



Magazine of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Issue 19

Spring 2016

Awl a'huld



St Andrew's, Hasketon.

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From the Editors

Thank you to all those who have contributed such a variety of articles to this spring issue of your magazine. It was especially pleasing to receive Lucy Williamson's enthusiastic account of ringing with her university society in York. We were delighted to hear that copies of the last issue have found their way to Australia, particularly since that issue contained George Pipe's account of ringing there 60 years ago.

If you have a tale to tell, please let us have it for the next issue. Contributions for the next issue to magazine@suffolkbells.org.uk or by post to Sue Freeman, High Meadow, Martens Lane, Polstead, Colchester CO6 5AG by the end of June please.

Correction

In the winter issue we wrongly ascribed the article on page 5 to Sally Munnings. In fact the piece was written by Ruth Munnings. We apologise to Sally and Ruth for this error.

Richard Gates and Sue Freeman

From the Membership Secretary

I was appointed Membership Secretary by the GMC in October 2015 and would like to thank everyone for the magnificent response to updating membership information. Let me reassure you that this information will remain confidential. As I write this in the middle of February I have received returns from 506 of the 745 people I sent letters to at the end of 2015.

If you are one of the 239 who have yet to do so I should be grateful to receive them soon. If you have lost yours there is a blank letter which can be downloaded at <http://www.suffolkbells.org.uk/pdfs/MembershipDataLetter2015.pdf>. As a result of the returns I have received information which will enable us to update Gift Aid Register, improve day to day communication with more than 130 more members on the email system run by the webmaster. Now there is a Membership Secretary there is someone to tell if you move house, change your email address, wish to be added to or removed from the Gift Aid register etc. If this applies to you at any time, please let me know. Thank you again for your support.

Mary Garner, membership@suffolkbells.org.uk, 01728 746097 Thong Hall, Wickham Market, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 0NG

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From the Guild Chairman

It's spring again, well almost, and the AGM is coming up which always takes a bit of thinking about. It's a shame in a way that it takes the AGM to force the thinking so to speak but that is the reality. On the other hand it's good to have a prompt to think about the basics of the Guild and where it's going. You will see from the numerous reports in the Annual Report that generally speaking the Guild is in good shape. The only cloud on an otherwise fairly clear horizon is that of filling officer positions. There have been challenges at both District and Guild level, not all resolved. I appeal to you to step up if you possibly can; do not just assume someone else will.

Now a few words about proceedings at the recent GMC meeting. This is the Guild Management Committee, where members from each District look after the business management of the Guild. Officers' reports provide status and discussions and decisions flow from there. In addition there are topics which are more one off by nature or that run for two or three meetings. Examples of these are a framework for allocating grants to assist with recruitment and training activities, along the lines of that used for bell projects but with less money involved and most importantly a fast track approach to match the shorter timeframes needed for a response. Started this time is a look at Guild branding. Over time many different logos have been introduced and used for different purposes. The objective is to rationalise this so that the Guild is presented with a single logo, so important in these days of heightened awareness of brand. Clarity of branding says so much about an organisation. So watch this space, or more accurately, the cover of this magazine next time.

Alan Stanley



AGM at Hadleigh

Saturday 2nd April

Ringling at Boxford from 1:30pm

2:30pm ringling at Hadleigh

4:00pm Service

4:45pm tea followed by meeting

Names for tea to Pauline Brown 01787 827135 or Derek Rose 01284 830436

Handbell ringling in the church during the afternoon

Two free car parks in Magdalen Road, on the opposite side of the High Street to the church

Memories of learning how to ring . . . and now

I learnt to ring in Northamptonshire in the early 1960's and although the names will not mean much to Suffolk ringers, they are a personal reminder of those who taught and encouraged me in the art of bell ringing. First a little scene setting. In 1953 the bells at Rushden, Northants were augmented to 8 to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and I was invited to ring in the Golden Jubilee peal there in 2003. I think it was during the reminiscences that took place over that weekend that I was told that it took me an inordinate amount of time to learn to ring Bob Minor. That revelation came as rather a surprise to me, yet perhaps we tend to forget the difficulties that we had when we learnt to ring.

