

# THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELL RINGERS

(Affiliated to the Central



Council of Church Bell Ringers)

## NEWSLETTER No 172 - April 1st 2022

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Founded Oct 18<sup>th</sup> 1909

### NEW BANK ACCOUNT - IMPORTANT

The Guild has banked with HSBC Bank for many years but recently they started charging us for the use of the account. Since December, we have had to pay £6/month administrative fee plus a minimum of 40p per cheque banked.

We have now managed to open a new free account with Lloyds Bank and this should be used for all future transactions. The details are:

Name: The Four Shires Guild of Bellringers

Sortcode: 30 98 97

Account: 67433862

Many of you pay by Standing Order, please can you ensure that you change this to the new account before your next payment is due. If you want to pay your subscription or donation by BACS please use these details. The HSBC account will be closed by the end of this April.

### Editorial

Time has passed quickly and already the next news letter is due, in summary things have been quiet in the Guild and there is little to report.

One very important detail is the change of the Guild bank account details please note above. If any other

bell towers have community bank accounts and are being charged, it may be worth looking into Lloyds for free banking. If your subs payment has been overlooked its not too late to pay but note the old account will close this month so do use the new details.

Its good to see a few quarters and

peals being rung again, all of them 1sts for some band members, see page 4.

We have a new programme secretary to arrange the Saturday events but so far this year there are no plans for any Guild dinner gathering during the summer or summer ringing tours.  
Alison Lee

## Officers and Committee Members of the Guild

### **President**

Mr John Nicholls

### **VICE-PRESIDENTS**

Mr Chris Povey

The Rev Dr Peter Newing

### **Chaplain**

Rev Dr Peter Newing

### **Accounts Examiner**

Claire Penny

### **GUILD OFFICERS**

#### **Guild Master**

Mr Peter Quinn

#### **Ringing Master**

Mr Richard Lewis-Skeath

#### **Hon Secretary**

Mr Steve Bowley  
S\_bowley@btinternet.com

#### **Hon Treasurer**

Mr Michael Dane  
landm.dane@btinternet.com

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Mrs Christina Ireland

Mrs Jackie Hands

#### **CCCBR Representative**

Mr Chris Povey  
chrismpovey@gmail.com

#### **BRF coordinator**

Mr Chris Povey

#### **Guild Peal Recorder**

Mrs Sandra Parker

#### **Programme Secretary**

Mrs Christina Ireland

Mr John Carroll

Mr Stuart Cummings

#### **Membership Secretary**

#### **Safeguarding Officer**

Mr Chris Mew

#### **Health and safety officer**

Mr C Povey

Mr John Wheeler

Dr Nicholas Allsopp

#### **Mid-week Tours**

**General Contact**  
Mrs Isobel Murphy

#### **News letter editor**

Alison Lee  
alison.lee.bellringer@gmail.com

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

FSG subs are due on 1st January 2022. The rates are £5 for adults and £2 for juniors. Please pay as soon after the due date as possible, an annual subscription is required to retain membership. If paying by cash please use the payment slip that will be attached to the January Newsletter. Payment may be made to Michael Dane, Hon Treasurer.

**THE PREFERRED METHOD OF PAYMENT FOR SUBS AND DONATIONS IS BY INTERNET BANK TRANSFER.**

THE GUILD'S BANKING DETAILS ARE: Bank, LLOYDS, Acct No, 67433862; Account name, FOUR SHIRES GUILD; Sort Code, 30-98-97. 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.

## Chaplains Thoughts

The nights are still long and dark but the days are getting longer and wintry conditions still do not help us. The Epiphany season of the church is concerned with making Christ known to all everywhere. It is concerned with light and Christ is the light of the world and is there to guide us through life's journey. It is there to sustain us on our earthly pilgrimage.

As we return to more ringing we may have to wear a face mask. It may seem inconvenient to some but is in itself a small price to pay.

Rev Peter Newing.

## The Four shires Guild of Bell Ringers

### Minutes of a committee meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at Evesham

**Chairperson** Chris Povey acted as chairperson in Peter Quinn's absence

**Apologies for Absence** John Nicholls, Jackie Hands, Nick Allsopp, Stuart Cummings and Peter Quinn

**Present** Stephen Bowley, Chris Povey, Alison Lee, Richard Lewis-Skeath, John Carroll, Michael Dane Christina Ireland and John Wheeler

2. Minutes of the last meeting October 5<sup>th</sup> signed off

3. **Matters arising from last meeting** none

4. **Reports:**

**Guild Master** none

**Hon. Secretary** Handover from Chris Povey to Steve Bowley completed.

**Proposals for membership** none

**Guild Insurance** It was decided to wait for the next quote to reassess any insurance cover for the Guild's valuables and activities. A rise of 5% (c. £420.00) would be within an acceptable rise should there be any. The committee's general view was that EIG had been good value for money and probably the most suitable type of insurance for the guild's valuables and activities.

**Hon. Treasurer/Membership** Clothing costs had risen on some items, the main reason being a rise in postage and packing.

**Ringling master** The first Guild practice since covid restrictions kicked off to a good start with monthly practices ` starting at Ilmington - 18 people attended.

**Safeguarding** No incidents reported. The secretary made a suggestion about promoting the new safeguarding Leadership procedures.

**Fixture Secretary** none

**Health and Safety** No issues reported

**Newsletter Editor** none

**Website** Richard asked if website calendar could be updated

**CCCB update** Donation/grant to the central council's new mobile belfry was discussed. Some members had voiced their opposition to any donation to this on the grounds that grants should only be given to towers within the Guild's sphere. After some time of deliberation, it was decided the Guild should give a grant of £280. This was on the firm understanding that this project deserved special consideration as a national scheme.

**Peal Secretary** no report

5. **Bells repair fund** unallocated funds stand at £4,845. The Didbrook grant had been extended due to Covid. Grants were also paid to Moreton and Halford.

6. **Learning to ring flyer**

7. **AGM report/update.** Feedback for the AGM was very positive. Guild members commented on what an enjoyable event it was. The turnout was also very good.

The committee discussed the possibility of changing the times of future AGM's. For example, whether we should start earlier and finish earlier, and with alterations to the structure of the event. There was no particular opposition to this as such, but it was decided to give the matter further airing. It was however stressed by some committee members, that any changes would have to be made through a FSG members vote at an AGM.

