



Magazine of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Issue 11

Summer 2013

Awl a'huld



St Peter and St Paul, Pettistree. See back cover.

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From the Editors

The summer months are busy ones for ringers. We are kept busy at weekends, sometimes on weekdays too, ringing for weddings, always an enjoyable experience. A more unusual request for bells to be rung came from the organisers of a re-enactment of the unveiling, one hundred years ago, of the statue of Thomas Gainsborough that stands in Sudbury marketplace in front of St Peter's church. The bells at St Peter's were duly rung as part of the proceedings.

Traditionally this is also the time for the striking competitions, both at District and Guild level. You will find some of these described in the following pages. Particularly notable was the large number of entries in the Guild six bell competition at Thornham Magna. Fourteen teams entered and seven in the eight bell at Gislegham. Even more pleasing was the fact that seven young ringers took part in the Guild competitions.

The Suffolk Young Ringers team competed in the Ringing World National Youth Contest at York and are to be congratulated on their performance there. News of this event has come too late to be included in this issue, but we hope to cover it in the next.

Many congratulations to David Salter who has rung his 3,000th peal. (For a little more information see page 13.)

We would like to express our thanks to James Freeman who has guided his mother in her first steps in using Microsoft Publisher.

As always we are grateful to all our contributors. Please keep the stories coming in and send us photographs whenever you can. Contact magazine@suffolkbells.org.uk or if you prefer, write to Sue Freeman, High Meadow, Martens Lane, Polstead, Colchester CO6 5AG. Copy by the middle of October please for the next issue.

Richard Gates and Sue Freeman



The young ringers in action



From the Chairman

Fantastic Guild AGM at Stradbroke; a brilliant turnout and a superb tea. I am sure I will not be alone when in future I recall the mounds of meringues. Obviously, the highlight for me personally was not just being elected chairman, but having Philip Gorrod as proposer with Jonathan Stevens seconding. As I said at the meeting there are times when one can find the right words and on the day those words were that Philip will be a hard act to follow. He achieved so much.

Jonathan arranged another interesting fringe meeting asking 'What are church bells for?' These fringe meetings really do add another dimension to the day.

The key piece of AGM business was amendments to the Constitution and Rules. Firstly to remove the link between the deaneries and our districts so that we will no longer have to consider which district a tower should fall into when the Church elects to apply boundary changes to deaneries. Secondly to simplify the structure of the GMC so that rather than have deanery representatives we have up to five district representatives. The intention here is to add flexibility to GMC membership and to shift the focus of GMC members away from deanery representation toward the Guild as a whole.

Jed spoke about the ITTS scheme and the progress that our Guild is making in improving the training that we give to new recruits, so important if we are to attract new ringers and retain them and see them advance to method ringing.

Ruth Suggett stepped aside from the Annual Report Editor's job after many successful years in the post, but finding a replacement is proving quite a challenge. There is a lot of support available but we need someone to pull it all together. So if you feel you can take it on or would like more information please email me at chairman@suffolkbells.org.uk

Something about myself for the great majority of you that I have yet to meet. I retired from my IT job in 2004, moved to Gislingham in 2005 and started to learn to ring in the following year. I have been a member of the GMC since 2009, and I am sure it is my contribution there that led to my nomination for the chairman's role.

I have been saying for a number of years that I would get out more and ring away from my home tower. Now at last I am achieving this. I went to the North East striking competition at Rumburgh and had a really good evening thanks to Jason, Maggie and many others. I also attended the Guild striking competition which was very close to home and a great day, finishing at the Six Bells at Gislingham. I look forward to forays into the south of the county.

Alan Stanley



Notes from the South East District

As well as a good deal of ringing here in the South East District since the beginning of the year, social events have figured quite highly. The New Year's lunch for the St Mary-le-Tower ringers and friends took place at Felixstowe Ferry Golf Club. Despite the arctic conditions it was supported by about thirty five people. Pettistree held its annual dinner in February and many from our district attended the Guild Dinner held at Woolpit. It was a great occasion and opportunity to meet and talk with friends across the diocese, without standing in a freezing cold tower. It was good to hear our web site being praised by the speaker. Well done, Chris.

Not only is ringing thriving in Bredfield at present, but also the social hour in The Castle which follows the Friday practice.