I was taught to handle a bell at Rushden in the early 1960's by Les Priestley, the tower captain, who was a carpenter by trade. Les had learnt to ring at a neighbouring tower with a number of others in preparation for the augmentation of the bells and the only thing I can remember about my first attempt at ringing was not to be put off by the fact that Les had only four fingers on one hand, as a result of a carpentry accident. Early ringing memories are rather lost in time, but I do recall being shouted at quite frequently by Arthur Gibbs and that was because my backstroke leads were too slow. Arthur was, however, a great encouragement, taking me to practices at Bedford in the days of Steven Ivins and later inviting me to ring in a peal of Cambridge Royal at Manchester Cathedral, which was lost due to mechanical failure. I was also amazed by Arthur Bigley and Jack Skeritt who would ring a course of Superlative, four-in-hand – how on earth did they manage that when ringing one bell to the method in those days would have been many steps too far!

But that's jumping ahead and let's come down to earth and back to Bob Minor. I recall spending a lot of time studying the "Ropesight" book, the cycle of work and writing out the changes on squared paper. I don't remember at this stage anyone telling me how to learn a method and I guess there were the comments of the day like 'Boy, there's the line go and learn it.' Well I managed to ring my first quarter peal to an inside bell to Bob Minor around Easter time in 1963 and I even conducted one in January 1964 so perhaps someone else's memories of the length of time it took me to learn Bob Minor were a little awry!

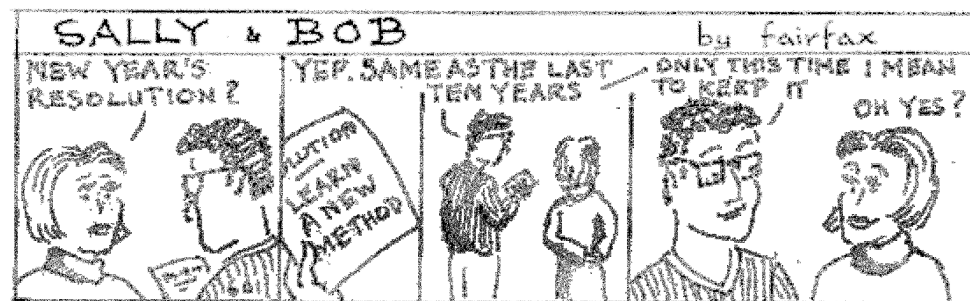
However, I came to grief with the 'learn the line' advice – still no instructions of how to learn the line – in early 1964 when the Bedfordshire Association held a practice at Elstow with Woodbine as the special method. I'd learnt the Woodbine line and when I rang it, all went well until someone called a bob. Chaos ensued and I simply didn't know what to do. I don't even remember being invited to ring a plain course after that!

It was not until I went to university in Manchester and had the opportunity to ring major methods that I was given instruction on how to learn methods. Gordon Benfield was a lecturer in Manchester and I believe he had rung in the first ever peal of 40 spliced surprise royal, so he was well placed to teach us how to learn methods—a lead at a time and the order of starts. The blue line

was deconstructed into manageable blocks and which one followed the previous. I wish someone had told me that much earlier when I started to learn methods. The point of reflecting on my own memories of learning to ring was triggered after attending an ITTS training course on teaching bell handling at Bardwell in October 2014. People learn in different ways, some by doing, some by seeing and others by verbal instruction. For example, to attempt to teach someone with verbal instructions – even to the extreme of shouting at them – when they are a visual learner is going to hinder their progress and perhaps discourage them so that they give up learning to ring entirely. The course is based on techniques that are used in training athletes and other sportsmen so that they can achieve maximum performance. Each activity is perfected before going on to the next. Teaching bell handling is similarly broken down into discrete steps. As the learner gains confidence and perfects each step, then an incremental step is added. Method learning is similarly broken down into small steps, getting away from what I guess is a huge jump for most people from rounds/call changes into plain hunt/plain bob. 'Dodgy call changes', 'Mexican wave', 'Twinkle twinkle little star', and 'Kaleidoscope' can provide fun, a challenge, and laughter when the experts in the band get it wrong. For experienced bands these things may not be applicable, but if your band is struggling to progress with method ringing, here are a couple of suggestions. Try jumbling the bells up with call changes and then starting plain hunt. Try ringing plain hunt on 6 bells with bobs (the treble makes a 4th's place bob each course which causes bells in 5/6 to dodge or a 2nd's place bob is called before the treble leads which causes bells in 3/4 and 5/6 to dodge). These exercises can help to develop bell control, knowing what place one's bell is in and they form a progression to method ringing.

