

THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELL RINGERS

(Affiliated to the Central  Council of Church Bell Ringers)

NEWSLETTER No 133 - JULY 2012



Founded Oct 18th 1909

CONTENTS

P.2	Officers & Committee members	P.10	El Pres's X-word; Mid-Week Tours report
P.3	Notice of Striking Competitions and AGM	P.11	240 PB Doubles; Squirrels in towers!
P.4	Guild accounts to 31 st December 2011	P.12	Special occasion at Tredington; CC Meeting
P.5	Guild Master's report; Editorial	P.13	102 nd anniversary meeting at Blockley
P.6	Committee Meeting; From the Archives	P.13	350 th anniversary, Book of Common Prayer
P.7	Guild Summer BBQ	P.14	Notices and adverts.
P.8	Your Newsletter: costs and production	P.15	Around the towers; Tower news
P.9	A tale of two fours	P.16	Diary of Saturday towers, etc; Tag end.

TOWER OF THE QUARTER – ST PETER'S, PEBWORTH, WORCS



(A b&w photo from about 1996 by Chris Povey)

St Peter's, Pebworth, had an amazing transformation from derelict 5 to very much ringable 10 in a very short space of time. The bells were rehung and made 6 in 1986, augmented to 8 in 1995 and then to 10 in 2002. As ringers we know them quite well, and due to the open galleried ringing platform, we get an elevated view of the church's interior. However, the church contains some interesting features that are worth a closer look at ground level.

Whether entering from the main or the tower doors, there are steps down into the nave. This is because the ground slopes down from west to east, thus leaving the chancel at or above natural ground level. The earliest part is the chancel, which dates from C13th. The East window is a pleasing example of the Perpendicular period and, at its apex, contains a small piece of medieval stained glass. The barrel-roofed nave is C15th, as is the tower. The main door may date from that period, too, and is thought to hang on its original hinges. The C19th dormer windows in the south side nave roof are rather delightful, and their style is particularly unusual for a church. The font is a little unusual, too, in that its base incorporates a step. Presumably the officiating cleric was short! It is claimed the only other in Gloucestershire similar to this is at Wormington (*and, yes, I can confirm Wormington's font has this feature. Ed*).

The large arch-like opening in the west face of the tower is intriguing. At one time it contained a window, but the tracery within it decayed and after its eventual collapse the opening was filled in. It would be slightly remiss not to mention the bells, as some have a local and even national importance. A ring of 5 bells was cast by Evesham bellfounder Michael Bushell in 1707. Unfortunately the tenor cracked and was recast by Abraham Rudhall in 1732. The four remaining Bushell bells survive as the 6th, 7th, 8th & 9th of the present ring. Michael Bushell worked with the already-established William Clarke. Bushell is first mentioned in 1706, when he and Clarke *(cont overleaf)*

Officers and Committee Members of the Guild

PRESIDENT

Mr John Nicholls

john.nicholls18b@btinternet.com

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Mrs Phyllis Brazier

The Rev Dr Peter Newing

Chaplain

The Rev Patrick Wooster

Accounts Examiners

Mr Michael Fairfax

Mr Trevor Hobday

GUILD OFFICERS

Guild Master

Mr Peter Quinn

peterquinn22@gmail.com

Ringling Master

Mrs Sophia Lewis-Skeath

sophia.dady@btinternet.com

Hon Secretary

Mr Andrew Gunn

awgrf@hotmail.com

Hon Treasurer

Mr Michael Dane

landm.dane@btinternet.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr Peter Kenealy

peterkenealy@btinternet.com

Mrs Jackie Hands

Mr Keith Murphy

Mr Chris Povey

CCCBR Representatives

Mr Chris Povey

cmpovey@btinternet.com

Mr Keith Murphy

keith.murphy@btinternet.com

Programme Secretary

Mr Stuart Cummings

Child Protection Officer

Mrs Sophia Lewis-Skeath

Mid-week Tours

General Contact

Mrs Isobel Murphy

isobel.murphy@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary

Mr Peter Kenealy

Health & Safety Officer

Mr Chris Povey

Newsletter Editor

Mr Chris Povey

cmpovey@btinternet.com

THE FSG WEB-SITE IS: <http://www.fourshires.org.uk>

The deadline for the next issue of the FSG Newsletter (October 2012) is Sept 13th 2012

This Newsletter survives only because of the contributions you make to it. Without them it will fail. Articles can be submitted to the undersigned via email or to the postal address shown above, or to any committee member.

Please contribute something, however small (or large). You would be surprised the things people enjoy reading about. A few suggestions: an historical item; a funny story; a quarter peal report; poems; puzzles; tales, events past and to come; a ringing tour, even! Send them in. They will all be welcome.... and don't worry if you think your handwriting is unintelligible. It can normally be translated. Just send the stuff in!

(Caretaker) Newsletter Editor: Chris Povey Postal and email addresses above

If sending articles by email, please use MS Word (not the dreaded Works*) format for written articles, jpg format for photos, and scanned items in pdf or jpg formats. (I have the facility to scan photo prints if you haven't.) Please let me know ownership of photos for acknowledgement where relevant. If you have a long article, you might consider breaking it into parts. (* If you've only got Microsoft Works, then 'Save As' your article into Rich Text Format – ie, suffix .rtf – and send in this form.)

TOWER OF THE QUARTER, ST PETER'S, PEBWORTH- cont. from front cover

collaborated to cast a ring of 6 for Badsey (the present back 6). Clarke had by that time cast some single bells for churches in the area and in 1705 cast a ring of 5 bells for Hinton-on-the-Green (the present back 5). Bells had been cast in Evesham since 1600, but all this ceased in 1711 when Clarke & Bushell's operation was curtailed by the landlord selling the bell foundry site and some adjoining property.

The bells are a chuckable, easy-going 10 that anyone can handle with ease. The first Q on the 10 was Grandsire Caters on July 22nd 2002, composed and conducted by Ian Povey. The Guild's practice, on July 21st 2012, is almost 10 years to the day on from that occasion.

NOTICE OF 2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND STRIKING COMPETITIONS

AT THE CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, CHASTLETON, OXON (6, 6-3-8 in G),
ON SATURDAY 13th OCTOBER 2012

ORDER OF THE DAY

2.15pm	Brazier Cup Striking Competition at St Mary the V's Church (6, 9cwt)
3.00pm	Newing Shield Striking Competition, ditto
4.45pm	Service in the Church (conducted by the Vicar)
5.30pm	Annual General Meeting in the Church (Chairman: the Guild President)

Evening ringing: nothing arranged at this stage. See web-site for updates nearer time.

The AGENDA for the AGM is:-

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting (*published in the Jan 2012 Newsletter, no 131, pp.4 & 5; and on website**)
- 3 Matters Arising.
- 4 Guild Master's Report (*included in this Newsletter: see p.5*)
- 5 Treasurer's Report (*included in this Newsletter: see p.4*)
- 6 Election of Officers (Guild Master, Ringing Master, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer).
- 7 Election of Committee and Honorary Independent Examiner(s).
- 8 Confirmation of new members
- 9 Any Other Business (at the Chairman's discretion)
- 10 Results of the Striking Competitions.

(* available from the website for printing out if reqd: www.fourshires.org.uk; then select 'Newsletters')

Andrew Gunn, Honorary Secretary

Light refreshments will be available in the Church from about 2.00pm. We're not quite sure of the domestic arrangements at the moment, as there is a rota of bodies involved with serving teas in the Church to the visitors of Chastleton House (there is no restaurant/café there). The date has been booked by one of these organisations, so we will endeavour to liaise with them before our event.

Teams intending to take part in the Striking Competitions should contact the Ringing Master (Sophia L-S) about their entry.

PLEASE NOTE: VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

The National Trust is the major player at Chastleton. Because the Trust personnel there are being very accommodating in allowing us to use their facilities and are openly welcoming us, we mustn't cause problems to their operation. The Trust has its own car park for people visiting the House, to prevent associated vehicles clogging up the narrow roads. In the same way and for the same reasons, all our vehicles (that is, vehicles on FSG activity) must park in the car park that has been arranged for our use. This may mean a little walk to get to the Church, but most members won't find this difficult. If anyone cannot walk that distance, or if there's a need to transport anything to the Church, it probably won't affect the traffic there too much if somebody or something is dropped off before the vehicle is parked in the designated car park.

The area for parking our cars hasn't been confirmed at the time of printing this Newsletter (it is on private land). It is hoped the area will be close to the Church. When the area has been arranged, an update will appear on the web-site and in the October Newsletter (although this may not reach all members by the date of the AGM).

The area will be clearly signposted on the day.

