

THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELL RINGERS

(Affiliated to the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers)

NEWSLETTER No 130 - OCT 2011

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Founded 1909

TOWER OF THE QUARTER – ST JAMES, CHIPPING CAMPDEN, GLOS



Photo: Robin Povey

What does one say about this magnificent church that hasn't been said before? I remember being told many years ago by an old Campdonian about a tradesman from Birmingham who came to Campden to undertake some work at the church. He returned to Birmingham saying he'd been all round the place but couldn't find it. When told he couldn't have missed it, because it was so prominent, he exclaimed, "I thought that was the Cathedral!" Unlike many other churches, St James is all-of-a-piece, no one part jarring architecturally with any other. This church is, of course, a product of the prosperous wool era, when Campden had one of the few 'Wool Staples', a body which governed the quality and price of the wool being exported, and thus it became home to rich wool merchants. The best-known of these, William Grevel, built the superb building in the High Street that carries his name, and whose brass, the largest in Gloucestershire, lies in the chancel floor. These merchants gave generously to the church, transforming the humble Norman building into the glory we see today. Rather surprisingly, its interior is fairly plain, with clear glass in many side windows. However these and the clerestories let in plenty of light, such that details of the walls, columns and roofs can be seen easily. St James contains many treasures beyond the brasses. Principally these are the 15th.c altar hangings and the 14th.c cleric's cope on display under the tower (but both are covered to protect them from light), and Sir Baptist and Lady Hicks' tomb on the south side of the Chancel. The brass 'falcon' lectern, given by Hicks, is truly a jewel, as is the Flemish-style pulpit, another of his gifts.

Externally, the delights include the Monument Room above the porch, access to which is via a little door near the South entrance, and on the east wall of the porch is a memorial tablet to Jonathan Hulls. Who, you might ask, is Jonathan Hulls? He was the first person to be granted a patent (in 1736) for using a steam engine to power a boat. Unfortunately, it failed when tried on the Avon at Evesham, but in recognition of his foresight, his portrait hung (and may still hang) in a stateroom of the Cunarder 'RMS Queen Mary'.

The great external gem is, of course, the tower, all 120ft of it. Unfortunately, it is something of a 'wobbler', moving perceptibly when the bells are rung. It was far worse when the bells were hung in the ancient wooden bellframe at louvre level, at which time they were a handful to ring (Oh! I remember them vividly...!), but they were rehung in 1986 in a new metal frame some 15ft or so lower in the tower to improve handling and their effect on the structure. The bells are a varied lot, being the product of four founders. There were some proposals a few years ago to augment the bells to 10, but this foundered. Perhaps this should be revived with new vigour to provide a ring appropriate to the building containing them. If a 'lesser' church in the Deanery can do it, why not the 'big' Church.....?

The Guild has a practice here on Saturday Dec 17th (7.00-8.00pm), after which the Xmas Party will be held (see Notice).

Officers and Committee Members of the Guild

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

The deadline for the next issue of the FSG Newsletter (Jan 2012) is December 13th 2011

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

Please contribute something, however small (or large). You would be surprised the things people enjoy reading about. A few suggestions: an historical item; a funny story; a quarter peal report; poems; puzzles; tales, events past and to come; a ringing tour, even! Send them in. They will all be welcome – and photos, too, you'll notice.

.... and don't worry if you think your handwriting is unintelligible. It can normally be translated. Just send it in!

Newsletter Editor: Chris Povey Postal and email addresses above ([please note my new email address](#))

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

EDITORIAL

I'm very pleased to mention that eleven different members contributed articles to this issue. This indicates the Newsletter is alive and (I like to believe this) is being read. Thank you to all those contributors. It is the Guild's mouthpiece and therefore your mouthpiece.

This quarter is normally a busy time for Guild activities. There have been a larger-than-normal number of quarter-peals (I know, because I type them out!).

Additionally, there has been the 'normal' ringing tour in July and the walking tour at the beginning of October. Both of these events were successful judging by the reports and the photos (but I suspect Steve Bowley would tell you the camera does lie, as he doesn't have a 'Desperate Dan' left arm!). There is a possibility that next year's ringing tour might just be a little different if Sophia and Richard L-S's idea comes to fruition: a weekend ringing tour from Friday to Sunday. While this might appeal particularly to caravanners and campervanners, the overnight location would be chosen to offer cheap accommodation. Do not be surprised if Richard or Sophia 'lean' on you to encourage support (I have already been leant on...; and beware of Sophia, as she's particularly effective). Seriously, the idea has much merit and should offer a new dimension to the Guild's activities. Richard and Sophia are looking for 'expressions of interest' for this.

The AGM looms before us. The notice was given in the July Newsletter, together with the agenda,

the Guild accounts and the proposals to be made. While it might look a lot of business, most of the reports and proposals are likely to be taken 'as read', to shorten the process. Mike Rees is stepping down as Guild Treasurer, a job he has done for many years, and a volunteer to take on this important task is very much required. There must be a number of members out there who have some sort of accountancy background. Please consider giving some time to the Guild as its Treasurer.

Please note the appeal for young ringers to attend and contribute to the CCCBR Conference on 'Change Ringing for the Future' at Wellesbourne on November 12th (see Notice, p.10).

Christmas is coming! I know it's a just a wee bit early to be thinking of that, but this is the last Newsletter before that joyous occasion. I hope you will notice, contrary to what was said at the September Committee meeting, that a Guild Christmas Party is thought to be a good idea after all. Therefore, there will be a get-together in the Church Rooms after the practice at Chipping Campden on December 17th, starting at about 8.00pm (see Notice on p.10).

This is the fourth reminder that the job of Newsletter Editor is up for grabs. I'm available to discuss the requirements of being the Editor of this august journal. Again,

no one has contacted me. Do, please, remember that I am departing after the January 2012 Newsletter. It isn't the hardest of jobs (I've done much of the hard work in setting up the format), but some time is required. See the advert on the back page. Don't think there's a dearth of material out there and therefore there will be nothing with which to fill the Newsletter. It somehow keeps coming in.

