

# **PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS**



**Newsletter**  
**September 2021**

# GUILD CLOTHING OFFER!



Fed up with wearing the same clothing to all ringing events?

Do you deserve a treat to celebrate the "return to ringing"?

Don't want to wait until 2024 for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary range of garments?

Contact Cathy Dixon [pro@pdg.org.uk](mailto:pro@pdg.org.uk) for full details of how to order a new piece of clothing with the Guild logo embroidered on just for you.

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## President's Preamble

In the last Newsletter I wrote that I saw a glimmer of sunshine just over the hill. Well, after a few bumps in the road, that day finally dawned in July and we were allowed to commence ringing again in a very careful, risk assessed way.

It has been great to get out and about again, to ring 'properly' as well as virtually on Ringing Room, and to meet friends who it seems we have been avoiding for months. I hope you will all have an opportunity to ring in your local towers in the very near future.

It was really great to have our first Guild "Not the Spring Meeting" in Northampton: some 30 members attended that rather damp August day. The weather might have failed us but at least the welcome was warm and the ringing brisk. Many thanks to Giles Willson and Clare Dean of Northampton Branch for setting it all up with the Church – and doing the extra careful cleaning up afterwards!

You may be aware that the Guild has bought a CO<sub>2</sub> meter so that Members can check the adequacy of the ventilation in any Tower while they are ringing, and thus update their Church risk assessment. Please contact John Beresford ([steward@pdg.org.uk](mailto:steward@pdg.org.uk)) to borrow the meter.

I recently borrowed it when I rang a couple of Quarter Peals: we rang at one church with ground floor ringing chamber, high ceiling and open arch to church. With the west door open the maximum was 550ppm, well short of the warning level of 800ppm. Our next church, also ground floor, medium height ceiling and just the west door open, gave a maximum of 750ppm, just short of the warning level. It has given me a better idea of what to look for when planning more ringing days. Of more concern was that when I was trying out the meter at home it shot up to 1800ppm (danger level?) while just 2 of us watched TV! My windows are now open.

The Guild is here to support you as you restart ringing – please do let the Officers know what we can do to help you in any way. Please contact Helen Allton ([secretary@pdg.org.uk](mailto:secretary@pdg.org.uk)) if you need advice or help with risk assessments.

I hope all towers will seriously consider calling out the Guild "Flying Squad" to help you at practices during this critical period when we are all struggling to remember how to handle a rope as well as how those called changes and

methods went. Contact Simon Dixon ([master@pdg.org.uk](mailto:master@pdg.org.uk)) to activate the 'blue lights' heading towards you.

Thank you to all those who led and attended the Virtual Training sessions held over Easter – the presentations are available on the Guild website under Home -> Learn to Ring -> Training Resources. Do take a moment to dip in and see what help and support is available there.

I am really looking forward to getting out and about around the Guild again this winter, hopefully attending Branch meetings in person this time.

See you soon.

*Alistair*

## **Newsletter News**

Members will notice that this is not the usual Newsletter, which has become so familiar during Chris Pearson's reign as Editor. The Guild is immensely grateful for his work over many years, and he has certainly earned his retirement from this role, which is now in the hands of Jonathan Stuart (Towcester Branch). We shall be experimenting with format, content and distribution in the coming issues, with the objective of making the Newsletter as interesting, useful, relevant and timely as possible.

You may have thought that eighteen months of Lockdown means that there cannot possibly be any ringing news from around the Guild since the last Newsletter. Not so! In the Guild and the Branches, activity has continued, both virtually and physically, in support of our favourite art.

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter. We plan to increase the number of editions annually, from two to three or four. The next edition is therefore planned for January, covering the autumn and Christmas period. If you have any comments, or contributions for future editions, send them to me at [newsletter@pdg.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@pdg.org.uk).

*Jonathan*

## Guild Officers

Elected at the Guild AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Post	Name	e-mail
President	Alistair Donaldson	<a href="mailto:president@pdg.org.uk">president@pdg.org.uk</a>
Master	Simon Dixon	<a href="mailto:master@pdg.org.uk">master@pdg.org.uk</a>
Secretary	Helen Allton	<a href="mailto:secretary@pdg.org.uk">secretary@pdg.org.uk</a>
Treasurer	Chris FitzGerald	<a href="mailto:treasurer@pdg.org.uk">treasurer@pdg.org.uk</a>
Steward	John Beresford	<a href="mailto:steward@pdg.org.uk">steward@pdg.org.uk</a>
Peal Secretary	Paul Mason	<a href="mailto:peal_secretary@pdg.org.uk">peal_secretary@pdg.org.uk</a>
Report Editors	Jim & Gwynneth White	<a href="mailto:report@pdg.org.uk">report@pdg.org.uk</a>
Newsletter Editor	Jonathan Stuart	<a href="mailto:newsletter@pdg.org.uk">newsletter@pdg.org.uk</a>
Public Relations Officer	Cathy Dixon	<a href="mailto:pro@pdg.org.uk">pro@pdg.org.uk</a>
Webmaster	Richard Allton	<a href="mailto:webmaster@pdg.org.uk">webmaster@pdg.org.uk</a>
Safeguarding Officer	[Vacant]	
100 Club Co-ordinator	Cathy Dixon	<a href="mailto:100_club@pdg.org.uk">100_club@pdg.org.uk</a>

## Officers' Observations

### The Ringing Master's Flying Squad

As ringing is restarting, bands and individuals may find that they need some extra support in order to progress. The Flying Squad is a group of ringers there to help. There are several ways in which we can help. Those listed below are only suggestions:

- Help to ring a quarter peal by supplementing the band
- Providing a conductor for a quarter peal
- Experienced support for a training session
- Help for a limited period for a band looking to progress to the next step.

If you feel that you or your band would find this useful then please contact the Guild Master, Simon Dixon, email [master@pdg.org.uk](mailto:master@pdg.org.uk).

## The Secretary Sighs...

... with relief. I can't be the only one who grabbed hold of a rope earlier this year, wondering if I could still do this. It's been a long layoff and that saps the confidence. However, it seems that muscle memory is a wonderful thing and after a few tentative pulls, the familiarity returned. Some of the methods that I thought I knew have been a little slower on the return journey (sorry about that!) and my ropesight remains a bit hit and miss at times. But even after a limited number of practices, it is coming back. If you've been uncertain about your return to ringing, please take heart from the fact that you're not the only person having those doubts. Speak to someone, ask for a refresher ahead of practice, have a minder for confidence; do what you need to do to get back on the end of the rope.

In my entry in the newsletter this time last year I confidently said that I didn't want to have to go through another Guild AGM on Zoom – so much for my powers of prediction. In June we held our second Zoom AGM. This was less scary, second time around, but I'm still going to cross my fingers and toes that we will meet in person in the Peterborough branch for the AGM in 2022.

At the AGM we announced a number of 50 year membership certificates that, for the second year running, we have been unable to present. I hope that the recipients in the last two years will be able to attend an upcoming Guild event so that we can present these in person.

The AGM also saw several new officers elected. One change was that of webmaster, from Geoff Pullin to Richard Allton. This also saw a change in the website address. The Guild website can now be found at [www.pdg.org.uk](http://www.pdg.org.uk). It has events, towers and news, amongst other items of interest. Do take a look. Another new appointment was the newsletter editor, whose efforts you can see here. Thanks go to Chris Pearson for doing this for the previous years, and all the best to Jonathan Stuart for taking it on. We hope that you find the latest edition interesting, but it can only be as interesting as the items submitted. If you have something to say or contribute, please get the pen or typewriter out and send in your jottings.

