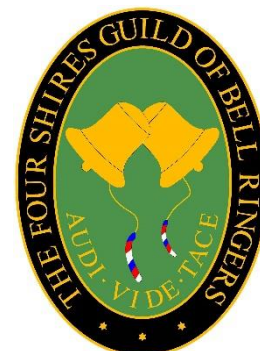


THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELL RINGERS

(Affiliated to the Central  Council of Church Bell Ringers)

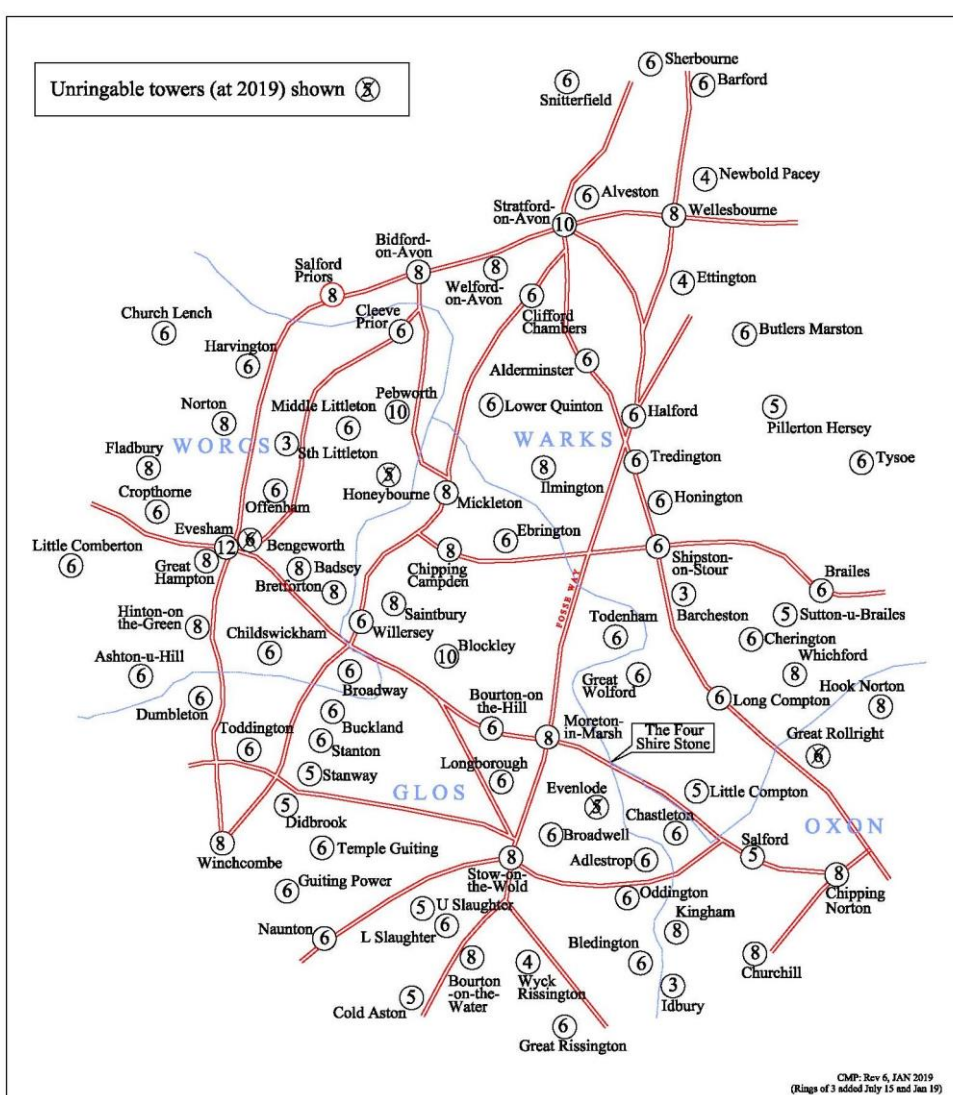
NEWSLETTER No 161 - July 2019



Founded Oct 18th 1909

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I started my run as Newsletter editor in 2009 (Newsletter no 122) with a map of the FSG area on the front page. But as time was short, I'd drawn it quickly to get something to use and there were some omissions (apologies were made to Quinton and Welford in No 123!). As I've come to the end of my editing era with this issue, No 161, I thought a map as at 2019 would be appropriate. In those 10 years there have been some rehangings, eg Wyck Rissington: some rehangings and/or augmentations, eg, Adlestrop, Blockley, Stanway and Temple Guiting; and some additional towers, eg Little Comberton, and Pillerton Hersey (the latter rehung and augmented). Also during that time the Bells Restoration Fund has been formed and a total amount of £6,270 spread over 19 grants has been offered and used by the towers concerned. While some of these grants have been used for major rehousing work, many have been used to keep rings from unringability, which is even more satisfying. Yes, Great Rollright, Evenlode and Honeybourne are still requiring substantial work, the first two very substantial work, but time sometimes brings surprising solutions, eg Saintbury back in the 1980s.. **CMP (See Editorial, p.4)**

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

Subscription rates: £5 adult; £2 Junior

It also has a Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1548368912115550/>

Temporary Newsletter Editor: Chris Povey Postal and email addresses above. **NOTE: EMAIL** chrismpovey@gmail.com

NEW RULE CHANGE CONCERNING ACCOUNTS EXAMINERS

Following the change agreed at the 2018 AGM, that the Guild will have one Accounts Examiner instead of two, the relevant rule in the Guild Handbook (Ringers' Rules; Independent Examiners, p.3) will change to: There shall be **one** Independent Examiner, elected annually at the AGM on the recommendation of the Committee. **He or she** will examine all the accounts of the Guild and report on the same to the Committee. **He or she** need not be a member of the Guild. (*Changed wording shown in bold.*) Future editions of the Guild Handbook will be amended to include this wording.