Chris Povey

(The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Four Shires Guild or its Committee.)

ERRATA

Please note the following error in the Guild 2010 accounts as published in the July Newsletter (page 3).

Under 'Expenditure 2010' the cost of Coventry Silverware should be £56.83. The totals at the bottom of the column are unaffected.

The error is due to the Editor's sloppy transcription of the note distributed by the Treasurer to Committee members at their June meeting. Any copies of the accounts at the AGM will incorporate the correct figure, and the Chairman or Treasurer will mention this error then.

FROM THE ARCHIVES (100 YEARS AGO)

The Old FSG Minute Book records the following for the period 1st October to 31st December 1911. The entry for Oct 26th is significant, as it records Walter Large had left the District by that date. Does anyone know where he went?

Oct 2nd 1911:

A Committee Meeting was held at The Swan Hotel, Moreton-in-Marsh, to consider the Programme for the Autumn Meeting on Thursday October 26th. There were present:- Rev F W Drewe (in the Chair), Rev Spencer Jones, Messrs Case, White, Williams, Pardon, Keyte, Bird, etc. Letters were read from Canon Houghton, Rev Lloyd, & Mr H Evans regretting their inability to attend the Meeting. It was decided to follow the same plan as the previous Spring Meeting, with regard to the Competitions, and that Messrs Bird & Adams be the judges.

It was also decided to ask the Rev Spencer Jones to preach the Sermon at the Special Service. It was proposed and carried that the Tea take place at the White Horse Hotel. It was further agreed that all Subscriptions be paid in January instead of various times during the year. Mention was made of the many local towers who have not yet joined the Guild. It was decided to try & induce more to become associated with the Guild. A Vote of thanks to the Chairman for presiding closed the meeting.

Oct 26th 1911

The Fourth (Autumn) Meeting of the Guild took place at Shipston on Stour on Thursday Oct 26th 1911. The attendance was very good

notwithstanding the wet weather. Ringing Competitions took place and the following Towers took part:-

Todenham, Longborough, Campden, Blockley.

The following was the order of merit:-

<i>Rising & Sinking</i>		<i>Round Ringing</i>	
<i>1 Longborough</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>1 Campden</i>	<i>97</i>
<i>2 Blockley</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>2 Todenham</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>3 Todenham</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>3 Longborough</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>4 Campden</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4 Blockley</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>Call Changes</i>		<i>Method Ring</i>	
<i>1 Campden</i>	<i>92</i>		
<i>2 Blockley</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>No Competition</i>	
<i>3 Longborough</i>	<i>81</i>		
<i>4 Todenham</i>	<i>74</i>		

Tea took place at the White Horse Hotel. A Special Service was held at the Parish Church – the Rev Spencer Jones Rector of Moreton being the preacher. At the meeting after tea it was proposed & carried that all subscriptions be paid in January for the ensuing year. Votes of thanks were passed to the Chairman & officers of the Guild; Mr F A Case was elected Secretary in place of Mr Large (who has left the District), & Mr H Jannett was elected Treasurer in place of Mr Case. Touches were rung on the bells in the evening.

*(Signed) Owen F Jacson
Chairman*

April 25th 1912

GUILD MASTER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2010 – 2011 (Item 4 of AGM Agenda)

I am pleased to report that your Guild in the past year has been very active again, and your committee, elected at the last Annual General Meeting, has been working very hard on your behalf. The Guild Treasurer will also make his report at this AGM

The weekly practices have generally been well attended. The Ringing Master has either run them or someone has deputised on her behalf I have reason to believe that any tower at which we have rung during the year is happy the Guild returns.

A Guild peal was rung to celebrate the marriage at Westminster Abbey of HRH Prince William of Wales and Miss Catherine Middleton, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, on 2nd May at Moreton in Marsh. With the Queen's Diamond Jubilee next year in mind, let's hope the Guild can ring as many peals and quarters peals for this event in the churches in our operational area.

Another successful Annual Dinner was held on Saturday 5th February at The White Hart Royal Hotel, Moreton in Marsh, and I am sure all who attended enjoyed it. Our thanks go to Jackie Roberts, Chairman of The Ringing World, who was our guest speaker at the Dinner. The same venue has been booked for the 2012 Dinner, which will be held on Saturday 4th February.

The Committee again agreed to insuring the trophies and this was added to the existing Public Liability cover with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group.

To resolve the confusion over the unintended false touch that occurred in the 2010 Newing Shield Striking Competition, and the lack of direction regarding this in the Rules that were current then, the Committee, under its delegated powers in those Rules, agreed an additional rule at its meeting on June 9th. That new rule had immediate effect and has become number 10 in the list of rules. The details of this rule were published in the Notices section of the July issue of the FSG Magazine.

The website under Roland Meyrick is also projecting an active Guild to the web world, and

the Guild Newsletter and other relevant details can now be read online. It also displays an advert for the Guild clothing.

After long deliberations at two committee meetings this year, proposals to update the existing Guild Rules (last amended 1992 and currently contained within a yellow booklet) were agreed. The need arises because of various changes that have occurred since 1992. Details of proposed changes were shown in the July FSG Newsletter. The parts that are to be superseded were shown struck through, with the proposed wording to replace it shown in blue. The reasons for each change were shown in italics*. We now require ratification of these amendments at this AGM. I shall therefore propose at the appropriate part of the agenda: "That the Four Shires Guild's Rules be amended, to reflect the changes that have taken place since they were last considered and amended in April 1992. The amendments and other changes proposed are outlined on pages 10 & 11 of the July 2011 Newsletter, no 129, a copy of which is distributed to all members."

The Guild is now affiliated to the CCCBR and the two representatives who were elected at the last AGM for a three-year period both attended the meeting held at Hereford in May this year. A summary of the minutes of that meeting was published in "The Ringing World" and an article entitled "Central Council Meeting 2011 – First Impressions" was written by Keith Murphy (one of our representatives) and published in the July Newsletter.