8. **Assessment of current membership** a decision was made to update the membership list in the New Year when sub payments were due.

9. **Resumption of Guild activities - update.** While covid restrictions were still in place, ground floor rings and open balconies were suggested for future practices. Reasons for this were to optimise ringing chamber ventilation. A spring BBQ was suggested as a possible outdoor substitute for the annual dinner. Another suggested event was a return to the skittles evening.

10. **Date and location of the next meeting** to be held at the Church Rooms Wellesbourne on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022

## Peals and quarter peals

[Bretforton, Worcestershire](#), St Leonard, Monday, 17 January 2022 in 47m (8-3-11 in F# ), **1320 Plain Bob Doubles**, 1 Clare Davies, 2 Neil Garner, 3 David Jones, Josh Fiander, 5 Roger Hunt©, 6 John Cleveland, Rung open in celebration of the life of local market gardener Bill Byrd, a popular character, whose funeral took place here earlier today. **1st quarter at 1st attempt for Josh** (and rung at his home tower).

[Kathryn McCarthy](#) 27th January **1st inside** to plain bob doubles, Warwickshire.

[Ilmington, Warwickshire](#), St Mary, Saturday, 5 February 2022 in 45m , **1260 Doubles (3m/v)**, 1 David Clark, 2 Fran Chapman, 3 Bill Sabin, 4 Jacqueline Hands, 5 Michael Dane©, 6 Bill Nash, To mark the 70th anniversary of the accession of HM Queen Elizabeth II

[Evesham, Worcestershire](#), The Bell Tower, Saturday, 26 February 2022 in 2h 51 , **5040 Plain Bob Minor** 1 Nicholas K Allsopp, 2 Alison M Lee, 3 Richard Lewis-Skeath, 4 Roger H Hunt, 5 Steve Bowley, 6 Michael Chester ©. **First peal: 2.**

The band, anticlockwise from the left



[Offenham, Worcestershire](#), St Mary and St Milburgh, Tuesday, 8 March 2022 in 43m , **1260 Grandsire Doubles** 1 Neil Garner, 2 Claire Penny, 3 Clare Davies, 4 Alison Lee, 5 Martin Penny ©, 6 Graham Lee. **First of Grandsire - 3**

## The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme has been extended

It has recently been announced by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) that the LPWG Scheme has been extended to the end of March 2025. It's a scheme that allows the VAT on eligible work to Places of Worship to be refunded. This may not be of interest initially to many ringers, but it will to those ringers trying to raise money for work to their bells. Having the VAT refunded makes a big difference to the overall bill, ie, not quite so much fundraising to do – although the VAT must be paid before it's refunded. And all the relevant receipts for the work must be to the PCC, as only the PCC that can claim the refund.

So, if you are considering work to your bells, it might be a good idea to think about doing this sooner rather than later, to be fairly confident that there will still be money in the DCMS's pot at the end of this period (it's not just bell work that's eligible). I should tell you, too, that bell ropes are included in the eligibility list (although you won't be able to claim for one or two ropes, as there's a minimum spend, but Evesham Bell Tower saved about £500 when a new set of ropes was received last year. Worth looking at what this scheme has to offer: a dollar saved is a dollar earned... PCC Treasurers should know all about this scheme, as it's been running for a few years now.

Your church must be Listed, at List 2, List 2\* or List 1. Most churches in the Guild's area are listed.

For more information about this scheme and the eligible items, see <http://www.lpwscheme.org.uk>

Chris Povey

## Four Shires Guild of Bellringers –Financial Report 2021

The guild operates 2 bank accounts with HSBC; a Community Account which is our day to day account for General Funds and a Business Money Manager Account (which generates a small amount of interest) which holds the Bell Fund.

This was another difficult year with Covid restrictions continuing and no subscriptions were charged apart from those members who had not paid in 2020. The General Fund started the year with £3,522.12 (including a donation of £2000 for the Bell Fund) and finished with £761.42. Taking into account the Bell Fund donation we made a loss over the year of £760.

The income from subscriptions was £93 and there was expenditure of £356.14 on printing and postage (including printing certificates), £419.06 for the guild insurance and £80 for CCCBR. At the end of the year there was an outstanding bill of £148 for printing the flyers. The total membership for 2020/211 was 198 including 8 Life members (down on 2019 but with tower members not meeting it was not easy for many to collect the subs)

The Bell Fund started the year with £4,480.99 and ended with £5,365.59. The income was £2,528.60 from donations and advertising. We paid a number of grants: Honington (£800), Moreton (£234), Childswickham (£50), Aston Cantlow (£90), Halford (£190) and the CCCBR Mobile Belfry (£280). There is one outstanding grant of £800 to Didbrook. At the end of 2021 we had £4,565.59 of unallocated funds which can be used for grants.

Michael Dane Hon Treasurer – Four Shires Guild of Bellringers

I have checked the annual accounts of the Four Shires Guild of Bellringers and found them to be correct.

