

LDG NEWS

NEWSLETTER - THIRTY FOUR / DECEMBER 2016 / www.leicesterldg.org

EDITORIAL

As another year draws to a close it is sad to report the loss of three more ringers in the Guild and one of our Patrons. We should all be grateful for their individual contribution, in many different ways, to ringing in this Diocese.

At the end of this newsletter you will see details of the Guild Dinner to be held on Saturday 25th February. The evening will again be held at the home of Leicestershire County Cricket Club and is a most enjoyable event. We doubt that those who have been before will need much encouragement. To those of you who are pondering, why don't you have a tower or district table or bring your family? All that remains is to wish one and all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2017.

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NO LONGER WITH US

VENERABLE T.HUGHIE JONES died peacefully on the 25th September 2016 aged 89 years. He was our longest serving patron and always most supportive of our activities.

His funeral service was held at his former church, St. Peter's, Church Langton on Wednesday 12th October 2016.

Michael Brown of Sapcote died on Wednesday 9th November 2016, aged 86 years.

Ian Fraser of Knighton sadly passed away on Monday evening 12th December 2016.

BRF 100 CLUB DRAW RESULTS

October

1st Prize Nos 114 2nd Prize Nos 112 3rd Prize Nos 134

November

1st Prize Nos 69 2nd Prize Nos 03 3rd Prize Nos 23

December

1st Prize Nos 38 2nd Prize Nos 28 3rd Prize Nos 72

SNIPPETS

Congratulations to Ann and Barry Brown of Anstey who have both celebrated their 80th Birthday since the last Newsletter.

Congratulations to Lee and Jane Cox (nee Cook) on their marriage at All Saints Church, Bloxwich on Saturday 8th October 2016

Congratulations to Ian Hearn and Darren Blockley who were joined in civil partnership in a private ceremony in North Walsham, Norfolk on 11th October 2016.

A Market Harborough District band rang a quarter of Mixed Doubles (11 Methods) at Saddington on 28th November to celebrate the union.

SIR EDMUND BECKETT DENISON Q.C. (1816 – 1905)

I cannot resist a few lines about this character as, during the latter half of the nineteenth century he wielded considerable influence on the design and specifications for bells. Unfortunately these were seriously flawed and resulted in rather dubious sounds. John William Taylor(1827 – 1906) of the famous Loughborough Foundry is reported to have described Denison's plans as "most bad in principle". However Denison was what today we call "an instant expert" and was apparently self opinionated to a degree that his word was law or thereabouts. Perhaps it is significant that his restoration work at St. Albans Cathedral, paid for by himself, includes statues of the four evangelists around the west door, that of St Matthew having his own face.

However he was undoubtedly a clever man with varied interests including horology and it was via this that he progressed to work on bell installations. Designing an excellent escapement for the clock at Westminster he also undertook the design and specifications for the 13 ton Big Ben and the four quarter chiming bells.

Without going into detail his ideas were way out, the musical notes of the bells being largely incompatible with their respective weights. For example a 2.5 ton bell by Denison would sound

The note of C, whereas a modern bell of the same weight would ring a full tone lower. This discrepancy gave his bells a mournful sound and lack of resonance.

The bells at Westminster remain today, a poor lot of them, though the founders cannot be blamed as they were constrained by Denison's specifications. Those at Worcester Cathedral, cast in the latter half of the nineteenth century by Taylors to Denison's ideas, could not have been satisfactory as they were recast in 1928 by the same firm, though on this occasion to their design resulting in what the late Harold J. Poole, that remarkable ringing master at Leicester Cathedral once described as "the finest musical box ring of twelve". True word indeed.

John Bennett

100 CLUB

Temporary measures have been introduced following the unexpected passing of Ian Fraser who has been a very efficient administrator of the 100 Club.

Can you please address all correspondence, renewals etc. to the 100 Club to the Fishers, 9 Slatebrook Close, Groby, Leics. LE6 0EE

Winners of the 100 Club for November and December will receive their prizes as soon as all necessary administrative matters have been sorted out. Members can be assured that the monthly draw will continue but please bear with us.