CHASTLETON HOUSE



Photo: Chris Povey

Chastleton House is quite simply a jewel in the National Trust's crown. It's truly a glory. A Trust description states it 'exudes an informal and timeless atmosphere' – and so it does! It was built 1607-1612 and remained in the same family's ownership until it passed to the Trust in 1991. The interior is largely unchanged from its original period. The House will be open 1.00-4.00pm on October 13th, but do consider the following if you wish to visit that day. Entry is only by timed ticket (free if you are a Trust member, otherwise £8.25), which needs to be collected from the ticket office. This opens at 12.30pm, and tickets are issued on a first-come-first-served basis. There are associated gardens to view, too (not subject to timed entry). Of particular interest are the croquet lawns. The rules of the modern game of croquet were codified at Chastleton in 1866 and a plaque records this.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2011

<u>Income</u>				<u>Expenditure</u>			
<u>2010</u>		<u>2011</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2010</u>		<u>2011</u>	<u>Notes</u>
£2525.81	General Fund Opening balance	£925.93	1		General Fund		
£507.50	Subscriptions	£531.50		£355.17	Newsletters	£711.13	3
£1.20	Interest	£0.79		£174.14	Insurance	£364.47	4
£25.00	Advertising sales	£25.00		£85.00	Expenses	£32.08	
£118.00	Garments	£335.00		£91.59	Garments	£302.97	
£17.00	Annual Dinner	£800.00		0.00	Annual Dinner	£870.00	
£80.50	G&B Donation	£23.50		£57.83	Coventry Silvercraft	0.00	
0.00	Intershires Striking Comp tea	£34.40					
0.00	Miscellaneous	£71.63	2	£60.00	CCCBR subscription	£40.00	
0.00	Donations	£100.00					
<u>£748.70</u>	Total receipts	<u>£1921.82</u>		<u>£823.73</u>	Total expenditure	<u>£2320.65</u>	
				<u>£2651.18</u>	Closing balance	<u>£527.10</u>	
<hr/>							
<u>Restricted Funds – Bell Fund</u>							
	Opening balance	£1725.25					
£300.00	Mid-week tours	£100.00			Temple Guiting grant	£500.00	
	Donations	£7.00					
	Dinner raffle	£63.00					
£300.00	Total receipts	£170.00			Total expenditure	£500.00	
				<u>£1725.25</u>	Closing balance	<u>£1395.25</u>	
<hr/>							
<u>Assets</u>							
£2638.37	Bank	£1922.35	5				
£12.81	Cash	£0.00					
£22.50	Badges	£22.50					
£0.00	Garments	£0.00					
	Printers (2 year write-off)	£82.37					
	Paper and inks	£116.53					

Explanatory Notes on the above:

- 1 **Opening balances:** the closing balance for 2010 has been apportioned between the General Fund and the Bell Fund for the 2011 opening balances;
- 2 **Miscellaneous:** these are bank deposits that cannot be attributed elsewhere and includes cash in hand (£12.81 of which was from 2010);
- 3 **Newsletters:** this includes £163.91 that was incurred in 2010. It is planned that the two printers purchased by the Guild will be written-off over 2 years, which equates to a cost of £91.25 per annum. At the end of 2011 the value of unused inks and paper (carried into 2012) was £116.53.
- 4 **Insurance:** this includes the insurance premiums for both 2011 (£179.03) and 2012 (£185.44).
- 5 **Other assets of the Guild include:** Newing Shield, President's Chain, Brazier Trophy, Spencer Jones Cup, Mini-Mouse Award, Merit Award, Inter-Shires Trophy, peal books and documents. The Shield, Cup, Trophy and President's Chain have been valued professionally and are currently insured by the Guild for £4051.

At the end of 2011 there were no outstanding invoices so the expenditure incurred in that year is complete. I hope most of the figures are self explanatory, but there are a few notes that require explanation.

The first thing I have done is split the funds into the General Fund and the Bell Fund, and ensured that each is held in its own account. This way I know at all times what unrestricted funds are available. The only downside of this is that we are not moving spare funds into the interest earning account (where the Bell Fund is held), but this is costing us less than 50p interest a year. There were some deposits into the account for which I have no deposit slips or any paperwork, and these therefore have been noted as Miscellaneous.

The insurance is due in December each year, but in the last couple of years has not been paid until January; I have paid it when due to try and get it in the correct accounting year, which results in there being 2 payments in 2011, but hopefully only one each year in future.

The Newsletter costs include two printers that will be written off over 2 years, and after each printing of the Newsletter there are inks and paper remaining for the next print run. In 2011 there was more apparently spent on the Newsletters than the true cost due to some 2010 bills not being paid until 2011 and there being inks and paper carried into 2012. I have attempted to calculate the true cost for 2011 and estimate it at £410.38.

HON TREASURER'S REPORT

I took over the role of Treasurer at the October AGM, went to Australia for 5 weeks and only managed to do any treasuring for about 1 month of the 2011 year. Also, due to the incompetence of the FSG bank, I was not allowed to have bank statements or sign cheques until February 2012. Thanks to the information provided by the previous treasurer and also the secretary, I managed to get a grip on the money and have produced these accounts.

Michael Dane, Hon Treasurer

REPORT BY THE ACCOUNTS EXAMINERS:

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our notice to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

(Signed) Michael Fairfax, Trevor Hobday

GUILD MASTER'S REPORT FOR THE 2012 AGM: YEAR 2011–2012

I am pleased to report that your Guild in the year 2011 to 2012 has been very active again, and your committee, elected at the last Annual General Meeting, has again been working very hard on your behalf. Our new Honorary Treasurer, Michael Dane, will make his report at the 2012 AGM. This, together with the Guild accounts, will be published in this newsletter

The weekly practices have again been very well attended. The Ringing Master, Sophia Lewis-Skeath, has either run them or appointed a deputy to do so. Most of the towers we usually ring at during the year welcome the Guild back! Stuart Cummings has done a sterling job in arranging all the towers.

The Annual Dinner was held on Saturday 7th February 2012 at The White Hart Royal Hotel, Moreton in Marsh. The weather was exceptionally inclement that day and the dinner was nearly cancelled. A number did not turn up due to the snow. I am quite sure all who attended enjoyed the dinner, and thanks must go to Peter Newing for speaking at the dinner. We intend to hold the dinner again at The White Hart, as they were very

understanding and did not charge anything for this year's cancellations.

The website under Roland Meyrick is also projecting an active Guild to the web world. It contains the Guild Newsletter to be read online. It also displays what Guild clothing is available to purchase.

As stated in my last Report the rules of the Guild have now been amended and were ratified at the 2011 AGM. They will be printed during the year in booklet form and are expected to be ready for distribution at the 2012 AGM in October.

Chris Povey is editor of the Guild Newsletter and our thanks must go to him for producing an excellent product. As I said in my last report, it has taken on a new dimension, both in editorial content and printing quality. The printing is still being done 'in house' by a volunteer printing team, to whom thanks, too.

An abridged version of the minutes of the most-recent Guild Committee meeting is always published in the Newsletter, so that all

members are as up-to-date as possible with Guild business. They can then inform the Hon Secretary about any items they wish to be discussed at these meetings or request clarification about items already discussed.

Our Bell Restoration Fund, which was set up two years ago, made its first grant to Temple Guiting to assist with their augmentation to an excellent ring of six. We have other smaller applications under consideration and we hope to raise further funds to be able to continue offering grants to other towers in our area of operation.

Finally thanks should go to all members of the committee for their commitment and hard work, and for the time they have given to attending the committee meetings held during this year. Also, thanks to Wendy Mace for organising the annual Guild walk, to Isobel Murphy for the work she does in coordinating the FSG monthly tours and to Richard Lewis-Skeath for organising the annual Guild ringing tour.

Peter Quinn, Guild Master

EDITORIAL

Firstly, an apology for the slightly later arrival of the Newsletter this time; it is entirely down to me having insufficient time to finalise it before the normal printing date after returning from a holiday at the end of June.

Again, lots of things have happened in the past three months: the Diamond Jubilee, FSG BBQ, John Nicholls' Big Birthday, Rob Harvey's bigger birthday – and even the Central Council meeting. El Pres's 80th almost coincided with the Guild's 102nd anniversary of its very first meeting at Blockley, so John had a good turn-out of members around him: see report of those events on p.13.

The Jubilee: did your tower ring for this on Sunday 3rd June? I've only heard of a few towers that rang. There must have been more! Please let me know and I will list them next time.

Ah! now, the Guild BBQ: what a delightful event – made even better by the weather being on its very best behaviour. As Hannibal Smith from 'The A-Team' used to say: 'I love it when a plan comes together!' And the BBQ certainly did. See p.7.

The Olympic torch came through Evesham on July 1st, and being good ringers, the bells were rung for the occasion. Not sure whether the ringing did much for the torch or the crowd, but at least it happened, all as requested by the 'powers that be'. This was the second time in less than a month that the bells were rung for a national event – as requested – and it caused me to reflect on what we, ie ringers, contribute to such events. The public generally expects church bells to ring, because it's happened like that for centuries. But

my ringers didn't see the river pageant on the telly at the time it occurred, because we were up the tower giving the required background music. Likewise all the ringers in those churches down the Thames didn't see it either. It was the same with the Olympic torch: didn't see anything of that. Do we get praise for giving all this traditional background music? Not that I'm aware. Perhaps it's all taken for granted: somebody just pushes a big switch and it all starts happening. No human input involved! It saddens me that a long English (yes, I use that term correctly) tradition is so badly known about and understood in England. Ask most English people what they know about English bell ringing and most haven't a clue. Cricket, yes, but equally-old and equally widely-practised English bell ringing, no. I see people walking through the churchyard in Evesham when the bells are being rung, and many look up for some time at the windows through which the ringers are outlined. I suspect the watchers are fascinated to find that real people are up there pulling ropes. I wonder how many people learnt anything about English bell ringing from the bells being rung on the leading barge in the pageant. The BBC could have made some mileage out of that, particularly as many ringers in the nearby churches were doing the same; and especially as the College Youths (established in 1637 and therefore older than most organisations involved in the pageant, ie truly 'Ancient') were doing their bit at our premier Cathedral, St Paul's. Why didn't they?

