

THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELL RINGERS

(Affiliated to the Central  Council of Church Bell Ringers)

NEWSLETTER No 144 - APRIL 2015



Founded Oct 18th 1909

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ROBERT (ROB) HARVEY

19th JUNE 1918 – 8th MARCH 2015



Rob outside his beloved Church at Whichford after his birthday quarter in 2010 (the last in which he rang); and minus his flat cap, because one of his daughters told him to take it off for the photo!!

(Photo taken by his daughter on the Editor's camera)

The 'Grand Old Man', a Life Member of the Guild and a ringer for 85 years, is no longer with us. See article on p.6

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The FSG website is: <http://www.fourshires.org.uk>

Subscription rates: £5 adult; £2 Junior

The deadline for the next issue of the FSG Newsletter (July 2015) is June 13th 2015

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

It helps me hugely if you send articles to me by email, so I can cut-and-paste. If sending articles in this way, please use MS Word 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.

STOP PRESS!! THE GUILD NOW HAS A FACEBOOK GROUP:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1548368912115550/>

EDITORIAL

Not to have Rob Harvey with us will seem very strange. The 'Grand Old Man' has been with us forever, and in many ways that is true. He learnt to ring at Whichford when he was 11, so he managed 85 years of ringing. A good score by any measure. Those of us who've notched up 50 years on the end of a rope think we've done well, but compared with 85 years – hah! we're still on the gentler slopes. Read the article about Rob on p.6

My apologies for the lateness of the Newsletter this time. I had to concentrate on some private stuff in this period and the Newsletter had to be pushed into the background. *C'est la vie* sometimes.

It is good to be able to report the filling of the outstanding vacancies on the Committee and other posts. Firstly, Matthew Kemble has been co-opted onto the Committee; and secondly the Child Protection Officer's post has been filled by Chris Mew. Matthew is now well known throughout the Guild, so he's unlikely to need much introduction. Chris Mew definitely needs no introduction – he's currently the President of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers. Additionally, he has fronted for many years now Child Protection discussions with the various national bodies on behalf of the CCCBR. Thank you Matthew and Chris for coming on board.

The Guild's accounts (p.4) show that we are still solvent and that things look positive for the future. We continue to drive down the cost of publishing the Newsletter (one of the major costs), and the Committee agreed at the last meeting (see Committee Notes, p.5) that the new flat rate for printing on home printers will shave a bit more off the overall cost in the longer term. Thank you for the accounts, Michael Dane, and to the intrepid accounts examiners, Mike Fairfax and Trevor Hobday. Additionally, a number of new members were reported to the Committee at its last meeting.

The Chaplain's Thoughts (below) contain some useful advice. I particularly liked the last paragraph. The problem of complaints is on-going at Temple Guiting, where a new family with young children moved into the Old Rectory, which is only a few yards from the Church. Since being augmented to 6 the bells have received increased use. Unfortunately, the

belfry windows are large and the louvres are set at a shallow angle, so they point directly at the house. The bells are at louvre level, too, so the house gets it with both barrels. The children can't sleep and there has been a stand-off for a while. An interim arrangement between the PCC and the family is in place, but it's not totally OK. A scheme to install soundproofing in the relevant bell windows has been designed and – this is the very important bit – has been submitted to the Diocese for its approval. All works involving the fabric should have diocesan approval, otherwise the PCC may be forced to reverse all at their expense if the work is unacceptable.

The Newsletter's items are becoming biased towards the western side of the Guild. Some articles from the eastern side are needed! There are some wonderfully articulate, literate members over there (thank you for your contribution, Trevor). I'm sure there are lots of things to write about... please... It would balance things up.

I usually need to apologise for some inaccuracies in the Newsletter. I need to apologise again. In the Jan mag I suggested the Q of Plain Bob Cinques was the first 12-bell quarter peal for the Guild, unless you knew otherwise, of course – and of course somebody did. That somebody was Chris Mew, who gave me details of three 12-bell quarters that were rung with almost all the band being Guild members. These were Qs of Grandsire Cinques in March 1993, Little Bob Maximus in August 1993 and Stedman Cinques in 1995. That was bad enough, but it worse because they were rung at Evesham; and even worse to find I'd rung in all of them. Am I losing my memory.... or just getting old? (Is that what happens El Pres?)

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.)

THE CHAPLAIN'S THOUGHTS

Recently it has been reported that there are problems at Ashwell, Hertfordshire, because the clock continues to sound during the night. Clock chimes do not concern ringers so long as we have taken the precaution to make sure that hammers are off while we ring.

Problems for ringers begin when people complain about the noise of the bells on practice nights and maybe when quarter peals and peals are attempted. I think it is important for ringers to listen very carefully to any complaints about the noise of the bells. We all know of towers where the bells are really much too noisy just outside the tower. We should be prepared to try to alleviate what may be considered excessive noise and, if possible, reach a compromise with the complainants. New people buy houses near the Church in towns and villages. People who have lived near the Church for years do not seem to have a problem with bell noise.

It often does not cost a great sum to partially block one or more louvres. New rings of bells do frequently have provision for sound control. One of my Churches did not have a ring of bells – just 3 for many years. They became a ring of 5 and some barns on the south side of the Church had been converted into two dwellings. We bricked up the louvres on the south side and all was well.

Bells are the external voice of the Church and they are valuable assets of the Church in more ways than one. The ringing of the bells must not be stopped because of one or two complaints!

Rev Dr Peter Newing

THE GUILD'S LIBRARY – BOOKS TO BE SOLD, DONATED (OR PULPED!!)

No responses to this appeal were received last time, so a second notice is given here. Should there be no requests for the books on the list below prior to the August Committee Meeting, the Committee may decide to send them off for pulping, as otherwise they are taking up valuable space in somebody's home. This would be a

shame. Let me have your requests asap!

Should there be a member or a tower that wishes to purchase the whole lot, get in touch with me asap. All offers considered. The books are listed in the January Newsletter.

CMP Hon Sec

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2014

<u>Income</u>				<u>Expenditure</u>			
2013	General Fund	2014	Notes	2012	General Fund	2013	Notes
£484.39	Opening Balance	£485.07	1				
£820.50	Subscriptions	£889.00	2	£206.29	Newsletters	£278.74	4
	G&B Donation	£30.00		£284.95	Insurance	£292.37	
£64.00	Garments			£77.90	Garments		
	Annual Dinner			£42.00	Annual Dinner	£221.00	3
				£50.00	CCCBR	£60.00	
				£42.00	Room Hire		
				£7.08	Website domain		
£44.00	Badges	£164.00		£217.60	Badges & Shields	£10.55	
..£421.70	Bell Fund Donations	£630.60		£421.70	Transferred to Bell Fund	£830.60	
£1,350.20	Total receipts	£1,713.60		£1,349.52	Total expenditure	£1,693.26	
				£485.07	Closing balance	£505.41	
					Cash in hand	£10.00	
<u>Restricted Funds – Bell Fund</u>							
£1,387.10	Opening balance	£1,649.75	1				
£200.00	Mid Week Tours	£200.00		£100.00	Hinton-on-the-Green		
£3.00	Donations	£155.00		£60.00	St Michael, Cropthorne		
£0.95	Interest	£1.02			Dumbleton	£350.00	
£105.00	Newsletter Advertising	£115.00			Whichford	£150.00	
£113.70	Other (Raffles, outing, teas etc)	£160.60					
	From General Fund	£200.00					
£422.65	Total receipts	£831.62		£160.00	Total expenditure	£500.00	
				£1,649.75	Closing balance	£1,981.37	
Creditors at year end				Debtors at year end			
					White Hart (Dinner Deposit)	£200.00	3
<u>Assets</u>							
£724.00	Badges & Shields	£560.00					
£81.66	Ink & Paper	£62.52					

Other assets of the Guild include: Newing Shield, President's Chain, Brazier Trophy, Spencer Jones Cup, Minimus Striking Competition trophy, RM's Merit Award, Inter-Shire Championship 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 £4,153.

Notes:

- 1 Opening balances:
The Guild operates 2 bank accounts, one for the General Fund and the other (which incurs interest) for the Bell Fund.
- 2 Subscriptions:
The total membership for 2014 was 189. This includes 11 Life members, 2 who paid in 2013.
- 3 Dinner Figure:
This includes a deposit of £200 for the 2015 Dinner
- 4 Newsletters:
Covers cost of printing Newsletters. £81.66 was carried into 2014 for unused inks and paper, and £62.52 into 2015. The true printing cost of the FSG printing for 2013 was £297.88.

- 5 Bell Fund:
The Committee decided that all the profit from Teas, Raffles etc would go into the Bell Fund, together with any interest generated by the account. In December 2014 the committee approved grants to Pebworth (£200); to be paid in 2014.

Michael Dane, Hon Treasurer

REPORT BY THE ACCOUNTS EXAMINERS:

Although there is some indication the Accounts Examiners (Michael Fairfax and Trevor Hobday) will be content with these accounts, their formal satisfaction has not been received at the time of publication on this Newsletter. A follow-up note in this respect will be published in the July Newsletter.

FSG COMMITTEE MEETING, 17th FEBRUARY.

The Committee met on Tuesday 17th Feb at the Wellesbourne Church Centre. John Carroll presented apologies.

1) Matthew Kemble had been co-opted to the Committee and was welcomed.

2) The Minutes of the August meeting were agreed, subject to one typographical error being corrected.