Chris Povey took on the job as Editor of the Guild Newsletter in October 2009 and as I said in my last report it has taken on a new dimension since then, both in editorial content and printing quality. The printing is still done "in house" via two home type printers purchased by the Guild specifically for this purpose, and a loyal band meet four times a year at Andrew Gunn's house to carry out the printing, collating and stapling. We can now do this in one day. Chris has given his notice and wishes to pass on the editorship of the

Newsletter (which could be more than one person). He has said he will impart his expertise over a period of time, so handing can be a gradual process. If anyone can help with the Newsletter please let us know as soon as possible.

An abridged report of the Guild Committee meetings within in the past 3 months are now published in the Newsletter, so that all members are notified of any important business. They can inform the Secretary of any items they want discussing at forthcoming committee meetings, or if clarification is required.

A Guild Bell Restoration Fund was set up following the vote for this at the 2010 AGM. Its Rules were published in the FSG Newsletter. An application was received for the Temple Guiting augmentation to 6 and the first offer of a grant from this Fund was made to St Mary's Temple Guiting PCC.

The Guild has not had the need to increase the subscriptions for some years. This has been made possible through prudent housekeeping and keeping the printing of the FSG Newsletter "in house", and I am sure you will be able see this from the accounts prepared and presented by Mike Rees. However, the time has come when an increase is needed, and during his report Mike will make the proposal (published in the July Newsletter) to increase the subscription to £5/annum.

Finally thanks should go all members of the committee for their commitment and hard work, and for the time they have given to attending the committee meetings held this past year. Thanks also to Wendy Mace for organising the Annual Ringing Tour Walk, and to Isobel Murphy for the work she does in co-ordinating the FSG monthly Mid-Week Tours.

*Please note: one reference copy of the proposed rule changes will be available at this Annual General Meeting.

2011 AGM AT BARFORD, SATURDAY OCT 15th AN ALTERATION TO THE PREVIOUS NOTICE

PLEASE NOTE: the AGM itself will take place in St Peter's Church, Barford, not in the School Hall as previously advertised. Start time of meeting unaltered at 5.30pm.

Please note, too, the Errata on page 3 concerning the Guild Accounts published in the July Newsletter.

FSG COMMITTEE MEETING, 1ST SEPTEMBER

The Committee met on 1st September at Ilmington. Matters discussed were:-

1) The Minutes of the June meeting were agreed with minor amendments.

2) Matters arising were:-

Intershires Striking Comp – set for 19th November at Cherington;

missing (post 1974) Minute Books – Peter Q agreed to delve further and harder into the possible places they may be;

Guild artefacts – some progress on this, with Committee members agreeing to divide up the list of towers and then inspecting each of them;

Christmas Party – although a ‘proper’ Christmas Party was deferred for this year at the last Committee meeting, an informal ‘get-together’ after one of the Saturday practices in December was thought to be a better way of marking the oncoming Festive Season. This was suggested as being after the practice at Chipping Campden on December 17th (*see Notice on p.10*);

Guild badges: requests for these being received; need to check on stock and re-order if more required;

3) Reports: the following are highlights:-

Treasurer: report re finances;

H&S: see the item in the Newsletter about a broken arm (*see below*);

Newsletter Editor: October issue underway and 12 sides expected this time;

Mid-week (Vice-President’s) Tours co-ordinator: £140 collected in the last 3 months, which will go into the Guild Bell Restoration Fund; thanks expressed to Isobel and the Mid-week ringers;

CCCBR reps: there is to be a conference organised by the CCCBR on ‘Change Ringing for the Future’ and it will be held at Wellesbourne on November 12th; Guild members are invited to attend (*see Notice and relevant details on p.10*).

Bell Restoration Fund: no more applications at this time; and Chris updated on the Temple Guiting augmentation project (*see Tower News, p.11*).

3) Items for discussion:-

Striking Competition: Bill’s proposals from the last meeting were discussed. There was support for offering additional trophies or awards for individual parts of the competition, eg best rise, best fall, etc, as this would offer greater opportunities for bands to win something. Bill said he was unhappy with the almost-unanimous vote governing unintended false touches (published in Notices in the July Newsletter) and thought this should be retracted;

AGM arrangements: all ready for the 15th October at Barford. Offers of food, etc, for the tea will be welcome.

4) Any Other Business:-

Andrew Gunn said there was an initiative to have as many church bells as possible rung at 8.00am on the Opening Day of the 2012 Olympics (July 27th), but more on this will transpire soon;

Chris suggested there should be better liaison between the Guild and the North Cotswold Branch of the G&B to avoid clashes of events, such as the two ringing tours on the same day. This was agreed. Chris said he sent a July Newsletter to the Branch Chairman (Jeremy Meyrick); Minimus Comp on September 10th: a Committee team was required. Five members volunteered.

Chris put forward a person for ex-Territorial membership: Peter Bennett of Newport, who is an ex-pat of the area. John Nicholls seconded. Agreed.

Guild Annual Dinner: agreed to go to the White Hart, Moreton again (*see Notice p.10*).

Next Meeting: 1st December, Ilmington. (*NB: these notes do not supplant the formally-agreed Minutes.*)

HEALTH & SAFETY - A CAUTIONARY TALE

Whilst ringing in the last touch at a wedding one of the ringers had his glasses slip and he raised his arm and hand to push them back. Unfortunately the rope caught around his arm, which was quite severely damaged. At the A&E Department of the local hospital, his arm was found to be broken.

Bellringing is not a dangerous hobby, but it is never wise to think that accidents never happen! Many Associations/Guilds/Societies insure their members. It is not thought this accident could lead to a claim.

This information was given to me by a Guild member, who does not wish to divulge publicly the name of the person to whom the accident occurred, or where it occurred. He also wishes to remain anonymous, as this will

also help to identify the area in which it occurred. These details are of no consequence. What is significant, of course, is how such a simple action can cause such a severe injury. Bells are powerful things when swinging. I can say the incident happened fairly recently and in one of the four counties that surround us.