I can thoroughly recommend the ITTS courses, Module 1 for teaching bell handling and Module 2 for progressing in method ringing. More details of the scheme and forthcoming courses can be found at <http://www.ringingteachers.co.uk/itts/>. The 'New Ringers Book' from the Central Council is also a recommended aid. (See book review in Issue 11)

Roger Coley



Ringling in Australia

Earlier this year I was invited to a wedding in Hobart, Tasmania, and made it the opportunity to spend some time in Australia, and while there do some ringing. In Hobart we stayed in a hotel opposite St David's Cathedral so only had to cross the road to ring on Sunday morning. I joined this 10 bell tower for Sunday service ringing and donated a copy of *Awl a'huld* which just coincidentally contained an article from George Pipe relating to his ringing experiences in Australia. Following the ringing, we adjourned for coffee before heading across town to the Church of the Holy Trinity. This has now become a Greek Orthodox church and their service was in full flow but we started ringing regardless and I was assured that the congregation enjoyed hearing the ringing whilst their service was ongoing. Although this is an 8 bell tower, we only had 6 ringers but had a very pleasant ring none the less, surrounded by multiple archive items on the walls relating to the history of ringing in the tower. The following weekend I found myself in Melbourne on Sunday morning and joined St Paul's Cathedral for their Sunday ringing, again donating a copy of *Awl a'huld* to the tower. This is a 12 bell tower (29 cwt tenor) and fortunately we had enough to ring all 12 bells which sounded superb and was undoubtedly the ringing highlight of my trip. The following evening I was at St Paul's in Geelong where I joined the tower for their practice evening along with several of the faces from the previous day's ringing in Melbourne.



St David's Cathedral, Hobart.



Ringling in Sydney

My final weekend in Australia was in Sydney where I went to St Andrew's Cathedral for Sunday ringing. Although this is another 12 bell tower with a 29cwt tenor, disappointingly there were only 8 of us to ring, but we rang the back 8 and so I at least got a feel of how the full ring would have sounded. Like many places in the UK, there seems to be a nucleus of good ringers but an overall lack of numbers seems to be an issue in Australia, particularly on a Sunday morning when many churches with bells tend to have a service at roughly the same time. All in all it was a cracking experience and I was made just as welcome as any visitors would be back home in the UK.

Kevin Ward, Hadleigh

The Ringers' Lament

So here they come, some big and some small,
Some are short and some are tall,
Each to a rope and stands quite steady
When the Tower Captain calls out, 'Ready.'
'We are earlier today,
It's shocked the rector', heard her say.
'The Best Man's here, with a nervous Groom.
I'm sure the Bride will be here soon.'
She's always punctual, our dear Rector
And does not wish to stand and hector
Toddlers in the congregation
When they make perambulation
Round the pillars, up the aisles,
She merely looks and gives them smiles.

The ringers now are old and grey
Oh! How they hope there'll come a day
When younger folk will come along
And help them regularly to bong
Our lovely bells to Sunday's leaven
They'll soon be asking 'Pete' for Heaven
But now, 'Look to! Treble's going, treble's gone.'
And once again the bells do Bong!

John Mardon

Sally Munnings writes:

Just a bit of background into the late John Mardon who joined us ringing at Soughton when he moved to the village in 2003. Straight away he came along every Wednesday and Sunday although towards the end not always a well man. He was taught to ring at Purleigh in Essex when his son learned there. He was already in his eighties but nothing stopped John, such a lovely man. Whilst in Purleigh he wrote some poems, but the above is one he wrote while with us.



John Mardon

A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the service, his cousin asked him, 'How many women can a man marry?' 'Sixteen,' the boy responded. His cousin was amazed at the answer. 'How do you know that?' 'Easy,' the little boy said. 'All you have to do is add it up, like vicar said, four better, four worse, four richer, four poorer.'

Lavenham in the news again

Our lovely wool church at Lavenham has been much mentioned in recent months. Last year Reginald Brill's painting of ringers in action was chosen by the Central Council to be made into a Wentworth jigsaw puzzle, the proceeds of which went to the CCCBR Bell Restoration fund. Also last year came the bad news that thieves had stripped the lead from the roof of one of the aisles. On the ringing front, the clappers were all removed and sent to Taylors where they were refurbished.