*Helen*



## Treasurer's Call - New 21st Century Fund Raising

The world is a different place in the 21st century than we were all used to. There are new forms of fundraising alongside the familiar shaking of charity tins at the supermarket, organising fun runs/cycling events and writing affiliation letters. The world of online shopping presents an alternative way. Online retailers are now looking for new ways to drive activity to their web pages and they are offering opportunities for shoppers to donate to charities. However, there is also a risk that the retailers may be using your data and spending patterns to try to influence advertisements that they will send to you and potentially sell to third parties. You need to be mindful of this, and potential criminal use of data, so I would counsel not giving information on maiden names, education, date or place of birth, or anything that could be misused if the data was sold on.

There are 3 approaches that I am currently looking at:

**Amazon Smile** – By using this special portal rather than the normal Amazon website, they pay your selected charity 0.5% of all relevant purchases. The only additional information you will be giving up is your preferred charity.

**Give as You Live** – Similar, but open to over 4,500 shopping websites. This asks you to provide more information on choices and renewal dates. For each purchase the portal tells you how much they will give your charity. Be aware that the same amount goes to the company running the service.

**Charities Aid Foundation** – They operate a Give As You Earn scheme (better than Gift Aid for higher-rate taxpayers; roughly doubling the value of donations). It involves a salary sacrifice scheme, which is not for all. They also offer fund raising support with simple Gift Aid facilities.

I will be putting together detailed FAQ documents to tell you how you can access these schemes and will be adding them to the Guild Donations page [www.pdg.org.uk/homepage/content-2/donations](http://www.pdg.org.uk/homepage/content-2/donations) as I find out more. I can confirm that the Guild has benefitted to the tune of £250 from the GAYE Scheme for the training fund, plus £5.29 from Amazon, with another £3.65 to come!

If anyone has any immediate questions that they would like to ask, please feel free to contact me on 07761 180369 or [treasurer@pdg.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@pdg.org.uk).

*Chris*



## The Webmaster's Wanderings



The new Guild website can be found at [www.pdg.org.uk](http://www.pdg.org.uk). It is full of useful information about the Guild, contacts for towers, branch information, and latest news.

This was introduced during the Spring. At the beginning of the year, Geoff Pullin, the webmaster, received information that BT would stop supporting the free BT community sites on which the Guild website had run for many years. This was a concern, as the Guild's website is a major part of the Guild's visible presence. After debate at the GMC, the decision was made to migrate to a new site, at [www.pdg.org.uk](http://www.pdg.org.uk). This also meant a change of Webmaster, with Richard Allton taking over as general technical wizard (although that is not the official title).

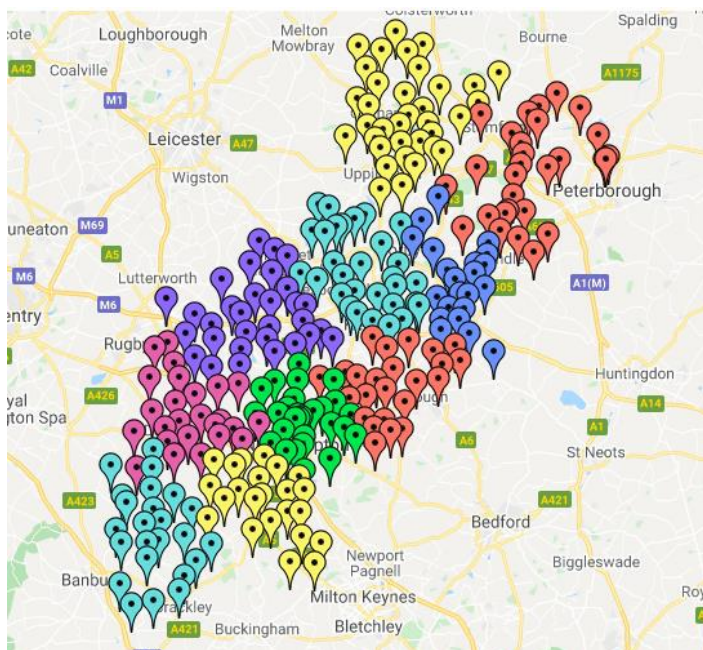
The same issue also affected the Guild inventory of bells, published by Rob Palmer, again using the BT hosting service. His work has now been made available as it was, under the link [www.inventory.pdg.org.uk](http://www.inventory.pdg.org.uk).

These forced changes brought with them some new opportunities. Some members have already noticed that there is a member login facility. The intention is to provide information (limited at present) which is restricted to members of the Guild. This can also function as a mailing list, which is certainly of interest. Watch this space...

Probably the most important function of the website is to provide contact information, both for towers and branches.

For all contacts, the name will be listed, along with one piece of contact information, in order of preference: e-mail address, telephone or a mail address. The e-mail addresses are all protected such that while they are human readable, they are not easily harvested by spam bots, thus protecting contacts from spam mailings.

All the Guild officers and the public branch officers now have generic role-based e-mail addresses for use on the website and in the annual report. Each branch has its own prefix e.g. *office@branch.pdg.org.uk*. For example, the chairman of the Wellingborough branch is [chairman@wellingborough.pdg.org.uk](mailto:chairman@wellingborough.pdg.org.uk). These are normally forwarded to the role-holder's own e-mail address, or even to more than one person if roles are shared. This has the advantage that on the change of e-mail address or role holder, the forwarding can be changed quickly, and address books and links always remain current.



GDPR permission forms are now collated centrally by the Guild Secretary, who will act as a point of reference for these permissions for both the website and annual report. There is an updated permissions form which can be completed and returned electronically, hopefully making capturing these more convenient.

The website remains, as ever, a work in progress. Initially the aim was simply to transfer information from the BT site to the new site. Now that this has been accomplished, other changes are being made. Each tower now has a What3Words location, as well as a link to a map and the tower's Dove information. Images of towers are always appreciated, so please take one of your tower and send it in.

A final thank you to Geoff for his sterling work setting up and maintaining the previous website. Much of what he created has simply been re-used.

*Richard*

## Recent Guild Events

### Tolling for HRH Prince Phillip, RIP

Coordinated arrangements had been put in place within government, the Central Council and the Diocese, to guide our ringing: half-muffled tolling or chiming of a single bell on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April at noon, 99 times or up to 5 minutes; 8 days of official mourning, during which any other ringing should be half-muffled and in accordance with current Covid-19 restrictions; half-muffled tolling or chiming of a single bell on the day of the funeral, Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> April.

162 towers in the diocese tolled, chimed, or otherwise marked the death and funeral of Prince Philip. Letters were sent to the Bishop of Peterborough and to the Lords Lieutenant of Northamptonshire and Rutland, the Queen's representative in each of the counties, to inform them of this achievement.

### [Not the] Spring Festival - Rain did not stop play!

It may have rained heavily in Northampton on Saturday 21st August 2021, but it didn't prevent a fine afternoon meeting of the Guild, the first for nearly 2 years.

About 30 members braved the elements for an informal gathering at Abington Church where suitable Covid-19 precautions were taken.



It was a wonderful opportunity to catch up on news and ring a variety of methods from Plain Bob Doubles to Carlisle Surprise Minor.

*Cathy Dixon*



## Calendar Competition

For the 100th anniversary, in 2024, the Guild will be producing a calendar for the year, decorated with images of churches within the Peterborough Diocese.