I note the incident was not expected to lead to a claim. Perhaps the injured person was retired and therefore did not have to rely upon working to gain an income. While this type of injury is undeniably a rare event, it is indicative of things that can happen and ‘lay you up such that – possibly - you can’t work and earn your daily bread’. Sympathetic employers are getting rarer in this current financial climate. Ed

THE 2011 MINI-MOUSE STRIKING COMPETITION

The entry for this year’s competition, held at Temple Guiting, was disappointing: two real teams and one scratch team. As this competition is supposed to be fun, one could conclude that most Guild members are averse to fun. Could it be that many members don’t realise it doesn’t include rising and falling, as in the Newing Shield competition, thereby making the whole thing easier? It may be neither of those, but something to do with ringing Minimus, and there are two possibilities here: that Minimus is difficult to ring (don’t laugh: I’ve seen ringers normally happy with Doubles and Minor have trouble with Minimus!), or something to do with a religion that forbids them to ring 4-bell methods. Some might say this latter is an affliction known as ‘ringing snobbery’, but I couldn’t possibly comment (if they want, they can ring Bristol Minimus – yes, there is such a method – and it really sorts out the grown-ups from the kids).

Whatever; can we please try to overcome any hang-ups about ringing Minimus before next year?

So, what happened at the competition? The real teams were The Committee and Moreton, the former ringing Minimus with tenor cover and the latter, in now time-honoured fashion, ringing the back 4. The scratch team blasted forward with Double Bob Minimus. John Gwynne was the judge. Although the scratch team had least faults, The Committee was declared the winner of the ‘properly-constituted’ teams. The trophy will presumably be awarded at the Annual Dinner. The Committee team comprised Andrew Gunn, Sophia L-S, Michael Haynes, Peter Kenealy and Chris Povey.

CMP

THE GUILD RINGING TOUR, SATURDAY 2ND JULY

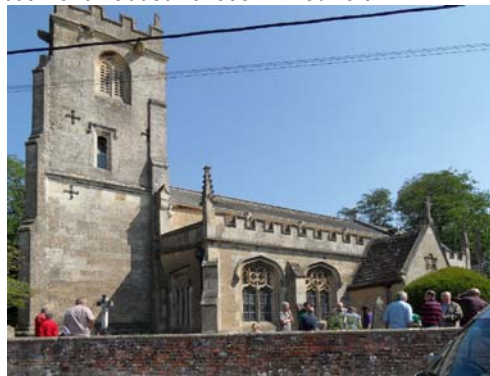
We were lucky with the weather, but unlucky with the clash of tours, which reduced our numbers slightly, but not enough to spoil a very worthwhile visit to six well-chosen towers in Wiltshire. Everyone was on time and at 7.10am David Adams, John Carroll, Ted Copson, Stuart and Michael Cummings, Peter Kenealy, Richard, Sophia and Ben Lewis-Skeath, John Nicholls, Juliet Reynolds and Tim Woodgate climbed aboard a mini-bus driven by sometime Moreton ringer Andy Teague.

We made such good time that we arrived at Christ Church, Bradford-on-Avon, with an hour to spare. Here we were joined by Sue Bacon, Roland Merrick and our friends from Fairford, Andrew and Joanne Roberts. The 1923 Gillett & Johnston 12cwt 8 were already up and so we went straight into Grandsire Triples. Call changes, St Simon's Triples, plain hunt Triples and Plain Bob Major were successful, but Double Norwich Court Bob Major proved beyond us.



Christ Church, Bradford on Avon

Richard Turner joined us at the next tower, St Katherine's, Holt. The 9cwt 6 has a medieval 5th cast in about 1475 by the Bristol Foundry. The remaining bells were originally by Warners, but were recast in 1925 by Mears & Stainbank. Here we rang the usual popular 5 and 6 bell methods, but with an added variation – Dedworth.



St Katharine, Holt

Excellent navigation by Andy overcame roadworks and street blockages and we arrived on time at Melksham, where Andrew Gunn joined the party. The 1924 Taylor 8 (18cwt) went well and we added Stedman and Single Oxford to our repertoire.



St Michael & All Angels, Melksham

Lunch was at The George in Lacock, the famous, picturesque village owned entirely by The National Trust.



The George, Lacock

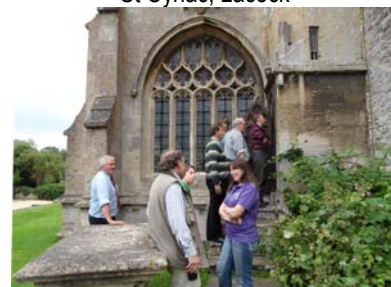
The beer was good, the food passable, but the service was intermittent to say the least!



The bells at St Cyriac, Lacock, 6 (12cwt) go well, but the small ringing chamber meant that at times the desired combinations of ringers were not there. However, we did manage to ring John C's speciality, St Clement's.



St Cyriac, Lacock



No tiredness was discernable at the two Chippenham towers, St Andrew's 8, 18cwt and St Paul's 8, 12cwt, and the ringing was generally very good. Indeed, the best ringing of the day was the final touch of Stedman Triples conducted by Richard.



St Andrew, Chippenham



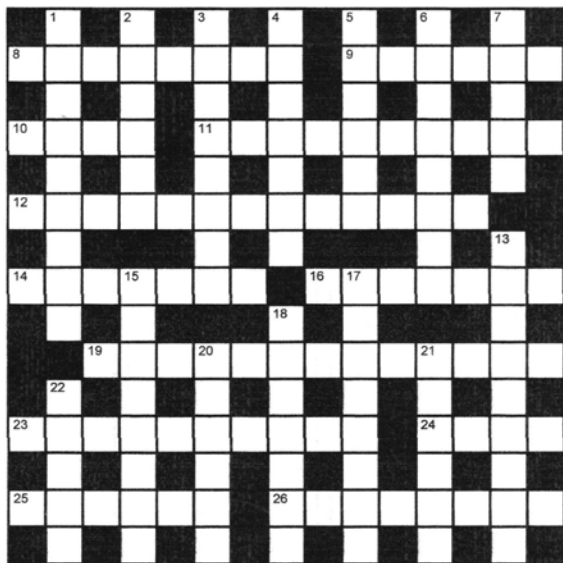
St Paul, Chippenham

Our thanks go to Richard for organising the towers and the mini-bus.