Now there is news of a very different kind. Over the winter months first one, then two peregrines were seen high on the tower. Permission was sought and given for a wooden platform to be installed within the parapet of the tower to provide a suitable nesting site should the peregrines decide that this was home. The platform is now in place and the two peregrines are still there, so there is hope that these might be the first peregrines to nest on a church in Suffolk. Eggs are usually laid in March or April, so the next few weeks will tell.

Because these are birds that enjoy life high on mountains and lofty cliffs it is understandable that Suffolk has not been a county favoured by these fast flying



Peregrine chicks in their box on the Orwell Bridge
in 2008

birds of prey. Back in 1999 a pair was seen on the Orwell Bridge and a nesting box was installed for them there. Eventually, in 2007, a pair bred successfully in that box and in subsequent years many chicks have been reared. These were the first peregrines to breed in Suffolk in 200 years. Last year a pair raised chicks on a nest on the old Cranfield's Mill by Stoke Bridge in Ipswich and they are there again this spring.

This pattern of nest building on high buildings has been repeated on cathedrals all over the country; just a few examples are Derby, Winchester, Salisbury and Norwich. Who knows, Bury St Edmunds may be next! In the meantime we are very privileged to have these stunning birds on a Suffolk parish church. A female peregrine has also been seen this last winter on Bungay church tower and a nesting box is to be provided there in the hope that a male will appear, so perhaps this once rare bird in our county will become more common. Historically it has been killed by gamekeepers and suffered badly from poisoning by agricultural chemicals.

Legal protection has helped it to recover, but it is still an uncommon bird in Britain.



Male peregrine on Lavenham tower

Peregrines now seem to be quite at home in towns and cities; there are even pairs nesting in central London. In the Suffolk countryside we are used to seeing kestrels hovering while they seek out prey on the ground. Sparrowhawks hunt along hedges before moving in to the kill, again on the ground and common buzzards also take prey such as rabbits and other rodents. Peregrines have a very different style of hunting, a method that has made them popular birds for falconry. It is a very fast flying and agile bird which catches other birds on the wing, not on the ground. From its high perch it can see prey a long way off; then

it will rise very high and fly very fast towards it before dropping on to it with its wings folded to increase momentum. It also catches birds by simply outflying them. Pigeons are commonly taken, but any passing bird is fair game.

Next time you are in Lavenham, take your binoculars and have a close look at that lofty tower. The birds are most often to be seen just below the parapet on the East side of the tower, overlooking the nave roof.

Many thanks to Phil Spraggins for the photograph of the peregrine on the tower.

Over

A few months ago, I was privileged to ring a peal at Over, Cheshire. These are a magnificent ring of eight from Taylors cast during their “Golden” or best period. Cast in 1915, they are excellent: no shrieking trebles, no over humming tenors, just one uniform sound that warms and pleases.

In 1946, a band of Suffolk ringers including Lester Brett, Les Wightman and Charlie Bailey rang a peal there of Cambridge Surprise Major. This must have been a logistical nightmare to organise particularly so closely after the war. It took me four and a half hours to drive home with modern roads and a modern car.

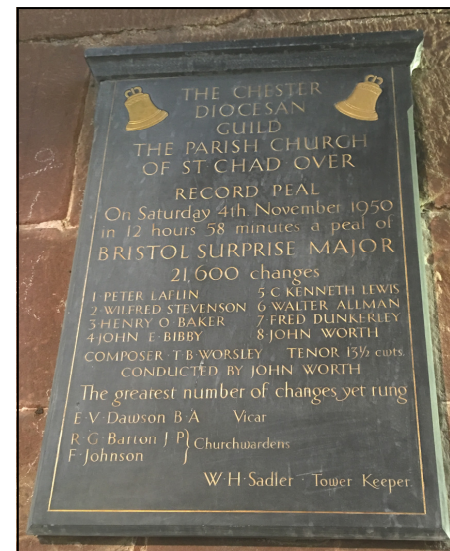


We can only speculate as to why the Suffolk ringers travelled so far at this time. Three Suffolk ringers, Peter Laflin (born in Stoke by Nayland), Allen Bailey (born in Leiston) and Ted Jenkins (not a true blood as born in Paddington), were all established in Cheshire at that time. All learnt to ring in Suffolk and Peter Laflin rang many peals with the Framsdon, Helmingham Debenham ringers. So it is reasonable to consider that the peal band were visiting old friends.