The district practices and meetings have all been well supported since the beginning of the year, as was the District Striking Competition (see the separate report). Since the AGM the committee has been discussing a revised format for the committee to ensure that it is fit for purpose in 2013 and so that everyone will know which posts will need to be filled at the ADM in December. This was presented at the most recent meeting at Coddensham, where it was good to see Alan Smith, tower correspondent and a past Guild Treasurer.

The "go ahead" has been given at St Margaret's in Ipswich for the bells to be hung lower in the tower and rung from a gallery.

In March, the sad passing of Howard Egglestone, (Ringing Master 1969-74), was marked with a memorial peal of Bristol Surprise Major at Henley.

Congratulations to John Taylor on ringing his first peal at the age of 80.

I should like to express my thanks to George Pipe who has provided the outline for this report. We all wish him a speedy recovery and look forward to reading his report in the next issue.

Mary Garner

South East District Striking Competition

May the Fourth be with you...The force was strong within the galaxy of Brandeston, as teams gathered on the aforementioned 'Star Wars Day', where indeed the empire was about to strike back. The church was filled with eager participants, young and not so young, all waiting for the draw. For some, the draw was favourable. In other words, I waited a long time to ring!

Twelve teams had come to compete in the method and call change categories, with the hope of securing the new call change trophy donated by the Scase family in memory of David Barnard. The standard of ringing was excellent, with teams from across the district, including Barking, Helmingham, Hollesley and a band of youngsters from Sproughton all in contention of winning the prize. The weather was glorious, with the emphasis on WAS. We started with bright sunshine, only for it to turn into rain at the drop of a sunhat. However with the village hall open and the kettle on, everyone was well looked after!

Once the last team had done their bit, it was back to the village hall (for those not already avoiding the weather) for a fine example of a ringers' tea. Then it was time for the results. Judges Chris and Margaret Bulleid had their work cut out, and began by saying how brilliant it was to see so many people competing, and with such a good standard of ringing. Congratulations must go to Hollesley, the first ever winners of the David Barnard call change trophy, and to St Mary-le-Tower 'A' on winning the method trophy.

Many thanks to Chris McArthur and his band of Jedi helpers who kept everybody watered and organised the hall and the tea, for permission to ring and anything else I've forgotten to mention. Finally, thanks must go to Tom Scase for organising the judges, and for keeping everybody 'in check' throughout the day.

Well done to everybody who took part, especially if it was your first experience of a striking competition. Here's hoping that next year we will be able to equal this success.

Ruth Munnings, S E District Secretary

North West District Striking Competition

The competition was held on Saturday, 8th June, at Rickinghall Superior (6 bells tenor 9cwt). This was the first time for several years that the North West District had organised a traditional competition, having had fun striking competitions instead. It was felt that a return to a traditional competition would be of much more benefit to try to improve striking generally.

Rickinghall Superior, as those who have rung there will know, are a challenging ring, but all the bands taking part rose admirably to this challenge and the general standard of the ringing was really good.

The competition included a call change element, and three of the seven teams taking part: Thornham Magna/Eye/Redgrave, Great Barton and Bury St. Edmunds Alpha rang call changes.



The remaining teams: Stowmarket, Stowmarket Deanery, Bury St Edmunds 'A' and Rougham all rang a method. A new call change shield had been provided by Chris Davies, Neville Whittell and Winston Girling and this was presented to the call change winners, Bury St. Edmunds Alpha. Great Barton were placed second and Thornham Magna/Eye/Redgrave third.

Continued over

North West District Striking Competition continued

For the remaining teams Stowmarket and Stowmarket Deanery were joint winners, with Bury St Edmunds A second and Rougham third. The Win and Henry Ivings shield was presented to the winning teams.

May I congratulate the winning bands of the day, and thank all for taking part and making the day such a resounding success. Thanks must also go to Jeremy Spiller for judging the competition so efficiently.

Lastly, I cannot thank enough Briony and Chris Davies who invited us to their home at Redgrave for a barbecue to round off the day. This was much enjoyed and appreciated by all.

It would be great to see even more teams taking part next year.