John Nicholls & Peter Kenealy

EL PRESIDENTE'S CROSSWORD

Crossword aficionados will be delighted to find a morsel of their basic diet here again. As usual, some of the clues are – to a non-crossword person – wonderfully obscure. (I thought I knew the answer to 13 Down, but my choice of word didn't fit....)



Down

- 1 The tour list (9)
- 2 The best way to reduce tower oscillation (6)
- 3 A method with a regular treble but not the same number of blows in each position (8)
- 4 Nationality of 22 Down (7)
- 5 An instrument board (6)
- 6 Wood heated in the absence of air (8)
- 7 Eg, the Blue Line (5)
- 13 Could describe an activity like ringing (9)
- 15 Ancient kings (8)
- 17 Racehorses may be, but ringers, never! (8)
- 18 Good ringers should make allowance for this in beginners (7)
- 20 Describes the embryo (6)
- 21 Thursday tours co-ordinator (6)
- 22 King, Roman puppet, held responsible for the massacre of the innocents (5)

Across

- 8 They point to Heaven! (8)
- 10 Ancient South American people (4)
- 12 Remember what Robert Chadburn told us? (13)
- 16 Rung to celebrate their divorce from Leicestershire? (7)
- 23 The second Sunday before Lent (10)
- 25 Queen of George the 1st or Queen of Hearts? (6)
- 9 On to the land (6)
- 11 The cause of the downfall of many a touch of Stedman Triples! (10)
- 14 Seven is the clue (7)
- 19 St Matthew (Warks) whose name shows evidence of an earlier religious house (13)
- 24 How most ringers like their handstroke leads (4)
- 26 News – one way or another! (7)

Answers in the January 2012 Newsletter

THE ANSWER TO EL PRESIDENTE'S MIND-BENDER IN THE JULY EDITION

El Presidente writes:-

It would have been nice if a correct answer had come from other than science graduates, but nevertheless there were three gentlemen and one lady of that learned species who got it right: Michael Gray, Michael Sporton, Stella Southam and James Harris (*son of Brian Harris, who is an ex-pat 'Lad of the Vale', having grown up in, and learnt to ring at, Bretforton. Brian now lives and rings at Swindon. Ed*).

The first thing to realise was that the position of the flagpole denoted that the field was cyclic, ie the corners are on a circle, with the flagpole at its centre. Then, if you don't remember it from school, you look up Brahmagupta's formula from your encyclopaedia, or these days the internet:-

$$A = \sqrt{(S-a)(S-b)(S-c)(S-d)} \quad \text{where } S \text{ is the semi-perimeter and } a, b, c, d \text{ are the sides of the field, ie } S = \frac{1}{2}(a+b+c+d)$$

So $S = \frac{1}{2}(52+44+56+48) = 100 \text{ metres}$

Therefore:- $A = \sqrt{(100-52)(100-44)(100-56)(100-48)} = \sqrt{48 \times 56 \times 44 \times 52} = \sqrt{6150144} = 2479.9484 \text{ sq.metres}$

Michael Gray has done some interesting conversions. A = nearly 0.25 Hectares, which is 0.613 acres or 2966 sq. yards. In view of the fact that Michael also sent a proof of the formula and he was first anyway, I have decided that he should win the prize.

For further interest the distance from the flagpole to the corners (r) can be found by:

$$r = \frac{(ab+cd)(ac+bd)(ad+bc)}{4A} \quad (\text{and a great deal of hard work!})$$

= 35.497 metres

(Simple...!! Ed)

RECENT MID-WEEK MONTHLY TOURS REPORT

The Thursday outings continue to be enjoyable and well attended.

The July Outing, organised by Geoff Pratt, kept us in South Warwickshire. The first tower was All Saints, Sherbourne (6, 11cwt), after which we went to the light six (4cwt) at St Peter's, Barford, where the 3rd is one of the oldest bells in the country still being rung full circle (by the Gloucester Foundry, about 1330). Lunch was taken at The King's Head, Wellesbourne, and on its conclusion we rang on the 8 bells (10cwt) at St Peter's there. We ended a pleasant day's ringing at St Peter's, Snitterfield (6, 16cwt).

Ian Thompson organised the August Outing, which again found us in South Warwickshire. Our first stop in the morning was All Saints, Harbury (8,

12cwt), which was followed by St Gregory, Offchurch (6, 14cwt) where two of the bells are by Robert Hendley and dated about 1500. As if to copy the July Outing, we had lunch at The King's Head, but this time at the one in Cubbington. St Mary's bells, Cubbington (6, 10cwt) were put to good use afterwards. The outing finished at St Mary's Church, Stoneleigh (6, 10cwt), where yet another ancient bell was encountered, the 3rd by John Woolley dated about 1525. Warwickshire does seem to be well endowed with ancient bells!

The September Outing, organised by Alan Marks and Brenda Dixon, took us East to just over the Northamptonshire county boundary. The first tower was All Saints, Pitsford (6,

10cwt). All Saints, Brixworth was the next stop, where some slightly heavier metal was sampled (6, 16cwt). To complete the hat-trick we had lunch at – you've guessed it! – The King's Head at Spratton. Afterwards we rang at St Andrew's Church, Spratton, where a Dutch bell (the treble) had managed to infiltrate the otherwise Taylor and Bagley bells. The concluding tower was the 8 (14cwt) at All Saints, Cottesbrooke, where the back six are all by Henry Bagley II dated 1702

Thank you all you organisers for giving us some good days ringing.

Frank Spiers

HALFORD'S OLD TREBLE

Peter Richardson, to whom I am grateful for supplying articles regularly, provides us this time with a fascinating historical piece.



This historic photo recently came to light showing Halford's treble before the Church restoration of 1994/95, when there were but three bells. According to Tilley & Walters (*Church Bells of Warwickshire: 1910*) the original treble is early fourteenth century dedicated to St John the Baptist, the second was early fifteenth century but was recast by Taylors in 1883, and the tenor, weighing 7cwt 23lbs, was recast by Henry Bagley in 1639 bearing the inscription PRAYSE THE LORD

YE PEOPLE. These bells are respectively the 4th, 5th and tenor of the present ring.