Four Shires Guild of Bellringers - Accounts 2021						
2020	Income	2021		2020	Expenditure	2021
<b>General Fund</b>						
£982.04	Opening Balance	£3,522.12	1			
£860.00	Subscriptions	£93.00	2	£94.71	Printing & Postage	£356.14
£12.00	Insurance refund	£0.00		£395.21	Insurance	£419.06
£0.00	Garments	£25.00		£17.50	Garments	£28.50
£1,378.00	Annual Dinner	£0.00	3	£1,139.50	Annual Dinner	£0.00
	Donations towards Tea			£80.00	CCCBR	£80.00
				£0.00	Room Hire	£0.00
				£0.00	Website Domain	£0.00
£17.00	Badges	£0.00		£0.00	HSBC Charges	£5.00
£2,837.00	Bell Fund Donations	£538.00		£837.00	Transferred to Bell Fund	£2,528.00
£1,440.00	Trans from Bell Fund (grants)	£1,644.00		£1,440.00	Grants Paid	£1,644.00
£6,544.00	<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>£2,300.00</b>		<b>£4,003.92</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£5,060.70</b>
				£3,522.12	Closing Bank balance	£761.42
					Cash in hand	
				<b>£3,522.12</b>	<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>£761.42</b>
<b>Restricted Funds - Bell Fund</b>						
			5			
£5,078.83	Opening balance	£4,480.99	1			
£100.00	Mid Week Tours	£0.00		£250.00	Childswickham	£50.00
£471.00	Donations	£2,332.00		£540.00	Temple Guiting, Hinton	
£5.16	Interest	£0.60		£650.00	Ebrington, Hampton	
£120.00	Newsletter Advertising	£120.00			Honington	£800.00
£146.00	Raffles, outing, teas etc	£76.00			Moreton	£234.00
0	Clothing Profit	£0.00			Aston Cantlow	£90.00
	From General Fund				Halford	£190.00
					CCCBR Mobile Belfry	£280.00
£842.16	<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>£2,528.60</b>		<b>£1,440.00</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£1,644.00</b>
				£4,480.99	Closing balance	£5,365.59
<b>Creditors at year end</b>				<b>Debtors at year end</b>		
	Subs paid in advance	£5.00				
£519.00	Badges & Shields	£519.00				
	Warwick Printing (Flyers)	£148.00				
Other assets of the Guild include: Newing Shield, President's Chain, Brazier Trophy, Spencer Jones						
<b>Notes</b>						
1	Opening balances			4	Printing	
	The Guild operates 2 bank accounts, one for the General Fund and the other (which incurs interest) for the Bell Fund.				This covers the cost of all the Guild printing & posting, including the Newsletters.	
2	Subscriptions			5	Bell Fund	
	The total membership for 2021 was 198. No membership was charged in 2021 for members who paid in 2020.				The Committee decided that all the nett profit from Teas, Raffles, Clothing sales etc would go into the Bell Fund. There is 1 outstanding grant to Didbrook of £800 (to be paid in 2022).	
3	Dinner figure; No deposit has been paid for a dinner.					

### Quiz questions

1. In which church in 2011 were a band of peal ringers locked in for making a 'noise'.
2. How many churches on off shore islands around the coast of Britain have 3 or more bells hung for full circle ringing.
3. Please turn to page 9 for the final question this time.

Pat Bell's recent article published in tower talk

## My Journey towards 50 Ringing Things

Whilst I was ringing one evening in January 2020 in my tower (Pebworth) my long suffering teacher Claire Penny suggested that I should start to work towards achieving 50 Ringing Things.



Another ringer from my tower Alison Lee had already started hers and this was proving interesting and beneficial to her.

I was soon doing very well and achieved my Bronze fairly quickly before the end of February 2020 then Covid got in the way and all towers stopped ringing which immediately stopped my progress to Silver. I quickly found there were quite a lot of challenges/tasks I could do on my own or achieve by studying i.e. write a method using place notation, studying the history of bell ringing and studying the history of my tower. I also did a lot of ringing online using zoom and ringing room apps this included some training which of course enabled me to progress, an extra benefit of this was that I met numerous helpful and friendly ringers that I would not normally have come into contact with.

### Blue 18 make a model bell

I achieved my Silver award in February 2021, I was delighted but never thought I would ever achieve my Gold mainly because of the restrictions caused by covid which stopped me ringing at additional different towers.



### Gold Plus with Claire Penny & Alison Lee

As restrictions were eased I renewed my efforts to progress as much as possible, I found towers in my area and a few more during UK holidays and all were helpful in my progression.

I soon realised that it was going to be difficult and that my original plan to ring at more than 50 different towers was not likely to be achievable within the target timescale, however revisiting the booklet I found alternative tasks that I could achieve. I completed my Gold/Gold plus in January 2022 which was just under 2 years from registration but just over the 100 week target, I was worried that this would disqualify me from the gold plus award but after discussion with the helpful people from ART I was delighted that they extended the timescale and therefore I achieved my target.

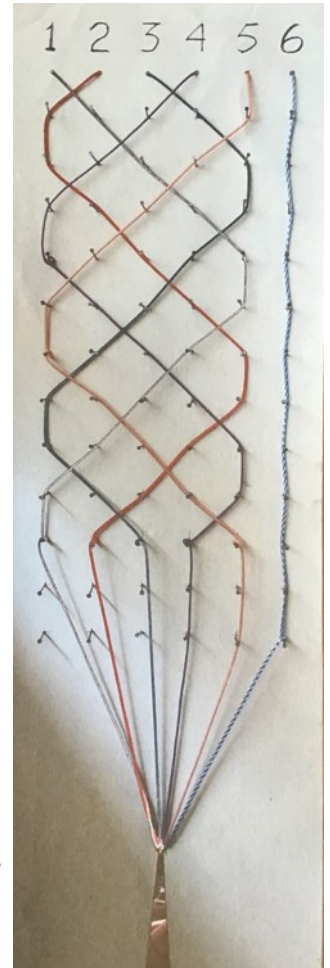
I was asked if there was a highlight and whilst there is no particular one that stands out, the experience of climbing up and around the bells to fit a stay and in another tower to fit muffles will always stay in my mind, not bad for a 75 year old!

An area that has helped me progress in my ringing was the experience of ringing very light bells and very heavy bells and this made me realise that your technique can be modified to suit an individual bell and overall this experience has helped me in my day to day ringing. Without a doubt there are many things within the 50 RT that I would never have done without the motivation provided by the challenge.

I would encourage any bell ringer at any stage of their ringing journey to have a go at 50 RT as I did. I am sure that any of you will find it most rewarding.

By Pat bell

### Red 16 make a visual aid for training



## 1st Pealers , Your Guild needs You.

Have you rung a couple of 1/4 peals inside and are now ready for the next challenge?

How about a peal on an inside bell.

If you are not ready for this challenge, how about a first 1/4 peal?

Either, on the treble, covering or inside.

If you are interested please let me know. We are looking for names, and the towers where you ring. Nick ([allsoppn@gmail.com](mailto:allsoppn@gmail.com)).



### Preparing for your first peal

I could not find much information on the net so here's my contribution to those preparing for a first peal. If I was still a teenager I wouldn't need to prepare but I'm not so I felt I had to think about this event carefully, I had one month to prepare.

I have already completed a number of quarter peals in the past and am fairly confident in the method chosen for my peal although most of that was 2 years ago pre-covid.