Our Guild Treasurer, Pam Fisher has asked that members, who have not yet sent a cheque for their annual subscription, may send it to the above address and to those have sent cheques already to email the Treasurer at – pjfisher9@gmail.com to advise that they have already paid and give their name, address and 100 Club Number if known.

District Secretaries may still have renewal letters which they have not yet distributed and Pam asks that they advise their District members with this information and the situation.

IN MEMORIAM : MICHAEL E. BROWN, 1930 – 2016

Michael Brown was well known and respected throughout the country for his talent for teaching ringers and for his own ability on the end of a rope, together with his practical skills in bell maintenance, restoration and rope splicing. His wide-ranging contributions to the bellringing community were made evident from the kind cards and comments received by his family after he died. Michael shaped many people's ringing careers, either via his teaching skills or from his practical and knowledgeable hands-on approach to bell maintenance.

Michael had his first ringing lesson on 26 April 1943, at Sapcote, where he was taught by Charlie Brown (no relation). It was the beginning of his lifelong connection with the bells in the village where he was born and lived for his whole life. In 1944, aged 13 years and 11 months Michael rang his first peal, Plain Bob Minor at Sapcote. He went on to ring 514 peals, his last being at Milton, Oxfordshire in 2005.

He was made Head Ringer at Sapcote in 1949. For 56 of the 60 years he was in charge, the Sapcote band was capable of ringing Surprise methods for Sunday Service, of which he was justifiably proud. Michael was the driving force behind the two augmentations in the 1970s, first from six to eight (1970) when the ringing chamber was also moved upstairs. To raise the necessary funds, Michael, along with the Sapcote ringers, collected waste paper around the village together with scrap metal. He cut up over 30 old cars, taking them to the scrapyards for cash. Seven years later the bells were augmented to ten, for which Michael donated the two trebles. All the work for this project was done by Michael together with a team of local helpers.



Michael met his wife Kathleen at Claybrooke practice in the 1950s. Michael and Kathleen were married for 61 years and their two children, David and Janet, were encouraged to learn to ring from an early age. Of their four grandchildren (Emma, Jon, Ellen and Isobel) three have learned to ring.

Michael and Kathleen were dairy farmers for over thirty years, later rearing beef cattle until they retired. However, the responsibility of milking cows twice a day didn't stop them pursuing their interest in ringing at new towers across the UK and abroad. They both rang at over 5000 towers, which Michael recorded with great detail in his ringing records. Michael's final total was 5563.

At Michael's funeral on 23 November, Sapcote church was filled to capacity and bell ringing featured greatly in the order of service. A half-muffled course of Little Bob Royal marked the arrival of his coffin at the chancel step, with the congregation standing in silence to listen. During the service Edelweiss was played on his old handbells. Hymns included his favourites, *Angel voices, ever singing* and *Unchanging God*. At the end of the service the mourners left the church to a quarter peal of Yorkshire Surprise Royal. As Michael was laid to rest, the bells could be heard ringing in the distance. Later in the afternoon a peal of 5086 Harecroft Surprise Royal (specially selected to reference his age and the farm where he spent his life) concluded a fitting day of remembrance and celebration for Michael's long and full life.

"Called home to rest at last"

Janet Dew

AROUND THE DISTRICTS

Market Harborough :-

The District AGM was held at Oadby, with additional ringing "over the border" at Evington. There were no great surprises at the meeting, with most of the committee being re-elected unopposed. Arthur Rees had expressed a wish to stand down as BRF Fundraising Committee representative, and he was thanked sincerely for all his hard work on this committee (and indeed other committees). Nobody present at the meeting volunteered to take up this important post, so the appointment has been held over for the moment, although a couple of people have expressed an interest, if they can rejig other commitments. The Chair commented that it would nice to see some more people at District Practices – this is a great opportunity to advance your own ringing and meet other ringers in the area.

Around 25 people joined the District Carol Service and Christmas Social. The service was held in the lovely little church at Shangton (only two chimed bells), then we adjourned to the Village Hall in Church Langton.

A sumptuous "bring-and-share" meal was followed by a beetle drive: great fun for all ages.