Winston Girling, District Ringing Master

From the South West

News this time comes from the Clare Deanery. Four new ringers at Stradishall and Cowlinge are making great progress. Teenagers Matthew Crysell and Aaron Whittleton, are doing well under Christine Knight's guidance. Now that GCSEs are over they will be able to spend more time ringing. Amanda Crysell and Caroline Priestley are also progressing well. The result of the district striking competition, described below, is testament to the dedication of these ringers. The target is for some 'first quarters' this year.

Paul Mitchell from Haverhill recently rang his first 120 of Bob Doubles without being observation bell at a practice at Great Thurlow while at Stoke by Clare David Smith is working hard to move people on from call changes to method ringing. Tom McKenny, David Newton, Neil Murfitt from Clare and Julius Bell are all making good progress.

South West District Ringing Master Derek Rose writes:

On Saturday 22nd of June the South West District held their striking competition at All Saints, Hartest. Four teams entered. The draw took place at 6pm followed by the competition. The judge was our good friend David Sparling from Essex. With the judge in place and the first team doing their piece the night was well under way. The teams all done it was time to tuck into the lovely food, which as usual took the form of a bring and share supper. The judge fed and watered, it was time for his deliberation on the competition. The Method Shield was won by Kersey and the shield for Call Changes was won by Stradishall. Congratulations to the winning teams and commiserations to the runners up. I would like to thank our judge Mr David Sparling, the teams and their supporters, Richard Gates for time keeping and to every one who brought food and for helping with the cleaning up at the end. It makes me feel proud to be Ringing Master of the South West District and be in the company of such a great bunch of people.

Open tower at Boxford

Thirteen year old Esther Gray, ringer at Boxford and Edwardstone, describes a busy afternoon.

On the 2nd of June there was an Open Gardens event in Boxford and as part of the day there were trips up the church tower to look at the bells and admire the view. Richard Gates, the tower captain, was the guide for the tours as he knew everything you needed to know about the tower and more. For example he told the visitors that the oldest bell, the six, is 600 years old and the next two oldest were in the tower by 1590. Each tour took about 45 minutes. Firstly the visitors went up to the ringing chamber where Richard told them a brief history of the bells and how the tour would proceed, then I led them up the stairs to the clock room where the ladder through the new bell frame begins. The next two short ladders lead through the old wooden bell frame and so we climbed through a trap door on to the tower roof.

When we got to the top there was an amazing view of the whole village. You could see Stoke by Nayland church to the south and Groton church to the north. The visitors also had an extensive view of the beautiful houses and gardens that were wonderful to look at. We could also see some of the gardens that were not part of the open garden event. It was jokingly said that for the trip up the tower visitors need not have paid to go round the gardens as they could see them from the tower.



The tour ended in the ringing chamber where each visitor was encouraged to chime the number three bell after Richard or I had shown them how to do it. Those who were successful were rewarded with a chocolate or a toffee.

By the end of the day some 80 people had been up the tower and I was very pleased to have been involved in what was a long and successful afternoon.

The 90th Anniversary Dinner of the Suffolk Guild

Guild Secretary Mandy Shedden reveals what went on behind the scenes before this highly enjoyable event.

Believe it or not the planning for this prestigious event started in May 2012 some ten months before it was due to take place. At first everything went smoothly: a Guild member who was resident in the village of Woolpit booked the hall because it was cheaper like that, the same member agreed to provide some light entertainment on the piano, the caterer was sourced and booked, a very good cheap florist had been identified and most importantly the bar person was available as well.

Christmas came and went and then just as I was about to start publicising the event and organise selling of the tickets, word came through that our musician had double booked himself and there were some doubts from some quarters about the suitability of Woolpit Village Hall because of the limited amount of parking. Two weeks were wasted in enquiring about the suitability of other venues so I adopted the view that Woolpit Hall had been used before with no great problems reported, the caterer knew the layout of the kitchens, the bar was being provided by an old school friend of one of our long standing Guild members. What possibly could go wrong?

If I thought that this was going to be a doddle to organise then I was in for a shock. 130 tickets were sold, then when I went to the florist to place the order for the flowers to make up the table decorations, I was told that as the dinner was booked for the Saturday after Mothering Sunday, there might be a scarcity of flowers being brought over from Holland. As these flowers were going to be less than half the price of a mainstream florist I was not keen to ask the Guild Treasurer for twice the amount of money I had provisionally earmarked. I also realised that two amateurs with no floristry training in my case and very little in the other case, would struggle



to get 20 table decorations done on the afternoon of the dinner day. Fortunately an excellent floristry enthusiast came to our rescue in the form of Theresa Colthorpe.

