

THE FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELL RINGERS

(Affiliated to the Central



Council of Church Bell Ringers)

NEWSLETTER No 169 - July 1st 2021

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Founded Oct 18th 1909

Church Bells



Bell ringing offers

- Fun, excitement, the feeling of wanting more.
- Leadership skills.
- Progressive natural learning
- Work as a team
- The chance to get involved in looking after the bells.



- A traditional community activity

All towers have someone to train you and model or training bells to help you learn the ropes.



Come and join us

Would you like a hobby that's exciting for the mind ?

That is gently physical, easier than you might think and socially engaging.

Then why not try church bell ringing.



There will be a local tower near you that offers teaching to suit your needs. No expectation to attend a service.

Suitable for any age from approx. 10 years and upwards couples, individuals friends or families in a friendly welcoming atmosphere.

New team members are always needed.

Practice nights are often accompanied by a chat and a piece of cake or a drink in the local pub.

[Learn to ring - CCCBR](#) or www.bellringing.org

Sponsored by the Four Shires Guild of Bell Ringers

Bell Ringing

Great way to meet new people

- Regular practice opportunities in different village bell towers
- Annual organised events



- Opportunities to ring at cathedrals and bell towers all over the country
- Ring for weddings, special events and get paid for it!
- This hobby can be as much or as little as you want it to be

For details of practice nights and times in your village, arranging a visit or just to find out more.

please call or text **07730579065**

or Email

alison.bellringer11@gmail.com

Editorial Hopefully most of you have been able to get back to some sort of ringing over the past few weeks. I'm amazed that ringers both new and young who didn't get an opportunity to ring at all during lock down, just got on the end of their bell rope as if they last rang the day before.! Great to hear of so many people return but so sad for the towers that have lost ringers. Robert Hall a well known ringer is one

such sad loss. see page 6.

If any tower around the four shires needs a recruitment aid the leaflet above is a provisional draft and has been designed to be folded in 3 and posted through letterboxes. The FSG are looking into assisting with some of the printing cost. Let me know if your tower would be interested in hand delivering a stack of leaflets through peoples letter boxes so we can gauge how

many to print. Poster size and different contact details could be an option before each batch of printing.

Important. Please note the new venue for the October striking competition and AGM, page 5. There will be some prominent re-elections, new Vice President and Honorary secretary. Please support.

Alison Lee

Four Shires Guild of Bellringers – Financial Report 2020

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.

The General Fund started the year with £982.04 and finished with £3,522.12. However this final figure includes a donation of £2,000 to the Bell Fund which was deposited into the account on Christmas Eve and I had not moved it to the Bell Fund before the end of the year. Excluding this, there was an increase of £540; however, we paid no dinner deposit last year for a 2021 dinner so actually made a profit of £275.

The principal income was subscriptions of £860 and expenditure of £94 on printing and postage, £395 for the guild insurance and £80 for CCCBR. The total membership for 2020 was 180 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 £5,073.83 and ended with £4,480.99 (plus the £2,000 donation mentioned above). The income was £842.16; well down from the 2019 income, but with no midweek tours or AGM etc we could not expect the usual income. We paid a number of grants: Childswickham (£250), Hampton (£200), Hinton (£440), Temple Guiting (£100) and Ebrington (£450). There are outstanding grants of £1,099 agreed at the end of the year. At the end of 2020 we had £5,381.99 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.

Claire Penny

Claire Penny May 2021

NEW HONORARY SECRETARY REQUIRED FROM 2021 AGM

I intend resigning as the Guild's Honorary Secretary at the 2021 AGM in October. I shall have done the job for seven years, with some secretarial input prior to that. I have a few things going on in my life that I didn't have a few years back and I feel the need to off-load some things. This post is one of them. I believe I've 'done my bit for the Guild'. It's for somebody else to give it a go now.

The job is typically secretarial, and anyone who has done this sort of work previously will recognise it as such:-

arrange meeting venues, formulate the agendas, attend the meetings (4 per year) and take the Minutes, distribute the Minutes and act on any actions that arise from the Minutes that are the Hon Sec's to do;

arrange the venue of the AGM and the Striking Comps. Arrange the organist and preacher. Compile the agenda for that, take Minutes and distribute, undertake actions;

work in conjunction with the Master of the Guild to arrange the Annual Dinner;

receive grant applications to the Guild's BRF, distribute the details to the members, write letters to the applicants when their application has been considered;

receive incoming mail (email and by post), and reply on behalf of the Guild when answers are known;

liaise with the other Principal Officers of the Guild (Master, Hon Treasurer and Ringing Master) and the Newsletter Editor among others; and be a signatory to the Guild's two bank accounts;

anything else? Probably, but can't bring it to mind at the moment...

For further information contact me (01386-584388; chrismpovey@gmail.com).