In 1950 the Cheshire ringers rang a

record length (21600) of Bristol Surprise Major on the bells. The peal took 12 hours and 58 minutes. There is a peal board in the tower to mark this remarkable achievement and a very good picture of the band. Interestingly the treble was rung by Peter Laflin. At the time of the long length, Peter would have been 61. As far as I can find no other Suffolk “True Blood” ringer has rung more consecutive rows nor for a longer period. A true record.

David Salter



Ringling for Agincourt

There were a number of notable anniversaries last year, 2015: the 800th of the signing of Magna Carta, the 200th of the battle of Waterloo, the 70th of the Battle of Britain and in September Queen Elizabeth II became the longest reigning British monarch. 25th of October marked the 600th anniversary of one of the great medieval battles, that of Agincourt, when Henry V led a small army, which had been greatly weakened by illness at the over-long siege of the town of Harfleur, on a march through northern France. The destination of the army was Calais, which was still a possession of the English Crown, but Henry found his route blocked by the far larger French army. Fought on a muddy field, Agincourt became one of the most famous military victories of the Middle Ages and secured Henry's place as our greatest warrior king. Shakespeare wrote a play based on the events of the battle; this was turned, in 1944, into a lavish film starring Laurence Olivier to celebrate the heroism of the British Armed Forces during the Second World War..

Only two English noblemen died in the battle: Edward, Duke of York and Michael de la Pole, the young third Earl of Suffolk who had inherited the title on the death of his father the second Earl, also called Michael, from dysentery a few weeks earlier at the siege of Harfleur. The bones of the two men were returned to England from France for burial, the third Earl being buried in the Priory Church at Butley and the second Earl at the Collegiate Church of St Andrew in Wingfield a short distance from the castle which he had completed after the death of his father. The fine tomb of the second Earl can still be seen in the chancel of St Andrew's.

The tower of St Andrew's now houses a ring of six bells, unfortunately none of which date from the time of Earl Michael, the oldest bell being the second which dates from 1596. The tower contained four bells and a 'Sance' bell in 1553. These would have been the bells heard by the Priests of the College founded by Sir John Wingfield who sang masses for the souls of Earl Michael and Countess Katherine.

On Sunday 25th October 2015 a quarter peal was rung in Memory of Earl Michael and his son by members of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers: 1600 changes of Little and Plain Bob Minor in 55 minutes

Mark Utting

The band, left to right: Mark Utting, Chris Davies, Josephine Beever, Serena Steggles, Winston Girling, Mark Steggles.



Young ringers

After an amazing entry into the Ringing World National Youth Competition in Worcester in 2014, Suffolk were unable to muster a team for the 2015 competition. This was due to lots of different factors, one of which was that the maximum age is 19 years on 31st August of the relevant year. Young ringers are lovely, but they grow up too fast!

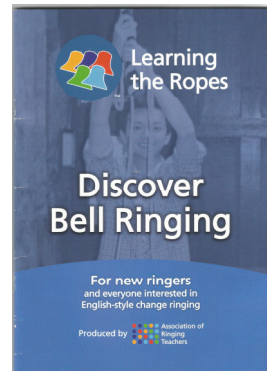
So with the 2016 competition due to take place in London on 2nd July there appears to be new enthusiasm for entering a team. We have to make our entry by 15th April and we are eagerly anticipating our first meet of the year, which is taking place on Thursday 31st March in Ipswich.

If you are a young ringer and want to find out more, or if you have young ringers in your band, please get in touch at yrcoordinator@suffolkbells.org.uk
Ruth Suggett

Discover Bell Ringing

This thirty page booklet produced by the Association of Ringing Teachers is an excellent introduction to the world of church bell ringing.

In a series of brief chapters it gives just enough information to whet the appetite without overloading the reader with too many facts. The subjects covered include 'The Bells', 'Change Ringing', 'Learning to Ring', 'Who Rings?' and 'A Little History'.



As I have been ringing for a few years the section that most interested me was the history of bell ringing, particularly learning about the way that ringing has developed into the art as it is today. In the change ringing section it was a delight to learn that a quarter peal of Spliced Magic Roundabout Surprise Major was rung at Swanage and comprised the five methods: Florence, Dougal, Mr Rusty, Zebedee and Dylan.

There can be few other social activities so incorporated into our social fabric that allow such a degree of creativity whilst maintaining the reason why we ring bells.