The day of the dinner arrived, I left Bury in good time to meet up with a group of willing volunteers to set the Hall up. This is when the real nightmare started. I went to collect the hall key from a lady who had kindly volunteered in the absence of the caretaker to hand it over. She had been instructed that a man called Chris would collect it, I don't know

where she got that idea from but I obviously did not fit the bill and at first she was reluctant to hand it over.

That was resolved and off I set, key in hand, ready to tackle the hall. I was not prepared for what happened in the next half an hour. The key I had been given did not open any of the three doors which were on the outside of the building at Woolpit Village Hall. The deputy caretaker did not have any other keys to try, and it was very cold standing outside while we discussed what to do. Maurice Rose who seems to know someone in every corner of Suffolk eventually came up with the idea that a former ringer still lived in the village and that he might know of someone else we could get the key from. With a heavy heart I dialled Philip's number and told him of our predicament. We could not get into the hall, the caterer was arriving in 20 minutes with all the table settings, and the cook had already started preparing the hot meals at her home ready to bring to the hall. There was no turning back.

Philip looked on the website of Woolpit village hall and found the number of a previous secretary who just as he rang was on the doorstep talking to Maurice about the possibility that she may have still got a key which she had not handed back to the current Hall committee. At the same time, I was discussing breaking a window to get entry into the hall with Gordon, the Guild treasurer who agreed that replacing the window was cheaper than losing out on refunding 130 dinner tickets and paying the caterer for wasted food. Salvation arrived in the form of a dapper little lady in a sports car who zoomed up to the hall doors with a key clutched tightly in her hand. Yes the former Secretary did still have a key and it did open the doors. With two and a half hours left until the guests were due to arrive, we managed to set the hall up in time for an Anniversary Dinner that was well received and enjoyed by the majority of diners.



Peal Compositions part two

In the second of his series of articles David Salter explains the methods of recording peal compositions.

Once it was discovered that methods could be extended by calls, compositions (a method of recording what is to be rung) have developed. A system needed to be found that gave access to all not just a few. Over the years the system of recording compositions has changed in an effort to make them more understandable. A composition is a set of instructions that lays out how to ring the touch.

Early publications give the touch or composition by the bobbed leads only. For example:

2357486
6452837
6423578
2643578
4263578
4237685
6342578
4632578
3462578
3427685
6234578
3624578
2364578

Twice repeated.

This composition gives 3024 changes of Plain Bob or 6048 changes of a treble dodging method.

The leads show the lead end change when a bob is called. As an example the first lead given: 2357486 would be 3527486 if no bob was called. By working out the leads in-between the bobs you can get the full works. The first three bobs could also be shown as: BPPPPBB (a notation used in many change ringing computer programs.

The next phase was to indicate how many leads occurred between the bob changes to try to clarify where the calls came, thus:

2357486 1
6452837 5
6423578 1
2643578 7
4263578 7
4237685 1
6342578 6
4632578 7
3462578 7
3427685 1
6234578 6
3624578 7
2364578 7

Twice repeated.

This is the same composition with the added lead notation which shows a bob at lead 1, bob five leads later, bob next lead and so on. This system is still used today for methods with no obvious fixed bell such as twin hunt Triples like Grandsire and Single Oxford.

Even this simplistic approach was not deemed accessible enough so the composition developed "calling" positions: Wrong, Middle and Right. Simply these mean Wrong, when the observation bell is in N-1 place at the lead end. So for Major it would be 7th, Royal 9th. Middle is when the observation bell is in N-2 place at the lead end. So for Major it would be 6th place, Royal 8th place. Right is when the observation bell is in its home position. So for Major 8th and Royal 10th. In most cases the tenor is usually the observation bell.

This is the above composition given in this form:

W M R 23456
1 1 3 42635
1 - 3 34625
1 - 3 23645 Repeat twice

Peal Compositions continued

Note that 78 have been dropped to show that they are fixed or unaffected by the calls throughout.