Chris Povey

Four Shires Guild of Bellringers - Accounts 2020

2019	Income	2020	2019	Expenditure	2020
General Fund					
£572.93	Opening Balance	£982.04	1		
£989.00	Subscriptions	£860.00	2	£301.98	Printing & Postage £94.71
	Insurance refund	£12.00		£432.12	Insurance £395.21
£101.20	Garments	£0.00		£101.20	Garments £17.50
£1,300.00	Annual Dinner	£1,378.00	3	£1,040.00	Annual Dinner £1,139.50
	Donations towards Tea			£80.00	CCCBR £80.00
				£45.00	Room Hire £0.00
				£7.49	Website Domain £0.00
£5.00	Badges	£17.00		£25.00	Engraving Shields £0.00
£1,427.80	Bell Fund Donations	£2,837.00		£1,381.10	Transferred to Bell Fund £837.00
£0.00	Trans from Bell Fund (grants)	£1,440.00		£0.00	Grants Paid £1,440.00
£3,823.00	Total receipts	£6,544.00		£3,413.89	Total expenditure £4,003.92
				£982.04	Closing Bank balance £3,522.12
					Cash in hand
				£982.04	Closing Balance £3,522.12
Restricted Funds - Bell Fund					
			5		
£3,688.92	Opening balance	£5,078.83	1		
£400.00	Mid Week Tours	£100.00			Childswickham £250.00
£635.20	Donations	£471.00			Hampton £200.00
£8.81	Interest	£5.16			Hinton £440.00
£120.00	Newsletter Advertising	£120.00			Temple Guiting £100.00
£221.50	Raffles, outing, teas etc	£146.00			Ebrington £450.00
4.4	Clothing Profit	£0.00			
£0.00	From General Fund				
£1,389.91	Total receipts	£842.16			Total expenditure £1,440.00
				£2,544.20	Closing balance £4,480.99
Creditors at year end			Debtors at year end		
£161.00	Subs paid in advance				
£536.00	Badges & Shields	£519.00			
Other assets of the Guild include: Newing Shield, President's Chain, Brazier Trophy, Spencer Jones					
Notes					
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 2020 was 180; this includes 8 Life members.			The Committee decided that all the nett profit from Teas, Raffles, Clothing sales etc would go into the Bell Fund. The outstanding grants are Childswickham (£50), Aston Cantlow (£90), Halford (£215), Didbrook (£600) and Moreton-in-Marsh (£234); to be paid in 2021.	
3	Dinner figure; There is no 2021 dinner therefore no deposit is carried over.			A £2000 donation has not yet been transferred to the Bell Fund and is in the General Fund.	

Quiz questions

- 1, How many different 120s of Plain Bob Doubles are there?
2. If you are ringing in Queens on 6 bells and the conductor shouts 'Go Plain Hunt on Five' what are the first blows for bells 3 and 4? (that's bell numbers, not places)
3. In plain hunt on 8 you are ringing 6. Which is your course bell?
4. You are ringing call changes. The bells are in the order 7 5 3 1 2 4 6 8, What is the name of this change and how would you call them back to rounds.

Claire Penny, Offenham T.C.

NOTICE OF 2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND STRIKING COMPETITIONS

(SUBJECT TO COVID RESTRICTIONS ALLOWING)

ON SATURDAY 16th OCTOBER 2021

**AT THE CHURCH OF ST PETER, WELLESBOURNE, WARKS
(NOTE: THIS IS A CHANGE OF LOCATION)**

BELLS: 6, 10-0-24 in G (back six)

EXPECTED ORDER OF THE DAY

2.00pm	Brazier Cup Striking Competition
3.00pm	Newing Shield Striking Competition
5.00pm	Service in the Church
5.45pm	Annual General Meeting (in the Church) (Chairman: the Guild President)

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

- 1 Results of the Striking Competitions.
- 2 Apologies.
- 3 Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting (*in January Newsletter 159*)
- 4 Matters Arising.
Guild Master's Report (*to be in the October Newsletter*)
Treasurer's Report for 2019 and 2020 (*2019 included in the April 2020 Newsletter and on web-site; 2020 to be in the October 2021 Newsletter*)
Election of President and Vice-Presidents to serve for 2 years. (*Note that Freda Cleaver wishes to stand down and a new Vice President is required*)
Election of Officers (Guild Master, Ringing Master, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer – (*Note the present Hon Sec will not be standing again and that a new Hon Sec will need to be elected*))
Election of Committee (6 members) and Honorary Accounts Examiner.
Election of two Central Council representatives (to serve for 2 years)
- 11 Confirmation of new members since the 2019 AGM
- 12 Any Other Business (at the Chairman's discretion)

(Please note: this agenda may be expanded to include additional relevant items, but notice of such will be advertised in the October Newsletter.)

Chris Povey, Honorary Secretary

Entries to the Striking Competitions are to be submitted to Richard Lewis-Skeath (Guild Ringing Master),

Tea will be served in the Church during the competitions. Contributions of eats and drinks will be welcomed and the details of the requirements may be discussed with Jackie Hands and/or Michael and Stuart Cummings, as all three are well versed in this extremely important subject!