3) **Matters arising** were:-

Xmas Party feedback: reduced attendance on previous years. Another location to be considered;

Annual Dinner feedback: slightly reduced on previous years. May try another location in Moreton;

Committee vacancies: Rev Peter Newing has agreed to be the Guild Chaplain, and Chris Mew will take over the Child Protection post. Thanks to both;

Old Minute Book: Chris to pursue with Steve Bowley;

Peal books: Sandra P has completed the update. Thanks to her;

Striking Comp certificates: still outstanding

Guild Library books: no takers as yet;

Transfer of money to Bell Fund: done;

Guild insurances: all renewed

4) **Reports**: the following are highlights:-

Hon Secretary: reported that 16 new members had been proposed and seconded as the Rules for membership dictate. They are: Georgie Roberts (Evesham); Claire & Colin Allen (both Offenham); Rob Newman and Thelma James (both unattached); Fiona Gibson and Nana Hirayama (both Bretforton), Nigel Ladds, Alison & Graham Lee, Philip Milward, Colin Sagar, Jackie Saville, Carol Wade and Bill Wadsworth (all Childswickham), and Martin Pleasance (Ebrington). Their elections were confirmed;

Treasurer: Michael D said subscriptions were coming in well, but nothing had been received yet from the re-elected Quinton members;

Ringling Master: reported that attendance at the Saturday practices is averaging 14, which he thought a good sign – and echoed by the Committee. He has introduced 'Saturday @ Six' quarter peal, rung before the Saturday practice and at another, but local, tower. This initiative to be mentioned in the Newsletter;

Fixture Sec: reported an incident at a Saturday practice tower that could have led to damage. It was not the Guild's fault; and the Tower Captain took responsibility. It was agreed that a section on the attendance sheet be for reporting any incident of this nature, so that a contemporary record of such is available if a delayed claim is received.

Newsletter Editor: submissions are being received, which is good news!

5) **Bell Restoration Fund**: the application from Stanway for a grant towards the rehang there was considered. Extra bellwork costs were discovered after removing the headstocks. It was agreed to offer them £500;

Pebworth: the new headstock has been fitted and it was agreed that Roger Hunt be asked to inspect for grant;

Adlestrop: an application for a grant has been received. To be considered at the May meeting.

6) **Items for discussion**:-

Website: it was suggested there should be a link on the Guild site to the Harry Windsor Ringing Centre site. Also Guild Rules to be on the site. Hon Sec to discuss with Roland;

Guild Facebook page: Richard L-S thought this a good facility and offered to develop it. Agreed (*see p. 2 for details*);

Guild Rule Books distribution: agreed to print more and that Stuart should have some to distribute as required at Saturday practices;

2015 Events Programme:-

InterShire Comp: John N is organising this for, probably 21st Nov;

Ringling Tour: Richard has this in hand for 4th July and details will appear in the April Newsletter;

Guild Walk: Michael H has it all hand for another on 26th September;

AGM & Striking Comps: agreed with the PCC and Ringling Master for this to be at Pebworth. Details in July Newsletter

Newsletter printing costs: it was agreed to pay those printing on their own printers and all-in amount of 6p per double-sided sheet. This should prove beneficial to both the Guild and the printers;

Quarter peal before Committee meetings: it was agreed that meetings could start at 7.30pm if there were a Q attempt beforehand.

7) **AOB**:

Sherbourne Teaching Aids: the future of this was discussed, as Ted C might be having some difficulties. The Guild will help in any way possible.

8) **Next Meeting: Tues 19th May 2015.**

Location and time to be announced.

Future Committee meeting dates: agreed as 18th May, 18th Aug and 17th Nov.

(NB: these notes do not supplant the formally-agreed Minutes.)

RON CELEBRATES HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

The bells of St Lawrence Church, Mickleton, were rung on the evening of 30th March to celebrate a very special occasion – the 90th birthday of Ron Gilkes, regular Mickleton & Ilmington ringer until age caught up with him. Ron is also a Life Member of the Guild. All eight ringers were associated with Ron over many, many years through his ringing at local towers in competitions across the four shires.

In his heyday Ron specialised in ringing the tenor, a bell that must maintain a regular pace enabling consistently good striking throughout. He was, in my estimation, one of the best, if not the best in the local area.

As so often occurs in campanology, Ron was tutored by his father at Lower Quinton, where he was brought up in his younger years. When moving to Mickleton to work for Joseph Webb Jnr (market gardener), he maintained his allegiance to Quinton tower, but he was eventually persuaded to join the Mickleton & Ilmington band. Here are just a few names to remind you of your early days with us, Ron: Harry Wright, Roger Kinchin, Sam Loynes, Francis Powell.... The list of friends you made over the years in this fascinating hobby is endless.

The ringing consisted of 1260 changes of Grandsire Triples (and to the discerning ear it was very good – unfortunately, Ron didn't hear it due to March going out like a lion). The band stood as follows:

Mickleton, Glos, 30th Mar, 1260 Grandsire Triples: 1 David Clark, 2 John W Kinchin, 3 Bill Sabin, 4 John Nicholls, 5 Bill Nash, 6 George Osborn, 7 Michael Dane (C), 8 Jackie Hands.

John Kinchin

PS: as you might expect, the ringers adjourned to the local hostelry to quench their thirsts; and well deserved, too.

(Your assessment of Ron's tenoring abilities is well justified, John. I remember calling a couple of peals with Ron ringing the tenor behind and it was an utter treat to ring with him: he was totally metronomic. A ringer once said to me 'They think you can cut a tenor ringer from the hedgerow, but you can't.' Indeed you can't. It is truly a gift to ring a tenor behind perfectly. Few can. Ed)

ROB HARVEY, MAN AND BOY OF WHICHFORD, FARMER AND RINGER

What does one say about Rob Harvey? He was so well known by the majority of us. That he was ringing around these parts before any of the rest of us took a rope is undisputable: 85 years on the end of a rope is impressive. Yes, Ron Gilkes exceeds that slightly in life span, but he wouldn't have taken hold of a rope until later. Rob has been part of the ringing scene effectively forever. Now he's no longer with us. It will be strange for a time – but he certainly won't be forgotten.

I last saw Rob at the Guild's AGM at Whichford last year. He didn't look well then. He was in a wheelchair and I think he had great difficulty in keeping up with people and what was going on. His eyesight had all-but failed him. I'm very sure this always-active person wasn't enjoying being in this state at all.

I'd met Rob a number of years ago. He had a very great liking for Taylor bells. Those from other founders were OK, particularly the modern ones that are in-tune with themselves, but Taylor bells were his delight. He used to come over to Evesham for some of the practices, I guess to enjoy those bells. He must have delighted in having Hook Norton's bells so close, too – a truly glorious 20cwt complete ring of 8 from Taylors. He says he transported the bell frame side castings from the local station to the church when the work was done in 1949.

Rob had a very musical ear and good singing voice, which, I guess, allowed him to hear all the various tones a bell emits when struck. I remember asking Rob if he'd like to ring some Grandsire Caters when he was at Evesham for a practice and a little to my surprise he said 'Yes'. He had grown up on 6 bells and may have had had some 8-bell experience, but 10? He got through it quite well, but I noticed he wasn't looking for the bells, but was ringing on the beat and listening. What ability! Oh that many more had such!

Rob is of course responsible for Whichford's augmentation from 6 to 8 in 1998. I understand he'd harboured a desire for some time to see an 8 in the tower. He asked Taylors to come in and tell him what was needed (the bells had been rehung by Taylors in 1904). Jed Flatters came to inspect and said to Rob he thought the frame was designed so that two pits could be added without difficulty. On checking, it was found to be the case and all the dimensions for the new pits were there on Taylors' drawings. They didn't bother to attend site again to check the dimensions – and yes, of course, they were correct! As we know the augmentation did take place, with Rob donating the new treble.

It became a tradition to ring a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples for Rob's birthday. He would

invariably ring 'his' bell, the treble. This went on for some years. As Rob got older, a slight reluctance to ring crept in, only because he did not want to fail the band by having to stop. On the occasion of his 92nd birthday I offered to be the reserve, so that if Rob felt he'd had enough I would take over his bell. The quarter started well, with Rob doing the bizz. It continued, with me looking at Rob to detect any signs of fatigue. But no, Rob looked comfortable and showed no signs of stopping. I sat longer and still nothing. Then that was it: 'That's all'. Rob had happily rung the quarter. It was his last, but what a way to finish.

Rob's 96th birthday and 85 years a ringer was celebrated in slightly different style to the normal Grandsire Triples. Members of the Coventry DA rang a peal of Whichford Surprise Major. Not many people can say they've had a peal of the 'home method' rung for their birthday!

As might be expected, his funeral was very well attended. Luckily, there were seats reserved for the ringers, as his Will requested that a half-muffled quarter peal of Grandsire Triples be rung by Guild members at the time his coffin was lowered into the ground. Peter Kenealy put the band together and it is a pleasure to say the quarter peal was successful. It was not without incident, though. About a third of the way through the tower door opened and in stepped a lady and two gentlemen; they'd clearly been at the funeral. They stood in the doorway for a short while and then advanced, the lady with a camera in her hand. Naturally the ringers' eyes were watching the visitors, to see what they were going to do, and the ringing started to suffer. I think we were all waiting for the visitors to move into the circle and try to have a conversation with a ringer. Then they turned and went away. Mick Austin told us later he'd said to the lady (as he was the closest to her), 'Would you please go'. Thank you, Mick, for saving the quarter. We were very surprised to find a little present for each ringer afterwards. I enjoyed mine with a toast to Rob every time I took a tot!

Speakers at his funeral told us about Rob as a farmer. Apparently he was known to take a gamble on many things. He may have had a few failures in this way – that's life – but he clearly had many successes. The opportunity arose to buy the farm that became his home to the end. He was told he wouldn't be able to repay the loan within the time limit, but he bought it nonetheless and then worked tirelessly to pay off the loan, which he did within 3 years. There was a lovely story about the local Hunt. Rob allowed them over his ground, but on one occasion asked them not to ride over a wet area in a wheat field. Unfortunately his request was not heeded and the Hunt trampled through the wet patch, ruining the wheat. On seeing this Rob immediately

saddled up his horse and took it to trample through the gardens of Hunt officers! There were the inevitable cries of 'Look at the damage you've done to my garden', to which Rob replied, 'It's not as much as the damage to my wheat.' There was a lot more respect for Rob after that!