My main concern was how to prevent blisters on my hands as so far all infrequent quarters cause me blisters, sometimes all over my hands. I had an experienced bellringing teacher scrutinise my technique and although not much was found wrong she did suggest I was slightly over pulling and snatching to strike my bell in the right place rather than being relaxed and smooth so I set to, to try and put this right.

As I have been ringing for several years changing my technique would not be easy but not impossible, I had sessions on the simulator and during practice with people watching me specifically and correcting /giving me feedback that helped my technique greatly. Now for my hands, there were a few ideas on the bell ringing forums on what to put on the hands to toughen them up such as alcohol gel, coal, rice even urine! I decided to use hand cream to allow my skin to be as supple as possible.

I planned to increase my practice each week over the next month both physical longer lengths of ringing and mental ability to concentrate. Each week I increased my practice by one quarter length either by time on the simulator or by arranging simultaneous quarters. Week one was all about my technique, improvements continued with a vengeance, simulator practice up to 45 minutes concentrating on relaxed rhythm, no over pulling or snatching and the Mobel app at home for mental method practice.

On week two I was lucky enough to ring 2 quarters one after another neither of which came round but I did get 1hr 30mins of almost continuous practice and I continued on Mobel for longer lengths to know my method inside out. So far, the slight change of technique had kept the blisters away and I felt more confident both in the capability of my hands and my concentration. The peal speed for my method was predicted to be 2:40 so I upped the simulator practice speed to this.

At the beginning of the final week I did one final push on the simulator of 3 hrs! of almost continual ringing, I did have to stop and adjust the computer a few times. My arms no longer ached during this time, I appeared to be able to concentrate with just minor slips in the method and still no blisters, I was quietly confident, I hoped I had not over looked anything, I just told myself it was just an extended practice.

The morning of the peal arrived and I did start to feel nervous. I had sorted out trousers that weren't going to fall down during ringing! I had had adequate food and fluid during the morning and arranged a lift there so I could celebrate in the pub once completed! My mouth was really dry just before I started, nerves I guess.

It was all very relaxed, we tried the ropes for size and started on time, there were a few slips and trips along the way but the conductor put me right almost before I went wrong just awe inspiring! Time passed so quickly, until about 2 hours when I first glanced at the clock, one more look at the clock at 2 and a half hours then it was all done in 2hrs 51m.

I wasn't prepared for the inability to walk immediately after standing the bell, both legs seized to the spot and properly would not walk when I asked them to but that was short lived and just funny! I had prepared well, no aching arms, not too tired, I felt physically able to carry on ringing but my hands were a bit sore, no bleeding on the ropes which no doubt pleased the tower captain of Evesham bell tower.

This is a must do for anyone half considering a peal, its no where near as difficult as I had first imagined, Thankyou to Nick for creating the opportunity for a first peal and to the band members who helped get me through. Alison Lee

## Save Our Spire

Cracked stonework that needs replacing and repointing, tower pinnacles to be made safe, replacement lightning conductor and repairing of the 'Cock o'the steeple at a cost of £10,000 . The Friends of St Mary's church childswickham invite you to a

'Wine and cheese ' fund raising evening at the Childswickham Memorial Hall Friday 6th May, 7pm.

## The Four Shires Guild of Bell Ringers

### Minutes of a committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at Wellesbourne

**Apologies for Absence** John Nicholls.

**Present** Peter Quinn (Chair), Stuart Cummings. Michael Dane, John Wheeler, Jackie Hands, Christina Ireland, Richard Lewis-Skeath, Nick Allsopp. Also in attendance: Alison Lee (Newsletter Editor), Chris Mew (Safeguarding Officer), Chris Povey (V-P). In Steve Bowley's unexpected absence, Chris P took the Minutes.

2. **Minutes of the last meeting November 9<sup>th</sup>. Agreed** and signed.

3. **Matters arising from last meeting** none

4. **Reports:**

**Guild Master:** Peter said he and Michael had arranged the first Saturday practices at Halford, Honington, S/Priors and Bidford. Honington and Halford had already taken place

**Hon. Secretary:** the agenda listed 8 prospective members. These were all **agreed** as follows:-

Matthew Turvey and Tim Watkin (both Childswickham); prop Alison, sec Richard

Martin Robins (Hinton-on-the-Green); prop Alison, sec Christina

Martin Taylor-Reed (Tredington); prop Stuart, sec Chris P

Myra Ford (Bourton-on-the-Water); prop Stuart, sec Chris P

David Jones and Sara Bent (both Elmley Castle/L. Comberton); prop Steve, sec Christina

Christopher Stuart (Great Hampton); prop Chris P, sec John Smith

**Hon. Treasurer:** Michael had prepared and distributed a report on finances for the last 3 months. The 2021 accounts had been sent to Claire Penny for checking. Michael had also prepared a note about bank charges on the Guild's account. There seems to be no choice at present but to bank and pay everything by BACS to avoid these charges. He said he would keep an eye open for a bank/BS that would charge nothing, but nothing is available. He asked for permission to open an account elsewhere if a better arrangement became available, which was **agreed** by the Committee. He mentioned that some PCCs wish to have grant money paid by cheque, which incurs a £5 charge. It was **agreed** that a sentence be added to the offer of grants that PCCs agree to having the money paid by BACS, and confirm that as a condition of accepting the grant (or agree to a £5 reduction to compensate).

**Action:** Chris P to add the relevant wording.

**Ringling Master:** Richard reported that two of those towers already arranged had had practices. Honington was a slow start, but Halford had a good attendance. The recent Offenham practice had 19.

**Safeguarding:** Chris M's submissions (circulated with the agenda). The C of E's proposals on this apply to all volunteers in a church, not just ringers, and will be handled in the way each diocese thinks fit. There will be three categories: Basic Awareness (all); Foundation; and Leadership. This could lead to variations in training across boundaries. It could also lead to volunteers deciding not to continue, eg, ringing, if they don't agree with the way the proposals demand. Chris's paper is to form part of the Guild's existing Safeguarding document. As the Guild is not a territorial organisation, Chris's advice is that no immediate action is required by the Guild. It is the territorial bodies that will be affected first - training, etc, likely to be through them to begin with (possibly on-line for basic).