Probably because the BBC hasn't a clue about ringing either! OK, rant over!

The return/rediscovery/whatever of the first Minute Book of the restarted Guild was a source of much joy and relief (see Committee Meeting, p.6). It would have been highly embarrassing to have the Old Minute Book back and then find (as initially feared) that the 'recent old' Minute Book had disappeared. The returned book shows there is good reason to believe the actual re-founding of the Guild is 30th March 1973 and not as popularly thought for some time now, 1st January 1974. This would be in line with how the founding date of the 'old' Guild has been assessed. If this is indeed so, then the 40th anniversary of the re-founding is less than 9 months away. Should this be celebrated? And if so, how?

I'm glad to see my assessment of donations to towers at which the Guild rings on Saturday nights is agreeable to all. The lack of letters about this subject, from members and tower captains alike, is clear proof.

Lastly, come to the AGM and see the beautiful and charming Chastleton House.

Chris Povey, (Caretaker) Editor

(The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Four Shires Guild or its Committee. The Guild endorses no products or manufacturers advertised within the Newsletter – but would not allow such advertisements where the goods or services are knowingly questionable.)

FSG COMMITTEE MEETING, 19th JUNE.

The Committee met on Tuesday 19th June at the Hon Sec's home in Ilmington. Peter Quinn, Keith Murphy, Sophia Lewis-Skeath and Michael Haynes gave their apologies. The President, John Nicholls, took the Chair

1) The Minutes of the February meeting were agreed without amendment.

2) Matters arising were:-

John updated on the missing Minute Book(s): the book from 1973-1999 had been found. Peter K presented it to the meeting. It appears this may be the only one missing, as its continuation seems to be to hand. Its previous location wasn't given. It was agreed that it should be photographed for record purposes, as the Old Minute Book has been, and was handed to Chris for this work;

Andrew reported on Guild badges. He hasn't been able to devote much time to this, but will. Re the Winner's Shields, there have been four different designs, so he asked the Committee to choose a design to continue with, which was done;

Newsletter distribution list: Michael D has developed a list of members eligible and wishing to receive a hardcopy Newsletter. It was reported that some Newsletters may still be sent to non-Member towers, as done in past years. The Committee decided this would stop immediately, to contain costs;

Newsletter printing costs: Michael D presented his assessment of the 2011 printing costs: £410.38;

Forthcoming events: Guild Ringing Tour 6th-8th July has extra towers; Minimus Comp set up for Sat 8th September at Salford, Warks, but a judge is required (Peter Q to obtain); Guild Walk all arranged for Sat 6th October; Striking Competition and AGM at Chastleton on Sat 13th October is mostly arranged, but some details require finalising before the Newsletter goes to print;

Guild Rule Book: Chris presented a draft copy of the proposed document. He suggested this be finalised and printed for distribution at the October AGM. This was agreed. He asked that the document be read by all, particularly the Brief

History, for factual and typographical errors, as it needs to be finalised very soon;

Donations to towers for Saturday practices: the Committee agreed that the Guild's policy about this should be a presumption against. On the other hand, it should be made known that towers are invited to apply for grants from the BRF when maintenance work is required.

The Guild wishes its funds to be used for clearly-defined items; and that money should go to towers/PCCs that genuinely need it;

Updating Merit Award dates: not done yet.

3) Reports: the following are highlights:-

Hon Secretary: Andrew said the details for the RW Diary details had been forwarded;

Treasurer: Michael D presented his report (circulated prior to the meeting). He enquired about a definitive list of Life Members. There isn't one, but there should be. It was agreed a list should be compiled and ratified at the AGM;

Membership Sec: some cross-referencing of the membership figures and the Treasurer's income list occurred, to establish parity;

Fixture Sec: everything for the next quarter agreed and with the Newsletter Editor;

Health & Safety: nothing of note to report

Newsletter Editor: the July issue was coming together and the printing date was agreed as Tuesday 10th July, to allow for Chris to return from holiday and finalise the issue. He said he needed certain pieces of information before finalisation, particularly about the AGM arrangements;

Mid-week (Vice-President's) Tours co-ordinator: tours continuing successfully: Isobel reported a float of £136.65;

CCCBR reps: Keith's report of the CC meeting was circulated to Committee members beforehand. Chris said there were some minor additions and outlined these;

Bell Restoration Fund: the application from Wyck Rissington re their rehang was discussed, after which a grant of £350 was

agreed. Chris said he had received an only-just-completed application from Hinton-on-the-Green re bird infestation clearance and protection, and was the Committee happy to consider it? It was agreed to do so. Chris had seen the problem, which is severe and requires professional services. The Committee agreed to grant £100. All grants to be paid on successful completion of the work;

4) Items for discussion:-

AGM; other towers open then, and rise, fall and ringing certificates for Competition: Other towers open at the same time had been suggested. Peter Q to action all as required;

Feedback on BBQ: very good event!

Life and 'Special' members: following his request about Life members, Michael D asked about the 'Special' members that appear on the membership lists. (They mainly cover those non-local members attending the Mid-week tours);

Mid-week tours; subscription collection: Michael D asked how subs are collected – does anyone do this? It used to be done fairly routinely, but is sporadic now.

5) Any Other Business:-

Christmas Party: should there be one? If so, an ideal date would be December 15th. John said the location used in Campden last year is unavailable now, ie an alternative is required. More discussion at the next meeting and any details would be in the October Newsletter;

Annual Dinner: need to decide on the location for this, which will be on Saturday Feb 2nd 2013. There was support for the White Hart Royal Hotel at Moreton again

Next Meeting: 19th June, Ilmington. (NB: these notes do not supplant the formally-agreed Minutes.)

FROM THE ARCHIVES (100 YEARS AGO)

The Old Minute Book records nothing from July to the end of September 1912, except the following addition to the Committee meeting held on October 2nd 1912 to discuss the forthcoming Guild Meeting on October 23rd. I am inclined to think the addition, which is the results of the Striking Competition held at Campden on April 25th, was an afterthought, and should really have appeared with the Minutes of that Meeting (see 'From the Archives' in the April 2012 Newsletter). Here are those results:-

The following were the results of the Competitions held at Campden on 25th April.

<i>Rising & Sinking</i>		<i>Round Ringing</i>	
Longborough	32 points	Longborough	89 points
Moreton	28 "	Moreton	83 "

<i>Shipston</i>	15 points	<i>Shipston</i>	74 points
<i>Blockley</i>	0 "	<i>Blockley</i>	76 "

<i>Call Changes</i>		<i>Method Ringing</i>	
Longborough	83 points	Longborough	79 points
Moreton	79 "	Shipston	0 "
Blockley	77 "		
Shipston	60 "		

Clearly, Longborough ringers were the big hitters at that time. They wiped the board in all four categories. Blockley obviously had a problem with 'Rising & Sinking': zero points; and Shipston similarly mucked up with the Method Ringing. I'll bet there were a few hard words for those who caused the zeros! Ed

THE 2012 SUMMER BBQ AT EVESHAM, JUNE 9TH

Saturday June 9th was preceded by a week of dreadful weather, high winds and rain, and was followed by a week of incessant and miserable rain. But the day itself was gloriously dry and sunny. Robert and Sue Hall must be congratulated for choosing such a fine day – were they just lucky, or do they have some sort of connection to the powers that control such things? Hmm... Whatever the reason, over thirty Guild members and guests enjoyed the occasion, which consisted of a ring at the Bell Tower, where we rose to Grandsire Caters and rounds/call changes on the 12 (one might have pitied William Hall, Robert's son, who hadn't rung for about 4 years, being given a rope for ringing on the 12 to kick off with..... but of course, as an ex-Bell Tower ringer and past Guild member, he rang perfectly capably), a boat trip on the River Avon and then - on dry land - the BBQ.

We were also lucky with the river, as only the day before boat owner and Guild member Tom Sandham had warned the trip could be cancelled. The Avon was in flood from the earlier heavy rain and the danger level at which all navigation should cease was approaching. Very amazingly, considering the weather, the following 24 hours saw the level fall and the river itself to become largely its normal tranquil self. Ah! the power of the Four Shires Guild!

The boat, 'Handsam Too', is registered as an historic vessel, having been built in 1934. The floods of 2007 damaged it, causing it to sink through being holed. Luckily it was recovered by Tom after the floods and was repaired successfully. Such is the nature of running a pleasure boat business on a river: the nice days are nice, but the rainy ones.....!