ROBERT CHARLES HALL: 09-04-1938 - 11-05-2021

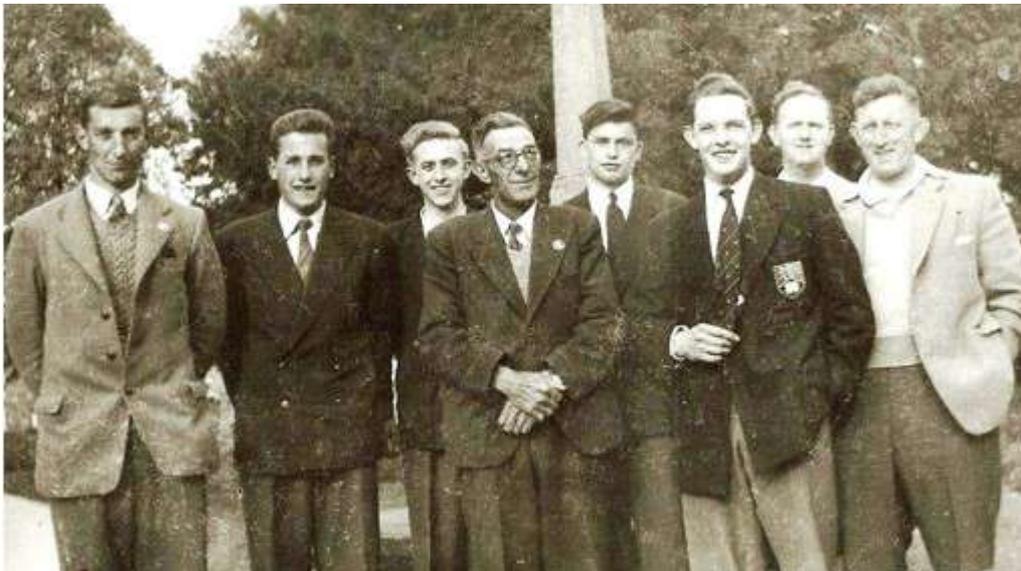
Robert Hall died on 11th May, a month after his 83rd birthday. He was well known in the FSG, both as a competent ringer and bell handler, and as someone who was passionate about teaching youngsters to ring. He will be missed by many. He was born in Badsey the youngest of a large and wide family, who had been entrenched in the Vale of Evesham marketing gardening scene for generations.

Although he spent some years away for work, he was a true 'man of the Vale'. He returned to his native Vale in the mid 1980s.

He attended the primary school in Badsey and then attended Prince Henry's Grammar School in Evesham. In 1956 he applied to join the Police Force and applied to attend the Police College at Hendon. After he completed the course he was posted first to Plough Corner station in Romford, which was behind a pub called The Plough - the landlord there used to give them pints over the fence on hot summer days!

When he left there in 1958 he went to Commercial Street station in London, where he went on to become a Sergeant in rank. Towards the end of his career he ran the youth section at Bow Road for the police, which looked after some of the youth offenders, who had taken a wrong path, to stop them returning to the bad times. I believe he mentioned coming across the Kray twins and their like, too.

He was taught to ring in the late 1940's/early 1950s at Badsey, principally by Tony Brazier and Roger Savory, as part of the post-war urge to train more ringers. The rehanging of the bells at Badsey in 1950 must surely have added encouragement to this desire to learn. A competent band began to appear, particularly as Roger Savory was one of those gifted ringers to whom the intricacies of change ringing, both in composing and conducting, was wonderfully simple. It was not too long before he produced a composition of 6000 changes of Plain Bob Major; and it was not too long before it was suggested that a band attempt it. A band consisting of Badsey, Evesham and Hampton ringers rang it, at Badsey, on May 19th 1956. Robert was one of that band; he was 18 at the time. This peal remains the longest to be rung at Badsey (and probably in the area, too), and those that rang it gained some sort of hero status. Here is a photo of the band:-



L-R: Gerald Hemming, Robert Hall, Colin Wingmore, Geoff Hemming, Harry Wheatley, Roger Savory (C), Tony Brazier, Wilf Newman.

Robert was the last survivor of this band. (The last-but-one survivor was Roger Savory, who died in February last year, aged 90.) A plaque commemorating this peal has been hung in Badsey's ringing room.

Robert's ringing continued in the Essex area. There was good band at Hornchurch and he joined it, becoming the secretary of the ringers. He rang with some of the leading lights in the Essex Association, who occasionally rang at places such as St Clement Danes, the RAF Church in The Strand; and on one occasion Robert rang a peal there with them.

Robert visited the Vale every so often to see his mother, and it was on one such occasion that I first met Robert. It was a Q of Bob Royal at the Bell Tower in November 1980, and then again the following month for a peal of Grandsire Caters. I suppose he had had thoughts of returning to his native soil at some time. If so, that was realised in 1986 after he retired from the police. He came to live in Offenham and soon took on some 'ground', on which he used to grow marketing gardening-type produce.

Once settled in Offenham Robert's interest in teaching young people to ring started with a bang with him teaching his son William, along with my two sons, Ian and Matthew. They all progressed under Robert's tutelage, with William and Ian continuing to greater things in ringing. It cannot be denied that they were all taught superb bell handling - as indeed all those taught by Robert have. It was his intention that his beloved grand-daughter Chloe Honeywell should learn to ring, and with Claire Penny's assistance at Offenham this became a reality, as many ringers in the area witnessed. Robert used to take her to various towers in the Vale and also to FSG practices.

