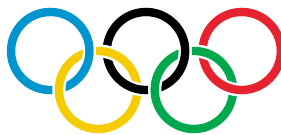


Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

Central Branch Newsletter (number 79) September 2012

Olympic Rings



Was this logo the inspiration for the 'installation artist' to come up with the idea of getting every bell in the country to ring 'as loudly as possible' for three minutes from 8-10 on the opening morning of the Olympic Games? (His previous work in Tate Modern was called 'lights going off - and on'. At least that contained an element of surprise, and involved only one person by the switch (or more likely, an electronic gadget!), not getting ringers all over the county out of bed (or worse still, off the bus to work) for a mere 3 minutes ringing! Besides, that is not what church bells are for! No way would you get me involved! Thus ran my argument when people asked if I was taking part! Why, then, was I found in Nettleham tower just after 8 o'clock on the morning of July 27?

Well, I hadn't accounted for Amy (who, to be fair, had looked forward to doing it all along). It seemed to be so important to her to be involved in the Olympics, that on practice night I gave in. Jerry, who is always game for anything to do with ringing, joined us, and of course Dave. When I had said 'She must be mad', he had replied, 'No. She's an American. I did try to dissuade her, honestly I did.' We found a lady outside with her little bell. She looked inside the belfry, then stood in the churchyard and rang her bell along with us. Sadly, most of the Sunday congregation asked if we had rung as, although going outside to listen, they hadn't heard us, so that was a waste of time!!! Maybe we didn't ring them 'as loudly as possible'!! Margaret Parker

At 8.00 on the Friday morning the six bells of St Lawrence, Bardney, were rung up. Also in the church I had brought the set of 8 hand bells and those who had been interested were instructed how to ring them and asked to wait until they heard the church bells begin and then go out into the church yard and make as much noise on them as possible. At 8.12 the bells went into rounds and rung for three minutes, and then rung back down. At the same time the hand bells were rung in the churchyard by other residents of the parish. We all, both hand bell and church bell ringers, were proud to be part of this project which was heard throughout the country where the bells could be manned. Many

other people also took part ringing their doorbells, cow bells even alarm bells, all as a prelude to the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Chris Jackson

Many other ringers co-operated too. Brian ran downstairs and rang his doorbell for three minutes. John and Sandra rang all their 8 'pots' - four in hand each. Jim rang his camel bells and cow bells on Radio Lincolnshire. Mick and Betty rang hand bells on their front lawn. They remarked that 'A passing cyclist shouted 'Good morning' – but he didn't ring his bicycle bell!' Caythorpe ringers rang 7 of their 8 bells (one ringer failed to turn up!) Single bells were rung in many towers. Roy found that ringing Thorpe tenor up and then down again just filled the three minutes! The former Visitors' Officer at the Cathedral (a non-ringer) tells me she took her little bell into her garden and rang it loudly in time with Great Tom being tolled at the Cathedral. 'The neighbours thought I must be mad' she laughed. Potterhanworth ringers rang rounds and call changes whilst BBC Look North was present, filming the ringing for a news item. In addition they rang a quarter starting at 20.12 to celebrate the opening of the game ringing up to 9 o'clock for the opening ceremony. Whilst this was being rung the Red Arrows flew overhead on their way home after their flypast in London.

It's all good publicity!

Thank you

- - - - A big thank you from North Scarle Project Fund to all who bought the quiz sheet devised by Mick and Betty Stracey. A total of £210 was raised being made up of 193 sheets sold, £12 donation, £8 from a ringers' tea, £12 from sale of jigsaws, total £225, less £15 for prizes. First prize Phil Burnett, Cherry Willingham. 2nd Prize Val Fox, Welton. 17 sheets returned. Thank you, Mick and Betty, and all who contributed.

Suggested Ringing Programme for 2012 – 2013

Oct 13	Harmston?	7.00 – 9.00
Oct 20	Guild 8-bell Striking Competition	
Nov 10	Hackthorn Quiz Ringing (6.30 - 7.30)	7.30
Dec 10	Swinderby Carol Service	Ringing 3.00
Jan 12	Heckington AGM	
Feb 9	Bardney	2.30 – 4.00

Mar 9 Nettleham

2.30 – 4.00

We are grateful to Sue Waterfall for arranging Surprise Major Practices at Washingborough. They are held 10-30 – 12 on Saturdays 29 Sept (many of us will be away on 22), 27 Oct, 24 Nov, 22 Dec.

Put all these dates in your diary.

These meetings are subject to change during the year. Do check.