NOTIFICATION OF THE STANDING PROCEDURE CONCERNING NEW MEMBERS AND THEIR PROPOSERS AS AGREED BY THE COMMITTEE AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING

The following was reported in Committee Notes in the April 2019 Newsletter (160), which accurately reflected the wording in the formally-agreed Minute in the Minutes of that meeting. That:-

Members elected during the year be present at the AGM and introduced by their proposers. They are to be given a membership certificate.

This procedure will commence with the 2020 AGM, when membership certificates are ready for use. See back page of this issue for information about a competition for designing the membership certificate.

NOTICE OF 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND STRIKING COMPETITIONS

ON SATURDAY 19th OCTOBER 2019

AT THE CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL, GUITING POWER, GLOS
BELLS: 6-2-25 in B^b (GF)



(Photo: Chris Povey)

ORDER OF THE DAY

2.00pm	Brazier Cup Striking Competition
3.00pm	Newing Shield Striking Competition
5.15pm	Service in the Church
6.00pm	Annual General Meeting in the Village Hall (Chairman: the Guild President)

!THERE WILL BE NO EVENING RINGING!

The **AGENDA** for the AGM is:-

- 1 Results of the Striking Competitions.
 - 2 Apologies.
 - 3 Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting (*in January Newsletter 159*)
 - 4 Matters Arising.
 - 5 Guild Master's Report (*to be in the October News-sheet*)
 - 6 Treasurer's Report (*included in the April Newsletter and on website**)
 - 7 Election of President and Vice-Presidents (to serve for 3 years).
 - 8 Election of Officers (Guild Master, Ringing Master, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer)
 - 9 Election of Committee and Honorary Accounts Examiner.
 - 10 Election of two Central Council representatives (to serve for 3 years)
 - 11 Proposal from the Committee: *'the attribution of a peal to the Guild shall require at least half (50%) of those having rung the peal to be fully paid-up Guild members'*.
 - 11 Confirmation of new members during the year
 - 12 (a) notification of the amendment to the Guild Rules concerning the agreement to have one Independent Examiner instead of two, as agreed at the 2018 AGM. (*See p.2*)
(b) notification of the Standing Procedure agreed by the Committee concerning new members and their proposers (*see this Newsletter, p.2, for details of such*).
 - 13 Any Other Business (at the Chairman's discretion)
- (* available from the website for printing out if reqd: www.fourshires.org.uk; then select 'Newsletters')

Chris Povey, Honorary Secretary

Refreshments will be available in the Village Hall from about 4.00pm.

As usual, donations of food will be gratefully received.

Stuart Cummings or Jackie Hands can advise on what to bring.

Teams intending to take part in the Striking Competitions should contact the Ringing Master (Richard Lewis-Skeath) about their entry.

EDITORIAL

Here we are with the July 2019 Newsletter and I've indicated (front page) that my run as Editor for 40 issues is over. Nobody has come forward to take on the editing and nobody has come forward to be the Honorary Secretary either, so what is to happen now?

If nobody comes forward at the AGM in October to take over as Secretary, I will continue in that post, because the Guild would be rudderless without one – it is a key position. And what of the Newsletter? That, too, is a key part of the Guild, as it gives information to members about what has happened, eg Committee meeting notes, and what is to happen, eg future events. It also provides deadlines by which information about whatever is to be submitted for publication. Lastly, but importantly, there is some income for the Guild from adverts, which we can ill-afford to lose.

But I don't want to continue as Editor – I need some extra time in my life, as a few things have changed for Helen and me in recent years – and 10 years doing the job is a long time. It grieves me to take this action, but...

If nobody comes forward for either the Hon Sec's post or the Newsletter Editor post, then (as said above) I will continue as Hon Sec, but I will produce a very cut-down version of the Newsletter. There might be something of note on the front page, but just about all of the newsy stuff (reports of outings and Guild events, From the Archives, X-word, Around the Towers, Qs and peal reports, and the like) won't be there. Deaths of members will be reported, but there will be no obituaries. Notices of events and adverts will be there. Yes, all very cut-down: just the bare essentials. Sad, but in the absence of an Editor to do the full job, this will be the shape of the Newsletter from hereon. Hopefully someone will mourn the passing of the full Newsletter sufficiently

to get into the Editor's seat and do the bizz as before (all the Word files from issues 122-161 are ready and waiting).

I've been lucky to have had regular contributors over the years and I will mention firstly FSG President John Nicholls, who has provided El Presidente's Cross-word for all but one, I believe, of my 40 issues. Thank you, John; (Helen has enjoyed them). Additionally there are Stuart Cummings and Roger Hunt. Stuart has reliably fed me the Saturday practices lists in Word so that I haven't needed to retype; and Roger Hunt has provided the regular (and very interesting) 'Tales from a Tower near you' for the last five years or so – again all in Word so that I can insert without time or trouble. Roger has also provided many photos over the years. Another contributor has been, of course, Peter Newing, with his 'Chaplain's Thoughts'. We are a Church-associated organisation and I think Peter's 'Thoughts' should continue (sorry Peter!). Lastly, thanks to Isobel Murphy for her efforts in encouraging participants of the Mid-Week tours to send me reports of towers visited. Isobel did this herself on occasions. Sadly the reports of these tours 'dried up' in the last couple of years. My thanks to all of those mentioned above, and to those who have provided regular snippets (John Kinchin in particular comes to mind).

Lastly (once again), apologies for the lateness of the Newsletter.