Robert became a loyal ringer at Offenham, Badsey and the Bell Tower, as well as ringing in other Vale towers regularly when able. He was very supportive of the Guild and was its Accounts Examiner until earlier this year, when he felt he could no longer continue in that role.

Robert arranged a Q for his 80th birthday and chose the band. This was Plain Bob Triples on the middle 8 at the Bell Tower, in a comfy time of 48 minutes. Robert rang the treble. It was a good 'un - in fact a very good 'un. We had the pleasure of a solid treble ringer in the shape of Robert, who struck it to perfection. (Have you noticed how much the quality of ringing depends on the quality of the treble ringer...?)



(photo: Roger Hunt)

L-R: Ian Povey (6), Robert Hall (treble); Roger Hunt (5); Chris Povey (7,C); Sandra Parker (3); Claire Penny (2); Martin Penny (4); William Hall (tenor).

I suspect that was the last Q Robert rang. He had had a series of health problems in very recent years, including the emergency fitting of a pacemaker about three years ago. I shall miss his advice about many aspects of ringing, which were always based on sound experience of the aspect under discussion. And I shall miss his excellent striking ability, too.

My condolences to Robert's large family for their loss; and I'm sure the Guild wishes to pass on its condolences, too, in particular to William and Chloe in losing their tutor and mentor. I'm also sure there will be some ringing in Robert's memory when we are able to ring properly again.

Chris Povey

Promotional photos

Once an Idea was conceived about a recruitment leaflets, things have snowballed. We had to organise a photo shoot and gain permission from all who attended for photos to be used publicly. Other decision such as who has to pay for it, what target audience, how do we distribute the leaflets, how many to be printed and what size are all still being discussed. Here are just a few photos that didn't make it to this particular leaflet. Following all covid restrictions we had to wear masks and remain suitably distanced except for the actual photograph, the time for the photo shoot was limited to 45 mins including time to eat cake that was provided.

Thankyou to Roger Hunt for taking the posing photos in the bell tower and Thankyou to Kathy McCarthy for providing the bell tower photos



Quiz Answers

1. Every working bell can ring its own observation (unaffected) so the answer is 4. In PB observation means that the observation bell is making long 5ths at each bob and therefore is unaffected. Each 120 is made up of 3 bobs called when the observation bell starts long 5ths.
2. 3 is in seconds place so will go into the lead, 4 is in fifths place so will do another blow in fifths.
3. Your course bell is the one that you take off the lead, so in this case it is 4. The bell that takes you from lead is your after bell, in this case that is 8.
4. The change is Kings. As usual, as long as you only move a bell a place at a time you cannot be wrong. It's a minimum of 12 changes, something along the lines of: 3-1, 3-2, 5-1, 5-2, 5-3, 5-4, 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, 7-5, 7-6, 7-7, 7-8, 7-9, 7-10, 7-11, 7-12, 7-13, 7-14, 7-15, 7-16, 7-17, 7-18, 7-19, 7-20, 7-21, 7-22, 7-23, 7-24, 7-25, 7-26, 7-27, 7-28, 7-29, 7-30, 7-31, 7-32, 7-33, 7-34, 7-35, 7-36, 7-37, 7-38, 7-39, 7-40, 7-41, 7-42, 7-43, 7-44, 7-45, 7-46, 7-47, 7-48, 7-49, 7-50, 7-51, 7-52, 7-53, 7-54, 7-55, 7-56, 7-57, 7-58, 7-59, 7-60, 7-61, 7-62, 7-63, 7-64, 7-65, 7-66, 7-67, 7-68, 7-69, 7-70, 7-71, 7-72, 7-73, 7-74, 7-75, 7-76, 7-77, 7-78, 7-79, 7-80, 7-81, 7-82, 7-83, 7-84, 7-85, 7-86, 7-87, 7-88, 7-89, 7-90, 7-91, 7-92, 7-93, 7-94, 7-95, 7-96, 7-97, 7-98, 7-99, 7-100, 7-101, 7-102, 7-103, 7-104, 7-105, 7-106, 7-107, 7-108, 7-109, 7-110, 7-111, 7-112, 7-113, 7-114, 7-115, 7-116, 7-117, 7-118, 7-119, 7-120, 7-121, 7-122, 7-123, 7-124, 7-125, 7-126, 7-127, 7-128, 7-129, 7-130, 7-131, 7-132, 7-133, 7-134, 7-135, 7-136, 7-137, 7-138, 7-139, 7-140, 7-141, 7-142, 7-143, 7-144, 7-145, 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TO RING OR NOT TO RING, THAT IS THE QUESTION...

At the time of writing (mid June) we have family wedding coming up in mid-July at a North Cotswolds church, which is two days prior to the extended lockdown that has just been announced. The bride (my niece) has already had two goes at getting this wedding done, as it was arranged and re-arranged for last year. She wants the bells if that's possible. We have a band arranged (a really good band), but are unsure whether we shall be able to ring on the day. Please can we give the poor girl some bells!