Ringling Publications - Central Branch Stock

Dove's Guide to Church Bells 10 th edition	£15.00
Criblines 1	£1.00
Criblines 2	£1.50
Ringling jargon made easy No 1	£0.20
Ringling Circles	£2.50
Beginners Handbook	£1.50
Beginners Grandsire	£1.00
Beginners Plain Bob	£1.00
Doubles and Minor for Beginners	£2.50
Triples and Major for Beginners	£2.50
Learning Curve Volumes 1, 2, 3 & 4	£3.00 each
Service Touches	£1.00
Beginners Guide to Conducting	£2.50
Tower Captains handbook	£2.00
A Schedule of Regular Maintenance	£2.50
Teaching Beyond Bell Handling	£2.00
Teaching Tips (Pip Penny)	£3.00
Sherbourne Teaching Aids	
One per learner; The Follow on Book; The Ringers' Exercise Book	
Plain Bob in Easy Stages	£5.00 for six or £0.84 each

All these Publications can be obtained by ringling Chris Jackson on 01526 398377 who will bring them to the next Central Branch Meeting or to your practice night.

If there are any other publications you feel you wish were in stock please let Chris know and an order on behalf of the Central Branch can be placed.

Thoughts on the Striking Contest

I think I read a while ago that there had been some discussion on whether or not the striking contest should continue. Having joined a team to ring at just such an event at Thorpe-on-the-Hill on Saturday, I feel motivated to put pen to paper (or should that now be fingertips to keyboard) to make an admittedly somewhat belated contribution to the debate.

Much encouraged by our tower correspondent six of our members prepared to ring; two of our team members being fairly new to ringing, and there to gain experience (they are both not yet teenagers) they were given their choice of bells and off we went to ring some call changes. We did our best, we made mistakes, and we enjoyed ringing on the bells which were new to us. Nobody moaned, the other ringers we met were encouraging, and the judge gave considerate and constructive ideas to our clearly inexperienced band. After a short service, we moved on to a brief meeting followed by a truly magnificent barbecue. Grateful thanks to our hosts, Sandra and John and to all who arranged and made possible a most enjoyable afternoon.

There were four teams at the contest; one was a scratch team made up of ringers who were there but not to represent any particular tower, two were from the cathedral and then there was us. Now we all enjoyed it, but what a great day you all missed! WHY don't more towers enter a team? Are we all afraid of coming last or nervous of ringing badly and incurring the wrath of the local residents?

Now I realise that the organisers and the judges and the local inhabitants don't want endless teams turning up and striking contests that last all day long, but surely two towers is not representative of our art. OK the trophy bears little shields all the way round telling you that the cathedral band has won yet again (every year except one I think) but so they should - their band is made up of some of the most experienced ringers around - but that shouldn't stop the rest of us taking part.

Perhaps we don't see ringing as a competitive exercise and therefore we can't cope with the idea of a competition, but just for the experience it must be worth turning out now and again, so I urge you to consider it. Who gave us the quote about 'It matters not who won or lost

Margaret Neate

'Where's Gill?'

'In the loo. She'll be here in a wee while.'

'Would you like to re-phrase that?'

Central Branch Striking Contest at St Michael's Thorpe-on-the-Hill

from a Gladman point of view.

On the day of the contest, the sky looked bleak, and rain threatened.

Was this typical barbecue weather?

Arriving at St Michael's, for the service, we heard well struck bells as the striking contest was under way. How many people noticed the scent of the roses which lined the path?

Then I passed the ringing chamber where the door was open and saw that the ringing team was made of the younger members of the branch - good for them - puts me to shame since I was not involved in any team. What is the adage - it's not the winning but the taking part which matters?

After the ringing there was a service which was taken by Mick Stracey with Les Townsend playing the organ. Thank you Mick who stepped in at the last minute as the Vicar failed to turn up! Mike's inspiration for the sermon was taken from a pamphlet in the church which gave advice on what pitfalls to avoid when singing in a choir. He drew similarities with how we should ring. For example - though we may sing at different speeds, we should all finish together - perhaps we should strive to stop our bells when we are called to 'stand.' Afterwards, we sang the ringers' hymn which I do have difficulty singing - perhaps I should attend a ringers' service more - practice does make perfect. I did manage to finish singing at the same time as the others.

Then after the service Margaret P gave her assessment for each of the ringing teams. This confused some of us, since the teams were described as Saints - St Michael's (team led by Mick Stracey), St Philip's (team included Philip Mason), St Andrews (led by Andrew Blacklock) and then St Fiona's ?????? I did check on the internet to see if there was a St Fiona. Others may wish to check as well. I think enough said on that topic.