The river trip started at Sankey Marine, the eventual location of the BBQ situated at the downstream end of the big river loop that encloses Evesham, and chugged all the way round the loop to Tom's mooring in The Park. Chris and Helen Povey were picked up here, as they were too late arriving at the Marina (typical: it's always the closest ones....). It was then up through the Workman Bridge to the weir to turn round before returning to Sankey Marine. The river was a picture in the sunshine. It sparkled; an unexpected treat considering the past weather.



"I'm forever blowing bubbles...."



Cap'n Tom and those at the blunt end

The children on board were issued with little containers for blowing soap

bubbles. Most if not all of the youngsters were at the bow (the pointy end), so we were treated to an almost continuous stream of bubbles down through the boat. But they (the youngsters, that is) loved it.



The assembled company tucking in



Plain hunt Minor on handbells (Is that a wooden overcoat, Richard?)

Once back at the Marina the proprietors cooked up the BBQ. Drinks of all descriptions were available in the Club House, which we could have used if the weather was inclement. To compound our good fortune the weather treated us even more kindly in the evening, in that it became sunnier and almost still while we collected our food and sat down to eat. The Bell Tower handbells were brought along, but sadly we couldn't do them justice, only managing rounds on 12 and plain hunt Minor.

We left with just a fleeting memory of what June should be like, rather than the poor weather thrown at us this year!



The serenity of the river and of the evening compared to the previous day was quite unbelievable!

It was a very pleasant event, for which Robert and Sue Hall, and Sophia L-S, must be thanked.

CMP

(Handsam Too Boat Co: see www.handsamboatchcompany.co.uk/)

YOUR NEWSLETTER: AN UPDATE ON PRODUCTION AND COSTS

The Guild's Newsletter has been around a long time, since June 1978 to be precise, and many changes have occurred since then. Significant changes have occurred in the last two or three years, not least of which have been colour photos and a few more pages – and yes, a change of editor. (I am very proud of the fact that I contributed an article to the very first issue and to the second one, too – but contributing to those issues isn't a necessary qualification to be Editor and I'm still waiting for someone to take the job from me.....)

It is, of course, printed as a hardcopy, but it is additionally available via the Guild's web-site. Every member is entitled to receive a copy, although couples who are members get one copy between them. Members may elect not to receive a printed copy, but to view it via the web-site. I can only admire these members, who clearly have the strength to resist cluttering their homes up with lots of paper.....

You will have noticed some of the recent changes, but not others. The format has settled down now (and I hope you like it). I think major changes are unlikely in the foreseeable future, although a minor detail may be tweaked. It's generally in 14-side form, but there has been a 12-side issue and an 18-side issue in the last 12 months. A change you are unlikely to have noticed is the way it is printed. Until about 18 months ago production was by photocopying. We were lucky for a time to have this done at a favourable rate by a member's employer, but unfortunately that arrangement came to an end. The Committee needed to replace this facility with another one very quickly and, after a trial run, settled on an in-house printing arrangement.

The in-house printing arrangement has created lots of change, in that some of the equipment (the printers) are 'capital' costs and therefore are written-off after a period of time, so their cost is spread over a number of printings as an on-cost. Consumables (paper and inks) are directly attributed to a printing run. The actual in-house cost of printing the Newsletter is therefore not a straightforward calculation, initially at least, but after a period of use it becomes clearer.

We started with a new Canon 540 printer, which was a cheap offer at £72 all-in from Argos. This printed OK and fairly quickly on the 'fast' or 'draft' setting. However, it soon became apparent another printer was required, because it took almost two days to print 200 issues of a 7-page/14-sided document, ie 2800 prints. The printing team are happy to give up one day to produce your favourite publication, but two days was just a bit too much. Two of the team each brought along a printer to the next printing session to boost the production rate, and the printing job was completed in one day. Another

printer, an Epson capable of even quicker print rates, was purchased by the Guild, although it cost a little more than the Canon.

As might be imagined, printing almost 3000 pages per issue uses a lot of printer ink. It has been said printer ink is some of the most expensive liquid it is possible to buy. This is true if printer-manufacturer cartridges are purchased, but Stuart Cummings put us on to an internet supplier, whose charges are vastly cheaper and whose service in posting out the goods is absolutely superb. We always print on a printer's fast or draft setting. Firstly, it saves production time, but just as importantly it's more economical on inks. Text is more than reasonable at these settings, although photo quality reduces slightly but is still acceptable.

Paper is another consumable. A single issue of 7 pages requires 1400 sheets for 200 copies, ie almost three reams. We buy in bulk, ie at least 5 reams at a time on special offers, but we've found we must be careful with the quality of the paper, particularly for double-sided printing, as cheap paper tends to 'bleed' through, even on the 'fast' print setting.

We've settled down for the last couple of issues with the two Guild printers and two borrowed printers. The mode of production is effectively finalised. We manage production, including printing and stapling the pages, in a day; even the marathon 18-side January 2012 issue, which included 200 A5 size subscription renewal forms. That session, at 200 copies, came to almost 4000 printed sheets.

Some questions about Newsletter production costs arising from the 2011 Guild accounts caused a check before the January print run on the number of ink cartridges each printer was using. The results of this were most illuminating and helped to sort out the costs that were truthfully attributable to 2010 and the value of the surplus consumables that should go into the 2012 accounts. In addition this exercise provided indicative costs of printing with each printer. We found that the newer printers, those with multi functions such as a scanner, were more expensive than the 'quite old' printer that has a simple printing function. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the cartridges for the old printer are much cheaper than those for the more-modern printers; and secondly, the older printer's cartridges hold a lot more ink. In the most significant case the old printer's cartridge is twice as large as that of a newer printer. This means the old printer's cost per print is less than a quarter of a newer printer's cost. We also found the old printer's 'fast' speed isn't much less than the newer printer's fast speed. This cost difference was a major discovery, particularly with our amount of printing, and it makes the old

printer very valuable. The consumption exercise revealed the average cost of printing double-sided (whether b&w or colour, and including paper and printer write-off cost) is about 9p.

The last area to receive attention has been the number of Newsletters to print for an issue. This number has been unclear for some time and we've had to estimate it and add a few for contingencies. The figure used was 200. Major changes occurred just recently in the Guild's accounting department and a significant outcome of this was a much more accurate list of paid-up members and whom of those is entitled to receive a hard-copy Newsletter. All of a sudden the number of Newsletters required plummeted to 160. All of a sudden, too, there was a big saving in cost over the 200 previously printed: about £100 per year, reducing the yearly cost to about £400; perhaps a little more when additional printing (eg Subs renewal sheets, etc) is taken into account. This is barely more than the totals shown for printing four issues 3 or 4 years back (and which had fewer than 14 sides if I remember correctly). The April 2012 Newsletter was the first printing to meet the lower total number required.

The cost of the Newsletter has been slightly offset by selling some space for advertising. Our local bellhanging company, Whites of Appleton, pay the Guild for their half-yearly adverts. In addition, some printing has been done for the North Cotswolds Branch of the G&B, for which the Branch has made a donation.

The Newsletter is the most expensive item in the Guild's accounts, which the Committee fully realises. I hope this article serves to show that the Committee is making substantial efforts to minimise the cost of producing the Newsletter, while at the same recognising that the finished article needs to be attractive and interesting to readers. The volunteer printing team (of four, plus the Hon Sec who supplies the premises and the coffee) works hard to keep the presses going - although those people would happily devolve this work should anyone show conclusively that the total cost of producing the Newsletter by commercial means is cheaper. They give of their time cheerfully - but none of them is a masochist (as far as Newsletter printing is concerned, that is: don't know about anything else.....)!

Chris Povey, (Caretaker) Editor, on behalf of the Committee

A TALE OF TWO FOURS

Rings of 4 are rare in our area. I believe there are just three of them. Until recently two have been unringable and one, although ringable, is rung sparingly due to the nature of the frame supporting beams and some fittings. Of the recently unringable ones, Ettington has had substantial DIY work applied by Graham Nabb of Kineton such that the bells can now be rung, and the other, Wyck Rissington, is undergoing rehangng work by Whites of Appleton at the moment. Stanway is the one that's ringable but only just. They are very hard to ring, but there are plans to rehang them. I went to Wyck Rissington (see below) and Simon Ridley from Cheltenham, who has taken Stanway under his wing and who is spearheading the rehangng project, describes the current situation there, what the projected work entails and how the project is proceeding. It's not very often you see an article on a ring of four, let alone an article on two rings of four, so settle back and enjoy the experience!

Church of St Laurence, Wyck Rissington, Glos (4, 6-3-16 in B)



(Photo: Friends of St Laurence, Wyck Rissington)

This small village must be a beacon of hope to those fundraising. After raising about £300,000 to re-roof the Nave, they set about raising approximately £25,000 to have the bells rehung. The bells became unringable about 6 years ago. The frame is good, but the wooden headstocks had become spongy, and other fittings were time-expired. Whites of Appleton are undertaking the work and came to remove the bells on Monday 14th May. (An indication of the enthusiasm that exists at Wyck Rissington is the speed at which all the wording and photos about this operation appeared on their website: the same evening!!) The bells will have their canons removed and will be given modern ringing fittings. They will then be tuned, as two in particular are wildly sharp. The frame will be given some tie-bars and brackets to stiffen it, and two steel beams will be placed underneath the frame to relieve the old wooden beams supposedly doing this job, but are gradually not. A new floor underneath the bellframe will be provided, to prevent the steeplekeeper plummeting some 12ft to the next floor below if he loses his footing. Some thought was given to augmenting to 5, but sadly there is no room to add another bell.