Chris Povey, 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

Angela and I went to France for the opening of the new ring of bells at St. George's Church, Vernet-les-Bains in the Pyrenees, which was to be on Easter Day for the Parish Communion Service. On our way to dinner in the Princess Hotel we saw on the television that a huge Church was on fire. That Church was Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. After dinner we looked at the television in our bedroom and it was the first time that I have watched a tower falling into the central part of the Cathedral. One of the two familiar towers at the west end was also beginning to burn, but that fire was controlled, and it said that the bells were largely unaffected.

The Archbishops and Bishops in France and England asked that all bells be rung on Maunday Thursday when few bells are normally rung in Holy Week. Those ringers, like us, who arrived early rang a quarter peal of Plain Bob Caters in 48 minutes, this being the first on the new ring (tenor 5-0-15). There were many more ringers by Easter Day, when we all rang before and after the Church Service, at which 78 were present. There is a British Chaplain (Diocese of Europe).

Some years ago I went to Kilmallock in the Diocese of Limerick as a locum for the Rector who had gone on a family visit to Canada. Angela and I were due to stay in the Rectory, but a few days before we arrived workmen were replacing lead on some of the flat roofs and there was a fire in the night and much of the roof was destroyed. It was arranged that we stay with a local family in the village. The Dean of Limerick invited me to preach at Evensong and this is the only time that I have been invited to do so in a Cathedral.

Many things can be damaged or destroyed by fire, such as churches, shops, homes and other buildings. Also woods, farms and the like, and even whole forests.

The love of God for all his people cannot be destroyed by fire, so let us ring our bells whether in Cathedrals, parish Churches or even secular rings. Let our bells proclaim the Christian faith, because the music of the bells, well rung, has over the centuries brought many people closer to the love of God.

Rev Dr Peter Newing

ALFRED GEORGE FRANK SPIERS MBE 1925-2019



(Photo: Roger Hunt)

Frank was born in January 1925 the second child of Alfred and Victoria Spiers who kept the Bull's Head in Bidford on Avon, Warwickshire. His younger brother, Fred, in due course took over the tenancy from his mother. The tenancy had passed to his mother on the death of his father when Frank was 9 years old. Frank could often be seen behind the bar helping his brother and this became the watering hole of the ringers.

From a very early age Frank was a boy chorister at St Laurence Church just over the road from home. He never moved far from his beloved Church. At the age of about 12 Frank was invited into the tower by the then captain, Arthur Shorey.

After schooling in the Village Frank, at the age of 14, started work at the BSA factory in Redditch later moving to the Austin Motor Company at Longbridge finally working on car bodies as a sheet metal worker. He initially cycled the 12 miles to Redditch before moving to a motor cycle which he subsequently added a side car. In the 1950s this was exchanged for a car. After being demobbed Frank returned

to The Austin and remained there until retirement.

At the age of 18, when called up for military service, he decided to join the Grenadier Guards and after training served time in Germany finally returning to Caterham where he was a Drill Instructor until he was demobbed. He was very proud of his time in the Grenadier Guards, a member of the local branch of the Grenadier Guards Association and almost always wearing his Guards tie. No surprise our sallies are the colours of the Grenadier Guards! Prior to Military Service, Frank was an amateur boxer something which he was able to continue with whilst serving with the Guards, representing them in various competitions.

In 1953 Frank married Gian a marriage which was to last until 2002 when Gian died. They had two children, Jill and John. Frank was very proud of his children and their achievements.

In 1995 Frank was awarded the MBE for "services to Bidford on Avon". Locally Frank was known as Mr Bidford, a tribute to all the village organisations to which he was involved. He was a Parish Councillor for 45 years, a Churchwarden and a member of the Royal British Legion. Perhaps I should add here that Frank enjoyed his football as a youngster playing for the local team and later as a referee travelling to various games in the area. He was also involved in raising funds for the village cricket pavilion. Sport would often be a topic of conversation with fellow ringers. Space does not allow me to list all his activities during his lifetime.

Returning now to Frank's ringing and looking at Tower records it appears that Frank's first quarter peal was in 1955. Ringing at Bidford was rejuvenated in the 1970s when Frank asked Michael Homans how to teach new ringers. This was the start of the new band. In the 1980s Fred and Joan Munday, Pam Craney, myself and my husband Richard all moved into the village. This was really the moment when Frank was able to progress and enjoy his ringing. In the period to 2006, which was his last quarter peal, he rang a minimum of 58 quarter peals and conducted one of Plain Bob Doubles. On Bidford bells Frank would normally be ringing the 7th or the Tenor. Frank was not a peal ringer but did ring 9 peals with Peter Border and Chris Mew conducting them.

Whilst Frank did not take office he was a member for over 50 years of both the W&DCRA and the Coventry Guild of Bellringers, also joining the Four Shires Guild and would always try and attend meetings. He enjoyed the monthly outings with the FSG and in the early years he would have a day out with Gian sorting out the lunchtime pub. At the May outing Grandsire Doubles was rung as attribute to him, a method which he would ring on these days out and would sometimes call. He would often comment that ringing took him to 'some lovely parts part of the country'. He was elected an Honorary Life Member of the Guild at the 2018 AGM.

In late April 2019 Frank was taken to hospital and subsequently discharged to the care home home in Bidford, where he had been for just over a year, where he died peacefully on 7th May.

The congregation of 240, for his funeral, shows the regard and affection with which Frank was held. There was half muffled ringing prior to the Service with the local band ringing Frank out of Church. Whilst the burial was taking place in the Churchyard next to the Church a quarter peal was rung, the details of which are:-

Bidford on Avon, Warks, 29 May, 1273 Grandsire Triples: 1 Richard Lewis-Skeath, 2 Annie Hall, 3 Karen French, 4 Roger Hunt, 5 Ray Sheasby, 6 Mike Chester, 7 Simon Rogers (C), 8 Richard Spray.