The calendar will be produced with images in landscape format. Many towers may look better in portrait than landscape, so submissions can be a single landscape image or a selection of images of a single church to produce a collage. Images may be an external view of the church or tower, of the bells or installation, or architectural features of the church - be as inventive and artistic as you like. Images of a vibrant town centre church would be as interesting as an idyllic country church in a peaceful landscape. Images showing different seasons are particularly welcomed.



Pictures must be of churches within the boundaries of the Peterborough diocese with three or more bells hung for ringing. The bells do not need to be ringable. For ideas about towers, see the Towers section of the Guild website.

The competition is open to anyone and closes on the 1st September 2022, with winners to be announced at the Summer Festival that month. The three best images, as judged by the 100th Anniversary Committee, will be the recipient of a 100th Anniversary Calendar each for the photographer and for the tower pictured.

The small print:

Images need to be in jpeg or png or equivalent format.

Images must be submitted by e-mail to [photos100@pdg.org.uk](mailto:photos100@pdg.org.uk), including the name of the photographer, the church, and the month/season they were taken.

Files should be at least 3000 pixels in the longest side, typically more than 2 MB in size.

Images must have been taken by you and contain no text, watermarks, or other annotations.

You must have permission of any identifiable person in the image to submit the image.

By submitting an image, you agree to release the photo under a Creative Commons Attribution. This allows PDG, media or any other organisation to use the photo freely, with appropriate credit to the photographer.



## Peregrine Falcons at Higham Ferrers

The elegant crocketed spire of St Mary Virgin, Higham Ferrers rises to 170 feet above ground level. The tower houses a fine 22cwt ring of ten following restoration and augmentation in 2014. It is also home to a family of peregrine falcons. They are magnificent large birds, the fastest moving of all living creatures, with a wingspan well over a metre. They nest on cliffs and the like, but if none is available, tall church towers are next best, and so peregrines are to be seen around Worcester and Norwich Cathedrals, and of course many other churches.



In 2014, just as the bells were being removed to Loughborough, a pair of peregrines made the spire their home. Word quickly spread, and people came from near and far to see and photograph them. The decision was made to install a suitable box for them to nest, although we knew it would take some time for them to be willing to use it.

Sadly, the peregrines left and the work seemed to have been in vain with the box being used just by pigeons. However, they returned earlier this year and quickly moved into the box. Since then, hordes of watchers and photographers have come to see them. In April, as one photographer described it, they put on



a regular “porn show” up the spire, so it was no surprise that chicks hatched in May, four in all. Peregrines are certainly not quiet birds, and the time while the chicks were growing was one of almost continuous screeching from above.

One chick was almost lost when it fluttered to the ground during one of its early attempts at flight, and then made no attempt to fly again, being seemingly resigned to its fate. We decided that we may as well try to take it back up the tower and were very surprised that it offered no resistance to being picked up. We released it on the church roof, and watched it run the roof’s full length. A peregrine’s running gait is like something from a child’s tv cartoon, bouncing left and right, but the pleasing

thing was to see it being fed by its parents shortly afterwards, none the worse for its ordeal.

Although the parents are still around, noisy as ever, the chicks have now left to make their way in the world. Our next plan is to install one or possibly two webcams in the sides of the box, hoping that we can watch another brood next year in more detail.



*Bob Dennis (additional photos: Alan Goodger)*

## OBITUARIES

### Peter J Chilton

As lockdown came in March 2020 Peter was diagnosed with cancer and died on 2nd May 2021 aged 75. Covid-19 restrictions meant that ringing at Wilbarston, his home tower, ceased in late February 2020. Regulations were relaxed for Christmas Day 2020 and Peter rang with two others (socially distanced) for a short time after the midnight service. It was the last time he rang there.



Peter and Alyson came to Wilbarston some eight or nine years ago. He had been an enthusiastic ringer in his youth in Leicester but had not rung for many decades. On arriving, Peter started to ring again and set out to teach others. He had great skill in this, being patient, encouraging and always looking for high standards. He taught weekly at Ashley and then under him weekly practices at Wilbarston re-commenced, where he introduced interesting ringing exercises. Sunday ringing took place, and many learnt to ring. His vision was the project, which he masterminded, to re-hang and augment the existing five bells; this would make this easier to learn on as well as enabling more varied ring.

The re-hanging of the bells was a major project involving many personal contacts, much telephone and paperwork as well as the physical work to

prepare the bells for removal to the Taylor's foundry at Loughborough and getting them up again when they were returned. He also managed the fundraising (£33,671.34p) for this. He led the team of Wilbarston bellringers in this work and in the fundraising, which included a packed gig at the village hall helped by the bellringers. Remarkably it took only two years of hard work for all this to be achieved, aided by Murray Coleman, Nick Churchman and Andy Bimson (and the bell hanger Neil).



There was a big celebration in July 2018, on Peter's birthday, two years to the day after the PCC had given its approval for the work. The church was packed with ringers from the Benefice and Guild for this.

The village has much to thank Peter for; he will be sadly missed. But he has left a beautiful ring of bells, a re-ordered bell chamber and re-ordered ground ringing chamber. It is fitting that his ashes

will be interred beneath the tower he did so much for. At his funeral on 21<sup>st</sup> May a band of six ringers (from Wilbarston, Ashley and Stoke Albany), some of whom had not touched a rope for 15 months, rang the bells half-muffled as a tribute to Peter. Ringers from Ashley stood in the churchyard as a tribute to him.

Ruth Doyle writes: Thinking of our dear, talented, dedicated, musical friend. It's been an honour and a privilege to play music together the last few years. Wilbarston appreciates all you've done for us; our church bells will always remind us of you. Rest now.

*Photo: The new bell of 2018 inscribed "I RING OUT ACROSS THE VALLEY"*

## Janet Collins

We had the sad news that Janet Collins died, aged 65, on April 10 from her sister, Alison Willgress. Janet had been in LOROS Hospice in Leicester. She joined the Guild in 1968 at Nether Heyford, rang her first peal in 1971, was a Branch Committee member 1977-9, ordained priest at Banbury in 1994 and received her 50 year Guild membership certificate in 2018. Her duties took her away from her home and she served in the dioceses of Peterborough, Oxford,





St Albans and Newcastle. Jan's funeral on May 6 was subject to Covid-19 regulations, with which we have all become too familiar, with very restricted attendance.

*Photo: After a QP at Rushton celebrating 50 years Guild membership for Jan (bottom right)]*

## Rosemary Davidson

Rosemary passed away peacefully at home on May 28. After retiring in Northern Ireland, Ernie and Rosemary moved to Hellidon. Rosemary set about organising the funding and pushed through the restoration and augmentation of Hellidon bells in 1991 from a derelict four to a good five. The PCC named the new treble "Rosemary" (without her knowledge) in her honour and now to her memory.

Rosemary started to learn to ring with seven others at a special branch organised teach-in evening held at Priors Marston in August 1991. After a lull in village ringing, Rosemary initiated a Tuesday morning Hellidon practice with refreshments in 2006. I was under very clear instruction that there was to be no pressure to learn methods! The practices have attracted many people until stopped abruptly by Covid-19 in March 2020. Although Rosemary, 91, had not rung for several years, she continued as a keen listener and gave her comments on striking with due Ulster vigour as well as keeping a critical eye on the quality of the cake!

