringers, George Timms, has now clocked up 65 years of continuously supporting ringing in Middleton Cheney. At the age of 79 he still chimes the bells for weekday services. He felt that it was time to let any bygones be bygones. The exact reasons for past tensions are opaque, but appear to centre

around teaching techniques and involve several people now long dead.

The Incumbent of the Benefice to which Middleton Cheney belongs felt that more use could be made of the bells and recently contacted Robert Wood (Towcester Branch) to take a lead. Robert is now formally Tower Contact and has a band in training.

As the church is now fully engaged at Branch level, we wanted to mark George's contribution. As George hasn't been a Guild member for many years, formal Guild recognition was not appropriate. Instead, Alistair (Guild President), Jenny (Branch Chair), Nick (Branch Ringing Master) and I (Branch Secretary), plus two first-timers (Chris Lines and Duncan Lilly), took part in a Quarter Peal attempt on a very hot 25th May. With a tenor over 22 cwt, they are not the easiest bells to ring, but we succeeded with a time of 51 minutes.

Middleton Cheney - All Saints
Monday, 25 May 2026 in 51m
(22–2–15 in D)

**1260 Doubles (2m) - Stedman Doubles,
Grandsire Doubles**

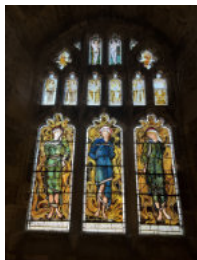
1. Chris Lines
2. Andrew North
3. Jenny Griffiths
4. Nick Chatt
5. Alistair Donaldson (C)
6. Duncan Lilly

First QP - 1 and 6



The Band pictured with George Timms

What makes this turn of events particularly welcome is that All Saints is a truly amazing church. Most of it dates from c.1300 but was restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1865, around the time that stained-glass windows by William Morris' firm were installed. Some of the stained glass is by Edward Burne-Jones, some by Ford Madox Brown, and some by William Morris himself.



For me it is a real privilege to be ringing within a few feet of the west window – *The Fiery Furnace*, a Pre-Raphaelite masterpiece of stained glass by Edward Burne-Jones and others.

Andrew North

Quarter Peal at Brackley

What do YOU do during your lunchbreaks? Well, when it's another hot summer's day and the weekend beckons, you may be forgiven for popping outside to sit under a tree in the shade to eat your lunch, before starting your afternoon's work and thinking about winding-down for the week.

But on Friday 24th July, six of us decided otherwise... Whilst listening to the Jeremy Vine Show on Radio 2 (who just happened to be interviewing famous musician Guy Pratt,

who had just started to learn how to ring at his local church in Alfriston, East Sussex), we drove to St Peter's Church in Brackley to attempt a quarter peal! This was to celebrate 150 years of the Mothers' Union in Brackley, which has an active branch associated with this church.

Under the watchful command of Nigel Williams, we completed a 1260 quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles, on what was one of the hottest days of the summer. Visitors sat in the shade of the churchyard trees to listen whilst having their lunch, and even the line-dancers in the church hall stopped their session – though only to close the doors and windows, as the bells were drowning out their music!

We completed the celebratory ring on the back six bells in 45 minutes and took a picture of the band in the ringing chamber after the event, all positively 'glowing'.



Congratulations go to (in order of the bells): Andrew North, Jenny Griffiths, Chris Lines, Paul Bennett, Nigel Williams (C), Duncan Lilly.

Jenny Griffiths

DAVENTRY

May Branch Outing

This year Jim Grennan organised both our car ringing outings. The first was in Warwickshire on 16th May. Fifteen ringers converged into the central tower of Alderminster church, where the six long ropes caused us a false start!

Next was Welford on Avon, the only eight-bell ring of the day. We were interested to see a short splice in the end of one tail rope – almost ready made for Jane, who couldn't be with us!

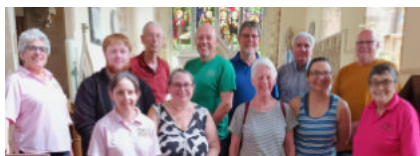


*Group in Clifford Chambers churchyard
l to r: Geoff, Justin, Gwynneth, Carole, Paul, Sue, Anne, Jim W, Cathy, Bobby, Theresa, Jenny, Kevin, Jim G, Richard.*

Lunch had been arranged at the Bell Inn. They wouldn't take an advance menu order from a Canadian, so we booked individually in advance or risked waiting but they still delivered all the food in good time! Then on to Clifford Chambers where I was running the ringing and we were joined by two Tysoe ringers for a quick grab. At Alveston we climbed to the balcony, which opened into the tower, where Richard Hobbs was in charge. The final tower was Butlers Marston, the heaviest tenor of the day (14cwt). Thanks to Jim for organising and Justin for running the ringing at three towers.

August Mini Outing

Instead of a meeting, the monthly branch gathering on 15th August was scheduled as a mini-ring ending at a pub for a meal. Twelve ringers, including 3 visitors from outside the branch, enjoyed three pleasant towers, all within a few miles of each other.



l to r: Cathy, Bobby, Liz, Jim W, Jenny, Jonathan, Kevin, Gwynneth, Paul, Anne, Jim G, Jane.

The first was St Mary the Virgin in Wappenham, a manageable first floor ring with a large glass partition so we could gesture down at those not ringing and encourage them up. Ringing started with hunting on 5, then on to Plain Bob doubles, Stedman, Cambridge and down. Soft drinks were kindly provided by our tower contact.

The next stop was St Mary and St Peter in Weedon Lois. The ringing chamber was accessed by climbing through a passageway in the eaves and emerging directly under several beams in a really quirky set up where the ringers were unable to see each other's faces due to the positioning of the beams. From a viewing platform above, six bell ringing dolls created for a church fundraising event kept us on our toes. Rounds and call changes were on offer plus various methods and a nice plain course of Kent. An excellent ceiling fan helped keep us cool!

The third tower, St Mary Magdalene in Helmdon, was another first-floor ring, with a decent ladder and much-celebrated ground-floor toilet. More ringing followed in the usual fashion, The high point was a fairly solid touch of Grandsire called by our youngest participant, Bobby.

We then gathered in the Nave for a group photo after which 3 people had to dash off to ring for weddings. The rest adjourned to The New Inn at Abthorpe for a very nice lunch.

Meetings

Byfield Meeting (18th April)

Seventeen rang from Cambridge Major to rounds. The service was taken by Rev Clare Glover with three hymns accompanied by Meriel Gardner (who has sadly died since) at the piano.

At the quarterly meeting, we elected Andrea and Adrian Brown as members for Daventry where they have been training since May 2025 and are also now progressing at Staverton - they live in Kilsby.

Fourteen moved on to Staverton and were joined by two from Crick. Plain hunting and a range of methods kept us busy until lowering just before time.

Newnham Meeting (20th June)

Fourteen crowded into the ringing chamber. Five didn't ring, mainly the local tea team, who fed us well in the village hall. In the tower we wrestled with the door to balance extra-loud bell noise and the great heat build-up, under Justin's guidance.