Rung immediately after the funeral service of A G Frank Spiers MBE (1925-2019). Frank was born in Bidford and it was his home for his whole life. He was fully involved in village life throughout his life including playing and refereeing football, working on the parish council and being fully involved as a parishioner at this church. He learnt to ring in 1939 and was tower captain for many years, only giving up ringing when not well enough to do so. He was awarded the MBE in 1995 for services to Bidford. 400th quarter - 3.

Sandra Parker

'LIFE IS LIKE A GAME OF SNAKES AND LADDERS. WE GO UP SOME LADDERS AND DOWN SOME SNAKES. WE'RE ALL LOOKING FOR THE LONG LADDER AND WE'RE ALL TRYING TO AVOID THE LONG SNAKE.'

‘A RECEPTION IN HONOR OF RINGERS’

No, I haven't misspelt honor, as that's exactly the spelling used when I received an email early on Monday, April 29th. Topped with an official crest it read:-

*The Ambassador of the United States of
America*

Robert Wood Johnson

requests the company of

Mr. Chris Povey

*at a reception in honor of
Bell Ringers*

I looked at it and looked again. I called Helen to find out what she made of it. We both thought it was probably a spoof or a late April Fool. What in Heaven's name had Ambassador Johnson to do with English-style ringers, or more to the point, with me? The story behind this came out a little later – the email was genuine. It seems Ambassador Johnson was visiting St Paul's Cathedral when the bells were being rung. He asked if could go to watch and was taken up the tower. He was fascinated and resolved put on a reception for ringers at his official residence, Winfield House, in Regent's Park on Thursday May 9th. He liaised with Christopher O'Mahoney, the President of the CCCBR, on invitations. Whether I received one as Secretary of the Guild or from the past work I've done with the CCCBR, I don't know. But here it was.

It's a bit difficult refusing such a high-level invitation, so I thought I'd better go and duly RSVP'd my intention to be there. Apparently there were only 120 invitations, so I felt quite honoured.

I went up by train and tube, and walked the last quarter-mile to Winfield House. I was a little early, but there was

already a small gathering outside the tall metal gates. But who were these people? They were all suited and booted – literally – so how could they be ringers? But they were. More arrived, equally suited and booted (the dress code did say 'smart').

Eventually the gates opened and we lined up to show our passports or similar to prove identity. Two armed policemen were standing inside the gates. This was no ordinary meeting of ringers! Once inside Winfield House the atmosphere changed. It was very easy-going, although nicely formal – but to see ringers in their Sunday-best (in most cases better than their Sunday-best) was quite surreal. I doubt whether I shall ever see such again. Drinks and nibbles were offered. I had a particularly enjoyable 'whisky on the rocks', as I wasn't driving home! We were allowed to visit the various rooms there and move into the garden. It's a very fine house, but I guess security is drum tight – and certainly would have been later when the President came to stay there during his visit to the UK.

A little later Ambassador Johnson came down to see us and gave an extremely good talk, after which there was a glorious touch of Stedman Cinques on handbells. Mingling followed that and then our time was up, so we gradually exited the building. It was an experience that will be talked about for some time – and for it showing that ringers can dress very smartly indeed.



Amid the splendour of Winfield House. Ambassador Johnson centre with microphone.

FROM THE ARCHIVES:-

100 YEARS AGO

There is no entry for this period in the old Minute Book. The next is for 3rd Oct 1919.

40 YEARS AGO

5th August 1979:

Committee Meeting held at 2 Cole Brook Court Yard, Blockley on 3rd September 1979 at 7.30.

Members present were: Miss L Bedford, A J Brazier, S Carter, Mrs H Davies, P.Harmer, Mrs P Linsdell, and J White. Apologies were received from M.F.Fairfax (In the absence of Mr Fairfax, A.J.Brazier took the chair.)

Matters arising from the Minutes

Insurance. Miss Bedford reported that M.F.Fairfax was dealing with the insurance of the Cup and Shield. The Secretary was asked to confirm this.

Saturday Practices:

S.Carter reported that the Saturday practices had been generally well attended this summer. He added there was usually a fall in members

during the summer, but it had not been so noticeable this summer.

Annual General Meeting:

Details of the AGM are to be published in this next Newsletter. Nominations for the Officers must reach the Secretary by the 13th October together with a seconder. Members are reminded that if they wish to propose a member for the Committee, that member's permission must be sought before the meeting.

M.F.Fairfax and Miss L.Bedford are not prepared to stand for re-election for the 1980.

A.J.Brazier, in the absence of the Guild Master, proposed a vote of thanks to Miss Bedford for her work as treasurer over the past two years.

Treasurer's Report:

Miss Bedford reported a Balance of £68.50. She commented on the fact that according to the *The Ringing World* our account was more than it should be. The Treasurer and Guild Master had sorted it out and believe the Guild to be in credit. A.J.Brazier proposed accepting these figures for the purposes of the Guild's accounts for the year ending December 1978. Seconded by Mrs H.Davies and carried.

(cont next page)

Boundaries:

The question as to whether to enlarge the Guild's boundaries was raised and after some discussion it was agreed there was no justification for this at present. It was suggested that extra-territorial membership be encouraged and the Committee would review the situation again.

Outing:

Thanks were extended to Mrs H.Davies for organising an outing to Great Barrington, Burford, Clanfield, Bampton, Lechlade and Hatherop on 29th

September. It was emphasised that ringing must be kept to a high standard or stopped. A charge would be made of 10p per tower to cover fees and donations.