*Photo: Rosemary at Hellidon practice in May 2012.  
(Photo by Tony Brown)*



## James (Jimmy) Cameron

Jimmy joined the Grand Union Benefice Bell ringers in January 2014 as a lapsed ringer, having learned to ring at Whittlebury in his youth. He very quickly became a very valuable and competent ringer of the band, ringing at all the Benefice Churches.

He shared in the weekly scramble from Blisworth, usually in one vehicle, to Milton Malsor, Stoke Bruerne or Alderton on a Sunday for 9am ringing for the 9.30 service, and then back to Blisworth for some breakfast and a comfort break before ringing at 10.30am at Blisworth or Grafton Regis.

Jim's greatest personal achievement in the belfry was to ring a quarter peal at the 2018 Canal Festival with ringers from Bobbing in Kent who brought a Mini-Ring of Bells to the festival.

A keen Cobblers fan, he was frequently teased about the wrong shaped ball by the Saints fans in the team, and the performance of both were the subject of many discussions during the winter months. Unfortunately, Jimmy only enjoyed a very short, busy retirement before falling ill. It was such a pleasure to meet him, Jane and Daisy when out for a walk in the village. Jimmy was a true gentleman, greatly missed by his friends in the belfry.

## Peter Aslett

Sincere condolences go to Hilary Aslett who, on 6<sup>th</sup> August lost her beloved husband, Peter, member of the Guild since 1972 and former Tower Captain at Pattishall. Our thoughts and prayers are with her. There will be a celebration of Peter's life on 25<sup>th</sup> September, at 11:30am, Holy Cross, Pattishall.

## News from the Branches

### CULWORTH BRANCH

The bells remained silent for so many months apart from perhaps the occasional tolling for a funeral. Nearly all the towers in the branch tolled a bell in remembrance of HRH Prince Philip in April.

We managed to hold our branch half AGM, (minus tea), at Croughton in July where we said farewell to our branch treasurer, Geoffrey Stretton, and wished him well in his new home and tower. We thanked him for all the work he had

done in the branch over the years. Paul Bennett from Evenley will be taking over as Treasurer.

The break we had due to Covid-19 has taken its toll on our ringing activities. Only about half our towers in the branch have commenced ringing and some of our older members have not returned yet. For those of us who have started ringing again we have had some very positive encouragement from the villages who are pleased to hear the bells again. Now that restrictions have been lifted, new recruits are being taught again and are progressing well.

Weddings have restarted and we sometimes struggle to find enough ringers if there are several weddings on the same day in the branch. We are encouraging ringers to visit other towers within the branch so that they are familiar with the bells and would be able to fill in if required.

Our ringers at Lois Weedon were pleased to meet again in May, albeit with only 6 being allowed in the tower at one time and wearing masks. Luckily for us, on all our Wednesday evenings we had fine weather, so our surplus ringers were able to congregate in the churchyard for a catch up.

What does one do when one can't go out ringing? Well, one of our ringers, Chris Klein Wassink, took to poetry and penned the following which, I am sure you will agree echoes all our sentiments and deserves being printed.

DING-DONG MERRILY – (OH NO!)

Oh dear, oh dear, this lockdown – it's been going on for ages –  
No ringing fun, we're kept away like animals locked in cages.  
No sound of bells in any church – no practices for learning,  
No meeting-up of ringing friends, for which I'm really yearning.  
No singles, bobs, no other calls, no methods new or old  
No "bang, crash, wallop – dearie me, it's left us in the cold.  
No "Look to, trebles going" – no singles, nor no doubles,  
No congregations near or far to thank us for our troubles.  
No studying of methods new (perhaps relief for some!)  
But just beware – you learners know THAT time will surely come!  
No meetings, outings, dinners no – no ringing down or up  
No local presentation to the winners' cup.  
But this will end – just be assured, and soon we'll be together  
Again "bang, crash and wallop" – yes – this storm we have to weather.  
Just don't forget – when next we meet, whether hating it or liking  
Whatever else we choose to do - my passion is good striking!

*By Chris Klein Wassink*

*Joy Kirkham*

## DAVENTRY BRANCH

### Virtual Meetings

The lockdown that started on Boxing Day for Coronavirus prevented any opportunity to meet and ring until Easter and then only under severe restrictions. This typically meant going back to ringing alternate bells with no bystanders, well sanitised hands, doors and windows open, face coverings, not swapping bells and for shorter periods. Branch events took the form of Zoom gatherings.

We had a Zoom quiz on March 13 with thanks to Shirley Waterhouse for setting it up and Leanne Martin for hosting. I counted 28 folk flitting across my screen. The winners were Bob and Maureen Sinclair of Newnham followed closely by Nikki Butt of Welton.

On May 8 we held the 'Not the Branch Coach Outing' Zoom gathering. I think 19 plus two cats presented themselves, with Leanne making short appearances from a marina in Southampton. Jane was handed control and sorted a successful break-out time, including a Ringing Room session. It gave us a chance to catch up with one another.

The next Zoom gathering was the Guild's AGM on June 12. If it had not been via Zoom, we were scheduled to host it at Weedon, so we were let off! It began with prayers pre-recorded by the Rural Dean of Daventry (Revd Stephen Burrows at Heyford) and we remembered members who died since the last AGM, rather more than is comfortable.

Following the closure of BT's free community websites, the branch website was replaced with the snappy [www.gcsspullin.wixsite.com/daventrybranch](http://www.gcsspullin.wixsite.com/daventrybranch) in May, a temporary free measure until editorial access to the Guild website can be extended.

The Branch Committee decided in July that it was too soon to restart ringing meetings so organised a picnic in August and a walk in September instead. The Picnic was held on August 22 in the Bugbrooke Sunday School Rooms garden. Twelve turned up for a pleasant picnic - see photo of the company during a dry spell, otherwise there were two groups! Thanks to Gwynneth White for organising and taking the photo.



### **Special Events**

The Church of England and the Marie Curie organised a day of reflection, to mark a year since we entered lockdown, for Tuesday, March 23. Bellringers were invited to mark the end of the one-minute silence by tolling a bell at 12.01pm. I tolled Daventry tenor 88 times, being the atomic number of Radium, discovered by Marie Curie in 1898; Braunston, Welton & Ashby also tolled and Barby tolled 88.

The vast programme of vaccinations soon got underway. Branch Steward Brian Foley offered to carry out inspections of towers to check that all was in order before ringing, which was able to restart for services at Easter if agreed by the incumbent. Ringing was back to last autumn's arrangements.

The following Friday the mood changed with the sad news of the death of HRH Prince Philip.



I am aware of some highlights: Badby (99 half-muffled whole pulls), Barby (99 times), Byfield (tolling), Daventry (99 half-muffled whole pulls), Flore (tolling), Great Brington (Justin 99 tolled 5th, Hannah counted & safety), Kislingbury (John tolled 99), Newnham (Bob rang 99 blows of tenor), Preston Capes (tolled the 3rd 99 times or it may have been more! - it was accompanied by several dogs in the village who had forgotten what bells sound like), Weedon (Brian tolled tenor half muffled 99 times and for 15 minutes prior to the funeral), Whilton (Miles rang tenor 99 times, Theresa counted & safety).

At a Daventry wedding on April 17 the bride was welcomed in with tolling and left to half-muffled ringing, as required by the guidelines!

CCCBR asked for support for “NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers’ Day”, ringing at 8pm on Monday, July 5, the 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the founding of the NHS. It was celebrated by at least Ashby St Ledgers, Barby and Preston Capes.