The old treble is by an unknown founder. He cast in it a small Maltese cross with diagonal bars between the arms. It is said to be the oldest bell in Warwickshire. (*Although it is dated 'c.1400' in 'Dove', Barford's 3rd at c.1330 may be older. Ed*). The photo shows clearly the typical narrow-waisted profile of the medieval bell and the rough rim edges resulting from the rudimentary method of tuning by knocking off slivers with a hammer and chisel. The inscription reads: AGIOS IN HONORE SANCTI JOHANNIS BAPTISTE SUM RENOVATA., suggesting to Tilley & Walters that it had been recast, while AGIOS is interpreted as the Greek for SANCTUS. I prefer the implication that in Baptism one is re-born a Christian. Is there a Medieval Latin scholar who can shed any further light?

The massive wooden beam shown in the photo is preserved in situ and the bell's old wheel is on display in the tower arch. The Church was dedicated to 'Our Blessed Lady' in 1150AD and originally had a squat Norman tower, but during the reign of Charles I before the Civil War it was encased and heightened with an extra storey, windows, battlements and pinnacles, which allowed the treble to be hung above the larger bells and its sound therefore to carry further.

In 1995 the tower was strengthened and the three bells were retuned by Taylors and rehung in a new steel frame lower down. They were augmented at that time by two redundant Tudor bells from Little Packington. A further augmentation in 2000 by the addition of a new 2cwt Millennium treble completed the ground-floor ring to six.

St Mary's Church was profiled in FSG Newsletter 115 in 2007

Peter Richardson.

Thank you, Peter. I see 'Dove' shows the ex-Little Packington bells and the old treble (the present 4th) are all listed by the CBC. It is strange that the tenor, an early bell by Henry Bagley I, the patriarch of the famous Bagley bellfounding dynasty who started founding in about 1630, isn't so.

What an outstanding photo! Bells are notoriously difficult to photograph, as wide-angle lenses are normally necessary in belfries due to the restricted space. These lenses can very easily change the proportions of a bell, making them look odd. However, this photo seems not to have changed the proportions, as the narrow waist of the bell is clearly evident. Black & white is such a delight sometimes. Ed

“OH HAPPY BAND OF PILGRIMS.....” – THE GUILD WALKING TOUR

This year's outing, on Saturday 1st October, started at St Peter's Church, Willersey. Thank you to Peter McFadzeen for opening the tower for us and joining in the ringing. After the obligatory photocall we returned to the village hall to grab a quick cuppa at the RAFA coffee morning – how kind of them to cater for us! We then walked the very pleasant 2 miles or so into Broadway.



By now it was getting very warm and to beat the crowds we stopped off at The Crown and Trumpet, conveniently located en route to our next church, and sat outside to enjoy a cool drink and a pub lunch.

Then it was on to St Eadburgha's, the old church of Broadway, beautifully located in a timeless setting and just decorated for the Harvest Festival taking place the following day. This is a central ring, rung from the Crossing, and the pews have to be moved out of the way before ringing can commence.

We then took to the paths again cutting across to the top end of Broadway High Street and up the

old road up the hill.



The path from there passes through the Farncombe Estate with its wonderful views across the Vale and to the distant Malvern Hills.



We reached our last tower, St Nicholas's Saintbury, a little further on. This is now a closed church but it has recently been taken over by the Churches Conservation Trust. Very many thanks to Robert Chadburn for opening up for us and making our 8th ringer, as Peter Kenealy had had to leave us after Broadway. To ring on 8 is a rarity for some of us and these bells really do sound wonderful.



The final leg of the walk was a gentle stroll downhill, to pass back through the churchyard of St Peter's, Willersey, reaching our cars within a couple of minutes of the estimated finishing time.

Thank you to everyone for making the day so enjoyable: Ted Copson, Peter Keneally, Chris Povey, Ginny White, Juliet and Chris Reynolds, Stuart and Michael Cummins and to Peter McFadzeen at Willersey and Robert Chadburn at Saintbury. This was a day to remember, with wonderful (record breaking) weather and three beautiful churches all with lovely bells.

Report by Wendy Mace
Photos by Stuart Cummings

(This was my first Guild Walk and I found it extremely enjoyable. The ringing was in many ways incidental, as the walk itself was quite enchanting. As Wendy says above, it would have been nice to have had more on the tour. You (the wider FSG membership) should give this event a try. You definitely missed a glorious one this time. Ed)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir (*Oh, the honour! Ed*),

I often take my caravan to camp at Welland, near Malvern, and over the last five years I have made a few friends within the ringing fraternity (a bit like Norfolk George in our area).

The main reason for this note is to encourage ringers who go on holiday to go to the local towers and ring. I have always been made very welcome even if I am not of the standard of their normal ringing.

Here are a few towers where I usually ring when I am at Welland, with their ringing times. I know this information is available elsewhere, but thought it might be useful to one or two ringers if visiting the Malvern area:-

Monday	Eastnor	10.00am (perhaps ringing with our Vice-President, Rev Dr Peter Newing)
"	Colwall	7.30pm
Tues	Hanley Swan	7.30pm
Wed	Eastnor	7.30pm
Thurs	Much Marcle	7.00pm (collect a sticker if first time In tower!)
Fri	Castlemorton	7.30pm

Sunday Service ringing varies, eg, Hanley Castle is normally 10.00-11.00am, but not every week.