Committee:

The next Committee was arranged for 27th November at 7.30pm at Mr P.Harmer's, Honeybourne.

(Signed) M.F.Fairfax 27/11/79

FSG COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES, 7th MAY.

The Committee met on Tuesday 7th May at Church House, Evesham.

1) Apologies for absence: John W.

2) Minutes of the last meeting: all agreed as correct and signed as such.

3) Matters Arising:-

Handbell insurance: Richard had obtained a acceptable price and was asked to purchase.

4) Reports: the following are highlights:-

Hon Secretary: Chris had received proposals and secondings for the following:-

Henry Stephenson (Ashton-u-Hill) prop
Richard L-S, sec Roger Hunt
Membership was agreed, rem con.

Andrew Fleming wished to re-join: agreed.

Treasurer: Michael provided an update on the finances, both ordinary and BRF accounts. He said one member had cancelled his place at the Annual Dinner too late for it to be cancelled in the order, but he agreed to pay the £25. This had not been paid and the Committee resolved to write to him again requesting it be paid by the end of July, otherwise cancellation of membership was an option to be considered.

Safeguarding Officer: Chris Mew had offered to re-write the Guild's policy on this. The Committee were exceedingly grateful for this and will ask him to proceed.

Newsletter Editor: Chris said nobody had approached him about doing this job, or indeed taking over as Hon Sec. Committee members to 'ask around' if anybody is interested.

CCCB: Chris said he was exceedingly surprised to receive an invitation from the US

Ambassador to the GB to attend a reception 'in honor of bell ringers'. He thought this was a spoof initially, until it was confirmed it was real. It had been arranged via the CCCBR. He will attend and report back.

5) Bell Restoration Fund:

Michael confirmed there was £3607 of unallocated money available for grants

Updates:

Ebrington and Childswickham had been informed of the grants offered to them at the last meeting, and their thanks had been received.

Grant applications for consideration:

Two new application have been received. Both for clapper work at Great Hampton and Temple Guiting. To be considered at the next meeting (August).

Updates on outstanding grants:-

Ebrington: an investigation by Adrian Dempster, Structural Engineer, had been undertaken and his report had been received. This is likely to be an expensive repair project.

6) Items for discussion:-

Recent events:

None

Future programme:

Ringing Tour, 6th July: Richard has this in hand, with draft itinerary published in the April Newsletter.

Walking & Ringing Tour, Sat 21st September:

John C reported that the route would be Tredington – Honington – Shipston. Full details to be in the July Newsletter

AGM & Striking Comps, Sat 19th Oct. Guiting Power is available. Agreed that the Village Hall

is required. It was agreed that the striking comps should start at least 1 hour earlier, to avoid delaying the Service (and therefore the Vicar) as in the last 2 years.

Inter-Shire Comp, Sat 16th Nov. Again, Guiting Power is available, and the Village Hall will be required, too. John N agreed to assist with contacting the various teams, as in the past.

Xmas Party: to be at Badsey again, on either Dec 7th or 14th. Stuart to liaise with Hilary.

7) Proposals for a competition for designing a membership certificate.

It was agreed that the design should be 'open', but should include the new member's name, their tower affiliation, the date of admission and room for signatures of the President and, probably, the Ringing Master. It was further agreed that the size should a standard size, either A4 or A5, and in portrait. Closing date should be 31st October, so that entries can be judged by the Committee at the November meeting. The prize should be presented at the 2020 Annual Dinner, and it was agreed that it should be a Guild polo shirt. Chris to insert these conditions in the July Newsletter.

8) AOB:

There was none

9) Next Meeting: the next meeting will be on Tuesday 13th Aug at Wellesbourne.

Future Committee meeting dates:, November

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

AROUND THE TOWERS PEOPLE AND PLACES

Great Hampton and Childswickham are gearing up at present for work to the bells.

They have both been able to start the work – rebushing clappers in both instances, plus some pulley and other work at Childswickham – through grants from the territorial associations and from the FSG. This will ensure these two excellent rings will continue to operate properly well into the future.

There has been an application for a grant for work at Didbrook. These tricky little bells are to

have some work to them, including a new headstock on the treble, but also, perhaps more importantly for ringers, a decent rope guide installed (see the Cotswold Edge tour on p.8). Due to the difficulty in ringing them, Didbrook was taken off the Saturday night practice list about a year ago.

The Hon Sec tipped over into his 8th decade on Wednesday July 3rd. He had been encouraged to ring a peal on the day for the event, which duly happened at the Bell Tower.

The après-peal was spent in The Red Lion Inn in the Market Square, where the conviviality continued until 11.45pm!

Margaret Clayton has reluctantly given up her ringing due to ill health. She is very sad about doing this, but accepts it is for the best in the circumstances. She has graciously made a large donation to the Guild, which will be credited to the Bell Restoration Fund. Thank you so much for this Margaret. It was good having you with us when you were able to be..

AROUND THE TOWERS

PEALS, QUARTER PEALS AND OTHER RINGING

PEALS IN THE LOCALITY THAT INVOLVED A LARGE PROPORTION OF FSG MEMBERS AND/OR LOCAL REASONS FOR RINGING THEM.

Worcestershire & Districts Association

Bretforton, Worcestershire, St Leonard

Saturday, 27 April 2019 in 2h 49 (8-3-11 in F#)

5040 Grandsire Doubles

1 David Jenkins	4 Nicholas K Allsopp
2 Steve Bowley	5 Roger H Hunt
3 Michael Chester (C)	6 Christopher W Tennant

First peal: 6. 225th for the W&D: 5.