In the evening at Daventry, 19 rang including three from Culworth branch and Cathy & Simon Dixon. A potential new recruit was brought along by Caitlin who was quickly provided with her RW National Youth Contest shirt to render her ringable!

Badby Meeting (18th July)

19 rang at Badby and four didn't, as the year's third heat wave relented slightly. Bob and Maureen Sinclair, formerly of Newnham, came along during their latest caravanning expedition south from Darlington. Justin kept the bells busy to plain hunting and a large range of methods after it had been

demonstrated that they still need heavy encouragement to go up the right way!

Susan Rose, one of the Badby ringers, took the short service in party dress during a quick dash away from a family christening party. Martin Heath was at the organ kindly accompanying the two lustily sung hymns. Carole provided the usual Badby tea with help from Richard and Sue.

Twelve of us then made our way through the cattle field to Charwelton church where eight from the Culworth branch were assembled with Ian Chapple acting as ringing master.

10-bell Practice at Daventry

There was a good turnout on 22nd August, including 11 from Daventry and 10 from Towcester branches for the joint practice. Chris Bulleid ran the ringing which ranged from rounds to Cambridge S Royal. One lady was enabled to ring her first plain hunting on 9, followed by applause!

Making Progress

At Hellidon on Friday, on 22nd May a peal of 5,040 changes of Hellidon Bob Doubles was rung, conducted by Guild Peal Secretary Paul Mason. It was the first peal in this method.



Theresa's first quarter of Cambridge S Minor: L to r: Geoff, Theresa, Hannah, Carole, Justin, Richard.

Theresa Baker rang her first quarter peal of Cambridge S Minor inside on 28th May at Whilton, conducted by Richard Hobbs. It was followed on 17th July with her first of surprise major, ringing second to Cambridge S Major at Towcester, conducted by Richard Allton.

Flynn Spires rang his first quarter peal of surprise by ringing the 4th to Cambridge S Minor on the back 6 at Weedon on 25th April and Zack Pope rang his first quarter peal away from tenor cover by ringing the treble

to Plain Bob Triples at Daventry on 26th April. Both were conducted by Jim White.

Instead of standard ringing after the wedding of Daventry Rector's daughter Naomi on 27th June, we were asked to ring a quarter peal starting as the couple left the church. Jim White conducted 1,260 Plain Bob Triples, first quarter on 8 bells for Liz Heath.

Liz Heath and Kaiden McCreath rang their first quarter peal of major on Sunday 19 July at Daventry, it was especially arranged to mark the 150th anniversary of the founding of Mothers' Union. Kaiden rang the treble (his first away from cover), Liz the second and Jim White conducted 1,280 Plain Bob Major.



Plain Bob Major, 1 to r: Geoff, Helen, Paul, Gwynneth, Carole, Liz, Jim, Kaiden.

Kaiden McCreath

Not only conducting the judged piece in Nottingham and being asked to ring the 35cwt tenor, further congratulations are due for being awarded: Work Experience Award at the Culinary Arts and Catering presentation; Student Chef of the Year award and Principal's Award by Northampton College and is one of the five finalists in the Weetabix Northamptonshire Food & Drink Awards 2026/27 competition for young people demonstrating exceptional creativity, skill and professionalism in hospitality and culinary arts. All this as well as attracting new recruits to Daventry with social media posts! Keep at it!

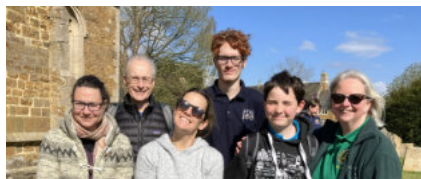
Guild Spring Festival

The competitions for the Weaver Shield (for change ringing) and the Centenary Trophy (for call changes) took place on Saturday 11th April at Braunston in Rutland (6 competing teams) and Brooke (5 competing teams) respectively. 14 branch members made their way in the cold wind and sun across rural Leicestershire to Rutland.

There were two teams entered in the change ringing competition from Daventry tower. "Team 1" had to be changed in the last week from the Call Change competition to Change Ringing because enough ringers meeting the form's new criteria were not available. The team was Helen Camps, Leanne Martin, Anne Prestwick, Zack Pope (C), Justin Baker, Daniel Camps. "Team 2" rang Plain Bob Minor: 1 Geoff, 2 Liz Heath, 3 Justin Baker, 4 Jonathan Cook, 5 Flynn Spires, 6 Carole (C). After tea the judges, David Kirkcaldy and Kathy Howard from Sussex, gave the usual run down of each piece of ringing and the number of faults. Our team 1 were mentioned as not using all of the four minutes practice time available to get used to the "idiosyncrasies" of the bells and Team 2's chaotic practice was thought by the judges to have been followed by some stern words as the test piece was far from chaotic! The results were:

1st	<i>Peterborough Cathedral</i>	26 faults
2nd	<i>Rushden</i>	27
3rd	<i>Rothwell</i>	34
4th	<i>Desborough</i>	35
5th	<i>Daventry (Team 2)</i>	36
6th	<i>Daventry (Team 1)</i>	43

It's all about being there!



Daventry's Team 2

l to r: Anne, Justin, Leanne, Zack, Daniel, Helen.

The result of the Call Change competition at Brooke was: 1 Welland Valley (36 faults), Blisworth (41), Edith Weston (63), Desborough (65), Rushton (86).

Janet Bower's funeral

About 50 attended Janet's funeral at Whilton, with half-muffled ringing before and after the service on 30th March. It was nice to see John & Sue Townley who came from Norfolk.

Janet's coffin left the church for cremation to the sounds of the organ playing 'How Much is that Doggy in the Window?'; reflecting her liking for dogs all of her life and there was a collection for The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. The eulogy that Justin Baker gave at the funeral is available on the Guild website. Refreshments were provided afterwards by villagers in the village hall.

A quarter peal of Kent Treble Bob Minor was rung by members of the Branch in Janet's memory at Whilton on 6th April, conducted by Justin, first as conductor in the method and Jonathan Cook's first in the method.

Another quarter was dedicated to Janet's memory at Pattishall by the South Midland District of the Ladies Guild on International Women's Day.

The Lost Generation

Those who were at our branch AGM in January will have seen Justine Larter making recordings for her degree project. The result is available on Justine's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@bellringing_lostgen. This includes the nine full interviews (six recorded with our young ringers) that were used in the finished video and trailer. Well worth a run through.

Daventry Open Tower

There were nine helpers for much of the time from 10.30am to 3pm at Daventry for the Open Tower recruitment day on Tuesday May 26th. It was the young ringers on the branch committee who suggested we go for a market day in school holidays.

There were quite a few visitors and one lad turned up and started training that evening and at Badby followed by his mother the next time! We missed a trick by failing to advertise in advance that it was cooler in the tower than the 31°C outside!

Badby Bells & BBQ

Using the idea from Whilton's event last July, Badby Church held a barbecue event to celebrate the return of the bells and to recruit more ringers on Sunday afternoon, 28th June. The celebration was much more

successful than the recruiting! The barbecue in the garden next to the tower attracted 60.

Thanks go to the nineteen ringers and seven people who had a go at ringing during the afternoon. Over 25 people climbed the 81 steps to the top of the tower, raising funds for the village church.