It is, quite rightly, the incumbent or churchwarden(s) that make the final decision about whether such can go ahead, as they have to take the rap if things are not in-line with the law at the time, or the proclamations of the Church of England. (And always remember the ringing of bells is by permission of those two personages, whether specifically or implied). It was time to refer to what the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR) says on this subject. It has produced information on the does and don'ts that are applicable at this time. The recommendations are made in conjunction with the House of Bishops Recovery Group, so there is a CofE input. The information on-line at the moment is bang up to date, so is applicable through the extended lockdown. The full info can be found at: <https://cccbr.org.uk/coronavirus/>; and the table (for England) at: <https://cccbr.org.uk/coronavirus/guidance-17-may-to-21-june/>

The table has proved most useful, as it would seem we could work within most, if not all, of it. The interesting bit was the social distancing aspect, which is ringing for no longer than 45 minutes when distance between the ropes is 1 metre or more. However, if rope spacing is less, then you ring for less time to compensate. We can do that. Face masks must be worn – we could manage that. The slight hiccup is in getting enough ventilation in the ringing room at this church, but we think that could happen by opening sufficient doors to the outside.

I'll let you know how it turns out. The lockdown might be shortened, of course, in which case no problem, but it might extend further...

(Just a quick addition about where ringers go from here on, for Service ringing or practices. Always remember that we are volunteers and therefore if somebody doesn't want to ring, they cannot be forced to. They may still feel uncomfortable about being with others at this point in the Covid game. If so, so be it.)

CMP

This newsletter is boosted by the contributions you make to it, without them I would struggle to compile an edition. Please contribute something, however large or small. All articles welcome.

WESTCOTE (CHURCH WESTCOTE), GLOS

I was asked to look over the bells at Westcote recently, as they had a wedding booked in 3 weeks' time and the couple wanted the bells. I did know where Westcote was, but wasn't over sure about what the tower contained: were they listed as ringable or unringable; and more to the point, was the belfry likely to be full of bird rubbish? For those unsure of Westcote's location, it is between Stow and Burford just to the north of the main road. It's just within Gloucestershire – and officially within the Guild's boundary, as it's the right side of a line drawn between Great Rissington and Bledington. Also, I was aware an old 6th form colleague of mine lived there (although I hadn't seen him since leaving school).

Dove told me there were three bells for full-circle ringing; tenor weight about 6cwt. To my question about rubbish, the Churchwarden advised the tower had been cleaned out about 2 years back and had been kept tidy. OK, no grounds to refuse the invitation then (but there's cleaning out and cleaning out...)

I inspected on a lovely day. Pretty little village (of the 'real' type); pretty little church; and my old school friend came along too (he'd helped with the cleaning out). It was good to meet again: lot to catch up.

The tower was indeed clean. The bells hung in a decent 3-bell frame constructed by Henry Bond of Burford in about 1899. The fittings were mostly OK, but some bits of shrouding had fallen off two of the wheels (but the bits had been collected and kept). Those items that needed to be tight were generally tight; and those bits that were supposed to move moved OK, even the old pulleys. That was encouraging. Better give them a pull to discover what happens for real, but before doing so the bearings were oiled.

Bell historians will be interested to know the belfry contains a very ancient sanctus bell. It was cast by Thomas Hey (A Somerset founder) in about 1355. It's the only bell by him in Gloucester Diocese. Diameter is 13".

The ropes hang in a straight line at ground floor level. Two had 'rat-tail' sallies and the same two had tatty tails. I pulled each bell up in turn and was surprised to find they all went quite well considering they hadn't been rung for some time. I suggested they could be rung for the wedding as long as the shrouds were replaced, the bearings were oiled before the wedding ringing and two ropes were repaired. I volunteered to repair the ropes.

I returned a week later with two repaired ropes. Pete (school friend) had replaced the shrouds and then helped me fit the ropes. If you are into ringing three bells, they are worth a visit, although the tuning may hurt your ears a little.

I was told the wedding ringing went without a hitch. Three ringers from Bourton-on-the-Water did the bizz – and it was sunny day for the wedding itself. A happy conclusion.

CMP

FOUR SHIRES GUILD OF BELL RINGERS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 11TH May 2021 BY EMAIL SUBMISSION

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 9th February by email submission

The Minutes were agreed. (Replies received from Peter, Michael, Stuart, Richard and John W to the agenda sent out on Wed May 5th.)

2. Matters arising from the Minutes

None

3. Financial Statement

Michael circulated a note regarding the financial position to all. The General Fund has £1275.27 as at May 8th. The Bell Fund has £4694.13 of unallocated funds.

Michael reported problems with the bank. The accounts are now held at the Stratford-on-Avon Branch of HSBC. It was originally at Shipston Branch, then Kineton before the closures of these two branches. The mandate for agreed signatures has not been processed correctly, such that the existing signatories are not included, even though cheques have been processed. Michael has been involved in collecting information to update the records, which has involved him in much time and trouble.

Following Robert Hall's request to discontinue as the Accounts Examiner, Claire Penny has agreed to do this (and has examined the 2020 accounts).