Rung as a birthday compliment to Lucy Tennant, wife of 6.

Worcestershire & Districts Association

Evesham, Worcestershire, The Bell Tower

Wednesday, 3 July 2019 in 3h 27 (14-2-26 in F#)

5021 Grandsire Caters

1 Alison R Williams	6 Martin B Penny
2 Rachel D Page	7 Nicholas K Allsopp
3 Roger H Hunt	8 Christopher F Mew (C)
4 Christopher M Povey	9 Richard Lewis-Skeath
5 Simon E Adams	10 Stephen Bowley

Rung on the light ten as a compliment to Chris Povey on his 70th birthday today.

Southam, Warks, 8 April, **1280 Cambridge Surprise Major**: 1 Christopher Mew (C), 2 John Keddie, 3 John Thorne, 4 Peter Quinn, 5 Robert Reeves, 6 Peter Hollings, 7 Douglas Kempton, 8 Mark Sayers. Rung in memory of Ruth Smith of Melbourne.

Fladbury, Warks, 16 April, **1680 Grandsire Triples**: 1 Rob Newman, 2 Christina Ireland, 3 Steve Bowley, 4 Richard Lewis-Skeath, 5 Rachel Page, 6 Neil Garner, 7 Roger Hunt (C), 8 Chris Tennant. Rung open in thanksgiving for the life of Andrew (Andy) Jones who died 30 March 2019 after a long battle with leukemia and whose funeral took place here earlier today. Andy was taught to ring on these bells by the conductor - he last rang in March 2018 (with Neil) whilst in Johannesburg. Thelma James is associated with this performance. First inside to Triples: 2. First on 8: 8

Bretforton, Warks, 18 April, **Rounds, Call Changes and Staggered / Tolloed Stand**: 1 Roger Hunt (C), 2 Rob Davis, 3 Fiona Gibson, 4 Bill Boyce, 5 The Rev'd Fr Timothy Hupfield, 6 Josh Fiander, 7 John Cleveland, 8 George Jelfs. 9 Rob Newman. Rung in solidarity for Notre-Dame immediately following the Maundy Thursday Benefice Service. First ringing for 4 years for Fr Timothy (Benefice Curate).

Tredington, Warks, 18 April, **Rounds and Call Changes**: 1 Hazel Davies (C), 2 Rachel Davies, 3 Emma Davies, 4 Kathryn McCarthy, 5 Richard Budd, 6 Michael Rees. Rung in sympathy and solidarity with the people of France following the devastating fire damage to the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

Bretforton, Warks, 23 April, **Call Changes and Firing on 8**: 1 Roger Hunt (C), 2 Rob Davis, 3 Clare Davies, 4 Bill Boyce, 5 Christina Ireland, 6 Josh Fiander, 7 Rob Newman, 8 George Jelfs. Rung for St George's Day and the launch of the British Asparagus Festival held at The Fleece Inn, Bretforton.

Pebworth, Warks, 4 May, **1260 Grandsire Doubles**: 1 Graham Lee, 2 Alison Lee, 3 Claire Penny, 4 Georgie Roberts, 5 Martin Penny (C), 6 Stef Whittle. Rung half-muffled in memory of Mary Jennifer Harrison (22 April 1939 – 11 April 2019); Cherished wife of Peter Harrison - Village Choirmaster, and beloved mother of Adam & Rachel.

Fladbury, Warks, 14 May, **Grandsire Triples**: 1 Rob Newman, 2 Christina Ireland, 3 Neil Garner, 4 Rachel Page, 5 Richard Lewis-Skeath, 6 Steve Bowley, 7 Roger Hunt (C), 8 John Alexander. Rung open to the memory of The Rev'd Canon J O C Champion whose funeral took place earlier today at Pershore Abbey. He was Rector of Fladbury (1975-93) before retiring to Pershore and was instrumental in the restoration of the then 6 bells here (after a 60 year silence) followed by their augmentation a year later in 1992.

Badsey, Warks, 16 May, **1260 Plain Bob Triples**: 1 Alison Lee, 2 Claire Penny, 3 Tom Sandham, 4 Roger Hunt, 5 Martin Penny, 6 Richard Lewis-Skeath, 7 Neil Garner (C), 8 Graham Lee. First Triples 1 & 8

Pebworth, Warks, 2 June, **1260 Plain Bob Doubles**: 1 Beccie Williams, 2 Claire Penny, 3 Neil Garner, 4 Bob Topp, 5 Martin Penny (C), 6 Bill Boyce. Rung to celebrate the christening of Felix William O'Dwyer, son of Sarah & Richard O'Dwyer of Ardens Grafton. Supported by his Godparents – Benjamin Emerton, Caroline Lockwood, Mark Bough and Melissa Ward.

Offenham, Warks, 9 June, **1260 Grandsire Doubles**: 1 Alison Lee, 2 Chris Povey, 3 Graham Lee, 4 Claire Penny, 5 Martin Penny (C), 6 Bob Topp. Rung for Offenham Wake. First in method - 3

Crothorne, Warks, 16 June, **1260 Doubles** (60 Stedman, 480 Plain Bob & 720 Grandsire): 1 Richard Lewis-Skeath, 2 Steve Bowley, 3 Harry Stephenson, 4 Rob Newman, 5 Roger Hunt (C), 6 John Alexander. Rung open in memory of local residents Lord Spicer (Baron Spicer of Crothorne) and former MP (died 29 May) and Gordon Cropper, a former ringer here (died 5 June).