RWNYC 2026 Winners

The Ringing World National Youth Contest was held in Nottingham on Saturday 4th July. The winners in the 6-bell Call Changes were Guildford Young Ringers followed in second

place by Daventry PDG Young Ringers. Very well done to everyone involved!



Caitlin, Zack, Daniel, Emma, Sahib, Kaiden (C), Flynn. Those in green shirts rang in the contest.

Geoff Pullin

GUILSBOROUGH

Quarter Peal Day

We like our quarter peal days in the Guilsborough Branch, and our latest, held on 11th July 2026, again proved very successful.

We managed to attempt six quarter peals, despite having to work around the Guild eight-bell practice at Welford, which many of us were keen to attend and thoroughly enjoyed. Four of the six attempts were successful, with two ringers completing their first-ever quarter peals and two more achieving a first in method.

Nikki and Stuart Payne from Long Buckby rang their first quarter peals, trebling and covering respectively to Plain Bob Doubles. Congratulations to them both.

Roger Carter from Naseby achieved a first in method, ringing St Martin's Bob Doubles at Cold Ashby. Well done, Roger – you are really beginning to clock up the quarters now.

Jonathan Cook from Daventry also achieved a first in method, ringing Cambridge Surprise Minor at Spratton. Jonathan has helped us greatly with our quarter peal attempts, so it was particularly pleasing to see him gain a first in method. Well done, Jonathan.

This quarter was also the 300th that Liz Reading and Alistair Donaldson had rung together. Coincidentally, it took place in the same tower where they rang their first quarter together in 2019.

A big thank you to everyone who took part and helped to make it such an enjoyable and successful day.

Our next quarter peal day is on Saturday 10th October. If you are interested in joining us, please e-mail me at deputy_ringing_master@guilsborough.pdg.org.uk

Anthea Hiams

Branch Outing



Elaine Greatrex organised a mini outing for us on Tuesday 11th August, with the aim of adding some more “tower grabs” for her brother-in-law, who lives outside the area.

Seventeen of us gathered at the first tower of the day to ring the fairly heavy-going upstairs ring of five at Theddingworth. We then

moved on to Lubenham, another upstairs ring, this time of six bells.

Lunch followed, with ringers choosing from the many lovely places to eat in and around Market Harborough.

The afternoon began with the challenging ground-floor ring of eight at Brigstock. Some of the bells were a little tricky, but we nevertheless enjoyed some good ringing. We then rang at Weekley, another ground-floor

ring. These bells proved less challenging, although still a little awkward to ring. The final tower, Corby, was a lovely ground-floor ring of six, with a quirky little step for the ringers of the three and four to stand on.

We were all very grateful to Elaine for organising such an enjoyable outing. The weather was glorious, the company was excellent, and the day provided plenty of good ringing and good food.

Quarter Peal News

Congratulations to Dan Bulley, who rang his first quarter peal away from cover at Guilsborough on 13th May, trebling to Grandsire Doubles.

Alistair Donaldson and Pam Bailey rang their 100th quarter peal together at Dallington on 18th June. The quarter, conducted by Alistair, was of Cambridge Surprise Minor.

On 12th July, Walgrave's heavy set of five bells hosted their first quarter peal since 2014. We hope this marks the beginning of much more ringing at the tower.

Remembering Alan Chantler

The Branch was saddened by the death of Alan Chantler of Yelvertoft on 28th May. An obituary appears on page 11.

Alan was remembered through several ringing performances. The Yelvertoft practice on 29th May was dedicated to his life, while a quarter peal of Wooler Surprise

Minor was rung at Cold Ashby that evening in memory of Alan, Stephen Bedford and David Llewelyn.

Further quarter peals were rung in Alan's memory at Crick on 4th June and at Yelvertoft on 19th June – the latter on what would have been his 81st birthday.

Mothers' Union 150th Anniversary

The Guilsborough Branch marked this with an attempted quarter peal at Guilsborough on 18th July. Although the quarter was not completed, the band successfully rang a 720 of Cambridge Surprise Minor, ensuring that the Branch was able to take part in the celebrations and record its contribution to this special anniversary.

Anthea Hiams

Guild Stewards

Lamport and Old hosted a meeting of the Guild Stewards. The bells at both towers are currently unringable, but it is hoped that work can be undertaken to improve matters.

The clock at Draughton is once again working, thanks to the not inconsiderable efforts of Rob Palmer, Colin Sim and the rest of the Branch Stewards' team.

We are indebted to the maintenance team for their efforts in keeping us running smoothly and for all of their kind attention to various installations prior to quarters being rung.

KETTERING

Summer Festival 2026

The Welland Valley Benefice won the Centenary Trophy in the call changes competition at the spring festival on the 11th of April. The members of the group ring at the towers across Northamptonshire. To illustrate their varying levels of experience in bell ringing we wrote short biographies:

Claire Bowles started ringing in 2013 at Ashley Church. She is now learning to ring Bob Doubles inside, so her next challenge will be a quarter peal inside. She particularly

likes the camaraderie of bell ringing and also occasionally guest ringing in a new tower when on holiday.

Jonathan Seymour learned to ring as a teenager at St Mary the Virgin, Northill in Bedfordshire, then resumed recently upon returning to the UK from Canada. His home tower is Wilbarston and he has rung three quarter peals (inside) at Lubenham – Bob Doubles and Grandsire Doubles.

Andy Bimson began to learn and was able to ring rounds in time for the Millennium then,

after a break, started again with a group of learners at Ashley. He rang his first quarter peal on the treble on his 70th birthday.

Hannah Conlon started ringing for 'Ring for the King' in 2023. She has learned at Rothwell, Cottingham, Wilbarston and Ashley and recently rang her first quarter peal on an inside bell to Bob Doubles.

Siobhan Lovell has been ringing for about 10 years at Wilbarston. She has recently completed her first quarter peal on the inside to Bob Doubles.

Joanne Leaning first learned to ring over 50 years ago at Rothwell, then started again for *Ring for the King* in 2023. Her home tower is Cottingham and she has progressed to trebling to Plain Bob Doubles. Joanne says that winning the striking competition at Brook was a highlight, especially as she was the least experienced ringer in the group.



L-R Clare Bowles, Jonathan Seymour, Andy Bimson, Hannah Conlon, Siobhan Lovell (caller), Joanne Leaning.

Kettering Branch Tower Open Day

The open day was organised on Saturday 16th May to raise funds for the refurbishment of the bells at Stoke Albany, Saint Botolph.

The key highlights were:

- 24 Towers were open across the Branch, including some from neighbouring Branches.
- The most popular tower was Ashley, St. Mary V. which received 63 visitors. This was followed by Arthingworth, Harrington and Pytchley which all attracted 46 visitors each.
- Visiting ringers came from as far afield as Dunblane in Scotland and Exeter in

the Southwest, and many other places in between.

- At least 10 ringers visited all the towers.
- 24 volunteer stewards made it all work, following a detailed rota and instructions prepared by the organisers
- A sum of £1,143.49 was raised for the Stoke Albany Bell fund.