This booklet is nicely illustrated and clearly laid out. I feel every tower should have a copy of this guide to show visitors and if it does not encourage some people to attempt to learn to ring I will be most surprised. After all, that is what we want and so I recommend that you buy a copy. Just go to www.ringingteachers.org Resources, then Shop, and order your copy for £4.00.

Richard Gates

Congratulations to Neal Dodge who conducted his first peal on Christmas Eve. The peal, of 10 doubles methods, celebrated his birthday two days before.

Written for a Ringers' Dinner of St Edmund's, Southwold

One summer Sunday morning
Right early was the hour
A ringer, in the sunshine
Sat dozing by the tower
Awaiting other ringers some 6, or 8 or more
With two in church already
And worshipping for sure.

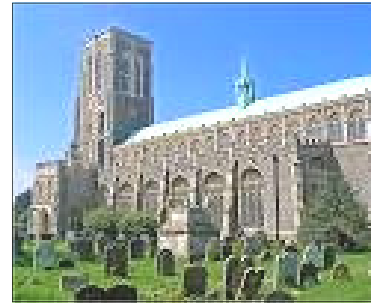
He listened to the service
How heartily they sing
And when the hymn is over
It's surely time to ring.

Then out came Shirley smiling
And carrying a tray.
'Hello, I'm serving orange juice
And cannot ring today.'
Then Julia had Sunday School,
Priscilla talked to mums.
And Doug had coastguard duty.
(Oh no! He always comes.)

Now Richard, Sue and Katharyn
Who pull with one accord
Exchanged their ropes for paddles
And pulled on Oulton Broad.

Dear Simon, he most regular
Had slept more than he oughter,
While Joan was off on holiday
A-visiting her daughter.

Alex, on vac, our noted wit
Who fills the tower with laughter
Had been, as usual, partying
And suffered 'morning after.'



His dad was running marathon
To give his arms a rest
From all that pulling at the back.
A masochist—you've guessed.

But where was ringing master?
It's sad to say that she
Who most maligns the striking
Had struck—and sailed at sea.

But hark! A bell was ringing.
The visitor awoke
And swiftly climbed the 50 steps
(To some this is no joke.)
And there two worthy ringers
Most faithful to attend
Against their doctor's orders
Were ringing—one each end.

Though vicar could not understand
The lack of dongs and dingers,
He sighed and said a kindly prayer
For all his absent ringers.

HP

*The editor is assured that all these
excuses have been used at one time
or another at St Edmund's Southwold,
luckily not all on the same occasion!*

Ringling in York

I must say that although it is so nice to be back in Suffolk again I do already miss York and 'my other life'! After nearly 12 weeks away from Ipswich at University I came back for Christmas in December 2015, probably rather too excited to get ringing again. Whilst I was doing my A Levels, Dad would always encourage me to go to practice nights at St. Mary-le-Tower and my response was always the same, 'Oh no, it's too scary!'...until I went to York! I am now a regular ringer at York Minster and was recently elected as a member of the YMSCR along with my 'besties' and housemates, Claire Pearson (Guildford) and Claire Reading (Milton Keynes). I think it's safe to say that Dad is now more apprehensive than me about SMLT, ha! I will soon be coming to the end of my year long stint as Secretary of the York Colleges Guild at our AGM in February. We have had a very successful year, made some great new friends and some great memories. The first weekend of June 2015 saw the annual York Colleges Guild Dinner weekend, which commenced with a student Quarter Peal of Minor at St Lawrence's Parish Church. I was organiser of this weekend which was both stressful and immensely rewarding. Saturday involved a tour of York Towers and a picnic lunch in the beautiful Museum Gardens – the sun even shone for us.



The Dinner itself was held at the Novotel and, despite the optimistically priced drinks(!), the food was amazing and many guests commented that it was 'the best food at a YCG Dinner for years'. This was followed by a Ceilidh which was great fun and enjoyed by all. Some of us continued the night in town AND still made it to Sunday morning service ringing the next day. Sunday brought a chance to ring at York Minster for the whole of the YCG society after picnicking in Dean's Park and games of frisbee. The society's new mascot, Bob the Badger, also enjoyed the whole weekend and was a big hit with all members, past and present He certainly earned his stripes!