Offenham, Warks, 23 June, **1260 Mixed Doubles**: 1 Annette Carless, 2 Claire Penny, 3 Rod Carless, 4 Neil Garner, 5 Martin Penny (C), 6 Tom Sandham. To congratulate Rev Timothy Hupfield on his ordination yesterday. Rung after Timothy's first Eucharist service by ringers from across the Benefice.

Crothorne, Warks, 24 June, **1260 Doubles** (60 Stedman, 480 Plain Bob & 720 Grandsire): 1 Rob Newman, 2 Richard Lewis-Skeath, 3 Steve Bowley, 4 Harry Stephenson, 5 Roger Hunt (C), 6 John Alexander. Rung open to the memory of Gordon Alec Cropper, a stalwart ringer at this tower over many years, whose funeral and interment took place here 21st June - RIP.

THE COTSWOLD EDGE TOUR, SATURDAY 18th MAY

Christina Ireland and Tom Sandham organised a tour 'along the Cotswold edge' for ringers still mostly at the learning stage, who had not experienced a tour and therefore bells other than their own. It did all that was intended of it and they are to be congratulated for it being successful. Tom wrote the following about it (photos by Roger Hunt):

Following the success of last year's tour around Bredon Hill, this year's theme was 'under the edge', a jaunt along the Cotswold escarpment.

We started the day at Saintbury (8) on a wet misty morning, the famed view over the vale denied us. Never mind, some useful ringing on the 8 with tea & coffee available being provided

for a Cotswold walking tour.

Next stop the nearby tower of Broadway (6) enticed some visitors in to watch. Some ringers find these bells – the heaviest of the day - a challenge, with their long ropes and high rope guide, but most people managed them well.

(cont next page)

On to Buckland another delightful 6 in yet another picture postcard setting. Quite acceptable ringing here and they were enjoyed.

Lunch was taken at the Gardeners Arms at Alderton; then on to ring at Toddington (6), a solid and magnificent Victorian church, with a tower and spire to match. It was a good climb to the ringing chamber. Our staple repertoire of Plain Bob, Grandsire and even Stedman was attempted.

Didbrook (5; and the lightest ring of the day) proved challenging to say the least. Rung from near the west door, 'ring' is a bit much: the 4

trebles are in line one side of the walkway through, and the tenor the other side. Very flighty indeed; I consider myself lucky not to have broken a stay!

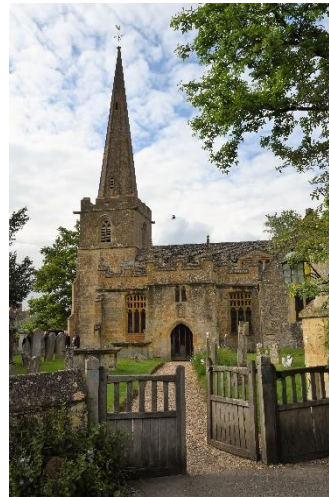
The last of our towers was at Stanton (6), another 'chocolate-box top' church in a 'chocolate-box top' village. These had the added quirk of having the ropes arranged anti-clockwise, so some confusion not unnaturally arose to start with. But eventually we triumphed!

Our aim to keep it simple and keep it local proved a popular choice and we hope to repeat it next year.

This was the first tour for some and the variety of towers and bells improved all our skills, from flighty bells to long draughts to anti-clockwise, we had it all.

With thanks to the 'professionals' who kept us right, Chris, Roger, Martin and Richard.

We started in the wet we finished in beautiful sunshine a metaphor for our ringing no doubt.
Tom Sandham



Top L: Broadway
Above: Stanton
Top R: Buckland
L: ringing at Didbrook
R: the happy party

TALES FROM A TOWER NEAR YOU (19)

... BELL HANDLING (Pt4)...

In contrast to previous bell handling tales this time we look at the traditional method employed for a small bell. 10 years ago in 2009 the two bells at **Stanley Pontlage** nr Winchcombe were refurbished in conjunction with the then necessary repair to the open turret stonework which housed them.

Only 18 inches or so in diameter the two similarly unscrubbed bells complete with their elm headstocks were quickly despatched to ground level using a vintage 1ton chain operated pulley block once they had been released from the plain bearing mountings fixed in the stonework – the condition of the stonework was best described as 'completely shot'. The swinging of the bells, using a rope attached to an iron lever on the headstock, was an alarming sight. (My accompanying photographs recorded the scene)
Roger de 'Flaedenburg'



'Completely shot'? More like 'horrendous and ready to fall down'. CMP



NOTICES

GUILD WALKING AND RINGING TOUR

SATURDAY 21st SEPTEMBER

A NEW ROUTE HAS BEEN DEvised WITH NEW TOWERS

Meet at **TREDINGTON** Ringing 10.00 - 10.45am (Please park tidily)
Walk to **HONINGTON** Ringing 11.30 - 12.15pm
Walk to SHIPSTON for lunch (1.15 - 2.30pm)
Ringing at **SHIPSTON** 2.30 – 3.30pm
Walk back to TREDINGTON.

For further details contact the organiser:- John Carroll ()

(John says all ringers, non-ringers and dogs are very welcome!)

GUILD-BADGED CLOTHING

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE:-

Polo shirts:	£15.00	Full-zip ladies fleece	£25.00
Sweatshirts:	£17.50	Half-zip fleece:	£22.50
Full-zip fleece:	£25.00	Lambswool V-necked sweater:	£35.00

Contact Kathy McCarthy on:- email, khmccarthy@fastmail.fm; phone, 01608 661001

Payment still goes to Michael Dane, contact details on page 2 (cheques to be made payable to 'Four Shires Guild of Bellringers'. Payment via BACS may be possible: check with Michael first). There are no extra carriage charges on the prices above. All profits from the sale of clothing go to the Guild's Bell Restoration Fund.