A big thank you to Helen Churchman, Hannah Conlon and Siobhan Lovell for all of their time and efforts, planning and organising the day and ensuring it was such a great success.

Open Day Great Cransley, St. Andrew

The 800th Anniversary of St. Andrew, Great Cransley was held on the weekend of 23rd – 24th May. Members of the Band conducted visits to the bells, demonstrated ringing and allowed visitors to have a go at chiming.

A celebratory Quarter Peal arranged for the Sunday afternoon was unfortunately unsuccessful. The QP was to have been conducted by the Tower Ringing Master Nick Watts who was unwell, and Nick Churchman kindly stood in at short notice. The band included Murray Coleman who had been a volunteer when the bells were re-hung over 30 years ago.



Display showing the re-hanging of the bells in 1991

New ART Instructor

Cathy Mason took part in the ART module 1 course last year and has been busy teaching her new learner Olivia at Corby, mentored by Nick Churchman. After a lot of hard work Cathy has been assessed, and is now officially an ART accredited instructor.

Going Like The Clappers

At the regular monthly peal at Rothwell, Holy Trinity on the first Friday of June there was a

loud noise from above about 10 minutes into the attempt, and the tenor bell fell silent. Investigating what had happened, it was found that the shaft of the clapper had snapped above the ball and flight due to metal fatigue

The following Thursday, the broken clapper was taken to John Taylor's Bell Foundry in Loughborough. The next day, archive records helped identify a suitable replacement. One was found in stock, painted, and installed in time for Sunday service ringing – a very quick turnaround. Ringers have commented that the bell is now easier to ring, with a pleasant tone and a lasting hum.



The new clapper in the tenor bell

Fête-goers Try Out Bell Ringing

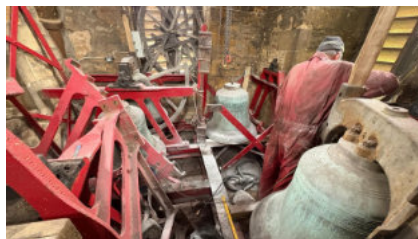
Fête-goers were invited to try their hand at bellringing at Cottingham and Middleton Village Fete on 11th July. Under the supervision of Welland Valley bell ringing tutors Nick and Helen Churchman, visitors came along to try out the specially constructed 'Wombell' – an ingenious contraption with a wooden wheel attached to a functioning bell rope on a tall metal frame. When the rope is pulled, a linked computer makes the bell sound, imitating how a church bell works and giving an idea of what's involved in ringing. The stall attracted lots of visitors and several people showed an interest in coming along to try the real thing. A big thank you to Nick and Helen, and also to Rich Guilford and Nigel Oakham, who helped get the Wombell set up on the day.

Repairs to St. Mary V, Weekley

Ringing at Weekley was suspended in 2021 when a crack was identified to the bell

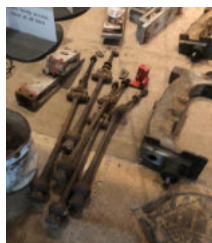
frame. Local attempts were undertaken to raise funds through various events but when this proved insufficient, Hilary Aslett and her son Clive offered funding to get the works done. Hilary lived in Geddington in the late 1940s, attending the church at Weekley, her father's family roots being in the neighbouring Warkton. Hilary learnt to ring through the Kettering Parish Church Girl Guide Group and helped out with service ringing at Weekley until late 1967 when she married. She is moving back to live locally in Barton Seagrave and hopes to help out at Warkton and Weekley in due course.

The work was assigned to Nicholson Engineering of Bridport. Their bell-hanger, Neil, arrived on 12th May and was met by Clive Aslett, three members of the Geddington Volunteer Fire Brigade (a village group involved in charitable activities), Branch Steward Andy Bimson, and other team members.



Neil, the bell-hanger for Nicholson Engineering of Bridport working on the frame

Four of the six bells were lifted and retained in the belfry. Damaged sections of the frame were lifted to be cleaned and the main beam treated to enable an effective repair. Corroded areas of the main beam were filled with epoxy, prior to replacing frame members and bells. The cracked frame was repaired by drilling and over plating. Having been stripped from the bells and frame, the



components were taken to Bridport for the repairs to be carried out. Minor damage to two headstocks were repaired by welding and all the rope blocks were renewed.

Work in the tower resumed on the 16th June and, in addition to putting everything back in its place, all bearings were cleaned to remove build-up of grease and old felts renewed. It was during this work that it became apparent the one of the gudgeon pins on the headstock of the tenor bell showed some movement. Work was suspended while the headstock was taken to Bridport for re-riveting. The bells were finally re-roped and tested on Friday 19th June.



Frame showing over-plating repair

A Quarter Peal was rung on the bells at Weekley on Thursday 6th August by members of the Thursday Phoenix QP Group and Hilary Aslett to celebrate the refurbishment of the bells and in memory of Hilary's late husband, Peter (died 6th August 2021). He and Hilary married in the church in 1967.

Following on from the Weekley work, the church in the neighbouring village of Warkton, St. Edmund is having some work carried out, the bells not having had any major work for some 30 plus years. Again Hilary and Clive Aslett are providing some financial support for the works.

The first practice was held at Weekley on 4th July, with Warkton and Weekley working together under the leadership of James Moore, tower captain of Warkton and Jane Marsh, Kettering Branch Chairman.

Fun Day - Rushton Revels

This was something different organised for our monthly meeting on Saturday 11th July.

Three teams were selected randomly from those present. The teams competed and marked each other ringing. Scoring categories included open leading, cleanliness of changes and overall evenness of striking. It proved a really fun, engaging and useful afternoon.

The winning team with the best overall score was Murray Coleman (Rothwell); Rachael Crooks-Douglas (Desborough); Daniel Counsell (Desborough); Steve Pawluk (Rushton); Jonathan Seymour (Wilbarston) and Nick Watts (Kettering).

First Wednesday Group

As an alternative to the regular monthly meeting on the bell simulator at Rothwell, the group went on what is becoming an annual event, a mini tour on Wednesday 5th August. The group on this occasion visited towers in and adjacent to Rutland. The aim of the day being to give members an opportunity to experience different bells, including an 8 bell tower. The towers visited were:

- Great Easton, St. Andrew (6) 9-0-16
- Caldecott, St. John Ev. (6) 8-0-15
- Uppingham, SS Peter & Paul (8) 14-2-2
- Preston, Peter & Paul (6) 10-0-23

With support from regular helpers, along with additional help from Cathy & Simon Dixon and one of the Branch Assistant Ringing Masters, Helen Churchman, the event was a great success. Branch Chairman and Event Organiser, Jane Marsh, noted that the regular members of the group had all continued to progress and develop in their ringing and were capable of dealing with the variety of bells. This was particularly evident at the last tower, where ringing up was paused for a ladder to be removed from the Belfry, followed by the challenge of extremely low sallies and long, stretchy ropes.



Ringers at Preston at the conclusion of the tour

In Memory Of Michael Downham

Michael was a regular ringer in the area in the 1970s and 80s. He died in a home in Yarm on Teeside where he had been staying

for the past 20 or so years, at the grand old age of 104.