**Fixture Secretary:** It was decided to stick with one tower per month, and these still to be ground floor rings, or those with balconies. Stuart said he was looking for somebody to take over from him on arranging towers. He has done this for 10 years. Christina said she would give this a try, but would like guidance on how to do this. Towers for May, June and July were required before the May Newsletter was published.

**Action:** Christina

**Health and Safety:** Chris M's second paper recommended that the provisions of this - for C of E requirements for Safeguarding and for Covid Awareness - be incorporated into the Guild's H&S document. **Agreed**

**Newsletter Editor:** if a Guild get-together of some sort is to occur later this year, then adequate notice of it should be given in the Newsletter. For an event in, eg, July, notice should be in the May Newsletter. The advert for Guild badges will appear again. The subscription rate for posted Newsletters should be increased to £5, due to increased postal charges. **Agreed.**

**Website:** Nothing from Roland

**Mid-week Tours:** have restarted and Michael reported that £100 had come from this group.

**CCCB:** nothing of note, except payment of affiliation fee

**Peal Secretary:** no report, but there are some peals to be written up now. The peal book is with Chris P, who will get it to Sandra for the updating.

**Action:** Chris

5. **Bells repair fund:** The Didbrook grant is likely to be paid soon, as work is underway. Rededication date is 8<sup>th</sup> May. When this is paid the Fund will have £4957 of unallocated funds. Chris will inspect the work

6. **Learning to ring flyer:** Alison reported some towers are asking for more flyers, but she still has many available. She asked if she could simplify the flyer into an A5 format for putting on notice boards. **Agreed**

7. **Assessment of current membership:** a decision was made to update the membership list in 2022 when a better idea



## February 8th committee meeting continued;

of membership can be gained through those who pay subs.

**8. Resumption of Guild activities – update:** This was mostly covered in discussions earlier, but adequate notice of whatever is agreed should occur. A pig roast was suggested, with The Fleece at Bretforton being a possible venue. Richard would investigate.

**9. AOB:** Chris alerted the Committee to an important date next year: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a preliminary meeting to gauge interest in re-founding the Guild. This took place in the Church Rooms, Chipping Campden. A proposal to re-found the Guild was made, seconded and agreed. The rest is history. It was agreed we should mark this occasion in decent style. It is believed there are now only four people who were there at the original meeting. It was suggested the Annual Dinner could be delayed until then; and possibly a peal at Chipping Campden. It was suggested a special badge might be produced, to include ‘50’.

Secondly, the Listed Place of Worship Grant Scheme (the governmental scheme that allows VAT refunds of certain aspects of bell, and other, work in a listed church) is to continue until March 2025. It is a good time to undertake bell work soon, as after that date VAT refunds may not occur (and this includes the refund of VAT on bell ropes).

**10. Date and location of the next meeting:** Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022, Church House, Evesham: 7.00pm

*Note: these Minutes do not constitute Guild policy until they have been agreed at the next Committee meeting as a correct record of the meeting to which they refer.*

### GUILD-BADGED CLOTHING

#### THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE:-

Polo shirts:	£20.00	Full-zip ladies fleece:	£33.00
Sweatshirts:	£21.00	Half-zip fleece:	£37.00
Full-zip fleece:	£33.00	Lambswool V-necked sweater:	£48.00

In the first instance please email your order to **Kathy McCarthy**:-[khmccarthy@fastmail.fm](mailto:khmccarthy@fastmail.fm) There are no extra carriage charges on the prices above. All profits from the sale of clothing go to the Guild 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 shirts	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

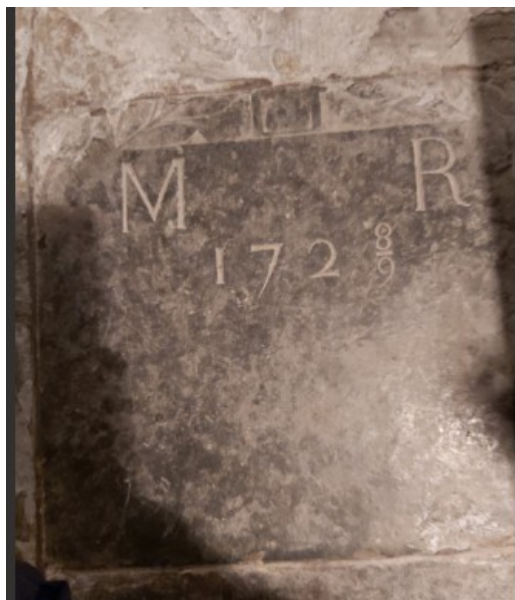
### GUILD LAPEL BADGES



Guild lapel badge 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!)



#### Quiz question

3. On the way to one of the ringing chambers in the locality we walk over this stone.

Why is the date written this way? And for a bonus which ringing chamber would you be on your way to if you walked over it?

# Learning Methods

By Neil Garner

This time we are going back to first principles and one of the earliest methods known to our art..... **Grandsire**.

As many of my friends will know... I have a unique view of Grandsire and believe it is something of an anomaly and should be treated as an advanced method. Let me explain why....

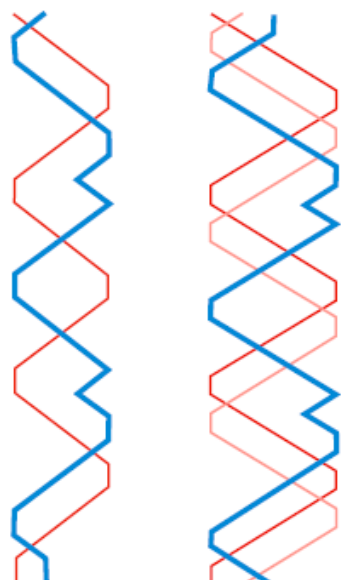
## History

Grandsire is one of the oldest methods we have and its history can be traced back into the 17th century. The book *Tintinnalogia* was written by Robert Roan (published by Fabian Stedman in 1667) and introduced the idea of method ringing for the first time to a mass audience. Grandsire was the 'big thing' in that book and it has remained a favourite with many towers ever since.

