

Great Gransden Church Bells

Blog 2016

31st December 2016

On Thursday 29th we had our ringers annual party, once again generously hosted by David and Sheila Prest at Old Dixies. We all appreciated the magnificent Christmas tree in the bay window complimenting the view of the floodlit church - idyllic for a festive party.

Fifteen attended which included ringers and other family members. Everyone enjoyed the supper prepared and served by the ringers themselves to help ease the burden on Sheila P.

After supper we were divided into two teams adjourned to separate rooms where we were able to take part in one of David's renowned quizzes, this time bases on anagrams and cryptic word puzzles. It was a close match with only one point between the teams. The prize was a box of chocolates, which was hastily opened and shared amongst all.

Thereafter, some made their way home and others stayed on to chat for a while until finally venturing homeward into the sub-zero temperatures.

Many thanks to David and Sheila for hosting our party again.

Well, it's the last Blog of the year, so I offer best wishes for 2017 to everyone, and happy and progressive ringing in the coming year.

23rd December 2016

Poorly attended practice again last night. These seem to be happening more frequently. Only six on this occasion but we did manage some Plain Bob Minimus to give Matt and Susanne the opportunity to ring the treble, so the time was not wasted.

The clock is ticking for the future of the team. Andrew and Alasdair will only with us for a couple more years before they go to university. We have no other regular youngsters coming on and try as we might be recruiting any new ringers is a major challenge.

Nevertheless, we have had a busy year and there have been a lot of successes big and small as this blog, and the news page for 2016 will testify. We continue to be a happy bunch gradually progressing in our ringing careers. Our next big event is our annual ringers' dinner after Christmas and we have a week's break from ringing, so hopefully we can re-group in the New Year with refreshed enthusiasm.

7th December 2016

It was a privilege to be asked to ring before the service on Tuesday 6th December celebrating the life of Helen Catmur. Helen was involved in many aspects of church and parish life, being well known and loved for her enthusiasm in everything she did. Sadly, her health deteriorated steadily with the onset of motor neuron disease but she

continued to take part in village life when she could and all of us will fondly remember her.

Her son Alasdair, a key member of our ringing team, wanted to be part of the ringing on this day and we were pleased to be able to support him in this. I recall seeing many people looking up to the ringing room as they arrived at church, some taking photographs, probably knowing that he was ringing.

As to be expected the service was very poignant and the church, filled with friends and family, was testament to how much Helen was loved. This shows how as a community we support each other in many ways and how we are strengthened by our love and fellowship for one another.

2nd December 2016

Good practice last night with several "firsts", or nearly "firsts". Susanne rang Plain Hunt on the treble for the first time, and Matt rang a touch of Bob Doubles on the treble for the first. David and Sheila called themselves unaffected to Bob Doubles, and we had some ringing up practice. Call changes are coming along well for everyone. Although there were only seven of us we made good use of the time and definitely made progress. Well done everyone.

The sweets have been replenished and we now have two tins Quality Street type sweets. Many thanks to the donors.

26th November 2016

Just six at practice on Thursday but we had a useful practice, introducing Andrew and Alasdair to the 3rd in Plain Bob Doubles. We also asked them to call changes alternately, which required them to work together in making a long enough length to ring but a calling with some structure to it. Andrew suggested would be psychotic, when he really meant psychic. The result was some very good call changes competently executed, and not at all psychotic!!

13th November 2016

Practice last Thursday was touch and go with several regulars away on business but we decided to go ahead with six of us. At the last minute, someone else dropped out by which time it was too late to cancel so we met with five only. However, we rang for 45 minutes and had an enjoyable time on the half-muffled bells. After practice Victoria came back to Nutbells and we taught her how to ring 5-6 on handbells to Plain Hunt Minor. This was great fun and Victoria did very well. Good sense of rhythm and no problems with handling the bells, which so many people seem to have.

Sunday was Remembrance and seven of us enjoyed ringing half muffled. Sheila called 60 on thirds which was very well struck. The muffles help us to hear the changes more clearly apart from which they give the bells a wonderful sonorous tone. Follow this link to hear them in part of a peal in 2013. The recording is from the ringing room.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgg8UqGsFBk>

30th October 2016

We were delighted to welcome members of the Faraday Guild of Ringers on Saturday 29th October. About twenty attended, ringing a variety of methods from Grandsire Doubles to London Surprise Minor. Ringers came from various parts of the country.