### **Getting Back to Ringing**

On May 17 came ‘Step 3’. The Rule of Six indoors and with a 1m apart allowance some practices could start after a 14 month gap. Short practices with six nominated ringers began soon after at Daventry and Badby, where the first touches of Plain Bob and Grandsire Doubles had one neighbour emailing: *‘Glorious to hear!’*. For the record, on June 29, a course each of Stedman Doubles and Cambridge S Minor was rung for the first time since 2020 at Daventry practice. The performers were still not used to the music produced by 1 3 5 7 9 10!

Some national movement of ringers was noted when a group of six in a Covid-19 secure bubble from London joined Narrow Boat Blueline (!) on July 10 for a week starting off from Napton. Six quarter peals, including two a week apart at Badby, were successful and only Dodford beat them.

A somewhat less exuberant than originally anticipated ‘Step 4’ started on July 19 as a rising number of new infections were reported. The Bishop passed the baton back to incumbents for ringing decisions as legal prohibitions had been removed.

A crop of pent-up weddings led to activity in several belfries from July.



*Wedding ringers à la mode (Photo by Carole Pullin)*

Practices have continued or started up with variations in precautions depending on local circumstances. Most practice nights will have restarted by the beginning of September.

## People

At the end of March, Michael Haighton had an ablation to his liver which has allowed his oncologist to declare him cleared successfully. This was followed by cataract operations. He was thus thankful to be able to ring again for the first time in 19 months at Kilsby in August.

Clare Glover was ordained Deacon on June 27 and has been appointed Assistant Curate of Kettering. Clare assisted with our Branch service at Daventry in September 2020. Her husband James rings at Kilsby and inherited Peter Box's handbells. He told us that the family was settling in, and Clare has been up the tower to discuss the resident peregrine falcons with the local bird of prey society. However, James is still living in Kilsby during the week as he got a job recently designing trains in Southam, so he hasn't had a chance for a ring yet.

Jackie Gibbard has been suffering considerably for a few years, with us all concerned that there was no diagnosis. Covid-19 stopped investigations until she was taken to A&E Walsgrave by ambulance on July 3 after further intense pain. She was eventually diagnosed with vitamin B12 deficiency due to an earlier major operation, which has led to deterioration of nerve sheaths. Lately



she has been shuttled between A&E, Rugby St Cross and Overslade House. She remains in pain and we all hope that the effect of B12 treatment will soon show.

We welcome the Revd David Battison, who was licensed via Zoom in July as Team Vicar in the Daventry Team with special responsibility for Catesby, Hellidon and Staverton.

*Geoff Pullin*

## KETTERING BRANCH

The return to ringing following the relaxation of restriction following the Covid-19 Pandemic has been a gradual one rather than a massive rush back into the towers.

The Branch held its first post 'Lock-down' committee meeting by Zoom on the afternoon of Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> August.

The meeting was attended by the Guild Secretary Helen Allton. The principal items on the agenda were the re-establishing a programme of monthly ringing meetings and the proposed arrangements to celebrate the Guild Centenary.

Arrangements are now underway with a programme of monthly ringing meetings starting with visits jointly to Rushton, All Saints, a new set of ropes having been recently installed, and Geddington St Mary Magdelene on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September.

As the Guild is intending to hold monthly events throughout 2024 to celebrate the Centenary on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month, and as this will clash with the regular Kettering Branch monthly meetings, the committee will seek the approval of the Branch members to move the Kettering Branch monthly meetings to the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month at the AGM in 2022.

The area received a visit from the University of London Society of Change Ringers for its Nene Valley Tour from 13<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> August. The tour was organised by Rhys Skillman who is a Kettering ringer outside of term time. The tour took in towers in the Thrapston, Wellingborough, Kettering and Northampton Branches and made an excursion to the "Twin Towers" of Rugby St. Andrew on the Monday. Due to reduced numbers, the visiting band were supported by a

number of local ringers over the course of the tour, with the ringing ranging from Rounds and Call changes through to attempts at Surprise methods.

I am most grateful to all the correspondents who have kept me informed on what is happening in their own tower as detailed below.

### **Ashley, St. Mary The Virgin**

With four upcoming summer weddings a smaller Ashley band decided on a practise on 21 and 28 June. With Rule of 6, facemasks and hand sanitiser in place we were pleased to practise and felt confident to confirm the ringing at the weddings if they were able to go ahead. Our bells had previously been inspected on 15 April and a single bell tolled for the Duke of Edinburgh on 17 April. As lockdown regulations eased, we decided to re-start our weekly Monday practises on Monday 19 July. Our first Sunday ring takes place on Sunday 29 August. The upcoming plan is for teaching from Nick and Helen once a month, and when needed on request. Our smaller group of seven ringers are keen to improve and we are currently trying to ring up and down in peal. We also like to support other churches in the benefice when needed. From mid-September we hope to encourage back a few more Ashley ringers to re-join our weekly practises and co-ordinate this with the support of Nick and Helen. Of course, we will all miss Peter Chilton who was a great supporter and teacher in Ashley.

### **Corby, St. John**

Corby Tower is back with its practice evening on Wednesdays from 6.30 to 7.15, with 7.25 ringing down at the latest. There is an evening church service from 7.30pm which doesn't appear to be changing yet so we are not ringing beyond 7.25pm for the time being.

Corby has no restrictions on who can come and ring providing, of course, that they do not have any symptoms of Covid-19 and have had at least one vaccine as most of the band have had two.

### **Cottingham St. Mary Magdelene**

The tower not having a regular band, the Branch Secretary pulled together a band of visitors to ring for a wedding on Friday 6th August.

The Branch Steward, Andy Bimson has since visited to inspect the Belfry and made recommendations as to required works.

### **Cransley, St Andrew**

In the well-ventilated ground floor ringing chamber practice night has resumed on Tuesdays at 7pm with unlimited numbers.

Three band members have announced that they won't be returning so we have vacancies, especially for weddings.

The rector has intimated on several occasions that she likes the bells to be rung, so whilst some towers have to impose limits, St Andrew opens its ringing chamber to all local ringers and can be on any night by arrangement.

The tower held its AGM on Tuesday 10th August, and on a pleasant evening congregated outside in the church yard. The meeting was attended by the Rector the Reverend Nicki Hobbs. The proposal to formally revert to practices on Tuesday evening was confirmed and following the election of officers, measures to recruit new ringers were discussed.

### **Desborough, St. Giles**

Desborough has been able to ring for services with a single ringer using the Ellacombe chimes. Initially practice ringing was held at Brampton Ash St. Mary and was restricted to 6 ringers on a rota basis.

The practice has now moved back to Desborough, numbers being restricted to local band members with a maximum of 10 people in the belfry, with face masks to be worn and duration of ringing restricted to 1hr 15 mins maximum. Ringers are asked to take care in the ringing chamber as it is probably the smallest & least well ventilated in the county!

### **Great Oakley St. Michael**

Diane Talbot rang the treble bell 73 times on Monday 5th July.

The local band have started ringing again on the occasional Saturday mornings at 10-30 am for 45minutes. The first wedding on which the bells were rung was on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July.

The installation of the 2 new treble bells which was delayed from 2020 is due to take place in the near future, with the frames having already being made by Matthew Higby.

### **Isham, St. Peter**

Starting at 8pm on July 5th the treble was chimed 73 times, then all of the band joined in on 6 bells for rounds and 6 firing...followed by more rounds.

Return to ringing was painless after a TRULY impressive risk assessment (thanks to Helen) which was submitted to the churchwardens and rector. Ringing has returned on every practice night since May 17th and we are in our stride, ringing St Martin's, St Simons, Antelope and Finchampstead!