Plain Bob Minimus (originally called Doubles and Singles) and Plain Bob Minor (originally called Grandsire Bob) also appeared in the same book... but although they date from a similar time, once you get away from the basic idea of plain hunting (used by all three), the similarities end.

## What makes Grandsire special...

**PB Minimus**   **Grandsire Doubles**



Unlike the vast majority of methods commonly rung, Grandsire has two hunt bells... so both the treble and 2nd place bell do not partake in the substance of the method, remaining as a reference for the 'working' bells. There could be as many double hunt methods like Grandsire as there are more standard ones like Plain Bob, but very few of these have ever been developed, rung or named and the majority of those that have are doubles methods, rung by peal bands 'pushing the envelope' and looking for ever more extraordinary variation for their performances.

At a first glance, Grandsire Doubles looks like a simple extension of Plain Bob Minimus. In Plain Bob, simple plain hunt is extended by adjusting the very last change. This is done by keeping the bell in second place static and thus stopping things coming round. This also causes all the bells above seconds to reverse for one change (a dodge) as their path is blocked.

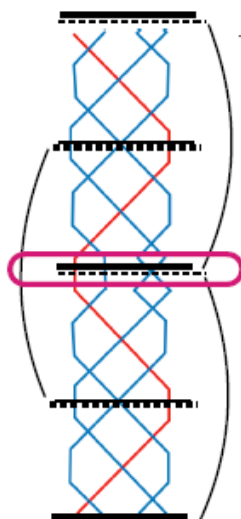
By adding another hunt bell, the whole process has to move one place further out... so thirds place bell remains static, with the above bells reversing (dodging) for one change in 4-5.

At face value, both methods can then be extended out to any number of bells by adding more pairs that dodge in 5-6, 7-8, etc. (Plain Bob) or 6-7, 8-9, etc. (Grandsire). However, beyond this the logic becomes fuzzy...

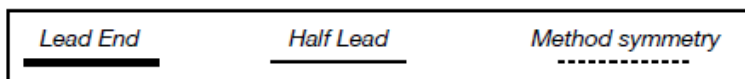
## Where is the lead end...?

In Plain Bob (and almost any other standard method for that matter) the lead end is when the extension change is applied, as well as being when the treble leads. It means that in Plain Bob, we all plain hunt until the treble leads and then we dodge or make a place for the very last change... This stops it coming round and extends it to 'n' leads... where 'n' is the number of working bells. This also works for Grandsire, but it creates a problem...

In Grandsire the second hunt bell does not lead until after the treble... so the mid point (at which we want to make our adjustment) now moves too... from lead end to lead head... so Grandsire has a lead end which is where it starts and finishes... and a different point where the adjustment to extend takes place, one change later and therefore into the next lead! Work that back and the result is that the working bells start with a dodge or place before any other



Plain Bob Symmetry is at the lead and half lead



Grandsire symmetry is offset by 1 change

changes are rung and the symmetry of the line is no longer co-incident with the lead end and half lead points...

In terms of ringing a simple plain course of Grandsire, these issues are relatively trivial and most ringers can just accept it is 'different', i.e. 'Grandsire starts'.... However, it does mean that unlike most methods, the line is asymmetric, so you cannot define it with a normal half lead of place notation!

## A Bigger Anomaly...

Anyone who has started calling, or even more importantly, conducting Grandsire (there is a big difference) will know that it is very different from almost all other methods... the calls are different, the placing of calls is different and the effects are different.... so all in all, a **very different experience!**

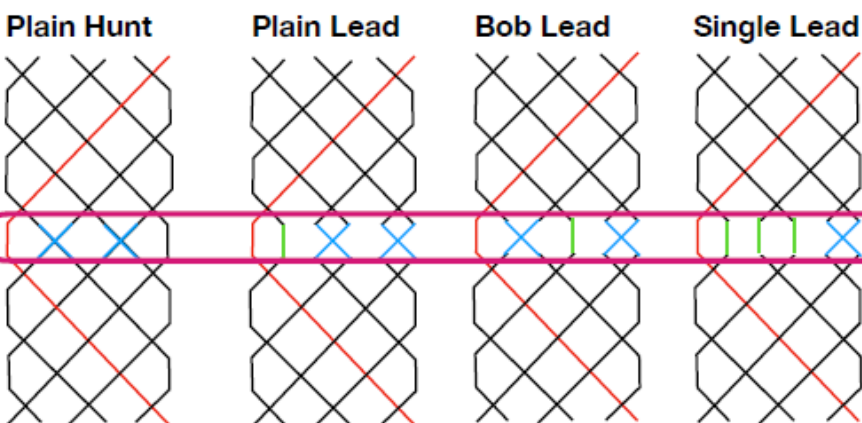
### Plain Hunt & Plain Bob Minor Lead-Ends

Let's look a little more closely....

In Plain Hunt we alternate between switching all bells and keeping the 1st and 6th static... which is why we lead and lie for a whole pull...

Plain Bob is similar, except we keep 1 and 2 static for the lead-end change, creating 3 consecutive even bell swaps for higher places - a dodge. (Technically, anything below the static bell continues to plain hunt and all above have to dodge.)

At a Bob or Single (also used in most other methods), we will see that it is once again a simple adjustment which occurs only on



the lead end change. As a result, the method will be extended in a different way and thus create more changes.

A Bob will keep the 4th bell static instead of the 2nd. This means that just like a plain lead end... bells below will hunt (i.e. the 1st, 2nd & 3rd) and those above will dodge. The result is that bells in 2nd, 3rd, 4th place do not follow a normal plain lead... and are thus switched in the order. The logic is simple, easy to apply and works for any number of bells and for countless other methods too!

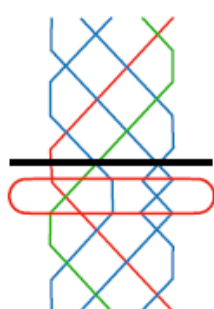
A single is slightly different in that 1,2,3 & 4 all make a place. Compared to a plain lead, we see seconds place bell is unaffected, so only **one** pair (3rd & 4th place bells) swap places... hence the term 'single'.

### Grandsire Lead -Ends

In Grandsire, it is much more complicated due to the asymmetry and the way in which our ancestors chose to deal with it...