The District contributed to Strike Back Against Blood Cancer, with a quarter peal of Julie McDonnell Doubles at Medbourne: a small contribution to a great cause.

Fri 9th December; St Giles, Medbourne, Leics. 1260 Julie McDonnell Doubles. 1, Steve Millington; 2, Diana Young; 3, Dan Iliffe; 4, Terry Iliffe; 5, Andrew Young (C); 6, Ian Hearn.

Three of us also rang in a quarter of Julie McDonnell New Bob Triples at Uppingham (14th December): this was an important one, as it was the first to be rung in the county of Rutland – one of the sponsored challenges is to ring a quarter of a method named Julie McDonnell in every county in England, before Christmas.

We were sad to learn of the death of Ian Fraser (Knighton). Although not a member of our District, he was a staunch supporter of our Surprise Major Practices, and his contribution will be greatly missed. RIP, Ian.

We hope you all have (had) a great Christmas, and we look forward to a happy and successful 2017.

Andrew Young

Melton :-

Recent Melton District meetings have been well attended at Asfordby (Oct.) and Melton (Nov with the AGM)

The committee for this year remains largely unchanged this year – thanks to everyone for volunteering for another year, the one change we have is the web/ press secretary has changed from Ken Brockway to James Lowe, many thanks to Ken for his work over the past few years on keeping the web and press sites updated. Here's the list of Melton Committee members :-

Officers :-

Chairman :- John Adcock

Secretary :- Peter Brown

Treasurer :- Wendy Saywell

District Ringing Master :- Jackie Parlby

Deputy Ringing Master ex-officio :- Annette Tudor-Brown

Guild Committee Appointments :-

BRF Fundraising Committee :- Position vacant

BRF Allocations Committee :- Andrew Shipman

Education and Recruitment Committee :- Peter Brown

Website/Press Secretary :- James Lowe

The LDG Rope Store is now up and running in Twyford along with some volunteers to do rope splicing if needed. The plan is to repair and catalogue the ropes we have had donated and publish that on the website early next year. Any requests to Pete on 0774813 5086

The next meetings are at Long Clawson (Dec.), Stathern (Jan), Gaddesby (Feb) – the 2017 venues list is available now and the website will be updated soon.

Leicester:-

On Saturday 3rd December the Leicester District had its AGM. We had ringing in the morning at St. Margaret's with refreshments at the church coffee morning. Lunch was produced by Carol Franklin and Pam Fisher and was followed by the business meeting. The following were elected as officers for 2017.

Chairman – Nicky Carling

Secretary – Angela Preston,

Ringing Masters – Dave Carling and Stephen Aldridge

BFR Allocations- Garry Mason

R&E representative – Mark Pendery

A big thank you to all those involved in preparing food and clearing up afterwards; it has been suggested we have a repeat next year.

We are continuing to hold monthly midweek meetings and Saturday morning focus practices during 2017, please see the Guild website for further details.

Loughborough :-

The Loughborough District held its AGM at Belton in December. We had some good ringing, evensong with carols and an excellent tea provided by Val and her helpers. We held a raffle in aid of the BRF, which raised £53. The day concluded with ringing at Shepshed. It was good to see so many people there, thank you for supporting us.

The following officers were elected:

Chairman: Richard Bimson

Secretary: Izabelle Bimson

Ringing Master: Richard Bimson

Committee members: Sally Brown & Liz Twitchell (Treasurer)

BRF Allocations: Stuart Hale

BRF Fundraising: Sally Brown

Education: Tony Croft

2016 has seen a new chairman and secretary, both of whom are grateful for the welcome and support that they have been given, both from their fellow district committee members and from the district ringers more generally. We look forward to a busy and fruitful year of ringing in 2017.

Syston District News

The Syston District has been inactive for the last year as there has been no-one prepared to take a leadership role.