The bells four days before removal.
(Treble near left; tenor near right, 2nd and 3rd between.)

Very good luck to Wyck Rissington with this project. I will update as and when things happen. Perhaps next year the Mini-Mouse competition can be held on a genuine and easy-going 4. CMP

Church of St Peter, Stanway, Glos (4, 12cwt in F#)



(Photo: Chris Povey)

The church and tiny village form part of the Stanway Manor Estate – most recently noted for its 300ft high single jet fountain. The bells were last restored in 1904 by Bond of Burford, who also cast the 2nd bell. The bellframe is for 5 bells, so there is a vacant pit for a treble.

The four bells have been seldom rung since their restoration and when you are on the end of a rope it's easy to hear why – they sound terrible! While the tenor and 3rd bells are almost in tune with each other, the treble could be in another ring and the 2nd seems to have been a poor compromise to amalgamate the others. The fittings, too, appear to have been salvaged from Bond's workshop floor and all are well past their sell-by date. Many date from around 1860 and are poorly installed at best. One of the badly split headstocks still has bark attached and the treble has a medieval clapper! Certainly the installation is no more than a sum of its parts.



The cracked headstock of the 3rd bell

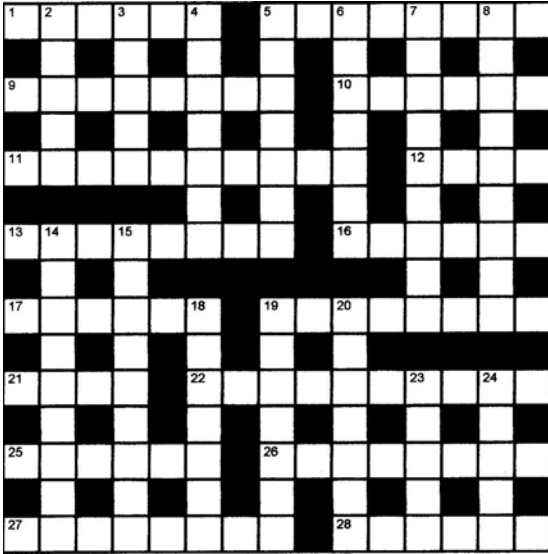
The proposed scheme is to make the best of what is in the tower and enhance it to create a tuneful and easily ringable instrument that can be made available for ringers and the church to enjoy. This will involve tuning the existing bells (two of which are of historical significance) and casting a new treble to fill the vacant pit in the frame. Thankfully, the frame is in good condition and so will be strengthened with tie rods and angle plates before being lowered onto new foundation beams. Safe access and a new floor will be built under the frame so a strong head for heights will no longer be a pre-requisite for ringing here.

The scheme is currently being put through the faculty process and fundraising is beginning. It will cost £40,000 to create a good quality ring of 5 bells. We will shortly be seeking donors to assist with the project. If you would like further information or a look at the bells, please contact me on ringingsimon1980@btinternet.com or by telephone 01242 525582.

Simon Ridley

EL PRESIDENTE'S CROSSWORD

Once again El Presidente doesn't disappoint. Here is yet another mindbender, but El Presidente considers these offerings simple little puzzles. (Your humble Ed is clearly a simple being.....!).



Across

- 1 Often the last to halve a quarter (6)
- 5 Put your finger on it! (8)
- 9 The criminal who was freed before the Crucifixion (8)
- 10 Nearest and dearest (6)
- 11 Well organised triples? (10)
- 12 With 10 across one could look backward (4)
- 13 Eg, Rodin, Michelangelo (8)
- 16 Slashing weapons (6)
- 17 For the time being (3,3)
- 19 Talk about the opposite! (8)
- 21 See 18 Down (4)
- 22 Obviously bell-flowers (10)
- 25 Misspell rut and get frozen ground (6)
- 26 Introductory movement (8)
- 27 Salvages (8)
- 28 I'm the first to ring said the young singer (6)

Down

- 2 Son of Abraham (5)
- 3 Haul (5)
- 4 Put a bit in the hat for surroundings (7)
- 5 -- as. Considering that (7)
- 6 Belongings (7)
- 7 Schedule unknown to Bill (9)
- 8 Found in ringing where a change has been repeated (9)
- 14 Extent of bending (9)
- 15 Describes Mormon saints (6,3)
- 18 and 21 Across. A tall Treasurer (7)
- 19 Could be windy places – or hot air! (7)
- 20 Tens are or could be at hand (7)
- 23 Set free? (5)
- 24 Month of showers – you must be joking! (5)

Answer to crossword in the April 2012 Newsletter



RECENT MID-WEEK MONTHLY TOURS REPORT

The April Outing, organised by Pat Halls, took us into the Derbyshire Dales. The first tower was St Werburgh, Spondon, with its 6 bells, 8cwt. The 3rd bell is dated about 1550 and is by Thomas Newcombe. The next tower was St Wilfrid of York, West Hallam, with its Taylor 8 (9cwt). The back 6 were cast in 1922. The local ringers of the time were clearly impressed by the new bells such that they had two trebles added in 1928. Lunch was taken there at The Punch Bowl. The first tower in the afternoon was St Peter, Belper, with its fine 14cwt Taylor 8 of 1925. The last tower to end a good day was St Alkmund, Duffield, with its excellent Taylor 10, 17cwt, cast in 1933. This was a lovely day out in the Dales with some wonderful bells.

The May Outing took us into Oxfordshire and was organised by Jenny Ball. Our first tower was St Mary the Virgin, North Aston (6, 6cwt), These were a ring of 3 until 1979, at which time they were rehung and augmented with three Taylor trebles. Our second tower was St James the Apostle, Somerton (8, 12cwt). These were augmented to 8 in 1994 with two Whitechapel trebles. The 7th and

tenor here are very early Henry Bagley I bells, having been cast in 1635. He also cast the 4th (1646) and the 5th (1670). We took lunch at The Bell, Lower Heyford, where afterwards we sampled the bells of St Mary's Church. These are a light (7cwt) 6. Our final tower, ending a splendid day, was the 8 at SS Peter & Paul, Steeple Aston. *(The tenor here was replaced in March by a new one, as the old one was considered too light and dull-sounding. The new bell is a 'Jubilee' bell and has the Royal Arms cast onto it. The weight of the old tenor was 2cwt lighter than the new one, which, at 12-2-16, might be considered at the lighter end of the weight range for its note of F. However, the new bell fits the weight distribution of the other bells perfectly and the tone is reported to be 'Oh! so nice!' There is a report of the new bell in the Ringing World of April 27th. Congratulations to Guild member Graham Clifton and his wife Dorothy in organising the old bell's replacement. Ed)*

The June outing took us onto the Bucks/Beds border and was organised by Colin Lord. Our

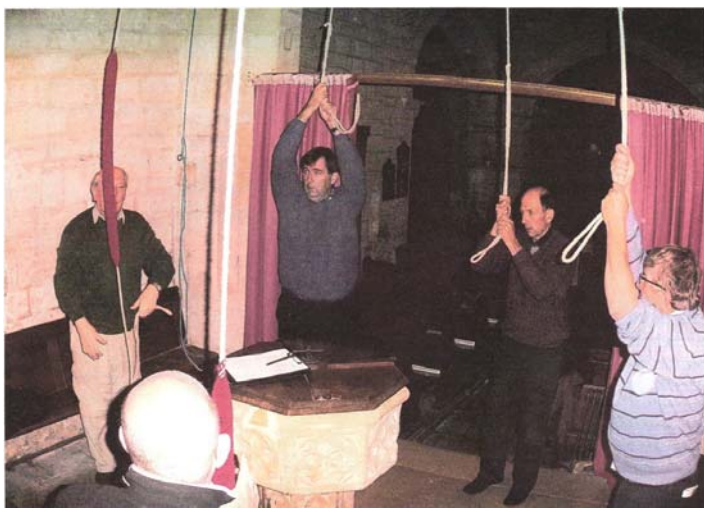
first tower was St Mary, Whaddon, with its 15cwt Gillett & Johnston 6 cast in 1927. Our next tower was St Michael & AA, Stewkley, to ring on its 8, 10cwt. The 5th is a bell cast in 1595 by Laurence Wright. Lunch was taken at the Grove Lock Inn, Grove, which is a comparatively recent establishment, being converted from the lock-keeper's cottage. After lunch we visited St Barnabas' Church, Linslade, and this beautiful old church is really worth a visit. The 8 bells (10cwt) were soon sounding well. We ended a good day's ringing on the 15cwt 6 at All Saints Church, Soulbury. The ring contains five very interesting old bells: two by the Wokingham Foundry dated about 1450, one by Bartholomew Atton dated 1592, one by Henry Knight II dated 1661 and one (undated) by Chandler.

The counties bordering our own certainly have beauty. Many of our Tour ringers come from these areas.