Further adjustment took place over the years to arrive at what is now considered standard.

W M H 23456

- - 3 42635

- 3 34625

- 3 23645

Repeat twice.

R (right) has become H (Home) and the gaps and bobs are slightly changed.

This composition is known as a 27 course block which gives 6048 changes to a Treble Dodging Method.

It is in this form that most modern compositions can be found.

Postscript to the Yarkhill story told in the Spring Issue

(From the Ringing World)

Yarkhill, Herefords,

St John the Baptist

Sat May 25 2013 2h34 (4)

5040 Stedman Triples

Comp. Taylor's No.3 Transp of

Thurstans'

1 Ashley C Fortey

2 Colin H Ward

3 Frederick Shallcross

4 James Clatworthy

5 Stephen W Barton

6 Adrian Moreton

7 Bernard Taylor (C)

8 Andrew Mainwaring

Rung to celebrate the installation

of these bells in honour of

Fabian Stedman (1640-1713),

of this parish. The first peal on the bells,

rung by a band representative of

those who supported the project.

Edith calls it a day at Bardwell

The Bardwell band were all sorry to hear that one of their loyal number, Edith



Nurse, had decided to stop ringing after many years of faithful service as a Sunday service ringer. Edith has been one of the stalwarts of the Bardwell band, and before that, of the Ixworth band, attending Sunday service ringing and practice nights regularly for many decades. Not just that, she has also done her fair share of recruiting, has baked innumerable cakes for open days and fundraising, and given up hours and hours of her time to help with tower tours and other events. Everyone has marvelled at her capacity to climb the steep and uneven steps to Bardwell's ringing room, but sadly they have now got the better of her. It was a real pleasure therefore, to ring a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples in her honour on Sunday 30th June and to then retire to the pub with the whole band, where Edith was presented with an engraved glass vase and bouquet of flowers as a small token of our appreciation.

Ruth Suggett

The Ladies' Guild in Suffolk

This summer it was the Eastern Region's turn to host the Annual General Meeting of the Ladies' Guild of Ringers. The Eastern Region consists of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire, and Suffolk was the chosen venue. A ringing festival was arranged, starting on Friday 28th June. Towers open on that day were Cavendish, Long Melford, Lavenham, Kersey and the Norman Tower, thus giving visitors to the area a glimpse of some of Suffolk's finest medieval villages and a chance to ring on the 12 at Bury.

The meeting itself was held on the Saturday at Bildeston and two routes of nine open towers were arranged, one from the south and west, coming up from Essex and finishing with Edwardstone, Boxford, Polstead and Bildeston, and one from the north and east finishing with Earl Stonham, Offton, Barking and Bildeston again. The service was held at

Bildeston, followed by tea, then the AGM in the Chamberlin Hall. About 100 ladies and a sprinkling of gentlemen attended. Apart from the counties of the host region,

members came from Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Leicestershire, Middlesex, Rutland, Somerset, Staffordshire, Worcestershire and South Wales.

During the course of the meeting Betty Baines was awarded honorary life membership, in recognition of her outstanding service to the Guild.



Clockwise from front: Shirley Girt, Margaret Roberts, Carla Broderick, Vicky de Vries and Evelyn Reeve enjoy their tea.



Betty Baines with retiring president Jan Wyatt and new president Liz Davey.

Give 'em enough rope...

Five trainee bell-ringers and their teachers from across the county gathered for an intense learners' practice day at St Mary's, Helmingham, on Saturday 28th April.

All trainees were either on Level One or recently signed off from Level One of the "Learning the Ropes" scheme – designed to take new ringers from first lessons all the way through to becoming proficient change ringers. All ringers had been ringing for about a year or under.

Having shown proficiency in bell handling and bell control, Level Two of the scheme includes activities that aim to build important ringing skills such as rope sight development and listening, as well as further bell control.

Helmingham St Mary has eight bells – given to the church to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo. But rather than ringing the Waterloo Bells for real, we rang on the simulator, recently installed so the tower can be used as a teaching centre for bell ringing.

Hosted by Jed Flatters and Rowan Wilson and under the careful eye of Trevor Hughes, the day saw learners put through their paces with rounds and call changes. "At the moment it is all about rope time – the more rope time you get, the better you become," explained Jed.

