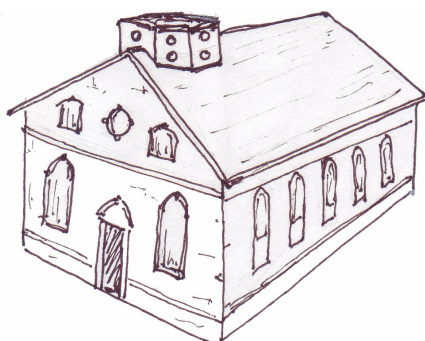


# Lincoln Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers

Central Branch Newsletter (number 58) August 2007



## St Peter & Paul, Langton by Spilsby

Yes, I know, I have strayed outside our Branch, but as no-one has given me a feature for this issue, and because Langton has such an unusual church, I have taken this liberty - but don't expect me to keep doing it! The church is well worth a visit when you are travelling to the coast. It has a three decker pulpit and box pews facing inwards. There is no electric light and candles are used for services in winter.

As you can see from the illustration, the bells are hung in the roof of the porch with an octagonal bell turret to let out the sound. They were regularly rung for special services by the Alford and Spilsby ringers until restoration of the church in 1956 left no provision for ropes, so they became silent.

The Langton family have owned the manor from medieval times, and were responsible for installing the bells. The Langton name has now died out, and one of the daughters of the family wants to restore the bells. As £44,000 is needed and the adult population of Langton is about 31, this is an enormous undertaking!

I am grateful to John Ketteringham for this information. If you want to know more, he will gladly supply.

## The bells:

	cwt	qrs	lbs	
1.	4	2	20	T MEARS LONDON FECIT 1825
2.	5	1	15	T MEARS LONDON FECIT 1825
3.	6		26	T MEARS LONDON FECIT 1825
4.	6	2	1	T MEARS LONDON FECIT 1825
5.	6	3	24	T MEARS LONDON FECIT 1825/ WE WERE GIVEN BY JOHN STEPHEN LANGTON ESQ/ LORD OF THIS FREE WARREN
6.	9	2	1	T MEARS LONDON FECIT 1825/ARE YOU PREPARED FOR ME TO CALL YOU HERE

## Proposed Ringing Programme

8 Sept Fulbeck Training morning; Onions

13 Oct Cathedral Ringing 7.00 - 9.00

10 Nov Quiz

8 Dec Holy Cross, Lincoln Carol Service. DIY carols on handbells afterwards.

12 Jan Harmston AGM (ringing, Service, Tea and Meeting. Ringing

9 Feb Claypole Ringing 2.30 - 4.00

8 Mar Thorpe-on-the-Hill Ringing 2.30 - 4.00

These are subject to change during the year. It is wise to check.

Branch Surprise Major Practices at Washingborough will be on the 4th Saturday in the month from 10.30 - 12. These will be on 25 August, 22 September, 20 October, 24 November and 22 December.

Some people have asked for help with calling Bobs and/or Call Changes. Therefore the training morning at Fulbeck in September will start at 10 am. for those wishing to learn about this and continue with general

ringing from 10.30 to 12 where they can practice their skills. There will be opportunity to ring at any level. Do come - and bring your onions with you. These will be judged when we adjourn, followed by a lunch of hot dogs and pudding, finishing at about 1.30.

September will see a course on tower maintenance (see separate notice.)

October will be the quarter peal month. Chris Woodcock is co-ordinating. Ask if you want any help augmenting your band, are needing a conductor etc.

November sees the 60th Anniversary of the wedding of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. More quarters then?

Those of us who are 'getting on a bit' will be pleased to know that the Guild Insurance now covers us up to the age of 85.

"I will master Bob Doubles if it's the last thing I do."

"They'll put it on your tombstone - 'I mastered Bob Doubles and it was the last thing I did.' "

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We are also planning to run courses on **tower maintenance** (possibly on September 29). Let Mick or Dot (or any of the committee) know if you are interested (either in coming, or in helping to run them). Last issue's article 'A cautionary Tale' underlines the need for this. An experienced Steeple Keeper expressed his amazement that anyone should try to replace ropes without the opportunity to try them out first. If problems can arise in the relatively minor task of dealing with ropes, how much more important it is to have Steeple Keepers aware of the regular maintenance to fittings that is necessary to keep bells ringing in good order. Even mechanically skilled people can benefit from shared experience in the specialised field of bell maintenance. I should like to urge every tower to consider sending a representative.