Frank Spiers

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER AT GUITING POWER

AN EXCELLENT 240 OF BOB DOUBLES



Allen Turner went to the Guild practice at Guiting Power on March 31st and gave his newly-acquired wide-angle digital camera a try-out. The ringers in the photo are (L-R) John Nicholls, Stuart Cummings, Michael Cummings and David Adams. (Cannot identify the ringer in the foreground.)

Keep snapping, Allen, and send the shots in.

George Osborn confounded my mentioning to him a short while ago at Broadway that all touches of Plain Bob coming round at handstroke are false. Well, they are (just try writing out the changes preceding rounds at handstroke and you will find they are the first lead of Plain Bob in reverse order); but not, as George discovered, when you mix such changes into a 240 of Plain Bob Doubles that repeats all the changes at handstroke and backstroke. As ever, the internet provided the goods. George called it (I think for the first time successfully) at Buckland for Sunday evening ringing there.

12345
13524
13542 Bob
15234
15243 Bob
12354
13254 Single
12435
14235 Single
12543
12534 Bob
15423
14523 Single
Repeat (2 part)

OK, you'll say, what's a Single in Plain Bob Doubles? Here it is:-

54321 3rd's from the back.
53412 and then out. No
35142 long 5th's: just 2
31524S blows in 5th's for
13254 the bell that would
13245 have made it, and
31425 in; the bell that
34152 would have made
43512 3-4 up runs out, 2
45321 blows in 5th's and in

IS SQUIRREL NUTKIN ALIVE AND WELL, AND LIVING IN YOUR TOWER?

'Of course not', you will reply. Unfortunately, you may be wrong. Read on.

Evesham Bell Tower is well-protected against bird infestation. No bird gets it, which is as it should be. New stainless-steel mesh was applied about 20 years ago and it's all in excellent condition. However, these defences were tested by squirrels recently and were found to be insecure. There have been reports of squirrels running up and down the outside of the Tower for some time, but no signs of entry until one Saturday morning when I went in to raise some bells for a wedding. There were bits and pieces over the ringing room floor. These had fallen through the rope holes. I went up to the clock room to see what had occurred, fervently hoping the ropes were OK. They were, and the clock room didn't seem unusually disturbed. Up to the belfry to check out the ropes there. Again, ropes OK and nothing unusual. You know the feeling: something's wrong, but you're uneasy because you can't find the cause. We rang for the wedding and afterwards one of the ringers and I took another look. In the belfry I noticed a movement of something that looked like a bushy tail. Further investigation revealed a large eye looking out of a crevice. It was a squirrel. There was a sudden vision of £2500-worth of bellropes being chewed and made useless! Action to remove the squirrel was required: and fast! I emailed the Vicar, who told me to 'Get on with' getting a pest control man in as quickly as possible. The first thought was to get the ropes off, as, being a Saturday, getting someone in wasn't going to happen until Monday. However, some of the bells were up ready for Sunday ringing, so removal had

to be left until the following morning. I hoped the rodent wouldn't fancy a bit of polyester overnight. However, luck was with me. 'The Vale Magazine', a local freebie mag, was to hand and I looked up pest control. Hinton Pest Control's advert looked me in the face. Hmm, that's nicely local: give them a ring. A lady answered, listened to my story and then said, 'Would you like us to come now?' Oh, most certainly! She said her husband, Stephen, was out on another job, but would call me when he'd finished. Stephen did and I met him at the Tower at 7.15pm on Saturday night. What service! He set two traps, one in the belfry and one in the clock room. I said I'd check them next morning. Stephen told me squirrels are able to get through holes as small as 15mm (that's about 5/8")! Being crawly, flexible creatures that are able to grip on any surface except glass and ceramics, there's hardly a chance 'normal' little crevices will stop them entering. Birds can't get where squirrels can.

I came to the Tower next morning hoping the traps had done the bizz. They had. I could hear rattling upstairs when I reached the Ringing Room door. There was nothing in the clock room trap, but the belfry trap had not one, but two, grey squirrels in it. They weren't happy. They were only small, so were probably young. Unfortunately, they were in the wrong place at the wrong time. I was told by Stephen's wife not to attempt to touch one, because they're nasty things and fight like

almost nothing else of their size. Stephen confirmed they're not nice at all when they're cornered. 'Yes', he said, 'they're just rats that live in trees; cuter looking, but nonetheless rats: don't touch'. We left a trap in the Tower on Sunday night and checked Monday evening. Another squirrel had been caught! Traps will be left in the tower and checked. We shall be blocking up any small holes that could allow a squirrel through.

In case you think squirrels can't reach the louvres or whatever in your tower and therefore their ingress is unlikely, let me tell you these things seem to have big suckers on their feet to defy all forms of gravity. I've seen a squirrel calmly running down the full height of one of the Bell Tower's buttresses; and a person told me he'd seen a squirrel on the clock hands, but it had slipped and fallen to the tarmac below. It was a bit dazed and a bit bloodied, but it got up and ran off. They can get anywhere. If they get in, severe damage is very likely to occur to bellropes, woodwork and electrical wiring. The cost of getting someone in to remove these creatures will be very cheap compared to the bill for their damage. I can recommend Stephen of Hinton Pest Control (01386-41762): a really nice accommodating chap. Oh, and I learnt later, his daughter is learning to ring at Hinton-on-the-Green. Chris Povey

A VERY SPECIAL OCCASION FOR ST GREGORY'S CHURCH, TREDINGTON

Sunday May 27th was a very special occasion for a large number of people and for a number of local ringers. It was a unique event that will not be repeated for most of those who took part.

The Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Rowan Williams Archbishop of Canterbury was the preacher at the morning Eucharist of Pentecost at a Service presided over by the Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth, Bishop of Coventry. Having one Bishop at a Tredington Service would have been special, but to have the Archbishop of Canterbury as well made it an unforgettable experience for us all.

It was important the bells welcomed the Archbishop as he walked down through the village from the Rectory; therefore plans were made well in advance. Tredington ringers are few in number and some members of the band had other duties to perform, so help was required. As the church is part of a group Benefice the invitation was extended to the Ilmington band and their regular supporters from Mickleton, to come to assist in ringing for the Service.

It has to be said that the Ilmington band took this request very seriously and even came to Tredington on their practice night, so those ringers not familiar with the bells could get the feel of them in advance. On the day about 15 ringers were in the tower from several other towers as well. A wide range of doubles methods was rung including a touch of St Simon's, which

was very well struck. Ringing concluded prior to the Service with an excellent lower, followed by some chair shifting so that the last few of the 450 strong congregation could sit in the Ringing Chamber. For those of you that do not know, Tredington is a downstairs ring open to the nave so the best seats in the house were in there! The bells, with a 16cwt tenor, are not the easiest six to ring. There is a long draft, as the bells are hung at the base of the spire above the clock room making the handling difficult for the less experienced.

The Service included several well-known hymns and the singing from a combined Deanery Choir conducted by Julian Harris was a joy to listen to.

At the end of the Service everyone had the opportunity to shake hands with Dr Rowan Williams and both he and the Bishop of Coventry spent further time with everyone chatting over refreshments in the Rectory garden.

Tredington felt honoured to be chosen to host the Service during the Archbishop's weekend in the Coventry Diocese to celebrate the Jubilee of the Consecration of the New Coventry Cathedral. A memorable experience we will not forget.

Hazel Davies

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL MEETING, CHESTER, 4th JUNE



"Well! I've often seen a cat without a grin," thought Alice; "but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in all my life!"

The 115th Central Council meeting was held in Chester in the county famous for its disappearing grinning cat. Chester Diocesan Guild even came up with the smiling animal on a special logo to mark the occasion (see above).

Smiles were in evidence as bellringers are generally pretty sociable, but I do have to say there was quite a bit of pressure on delegates as we were all attending over the very busy Jubilee bank holiday weekend. As luck would have it, the only really good sunny day (Monday 4th June) was the day we all spent in discussions in the Queen Hotel, Chester. Attendance I believe was a little down probably due to ringing events up and down the country to celebrate the Jubilee. With both Chris and I there on your behalf, I'm

pleased to say Four Shires reps attendance was 100%.

This is the only second conference I've attended but I and others were taken aback when we learnt of the passing earlier in 2012 of Harold Walter Rogers who had 64 meetings to his credit. A truly remarkable record of service to ringing and is by some distance the record for the longest service by a Council member. (Read more about this remarkable ringer in Ringing World No.5267 April 6th 2012.)

The business of the day was dominated by discussion on change ringing for the future. This really sprang from the Wellesbourne Conference in November last year and the actions that were being taken to reverse the declining trend in the numbers of ringers. Initiatives that surfaced in the discussion included the ITTS (Integrated Teacher Training Scheme) and the importance of good quality teaching to a consistent standard, the New York City Schools Project (see Ringing World No.5276), the pros and cons of focusing on young ringers, the importance of reaching out to lapsed ringers and the importance of links with the church that give us the "where" and "why" we ring.

There were some business matters settled. The adoption of a motion to include a statistical analysis of peals using simulated sound probably created the most discussion but was comprehensively adopted by the conference.

Other matters less controversial were the elimination of a potential problem with voting at the meeting of The Ringing World and the Ringing Foundation and the tidying up of the terms of reference of the Public Relations Committee.