With five learners from five different towers, it was a good opportunity for trainees to compare notes and progress. And with eight accomplished ringers on hand, there were eight pairs of eyes watching from all angles – ready to offer tips and nip bad habits in the bud.

After a pub lunch at the Dobermann Inn

in nearby Framsdon (take cash or a cheque book – they don't accept cards), it was back for more practice. This included exercises to develop skills in place making and standing the bell.

We rang a rather stilted version of "Twinkle, twinkle little star" – ringing one or two blows each and then setting the bell according to the tune. We also rang a "Mexican Wave" – simple kaleidoscope to help accurate striking and place making.

It can be a little nerve-wracking ringing in front of different people in a new tower, especially when the weather has still to warm up following the coldest spring in living memory. But by the end of the session everyone went away feeling they had learned something.

The learners were Catherine Draper (Halesworth), Sal Jenkinson (Wisset), Kirsty McGarry (Debenham), Adam Shard (Bury St Edmunds), and Johann Tasker (Polstead).

Johann Tasker

Congratulations

On June 23rd a Suffolk Guild band rang a peal of Yorkshire Surprise Major at St James, Garlickhythe, London. (Remember the bells on the barge leading the Jubilee flotilla?) This was Colin Salter's 75th peal, Mary Dunbavin's 800th peal for the Guild, Katharine Salter's 400th tower to a peal and the conductor David Salter's 3,000th peal. Also ringing were George Salter, Nicola Turner, Tom Scase and Colin Turner.

This was a 15th birthday compliment to Colin Salter and probably a birthday he will remember for some time to come.

Sound Room (Clock Room, Intermediate Chamber)

This is the room that a lot of towers have, between the bells in the Belfry and the ringers in the Ringing Chamber, the main purpose of which is to attenuate sound levels. It does this by acoustically isolating the belfry from the ringing chamber ceiling, by diffusing sound coming through the belfry floor rope holes and by absorbing some of the sound of the bells.

It is also there to mix the bell sounds evenly, provide space to draw the ropes into a better circle, to protect the ringers from a clapper failure and it often gives somewhere to put the tower clock.

We aim for the sound level in the sound room to be between 90 & 100dBA; more than that and attention to the belfry floor is needed. Maybe the boards are square edged (not tongued and grooved) and have shrunk a little, maybe a hatch doesn't fit properly or maybe there is a gap around the edge. All should be sealed; we want the sound to come only through the rope holes.

Solid, well sealed floor boards and hatches are needed in this room too, although if the sallies penetrate the rope holes when ringing, one may need to lift the hatches a little so they don't go quiet at backstroke. If, having got a good belfry floor above and a good sound room floor, the bells are still too loud (above 80dBA) in the ringing chamber, then muffler boxes can be used. Briefly, these are boxes made of 18mm ply or chipboard 2' (600mm) square by 10" (250mm) high, filled with "soundslab" or fibreglass, with a hole through the middle for the rope to go through and sealed to the floor with silicon. This can give a sound reduction of 10dBA.

We are fortunate in Suffolk in that most of our towers are flint and lime mortar, which combined have the ideal acoustic properties for a sound room. If your tower is of hard brick though, it would be worth chatting to the church architect about having it plastered with a lime based plaster (longer lasting than acoustic tiles) which would reproduce the sound absorbing qualities of the flint and lime walls.

Handling problems can sometimes be traced to the sound room. Whether the ropes are drawn or not, flapper boards or chutes are a huge help in taming flapping ropes. Pulleys, on belfry floor and sound room floors get overlooked and should be checked and if necessary oiled or greased; they must rotate freely.

Clocks need consideration. When planning a restoration, do talk to the clock advisor before making any plans to move it and make sure the bell-hanger is aware that the clock has drive shafts to the face or faces and that ropes may need to penetrate the works. Weight cases are an often overlooked source of flanking sound, raising the volume in the ringing chamber. If your clock has been converted to auto-wind, these are no longer needed and can go, or at least be capped off and sealed at sound room floor level. If your clock is still wound by hand, do give auto-winding some serious consideration.

If you have any concerns about your bell installation, do get in touch; your Technical Advisor is here for just that.