It was particularly nice to see friends Christine Williams (Campton in Bedfordshire), Sue Silver (Biggleswade District Secretary) and Anthony and Charlotte Smith from Biggleswade. Although we see them periodically it is a pleasure to meet up again and have the opportunity to ring with them on home ground.

As always, we received some favourable comments about the bells and the lovely ringing room (complete with cctv).

The bells were left up for ringing on Sunday when the local band managed plain courses of Plain Bob Doubles and Grandsire Doubles. Well done everyone.

25th October 2016

We have had a couple of good practices concentrating mainly on Plain Hunt and Plain Bob. Matt is confident ringing the tenor behind and this has culminated in a successful quarter peal for him on Sunday last (for service of evening prayer). Andrew and Alasdair continue to work on an inside bell for Plain Bob, which is coming on well. We even managed a plain course of Plain Bob Minor.

This is the strongest the band has been for several years and we must continue to work hard to achieve our individual and team goals, which I am sure we can do.

The sacking of all the ringers at York Minster has come as a great shock to ringers everywhere and there is a lot of comment in the press and on social media. It appears to be a safeguarding related issue which has led the Dean and Chapter to this decision but as news trickles out the general opinion is that the wholesale dismissal of the band was unreasonable and unjustified.

Following this, Chris Mew, president of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers has issued a document to all ringing associations. This is a draft consultation paper concerning church policy on safeguarding. Co-incident with this, the Ely Diocese will soon be issuing new C of E guidelines on "safe" recruitment and safeguarding training of all volunteers in the church.

As the safeguarding co-ordinator for our parish I will be working with the churchwardens to review our existing policies and procedures to ensure that we comply. It is too early to say how these guidelines will affect us as ringers but I am confident that the controls we have in place are robust.

9th October 2016

Oh dear! events conspired against us this week with only six at practice. This was due to homework, university courses, conferences and illness. Never mind, we rang Plain Bob Doubles on the front five, and some good call changes. It should be noted that although we were only six we can now manage changes, whereas until recently call changes would have been our default ringing.

We need to continue to recruit so we have an idea to hold a ringing skills morning on Saturday 26th November but invite the village to come along too to see what we do. If anyone turns up they can be shown the bells and have a go. Hopeful we can recruit more ringers!

2nd October 2016

An excellent quarter peal on Saturday morning, arranged for the church gift day. The striking was very good and many people complemented us on our achievement and the quality of the ringing. It was also part of the Hunts District Quarter peal day, an annual event when ringers can volunteer for as many as four quarters.

Our quarter peal included Sheila Prest on the treble, and Alasdair Catmur on the tenor, with Phillip George conducting. The methods rung were Grandsire, St.Martins, St.Simons and Plain Bob.

Sheila G was unable to ring due to her recovery from a fall earlier in the week.

Sunday service ringing was also very good, there being just six of us. We managed call changes and Plain Bob Doubles, so finishing the week on a good note!

29th September 2016

A very good practice this evening although there were only six of us due to work commitments, holidays and illness. Nevertheless, we made good use of the time under the leadership of David Prest our deputy tower captain.

Plain Hunt, Plain Bob Doubles and call changes were on the menu, and opportunities for David and Sheila P to call go and stop in Plain Hunt. The younger ringers successfully rang Plain Bob Doubles and we all succeeded in Plain Hunt on 6, with just some leading irregularities due to there being no tenor behind!

We miss our absentees and look forward to their return soon. In the meantime, we are also planning a ringing skills morning for November, which we could double up as a recruiting session.

Thanks to David for the excellent practice.

5th September 2016

We had some very good service ringing yesterday. Seven of us attending and we started with a touch of Plain Bob Doubles. Sheila had to go down and see the organist so the remaining six rang call changes, followed by another set. Both pieces of ringing were very good, well struck and a good pace. This was followed by ringing down the back five in peal, which was also first rate. Impressive! Thanks to all who came.