Rob was buried in a coffin that had been made some years back from one or two trees that had been felled on his land. The coffin had lain in one of his barns awaiting the day it was required. He certainly would be feeling comfortable inside it, knowing it was Whichford-grown timber, and that he was to be buried in Whichford churchyard after a Service in Whichford Church with Whichford bells ringing. What a wonderful way to live and what a wonderful way to go. He will be remembered for a very long time.

Chris Povey

Here are the quarter peal details of the ringing as Rob was laid to rest:

Whichford, Warwickshire
Monday 23 March 2015

1260 Grandsire Triples

1. Richard Lewis-Skeath
2. Chris Povey
3. Mick Austin
4. Sally Austin
5. Trevor Hobday
6. Michael Haynes
7. John Nicholls (C)
8. Peter Kenealy

Rung half-muffled by Guild members in memory of Robert 'Rob' Harvey, tower captain at Whichford for many years, immediately after his funeral service.

Additional ringing undertaken in memory of Rob is on p.18. Sadly I cannot get it all onto this page.

PS: these are just my memories of Rob. There will be many members who have far more memories of him than me. Please submit them for publication in the next Newsletter. I'm sure there are some funny ones – there has to be from such a character.

THREE MESSAGES FROM THE RINGING MASTER:-

(1) 'S@S' QUARTER PEALS

As many members may now be aware, I have recently started a regular Saturday early evening quarter peal attempt. These are arranged to coincide with the Four Shires practice at a nearby tower and always start at 6pm. *They are open for anyone to ring in.*

Each week I send out a request to everyone on the S@S email list and the first ones to confirm their availability are in the quarter for that week, with the method chosen to suit the band. Some ringers want to ring most weeks, others just occasionally, as and when they are able to. If there is a particular method you would like to ring a quarter peal of, please let me know & I will do my best to accommodate your request. If you wish to receive the weekly requests then please send me your email address and I will add you to the list.

(This is a truly excellent initiative and, once more, puts the Guild above the norm of other guilds/associations/societies. Ed)

(2) GUILD FACEBOOK GROUP

For any members on Facebook, we now have our own Facebook Group for discussions, advertising practices & events etc. Please do take a look – just search under "Four Shires Guild" or let me know you're interested and I will add you as a member.

(3) HANDBELL RINGERS WANTED!!

I have recently formed a tune-ringing handbell team & we are looking for at least one other ringer to join us (although two would be nice!). The ability to read music (staff notation) would be an advantage although this can be taught if required. The aim is to set up a regular schedule of practices with a view to performing at the occasional event/village open day etc. throughout the year (& maybe even the Guild Christmas party?!).

If you've never rung handbells before and would like to give it a try, please do get in touch as well - we'd love to hear from you.

If you are interested, or know someone who may be, please speak to me at any Four Shires practice

Richard Lewis-Skeath
Ringing Master: 07747-802555
handbell.ringer@btinternet.com

WE NEED A CHALLENGE; OR MINIMUS TO MAXIMUS

In January 2013, Claire Penny and I were talking about things ringing after a practice. The comment was made that we needed to aim for something in our ringing to stretch ourselves. Over the coming days this came out as, 'Let's try and ring Plain Bob Caters this year'.

Moving into February the call came: 'Would you like to go and ring at Escrick (Yorks) and try Plain Bob Caters, and then ring at a couple of towers in York?' So, Friday 14th March found us in Escrick on a Friday night. Having not rung much on 10, this was a nervous evening but ultimately successful and we went on to have some enjoyable ringing in York the following day.

A few days later, still very happy that this year's challenge was past, came the fateful conversation: "I've been thinking! Why don't we attempt to ring from Plain Bob Minimus to Plain Bob Maximus this year?" and this started the trip through Plain Bob from Minimus to Maximus.

Having rung Bob Caters, Bob Major fell easily on the end of the March curry-and-quarter night, followed in April by Bob Minor. May Bank holiday saw us with an unsuspecting treble ringer ringing Bob Minimus on the simulator at Offenham. July and the Editor's Birthday Quarter saw Bob Royal being successfully bagged; and two days later what we thought would be the hardest quarter to get, Bob Doubles, was completed.

July also saw us back in Escrick for a day where one of the quarters rung was Bob Triples, as one of us had missed it

the first time we rang it in the year. This then left the big ones Bob Cinques and Bob Maximus. After much 'well, we have got to ten - shall we stop here?' and a couple of attempts to organise enough ringers, the end of November saw Bob Cinques fall at the Bell Tower and also the first quarter on 12 for the Four Shires Guild we believe. *(Er, not quite. The Editor led you astray: see Editorial for sackcloth and ashes.....)*

With no time left in the year, we changed the rules and said within a year of ringing the first quarter we would ring them all. With the Bell Tower in its weakened state and having used up any favours we had with ringers round here it was back to Escrick, and after a false start came the successful completion of this challenge.

We would like to thank everyone who rang in these quarters and the various towers that we rang them in. And the conversation in the car on the way home after the Maximus? "What shall we attempt this year?"

The Quarters in date order:

1293 Plain Bob Caters, Friday March 14th, Escrick (St Helens)

1344 Plain Bob Major, Friday March 28th Badsey (St James)

1260 Plain Bob Minor, Friday April 25th Middle Littleton (St Nicholas)

1272 Plain Bob Minimus, Monday 5th May Offenham (St Mary & St Milburgh)

1260 Plain Bob Royal, Thursday 3rd July Evesham (The Bell Tower)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles, Saturday 5th July Offenham (St Mary & St Milburgh)

1260 Plain Bob Triples, Saturday 12th July Escrick (St Helens)

1320 Plain Bob Cinques, Saturday 29th November Evesham (The Bell Tower)

1320 Plain Bob Maximus, Saturday 7th February Escrick (St Helens)

Matthew Kemble.

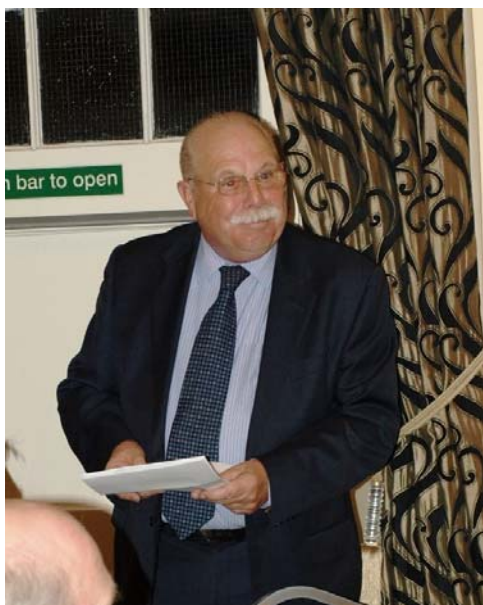
THE ANNUAL GUILD DINNER

The Annual Dinner once again took place on the first Saturday in February (this year the 7th) at the White Hart Royal Hotel in Moreton-in-Marsh. There had been some discussions at previous Committee meetings about whether this event should be moved out of Moreton for a change, but the majority thought Moreton was central to the area, and, just as importantly (perhaps more so), the Guild originated in Moreton and therefore its spiritual home.

We were once again allowed the large upper room, which we have had in the past. There were members there who had regularly attended in the past, and some who were new to the experience. Sylvia and Paul Smith decided to bring their campervan to the Moreton camp site, so were able to walk to and from the venue and not have to worry about drinking and driving: a clever solution!



As usual the Guild silverware and other trophies were on display (and were polished up by my own fair hands. In past years they have looked a bit tarnished. Not this year! Ed).



Our Speaker was the irrepressible and eloquent Michael Uphill, who is well-known in ringing circles. Having heard him speak at the College Youths Dinner a few years back, our smaller gathering did not deter him. He had investigated the Guild before coming and said kind words about it. He seemed to think our Newsletter was a very good production (*which was pleasing!* Ed). He has recently written a book in 'deliciously gossipy' style

about his ringing experiences as a long-term member of the London County Association. The book is called 'Tales from the London County Crypt' and is a good read, judging by the parts that were published in *The Ringing World*. Mike donated a copy as a prize for the raffle.

The Dinner always finishes with the presentation of the trophies to the various winners throughout the previous 12 months. The winners this time were:

The Newing Shield
The Spencer Jones Cup
The Ringing Master's Merit Award
The Minnie Mouse (Minimus) Award

Moreton 'A' team
Wellesbourne
Moreton 'B' team
The Committee Team

The Brazier Trophy event did not run this year.



Richard L-S accepting the Newing Shield from, appropriately, Peter Newing on behalf of Moreton 'A' team



Michael Dane accepts the Spencer Jones Cup on behalf of the Wellesbourne team



David Adams accepting the Ringing Master's Merit Award on behalf of Moreton 'B' team.



Chris Povey accepting the Minnie Mouse trophy on behalf of 'The Committee' team

The evening finished with the raffle, which raised just over £100 pounds.

A quarter peal was rung prior to the Dinner, the details of which are:

Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos, 7th Feb, 1260 Grandsire Triples: Simon Adams 1, Jeanette Davy 2, Jane Gilbert 3, Nick Allsopp 4, Michael Haynes 5, Len Morley 6, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 7, Rob Stansbury 8.
CMP

FROM THE ARCHIVES 100 YEARS AGO

16th April 1915:

A Committee Meeting was held at 'The Rectory', Moreton-in-Marsh, on Friday 16th April, 1915, to consider what arrangements should be made for the Annual Meeting of the Guild at Campden. There were present the Rev O.J.Jacson, Rev Spencer Jones, and representatives from Blockley, Campden, Longborough, Moreton & Willersey Towers.

The Rev Spencer Jones was voted to the Chair. After the Minutes had been passed it was pro. by Mr A.Williams, sec by Mr H.Evans that the Annual Meeting be held on Thursday 20th May 15. It was resolved the arrangements be as follows; Special Service 3.30pm, in the Parish Church. Tea at 4.30pm followed by the Business meeting.