The reports of the various committees came next. Before delegates speak at the meeting, they must give their name and the body they represent, so when Chris seconded the Towers & Belfries Committee's report, it was good to hear 'The Four Shires Guild' echo round the room. Chris's elected term on this Committee expired at this meeting, but he was re-elected for another 3-years.

So the message from the conference was to use the Central Council as a support for your own initiatives to build ringing numbers, improve technique and standards. Use its materials, its resources, its committees to share ideas, thoughts, successes and indeed failures. Ask ourselves the question what are we doing to secure the future? We all enjoy our ringing but if we can all do a little something to bring someone new to that enjoyment, we won't disappear like the Cheshire cat and we'll all be smiling that curious smile.

Keith Murphy, Central Council Rep.

THE 102ND ANNIVERSARY MEETING AT BLOCKLEY

The April Newsletter's front cover showed Blockley as the 'Tower of the Quarter'. It was chosen because the date and location of the Saturday practice, 28th April 2012, coincided exactly with the Guild's very first ringing meeting after its founding, which was on 28th April 1910 at Blockley. Eighteen members and one visitor turned up to the practice, and methods ranging from Grandsire Triples, through Stedman Triples and Little Bob Major, to Yorkshire Surprise Major were rung.

There was a delightful little ceremony at the end when it was pointed out that John Nicholls, El Presidente, would be 80 in two days' time. This prompted the suggestion that a rendition of 'Happy Birthday' should be sung; and it was, with one or two recognising that Marilyn Munroe's 'Happy Birthday Mr President' was the appropriate wording (but not one of them managed, or offered, to sing it in the seductive way Miss Munroe sang the original, which may have disappointed John).

After this little bit of FSG history was completed, it was suggested a photo of the assembled company should be taken to record the occasion. Unfortunately one or two had departed earlier in the practice, so not all who attended appear. Nonetheless, a goodly number are recorded for posterity.



L-R: Stuart Cummings, Michael Cummings, Laith Reynolds, Margaret Smith, Sue Bacon, Peter Kenealy, John Nicholls, Chris Povey, Richard Lewis-Skeath, Sophia Lewis-Skeath with Eliza, Allen Turner, Visitor from Herts, Anne Bourne, Ted Copson, Andrew Gunn. (Full marks to Sue for coming dressed to brighten the practices. Perhaps we should all do so).

350TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER 1662-2012

Peter Richardson sent me details on an event that probably passed many people by: the Book of Common Prayer is 350 years old this year. It is a significant publication, having had a profound effect on the lives of the inhabitants of this country during that time: an exceedingly profound effect in earlier centuries. The Coventry Branch of the Prayer Book Society invited ringers within the Coventry Diocese to mark the anniversary by dedicating some special ringing between 23rd April and 4th May. A number of towers within the Diocese did this, many ringing quarter peals. Although some Guild members took part, I do not intend listing the quarters, as, rightly in this case, they were attributed to the Coventry DG. However, one attempt on 26th April deserves special mention here, as for one of the ringers it was something of a special occasion for her, too.

The attempt, which unfortunately wasn't successful, was at Welford-on-Avon, and the lady ringer for whom it was special was Freda Cleaver.

Why was it special? The attempt was of Superlative Surprise Major. Freda's very first peal was Superlative SM. That was in 1952, ie 60 years ago! Some might well say Freda hardly looks old enough to have rung a peal that long ago, and at best she must have been a 'slip-of-a-girl'. Indeed she was: still in her teens. First peals in one's teens weren't massively unusual 60 years ago; and certainly they aren't now. However, Superlative S Major as a first peal 60 years ago (and yes, Freda rang inside: not the treble) was, I suggest, quite unusual – and I suggest it is not so normal even now.

Apparently Freda is to stand in another quarter attempt of Superlative, to mark the occasion properly. We all wish her success in that aim. (A peal 60 years ago? I've not even been ringing that long. What a remarkable - and quite lovely - lady!)

Editor

TRY TO DISCOURAGE YOUR PCC.....

The following is a cartoon sent in by Claire Penny. Husband Martin found it on at old disk. Thank you for sending it in, Claire.



AN OLD PHOTO

While searching for a document recently I came across the following photo. It says on the back, 'Taken Feb '79 to commemorate victory in the Four Shires Guild Striking Competition, October 1978'. The Ebrington team holds the Newing Shield, which was newly donated.



Back L-R: myself, John White, my brother David. Front L-R: George Rouse, Bert Diston, Francis Powell. Taken at Ebrington. CMP

NOTICES AND ADVERTS

GUILD MINIMUS STRIKING COMPETITION FOR THE 'MINI-MOUSE TROPHY'

TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, 8th SEPTEMBER 2012, AT SALFORD, OXON, (5, 6-2-27 in A)

The 'Mini-Mouse' Striking Competition is to happen again this year. Remember, it's intended to be FUN, so come along to have some fun. As last year, it will be on a 5, ie Minimus with tenor covering, but if you want to ring just the back 4, that's entirely OK, too.

It's an early evening event as this year, with the competition just before the evening practice, so the programme will be as below.

- 6.00-7.00pm:** Striking Competition
7.00-7.30pm: results in the church (or churchyard if nice), with cheers and groans as appropriate
7.30-8.30pm: evening practice ringing

Teams can be associated with a tower, or any five FSG paid up members can form a team with a name. No ringer can ring for more than two teams. All teams get a warm-up practice of 3 minutes, and then no further practice. A maximum of about 10 whole pulls of rounds before the test piece, which can be any Minimus method. Rounds before and after not marked. No rising and falling in this event. That's it for the Rules!

Names of teams and ringers names in them to me by Saturday 1st September if possible; otherwise turn up on the day and 'fit in'.

Organiser (*to whom all thanks, Ed*): Peter Quinn 01789-840827 (peterquinn22@googlemail.com)

(The 'Committee' team won it last year. Surely there must be some who can wrest it away from them?)

The oldest Bellhanging Company in the UK
combining Modern Technology with Traditional
Craftsmanship

WHITES OF APPLETON LTD



Church Bellhangers

(Established 1824)

Appleton, Abingdon, Oxon. OX13 5JJ

Tel: 01865-862549 Fax: 01865-864969

E-mail: bells@whitesbellhangers.co.uk

Web site: <http://www.whitesbellhangers.co.uk>

Free inspections on the UK mainland
No deposit required with order



FOUR SHIRES GUILD BELL RESTORATION FUND

At the 2010 AGM the Guild established a Bell Restoration Fund, from which the Committee are empowered to offer grants towards suitable aspects concerning rings of bells within the Guild's area of operation. Such aspects may include a range of needs, from maintenance to augmentations.

Rules and Constitution of the Fund and application forms are available from the Honorary Secretary.

Historic Churches 'Ride & Stride'

The chance to help with the upkeep of ancient churches by being sponsored to cycle ride or walk between churches in the four Shires will occur on September 8th. Here are the websites:-

General site:-

<http://www.rideandstrideuk.org/>

Gloucestershire:-

<http://ghct.org.uk/ride.php>

Worcestershire:-

<http://worcestershirechurches.blogspot.com/historic>

Warwickshire:-

<http://warwickshirechurches.org.uk>

Oxfordshire:-

<http://www.ohct.org.uk/bike.htm>

As usual, Warwickshire is very well organised for this and more details are on its web site.

2012 GUILD WALKING TOUR

Saturday October 6th.

Start at **Sutton-under-Brailes**, ringing 10 - 10.45am,
(please park carefully around the village green area)

Walk to **Brailes** and ring 12 - 12.45pm

Followed by Lunch at 'The George' or bring your own
sandwiches (approx 1 - 2 pm)

Walk to **Cherinton** and ring 3 - 3.45pm

Return to cars by 4 pm

As always this day is intended for anyone to enjoy: non-ringers who enjoy a walk and looking around our lovely churches and villages; ringers who prefer to drive between towers rather than walk; and of course those who enjoy both walking and ringing. The total distance walked is not great, around 5 miles and there are no hills. The organiser is Wendy Mace. If anyone has any queries please get in touch with Wendy: macebwell@btinternet.com

AROUND THE TOWERS

QUARTER-PEALS:-

Mickleton, Glos, 16th April, 1280 Double Norwich Court Bob Major: John Kinchin 1, Ian Thompson 2, Karen French 3, Lucy Gwynne 4, Chris Mew (C) 5, John Nicholls 6, John Gwynne 7, Richard Lewis-Skeath 8.

Stow-on-the-Wold, Glos, 23rd April, 1265 Plain Bob Major & Grandsire Triples: Maureen Sparling 1, Sophia Lewis-Skeath 2, Richard Lewis-Skeath 3, Mark Sayers 4, John Nicholls 5, Chris Mew (C) 6, Clive Sparling 7, Peter Quinn 8. A 65th birthday compliment to Clive Sparling.

Middle Littleton, Worcs, 27th April, 1260 Plain Bob Doubles: Andrew Gunn 1, Chris Povey 2, Claire Penny 3, Martin Penny 4, Matthew Kemble (C) 5, Tom Sandham 6. Rung in memory of Vera Penny (1924-2011) and Barry Penny (1931-2012). 1st Q as conductor.