General ringing was organised for 1:30pm on Monday 13th July to coincide with Michael's funeral at the Crematorium in Yarm. The ringing included a short piece of Stedman Doubles on the back 5, which Michael would have been very familiar with. This was

followed by a Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Doubles on the following Sunday

I would like to thank all of my contributors, without whom I would be unable to present such a full and detailed picture of the Kettering Branch activities

David Dainty

NORTHAMPTON

The Northampton Branch practice was held at Holy Sepulchre on Saturday 27th June in the afternoon. Some visiting ringers from other branches in the Peterborough Guild came along to make up the number to enable the bells to be rung.

One of Duston Church Practice nights and Saturday morning quarter peals was dedicated to the Rector of Duston Church:

Duston, Northamptonshire – St Luke

Dedicated to Revd Mandy Marriott on the occasion of her retirement as Rector of Duston and Upton Parish.

**16 July 2026 in 46m (8–0–1 in B♭)
1260 Rounds, Call Changes, Plain Hunting and Bob Doubles**

Gillian Hargreaves, Karen Rands, Dora Denton, Liz Leaman, Heather Peters, Sue Best, Geoff Best, Liz Moore, Geoff Brown, Alison Camara-Green, Carl Johansson, Robert Lunn

Thank you for your support and ministry with love and very best wishes from all of St. Luke's ringers and their families. God bless.

**16 July 2026 in 46m
1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

1. Heather Peters
2. Geoff Brown
3. Martin Bull
4. Giles Willson
5. Gareth Grayson (C)
6. Carl Johansson

All of St. Luke's ringers would like to be associated with this performance.

Another practice night was dedicated to two of the local ringers.

6 August 2026 (8–0–1 in B♭) General Ringing

Sue Best, Geoff Best, Liz Leaman, Heather Peters, Karen Rands, Dora Denton, Gareth Grayson, Jenny Lunn, Robert Lunn, Cathy Harwood, Carl Johansson, Liz Moore, Alison Camara-Green, Geoff Brown, Gillian Hargreaves

Our Practice Night was dedicated to Sue and Geoff for the occasion of their Ruby Wedding Anniversary.

Many congratulations! With love and best wishes from all your bell ringing friends. Xx

On Sunday 9th August the bells at St. Benedict's, Hunsbury were rung before the Sunday service for 150 years of Mother's Union by Colin Sampson, Debbie Sampson, Geoff Brown, Liz Moore, and Keith Dunkley.

Thank you and well done to all those who took part to make all the ringing happen.

Liz Moore



Liz Leaman made this lovely bear in memory of her late dad, Cecil Swann, using his bell ringing ties, some bell fabric and added his Guild badge.

PETERBOROUGH

Castor

In July we had a wonderful peal featuring a mother and daughter ringing their first inside peal together, on their home tower bells.

Castor, Cambridgeshire – St Kyneburgha

**Sunday, 12 July 2026 in 2h 48 (10–0–9 in G)
5040 Plain Bob Minor**

1. Julian K Burton
2. Holly S Pedersen
3. Clara M Pedersen
4. Andrew M H Christie
5. David Banks (C)
6. Stuart Weston

2: First peal 3: First peal inside

Rung for the Patronal Festival, and congratulations to Holly, who will be studying medicine at Washington University, USA, from next month.



Band 1–6 left to right

Clara and Holly stood side by side for this achievement before Holly embarks on a medical doctorate in her home country.

We are very pleased for the Pedersen ladies.

Julian Burton

Glaphorn

On 27th June, St Leonard's Church in Glaphorn was pleased to welcome visiting ringers from Shirenewton in Wales.



They took turns ringing the three bells and commented that the second bell was the oldest they would ring on their tour of North Northants churches. The bell was cast by John Sleyt, a founder from York active between 1380 and 1400.

Pauline Davidson

Nassington

It's been a busy few months of ringing. Our practices continue to be popular, as we welcome new ringers to ring Plain Hunt and then move on to methods, whilst the more experienced ringers try Stedman and other methods. In addition to our usual Sunday service ringing, we rang for a number of weddings and funerals, and rang a QP at Nassington in April.

We welcomed a number of visitors ringing the bells across the Benefice as part of their outings, plus a peal at Thornhaugh in July.

Hilary Hardie

Peterborough St Mary's

St Mary's started the year with its AGM – our first in six years, somewhat forgotten about following the pandemic. With 25 in attendance, we gave a big thank you to Joan Parker, who handed over the Secretary role to Jane Robinson.

We've continued to ring quarters for particular services such as Candlemas Doubles, Ash Wednesday Doubles, Palm Sunday Doubles, Maundy Thursday Doubles, and then celebrated Easter with Easter Week Doubles, concluding with Low Sunday Doubles. We continue to promote these variations as an easy stepping stone and a sense of achievement, often just a twist on a base method. If you fancy a couple of quarters in an afternoon – commonly Doubles or Triples – please get in touch.

This year we've welcomed back Yolande Hasselo from Calgary, Canada, on two separate visits. Yolande is one of the most passionate quarter-pealers we've ever met, and as she undertakes most of her learning

on a dumb bell, she makes the most of ringing in Blighty. Only ten quarters on these visits. Thanks to Elaine Wilkinson, her host in July, for organising a mini tour of Rutland.

In early August we had bell ringing as a taster activity at the annual Family Fun Day and welcomed about 30 children and adults to chime or ring the tail end. We plant a seed

and hope that we have one or two interested to come back for more.

With the summer heatwave, we've laid low from ringing quarters, but our fellow ringers are looking forward to the autumn campaign starting in September.

Andrew Christie

RUTLAND

Guild Spring Festival

The sun shone on eleven teams of the righteous, as the Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers held its Spring Festival in Rutland on Saturday April 12th. Two closely fought striking competitions were taking place; at Braunston a nail-biting change ringing contest between six teams from Desborough, Daventry (2), Rothwell, Rushden and Peterborough Cathedral, ringing 120 changes of a variety of methods for the Weaver Shield, whilst at Brooke five teams of more novice ringers were poised for a tense call changes competition for the Centenary Trophy.

Rutland was represented in the Call Changes contest by the Edith Weston Ladies team, who were drawn to ring first, fortuitously allowing them to return to the Village Hall at Braunston to serve a sumptuous tea.

The High Sheriff of Rutland, Susannah Fish QPM, kindly agreed to present the prizes, and visited both Brooke and Braunston to compare and contrast the striking. New to bell-ringing, she was delighted to try ringing at back stroke under the supervision of Guild Master Jim Bence. She was pleased to be welcomed by so many friendly ringers and added a hint of Rutland sparkle to the event.

Both towers were treated to high quality ringing, and the teams returned to a lavish tea masterminded by Nicky Vickers, at Braunston Village Hall, before listening to the constructive comments of the judges. Competition was fierce, with a single point between each of the top three teams, but the team from Peterborough Cathedral retained the Weaver Shield, ringing Cambridge

Surprise Minor, having won it last year for the first time in their history as the Cathedral Company. The Centenary Trophy was won by the Welland Valley team.