We are looking forward to our weekend away in the Durham area from the 9th. Seven towers planned with other activities in between. Watch out for a full report in due course.

26th August 2016

It has been a busy week in the tower. On Tuesday, the electrician came to fit a spur from the new belfry to the old belfry. This is in readiness for the installation of a clackson

and two blue strobe lights. He made an excellent job of this making sure it was discrete and correctly clipped in. He ran it along the main timbers of the old bell frame (under the boarding on top). The oak is 300 years old and is so hard that a small hole had to be drilled for every clip securing the cable. This was very hard work working in confined spaces in very warm conditions as there is not much air circulation within the old bell frame.

That completed, on Wednesday the firm came to install the roof alarm system following the attempted theft of lead several weeks ago. Their job wasn't quite so difficult in the tower but working on the church roof in 29deg sunshine is a dehydrating experience. The work was completed on Thursday.



Siren (top) and control panel (right).
Blue strobes behind the temporarily closed shutters

Subsequent inspection in the tower revealed that one of the shutter doors opens on to their cabling (in spite of my talking through with them not to hinder any of our equipment. So today (Friday) I have been fitting a door stop to the shutter door to prevent it damaging the alarm installation!

An excellent practice last night (Thursday) with fourteen attending. This included Caroline and Matthew from Swavesey, visiting during the summer holidays, and Christine and Lee from St.Neots, calling on us in the absence of practices there during August.

We rang a lot of call changes but also had several goes at Plain Bob Doubles for Andrew and Alasdair (inside), with Matt on the tenor. Plain Hunt was also rung with others given the opportunity to say go and stop.

Christine has just returned from a visit to her homeland in the USA and brought back some goodies, so the half-time break included popping candy, and doughnuts (sort of) - Excellent!, followed by a stream of youngsters going downstairs to wash their hands! Even more excellent!

It was quite warm ringing and we appreciated the fresher air when we finished at 9.00pm, sadly in the dark as the evenings draw in.

Thanks to everyone for coming and especially to our visitors.

20th August 2016

As a follow-up to the clock hammer incident on Tuesday I adjusted the clearance in the hope that it was sufficient. It's much easier with two people which saves a lot of running up and down to make the adjustment, then ring up the bell, then check etc. so I made a best estimate that what I had done was sufficient. Unfortunately, it wasn't and so the block of wood was again needed during the practice.

Further adjustment on Friday was more significant and has resolved the problem, as checked when we rang up the bells this morning (Saturday) in readiness for a wedding this afternoon. I also modified the way the rope is secured to the spokes so that there is less bulk on the outside which further reduces the possibility of the rope fouling the hammers. We will monitor for the next few weeks.



Rope tie modification



Hammers clear when bell down



Hammers clear when bell is up

16th August 2016

We rang a quarter peal this morning at Great Gransden with some ringing friends from other towers in the area. The method chosen was Bourne Surprise Minor. The ringing was good throughout. The records show that this was the first quarter peal in the method on the bells. It was completed in 45 minutes.

Ringing at the weekend revealed a clonking sound from the tenor. The clock hammers were fouling the rope on the spokes of the wheel as it swung past. Some adjustment yesterday did not resolve the problem so I modified the technique of tying the rope around the spokes so that the winding was less bulky. No chance to test it so the piece of 2x2 had to be wedged between the hammers and the springs as a precaution. We'll have a look before practice on Thursday.

8th August 2016

We have had a busy week in the tower with two groups of visiting ringers and a wedding on Saturday. We hosted visits from the Roving Ringers, on Wednesday, a cycling group based this year in Buckden, and on Saturday we were delighted to meet the Rambling Ringers. Complementary comments from both groups about the bells and ringing room, and renewal of acquaintances amongst the latter group.

The church was also the venue for two performances (at the weekend) of Jim's War, a play about RAF Gransden Lodge. This was performed by the local amdram group and included live music and on Sunday was filmed by the BBC. The production required props and costumes etc, all of which were spread out in the church. During ringing by our visitors and rehearsals, cast and ringers intermingled to create a wonderful busy and friendly atmosphere in the church.