The new rector was installed on July 30th and attended the practice on July 12th to meet the ringers and join them at The Lilacs afterwards! Isham has also benefited from the Guild Ringing Master's "Flying Squad". Cathy and Simon Dixon having assisted in training a recruit to the tower.

### **Rothwell, Holy Trinity**

Service ringing started after the general removal of restrictions with limited numbers and face coverings worn due to the limited ventilation in the ringing chamber.

The Wednesday evening practice has recommenced but is restricted to members of the local band for the time being.

### **Wilbarston, All Saints**

Wilbarston have returned to ringing practice on a Tuesday night - all welcome. Service ringing as required.

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of the Wilbarston Tower Captain, Peter Chilton earlier this year (see Obituaries section of this Newsletter).

I hope you have found this up-date of interest and that there will be a lot more activity to report in Spring 2022

*David Dainty*

## **NORTHAMPTON BRANCH**

As for everyone else in the World, Northampton Branch was impacted by Covid-19 and the lockdown which meant all our tower ringing stopped to try and protect ourselves.

Despite no ringing there was support to other ringers throughout the branch, many telephone calls were made and support with shopping provided for some who could not get out.

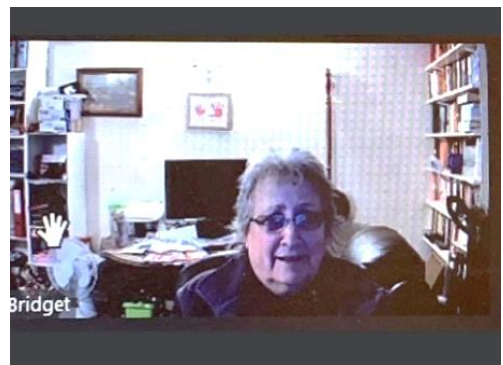
The branch has also lost ringers who died during this period, who we remember in our prayers and thoughts, it has been very hard to provide support as well as enable mourning for everyone due to lockdowns and isolation.

Despite these challenges there was an uptake in online meetings, particularly from the Northampton Town Centre when the usual Wednesday night practice was replaced by a zoom meeting. These took different formats depending on how we all were coping, initially starting with the novelty of having an online meeting, the fun of people being muted and bad connectivity, moving on to quizzes and some interactive work!

Below we have shared some of the quality screen shots from these meetings:

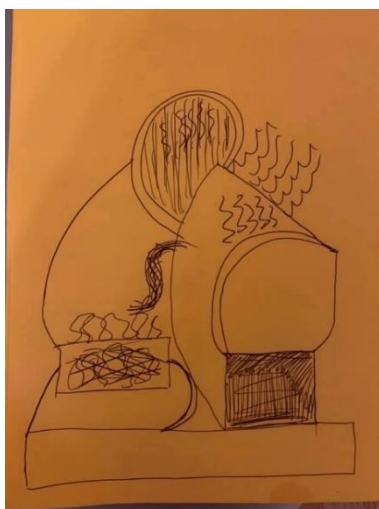


*We ARE having fun!!*

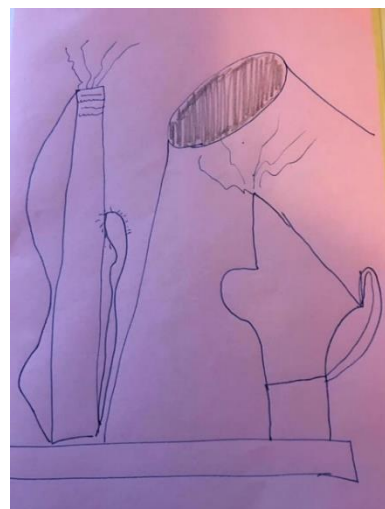


*Concentration ...*

One of our favourite activities – describe an object and everyone else needs to draw it on a piece of paper!



This was the same object – can you guess what it is?

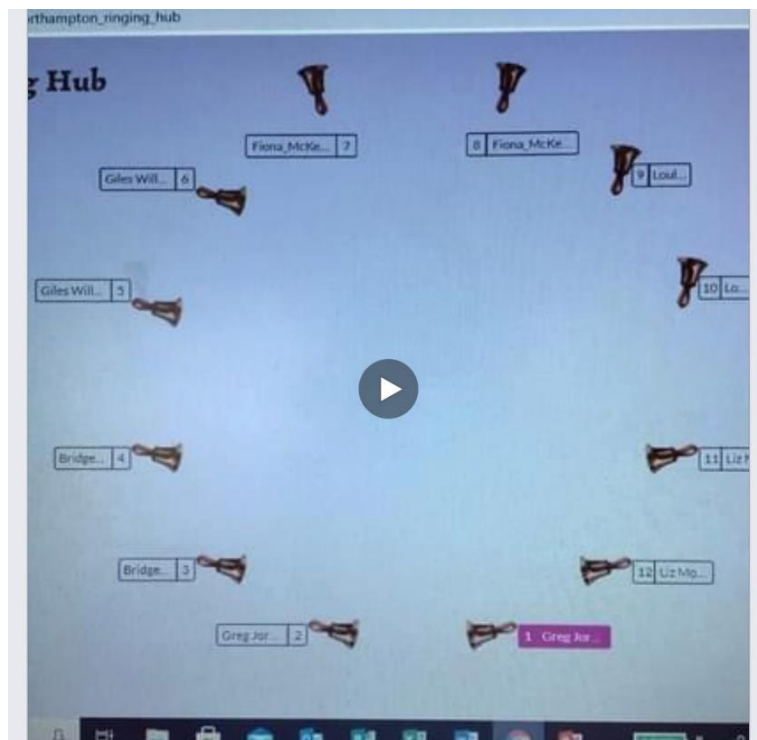


## Ringling School

Ringling school became ringling room. This provided fun and frustration however, some of the learners do appear to have mastered new methods from ringling room, we just need the practice in the tower! At Christmas we even rang carols online, sorry this is a screen shot so you cannot hear the fantastic handbell ringing!!!



*It's not that bad, is it?*



## Bell maintenance

Spotted in Harpole – the clapper from the St Giles, Northampton Tenor spending quarantine out of the tower!





## Pub socials

April – back to the pub. We really don't mind the cold!! (But we were pleased when we could go in doors again!)



## New news

Abington – we were very sorry to see Barbara and Ray Starmer move out of Northampton to pastures new up North but, wish them well. Barbara was the Tower Captain at Abington, we are very pleased that Claire Dean has taken on the role of the new Tower Captain. As a welcome present, she very professionally arranged for the Guild (Not the) Spring meeting on 21 August to take place – a big thank you. This was the first post Covid-19 Guild event in person!

*Giles Willson*

## PETERBOROUGH BRANCH

### Nassington Tower

During lockdown, we continued to hold a weekly practice in Ringing Room, each week concentrating on different methods, such as plain courses of Bob Minor, plain courses or touches of Grandsire and Bob Doubles. This allowed everyone to chat as well as ring. We have also supported the new Wittering band with their own Ringing Room practice.

For the National Day of Reflection on 23 March, bells were chimed or rung, after the 1-minute silence, across the Benefice at Nassington, Yarwell, Wansford and Thornhaugh. In addition, the tenor was tolled for several funerals in February and March. A bell was chimed at Nassington for the Easter service.