Who were the winners? - St Michaels who were a scratch team so could not officially be the winners?! So next was St Philips who were given the plate. They and St Andrews, both from the Cathedral, will go forward to the guild final. St Fiona' from Welton will go to the plate. Margaret described how each of the teams rang - she commented on one team which pinged a bell for so long she wondered whether they

thought she was asleep and needed waking. Nooooo. Margaret asleep - never.

After St Michael's (the church) we all went along to Sandra and John's place for a barbecue. The rain came but thankfully only for a short while and we were able to enjoy sitting outside in their lovely garden eating sausages, chicken and being served lots of cups of tea. - Lovely. Fantastic company and fantastic food - the ringers have done it again. Then just as we were collecting the plates, the rain came and stayed and we scurried into the phenomenal garden room which doubles as a ringing chamber for the pots. I think few of us were wondering would we be allowed to ring on the pots after the desserts? First I must talk about the desserts - if you see Sandra's cheesecake - try it - it is superb. Then Philip asked if the youngsters could try ringing the pots. They showed the older ringers how - they had never rung them before. Well done the youngest person present for learning how to ring a bell - or should I say pot?

Later on I did manage to ring a pot successfully to plain hunt, but only after Sandra had climbed the steps to repair the bell frame of the bell which I had been ringing. Allegedly I pulled too hard to raise the bell/pot? My excuse is that some person (not named!) said why not 'do it' in one go like this. So I tried and somehow moved the frame, allegedly. A kind person did think the frame had already moved before I started ringing on it.

Cups of tea, good company, what more could we ask for.

Thank you Sandra and John for opening up your house for the barbecue and the pots. Thank you to Margaret for judging and to Fiona for organising the meet.

Thank you to those who prepared the food and desserts - no ringing meeting should be without desserts! Thank you to all who came along - we could not have as good conversation without you all. And a big thank you to those who made and served the cups of tea (especially Betty Stracey). Wonderful.

Enjoyable time - yes - and I hope that next year I will be in a team for the striking contest. What about you?

Gill Gladman

Just a thought

It has been brought to my attention that maybe experienced ringers give the impression that they are superior as they talk of all the new things they have achieved. I am saddened when I hear people who, as well as ringing what challenges themselves, spend a lot of time teaching new

ringers, then use phrases like, 'We can only ring Bob Doubles.' Or 'Have we enough good ringers to try that?' or 'We need a strong band for you.' All these may be true and they don't mean to be disparaging, but they sounds very condescending towards their abilities to sensitive learners and is likely to shatter their confidence. We don't need to think aloud all the time. Everyone thrives on encouragement. After all we've all had to learn and are deserving of respect.

If you don't fall in with people, you can't fall out with them!

Ring for your supper, 11th August

Matthew and I enjoyed our outing to the 'ring for your supper' event held on 11th August. Having set off in good time we were initially unable to find the church at Waddington : we were looking for a tall tower! We were amongst the first to arrive so were able to earn our supper before partaking in it! After soup and bread we were off to Branston for the main course : this time we found our destination without getting into a pickle. Matthew had a go on the 'bells' whilst his dad watched on, drinking ample cups of tea : it's thirsty work watching. We were glad that the raffle prize that Matthew's mum, Susan, baked provided so much interest. Due to the attraction of the main course we were late getting to Washingborough for the final course, although we both got a ring. So Matthew got another three towers to put into his note book and the supper set us both up for ringing at the Cathedral the next day. All in all we both enjoyed the evening and it was good to see some ringers who I'd not had the opportunity to meet for some time. Finally, when we got back home I suggested to Susan that perhaps we ought to have a three course supper at home every Saturday evening : I cannot print the reply.

Tom Burton (aided and abetted by Matthew!)

Congratulations

- - - to 12 year-old **Matthew Burton** of Dunholme on ringing his first quarter (at the first attempt), treble to Doubles for service at Welton on 15th July.

Obituary **Beryl Radley**

-

1923 - 2012

Beryl was the wife of Harold, long time churchwarden and ringing master at Dunholme, and mother of Julie (Bell) and Gillian (Trowbridge). She did learn to ring, and rang in a family quarter peal at Dunholme in 1972, but she saw her chief role that of supporting Harold and the girls in the tower. In the days before food became part of the ringing tradition, she always sent Harold to the 'geriatrics' meeting at Christmas time with a tin of mince pies for the ringers! She was a tireless worker in the church - well known for her needlework, her flower arranging and her hospitality. St Chad's church is full of evidence of her work. Sadly, after she and Harold were in a road accident, she never returned to her ringing. Rest in peace, Beryl.