4. Consideration of grant applications.

Update on grants:

- a) Moreton-in-Marsh clock move: presumed continuing as intended
- b) Aston Cantlow: work complete and grant paid;
- c) Didbrook: fundraising on-going, but additional funds for tower repairs have been required. They have indicated that they will request an extension to the time limit;
- d) Halford: no report on progress
- e) Honington: completion of work expected early June

5. Items for discussion

- a) 2021 AGM, 16th October, Alveston: it now seems very likely that this can be held (together with the Striking Comps). Arrangements to be made by Chris in conjunction with John C, John W and Richard.
- b) Peter raised three points:-
 - a late Summer/early Autumn (this year) event of some sort (additional to the AGM);
 - a Christmas party as previously held;
 - the 2022 Dinner: venue.Committee members are asked to consider what we might do in these cases, particularly a Summer/Autumn event (Xmas and Dinner to be discussed at the next Committee meeting).
- c) A new Hon Sec will be required from 2021 AGM. The current Hon Sec is to retire from this post then.

6 Date of the next meeting

Tuesday 10th August. As we are very likely to be able to meet in person by then, the venue will be Church House, Evesham

Chris Povey

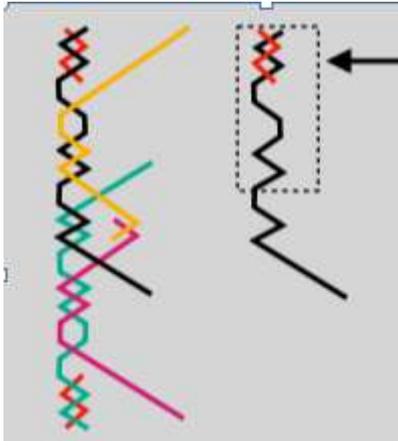
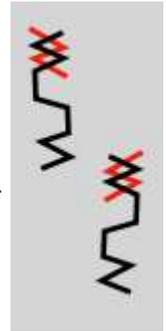
Hon Sec

(These Minutes are draft until they have been agreed by the Committee as being an accurate report of the meeting., and therefore should be taken as indicative until confirmation is granted at the next meeting. CMP)

Front, Middle and Back Work

Like most of the more complex methods, the work can be largely split up into blocks of static work. In the case of Cambridge, this can be split into the front work, middle work and back work.

In Double Oxford, we met a shape which is actually very common in Surprise too. It is based around a dodge-place-dodge figure which can appear at any pair of places. In Cambridge, it appears both at the front and in the middle places. The only difference between Cambridge and the plain method version is that you cannot pass the treble in the middle of it because the treble always dodges in all place pairs, so you will dodge at one end or the other instead. This 'places figure' is simple to learn and will prove useful to remember.



Front Work

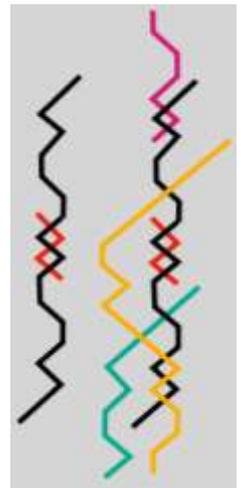
Dodge with the treble make places and dodge with another bell... Does that seem familiar? It is the places figure from above...

- After doing the places figure, you carry on with normal treble bob, so lead and then dodge.... Job done!
- That last dodge is at the half lead, so will be with the bell that is just starting the long front work on the return journey (turquoise)... It will do everything in reverse... So treble bob, then the places figure, finishing with the treble.
- One other bell is required to help make the 'places figure' work. That bell will be at the front for a short time while it leads and dodges or vice versa. In the first half lead it is 6th place bell (orange) which hunts in and then goes on to start the middle work. In the second half, it is 4th place

bell (pink) which has just finished the middle work.

Middle Work

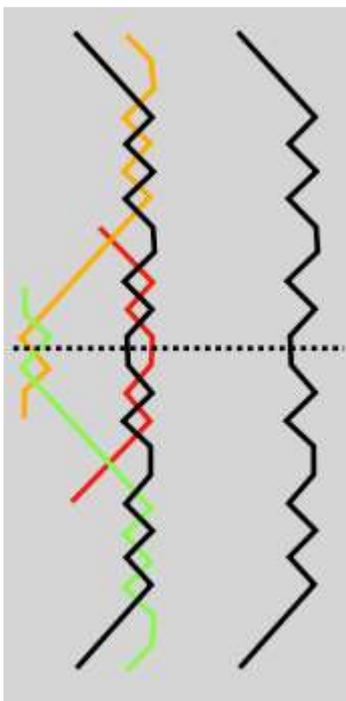
- The middle work also uses the 'places figure'.... but twice - back to back.
- It occurs at the beginning of 4th place bell and in the second half of 6th place bell.
- It lasts for 16 changes in total, so just over half a lead, which means there is always someone doing places and the hand over from 6th to 4th and back occurs at the first and last dodges which are at the lead end and half lead points.... and the treble provides the middle point dodge, which is a very welcome waypoint!
- A bell will always pass through the middle of any places... In the first set, 6th place bell (in orange) passes through on the way to the short front work, before coming back to the middle to start its own middle work.



- In the second set, it is 5th place bell (turquoise) on its way to start the long front work which passes through.
- In the second half lead, it will be 2nds place bell which has just left the long front work and 4ths place bell after the short front work that pass through the places.