Eight Bell Practice

Following on from a very well supported 8 bell practice at Uppingham in December, this is now a regular feature in our Branch programme. The start was delayed until May but now the Brooke & Braunston ringers with Uppingham host an 8 bell practice on every first Wednesday in the month. We aim to encourage more people to try ringing on 7/8 bells. The more experienced ringers can pass on their knowledge and skills and support those newer to 7/8 bell methods. The more people willing to develop good striking on higher number of bells, whether in call changes, Plain Hunting or a method, then the easier it becomes to provide a band to ring on the important occasions, weddings, funerals, national celebrations and commemorations.

New Practice Session

A new practice has started at St Peter & St Paul, Market Overton. This is a ground floor ring with a heavy set of 5 bells 14–2–18 (745 kg). The plan is for a ringing practice to be held on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month, 2pm – 3.30pm, supported by Rutland Ringing Master Ian Bell. Initially the ringing will primarily be aimed at improving striking, call changes and plain hunting.

Ringing Tour July 4th

Many thanks to Matthew Mack for organising our Branch Tour. We all gathered at Hallaton

in glorious sunshine, where we warmed up for the day with some lovely rounds and calls, followed by some Plain Hunt and Bob Doubles. Next was Kibworth in a lovely setting; their oldest bell was cast in 1618 ... and survived the Spire collapse in 1825.

Lunch was taken at the Oadby Owl, where only one of us elected to use 'the app' to order; fortunately, everything worked as advertised, and we journeyed onwards the short distance to St Peter's to resume our tour on another splendid eight.

Onwards to Evington, where we added to our repertoire with a Touch of Bob Minor. They also have an old bell, the 4th was made by Hugh Watts in 1605.

Finally to Thurnby; their 7th is a Hugh Watts II Bell, from 1631. An interesting route led us through a side door, up the spiral stair, outside on the roof ... to finally step into the ringing chamber. Must be fun on a winter's night in rough weather...

These towers were new to most if not all of us, and proved to be great choices. It was lovely to hear the different bells, and many thanks to Josh for identifying the odd bell that was not quite in tune!

We should also mention the expert ringers for helping out with encouragement and practical advice when needed. We all appreciated their experience and guidance.



The band on tour

Association of Ringing Teachers

We have three ringers from Rutland Branch who have now successfully completed the ART bell handling teaching and been assessed as competent trainers and have achieved recognition. Tracey Lawson

became an ART teacher earlier this year, followed by Alan Wordie and Ian Bell.

Our congratulations to them all.

Alan Wordie's Challenge

Away from the bell tower for a while, our Branch Chairman, Alan Wordie, completed a challenge to raise funds for the Motor Neurone Disease Association. On his three wheeled recumbent handbike he has just cycled and navigated about 930 miles from Land's End to John o' Groats, a lifetime personal goal to raise funds for the MND association. A huge achievement deserving of our support. His target sum is £70,000 and he is about halfway to raising that figure.

In Memoriam

Janet Ingram

Many will remember Janet Ingram, an accomplished ringer from Lyddington. In her home tower she always rang the number 2 bell, with her back to the wall and feet in a rectangular wooden open-front-sided frame.

Janet was blind and was led to her bell by other band members, but if you did not know you would never have guessed. Her striking was perfect. She rang many methods with ease and was an inspiration to all around her.

She rang 10 quarter peals and 2 full peals. Her last QP was Cambridge Surprise Minor!! How do you dodge so perfectly with heavy and light bells without seeing them? It was amazing how Janet achieved so much. One of her peals was in Peterborough Cathedral ringing the number 2 bell to Plain Bob Major

Janet was a Lyddington ringer for well over 25 years and could be relied upon for Sunday and special service ringing, as well as weekly practice nights.

A funeral service was held at Lyddington church on Tuesday May 26th. A Quarter Peal in her honour was rung on 14th July.

Tim (John) Holt

Tim was a long-time member of the band at Great Casterton. He married Valerie in 1965 and they were blessed with two children, Richard and Tracey. A very practical and handy person, Tim took on any kind of work

during the 70s three-day week to support his growing family. He was generous and extremely willing to help anyone in need. He even built a boat in his garage just to see if it was possible – and succeeded. His other hobbies included the restoration of classic British motorcycles.

Sadly, Tracey developed early-onset dementia in the late 2000s, and Tim and Valerie took on the care of their granddaughter, Eloise, around 2009.

Tim started bellringing at Great Casterton Church in the 2010s after visiting a church fête with Eloise. He began ringing for Sunday services that November and soon encouraged Eloise to join him in early 2012. At twelve, she quickly outpaced her granddad and continued ringing when she went to York University to study Physics.

With Eloise at university, Tim decided to take up a Physics course with the OU in 2021. The first couple of years went well, but he had to give it up in his third year through ill health.

Tim was a stalwart member of the Great Casterton band and congregation. He became our representative on the Rutland Branch committee, always bringing back tidbits of information from the meetings.

He loved the Two Ronnies, Morecambe and Wise and Monty Python, to name just a few of his favourite comedians from that classic era. The final tribute at his funeral was *Bring Me Sunshine*, a fitting tribute to a fun-loving and happy man. It was a great privilege to have known him.

Ann Archer

Notable Peal

Congratulations to Rutland Ringing Master, Ian Bell, on successfully achieving his second peal - **60 years** after ringing his first, in 1964 when aged 11!

This second peal was rung at St Peter, Brooke in 2hrs 48 minutes in memory of John Beadman, Tower Captain for 28 years following restoration of the bells in 1990.

Sue Webster

THRAPSTON

We have been able to meet regularly for two monthly practices on the first and third Thursday of the month. We have visited several towers including Great Addington, Wadenhoe and Twywell where ringing has been very limited. Our newest ringers and members are progressing well and certainly seem to have caught the 'Ringing Bug'.



We have also been able to support the more isolated and rural towers in the Branch as they valiantly keep ringing going in their parish. We are always pleased to hear compliments from local residents 'such as It

was lovely to hear the bells ringing' and so far, have had no adverse comments.

We have also been enjoying the social side of bell ringing, finishing our practices at one of our local hostleries - although sadly, as is the current trend, we have seen several local closures during the last year. We also enjoyed a summer social evening at The Duke in Woodford with many thanks to Chris and Frank Jenkins for organising a very enjoyable evening.

We now look forward to completing our ringing programme for the year with new and returning ringers joining us.

One of the notes on an advice sheet during Covid was '*Use the skills of all your ringers and think about what you can do differently to sustain ringing for the future*'. Thrapston Branch is very much following this advice.

Alison Byrnes

TOWCESTER

Guild 6-Bell Striking Competition

On Saturday 11th April, the Blisworth Ringers took part in the Peterborough Diocesan Guild 6-Bell Striking Competition, held this year in the Rutland Branch. Two events were scheduled: Call Changes for the new Centenary Trophy and Method Ringing for the Waver Trophy.

We entered the Call Changes competition, which was held on a nice ring of six bells at Brooke Church (8 cwt tenor).

Despite the nerves of the less experienced ringers in the band, we were placed 2nd (41 faults) out of five participating.

The band was:

1. Jenny Lunn
2. Polly Randall
3. Cassia Lorrimore
4. Peter Banks
5. Bob Lorrimore (c)
6. Sam Green.

One day we hope to win the new Centenary Trophy, first given in 2024 to mark the Guild's 100-year existence.