My trip to the Cathedral (Central Branch ringing for Evensong 12th August)

On 12th August I was invited to visit the bell tower at Lincoln Cathedral. I was assured that I could just go along, watch the ringers and admire the view over the city. There would be absolutely no need to ring. Quite a relief when I saw the crowds of tourists enjoying uphill Lincoln on a sunny Sunday afternoon.

Fortified with a rather yummy Dennett's ice cream we made our way up the tower to the ringing chamber. I was expecting something rather larger and more imposing. It was obviously bigger than Caythorpe, but somehow smaller than expected for such an incredible building.

Looking around I was fascinated to see 13 ropes, The heavier bells had huge boxes which looked to be permanent fixtures. Everyone had very earnest faces and there was an air of trepidation.

To my horror I soon realised that hiding away in a corner simply wasn't going to work. Several enthusiastic youngsters were already ringing rounds with encouragement from regular cathedral ringers. My attempts to blend into the background were failing.

My first attempt was rounds on 8. Gradually that increased to rounds on 10 and then, finally, rounds on 12! I found the fact that the position of the treble kept moving rather than the tenor slightly off putting. Picking out and listening to my bell became more and more difficult as the number of bells taking part increased. An encouraging voice from behind kept pointing out that I needed to be closer on my backstroke.

Since the visit I have been able to quiz Les. Why do the heavier bells have those boxes, why not just have longer ropes? Also exactly how does the 13th bell fit in? Although my music O level is very rusty, I did become fascinated, perhaps I should take an electronic tuner to our tower and work out exactly where bell 9 should be fitted.

Thanks to everyone for the invite and for the friendly welcome and encouragement. Ringing the bells at Lincoln Cathedral is something I never dreamt I would do in a lifetime. A definite tick for the little yellow book.!

Armed with this new experience I am so looking forward to receiving my invitation to ring for the 4 o'clock Christmas Eve service!"!!

Robert George, Caythorpe.

Seen on a Church notice board

Can't sleep?

Don't count sheep

Talk to the shepherd!

Tower News

Potterhanworth Primary School after school ringing club has been active again in the field of special ringing. They rang 15 minutes rounds and call changes prior to their school end of term service, rung as a farewell to Mrs Janet Reeder, their head teacher, who retires this summer. She surely has played a big roll in encouraging her pupils to take up ringing. The ringers of the 'performance' were 1. John Nicholson, 2. Yvonne Woodcock, 3, Charlotte, Andrew, Ella, 4. Sister Maureen Pike, 5. Chloe, Orissa, Daniel; 6. Catherine Wood. Daniel Copsey, Andrew Spence, Orissa Sansoa-twell, Ella Marshall, Charlotte Sunman & Chloe Alderson (all aged 10, and pupils of the school) ringing the 3rd and 5th with Christopher Woodcok standing by to lend a helping hand when/if required. Can some more of us follow this lead in recruiting enthusiastic young ringers?

Having been cast in 1612, the Tenor at **Thorpe-on-the-Hill** is 400 years old this year. To celebrate there will be a Bells Service with bell related readings and theme on Sunday 28 October at 6.30 - with general ringing from 5.30 - and possibly after. Do come and join in!

Nettleham ringers were delighted to gain a new recruit after the Open Day at the Carnival. He was taken up during the school holidays for a silent handling practice. He was doing very well when we heard the bell sound once, then an almighty clatter on the floor above. 'Hullo. A stay gone!' was the immediate thought and we took the bell and rang it down. On going upstairs to inspect the damage we found all six stays proudly pointing skywards! Puzzled, we went back down, rang the bell up cautiously and set it gently (we have in the past had a slider break). As there seemed to be no problem we carried on. When the steeple keeper went to remove the tie, he felt for the clapper, but there was no clapper there. It lay on the floor in the pit. He asked, 'Didn't you notice it had gone?' but the bell was tied and we weren't expecting any sound from it. I always advocate silencing a bell before handling practice - but there are better ways of doing it. Removing the clapper altogether really is a step too far!! (Happily Ian was able to fabricate a new clapper bolt in time for us to ring all six for the wedding!)