Other towers I know of:-

Mon	Ripple (2 nd Mon)	7.30pm
	Strensham (4 th Mon)	7.30pm
	Malvern Link	7.30pm
Wed	Twynning	
Thurs	Kempsey	
Fri	Dymock	

I hope this is some use to some ringers

Regards, Allen Turner

(Allen, on this basis you may be very interested in the proposal to have an 'away-weekend' for the FSG Ringing Tour next year. This is by no means fixed yet, but 'expressions of interest' are being sought by Richard and Sophia L-S. See Committee report, p.5)

AN INTERESTING GRAVESTONE

Allen Turner writes about the interesting gravestone he came across in the church within the boundaries of the buildings comprising Hartpury College, near Gloucester. He says:-

Dear Chris

I am unsure as to whether a gravestone would be acceptable in the FGS Newsletter. It does raise a question as to how a bell could crush a ringer. As John Hale was a blacksmith, he might have been re-hanging a bell (I gather blacksmiths were often involved with bell hanging by manufacturing fittings, etc.

I feel there might be a bigger story to the incident than shown here. The headstone itself must have cost a small fortune.

Regards, Allen

The inscription reads:-

In Memory of
John Hale of this Parish Blaksmith
Who Deceased Septemb ye 9TH 1692
Aged 25Yrs 4 Months.

Loe here's (Interr'd) the Muses Passive Friend;
Their Noblest Science (Ringing) was his End.
His Actions Just, A Martyr of that Skill,
Crusht by A Bell twas Heavens Sacred Will.
Melodious Bells delighting him on Earth,
Exchang'd Terrestriall for Celestiall Mirth:
This fatal Stroke (in haste) did stop his Breath,
Lamented was his unexpected Death.



Bells can be nasty, heavy lumps of metal if treated incorrectly, and are very capable of killing or maiming. There have been a few instances of bells killing people. There was one very recently at Christchurch Priory in Hants, where a bell badly injured a ringer who was working on an upturned bell which, through poor communication to the ringer below, came round onto him. It is coincidental this issue carries a report of a ringer's arm being broken when caught by the rope. The energy contained in a moving bell is huge. Never underestimate what damage they can do. Ed – and the H&S Officer.

NOTICES AND ADVERTS

GUILD ANNUAL DINNER 2012

The Guild's Annual Dinner will be held on Saturday February 4th 2012 at the White Hart Royal Hotel, Moreton-in-Marsh. The venue proved very satisfactory earlier this year, in location, surroundings and quality of food, and it is hoped this will be repeated.

This is an advance notice, to allow entries to be made in diaries. No details concerning cost are available at present, but full details will be outlined in the January Newsletter.

GUILD CHRISTMAS PARTY 2011

The Committee believes a Guild Christmas Party would get members in the mood for Christmas, so consequently has organised one to follow the Saturday night practice at Chipping Campden on December 17th. It will be held in the Church Rooms, just a few yards down the road from the Church, starting at about 8.00pm. Please note: the practice itself will therefore run 7.00pm-8.00pm. Please note, too, that this will be the last Saturday night practice of 2011 (see back page), so come along to help the Guild see 2011 out in festive fashion.

As in the past, please bring festive food and drink, plus something for prizes for the raffle (all profits to the Guild's Bell Restoration Fund).

A CONFERENCE BY THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS ON - 'CHANGE RINGING FOR THE FUTURE'

A NATIONAL CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS THE LONG-TERM PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE RINGING.

It is hoped young ringers in particular will attend and contribute to this seminar, as they are the future of the Art.

Place: Wellesbourne Parish Centre; Date: 12th November 2011; Time: 10.00am – 4.30pm

Fee: £8 per delegate (includes light lunch, coffee and tea)

Booking form available from gillehughes@googlemail.com

Conference documents will be sent via email in late October

FOUR SHIRES GUILD CLOTHING

This is a reminder that FSG clothing is still available. All items have the FSG badge embroidered on the left breast and come in many colours. More detailed descriptions of these products are available on the FSG website: www.fourshires.org.uk.

Clothing with Guild Logo Prices at 1st October 2011 (notice two styles have been added):-

KK403 Polo Shirt £13.50

R16 Reversible Fleece with Waterproof Lining £25.50

SS50 Half Zip Fleece £19.50

SS24M Sweat Shirt £15.50

SS51 Full Zip Fleece £20.50

If choosing colours from the web site www.fourshires.org.uk just hover the mouse over the colour, otherwise I can email you the colours.

Payment is cash/cheque with order to:

Peter Quinn, 22 Mountford Close, Wellesbourne, Warwick. CV35 9QQ

Tel 01789 840827; Mob 07785793500; Email peter@quinn22.fsnet.co.uk

Please make cheques payable to The Four Shires Guild of Bell Ringers

AROUND THE TOWERS

QUARTER-PEALS:-

Offenham, Worcs, 2nd July, 1800 Doubles (Grandsire, St Martin's): Tim Pinner 1, Claire Penny 2, Martin Kemp 3, Matthew Kemble 4, Martin Penny (C) 5, John Kemble 6. Rung to mark the Ordination as Deacon of Anne Potter, once the Lay Reader and now Postmistress and assistant Curate in Offenham.

Wellesbourne, Warks, 4th July, 1344 Yorktown S Major: Karen French 1, Chris Mew (C) 2, Richard Lewis-Skeath 3, Sophia Lewis-Skeath 4, Robert Reeves 5, James Ingham 6, John Nicholls 7, Peter Quinn 8.

Wellesbourne, Warks, 10th July, 1260 Grandsire Triples: Peter Quinn 1, Veronica Quinn 2, John Carrol 3, Sue Bacon 4, Simon Oram 5, Michael Haynes 6, John Nicholls 7, Peter Quinn 8.

Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos, 11th July, 1280 Cambridge Treble Place Major: Keith Murphy 1, Sophia Lewis-Skeath 2, Diana Reeves 3, Chris Mew (C) 4, Robert Reeves 5, John Nicholls 6, Richard Lewis-Skeath 7, Mark Sayers 8. Rung as a farewell to Rev'd Nick Weldon, curate of this church, and his family as they leave for North Tawton, Devon.

Mickleton, Glos, 15th Aug, 1260 Grandsire Triples: Chris Mew (C) 1, Peter Quinn 2, Richard Lewis-Skeath 3, Lucie Gwynne 4, John Kinchin 5, John Gwynne 6, John Nicholls 7, Robert Reeves 8. A compliment to Linda Beach on her forthcoming 60th birthday.