It was pro. by Mr H.Evans, sec by Mr Withers, that the Rev B.J.Littlewood be asked to give an address at the Service. The new Rules was (sic) further reviewed by the Committee, and ordered to be printed, for distribution to the members prior to the Annual Meeting, when they will be invited to sanction the same.

This concluded the Business, when the usual Vote of Thanks to the Chairman had been passed.

(not signed)

20th May 1915:

The Annual Meeting of the Guild was held at Campden on Thursday the 20th day of May, 1915. In consequence of the War, and so many members gone on Active Service there was a smaller attendance than usual. For the same reason and in accordance with the Resolution passed on 25th Sept, 14 there was no competitions (sic) held on this occasion.

A special service was held at the Parish Church, commencing at 3.30pm, when the Rev O.F.Jacson gave an instructive address. This was followed by a meat Tea, generously provided by the Vicar at the Lygon Arms Hotel, when close upon 30 members and friends sat down. After full justice had been done to a capital spread, the Business meeting commenced, the chair being occupied by the President (H. D'Este East Esq.). After the Minutes had been passed, letters of apology for absence were read from Canon Houghton & the Rev D.Lloyd.

The Secretary then presented the Balance Sheet, which showed a balance in hand of £9-10-4, the increase on the year being £1-9-5½. This shows the Financial position of the Guild remains sound. In giving his annual report for the past 12 months the Sec stated that there had been no additional increase of membership, for which he held the War was responsible. They deeply regretted that they had lost through death, one of their Honorary members, the Rev J.W.Stoneman (of Longboro). The Sec also mentioned the case of those absent members who were helping to fight the Country's Battles, and said they held a warm corner in their hearts that day, trusting they would have a speedy and safe return to their friends and families. These expressions were fully endorsed by those present.

The Sec on behalf of the meeting expressed the pleasure they felt in welcoming the President that day to take the chair for the first time. On the proposition of the President, seconded by Mr H.Evans, the Report & Balance Sheet was (sic) unanimously adopted. The President presented the Certificates to the winning Belfries at the competitions held at Moreton last year. A letter was read from Mr H.Jarrett (Todenham) resigning his Office as Hon Treasurer. He was accorded a hearty vote of thanks for his services during the past 3½ years.

On the proposition of the Rev Spencer Jones, seconded by Mr J.Harris, Mr H.Evans (Blockley) was nominated for the vacancy, and there being no other nominee, he was unanimously elected. Pro by the President, sec by

Mr Withers that Mr A.White be re-elected as Secretary. Carried. The Sec accepted on the same terms as the previous year.

The new Rules were submitted to the meeting, and a discussion took place on Rules 3, 4 & 6. Eventually it was on the pro of the Sec, seconded by Mr Hinton, agreed that Rule 3, part 3, stand as printed. It was pro by the Rev O.F.Jacson and sec that Rule 4 stand as printed. Carried. On Rule 6 Mr Wixey proposed & Mr Evans seconded that Probationers pay 6d per year after the first year of membership. The Rev O.F.Jacson moved an amendment that they pay on entry. This was sec by Mr Williams, but on being put to the meeting Mr Wixey's proposition was carried. It was then pro by Mr J.Harris and sec by Mr Byrd (Shipston) that the Rules as amended be adopted. Carried unanimously.

It was proposed by the Rev Spencer Jones that the meeting pass a Vote of Condolence to the family of the late Rev J.W.Stoneman; also a Vote of thanks to the Rev O.F.Jacson for providing such a good Tea. These propositions were seconded by the President and passed. The Rev O.F.Jacson suitably responded. After Votes of thanks to the Secretary for his services during the past year, and to Mr H.D'Este East for taking the Chair had been passed, the meeting closed. Afterwards a few touches were rung on the Church Bells (Signed)

Herbert D'Este East

(Most of the present members will understand the sums of money recorded, but for those who were very young prior to February 1971, or not on this earth, the following are the modern-day equivalents:

£9-10-4 = £9.52; £1-9-5½ = £1.47; and 6d = 2½p

Multiply by 100 for present day value, ie they had £952 in hand and there had been an increase over the previous 12 months of nearly £147. However, the Guild at that time is unlikely to have had more than 50 ringing members at best, probably 40 at most with men away on Active Service. It was a small group. Having nearly £1000 in hand at today's prices is remarkable. Where did the money come from? While ringing members paid today's equivalent of £5 pa (one shilling then), the honorary non-ringing members paid the equivalent of 'not less than' £25 pa, so it wouldn't have taken many at that rate to bump up the total. I've always wondered how such a small group could, in 1920, afford to buy the Challenge Shield, which must have cost in today's money a few thousand pounds. Clearly it was a well-off group.

Does anyone have, or know the location of, a copy of the Rules referred to above? It would be very interesting to see what they were.

I type the entries shown above from the facsimile copy of the Old Minute Book. It is truly very poignant to read these entries in the hand writing of the time, particularly when mentions are made of the War and the effects it was beginning to have on the Country. Also to realise the entries are a 100 year-old snapshot in time. In many ways it makes the conditions of 1915 very real. The horrors of the Somme campaign were still over year away. Should anyone wish to have a copy of this Book, I can email a pdf copy free of charge. The file size is about 10Mb. It is a remarkable book. Let me know if you want a copy. Ed)

FROM THE ARCHIVES 40 YEARS AGO

There was no Committee meeting held between April and July 1975. The next entry is the Minutes of the 1975 Annual General Meeting, which was held in October.

FIRSTS

Do you remember the first time you tied your own shoe laces unaided? The first time you rode a bicycle without a steadying hand? The first time you had a visit from the tooth fairy? The first time you held a girl's hand? The first time you shaved PROPER? (The last two assuming you are of the male gender!) The list is endless....

As you grow older, you tend to reminisce regularly. For this article I thought it a good opportunity to review those 'FIRSTS' of my bell ringing career.

CHIMING: I was a ten year old. The thrill of being handed a bell rope to make the bell dong – I couldn't run home fast enough to tell my parents.

RINGING: my tutor (Roger Kinchin – no relative) had rung the bell up. No noise – he'd tied the clapper. He handed me a loose piece of noosed rope (which I still possess) and this was to be my first experience of learning to ring. For backstroke I stood on a box.

ON MY OWN: following a short probationary period I was to ring the second at St Lawrence on my own! It was the five-minute Parson's bell for the 11.00am Service. "I want you to stand the bell at hand and backstroke every time", said Roger. "You control the bell, don't let the bell control you."

CALL CHANGES: the five-minute Service bell brought just reward for my venture into call changes – holding the bell to maintain the right position at each call. IF you did happen to make a mistake, Roger visibly grimaced and uttered something in a very discerning tone!

CHANGE RINGING: I was introduced to change ringing, naturally on the treble – and at Mickleton it was always Grandsire Doubles (*At Ebrington it was just 'method', which I found out later was Grandsire Doubles! Ed*) Then came the bewilderment – 3rd's on the front and as you pass the treble, pass the next and dodge with the next.

BOBS & SINGLES: it took a time get to grips with these calls (always a slow learner....!). From that day to this, I prefer to learn from the practical side – say no more.

NEW YEAR'S EVE: I cannot ever recall seeing a New Year in as a young boy. Tonight, I had joined a team of veteran's – to make up the eight, I think. Plain course of Grandsire commenced – I was on the second. Within a couple of minutes I shouted, "Roger, I'm lost." "Don't worry, Jack.", shouted his brother ringing the seventh. "I've been lost since we

started!" At the time, I hadn't realised they's all been on the pop beforehand!

QUARTER PEAL: my first quarter peal was naturally at St Lawrence, Mickleton. I don't recall much about it except for a dry mouth and knocking knees. The records show it was a successful attempt.

PEAL: St Lawrence was my first peal attempt, and good it was. By this time I had become a so-called accomplished village ringer! This 'first' was so important to me, as I rang the bell my late father had rung in a peal at St Lawrence.

BROKEN ROPE: during 60-plus years ringing, I've had two ropes break on me. The first was 'startling'!

BROKEN STAY: I've never broken a stay – whoops, that's tempting providence! There's always a 'first' time.

RINGING ASSOCIATION MEETING: my first ringing association meeting was at Salford Priors – probably a Worcs & Dist's Southern Branch meeting. Roger was to take me on the back of his BSA Bantam (green tank) motor bike. It was a bitterly cold day with snow falling furiously. By the time we reached Pebworth Halt, we resembled snowmen – and totally unsuitably clad. However, we made it there and back – despite no rear footrests – and I vaguely remember ringing the treble twice to a Triples method.

FIRING: Mickleton has maintained the FIRING tradition for weddings (it has been known on practice nights, too!). My first experience of this sent shivers down my back and I'm still affected by this 'Salute to the Bride and Groom' as they leave the Church.

HALF-MUFFLED: half-muffled ringing first came to me at Mickleton for a Remembrance Service. I do enjoy the echo ringing despite its sad association (open for me, please!).

Have these recollections given you food for thought?

The Mickleton Scribe

(Wow, they certainly have for me. I can recall many of your 'first' experiences as they happened to me just a little way up the hill from Mickleton. Nice to have them aired, John. Ed)

MICKLETON NIL – OTHERS 121

It's odd how some specific dates stick in one's memory – I shall always remember 19th March 2015.

I was watching a live TV debate from the Houses of Parliament on the previous day's budget (Heaven knows why....!). MPs from all parties consistently referred to percentages.

I hate percentages. I suppose they are important to emphasise certain points but I prefer factual figures. (I sold two oranges in February and three in March – a 50% increase month on month!)

However, when perusing the recently published Annual Report of the Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association (a booklet that contains various facts and figures about the towers within its area) I actually came upon one certain and startling set of – yes- percentages!

There are twelve Branches in the G&B (Mickleton is in the most northerly, appropriately called the North Cotswolds Branch). Each on the Branches had figures appropriate to the classes of membership: Junior, Senior & Retired.