#### **News from the towers**

**Change of phone number** : Central Branch Committee member and **Tower contact for St Giles** Telephone (Mobile) 07925 149 104. The address is unchanged : Mrs Sue Waterfall, 136 Fulmar Road, LINCOLN, LN6 0LA

On Saturday 21st July the first peal on the bells were rung at **Hackthorn**. It was planned to have as many of the Service ringers as possible with Ivan Howitt, who as Vicar suggested the Millennium Bell project way back in 1997 and Paul Mason who hung the bells a year ago. In fact Paul was unable to come because of work commitments, and we wish to associate him with the peal. The Guild Master and Secretary completed the band. The peal was followed in true Hackthorn style when the six ringers were joined by family and friends for a barbecue. They certainly know how to celebrate in Hackthorn!

Hackthorn. 21 July. 5040 Plain Bob Minor (Seven extents, each called differently).

1. Sue Faull; 2. Les Townsend; 3. John Bundy; 4. David Fox; 5. Brian Smith; 6. Ivan Howitt (C). First peal on the bells in Hackthorn.

A band consisting entirely of **Central Branch ringers** rang a quarter peal of Quedgeley Surprise Royal for Evensong at the Cathedral on Sunday 12th August.

**Washingborough** and **Waddington** have combined their practices, the 1st and 3rd Wednesday at Washingborough, the 2nd and 4th at Waddington, and the 5th at **Harmston**. (**Washingborough** - Sept 4 & 18, Oct 3 & 17, Nov 7 & 21, Dec 5 & 19. **Waddington** - Sep 11 & 26, Oct 10 & 24, Nov 14 & 28, Dec 12. **Harmston** - Oct 31. There will be no practice on Dec 26!)

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"I knew it was going to come into rounds when I heard that funny tune!"

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#### **St Denys' Outing to Staffordshire**

On 29 May fifteen of us set out for a two day ringing expedition in Staffordshire. Our thanks to Yvonne Hubbard and Richard Short for their excellent organisation. A marvellous time was had by all.

We started with 8 bell towers, Tutbury and Rolleston on Dove. Tutbury is a lovely church to visit even if you don't ring. These two towers were a good introduction for those not used to ringing away from home. From Rolleston we moved on a couple of miles to Horninglow, a 6 bell tower which used to have steel bells. Having set out early it was now time for lunch which Yvonne had booked back in Rolleston.

Lunch over we moved on to Barton under Needwood, an 8 bell tower where we worked off the lunch. From there we headed to the village of Marchington with 6 bells, before finishing the day at the 8 at Uttoxeter.

Here the problems started for some. No names, but the map directions were to say the least not quite accurate, there being the odd lefts instead of rights and vice versa. Some of the party had difficulty in finding the Crown Hotel in Longton but at the end of the day we all found the towers and the pubs.

The Crown, formerly the Railway Hotel, is cheap overnight accommodation with a cheap evening meal. Needless to say the food filled us and some of us had lights in our rooms, some had kettles, some had lumpy beds, some hot water, and some had used sheets.

On ordering our evening meal imagine the surprise when a large plate of chips arrived with with an apology from the waitress that there was only one serving of curry left and no rice. My second order was also off the menu. It was so confusing that I cannot even remember what I had ordered. A third attempt was made and at last I had food in front of me. When it came to dessert some of the choices were off and they had even run out of ice cream. I blame the Masons, the Straceys and their lot for arriving first and scoffing all the best items on the menu, especially that Woodcock boy. We all survived. Phil and a party went visiting in the evening to an old stomping ground for them at Kidsgrove. Not sure if he was fed up with the hotel or just liked to ring.

That evening Mick and Betty asked us all for £1 to enter a competition, guess the total number of steps we climb up to all the towers. We all now had to make an estimate how many we had climbed so far. Fiendish. Chris won so the drinks are on him.