Chris Lea

Branch Training Day - 25 April

A very successful and enjoyable training day was run by Chris and Margaret Bulleid. The training day was held at Holy Cross, Pattishall, with practical sessions at St Luke, Cold Higham. The aims of the training day were split into a morning session focusing on ringing up and down to improve control and technique and hopefully build confidence. The afternoon aimed to develop ringing up and down further and improve plain hunting skills by improving rope-sight. There were 12 students, each with a buddy, and helpers at both practical sessions.

We had a very sunny day, perfect for a picnic lunch outside the church. Coffee, tea and some delicious cakes kept our energy up.



I think everyone really enjoyed the very sociable day and learned something new, whether they were a student or a helper.

Branch Outing - Uttoxeter Area

On Saturday 23rd May, Towcester Branch set out on the annual branch outing to the Uttoxeter area. It started at Hoare Cross, a very nice 28 cwt six, in a monster of a church and tower. We moved on to King's Bromley, a total opposite, a 10 cwt six. Our next stop was Alrewas, a nice ring of 12-0-5, eight. We then moved to lunch at The Crown Inn at Alrewas.

After lunch we rang at Barton under Needwood, which gave us a 14-1-20 ten, which had previously been a six. The tower captain wanted to augment them to an eight. After raising the money, a generous donor gifted them a bell, giving them nine, so they had to raise more money to make them ten! Our next tower was Elford, a 6-1-2 six. We moved on from there to Whittington, a 6-1-26 eight, to finish the ringing for the day. Seventeen of us went to the Plough at Huddlesford after a lovely day's ringing.



Thanks for arranging go to Richard Allton for the outing and Nigel Williams for the meal.

Mark Rogers

St John the Baptist Church, Blisworth

Over the weekend of 6/7th June, St John the Baptist Church celebrated 800 years. The church was full of wonderful displays from village organisations and included a musical evening and parade service on the Sunday.

The bellringers organised an exhibition of bellringing paraphernalia and a Have-a-Try at Ringing, which proved very popular. The model bell was very useful to show how the bell works, and both adults and children managed to get the church bells to chime. After a very exhausting two days, we had obtained about a dozen interested names and have three committed learners being taught by Bob and Cassia Lorrimore. Steady progress is being made.

Grateful thanks go to the Guild for the loan of two pop-up Boards and Chris Bulleid for his bits and pieces.

Chris Lea

Branch Mini 5-Bell Outing

The five-bell mini outing was well attended on 27th June. It visited three local towers in the branch.



Holy Cross, Milton Malsor has recently become part of Towcester Branch and was a popular first tower. We continued on to St Margaret, Alderton, where the temperature outside was picking up, but the tower provided refreshments that were much appreciated. We finished at St Michael & All Angels, Ashton, another beautiful church;

however, it caused confusion for some as the bells are rung anticlockwise.

The special methods chosen for the outing were All Saints Place Doubles, Bastow Little Bob Minimus, Vegetarian Sausage Doubles, and Banana Doubles. Chris made sure that everyone who attended had a ring.

Inter-Branch Striking Competition

Fun was had at Cross and Stable Church, Downs Barn on 8th August when around 40 ringers met for the friendly head-to-head between ODG North Bucks and PDG Towcester Branch. Call Changes on eight, Plain Bob Minor, and Stedman Triples were rung by each team. It was a tight match again, with North Bucks edging ahead by winning the Call Changes and Bob Minor sections, but Towcester retained the George Holland Trophy for Stedman.



Well done to those who rang in the competition for the first time, overcoming nerves to produce some very creditable ringing. Thanks to everyone who took part.

Chris Bulleid

Joint Practice with Daventry Branch

A joint practice was held on the evening of 22nd August at Holy Cross, Daventry. Despite it being the summer holidays, there was a good turnout of 23 ringers, including a few from other branches.

The ten bells were rung all evening. Two ringers rang on ten for the first time and managed Call Changes and Plain Hunt on nine. There was also the opportunity to ring Grandsire Caters, Cambridge Surprise Royal, and Little Bob Royal.

WELLINGBOROUGH

Since the last newsletter, the Wellingborough Branch have held afternoon practices at Orlingbury and Ecton, treble dodge practices at Mears Ashby, Cogenhoe, Grendon and Abington and a Branch meeting at Yardley Hastings where Phil Watts from Irthlingborough and Jane Maer from Yardley Hastings were elected and welcomed as members of the Guild.

Our Branch hosted the Guild AGM which was held at Irchester. The service was led by Rev Debbie with Harry Curtis, Irchester's Tower Captain reading the lesson. Big thanks to the ladies of the Branch for the delicious tea.

The Wellingborough Branch Striking Competition was held on 16th June at Stanwick; with 11 teams competing. Rushden were the winners by just half a point with Higham Ferrers second. Thanks to David Westerman for judging the competition and to the Stanwick ringers who provided a large selection of sweet treats, tea and coffee.

Pam Bailey

Bozeat

Bozeat entered two teams in the branch striking contest. Both Bozeat performances were creditable, and interestingly Bozeat 'B' beat Bozeat 'A'. All a good learning experience for our rapidly developing band.

We were pleased to support the recent Open Gardens event in July by ringing a Quarter Peal of PB Doubles, this was a successful first attempt inside for Jackie Brandon – a commendable achievement. The tower was open to the public between 1pm & 2pm, and several visitors were able to see what we get up to in the tower.

Easton Maudit

Easton Maudit entered a team in the branch striking contest. In an attempt to defend our trophy win of 2025, we came a close third. We are now in training to win it back in 2027.

Ringling at Easton Maudit is much improved for listeners and ringers alike, as rope guides

have now been installed by bell-hangers Whites of Appleton.

We were pleased to be able to ring for the Prayer Book Society evensong in May and the Patronal Festival evensong in June.

We have also been able to make the bells available for several visiting bands to ring over the summer.

Tony Manktelow

Irchester

On Thursday 6th August the practice night ringing was dedicated to the Mothers Union 150th anniversary year.

Marion Whittaker

Irthlingborough

On 24th June, instead of the normal practice night, the Irthlingborough ringers enjoyed an evening out ringing at Abington followed by drink and chat at a local pub. Thanks go to Jenny for organising the tower and to Josh for finding an ideal pub.

On Sunday 19th July a Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Triples was rung to mark the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Mothers' Union. It was lovely to be greeted by some of the members from our Church after the Quarter Peal with a small gift and card as appreciation. This was followed by the Tower Barbecue at Alan & Margaret's home.

Sunday, 19 July 2026 in 48m (10–1–4 in G) 1260 Plain Bob Triples

1. Pamela M Bailey
2. Alison M Byrnes
3. Margaret S Bull
4. Tanya D Clayton
5. Emma K Bull
6. Stephen Avery
7. Joshua A Horne (C)
8. Jenny A Ball

Rung to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the creation of the Mothers' Union. Also rung to (belatedly!!) officially recognise Margaret and Alan's 50th anniversary of running the practices, looking after the

tower and bells at St Peter's. A laudable achievement and commitment to all things bells in Irthlingborough.