Jonathan Stevens
bac@suffolkbells.org.uk

Book review

The New Ringer's Book by John Harrison and Catherine Lewis. A publication of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers Education Committee.

The book begins with a short introductory chapter explaining full circle ringing and what is meant by 'handstroke' and 'backstroke'. Clear stickman diagrams illustrate the whole sequence. There are also photographs of bells, up and down, with the basic parts labelled. Chapters 2 – 7 are all concerned with learning to ring, from basic bell-handling through to starting to ring simple methods. Unlike many books aimed at the new ringer, this one is profusely illustrated, mainly by stills taken from video recordings of people actually ringing; these are not posed photographs, but 'action shots'. Thus, in the chapter on learning to handle a bell there is a sequence of photographs showing a ringer's hands rising to close round the sally before making the next handstroke. Much emphasis is placed on the importance of the right hand going quickly from the sally to the tail end at the end of each handstroke. Again photographs are used to illustrate the point. Some of the exercises described in this chapter are also to be found in the ITTS Teacher's Handbook, so there is a consistency here in the approach to teaching.

There is a chapter on raising and lowering with detailed help on making coils and how to practise this on a static rope.

Chapter 4 is entitled 'Ringing rounds' and concentrates on the skills needed to achieve rhythmical rounds: a good sense of rhythm and the development of listening skills and of ropesight.

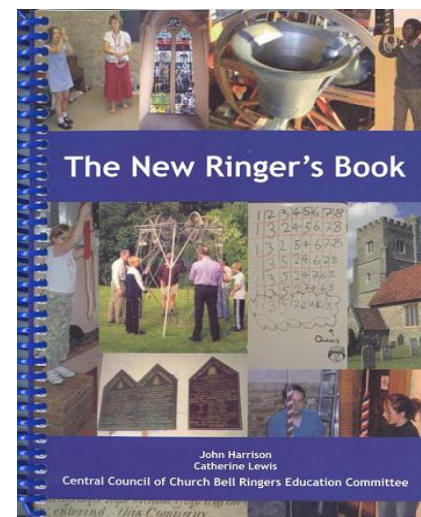
Chapter 6 gets to grips with some ringing terminology and explains some of the bewildering jargon such as 'front', 'back', 'hold up', 'cut in' and so on. It also introduces the concept of the 'place' in which a bell is ringing. This leads into a description of ringing call changes and then on to the building blocks of method ringing: hunting, making places and dodging. The next chapter introduces the ringing of simple methods.

After a chapter on how to progress in ringing, the book ends with more general information about the world of ringing. There is a full glossary of ringing terms, details of where to find out more about ringing and an index.

The book is to be recommended for the wealth of information it contains. Any tower where people are taught to ring would do well to have a copy. At £9.50 it is a little more expensive than many CCCBR publications, but this is due to the colour photographs used to such good effect in the chapters on handling.

Go to cccbr.org.uk/education for details of how to order the book.

Sue Freeman



St Peter and St Paul, Pettistree

There has probably been a church on this site for more than 900 years, although the structure of the present one dates from the 13th century. Although in the centre of the village, where the pub, possibly a guild hall, and very likely the place where the builders of the church lodged, forms the south wall of the churchyard, its setting is tranquil and surrounded by open spaces dotted with trees.

The oldest part of the church is the chancel, with windows from about 1280, the upper parts having stained medieval glass, some of it grisaille. There are a few medieval benches with poppyheads, but most of the pews are Victorian.

There was great excitement a few years ago when the lower part of the south wall was stripped of plaster because of the damp. The removal revealed a holy water stoup just inside the door and, further along, a mensa slab. This latter was probably part of one of two nave altars. Stone altars were ordered to be removed in the 1540s but as they were some of the holiest artefacts possessed by the church many were hidden; this one for more than four centuries. However an angle piscina in the sanctuary has survived since pre Reformation times.

One of the latest additions to the fabric is the set of altar kneelers. These were a millennium project, depicting the seasons, with the central one showing St Peter & St Paul. Michael Coulter kindly allowed his pictures to be “translated” into a format for stitching, a project undertaken by many members of the congregation.



Although a small village, the church in Pettistree is thriving as a centre of worship, with well-attended weekly services, as well as being a local centre for ringing.
Mary Garner