In recent years I've bewailed the lack of young ringers at St Lawrence – you're probably fed up to the teeth with it. Not only Mickleton suffers lack of youngsters. The whole of the North Cotswold Branch suffers this shameful 0%. Ideally I want to recruit more young people to the Art (yes it is an art, despite the ringing monks, etc). One, two, three, OR MORE.

To hell with percentages.

The Mickleton Scribe

DAY DREAMING

I imagine the majority of towers across the length and breadth of the country are crying out for new ringers – as indeed are most in the Guild's area. How do we recruit new members, particularly the younger generation? It shouldn't be too difficult surely – my newspaper today talks of the need for tackling obesity, and young people are bored!

Well, I thought I'd exhausted all attempts in my recruitment efforts in the Mickleton area. But NO! I've had an inspiration - something that has occurred to me on this cold, wet, windy day when I've nothing better to do.

What is this ingenious idea and why hasn't someone come up with it before? Is it because we've lived with the same old traditional ways for generations past? Is it because we're all reluctant to change?

Well, money influences – we've got to become 'professional'. Here is THE PLAN:-

The Four Shires area would be split into the Worcs/Warks/Glos/Oxon areas. We should run a six-bell competition on the basis, for example, of the football league. Each area representative (elected) would encourage as many towers as possible to participate. Each area would have their own league with each team playing (sorry, 'competing') against each other on a home and away basis. A neutral judge would be appointed for each league, scoring exactly as Guild

competitions. The frequency of these competitions would depend on the number of teams entered in each area.

When each team has played each other, the Guild President will publish the final league tables. The top team from each area will then participate in the 'finals' league, viz, Worcs v Warks, Worcs v Glos, Worcs v Oxon, Warks v Glos, Warks v Oxon, Glos v Oxon. All will take place in a neutral tower, with the same judging principles being employed. Obviously the team with the most points is the winner.

However, it doesn't stop here! We could have a Cup Knockout Competition – again run on the basis of the present FA & League Cup Competitions, ie all teams get put in the hat for each round. And, we could have an under-18 competition (assuming our drive for new recruits is still working!!!). And, what about giving all paid-up members the opportunity of voting for 'Ringer of the Year'?

Ah! I hear you asking – 'Where does all the professionalism come in?' Simple. Sponsorship! We convince potential sponsors of unlimited publicity. Regional and local press, country magazines, local radio, Guild newsletters, parish magazines And we could personally promote and 'sell the story' via T-shirts and sweater logos. Our respective clergy could read out the

results from the pulpit every Sunday!

So, we've convinced the sponsors. How are we to utilise the monies and entice recruits? We give monetary prizes for each competition – that's the PROFESSIONALISM:

Winning League Team	£120
Winning Cup Team	£150
New Under-18 Team	£120
Ringer of the Year	£75

Wow! I can see the new recruits queuing up to join us – young and old! Obviously certain rules would have to be made; for example, how many 'loan' ringers would be permitted per team; and what about transfers half-way through the season? (Now that could lead to trophy-hunting – and we wouldn't want that, would we??!)

The Mickleton Scribe

PS: as the headline suggests, it's pure DAY DREAMING!

(Is it really just Day Dreaming? This is true, 'outside the box' thinking. It might actually work – and give ringing a well-needed boost. Does anybody fancy taking on the organisation of this, even for a trial run? The results might be very surprising. Ed)

FUNERAL TOLLING AT LONG COMPTON

Last Saturday (April 4th) there was a funeral at Long Compton of a local dignitary, Roy Reed, who had been a District Councillor and churchwarden. We do not regularly ring for funerals, but Roy's widow asked me if I could arrange ringing before the service and tolling during the interment in the churchyard.

We rang half muffled before the service and then rang down, the ringers being myself, Peter Kenealy, Michael and Stuart Cummins. Len Morley and Caroline Makepeace. For the tolling I thought that it would be interesting to ring the Nine Tailors, so I went up into the belfry and tied a rope strap to the

clapper of the fourth. As the coffin was carried out I rang the three lots of three (nine for a man, six for a woman, three for a child). Then as the interment began I started my tolling using the rope strap, ear defenders and a stopwatch: one blow every six seconds gave me ten to the minute, and as Roy was 87 years old I carried on with this for eight minutes and forty two seconds.

The ringing and tolling were much appreciated by Roy's family.

Trevor Hobday

CENTRAL COUNCIL NEWS

Ringling for VE Day

A request has been received from Government for bells to be rung to mark the 70th Anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE Day). If possible, the desire is for bells to be rung at 11 am on Saturday 9th May or alternatively at other convenient time over the weekend Friday to Sunday 8th-10th May. Although there are other demands for special ringing coming up, we hope that this can be given due support. The Church of England has also been approached by Government, so church authorities should be aware of the reason for additional ringing."

A request from the Government to ring! Please do so for this special occasion.

800th Anniversary of Magna Carta

Much publicity has been given to the 800th Anniversary of Magna Carta

which has been subject of several articles in the Ringing World, the most recent by Kate Flavell being in the issue of 23rd January. The main celebrations are taking place over the period of Sunday 14th and Monday 15th June. It is hoped that the world- wide significance of the influence of the Charta will be marked by ringing in the nation of its origin.

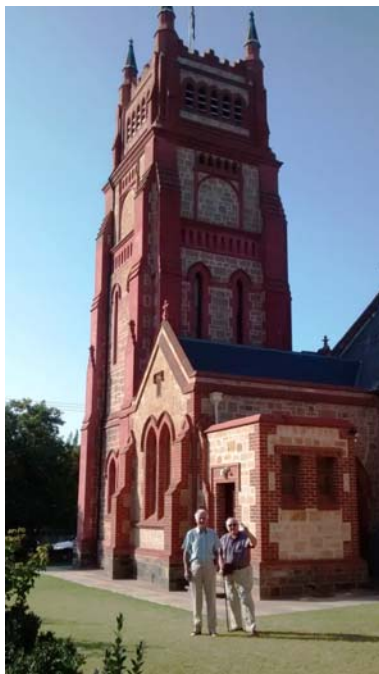
St George's Day, 23rd April

Please don't forget to ring for St George's Day on Thursday 23rd April. There was a successful campaign a few years ago for ringing to occur for England's Patron Saint. Initially this didn't receive much support from the upper echelons of the CoFE (surprisingly). However, they caved in and ringing got underway; and rightly, too. Ring anytime that day.

BELL RINGING IN ADELAIDE (a little off the Saturday night practice circuit!)

In January husband Brian and I went to visit my son in Australia. Unfortunately there are no bells in Newcastle where he lives. We were seeing friends in Adelaide, known as the City of Churches. An old genealogy friend, Kingsley Ireland, made contact with Anne, the bell tower Captain of St. Andrews. We were aiming for the practice night at St Cuthbert's on Friday evening. But when the forecast is over 35 C this is cancelled, which it duly was! Feeling thwarted, I perked up when I learnt that all four towers are rung by the same group of ringers on Sunday mornings.

We went to locate St. Andrew's at Walkerville on Friday morning, as it was the first Church service on Sunday morning at 9.00 am. We visited the Church office and learnt that the bells were being sent back to Whitechapel Foundry this year. The bells are a ring of 6 in the key of F#, and were shipped out from Mears & Stainbank of Whitechapel in 1886. They are replacing the wooden frame, so some lucky chaps are having a visit to Oz to supervise the installation of the metal frame. The bells are being removed via the roof of the Tower. What a sight that will be!



Sunday morning was bright and sunny. We were the first to arrive. A ringer from Leicester has family in Adelaide and rings three months at a time with them. A couple from Hereford, who have been in Oz for 10 years, also arrived. So we started to feel at home. There was a long ladder, straight up to the Ringing Chamber. One or two were raising the bells, but we were able to come down in peal, as I made the 6th person. I felt chuffed to be useful!

Adelaide is one square mile, streets in grid design surrounded on all sides by Parks, therefore quite easy to race off to the next Tower. One of the ringers came and guided us in the car. Straight off to St Cuthbert's. A ground floor ringing chamber in a separate Tower (*you'd be used to that, then, Christina! Ed*): 8 bells; quite light. The tower is nick-named The Tin Can! They needed me to treble to Grandsire Triples. Not my best performance! Left early to be shown the Ringing Centre at St Peter's Cathedral.



The Cathedral has two large towers, one accommodating the bells and the other a Teaching Ringing Centre. The Bell Tower Captain had been to Worcester Cathedral to gain this idea, and it is exactly the same as Worcester Cathedral Teaching Ringing Centre. We then walked across



the gallery of the Church to the Ringing Chamber, which was a large area.

The bells here were cast by John Taylor of Loughborough in 1946. They are the second heaviest ring of 8 in the world. (Which is the 1st Chris? (*Sherborne Abbey in Dorset: 46cwt tenor. Ed*). The 41cwt tenor cwt takes 3 people to raise; consequently the bells are left up at all times. With me being used to heavy bells at the Bell Tower I felt comfortable.

We seemed to collect more ringers as the morning moved on, which was just as well, because the Cathedral Church of St. Francis Xavier had 12 bells. We rang 10 bells, the number I am used to ringing regularly on a Sunday morning. But then I heard the tower captain's voice say "Christina! Closer on the backstroke!" Their discipline of ringing is very good. This place was huge. In the excitement of it all I can't remember the bells being rung down. We had to leave very quietly walking down the gallery in the Church. What a grandiose place.



Sadly, I did not have the experience of ringing the Town Hall bells. The Town Hall bells are not rung on Sunday mornings, but are rung on special occasions. It seems odd to have bells in a non religious place. The 8 bells here were cast by John Warner in 1865.

We all went for coffee and breakfast, their usual routine. I found out that one of the ringers had been Warden of the College Youths ten years previously in London. So I asked if he had been to visit the Bell Tower. He had been to the Bell Tower twice, remembered Chris and the water-colour painting. He had also visited Pershore, taking two extra ringers in case any freaked on their way up to the Chamber. As Brian, Kingsley and I were leaving, the English ringers were promising to visit the Evesham Bell Tower on their return home.