Wellesbourne, Warks, 30th April, 1280 Cotswold S Major: Michael Dane 1, Chris Mew (C) 2, Sophia Lewis-Skeath 3, Mark Sayers 4, Richard Lewis-Skeath 5, Robert Reeves 6, John Nicholls 7, Peter Quinn 8. Rung to mark the 80th birthday of John Nicholls. (Q attributed to the Coventry D Guild, but we must publicise it here). Congratulations, El Presidente, on reaching such a great age!

Mickleton, Glos, 14th May, 1280 Glazebury S Major: Chris Mew (C) 1, Ian Thompson 2, Robert Reeves 3, Lucy Gwynne 4, Peter Quinn 5, Richard Lewis-Skeath 6, John Nicholls 7, John Gwynne 8.

Childswickham, Glos, May 25th, 1260 Plain Bob Minor: Andrew Gunn 1, Martin Penny 2, Tom Sandham 3, Claire Penny 4, Matthew Kemble 5, Chris Povey (C) 6. 1st inside to PB Minor: 5.

Saintbury, Glos, May 26th, 1260 Grandsire Triples: Robert Chadburn 1, Robert Hall 2, Doug Bott 3, John Kinchin 4, Tom Sandham 5, Martin Penny 6, John Nicholls (C) 7, David Hammond 8. Rung to celebrate the 55th (Emerald) Wedding Anniversary of Anne and Doug Bott, who were married at St Catherine's Church, Chipping Campden, on 25th May 1957. Hearty congratulations, Anne and Doug!



The band minus John Kinchin, who had to leave immediately after the Q

TOWER NEWS:

Evesham, The Bell Tower: I was wondering how I might fill this slot, as little was happening 'out there'. Fortunately/unfortunately the following happened just before I'd finalised the Newsletter, allowing me to fill it. The Bell Tower has been closed off to the public. There is temporary fencing around it, so nobody can walk through the archway. Small flecks of the top structure have been falling off over many years, usually after a nasty storm. Earlier this year two large lumps about 6ins long dropped down. The crunch point was reached when the insurers said they wouldn't cover the PCC if anybody was hurt or even killed. The PCC had no option but to close it off. The structure at the top is sound; it is the ornamental bits, which have suffered badly with the two recent bad

RINGING FOR THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

Offenham, Worcs, 3rd June, 1260 Grandsire Doubles: Phyllis Brazier 1, Tom Sandham 2, Claire Penny 3, Matthew Kemble 4, Martin Penny (C) 5. To celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Rung before the tree planting on Offenham Recreation Ground. Rung on the back 5 due to the unavailability of a 6th ringer!

Evesham (Bell Tower), Worcs, 4th June, 1260 Doubles (April Day, Plain & Grandsire): Martin Penny 1, Claire Penny 2, Tom Sandham 3, Matthew Kemble 4, Chris Povey (C) 5, John Booth 6. Rung at 3pm to coincide with HM Queen's Diamond Jubilee River Pageant. Thanks to Merry Privett for standing down after Robert Hall became unavailable beforehand due to a painful arm.

Halford, Warks, ringers couldn't manage a quarter, but loyally rang on June 4th nonetheless.

Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos, 5th June, 1260 Stedman Triples: Richard Lewis-Skeath 1, Sophia Lewis-Skeath 2, Annie Hall 3, Mark Sayers 4, Karen French 5, Chris Mew (C) 6, John Nicholls 7, Rob Stansbury 8. Rung to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Circled the tower 3 times: 1

Tredington, Warks, 7th June, 1260 Plain Bob Doubles: Hazel Davies 1, Nick Allsopp 2, Jonathan Tallis 3, Mike Rees 4, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 5, Allen Turner 6. Rung to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The Tredington ringers would also like to associate this quarter peal with Ven Dr Gordon & Olive Kuhrt as the quarter peal attempt prior to their final service at Tredington was unsuccessful.

I'm sure other towers rang, too, but details haven't reached me. Let me know and I will include these towers in the next Newsletter. Ed.

Offenham, Worcs, 10th June, 1260 Plain Bob Minor: Chris Povey 1, Claire Penny 2, Tom Sandham 3, Matthew Kemble 4, Roger Hunt 5, Martin Penny (C) 6. Rung to close Offenham Wake.

Salford Priors, Warks, Jun 18th, 1250 Yorkshire S Major: Chris Mew 1, Alan Hartley 2, Lucy Gwynne 3, Karen French 4, Robert Reeves 5, John Nicholls 6, John Gwynne 7, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 8.

Bidford-on-Avon, Warks, 29th June, 1260 Doubles (Plain Bob, April Day & Grandsire): Andrew Gunn 1, Claire Penny 2, Sam Precious 3, Roland Merrick 4, Martin Penny (C) 5, Matthew Kemble 6. An 18th birthday compliment to Sam.

(Please let me have details of quarters. I cannot guarantee to see them on Campanophile, Bellboard, or wherever. I do some, but probably not all. Ed)

winters. Any small fissures in the limestone get rain in them. A heavy frost weakens the fissure more and eventually a crack forms. Ringing isn't to cease, but the three largest bells (4 tons total) won't be used. This will leave the light 10 – but 10's a goodly number!

Adlestrop: the bellframe expert has now inspected and his report is to be distributed to the relevant bodies. He doesn't seem to have identified any highly historic or particularly significant features about the frame, so this is encouraging. However, it is the bodies that will provide the all-important comments. The scheme promoters remain hopeful.

DIARY OF GUILD SATURDAY MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Jul 7 th	<u>NO PRACTICE: GUILD RINGING TOUR.</u>	
Jul 14 th	BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER, Glos	8, 12-1-22 in F#
Jul 21 st	PEBWORTH, Worcs	10, 11-3-9 in F#
Jul 28 th	BLADINGTON, Glos	6, 8-0-13 in G - <u>NOTE, 7.30-8.45pm</u>
Aug 4 th	SALFORD PRIORS, Warks	8, 15-0-14 in F# (GF)
Aug 11 th	BUCKLAND, Glos	6, 14cwt in F# (GF)
Aug 18 th	BRETFORTON, Worcs	8, 8-3-11 in F# (GF) – <u>NOTE, 7.00-8.30pm</u>
Aug 25 th	BROADWAY, Worcs	6, 18-1-16 in E (GF)
Sept 1 st	HINTON-ON-THE-GREEN, Worcs	8, 10-1-8 in G
Sept 8 th	<u>MINIMUS COMPETITION AT SALFORD, Oxon.</u>	FOR DETAILS SEE NOTICE p.14.
Sept 15 th	WELLESBOURNE, Warks	8, 10-0-24 in G (GF)
Sept 22 nd	TYSOE, Warks	6, 12-0-18 in F
Sept 29 th	STOW-ON-THE-WOLD, Glos	8, 27-2-24 in D
Oct 6 th	ILMINGTON, Warks	8, 12-3-26 in E (GF)
	<u>(ALSO GUILD WALK AROUND BRAILES IN THE AFTERNOON: SEE DETAILS p.14)</u>	
Oct 13 th	GUILD AGM AND STRIKING COMPS AT CHASTLETON, Oxon. SEE NOTICE p.3	
Oct 20 th	EBRINGTON, Glos	6, 12-2-12 in F#
Oct 27 th	HOOK NORTON, Oxon	8, 20-2-13 in E

For any alterations to this programme, check the FSG web-site (<http://www.fourshires.org.uk>), or Campanophile's diary (<http://www.campanophile.co.uk>). Meetings are from 7.30pm until 9.00pm unless otherwise stated. All are welcome. You do not have to be a FSG member and we are especially pleased if members of the local band wish to come along and ring.

Meetings are from 7.30pm until 9.00pm unless otherwise stated. All are welcome. You do not have to be a FSG member and we are especially pleased if members of the local band wish to come along and ring.

The Guild carries Public Liability insurance through the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group for all its activities. Non-members attending these activities are also covered by this insurance, providing they abide fully by the Guild's Health & Safety and Child Protection policies. (Both policies now appear on the FSG web-site, so their contents are available to all, whether members or non-members.)

TAG-END:

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 2012 SUBSCRIPTION YET?

If you haven't paid your 2012 subscription yet and you don't pay it by the end of September, this will be the last Newsletter you receive. From next year the limit for paying subs before the Newsletter is withdrawn will be the end of June.

Can you really live without being a member and getting your favourite mag?

REMEMBER!

OLYMPICS RINGING – Ideally 8.00am on Friday 27th July, but any time that day (see last Newsletter)
And remember, too: obtain your Incumbent's permission to ring on these occasions!

Events for 2012: book the dates:-

Mini-Mouse Striking comp	Saturday 8th September. At Salford, Oxon. (see notice p.14).
Guild Walking Tour	Saturday October 6th: location confirmed (see notice p.14)
Guild AGM	Saturday 13th October. at Chastleton, (see notice p.3).
Inter Shires Comp	Sat 17th November. Details tba

2013 – put in your diaries now!

Guild Annual Dinner	Saturday 2nd February, probably at Moreton-in-Marsh. Details tba
----------------------------	--