Colours: The range of colours can be seen on the Guild's website, which is <http://www.fourshires.org.uk>.

Some idea of sizing can be gauged from the following:-

(Chest size in inches)	Small	medium	large	X-large	xx-large
Polo shirts	36-38	40	42	44	46-48
Sweat shirt	35-37	38-40	41-43	44-46	47-49
Men's full zip fleece	35-37	38-40	41-43	44-46	47-49
Half zip fleece	35-37	38-40	41-43	44-46	47-49
Dress size:					
Ladies' full zip fleece	10	12	14	16	18

NEWSLETTER EDITOR REQUIRED OR GUILD HONORARY SECRETARY REQUIRED

As announced in the April 2018 Newsletter, Chris Povey has decided to resign the post after the July 2019 Newsletter. Nobody has come forward to take over from him. However, he has agreed to continue being Newsletter Editor, **BUT** will only do this if he gives up the post of Honorary Secretary, which he has held since 2014. Chris has said he will give up one of these posts come the 2019 AGM. If no-one comes forward for either of these posts by that time, he will choose which one of these to discontinue.

Both of these posts are important to the overall running of the Guild. If you feel unable to be the Newsletter Editor, but believe you could be the Honorary Secretary, please consider taking over this post. Chris will continue through the AGM and write the Minutes, but the new Hon Sec needs to be in post to take over from there. If you wish to know more about the Secretary's post (or the Editor's), please contact Chris or me soon, as time is running out.

Peter Quinn, Guild Master

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FOUR SHIRES GUILD BELL RESTORATION FUND

The Guild has a Bell Restoration Fund, from which the Committee is 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)

BEQUESTS TO THE GUILD'S BELL RESTORATION FUND

Have you made, or you about to make, your will? The Guild would be grateful if you would consider making a bequest from your estate to its Bell Restoration Fund. The Fund is now a significant part of the bell restoration scene, and we need money into it so that it can be distributed to the good causes that have arisen and will continue to arise. Speak to the undersigned if you need advice.

Chris Povey, Hon Sec

GUILD LAPEL BADGES



Guild lapel badges are available. They are slightly different to the previous version, as it is now the same as the clothing badges (the 'standard' Guild badge). It is slightly '3D' too, as some features are raised.

£4 each from the Hon Sec.

(The original badges cost £1 in 1976!)

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DIARY OF GUILD SATURDAY MEETINGS AND EVENTS

JULY 13th	BLOCKLEY, Glos	10, 17-0-6 in F (* NOW A RING OF 10 BELLS*)
JULY 20th	BROADWAY, Worcs	6, 18-1-16 in (GF)
JULY 27th	ODDINGTON, Glos	6, 9-2-20 in G (GF) (*NOTE 7-00PM.TILL8-30PM.*)
AUG 3rd	BRETFORTON, Worcs	8, 8-3-11 in F# (GF)
AUG 10th	GREAT RISSINGTON, Glos	6, 11-1-3 in F# (GF)
AUG 17th	LOWER QUINTON, Warks	6, 13-0-7 in F# (GF) (*NOTE 7-00PM.TILL 8-30PM.*)
AUG 24th	SAINTBURY, Glos	8, 11-0-24 in F# (GF)
AUG 31st	BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER, Glos	8, 12-1-22 in F#
SEPT 7th	LITTLE COMBERTON, Worcs	6, 13-1-18 in G
SEPT 14th	BIDFORD-ON-AVON, Warks	8, 14-0-24 in F (GF)
SEPT 21th	WALKING & RINGING TOUR (Shipston area) (*SEE DETAILS IN NEWSLETTER*)	
SEPT 28th	EVEHAM, Worcs	12, 35-2-20 in C# (& 10, 14-2-26 in F#)
OCT 5th	CHURCHILL, Oxon	8, 10-3-9 in G (* NOTE 7-00PM.TILL 8-30PM.*)
OCT 12th	WELFORD-ON-AVON, Warks	8, 9-3-1 in G#
OCT 19th	A.G.M. & STRIKING COMPS at GUITING POWER Glos (*SEE NEWSLETTER FOR DETAILS*)	
OCT 26th	SHERBOURNE, Warks	6, 11-1-17 in F#
NOV 2nd	T.B.A.	
NOV 9th	T.B.A.	

For any alterations to this programme, check the FSG web-site (<http://www.fourshires.org.uk>), also **BELLBOARD** website bb.ringingworld.co.uk (diary section)

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:

A COMPETITION FOR DESIGNING A MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE.

This has arisen from Nick Allsopp's proposal that new Guild members should be given a membership certificate when they join. It was debated at the last Committee meeting and it was agreed that there should be a competition for the design.

It was agreed that the design should be 'open', that is, with no restrictions on the what it should look like, but it must include room for:-

- 1 the new member's name,
- 2 their tower affiliation,
- 3 the date of admission and room for signatures of the President and, probably, the Ringing Master.

It was further agreed that the size should be a standard size, either A4 or A5, and in 'portrait' mode.

The closing date for entries will be 31st October, so that entries can be judged by the Committee at their November meeting. It was agreed that a prize of a Guild polo shirt should be awarded to the winner, which will be presented at the 2020 Annual Dinner in February. (Please note: the copyright of the winning design will pass to the Guild.)

This is a wonderful opportunity for the artists in the Guild. Please show us your talents!

Send entries in paper or digital form to the Hon Secretary (Chris Povey). Address/email details on p. 2.

Events for 2019 – book the dates now:-

Guild Walk & Ring Tour Sat 21st September. Full details on page 10
AGM & Striking Comps Sat 19th Oct at Guiting Power. See Notice on page 3