Margaret Bull/Pam Bailey

Rushden

Rushden entered a team in the Guild 6 Bell Striking Competition at Braunston, taking 2nd place - being beaten by the Peterborough Cathedral band by just one point. However, as some consolation, when the 100 Club draw took place, our Tower number won the 4th prize.

We were a bit more successful at our own Branch Striking Competition, when we brought the shield home for another year; winning by half a point.



Simon Dixon accepting the shield and certificate from David Westerman, the judge.

Since the last Report we have rung an Eighth Peal on Easter Sunday and a Quarter Peal to mark St George's Day, which was Cat's 100th Quarter Peal.

Our tower always holds a summer get-together with a bring 'n' share lunch/afternoon so in August this year ringers and friends met in Pam & Paul's lovely garden for good food, friendship and good weather.

We continue to ring on Friday evenings and Sunday Services. Thank you for the support of friends and visitors from other towers who come to help us. It is truly appreciated.

Pam Bailey

Wollaston

The team rang our bells in celebration on Easter morning, and then the same month we rang for St George's Day.

The following month we rang for Bell Sunday and logged it on BellBoard.

I am surprised that very few towers within Peterborough Guild do not mark this occasion by ringing their bells. It is a good opportunity for publicity and to try and encourage new recruits.



The Bell Sunday band

*Back row: Ben, Su, Jack & Mel.
Front row: Paul with Jax the dog, Kate & Jean.*

The team and friends rang for Wollaston Open Gardens on 5th July. We take this opportunity to let members of the public have a try on the bells (under the guidance of our Ringing Master), in the hope that we may attract a few new recruits. There were some very keen children, who were not quite tall enough to reach the ropes - we have asked them to return in a few years' time when they are a bit taller! We continue to explain about our bells in the village magazine and are always happy to welcome new learners or returners.

This year is the Celebration of 150 years of Mothers' Union, and in my other role as Diocesan Secretary for the Peterborough Diocese Mothers' Union, I have been encouraging Churches with bells who have an active Mothers' Union Branch to ring a Quarter Peal or even just general ringing which can be logged on BellBoard. Therefore, John Beresford organised a Quarter Peal here at Wollaston on Saturday 1st August as our contribution to this.

My thanks go to John for organising the Quarter, and all the ringers who gave up their Saturday afternoon for it and achieved a successful Quarter of Plain Bob Doubles.

Please see the Mothers' Union article on page 14 for a photo and details of the band.

We practice on a Wednesday evening from 7.30pm till 9pm and if anyone would like to come and join us, they would be most welcome. We enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and cake part way through the practice,

which gives a chance to catch up on news before we go back and practice a bit more!

Thank you to all those who ring with us and help us to continue learning, especially John and Janet, Harry, Andy and Gaynor, and Paul. I am most grateful for your help.

Jean Rose

Hot Summer Maintenance Tips



Following Ian's note about the effects of the recent hot weather on stays, clappers and wooden frames, it's worth highlighting a few simple checks that can help keep things running smoothly. None of these require specialist knowledge, and most can be done in a couple of minutes before a practice.



Stays and Sliders

Timber expands and contracts with changes in temperature and humidity. In hot, dry spells it tends to shrink slightly, which can loosen stay bolts or alter slider travel. A quick check that everything is firm and moving freely can prevent unwelcome surprises mid-practice.

Clappers and Bearings

Loose clapper nuts are one of the most common causes of odd striking. If a bell starts sounding "late" or "flat", it's worth checking the clapper seating and movement. Bearings can also feel slightly different in hot weather, so a quick visual check never hurts.

Ropes and Rope Paths

Hot, dry weather tends to dry out natural fibres, which can increase wear. Look for thinning at the sally and tail end, and make sure ropes aren't rubbing on edges or guides. A small adjustment now can save a replacement later.

Pulleys and Wheels

A quick spin of the pulleys to ensure they run freely is often all that's needed. If a rope feels "draggy", a pulley may be the culprit.

None of these checks replace a full inspection, but they do help keep the bells in good order between visits.

Footnotes

Credits

Hand image on page 4 courtesy of [vecteezy.com](https://www.vecteezy.com)
Wadenhoe Church image on page 30 - By TopherMe7 - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/index.php?curid=123265214

Quiz Answers (page 15)

Question	5	Ashwell	Rutland
	4	Great Billing	Northampton
	3	Thorpe Achurch	Thrapston
	2	Cold Ashby	Gilliborough
	1	Fawsley	Daventry
		Tower	Branch

Events Diary



For the latest announcements about future Guild Events, please check the usual channels, including the Guild website www.pdg.org.uk and our Facebook page www.facebook.com/PDGCBR.

September 2026

Date	Branch	Event	Venue	Time
Sat 19	Daventry	Ringing	Kilsby; Tea; Barby	15:30; 18:30
Sat 19	Culworth	Branch Practice	Syresham	19:30
Sat 26	Towcester	Ringing followed by skittles	Gayton	17:30

October 2026

Date	Branch	Event	Venue	Time
Thu 1	Thrapston	Branch Practice	Islip	19:30
Sat 3	Guildenburgh	Branch Practice	East Farndon; Maidwell	15:00; 18:00
Wed 7	Rutland	8-bell practice	Uppingham	19:30
Fri 9	Peterborough	8-bell practice	Castor	19:30
Thu 15	Thrapston	Branch Practice	Wadenhoe	14:30
Sat 17	Wellingborough	Branch Practice	TBC; Irthlingborough	10:30; 19:00
Sat 17	Daventry	Ringing, service, tea and meeting	Litchborough; Kisingbury	15:00; 18:30
Sat 17	Culworth	Branch Practice	Chipping Warden	19:30
Sat 24	Northampton	Practice	Cogenhoe	14:30
Sat 24	Towcester	Quiz and fish & chip supper	Towcester	18:00
Sat 31	Guild	ART M1 course	Pattishall	All day
Places limited; contact the Training Officer for details				

November 2026

Date	Branch	Event	Venue	Time
Sat 7	Guildenburgh	Branch Practice	Yelvertoft	15:00
Sun 15	Peterborough	Surprise Minor Social	Nassington	14:00
Thu 19	Thrapston	Branch Practice	Thrapston	14:30
Sat 21	Wellingborough	Branch Practice	TBC; Mears Ashby	10:30; 14:30
Sat 21	Culworth	Branch Practice	Aynho	15:00
Sat 21	Daventry	Ringing	Staverton	15:00
Sat 21	Kettering	Ringing followed by beetle drive and fish & chip supper	Desborough	15:00
Sat 28	Northampton	Branch Practice	St Peter & St Paul, Abington	TBC

December 2026

Date	Branch	Event	Venue	Time
Sat 5	Guildenburgh	Branch Practice	Welford	15:00
Sat 12	Wellingborough	Quiz	TBC	TBC
Sat 12	Kettering	Branch Practice with mulled wine & mince pies	Rothwell	15:00
Sat 12	Daventry	Ringing followed by carol service	Byfield	15:30
Sat 19	Culworth	Ringing followed by carol service	Helmdon	15:00

Times and venues marked TBC are still to be confirmed.