Obituary

Jean Sims

-

1936 - 2012

The ringers from the Scothern/Dunholme/Welton group were shocked and saddened to learn of Jean's death in late July. She had become 'unwell', and curtailed her ringing until she recovered, but none of us realised how seriously 'unwell' she was, and she died in Lincoln County Hospital within a few weeks.

Jean learned to ring at the end of the 1990's, and was proud to ring in a 'performance' (rounds and call changes with a band of learners) for the Guild Centenary. She became a member of the Guild in 2000. She struggled to learn to ring Bob Doubles, but did manage a quarter peal on an inside bell in 2008. She rang 16 quarters, mainly Doubles, but also Minor on the Treble. In her last year she was determined to master touches of Bob Minor inside. This she managed to achieve - on a good day! Frustratingly her ringing ability was not always consistent, but she was a valuable and faithful member of the band who could be relied on to be there, and in ensuring that we had enough ringers for service ringing, weddings etc. within the group on Sundays. She was a committed church member, and did a great deal in the community to help make people's lives better. She ran errands relentlessly for

her neighbours, and collecting prescriptions and driving people to and from their hospital appointments as part of her work with the Welton PDA (Patient/Doctor Association). She often arrived at ringing practice in a flustered state having spent the day running round after other people. When told that she was doing too much and for her own good she must learn to say 'No' sometimes, her constant reply was 'Well, you've got to do what you can for people in this life, haven't you.' Welton Church was packed for her funeral, and the ringers paid their tribute by tolling her in and ringing half muffled at the end of the service. A half muffled quarter of Bob Doubles was rung by her close friends in the afternoon (it had to be Bob Doubles for Jean. What else ?!!) She spent her life in service to others, may she now find rest in peace. (We are left wondering, 'Who will feed the cat or walk the dog for people going on holiday now?') God bless you, Jean. We shall miss you.

Stop Press!

I have just heard that Des Underwood, tower captain at Swinderby, has just died. A fuller obituary will appear in the next Newsletter.

Branch Quarter Peals

EWERBY

14 July

1296 Grandsire Caters

1. Sylvia Taylor
2. Sandra Underwood
3. Dot Mason
4. Betty Stracey
5. Phil Mason
6. Mick Stracey ©
7. Heather Grover
8. John Nicholson
9. John Underwood
10. Phil Grover

Following the wedding of Sandra and Mark Ireland

WELTON 15 July

1260 Doubles (2 extents each of Southrepps, April Day & Grandsire and 4 extents + 60 Plain Bob)

1. Matthew Burton
2. Margaret Neate

3. Yvonne Woodcock

4. Christopher Woodcock ©

5. Philip Dawson

6. Tom Burton

First quarter at first attempt - 1

Rung prior to service to celebrate the 70th birthdays of Marjorie Everett and Liz Powell, and the 88th of Betty Smart (chorister), all Church members.

EWERBY 15 July

1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major

1. John Underwood
 2. Betty Stracey
 3. Heather Grover
 4. Sylvia Taylor
 5. Mick Stracey
 7. John Nicholson
 8. Phil Mason ©
- For Evensong

DUNHOLME 17 July

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1. Val Fox
2. Julie Bell
3. Fiona Dawson
4. David Fox
5. Brian Smith
6. Stephen Bell ©

Half muffled in memory of Beryl Radley whose funeral took place earlier today. Also in memory of Sylvia Smith whose funeral took place yesterday. Beryl's late husband Harold was tower captain here for over 30 years and Sylvia's late husband Stan for about 10 years.

NETTLEHAM 21 July

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Lexie Brown
2. Margaret Parker ©
3. John Bundy
4. Helen McGurk
5. Brian Smith
6. Jerry Truscott

Rung following a wedding, to celebrate Jerry's 80th birthday.

EWERBY 19 Aug

1440 Norwich and Cambridge

Surprise Minor

1. Sylvia Taylor
2. Dot Mason
3. Mick Stracey ©
4. Phil Mason
5. John Nicholson
6. Richard Spencer

For Evensong.

WELTON 22 Aug

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Jan Kenworthy
2. John Bundy
3. Brian Smith
4. Keith Gladman
5. David Fox ©
6. Jerry Truscott

Rung half muffled on the day of the funeral at this church of Jean Sims, a local ringer, by her friends.

He was not very happy about standing on a box to ring, but was told 'You'll just have to stand still.' At which another ringer added, 'And if you fall off it and break both your legs, don't come running to me for help!'

'They say if you eat chocolate you don't get'

'What?'

'I can't remember!'

'Alzheimers?'

'Yes. That's it.'

'Pass him a chocolate, someone!'