As a committee, my friends and I have been implementing termly ringing outings and this term we went to Sheffield, via Doncaster, on 31st October. My personal highlight was ringing the tenor at Doncaster Minster (my heaviest bell to date). We even took some of our learners with us who are progressing very well, despite my apprehensive attempts at teaching bell handling. Our past ringing master Ryan Mills came to stay in November and gave me the following advice: 'Try not to flinch otherwise it makes you look scared' to which I replied, 'I AM SCARED!' I have to admit that I now have a new found respect for teachers of bell handling! Another highlight (and my personal favourite) was the NUA in Leeds in November. NUA stands for 'Northern Universities Association' and it is a relaxed weekend gathering for ringing students to meet one another. Not much sleep is had in order to make time for more socialising, drinking and ringing (and church hall floors aren't exactly renowned for being comfortable.) Last year in

Warwick I wasn't really sure what to expect but we had a whale of a time then and consequently our trip to Leeds was the cause of much excitement in our ringing household. After being persuaded by our ringing master and local Leeds dweller, Nathan Cox, that it was a good idea to walk from Leeds train station to St Matthias Burley to save taxi money, it then proceeded to pelt it down with rain...and HAIL! Turning up at the pub very wet and bedraggled was a bit miserable for us but the cause of great amusement to those already there who looked at us declared, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, York have arrived!' We managed to take 11 people in total from York and were by far the most 'dominant' society there. We were able to enter two teams for the striking competition which was at Saltaire (a 4cwt ring of 6). Both teams rang bob doubles, the 'newbies' came 5th out of 7 and my 'oldies' team won! There was a wave of giggles when our peal speed of 3 hours was announced but hey – we ring at York Minster people, what do you expect? Fortunately, despite the copious amounts of alcohol involved over the weekend, the only casualties were one broken stay and the kidnapping of our mascot Bob the Badger who is (we are told) in Manchester. Plans are still being hatched to bring about his glorious return.

YCG has achieved some great things this term. We got 67 email addresses at Freshers Fair, which was more than London apparently *smug face*! Additionally, our student quarter peal of Spliced Surprise Major (Cambridge, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Superlative) which after 5 false starts we finally got the hang of, was also the cause of so much excitement. As organiser of said quarter peal I felt somewhat under pressure by a few locals who thought it was beyond our capabilities but it all came good in the end and I believe a quarter of Bristol is on the cards for the near future .



Lucy is second left

I know I have been blessed to have settled so well into my student life in York and also to have met some wonderful friends; in fact my closest friends are all ringers. My advice to anyone going to university in the near future would be to not give up on your ringing (or if you're not already a ringer then to get involved) – I have found it to be the creator of great friendships and by getting involved in the 'local' ringing and not just the university society I it is possible to surround yourself with a network of lovely people who are always willing to help you with anything they can (e.g. lots of free lifts and pints in the pub). Ringing isn't just for the older generation...Ringing is cool - fact!

Lucy Williamson, St Matthew's Ipswich

St Andrew's, Hasketon

St Andrew's, one of Suffolk's remaining 41 round towered churches, stands in a lovely churchyard. Six of our round towers have rings and we have 105 'ground floor' installations. Hasketon has both and a very nice six they are in their handsome Norman tower, the second tallest in the county after Mutford.

The church, always immaculate, is a real 'sanctuary'. Further evidence of Norman work appears on the outer nave walls and there is a Saxon window too. Inside there is a devotional atmosphere especially at Evensong when the lamps are lit. Every period of architecture here from the tenth to the nineteenth century, nice glass and a fine font too.

The bells are a very good six, probably a complete Miles Graye five, subsequently some recasting and in 1899 augmented by Taylors.

Frederick Crapnell the Grundisburgh blacksmith who hailed from Hasketon told me this tale when I was a lad. It still gives me the shivers (or the 'staggers' as we say hereabouts):



A young village boy, Billie Leech, in 1902 was bet a shilling (5 pence in today's money) he couldn't walk round the top of Hasketon's (brick) parapet, unaided. It is only 12" wide. Billie did it! The outline of his footprint can be seen on the lead roof inside the parapet. Health and Safety was founded eighty years later.

If you like good sixes here is a suggestion for a day's outing – all adjacent: Ashbocking, Clopton, Otley, Monewden, Wickham Market, Pettistree, Bredfield and Hasketon, with Campsea Ashe, Brandeston and soon Cretingham if eleven in a day takes your fancy.

GWP



Thanks to Winston Girling for helpful notes on Hasketon's dates.