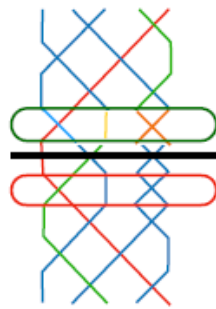
The first issue is that Grandsire does not actually have 2 hunt bells... it has one hunt bell (the treble) and one variable hunt bell (which can be any of the others). So when a Bob or Single is called, the variable hunt bell will change. The second issue is how the Bobs and Singles are applied...

#### Plain Lead-Ends



As we have already seen, Grandsire is asymmetric because the point at which the extending change is added (red loop) is not at the lead end.

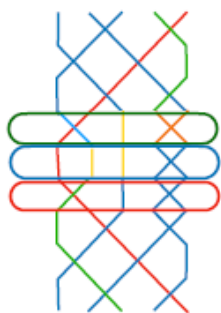
#### Bob Lead-Ends



When a Bob is called, it happens earlier than in normal methods... also it does not change the plain lead adjustment (red loop), but adds a balancing change before the lead end (green loop)... So thirds are now made one change before and again one change after the lead end. This 'double' blockage means that bells above thirds have to reverse direction twice and this is what creates the double dodge.... So, one dodge for the Bob adjustment and another two changes later for the plain lead....

Interestingly, this now makes Grandsire symmetrical... if only momentarily!

## Single Lead- Ends



The single is more complex still... It too makes the method temporarily symmetrical but adds a third extension change... this time at the lead end itself. It means that a single includes the extension change for the Bob (green loop), another for the Plain lead (red loop) and in-between a third adjustment change (blue loop) for the Single!

It also raises some questions too...

- Why is it called a single when every working bell is affected? ...Possibly because that extra change in the middle does swap one pair... but that is quietly ignoring all the other changes which occur on the previous change!
- The variable hunt bell ceases when it starts to double dodge, but the new variable hunt bell does not appear until the lead-end... so which bell is the variable hunt in between? ...Theoretically, it must be the bell making long thirds... for just part of the block of 4 changes! However, in reality, it probably doesn't matter...

## The Practicalities...

For any aspiring conductor, these issues add complexities...

- At a Bob, all bells except for 3rds place are affected and at a single all bells are affected and jump to a different place bell... meaning more transposition work to track the progress of a composition and more difficulty working out what people are/were/will be doing...
- Calls need to be one blow earlier than for standard methods.
- Because of the extended duration of the calls, they seem to be closer together - especially for doubles... and with nearly everything changing after every call, working out where you are can be also be tricky!

**At this point, I'm really not doing a very good job of selling Grandsire... and rest my case for it being an advanced method - but perhaps we need to remember where it all started...**

Grandsire dates from the earliest days of our art and it is likely that those who invented it did not think things through and had no benefit of hindsight... it just grew organically from what they liked and what worked.... and that is probably the most important point. For all its illogicality and eccentricity, it has an amazing ability to produce interesting changes and sound good - which probably explains why we still ring it so often... quirks and all!

It is a method that you can safely say would not be invented today and if it were, it would almost certainly lie in obscurity....

Ringling Grandsire is clearly not too difficult as so many manage to do it and for some it will be their first foray into method ringing... but understanding it is another matter and as we have just seen... it is fairly unique! In practice, those that ring and conduct Grandsire at a high level have special techniques to manage it... be it conducting, composition or just ringing it well.... and will accept that the effort involved is worth it because it makes good music. They are genuine specialists!

Interestingly, there is a method called St Augustine's which has a plain course based on a sequence of Grandsire singles... It has no second hunt bell, has normal half-lead/lead end symmetry, is easy to learn, manage, conduct and compose for and uses standard bobs. It is much more logical/sensible... but will not have the same flexibility to extract our favourite changes on higher numbers, because it is less complex....

...and of course it has no pedigree, so it is almost unknown!

Quiz answers

1. Sharrow in North Yorkshire, no culprit was caught.

2. Channel islands have 11, Isle of Man 2, Isle of Wight 15, Isles of Scilly 1, Lundy 1

3. There are 2 year dates due to the change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar which removed 11 days from the date both calendars were used in Britain at this time and it was known as dual dating.

<https://www.adamsonancestry.com/calendar/>

Hinton on the green

## FROM THE ARCHIVES: 40 YEARS AGO

Minutes of a Committee meeting held at 32 Badsey Fields Lane at 7.30pm 21<sup>st</sup> April 1982

Present MF Fairfax, AJ Brazier, A Turner, Hazel Davies, Jackie Taylor, J Nicholls, Judith Fletcher, P Harmer, D Hammond.

1 Minutes of the last meeting were read and signed by MFF

2 Matters arising

The Competition Rules were published as minuted. HD queried what a band was allowed a False Start no matter how far they were through a method. MFF proposed the rule be changed so that a False Start was only applicable to the first 30 changes.

The time limit on raising and falling was discussed but no action be taken until the rule is abused.

3 Newsletter

MFF offered to photocopy typed sheets if paper was provided. AT offered paper at £1.90 per ream. To save paper both sides should be printed.

4 Competition

Teams expected were Mickleton, Ebrington, Shipston/Tredington with possibly Offenham and Campden. There would probably be no Service.

5 Open Afternoon 12<sup>th</sup> June

Because of difficulty of access no 'tours of the bellcage' would be possible. P Linsdell has written to Severn Sound informing them of the date. She has agreed to do the organisation and it was hoped she might also produce two roadside posters. It was agreed to try to borrow a model bell. Publications from Central Council to be on sale. A rope splicing demonstration to be arranged. JN suggested Mr Charles Rouse be invited to attend.

6 Peal in aid of Todenham Bell Fund

Moreton-in-Marsh was suggested as first choice. The date is to be 9<sup>th</sup> October. JN to enquire about the bells. There would be a practice quarter peal at Mickleton on Sunday May 9<sup>th</sup>. Judith Fletcher would call. Simon Reading to take J Nicholls place as he would not be available on that day.

7 Committee Meeting Dates

These were all confirmed

8 Guild Rules

Certain revisions were voted for at an earlier AGM. These were written out. Points of issue were: a) Honorary Life Members; b) Annual election of President and Vice-Presidents; c) Ringing Master's duties were not defined. A current copy of the Rules are to be included in the next Newsletter.