Immediately after the death of Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, a bell was tolled at Nassington. As part of the National Day of Bell Ringing for his death, on 10<sup>th</sup> April, bells were tolled half-muffled at Nassington, Yarwell, Wansford and Thornhaugh, and again for his funeral on 17 April.



The Tower AGM was held on Zoom in May. After 6 years Brian Hardie stood down as Tower Captain, and I was volunteered to take over the role. Thanks were given to Brian for his leadership and support over the many years.

The first ring of all the bells in 2021 was half-muffled for a funeral in mid-May, and after that we restarted Monday practices and ringing for Sunday service, limiting the numbers to 6 ringers on a rota, allowing the whole band to get used to ringing the bells again.

In mid-July, we returned to normal practices on Monday evenings and Friday mornings, with some level of precautions, such as wearing masks, and it has been lovely to welcome so many ringing friends back into the Tower.

In addition to ringing for Sunday service at Nassington, the band has started to ring before services at the other towers in the Benefice, fortnightly at Yarwell, and occasionally Wansford and Thornhaugh, and we plan to continue this. The Churchwarden at Thornhaugh thinks it may be 25 or 30 years since the bells were rung before a Sunday Service.

We have also rung for weddings at Thornhaugh, Wansford and Barnack and for funerals at Nassington. A QP of April Day, delayed from April 2020, was rung in early August to celebrate a 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. This allowed two Nassington ringers to complete levels 3 and 4 of Learning the Ropes.

*Hilary Hardie*



*Brian and Hilary Hardie centre, surrounded by Jane Robinson, Terry Wright, Stuart Weston, Alex Heaton and Andrew Christie*

### **St Mary's, Peterborough**

St Mary's has emerged cautiously out of lockdown, and we thought it appropriate to name a new variation as our first QP since March 2020. This was named Phoenix Corona Doubles, so that, in years to come, folk can then reflect that we have risen from the ashes of the pandemic to do what we enjoy doing best. We have since rung half a dozen more QPs and one was of Double

Oxford Minor, where some of the ringers had only rung in the virtual reality of Ringing Room. It was far nicer to ring in the tower!

Some of our regular ringers also rang for their supper and supported St Mary's Summer Fundraiser, which was in aid of the local branch of the Samaritans. Very generously, they gave £250 with gift aid from the ringing and a salad supper hosted by Andrew and Gillie.

Sunday service ringing started at the beginning of July, and we will shortly be resuming Thursday practices and we will gauge how regularly we will run these.

### **Ufford**

St Andrews Church Ufford, since my last report, has had new louvres in the bell tower and a good clean. Sadly, the bells had not been rung until the death of The Duke of Edinburgh when the bell was tolled on the 10th April and then for his funeral on the 17th April. We had a group of ringers from Gedney led by John Bennett on the 10th June. The bells were serviced by Taylor's on the 11th August and are in excellent shape! They do need ringing and as we no longer have regular services this is difficult. So please come and ring our 4 lovely bells.

*Sally Hudson*

### **Warmington**

Over the last strange year the Warmington band have been learning to ring handbells. Initially, this was just an idea to keep us all in touch and give us a reason to meet whenever lockdown restrictions permitted. We began outside in the summer sunshine of 2020,



simply each ringing one bell, but soon realised we wanted to do it "properly" and learn to ring two bells. A year on and progress has been slow but we have achieved some Bob minor and can plain hunt on 8. We also used the handbells to ring out in the churchyard for services . This was very atmospheric at

Christmas when the church was floodlit and we also rang for several other special occasions. The photos show us on our first attempt at handling the bells in the garden and then ringing out in the churchyard. Note that we were ringing while standing around that ubiquitous sign of the times, a bottle of hand sanitiser resting on the grass at our feet!

Since returning to the tower (and the sheer relief of just ringing one bell at a time) we have kept up with the handbells but also greatly enjoyed being back in our tower. The photo shows some of us looking very happy at our first Sunday ring.



We were pleased to be able to ring for the induction of the new vicar in July and have very gradually resumed full practices after a few weeks of only having 6 selected ringers at any one time.

The only other achievement in Warmington has been that our youngest and smallest ringing enthusiast found that over lockdown she had grown so much that she ONLY needed TWO boxes instead of three, to be able to reach and chime the treble. She hopes soon to be tall enough to really learn to ring!

*Sylvia Upex*



*Terry Wright (Branch Correspondent)*

## RUTLAND BRANCH

It is so good to be ringing again after the long lay-off. Most of Rutland's towers are ringing now, with just a few exceptions, Oakham All Saints being one. A recent tower inspection highlighted significant problems, necessitating refurbishment and rebushing of the Treble, 3rd and 4th clappers. The leather bell pads need replacing on 4th, 5th and Tenor, and 7 of the 8 pulley boxes require removal for a complete overhaul and rebuild. Work is scheduled for late September, with a return to ringing sometime later.

The bells at St John the Evangelist, Caldecott, are also going to need some work and refurbishment. All six bells require rebushing of the clappers at some expense.

With the tower silent during the lockdowns Jackdaws were able to get into the tower, where they made nests and reared young. The resulting debris has been cleared but work is required to replace mesh to the windows to prevent a repeat situation. The required work is not preventing ringing at the current time.

During the pandemic lockdowns of 2020/21 four Quarter Peals were achieved by Harry and Mary Poyner on hand bells, rung in the garden of their home in Whissendine. The first, because they could; the next to celebrate their 61<sup>st</sup> Wedding Anniversary. In February 2021 their QP was for the conductor's (Harry) 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. They rang a fourth QP in a personal tribute to HRH the Duke of Edinburgh in April 2020.

Since the return to ringing, two Quarter Peals have been rung in Rutland and a Peal is planned for October.

*Sue Webster*

## THRAPSTON BRANCH

It has been good to take the first tentative steps back to ringing following the end of Covid-19 regulations. The "Lockdown" months are hopefully behind us now and with most of our towers spruced up, disinfected, ventilated and risk assessed, and with sanitizer and facemasks at the ready, we hope we can start to rebuild practice nights and branch meetings.

A lot has changed during the “Covid era”. Sadly, some of our elderly ringers are no longer with us and dwindling congregations, and a lack of regular incumbents, are a concern in many of the smaller parishes.

Regular ‘Zoom’ meetings with many of the Branch Ringers kept us in touch with each other, especially through the winter months, and once regulations eased a little, we have been able to share some wonderful garden times with various permutations of the rule of six.

One of the things that our ringers have commented on is not just missing the ringing this year, but missing the companionship and social events that provide “the cherry on the top of the cake”. Nevertheless, there have been some reasons to celebrate events in the Branch.

St. James’ Thrapston were planning celebrations to mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first recorded incumbent this year. He was probably one of the Monks from Bourne Abbey who tended to the early church. The present buildings date from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century with later 15<sup>th</sup>. Century additions. The Town itself grew up around a safe crossing point for the River Nene and the Market Charter was granted by King John in 1205. It was hoped to have several celebrations including ringing events to mark the occasion but apart from a low-key open air service, all other plans are now ‘on hold’ for another year.

St. Peter’s at Raunds also has reason to celebrate this year. The restoration of the Church is complete including renewal of the Belfry Steps and improved electrical works to the clock and lighting. The Bells are ringing again and, having such a large and open Belfry, with very socially distanced ropes, they have already proved popular with several touring groups. It has been good to welcome visitors and hear the bells ringing so well. We hope many more will come to ring these wonderful bells.

*Alison Byrnes*

## TOWCESTER BRANCH

As lockdown restrictions began to lift, there has been a significant increase in ringing within the branch for practices, services, weddings and funerals.