On the second day we started out to the 8 bell anticlockwise ring at Stone. One or two found this rather more demanding looking left rather than right at the start. From Stone we were due to visit Swynnertron but due to a masonry fall the church was closed. Too late in the day to organise a replacement but it did allow us extra time to get to the next church which was the 10 bell tower at Leek. We did not have to go far for lunch, as the ladies providing coffee, cakes and sandwiches etc for the locals in the church cafe were good enough to take an order from us while we were ringing and they were ready for us when we had finished. We did feel a little guilty because we took up virtually all of the cafe space, so there was not much room for the locals. Unfortunately we didn't know it was market day and when we arrived the town car parks were full. Some of us arrived very late having walked miles after finding somewhere to park. We moved on to the two towers in Cheadle, both named St Giles, which was a bit confusing. The first was a six bell ring C of E , and very loud and not easy to ring. From there we went across the road to the eight bell Catholic church. A lovely ring in a beautiful church to look round. Our last tower was at Alton of Alton Towers fame, but no water or scary rides for us.

In spite of the problems we all had a good time and most of us registered one or more new towers to add to our collection.

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'Can I try to call a Touch?'

'Yes, what are you going to call?'

From a raw recruit on the sidelines, 'Bob!'

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### **Central Branch Outing to the Newark Area 30th June**

We started at Balderton, an eight bell tower. Then we went to Barnby in the Willows, Coddington and finished up at Coddington, all six bell towers. These towers had nice easy bells, neither too heavy nor too light.

Methods rung ranged from Plain Bob, Little Bob, Grandsire through to Surprise Minor and Major - the range would have been wider had there been less experienced ringers in attendance who couldn't manage much change ringing.

The weather wasn't kind to us but despite that, two of us managed a picnic in Stapleford Woods! I think people who went all enjoyed the day and got a lot out of the ringing. I enjoy ringing on different bells and had a chance to ring methods that I hadn't rung for a while, had a go at Bob calling and even raised the tenor in peal at ALL the towers. Those who didn't go missed an enjoyable day.

*Sue Waterfall*

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It wasn't a mistake. It was just a hiccup!

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### **Central Branch July Meeting**

St Andrew's Church, Boothby Graffoe, nestles quietly among the trees and meadows just below the A607 towards the top of 'The Cliff' - the escarpment that runs south from Lincoln towards Grantham, with such lovely views across the 'flat lands' of the Brant, the Witham and the Trent. The July get-together began here in the afternoon of Saturday 14th with ringing on the three bells (8-1-24 in F). The long draught of the ropes provided an entertaining spectacle, with even the most experienced of the small band of ringers having to reach out to retrieve their wayward sallies that seemed to have a mind of their own as they came down from the backstroke.

The service using the Guild Office was led by the Revd Susan Williams, who spoke encouragingly of the role of bells and bellringers proclaiming the Church's message 'from the roof tops'. Les Townsend's playing of the organ, together with the sturdy singing of the hymns echoed that message again inside the walls of this ancient village church.

Then we all made our way the short distance along the road to Navenby, where we were treated to the dual delights of a splendid ringers' tea and the beautiful gardens of Judith Williamson's home at Dial House. Even the weather smiled on us while we tucked into this feast for the eyes and the palate: the perfect English afternoon and in a classic English setting.

The Branch business meeting that followed dealt, among other matters, with the continuing knotty problem of considering possible changes to the rules of the Striking Competition. By now half a dozen more ringers had arrived. There was the usual raffle for the Bell Repair Fund, and then we got down to the serious business of some challenging garden games, quoits and giant dominoes being as entertaining to watch as to take part in.

The day concluded with a good mix of ringing on the six bells of St Peter's Church (13-0-12 in F sharp). A notably enjoyable day, for which we must thank those who organised it, in particular the team who produced tea, and Judith for inviting us to her lovely home and garden. If YOU didn't manage to get there, you can only imagine what you missed!