I must thank the Adelaide bellringers for giving us such a warm welcome and so helpful too. It is amazing that all the church bells in Oz were cast over here and shipped out. So was the Sydney Harbour Bridge!!

Christina Ireland

ST THOMAS' MORN AT EBRINGTON, 21ST DECEMBER 2014

There is a centuries standing local tradition which we still observe of ringing Ebrington church bells from very early morning, around 5:45 am, till 7:00 am on St Thomas' Morn, the 21st December.

A small number of other local Towers also still celebrate the traditional St Thomas' Day, as he was recognised as the patron saint of Alms Charities, including our own Keyt Cow Charity; but could it be possible that we are also celebrating a pagan tradition of pushing back the gods of darkness, it being the shortest day?

Many Ebrington villagers look forward to this tradition, this year it was a Sunday morning, as they say it signals the start of the real Christmas season for them.



The 2014 Band comprised, Revd Fred Rothery, Peter & Pauline Banton,

Stuart Cummings and Michael Cummings with Allen Turner taking the pictures.



Here is the 2014 Band in the tower, followed by the equally traditional 'ringers breakfast'

(Thank you, Peter, for noting 21st December as the traditional date of St Thomas' Day. For some strange and inexplicable reason the CofE changed St Thomas' Day to 3rd July some years ago. But St Thomas' Day ringing was always 21st December, the shortest day, so it's good to see the tradition continuing of marking the original day in proper and original fashion. Long may it continue – even if getting up early at that time of the year is extra hard. The last time I rang for St Thomas' Day, at Campden in 1973, I was 20 minutes late... There were no such niceties as ringers' breakfasts then – a very civilised modern addition. Ed)

RECENT MID-WEEK MONTHLY OUTINGS REPORT

THE JANUARY TOUR: 15th JAN (the 303rd)

As I drove towards Kidderminster the sun was shining, but as I got nearer to Upper Arley thick dark clouds were looking at me. Snow was not forecast was it; or did I misread the forecast? As I turned off the main road to drop down towards the river it started to rain and sleet was mixed in it. Driving up to the Church I went alongside the River Severn looking brown and quite high after all the rain that we have had. Upper Arley is a ring of 6 with a tenor weight of 8 cwt in a very spacious ringing room. The bell ropes had been hanging in one of those heating machines that we see described in The Ringing World at times. Plenty of space for us to sit in this cold tower, to look at the menu and make a decision about lunch. Ringing here was organised by Brenda. Coming out of the tower we came out into sunshine and what a stunning view over the countryside and the river below. All we needed was a steam locomotive to go past on the Severn Valley Railway.

Now it was off to Wolverley, just a short drive away. Here the Church is perched up on a hill where once again there is a good view and hard to think that you are only just outside Kidderminster. This Church still has its balconies on three sides, something we do not see very often these days. Here was a ring of 8 with a tenor of 9cwt. Looking around the peal boards on the walls you very often see names of people that you have heard of but on this occasion there was one board with one of our own ringers on it – Paul Evans. Afterwards Paul advised us that he believes this the only peal board on which his name appears. Here our ringing was organised by Robin, with those ringing the 4th bell taking care where they stood; did not want people falling down the stairs, which were very close by.

Time for lunch at The Lock Inn just a short distance away from Wolverley Church where we found we had a room all to ourselves. As the name suggests it was by the canal lock and the lock was quite unusual. Normally when you are opening the lock gate you are pushing or leaning against a large straight wooden bit to open the gate but in this instance, because the lock gate was so close to the road bridge, this wooden part was angled. I am not sure I have seen one like this before.

Replenished it was back into the cars for the drive to Wollaston and we changed counties driving through part of Staffordshire before entering the West Midlands. These bells are a 10cwt 6, slow turning so ringing was sedate. Alan took charge of the ringing here, but had quite a job persuading us to move from our warm spots to ring. The ringing room here was small but there was a door that led out onto the balcony. Here at the back were radiators and they were on. Small carpet squares were placed over the radiators providing seats: oh what warmth on a cold day.

It was raining when we left Wollaston and a bit breezy as we headed to Amblecote driving through Stourbridge. Arriving at Amblecote we found a ring of 8 with a tenor weight of 7cwt, which have been rehung within the last few years. Once again the ringing room was small, but here they had another room with seating, which provided space for chatting without disturbing the ringing. At this tower our ringing was organised by Geoff. By now some had already left and others were making their way home, while others were thinking how to avoid the road works at Lydiate Ash by the M5.

Our thanks go to Pat for organising the day, no ground floor rings but all rings handled well. Also thanks to those who organised the ringing, ranging from Grandsire, Plain Bob to London. There was ringing to suit all standards.

Sandra Parker

THE FEBRUARY TOUR: 29th FEB (the 304th)

February is my favourite Four Shires tour, for the first time I arrive home in daylight, a glimmer of hope for the winter turning and of lighter days not far away.

We were greeted by milky white snowdrops at Sherbourne raising their heads on a dull dismal day, together with a few brave crocuses with a splash of colour at Whitnash at the end of the day when it had just about stopped raining. Even the moorhen in the village duckpond at Sherbourne scuttled off for cover out of the rain.

We write a lot about the bells and churches we visit, and often overlook the other vital ingredient in our days, and that is the individuals who turn up no matter what, to join in the ringing.

We are a diverse bunch, and the midweek tours have no committee (hurrah! I hear you say), no chairman, no ringing master, just a group of people sharing a common passion. Individuals take turns to organise a day, leading to a wide range of locations and towers you may not otherwise ring in, and where each tower's ringing is run by a different volunteer. Thanks go especially to Isobel who co-ordinates us all, produces a list once a year for us all to sign up to, email us to let us know where we are going, and sort out contributions for the towers.

I have been going for 10 years or so, I forget exactly, and choose to spend 10 days or more per year with Four Shires friends ringing. That adds up to more than 100 days of real friendship, support, encouragement not just of the ringing kind, exchange of views (mostly over lunch) and an opportunity to learn and ring things that for me would otherwise not be possible. It is better than a family, because you can choose whether or not to take part, without any prior expectations whatsoever, what more could you wish for?

This month we had the gothic splendour of Sherbourne, no expense spared; the thoughtful history of each bell described behind it in Barford, with a 14th Century 3rd bell lighter than the treble; Wellesbourne conveniently located to the rear of the pub which served pies as big as plates and fish described as "whales", they were certainly large; and a terrifying notice displayed to all comers in Whitnash (photo: Clive Sparling).



We enjoyed some excellent ringing from Bob Doubles to some exotic Grandsire & Stedman spliced, please ask Clive for more details if you are curious. Why not come and join the "geriatrics" and see for yourself. If I can ring, climb towers and enjoy myself half as much as these "geriatrics" when I get there I will be delighted, in the meantime I will continue to enjoy the unique experience with thanks to all of you who make it so special.

Chris Seers

THE MARCH TOUR: 19th MAR (the 305th)

March 19th, officially the last day of winter, demonstrated the season's tenacious hold on the temperature and a reluctance to allow the clouds to part. Under these conditions twenty of us journeyed to the Buckinghamshire countryside just to the west of Milton Keynes.

Lillingstone Lovell's medieval tower houses an 'interesting' ring of 6, previously bells 2 to 7 of a ring of 8. Despite their auditory idiosyncrasies, the bells went relatively easily, enabling us to bring round Plain Bob, Cambridge, Norwich, Stedman and Little Bob.

The ringing room at Cosgrove provided us with some amusing cartoons highlighting the dangers of teaching ringing, the work of a local artist.

As well as our usual repertoire an attempt at Alnwick proved slightly problematic but did ultimately succeed.

The Grand Union Canal passes through the village enabling us to enjoy lunch at a canal side pub.

Some of us explored the towpath and discovered an unusual horse tunnel underneath the canal, testimony to how much average male height has increased in the last two centuries.

The picturesque coaching town of Stony Stratford was our first venue of the afternoon. Here we saw the pubs that are supposedly the source of a "Cock and Bull" story. The easy going bells of the only 8 of the day enabled us to score Single Oxford Bob Triples, a Four Shires favourite as well as Plain Bob, Stedman, and Yorkshire.

Leaving the historic scenery behind, we negotiated the multitudinous roundabouts of Milton Keynes to our final tower, the stately 6 at Shenley. Here Oxford Treble Bob was successfully brought round together with a better rendition of Alnwick.

Our thanks to Colin Lord for arranging another enjoyable day.

Isobel Murphy



'BRETWICKHAM' – A DAY OUT

Following monthly visits of the Bretforton ringers to Childswickham, where a completely new band has been taught since last April almost single-handedly by Phil Milward (a former Pershore ringer in the 1970's), the opportunity was taken for a Christmas Holiday ring. Norton was the chosen venue for Monday 29th December and by chance it was also Fiona's birthday. Pleasingly we had 12 ringers including some of the Norton band and Christina. After the formalities of singing 'Happy Birthday' to Fiona we set about rounds and call changes on 8 (half-muffled for Holy Innocents) before a photocall. Jackie and Bill had grabbed their first tower away from Childswickham and everyone seemed to pull their weight!

It was rewarding to see the enthusiasm as everyone took their turn and also for me to ring the treble bell – I'd rung it to a peal of Artaxerxes S Major exactly 45 years ago to the day.

As the bells were caught in rounds (or thereabouts) Fiona invited everyone to bacon rolls and champagne – her husband Nick had unbeknowningly arrived and set up his barbecue in the car park.

It was a memorable and much appreciated end to our ringing on what was a rather cool and frosty morning. Thanks again to Dave Witts and the Norton ringers.

Roger H Hunt

(Childswickham practice night is Wednesday – contact Phil Milward on 01386 853532)



L – r: Christina Ireland, Jackie Saville, Bill Wadsworth, Fiona Gibson (plus Heidi and Xenia), Phil Milward, John Cleveland, George Jelfs, Roger Hunt, John Middleton, David Fletcher, Neville Holder, David Witts (photo: Kieran Hunt)

Tales from a tower near you (3):

WEST WORCESTERSHIRE AND THE INVADING WELFORDIANS...