The wedding on Saturday was multi-faith and the church welcomed both Christian and Sikh. This was a very colourful occasion. We rang the bells to 60 on thirds, followed by our traditional firing which in my opinion was amongst the best we have ever achieved.

1st August 2016

Only six on Thursday for practice but we made the most of our time. Sheila nominated Andrew as Ringing Master and he looked after the practice very well, with a little guidance. The ringing included call changes, ringing facing outside the circle (helps with listening skills), using playing cards to randomly choose in which order the bells would start (helps develop observation and quick thinking). We also practiced firing the bells ready for forthcoming weddings. Matt and Susanne have not done this before.

An excellent practice, well done Andrew.

23rd July 2016

On Wednesday 20th July the bell hanger spent a couple of hours replacing the bell bolt on the fifth, applying beezwax to the sliders and checking the rest of the installation for any problems. None found and the judgement was that the installation is in good order. When he came to check the remaining bell bolts on the fifth bell the lock nuts could not be loosened and they were deemed secure!! Good response from the Whitechapel Bell Foundry and good to meet Peter Scott again who I helped re-hang the bells in 2000

An email to everyone during the day announced that practice would be on as usual. Sheila G decided to ask David to take the practice which was a very successful one. Matt tried Plain Hunt on the treble and then tenor behind to a 120 Plain Bob Doubles. Both were successful. Good energy and enthusiasm from everyone present. We were able to complete the list of ringers for the four weddings coming up during the summer and David announced that details for our trip to Durham in September were almost complete.

Received a lovely email from Gloria Sayer, which I passed on to the ringers, thanking us for ringing for the Revellers during the previous weekend. Delighted to receive these thanks - this is all part of our [Ringing in the Community](#).

19th July 2016

So, after an eventful weekend I thought I would update the blog.

It has taken a couple of days to sort out repair of the 5th bell but I can now report on progress. On Saturday 16th we rang up the bells in readiness for the Gransden Revellers performance of Time Travellers which required four bouts of ringing over the weekend. The CCTV had decided not to work so I went into the belfry to check on cables. With the bells up my eyes were drawn to the floor under the 4th bell where I saw a bolt. Because we don't have any loose bolts lying about we rang the bells down to find its origin and discovered it was a bell bolt from the headstock of the 5th bell.

After discussion with Tom Ridgman (Association Bell Advisor) I decided to source some bolts locally and we (David P, Matt and me) would replace all the bolts on the 5th on Thursday evening in lieu of practice. A chance discussion with Mike Capps (local farmer, and very knowledgeable about nuts and bolts and things) advised me to get high tensile bolts. This was contrary to Tom's advice and as a result I telephoned the Whitechapel Bell Foundry to see what they had to say.

They offered to send some bolts (high tensile) which I accepted and also said that bell hanger was available this week if we would like him to fit the bolts and inspect the bells.

The loss of a bell bolt is very rare and in case there was some underlying problem I accepted the offer (after consulting David Prest, deputy T/C and Sheila Prest, signatory on bank account).

Bell hanger due tomorrow 20th July.

3rd July 2016

Ringers and Singers Party and Handbells in the Pub break the silence on the Blog front!

Not much to report for a while, partly due to holidays and partly due to "business as usual" with nothing special to report.

However, this weekend has been busy. A summer party, although not in summer weather, was held at Nutbells on Saturday 2nd July, hosted by Sheila and Phillip. All the ringers had been invited, and the church choir (there is some cross-over between the two). We were pleased to entertain twenty-five ringers and singers and thankfully the heavy showers held off so we were able to overflow into the garden to enjoy a bring and share supper.

As the air cooled even more (only 18 degC max early on) the warmth of the house beckoned and we all crushed inside to continue our lively chatter. Many thanks to everyone for coming and bringing food and drinks.



L-R Nadine, Rachel, Matt, Susanne, Alan



L-R Janet, Sheila P, Tom, David, Nichola, Jane, Stephen

The second "Gamma Ensemble" had been organised by Sean Walton for Sunday 3rd July. This is an opportunity for anyone and everyone living in the villages to perform songs or play instruments at The Crown and Cushion public house in Gt Gransden. David P had suggested to Sean that Sheila and I could ring handbells and an email communication with Sean explaining what we would do met with great enthusiasm.