9 Any Other Business

AJB suggested Central Council publications should be on sale at Saturday meetings. Jackie Taylor agreed to take charge of half the stock. Prices should be published in the Newsletter. Purchase of more copies was discussed but a decision was held over until the demand could be gauged.

MFF stated he did not wish to stand as Guild Master for 1983. Saturday practices were discussed. It was considered attendance was usually good, although there was not enough support at Bledington for the bells to be rung on 17<sup>th</sup> April. It was noted that a regular Surprise Major practice had now been organised. Jackie Taylor agreed to take charge.

Meeting closed at 9. 25pm. Thanks were expressed to AJB for the use of his home. Next meeting to be at home of AJB.

(Signed) MF Fairfax 25/5/82

Minutes of a Committee meeting held at 32 Badsey Fields Lane at 7.30pm 25<sup>th</sup> May 1982

Present MF Fairfax, AJ Brazier, A Turner, Hazel Davies, Jackie Taylor, J Nicholls, Judith Fletcher, D Hammond.

Apologies: P Harmer

1 Minutes of the last meeting were read, agreed and signed by MFF

2 Matters Arising

The revised copy of the Rules are ready for publication in the next issue of the Newsletter. A list of Central Council publications held by the Committee is also to be published.

The quarter peal at Mickleton - practice for the peal attempt - was successful. It was suggested a further practice should be arranged, possibly at Moreton. No date was settled.

3 Open Afternoon

Mr Fairfax agreed to meet Mrs Linsdell to confirm details. Advertising material was to be prepared and distributed around the area. Handbells were to be available and the cup and shield would be on display. A rope splicing display would be arranged.

There would be ringing demonstrations but no actual tuition. Mr Fairfax agreed to ask Mrs Turner to help with teas.

4 Outing

Rev Smith should be contacted to see how arrangements were progressing

5 Newsletter

Items ready for the Newsletter were: Guild Rules; publication list. Mr Fairfax reported he had paper for this issue. Ms Taylor agreed to ask S Page for a piece on Ebrington bells. It was suggested a note be included with the Diary to check with the Ringing Master whether or not ringing is at the tower specified for each Saturday practice.

6 Finance

The treasurer reported a surplus of £2.85 from the dinner. The Committee agreed this should go to the General Fund. The present position is:-

Cash in hand: £10.36

Cash in bank: £5.57

Cash in B Soc £125.63

Subs so far this year £41.00

Mr Brazier suggested some cash should be used to purchase more Central Council and others. The Committee agreed the following numbers:-

## From the archives 40 years ago continued

The Ringers' Handbook	£1.40	10 copies	
Beginners' handbook enough to give		10 copies	(4)
Doubles and Minor for beginners to give	5 copies	(1)	
Conducting for beginners to give	3 copies	(2)	
On conducting to give		3 copies	(2)

It was suggested the Ringing Master should hold all publications.

7 AOB

It was noted Mr F Woods was still paying a sub even though he was eligible for Life Membership.

Mr Fairfax reported he did not wish to stand as Guild Master in 1983.

It was noted Saturday practices were generally well attended. So far the only tower which did not muster enough to ring was Bledington.

Ms Taylor agreed to take over the running of the advanced Surprise practice

Thanks were given to Mr Brazier for offering his home for the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.08pm

Postscript: It was agreed Stow Fair ringing should be advertised in The Ringing World.

The next meeting to be Tuesday Sept 14<sup>th</sup> at 32 Badsey Field Lane and the meeting on October 26<sup>th</sup> at the home of Judith Fletcher.

(Signed) Hazel A Davies 14/9/1982

## From the archives 100yrs ago

A committee meeting called to make the necessary arrangements for the Spring meeting at Ilmington was held at 'The Rectory' Moreton, on Sat April 1st 22, at 6pm. In the absence of the Rector ( who during the early part of the meeting was holding a service at the church) Mr H. Terry was asked to take the chair, and representatives were present from Blockley, Campden, Ilmington, Moreton and Shipston. There was also present Mr E. Pardon ( and during the latter part of the meeting) The Rev Spencer Jones.

After the minutes had been duly read and passed, letters of apology for non attendance were read from the Rev's G. E. Hitchcock and a. D. Agar, also from Mr E. Harris ( Willersey ).

It was decided that the competitions be carried out on similar lines as at the previous meeting at Moreton, commencing at 2 pm sharp. It was proposed by the chairman, sec. by Mr Withers that the Rev A.E. Arthurs of Mickleton be asked to preach the sermon at the special service, and failing him the Rev Guerrier (Ebrington) or the Rev D Holbrooke (Shipston).

Messers E. Pardon and W. Large were appointed judges for the competitions. The Secretary read correspondence regarding the Insurance of the Trophy, also re the purchasing of a suitable Badge to be worn by members, but it was decided to leave these matters over until the annual meeting, in the meantime the Secretary undertook to endeavour to obtain a suitable design. The meeting then closed with the usual votes of thanks. Signed, William Guerrier.

## January Monthly midweek tour



photo taken by Sue Bacon of Pat Halls in St Thomas Church, Stourbridge. If any one is interested in joining the monthly mid week tours. please contact Isobel Murphy.



**Craig Ellis**

Managing Director

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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 'BRF grant coordinator'

## DIARY OF GUILD SATURDAY MONTHLY MEETINGS AND EVENTS

NOTE EARLIER TIMES FOR THE FOLLOWING 3 MONTHS

2022

**MAY 7TH,** GUITING POWER 6 bells, 6-2-25 (342 kg) in B b . **GL54 5XA** , **7.00PM -8.30PM**

**JUNE 4TH,** CLIFFORD CHAMBERS, 6 bells 6, 7-3-2 (395 kg) in A . **CV37 8HT** , **6.30pm** We are ringing at Clifford Chambers at 6.30pm to fit in with their Jubilee celebrations. They are thrilled to have us and feel that it will enhance the village celebrations.

Live band at the village hall **8.00pm** They have a new group of ringers that are keen to join us.

**JULY 2ND,** BRETTFORTON 8 bells, 8-3-11 (450 kg) in F# . **WR11 7JS** , **7.00pm -8.30pm**

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