The first Newsletter of 2015 contained an enjoyable account of the Welford-on-Avon ringers outing in October last year which brought back a few memories of my own visits to those towers.

Powick certainly are a heavy handful, albeit easier to ring since receiving attention in the last decade – I rang a peal there 45 years ago this July with Michael Uphill conducting (4 minor methods) and remember the 2 hours and 58 minutes of heat and perspiration. We took a 'liquid' lunch and then proceeded to Chaddesley Corbett to ring a peal of Oxney Surprise Major!

Ringing on the anti-clockwise octave at Kempsey shouldn't be a challenge for the more experienced ringer, but having enjoyed the sound of Superlative for 1279 changes I was a little infuriated when the conductor shouted 'that's all' for 3 of the band to ring to the right and the quarter peal didn't come round.

The tenor bell at Madresfield suffered a gudgeon pin failure back in 2004 and I went along to assist in recovering the bell from being wedged on its side in the bell pit – the subsequent remodelling of the bells requiring the complete dismantling of the Gillett & Bland (c1868) carillon machine 'summerhouse' and operating linkages to allow the bells to be removed (and returned) to the tower. The carillon hasn't worked for over half a century and costs would be prohibitive to restore it (a proposed move to the Swan Tower in Perth at that time was quashed).



Photo: Arthur Berry demonstrating how to 'drive' the carillon machine to Robert Heir of Worcester]

Sufficient has been said of Welland, which is probably why Geoff Drew arranged the 25 Minor method peal we rang in 1970 to be down the road at Hanley Swan (tenor 8 cwt - now a delightful rehung 6 worth a visit).

Lastly Hanley Castle, which received a full bearing overhaul a decade or so ago. I remember my youngest son, on school exam leave, coming along to help and gainfully manhandling the one tonne chain block up the staircase in a bucket and shouting down in an exhausted voice that the door at the top was locked. Arthur Berry and I smiled at each other. We'd forgotten to tell him that he only needed to take the gear up to the ringing chamber!

'Roger de Flaedenburg' (and photo is by him)

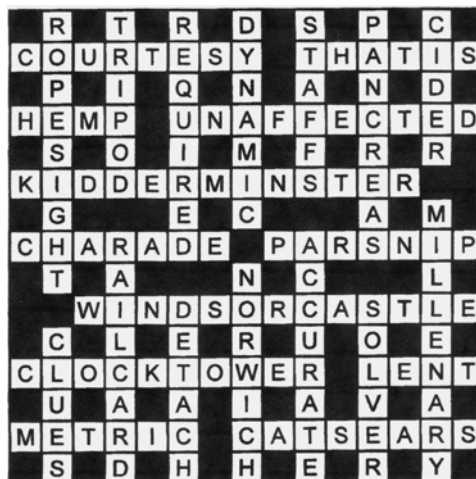
EL PRESIDENTE'S CROSSWORD

Cruciverbalist aficionados will be disappointed this time, as El Pres has been unable to supply one. I'm sure he will be able to do so again in future.

My wife Helen normally hammers through each one, with only the most in-depth ringing-derived answers having to be given to her. I find El Pres's crosswords very easy indeed – but then I get the answers.....

Hopefully another crossword will be available next time

Here are the answers to the January 2015 crossword:-



AROUND THE TOWERS

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Evesham Bell Tower. It's all stop here, as work to the Tower is just about to start. Please note: there is to be no ringing here until Christmas 2015. I will keep you informed on what is, or isn't, happening.

I regret to report that **Joan Newbury of Childswickham** died on Friday April 3rd. Joan was Guild member Mark Newbury's mother. I don't think Joan was ever a member, but she arranged ringing at Broadway, Childswickham and Buckland. Joan was a true Vale character. If she liked you, then you could make progress; if she didn't, you soon knew that was the case and there was little point in continuing. She could be stern but always in a polite way, and there was never any doubt about what she meant. You could have a good laugh with her, too, but she had to like you! I believe she learnt to ring at Broadway in her younger days, but she hadn't rung for 15-20 years. She would ring occasionally when her other son, Murray, came to Offenham on a Sunday morning. Her ringing style was 'interesting'. In the great order of things she was a good 'un: absolutely gun-barrel straight and straight-talking. We shall not see her like again; definitely one of the Old School! Many will remember her with great affection. I shall.

Pebworth. The replacement headstock was fitted in early February. The 10 were tried out for grant purposes and everything works OK. The Guild grant has been paid. A quarter peal on the back 6 has now been rung (see Q's and peals). It is good to have this handy light 10 back in operation, particularly as Evesham's light 10 will be out of action until Christmas.

You may be interested to see what the old, fractured headstock looked like: scary!



Bob Topp and Claire Penny helped Andrew Mills from Taylors with the work. Here they are with the old and new stocks:-



Hinton-on-the-Green: these bells will also out of action from about July for perhaps 3 months, as the PCC have secured a large grant to undertake essential repairs to the roof of the tower and the church itself. The roof of the tower leaked badly during heavy rain, so it's very good to know this problem will be overcome. If there's sufficient money in the pot, they may be able to undertake some refurbishment of the pulleys and clappers, which will be good. The bells (and the tower roof) have been badly neglected in the past.

Stanway. At the time of writing the bells are waiting to go back in. What an amazing difference there will be when they do! A horribly-going, untuneful ring of 4 transformed into a much better going, tuneful ring of 5. I'm looking forward to trying them.

THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD'S

ANNUAL RINGING TOUR

WHEN? SATURDAY 4th JULY 2015

WHERE? NEW FOREST AREA (HAMPSHIRE).

EXPECTED INTINERARY AND TIMES

1000 – 1045	Minstead (6)	7-0-20 B
1115 - 1200	Brockenhurst (8)	4-1-12 B

Lunch (location not arranged yet)

1400 - 1445	Lyndhurst (8)	11-0-0 G
1530 - 1615	Downton (8)	22-3-23 D
1645 - 1730	Britford (6)	8-0-0 A
1745 - 1830	Salisbury St. Martin (8)	13-2-4 F

£5 per person to cover tower donations

ORGANISER: Richard Lewis-Skeath *(to whom all thanks)*
handbell.ringer@btinternet.com
07747-802555

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FOUR SHIRES GUILD **BELL RESTORATION FUND**

The Guild has 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 are in the Guild Rule Book, and application forms are available from me. (These forms are emailable.)

Chris Povey (Hon Sec)

NOTICES AND ADVERTS (cont)

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2015 GUILD WALKING TOUR Saturday September 26th.

Start at **Whichford (8)**, ringing 10 - 10.45am,
(please considerately in this area)

Walk to **Long Compton (6)**; ring 12 - 12.45pm

Followed by Lunch at 'The Red Lion' pub in
Long Compton, or bring your own sandwiches
(approx 1 - 2 pm)

Walk to **Great Wolford (6)** and ring 3 - 3.45pm

Return to cars in Whichford by about 5 pm

Organiser: Michael Haynes
Final details in July Newsletter

AROUND THE TOWERS

PEALS & QUARTER PEALS RUNG IN MEMORY OF ROB HARVEY

Broadwell, Gloucestershire
Saturday 28 March 2015

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1. Richard Lewis-Skeath
2. Neil Ephgrave
3. Roger Hunt
4. Michael Haynes
5. Steve Bowley (C)
6. Michael Probert

In memory of Rob Harvey of
Whichford.

Wellesbourne, Warwickshire
Monday 9th March 2015

1280 Yorkshire S Major

1. Michael Dane
2. Barbra Howes
3. Chris Mew (C)
4. Richard Lewis-Skeath
5. James Ingham
6. Karen French
7. John Nicholls
8. Robert Reeves

1st touch in method - 2.

Rung in memory of Rob Harvey
of Whichford who died yesterday.

THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELL RINGERS

Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire

Church of St Edward

Saturday 14 March 2015

in 3 hours 10 mins (tenor: 27-2-24 in D)

5056 PLAIN BOB MAJOR

1. Christopher M Povey
2. Nicholas K Allsopp
3. Matthew J Kemble
4. Michael A Haynes
5. Michael Probert
6. Roderic K Bickerton
7. Simon E Adams
8. Peter L R Hayward

Conducted by Peter L R Hayward Composed by
C Kenneth Lewis.

First peal of Major: 3

First peal of Major inside: 5

Rung in memory of Robert Harvey of
Whichford who died on 8th March aged 96
- the Four Shires Guild's senior member.

Also in memory of Alderman Mrs Ivy Elsie
Bickerton, mother of 6

First peal on the bells since the recent
refurbishment work by John Taylor & Co

Salford Priors, Warwickshire
Monday 23 March 2015

1260 Diamond Bob Triples

1. Michael Gray
2. Richard Lewis-Skeath
3. James Ingham
4. Robert Reeves
5. Mark Sayers
6. Chris Mew (C)
7. John Nicholls
8. Karen French

First in method for all.

Rung in memory of Rob Harvey
whose funeral took place earlier
today at Whichford.

Yarnton, Oxfordshire
Monday 23 March 2015

1260 Doubles

(St Simon's, St Martin's, Plain
Bob, Reverse Canterbury,
Grandsire)

1. Lindsey Powell
2. Rosemary Hemmings
3. Robert Tregillus
4. Michael Haynes
5. Hugh Deam (C)
6. Barrie Salter

Rung in memory of Robert
Harvey of Whichford.

AROUND THE TOWERS

PEALS, QUARTER PEALS OF OTHER RINGING

Little Comberton, Worcs, 24th Jan, 1260 Grandsire Doubles: Richard Lewis-Skeath 1, Matthew Rodliffe 2, Roger Hunt 3, Steve Bowley 4, Matthew Kemble (C) 5, Stef Whittle 6. With best wishes for a speedy recovery to John Alexander of Pershore & Malcolm Lampitt of Bishampton. The first Four Shires S@S (Saturday at Six) quarter peal.