Back Work

- The longest part of the back work is 3rds place bell. it is the mid point of line, so the first and second half leads are symmetrical. Other than hunting up and down at either end, this bell is at the back the whole time.
- This long work is sandwiched by middle work before and after.
- It starts with a double dodge, pairing with 5ths place bell (orange) which is completing the short back work (dodge-lie-double dodge). At the end, it will double dodge with 2nds place bell (green) which is starting the short back work.
- In between, it will dodge both up and down with the treble and lie in 5ths to join both dodges and to complete the mid point symmetry.

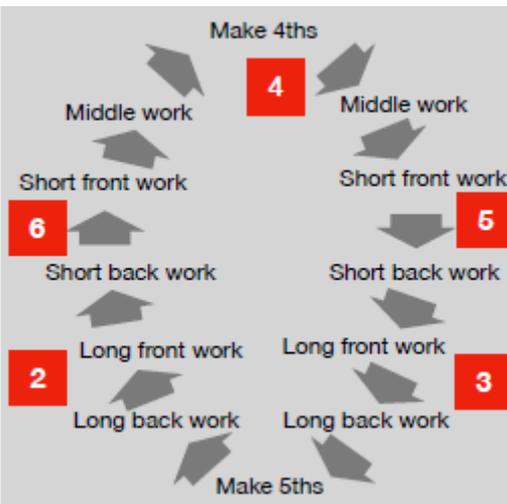
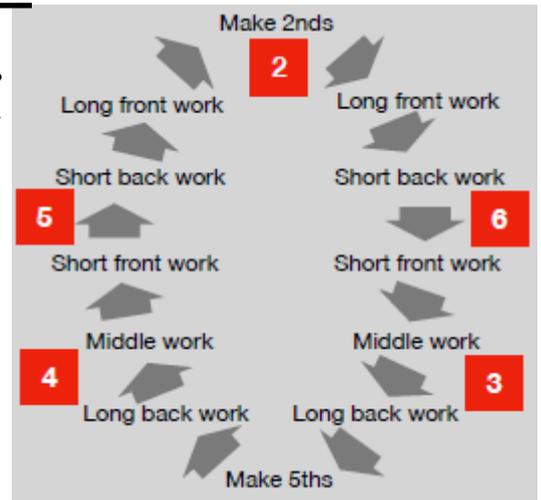


Passing the Treble

- **Dodging 1-2 up and down occurs consecutively with 2nds to link them.** It happens at the end of 5ths and beginning of 2nds place bell.
- **Passing in 2-3 occurs between short front and short back work.**
- **Dodging 3-4 always occurs in the centre of the middle work.** It makes an excellent reference point in what most people find the hardest part of ringing Cambridge.
- **Passing in 4-5 occurs between the long front and short back work.**
- **Dodging 5-6 up and down occurs consecutively (with 5ths to link them)....** so a mirror image of the 1-2 dodge.

Place Bells and starts....

- The place bell order is 2-6-3-4-5.
- 2 starts with the treble dodge of the 'place figure' in the long front work, having just made seconds.
- 6
- hunts to the front for the short front work... having just completed a short back work... then to the middle work.
- 3 is
- the symmetrical 'pivot' bell. It will spend the whole lead doing the long back work.
- 4
- starts with middle work and then to short front work... a mirror of 6th place bell!
- 5
- starts by lying in short back work, then hunting down to the long front work... mirroring 2nds place bell.



Bobs

At a Bob, just like Plain Bob and so many other methods, making 4ths replaces the usual 2nds.

- The practical implications are similar too... A bell will 'Run In' and a bell will 'Run Out', in addition to the bell 'Making the Bob' in 4ths.
- If you ring a Bob course (one bob every lead), you still ring 5 leads before it comes around, but the symmetry will have changed, along with the place bell order.
- The order is now 4-5-3-2-6.
- The trickiest bit is making the bob, because now you do both middle works back to back... so after dodging with the treble... make places (5 lots) until it comes back half a lead later!

Learning Advice Learn the elements first.... front, middle and back. Don't forget to note down where the treble meets you in each element. Once you can confidently draw these from memory, then look at how they link and how that relates to place bells and starts. Remember to try learning just before sleep - it will help it stick long term! Finally, the first is always the worst... it is new and you have no experience to help you, so if Cambridge seems hard, don't be surprised... just don't let it beat you.

Next time....

We look at how different methods are related and how this can make learning a new line so much easier.

Ringling the Changes in Honington!

Monday 19th April 2021 marks a red letter day for Honington village its six bells are due to be dismantled, refurbished by a specialist team at Britain's only remaining bell foundry in Loughborough and then rehung, hopefully in June which coincides beautifully with the easing of restrictions.

The bells have been a much loved part of village life for over 400 years. Research tells us that there were 4 bells in 1687 – for context, that was just 21 years after the Great Fire of London and James II was king! A fifth bell was added in 1786 and a sixth in 1810. The last major overhaul was in 1908 (when Honington was still part of Worcestershire) so we look forward to hearing our newly refurbished bells ring out again after this latest maintenance, more than a hundred years after the previous servicing.