To mark the death of HRH Prince Phillip, Jonathan Stuart of Pattishall Tower tolled the tenor half-muffled 99 times on 9<sup>th</sup> April at noon, and again on



Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April at noon. Also on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April at 12 noon there were 99 open blows starting at 12 noon at the following towers:

Greens Norton - Jon Lovell

Bradden - John Pardoe

Easton Neston - Nigel Williams

Towcester – April 9: John White, April 10: Brett Masters

Potterspury - Douglas Holloway

Cosgrove - Chris Stokes

Wicken - Ruth Stokes

Litchborough - jointly by Richard Hartley and Christine Rodhouse

Roade rang the 4<sup>th</sup> half-muffled 99 times

On the day of HRH Prince Philip's funeral, Union Jacks were flown half-mast and the tenor bells were tolled half-muffled at Easton Neston, Towcester, Pattishall, Roade, Litchborough, Greens Norton, Bradden, Whittlebury, Cold Higham, and Ashton.



There has been a concerted effort within the branch to return to ringing and on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2021 Chris Bulleid organised a friendly ring at Roade and Ashton. It was a great day with 23 ringers participating. It was a really good feeling to be, at last, on the end of a rope and to see everybody once more.

We all had a great morning's ring, supplied with lots of tea and coffee to keep us going. I received a lovely email from John Armitage, thanking us for coming and making the day enjoyable and he's hoping it will spur them all on to improve and learn some different methods.



On the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 the branch met at Weedon to have an eight bell practice. It was well-attended and they rang rounds and call changes, Bob Triples, Bob Major, Grandsire Triples, Stedman Triples and Cambridge Major.

Ringling was also organised at Gayton and Blisworth for the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2021. There was a very good response to this, and some 25 people signed up to attend. Groups for each tower were carefully organised to give everyone a worthwhile experience. In the pub afterwards everyone was very enthusiastic about their morning saying how enjoyable it had been at all levels.

I am pleased to report that as of July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021 all twelve bells of St Lawrence Church, Towcester began to ring out again!

The Obituaries section includes reports of the sad deaths of Jimmy Cameron and Peter Aslett. We are also sad to report the death on 6<sup>th</sup> April of Di Rogers, a Blisworth ringer - a lovely lady who always extended a warm welcome at her tower with a cuppa and a piece of cake. Our sincere condolences go to Mark and Matthew.

I am pleased to announce that my ringing hands are now not quite so sore, and my ringing callouses are putting in an appearance once more.

Happy return to ringing everyone.

*Jill Cooke*



## WELLINGBOROUGH BRANCH

### Rushden

Rushden started ringing when restrictions allowed. Starting on Sundays and then moving on to practices. Our practice nights are mainly basic methods as most of us are at the age when our brains don't remember so easily. Confidence is building up slowly.

We held our Annual Barbecue in Simon & Cathy's Garden our first social occasion and get together since the pandemic.

We have had two lots of visiting bands - a good sign of getting back to normality.

### Wollaston

St Mary's Wollaston restarted ringing on 23rd May 2021. Whilst observing the distances between bells, we were only able to ring 3 bells, and our clappers for bell 5 and tenor went off to Taylor's at Loughborough for some renovation work. These two were returned to us in June and so we were able to ring 5 bells on the 5th July for the celebration of the birthday of the NHS and Carers. We also rang 5 bells on the Sunday afternoon of Wollaston Open Gardens, and offered, via social media, to let visitors try a feel of the bells. It was pleasing that several people took advantage of this, and we have gained a new learner from this afternoon.

With all Covid-19 restrictions removed in mid-July, we recommenced ringing all 6 bells until we had some visiting ringers on 29th July when, unfortunately, the number 4 clapper fell out of the bell during ringing up. Fortunately, it did no damage to the bell or frame and a quick fix was put in place in order to be able to ring for a wedding that following Saturday. The Guild Steward, John Beresford, then decided that clappers 1 to 4 also need refurbishing, so they were also removed, and taken to Loughborough. The clappers are now returned to us and rehung in their bells. I am indebted to John Beresford, and Janet, for ferrying our clappers to and from Taylor's. The total cost for all 6 clappers is just under £1,700.



## **Earls Barton**

Following a Taylors inspection, we have now had work completed on one of the beams in our Belfry. They had identified that, over an unknown period, the beam between the 5th and 6th Bells had become warped and was in danger of causing the 5th to stick at some point, which would have been very unfriendly. The work took two days during June with me (Andy, Tower Captain) acting as unpaid assistant. This saved us almost £2K but the job still cost around £3K. Grants have been applied for to help us with the cost. The bells may not sound any better, but the work completed should at least ensure that they last for a good many more years to come.

## **Irchester**

We have started ringing again at Irchester. We have rung for 2 weddings and have begun our practices and Sunday Service ringing.

During the past 18 months we have lost 4 ringers for various reasons and are now looking for new recruits.

## **Ecton**

New ropes were purchased after a period of fund raising. The ringers are very grateful to the villagers, who provided almost all the funding, including some neighbours of the church yard, so we must be doing something right!

## **Stanwick**

We, at Stanwick, have decided to change our practice times on Tuesday evenings to 4pm to 5.30pm in the afternoons. After discussions with the usual ringers, all did not want to come out in the evenings anymore. We had all got use to relaxing in the evenings.

All are welcome to join us on an afternoon ring.



*Thomas Coulter-Brophy*

## 100 Club

When I took over from Derek Jones as 100 Club co-coordinator in 2019, it took me some time to get to grips with the job fully. One item being the need to report winners of the 100 Club draw in the newsletter! The missing details are as follows

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>Subscribers</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Prize</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Prize</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Prize</b>
Sept 2019	128	52D	£64.00	76To	£32.00	60N	£12.80
Oct 2019	128	43P	£51.20	148G	£12.80		
Nov 2019	131	46D	£52.40	48G	£13.10		
Dec 2019	133	20N	£53.20	12K	£13.30		
Jan 2020	157	14To	£62.80	164K	£15.70		
Feb 2020	164	27D	£65.60	29K	£16.40		
Mar 2020	167	31P	£66.80	61K	£16.70		

Then the monthly draws were suspended due to Covid-19, and the subscriptions rolled forwards.

However, as you can see the number of paid-up members has increased so in future there will be three prize winners each month. There is also a facility now for members to pay their subscription directly into a Guild bank account and to register for an email reminder of when subs are due. Further details available on request.

Look out on the website for details of monthly winners when the draw resumes in September.

*Cathy Dixon* ([100\\_club@pdg.org.uk](mailto:100_club@pdg.org.uk))

## GUILD EVENTS 2021 - 2022

Pandemic restrictions have made it difficult to plan a calendar of events in the usual way. Please watch for announcements about future Guild Events, broadcast through the usual channels, including the Guild website [www.pdg.org.uk](http://www.pdg.org.uk) and Facebook page [www.facebook.com/PDGCBR](https://www.facebook.com/PDGCBR). For now, we have the following events scheduled:

### September 25<sup>th</sup> 2021

THRAPSTON - Guild Summer Festival

### April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2022

KETTERING BRANCH - Spring Meeting and Tower 6-bell Striking Contest

### June 11<sup>th</sup> 2022

PETERBOROUGH BRANCH - Annual General Meeting

### September 24<sup>th</sup> 2022

RUTLAND BRANCH - Summer Festival and Inter-branch 8 bell Striking Contest