Salford Priors, Warks, 26th Jan, 1344 Plain Bob Major: Chris Mew 1, James Ingham 2, Robert Reeves 3, Karen French 4, Alan Hartley 5, John Nicholls 6, Matthew Kemble 7, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 8. In memory of Stella Shell of Eastbourne, who died on 24th January.

4

Freeland, Oxon, 30th Jan, 1296 Beverley S Minor: Michael Probert 1, Malcolm Fairburn 2, Nick Allsopp 3, Lorna Curtis 4, Neil Ephgrave 5, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 6.

Crophorne, Worcestershire
Saturday, 31st January 2015

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1. Chris Povey
2. Roger Hunt
3. Robert Hall
4. Matthew Kemble
5. Martin Penny (C)
6. Claire Penny

Conducted by Capt Martin Penny
(British Army, Ret'd)

Rung half-muffled in memory of William Ireland of Crophorne. A ringer at this Church before enlisting into the Worcestershire Regt.

Killed in France, 31st January 1915, aged 18.



William Ireland's name is recorded on Crophorne's War Memorial

Willersey, Glos, 31st Jan, 1309 Doubles (St Simon's, Plain, Grandsire): Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 1, Jeanette Davey 2, Michael Haynes 3, Matthew Kemble 4, Roger Hunt 5, Stef Whittle 6. Remembering Anthony J. Brazier, former Guild President, who died 1/2/96. *(Should have rung 1296 changes...! Ed)*

Stanton, Glos, 14th Feb, 1260 Plain Bob Minor: Roger Hunt 1, Michael Haynes 2, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 3, Claire Penny 4, Matthew Kemble 5, Steve Bowley 6. Remembering Geoffrey J. Hemming of Evesham, whose first peal was rung on the treble bell in this tower 97 years ago (Boxing Day 1917, Grandsire Doubles).

Pershore, Worcs, 6th Feb, 1260 Grandsire Triples: Claire Redstone 1, Madeline Reeder 2, Chris Povey 3, Robert Hall 4, Steve Bowley 5, John Nicholls 6, Andrew Evans (C) 7, A J Barnfield 8. Rung as a birthday compliment to R Roger Savory, our friend and fellow ringer, who will be 85 on 8th February.

Wellesbourne, Warks, 9th Feb, 1280 Original Major: Nick Allsopp 1, Mark Sayers 2, Chris Mew (C) 3, Karen French 4, Robert Reeves 5, Michael Dane 6, John Nicholls 7, Peter Quinn 8. 1st of Original Major: 1, 4 & 6.

Stratford-on-Avon, Warks, 22nd Feb, 1296 Grandsire Caters: Nick Allsopp 1 (C), Jeanette Davey 2, Jennifer Winslow 3, Richard Lewis-Skeath 4, Jane Gilbert 5, Simon Adams 6, Clive Sparling 7, John Nicholls 8, Charles Wilson 9, John Carroll 10.

Mickleton, Glos, 23rd Feb, 1260 Stedman Triples: Richard Lewis-Skeath 1, James Ingham 2, Karen French 3, Alan Hartley 4, Matthew Kemble 5, John Nicholls 6, Chris Mew (C) 7, Jackie Hands 8. First Stedman Triples - 5. Birthday compliment to Jackie Hands.

Offenham, Worcs, 1st Mar, 1260 Doubles (Stedman, Plain, Grandsire): Chris Povey 1, Georgie Roberts 2, Tom Sandham 3, Matthew Kemble 4, Roger Hunt (C) 5, John Cleveland 6. With best wishes to The Rev Anne Potter, moving to the Leigh Group in the Worcestershire West Rural Team, and rung immediately following her 'leaving' service by regular ringers from the towers here in the newly enlarged benefice of Badsey, Bretforton, Cleeve Prior and Offenham.

Freeland, Oxon, 13th Mar, 1440 Cambridge S Minor: Sue Rhodes 1, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 2, Alison Merryweather-Clarke 3, Michael Probert 4, Anthony Williamson 5, Neil Ephgrave 6. Rung in memory of Nutkin Ephgrave & also to mark the 10th anniversary of the death of Quenilla Merryweather-Clarke.

Middle Littleton, Worcs, 21st Mar, 1260 St Simon's Doubles: Stef Whittle 1, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 2, Nick Allsopp 3, Michael Haynes 4, Matthew Kemble 5, Claire Penny 6.

Pebworth, Worcs, 22nd Mar, 1260 Plain Bob Doubles: Freda Cleaver 1, Rosemary Cole 2, Matthew Kemble 3, Georgie Roberts 4, Claire Penny (C) 5, Tom Sandham 6. 1st Q: 2

Harvington, Worcs, 28th Mar, 1260 Doubles (St Martin's, St Simon's, Plain): Roger Hunt 1, Michael Haynes 2, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 3, Michael Probert 4, Neil Ephgrave 5, Stef Whittle 6. With best wishes for a speedy recovery to Rob Newman following a hip replacement procedure.

Childswickham, Worcs, 28th Mar, 1260 St Clement's College Bob Minor: Claire Penny 1, Michael Haynes 2, Roger Hunt 3, Neil Ephgrave 4, Steve Bowley 5, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 6. Believed to be Michael's first quarter peal without a stay!

North Leigh, Oxon, 28th Mar, 1272 Cambridge S Minor: Michael Probert 1, Anthony Williamson 2, Michael Haynes 3, Alison Merryweather-Clarke 4, Neil Ephgrave 5, Richard Lewis-Skeath (C) 6. Rung with gratitude and happy memories of laughs and wise words from Victoria Davey-Wilson who died too soon 6 years ago today.

Evesham, Worcs, 6th April, 1296 Plain Bob Caters: Roger Hunt 1, Robert Chadburn 2, Steve Bowley 3, Chris Povey 4, Claire Penny 5, Martin Penny 6, Bill Nash 7, John Nicholls 8, Richard Lewis-Skeath 9, Matthew Kemble 10. Rung half-muffled in cherished memory of Walter Kay Wornick, an American citizen from New York and latterly New Hampshire, whose generous donations brought about the flat 6th bell in 1976 and the extra treble bell in 1992, thus forming the 'Transatlantic 10' on which this quarter peal was rung.

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

DIARY OF GUILD SATURDAY MEETINGS AND EVENTS

APR 4 th	BOURTON-ON-THE-HILL , Glos	6, 11-1-27 in F (EASTER SATURDAY)
APR 11 th	MICKLETON , Glos	8, 15-3-16 in E (GF) (NOTE: 7-30PM. TILL 8-45PM.)
APR 18 th	ALVESTON , Warks	6, 7½ cwt in A
APR 25 th	ASTON CANTLOW , Warks	6, 14-0-14 in F
MAY 2 nd	BADSEY , Worcs	8, 15-0-4 in F (NOTE: 7-00PM. TILL 8-30PM.)
MAY 9 th	LITTLE COMBERTON , Worcs	6, 13-1-18 in G
MAY 16 th	SNITTERFIELD , Warks	6, 16-1-13 in F
MAY 23 ^d	PEBORTH , Worcs	10, 11-3-09 in F#
MAY 30 th	HOOK NORTON , Oxon	8, 20-2-13 in E
JUNE 6 th	BUCKLAND , Glos	6, 14 cwt in F# (GF)
JUNE 13 th	SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR , Warks	6, 9-2-1 in G
JUNE 20 th	WELFORD-ON-AVON , Warks	8, 9-3-1 in G#
JUNE 27 th	HALFORD , Warks	6, 7-2-16 in A (GF)
JULY 4 th	GUILD ANNUAL RINGING TOUR - - - (SEE NOTICE, P.17, FOR DETAILS)	
JULY 11 th	OFFENHAM , Worcs	6, 10-3-2 in F# (GF) (NOTE: 7-00PM. TILL 8-30PM.)
JULY 18 th	ODDINGTON , Glos	6, 9-2-20 in G (GF) (NOTE: 7-00PM. TILL 8-30PM.)
JULY 25 th	T.B.A.	

For any alterations to this programme, check the FSG web-site (<http://www.fourshires.org.uk>), or Campanophile/Bellboard'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.

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:

!! SUBSCRIPTIONS !!

Yes, folks, it's that time again: FSG subs are due on 1st January 2015. The rates are £5 for members and £2 for Juniors (under 18). Please pay as soon after this date as possible, as it benefits the Guild. (Please note: there is no Non-Resident Life Membership category. An annual subscription is required to retain membership.)

Payment may be made to Peter Kenealy, Membership Sec, or to Michael Dane, Hon Treasurer. It would assist greatly if, when paying by cash, you use the payment slip attached to this Newsletter.

YOU CAN PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION BY INTERNET BANK TRANSFER, which is a very convenient service if you are internet-connected and have internet banking. THE GUILD'S BANKING DETAILS ARE: Bank, HSBC; Acct No, 71118668; Account name, FOUR SHIRES GUILD; Sort Code, 40-41-26. For 'Reference', please insert your name and tower (or unattached), otherwise you and your payment will be untraceable!! You will not need a receipt, as the bank transfer process allows a copy of the transfer document to be printed off. (*I have used this system and it works well. Ed*)

(Please note: those who haven't paid their subs by June 30th will cease to receive the Newsletter)

Events for 2015: book the dates now:-

Guild Ringing Tour	Sat 4th July. Organiser is 'El Tour Supremo' (Richard L-S!). Details p.17
Guild Walking Tour	Sat 26th September. Organiser is Michael Haynes. Details p.18
Guild AGM, etc	Sat 17th October; Pebworth, Worcs. Details to be confirmed
Inter Shire Comp	Sat 21st November. Organiser 'El Pres'. Details tba
(Note: no Minimus Comp this year, as this and the Inter Shire Comp now alternate.)	
Guild Xmas Party	Sat 12th December, probably Wellesbourne