Having consulted Sally Mew (our other handbell ringer) we agreed to perform. Change ringing on handbells is not a performing art but we were excited at the prospect of bringing something quite different to the party. We were very nervous before we rang. A brief and enthusiastic introduction by Sean helped put us at ease and we set off into 120 Plain Bob Minor.

During the ringing, I was aware that there was complete silence in the pub. The ringing went well and we finished the piece with no problems and to a very loud applause from an encouraging audience.

Thanks to David for suggesting we ring - most enjoyable and nerve racking!

10th June 2016

A brilliant practice last night with new things tried by some. David called a 120 PBD with himself unaffected. Sheila P called the same. Alasdair is now fluent in calling call changes and is keeping bells right. Matt rang the tenor behind to Plain Hunt 5 and Susanne rang the 4th - a new bell for her! David stood behind for the first-time supervising Sam ringing the 2nd.

Ten attended and we were kept busy by Sheila G but a longish half-way break was necessary to discuss wedding dates to ensure we had a full band for each, as well as for ringing twice on the Saturday and Sunday for the Gransden Revellers weekend in July.

Phillip announced that the Ely DA won the Ridgman Trophy striking competition at Daventry on the 4th June in which he rang with four other ringers of the Huntingdon District. This is a ten-bell competition attracting teams from each Association in East Anglia and the West Midlands.



L-R Alan Winter, Hannah Campbell, Peter Rogers, Alban Forster, Paul Seaman, Henry Pipe, Barry Johnson, Phillip George

Sweets were donated by Lee (from St.Neots who Phillip is currently teaching), as thanks for the welcome she received when she visited our practice. Matt and Susanne also brought sweets from their holiday (I have temporarily forgotten where and will update in due course!!!)

We are looking forward to the Ringers and Singers social to be held at Nutbells on the 3rd July, and our weekend trip to Durham in September.

28th May 2016

Thinking we would be short on numbers at practice last Thursday we were pleased to welcome the President of the Hunts District, Geoff Durrant, who had contacted me to ask if he could come along; and two visitors from Brampton who had planned to go to the Gamlingay practice but found that they were not ringing.

With this added resource we were able to break out of call changes and Plain Bob Doubles and try Plain Bob Minor as well as reminding ourselves of St.Simons. Sheila P called a 120 of PBD and David P called go and stop to a plain course. Call changes were conducted by Alasdair and David & Sheila P rang PB Minor inside.

The very successful practice was closed by ringing all six down in peal, which we did fairly well. Thanks to our visitors who helped us make one more small step up the progress ladder.

21st May 2016

A very focussed practice last Thursday. We started with some call changes and then in turn were asked to mark it out of ten. The average was 4! It was fair to say that it was the first touch and we hadn't "warmed up", but everyone was very honest about their performance and it helped set us thinking about the quality of ringing, and so in subsequent touches we really started to think about the sound coming out of the tower.

"Look to, treble's going, she gone; immediately followed by "stand" was called two or three times to encourage us to have a good "pull-off". Let's try to remember this in all our ringing.

Later, we had a series of small touches where one by one the less experienced ringers rang the 2nd and we called the bells to Queens and back. Very short, punchy pieces if ringing. We found that the ringing was more regular, slightly faster and generally of a better standard.

Well done everyone for your efforts and concentration, especially those youngsters who had had a long day at school and were worn out!!!

Quality of striking was not the only thing to think about. There were opportunities for Plain Bob Doubles on the treble and ringing the tenor behind, and call changes for Christine who has just embarked on the wonders of changing places!!

15th May 2016

We have been watching the weather closely all week following a beautifully warm weekend of the 8th May, hoping that it would remain warm and sunny for our church fete today. Although temperatures were down somewhat the sheltered garden of the Old Vicarage was a lovely venue for a traditional fete.

Because the garden is adjacent to the church we decided to ring for twenty minutes beforehand. The bells are not very loud outside and we were confident that we would not disturb the stall-holders who would be adding last minute touches to their displays, or the parishioners arriving in good time for the start. Thank you, David, Sheila P, Tamsyn, Janet, Alasdair and Sheila G for the ringing.