*Stan Underwood*

The Guild Bell Repair Fund Committee has asked each branch to raise funds for the common BRF. The Central Branch has given £100 as our contribution - the profits from the tea and raffle at the treasure hunt, along with a donation received for a talk on bellringing.

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'This bell is making a grinding noise'  
"That's not the bell. It's the cogs in my head going round!"

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### **Summer Meeting August 11**

The last meeting I went to was the Rabbits meeting at Eagle. That day the weather could be described as dismal. The contrast for the meeting at Branston was huge, people had packed away their winter woollies and wellies and dug out their summer clothes.

The meeting started with ringing at Branston where it came as a surprise to newcomers that the church had a very modern organ loft and East window. The window at first seemed incongruous, but as I looked at it I found that I liked the contrast of the old and the new. The next activity was the treasure hunt. Dot had worked hard to sort out two, one for inside the church and one for out. As the weather was good we did the outside one, at least I think that was the reason. If anything the weather was a bit too hot for the treasure hunt, but many people persevered and found most, (well some) of the answers. Some of the treasure hunters were so dehydrated that they needed to retire to the pub before and after to make sure that they suffered no ill effects due to the rigours of the trail and the brain power needed to attempt the clues.

After the treasure hunt and the ringing sustenance was called for and was well provided by Dot and Phil Mason. After all of us had eaten well it was time to find out the answers to the treasure hunt and to draw the raffle. There were some disputes over the answers, but Dot dealt with them all in a very masterful manner, and no one dared to argue after the first one or two people had been subjected to a steely glare!

Finally people retired to the garage to ring the pots.

All in all a very enjoyable afternoon and evening was had by all.

*Jane Smith*

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He had been told of the touch of Grandsire where there are calls at almost every lead. When he was asked to call a touch the following week, one ringer pleaded "Don't call that fiddly diddly one!"

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### ***Congratulations***

- - - - to **Stan** and **Sylvia Smith** on their platinum wedding anniversary (70 years!) Stan was for many years the Tower Captain at Dunholme. Ringing members of his family and friends rang a quarter peal at Nettleham, where they were married, to celebrate this anniversary and give thanks for a long and happy Christian marriage. Stan and Sylvia were brought to the church to hear the finish and to share wine and cake. James brought the relevant Church Record from the archives for them to see the original entry of their marriage. This was the culmination of a day of celebrations for them and their family, with the Queen's telegram a highlight of what Stan later said was 'the best day of my life - ever'.

### ***Obituaries***

#### ***Noel Chambers***

**1919 - 2007**

Noel was the youngest of three brothers who lived on the (then) new St Giles housing estate in Lincoln. All three were servers in the wooden hut which served as a church until the present church was built in 1936 using the stones of the redundant St Peter-at-Arches church. When the bells were rehung in the new church in 1938 all three brothers joined the newly trained band of ringers, and Noel is one of the last surviving members of the band that rung the first peal there in. He was a member of the Guild from 1939 - 1954, when other commitments curtailed his ringing, but he remained a faithful server in the church.

#### ***Robert Sutton***

**1954 - 2007**

Robert and three of his younger brothers learnt to ring at Waddington under the watchful eye of Ray Smith, then their father Dennis. Robert continued to ring at Waddington until his illness made it impossible in early 2007. In 1999 Robert became Tower Captain at Waddington, taking over from Dennis, a role which Robert dedicated himself to as he did with everything he committed himself to. Robert taught many to ring including his son Alistair. He was a brilliant teacher who, although we sometimes wished he had said more, had the patience of a saint with everyone young or old. Ringing with Robert was enjoyable and we hope he realised that he led a band of 'Merry Men' who hold him in affectionate remembrance. He leaves behind his wife Maureen and sons Alistair and Sean. Our thoughts are with them.

#### ***Keith Buckingham***

Keith was the former Master of the Guild. He was a good servant to the Guild and had an active interest in all the Branches. He was killed in a car accident near his home in Shropshire and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

### ***Welcome***

- - - - to **James Walker** and **Siobhan Rattigan** from Washingborough who were elected at the July meeting in Navenby.

### ***We wonder***

which Central Branch ringer was reduced to licking his plate when out to lunch?