2nd May 2021 Since we last made contact about the exciting Honington Church bells project, much progress has been made. The church tower now looks very different inside as the bells are currently undergoing their first MOT since the turn of the last century. As you can imagine this has been a very intricate and surprisingly delicate process. There is no denying that it has been a dirty one too as 100 years of dust has been disturbed but for those leading the project it has been a really satisfying step on the journey to overhaul the bells.

Far more technical manoeuvres are involved than most of us could even begin to imagine as you can see from the pictures. In a nutshell, the fittings

for each bell have had to be dismantled piece by piece, all of which have been bagged and labelled to facilitate putting everything back together again. Perhaps the most hair-raising part of the operation was for someone to crawl under the bells to retrieve the clappers! Some of the bigger parts such as the wheels have been lowered to the ground on the outside of the tower and the bells themselves are resting on a timber frame using a block and tackle system to manoeuvre them.

All the fittings have been transported to John Taylor's Bell Foundry in Loughborough where they will be cleaned, refurbished or replaced as appropriate. It's not a job that can be done quickly and it will be the end of May /beginning of June before everything can be reassembled, which in turn will take even longer than the initial dismantling. From the Shipston team of ringers



HONINGTON BELLS ARE RINGABLE AGAIN (WITH EASE NOW)

The major refurbishment work at All Saints, Honington, undertaken by Taylors, has now been completed. Those that read the Minutes of the Committee meetings will see the Guild made a grant of £800 to this work. I remember ringing at Honington many, many years ago and found them hard work. Apparently, the plain bearings were rarely if ever oiled...!

The recent work has included new ball bearings to all the existing wooden headstocks, new or refurbished pulleys, refurbished clapper suspension arrangements, right-angled cleats to stiffen parts of the wooden bellframe (which is a nice one) and re-aligned rope drops to space out some of the ropes. A new set of ropes are due to arrive soon.

I expect Honington will be on the Saturday practice schedule at some time in the future, so we will be able to try out the work. I have no doubt the bells will go oodles better than previously!



CMP

GUILD-BADGED CLOTHING

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE:-

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

In the first instance please email your order to **Kathy McCarthy**: 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
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From the archives 100 years ago

30th September 1921. A committee called to make arrangements for the Autumn meeting on Oct 26th was held at 'The Rectory' Moreton, on Sept 30th at 7pm, over which the Rev Spencer Jones presided. There were present delegates from Blockley, Ilmington, Moreton and Shipston.

After the minutes had been read and duly passed, a letter of apology for inability to attend was read from Mr E.Harris stating that as the pinnacles of Willersey church had not yet been put in a proper state of repair, it would not be possible to have the competitions held there this Autumn.

Mr Terry also explained that the new bell at Ilmington church would not be hung until the 11th of November, therefore it was proposed by Mr Evans, seconded by Mr Terry that the competitions and meeting be held at Moreton on Wednesday October 26th and that the programme be on similar lines to the previous meeting at Blockley, except that the competitions start at 2-o'clock instead of 1:30pm

It was decided to ask the Rev F.Kennen, vicar of Longborough and failing him the Rev Dr Holbrooke to be the preacher at the special service, the Rev Spencer Jones kindly undertaking to correspond with them on the subject.

It was proposed by the secretary, seconded by Mr C. Byrd that Mr Pardon be again invited to judge the competitions. It was further resolved to suggest to the meeting for its decision, that a certificate be awarded to the tower who happen to win an event, other than the winner of the trophy. The question of purchasing badges to be worn by the members of the guild was also deferred to and held over for further consideration.

A discussion arose as to the number of visits paid by the instructor to any one tower in a given period, and it was on the proposal of Mr C.Byrd, seconded by Mr H.Evans decided that the number be limited to six(6).

This concluded the business of the meeting, closed with the usual votes of thanks to the Rector for presiding and for kindly lending the room.
G. E. Hitchcock. 26 October 1921

From the Archives- 40 years ago

Minutes of a Committee Meeting held at the Ebrington Arms Hotel at 7.30pm on 11th August 1981.

Present: Jackie Taylor, John White, John Nicholls. Pat Linsdell, P Harmer.

Apologies: A J Brazier, M F Fairfax

1. Minutes of the last meeting were read and signed by Pat Linsdell in the absence of the Guild Master
2. Matters Arising:-
 - a) Open Afternoon: to be held at Shipston-on-Stour. Refreshments would be available at the back of the Church. Mrs Linsdell agreed to arrange advertising in the Stratford Herald and the local advertising magazine 'WHY'. Mrs Linsdell also agreed to arrange posters.
 - b) Outing: Mrs Linsdell urged all present to make great efforts to advertise the event. Mr Harmer provided copies of the itinerary to put up in members' towers.
 - c) Todenham Appeal: it was reported Mr Fairfax suggested the fund remains open for another year. Mrs Linsdell suggested the Guild give a donation. This was carried over in the absence of the treasurer.
3. Any Other Business: it was suggested Broadwell be included in the next quarter's towers list. The contact is Mrs R Radley.
4. Next Meeting: AGM 24th October 1981 at Offenham. (signed) M F Fairfax 20/10/81

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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, Hon Sec

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