The sunny weather enhanced the venue and we had a very enjoyable afternoon. The venue also gave excellent views of the church.



Gt Gransden Church from
the Old Vicarage garden

22nd April 2016

A very busy practice this week with lots of new things tried for several people. Learning to lead is on the list for two or three, David turning in the tenor to Plain Hunt 6, and we all tried our best to strike well for our practice which we dedicated to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on her 90th birthday.

All very well intentioned, but sadly our striking left a lot to be desired due to a combination of having a lot of learners (great) all at the same stage. Individually there were some successes and everyone worked hard to learn.

We also had an unexpected visitor who showed an interest in ringing, but she lives in St. Neots.

Thanks to everyone for your dedication to the task. See you all next time.

15th April 2016

An excellent practice this Thursday with nine ringers present (and a couple or so missing due to work or family commitments). We made good use of the time making sure there was opportunity for everyone to have several rings. Mostly Rounds and call-changes, but we did manage a 120 of Plain Bob Doubles.

Everyone is improving and the weekly additional tied bell practices are paying off. These practices also include two ringers from St.Neots who are learning and are at about the same level as our own ringers.

31st March 2016

Quite a few people away this week due to the Easter holidays but we had a useful 90 minutes ringing Rounds and call changes. We were pleased to welcome Christine Tankersley to our practice. Christine rings at St.Neots but has been having bell control lessons here in recent weeks. We had arranged to carry out her assessment at Level 1 of the Learning the Ropes training scheme which she passed without difficulty. Sheila G carried out the assessment and also did this for our own ringers Matt and Susanne, both of whom passed with no problems. All three ringers started ringing at about the same time and it was good for them to reach this level together.

Phillip will submit their names to A.R.T. and certificates should be presented within the next week or so - watch out for the news on the Welcome page.

28th March 2016

There had been no ringing over the Easter weekend because there was no service at church, so we arranged a quarter peal on Easter Monday to celebrate the season. This coincided with a date (28th March) which Phillip needs as he works towards ringing a quarter peal on every day of the year. We met at 9.30am on a very blustery day as storm Katie swept across the country leaving little opportunity to be out and about in the stormy conditions, so ringing was a good option.

We decided on four methods, Plain Bob, St.Simons, St.Martins and Grandsire and rang a very good quarter peal in 44 minutes. The ringing was very enjoyable and steady throughout. This was David and Sheila P's 25th quarter peal (although not their 25th together), and Phillip's 200th as conductor on the bells. It was also Sheila G's 650th quarter peal.

Thanks to Jon for coming over from Wardy Fen to ring with us. Details of the quarter peal can be found [here](#).



L-R: David, Sheila G, Jon Reed, Sheila P, Catherina, Phillip

27th March 2016

On Good Friday I received a request to take some visitors up the tower. I was delighted to do this and then was asked if I could take them out on to the top of the tower, and was equally delighted as I hadn't been on the top for several years. A complete tour was planned for Holy Saturday starting at the top and working our way down, ending in the ringing room when there was a opportunity to give a brief bell handling lesson to all of them of both backstroke and handstroke incorporating use of the cctv and simulator.

The visitors were Sara Fogg, sister Rebecca and boyfriend Matt. What a geat morning with plenty of questions and which was a new experience for all of them. Thank you, Rachel Fogg, for giving me an opportunity to show them around.



L-R: Matt, Rebecca, Sarah

25th March 2016

We held our ringers' annual meeting on Tuesday 22nd March in lieu of practice during Holy Week. Sheila George (T/C) presented her report which can be found [here](#). The officers were re-elected: Tower Captain, Sheila George, Deputy Tower Captain, David Prest: Secretary/Treasurer, Phillip George. There was a lot of discussion about ringing events this year, for both parish and church occasions. Possibly our most exciting event this year will be our weekend away to Durham in September.

Light refreshments were served and a very pleasant evening was enjoyed by all who attended.