Swerford, Oxon, 27th Aug, 1260 Plain Bob Minor: Keith Abbott 1, Graham Allman 2, Steve Bowley 3, Rosemary Hemmings 4, Michael Haynes 5, David Roskelly (C) 6. Rung for the visit of the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt. Rev'd John Pritchard, before his visit to South Newington church on 30th August 2011

Swerford, Oxon, 5th Sept, 1260 Doubles (6m/v): Peter Kenealy 1, Michael Haynes 2, Roy Jones 3, Colin Meakes 4, Michael Dane (C) 5, Graham Allman 6

Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos, 5th Sept, 1280 Imogen D Major: Diana Reeves 1, Richard Lewis-Skeath 2, Peter Quinn 3, Robert Reeves 4, Sophia Lewis-Skeath 5, Chris Mew (C) 6, John Nicholls 7, Mark Sayers 8.

Pebworth, Worcs, 10th Sept, 1260 Grandsire Triples: Graham Allman 1, Andrew Baker 2, Rosemary Hemmings 3, Michael Haynes 4, Richard Hartwell 5, David Roskelly 6, John Nicholls (C) 7, Robert Robinson 8. Rung for Rev'd Trish Gigor, who was licensed on Thursday, 8th September at St Peter's Church, Pebworth, and for John Nicholls's 1100 quarter-peal

Chipping Campden, Glos, 12th Sept, 1260 Erin Triples: Sophia Lewis-Skeath 1, Richard Lewis-Skeath 2, Lucy Gwynne 3, Mark Sayers 4, John Nicholls 5, John Gwynne 6, Chris Mew (C) 7, Jackie Hands 8. Remembering those who died in the 9/11 terrorist attacks ten years ago. 1st in principle 1, 2, 3 & 6. Circled the tower - 2.

Mickleton, Glos, 22nd Sept, 1260 Plain Bob Minor: Mark Newbury 1, Chris Righton 2, Bill Sabin 3, John Kinchin 4, Jackie Hands 5, Chris Povey (C) 6, Mike Faifax 7. (With tenor cover: rung after meeting short for Triples.) A wedding compliment to Miss Lucy A Osborne and Mr Mark A J Fairfax, married at St Ecgwyn's, Honeybourne on 16th September

Willersey, Glos, 24th Sept, 1260 Grandsire Doubles: Tim Pinner 1, Jennie Chadburn 2, Claire Penny 3, Martin Penny 4, Robert Chadburn (C) 5, Gordon Hill 6. To celebrate Tim's 70th Birthday. By a combined band from Willersey, Offenham, and Badsey. First inside to this method: 2. (Photo below)



TOWER NEWS:

There is nothing to report this time other than an update on Temple Guiting's augmentation. The installation of the bell and its Dedication Service has been put back by one month, to October and November respectively.

Is there really nothing else going on tower-wise in the area? It's difficult to believe all action is 'dead'! Please forward any information to me about what's going on in the towers.

DIARY OF GUILD SATURDAY MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Oct 1 st	TYSOE, Warks	6, 12-0-18 in F
	GUILD WALKING TOUR (WILLERSEY/BROADWAY/SAINTBURY)	
Oct 8 th	CHIPPING CAMPDEN, Glos	8, 22-1-18 in Eb (care with bottom step of the tower!)
Oct 15 th	GUILD AGM AT BARFORD (6, 4-3-22 in B) – SEE NOTICE IN JULY NEWSLETTER	
Oct 22 nd	ILMINGTON, Warks	8, 12-3-26 in E (GF)
Oct 29 th	KINGHAM, Oxon	8, 12-0-14 in F# (GF)
Nov 5 th	LONG COMPTON, Warks	6, 12-0-22 in F
Nov 12 th	BRAILES, Warks	6, 29-0-19 in C
Nov 19 th	<u>NO PRACTICE</u> - INTERSHIRES COMPETITION AT CHERINGTON	
Nov 26 th	CHURCHILL, Oxon	8, 10-3-9 in G
Dec 3 rd	STOW-ON-THE-WOLD, Glos	8, 27-2-24 in D)
Dec 10 th	LOWER QUINTON, Warks	6, 13-0-27 in F# (GF)
Dec 17 th	CHIPPING CAMPDEN, Glos	6, 22-1-18 in Eb – <u>7.00-8.00pm, AFTER WHICH THE FSG XMAS PARTY: SEE NOTICE ON P.10</u>
Dec 24 th	<u>NO PRACTICE</u> (Christmas Eve)	
Dec 31 st	<u>NO PRACTICE</u> (New Year's Eve)	
Jan 7 th	EVESHAM, Worcs	12, 35-3-20 in C#; 10, 14-2-26 in F#
Jan 14 th	CHIPPING NORTON, Oxon	8, 14-1-4 in F#
Jan 21 st	SNITTERFIELD, Warks	6, 16-1-13 in F
Jan 28 th	WINCHCOMBE, Glos	8, 11-2-11 in F#

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

TAG-END:



Little Miss Chloe Honeywell, aged 2, tries out the demonstration bell in Evesham Bell Tower, with her Granddad, Robert Hall, on Sunday 4th September. Chris Povey looks on. Got to start 'em young!



While we were convinced El Presidente has been a teacher, and only a teacher, all his working life, spies in Cornwall have now exposed his moonlighting as an Undertaker in Perranporth. This has clearly been a profitable sideline for many years, as John has been able to hand over the day-to-day running of the business to Bob Chudleigh. When Bob was contacted by this Newsletter, he said he'd known John very well for many years. The business was doing very well and was profitable, and it's now able to keep John in the manner to which he's become accustomed, ie lots of diesel and beer to go ringing all over the country. You're a dark horse, El Presidente!

Dates set for events in 2011 are:-
Guild AGM & Striking Comps
Inter-Shires Striking Competition

Saturday 15th October at Barford, Warks – please come.
Nov 19th at Cherington.

Events so far for 2012 are:-
Guild Annual Dinner

Feb 4th, White Hart Royal Hotel, Moreton-in-Marsh