7th March 2016

So, we are about to pull off into Rounds and someone asks where such and such is. Remembering a TV advert from some 20 or 30 years ago, I said "He's gone to the dentist Miss", and then replied as the advert did "What, more fillings?". This was supposed to be funny but it was met with stoney silence. Quick as a flash Alasdair pipes up "Its coming to something when even the adults arent old enough to remember that!". Roars of laughter! Thanks Alasdair! :-)

27th February 2016

A busy practice this week with 12 in attendance. Matt is coming on very well with call changes and rang the tenor for the first time. Jonathan tried tenor behind to Bob Doubles and managed quite well. Our first ever attempt at St.Simons was a challenge but we just about got through a plain course, with much instruction. Alasdair was trebling with Andrew on the tenor. They had a job to keep right amongst the melee of the inside ringers; but we tried and in its way, it was progress. Try again next week.

Jenny and Jonathan have just returned from a week in Dubai and brought sweets with them. The Chinese panda sweets are gradually being consumed. Five out of ten for those, but at least they are quite small. Nevertheless, thanks to David for bringing them.

I have been giving a learner from St.Neots some tied bell practice every week. Her name is Christine and she is improving quickly. We are now doing some dodging practice and place-making. We use the simulator and we will soon go on to ringing the tenor behind. I have signed Christine up for LTR (Learning the Ropes) and she will soon be ready to go for her Level 1 certificate.

On Saturday 27th we welcomed a group of ringers from Trumpington (Cambridge) which included many familiar faces. It was the first visit for some but many said how much they enjoyed the bells, and the warm ringing room on a bright but chilly day! They rang well and it was a pleasure to host their visit.



Trumpington ringers and friends

Having carried out a major housekeeping job on the website, mainly the filing system, I hope that all the links to photographs and documents are now working. I had re-organised the file directory and deleted a lot of obsolete photographs. Having moved most of the remaining photos and documents they had changed their address so the links couldn't find them. Now all ok I think. Anyway, it was a worthwhile exercise because, according to BT, with whom I had made an enquiry about the speed of the website, they suggested that it was because I had too many photographs. Management speed is now very much faster.

I have taken down the old Blog and News Update pages for previous years, so saving a lot of space, and transferred all the data and photographs to pdf files. These can be found on the Archives page.

18th February 2016

Half term so a lot missing this week and down to six ringers for practice. Never mind, we spent the evening concentrating on helping Matt (one of our recent recruits) learn how to lead, dodge in Mexican wave, ring up and ring down in peal, and generally hone his bell control skills. Five of us were able to manage a 120 of Plain Bob Doubles (twice), finding the front five easier than the back five.

All good fun and hoping that we will be back up to strength next week, and for ringing this Sunday!

29th January 2016

A few people missing from practice this evening but we kept everyone busy using various ringing exercises catching up with progress cards and books.

Everyone will soon be signed up to the Learning the Ropes scheme and it is expected that many can achieve level three certificates this year.

Part of this evening practice included ringing facing outside the circle. This was achieved with some accuracy and much amusement. Other achievements - Alasdair and David called go and stop in Plain Hunt on 5, Victoria had a go a Plain Hunt on the 3rd, Matt had a grilling in call changes and Sheila P rang tenor behind to Plain Hunt. All in all an excellent evening - well done everyone!



Ringling Rounds facing out of the circle

9th January 2016

Welcome to 2016. The year started with a great practice on the 8th January. Everyone was buzzing with excited anticipation of our annual dinner to be held on Saturday the 10th, and there was much discussion about who would prepare what. Unfortunately, Victoria and Richard are unable to come to the party so Victoria brought some cupcakes for us to enjoy during the practice. Wow - what cakes, topped with a delicious caramel/toffee icing. Definitely sticky finger jobbies, so some ringers had to wash their sticky fingers before ringing again!

Back to the ringing. We had a good evening with our newest ringers demonstrating that they hadn't forgotten anything over the non-ringing Christmas period. New ideas were mooted amongst which were for David and Sheila P to learn and ring St. Simons, and to call Plain Bob Doubles.



Matt, Phillip and Alan



Tamsyn, Sheila and Susanne



Jenny and Janet



David presents gifts to Phillip & Sheila



Young people's games



Winners of the quiz



Runners up in the quiz



Our hostess, Sheila P