On 26th November the General Committee organised a get-together after Progressing Ringers to discuss the future. 11 District members came. The discussion was led by the President Elect, Mark Pendery. As there was still no-one prepared to take on an organisational role it was decided to:

- Arrange the Guild social in the District on 14th January 2017
- Arrange 4 Progressing Ringers meetings in the Syston area on 4th Saturdays. These would be arranged and run by the R&E committee.
- Arrange a mid-year morning meeting on 13th May at Barrow-upon-Soar. Ian Stonehouse offered to act as ringing master for the morning
- A further discussion group would be held at Birstall on 25th November 2017 after Progressing Ringers to discuss progress.
- The General Secretary would continue to send information to her present email list and would seek to expand it to other members.
- The General Secretary would collect the district subs.
- Guy Jibson and Tracy Radford would attend Guild committee meetings to feed back ideas.
- All Syston District towers would receive a copy of the 2014-2016 Guild report.

ALL DISTRICT MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUPPORT TO THESE EFFORTS

Syston District: What do you want from your District?

USE IT OR LOSE IT!

L.D.G. EDUCATION COMMITTEE

2016 Ringing Course Feedback :-

A huge 'Thank You' to all those involved in the 2016 course. A lot of hard work by everyone and highly valued by the students. The end of course feedback gave an overall satisfaction score of 9.3 and all student and tutors had enjoyed the weekend. The number of Helpers was key to the success. We are considering how to improve the course for next year. More information to come early in 2017

Additional Courses :-

We are considering a number of new courses for 2017 including :-

Bell Maintenance Course is planned for Saturday 11th March 2017 at Ratby (T.B.C.) with Andrew Higson. A maximum of 8 attendees.

Rope Splicing Course is being planned.

Ringling 10/12 Bells. Perhaps as a Focus Practice.

Conducting Course Perhaps 2 courses Bob Calling and Conducting as separate events.

Striking Course was discussed at previous meetings but is a very broad issue and will be looked at again. Please let the committee know if you are interested in taking one of these courses if they are offered or in helping to run them? Contact us by email at education@leicesterddg.org.uk

A reminder :-

Rising Ringers is for ringers at Learning The Ropes (LTR) Level 1 and Level 2

Progressing Ringers is for those who have achieved a pass (or are at the standard of being able to pass the LTR Level 2 criteria) and covered Level 3, 4 and 5 of LTR.

Rising Ringers

Since the last Newsletter two meetings have taken place on Saturday 24th September and Saturday 26th November, both at Sapcote. A wide variety of methods were rung including Plain Bob, Cambridge Surprise Minor, Stedman Triples and Plain Hunt on 9.

I would like to thank the helpers who give up time to help out throughout the year, without them it would not be possible to continue this group.

We are looking to enter a team into the Ringing World national youth contest next year. This will be on Saturday 1st July in Birmingham. It will be a great experience for our younger members. Further information can be found here: <https://rwnyc.ringingworld.co.uk/>. So, we are looking for members who are aged under 19 on 31st August in the year of the Contest. Please contact me directly for more information.

I would like to continue the bi-monthly meetings during 2017, the dates are as follows. Please attend if you can.

Saturday 28th January 2017

Saturday 25th March 2017

Saturday 27th May 2017

Saturday 1st July – Ringing World Youth Contest

Saturday 22nd July 2017

Saturday 23rd September 2017

Saturday 25th November 2016

We are going to move the meetings around next year so I will update the location nearer the time.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone involved.

PEALS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

The Christmas period has traditionally been a time of more bellringing than normal. Plenty of peals have always been rung around this time but what about Christmas Day?

The Leicester Guild was formed in 1946 but it was eleven years before a Christmas Day peal was rung for this Guild.

On 25th December 1957 the local ringers of Stoney Stanton rang 5040 Grandsire Triples during the morning. The band was George E Vernon Treble (First Peal), John A Underwood 2, Rodney Richardson 3, A Maxwell Lindsey 4, Graham T Ball 5, John Vernon 6, Michael Vernon (Conductor) 7, Frederick Watson Tenor.

Their feat did not, understandably, encourage a rush of other guild members and it was 1960 before John Jelley, John A. Acres and Ernest Morris rang 5040 Plain Bob Minor on handbells at the Wigston Magna home of John Jelley, who also conducted it.

Scroll down to 1970 when 5040 Plain Bob Minor was rung at Croft exactly one year after the death of the local rector, Reverend G E Simms-Reeve. I noticed that the late Fred Watson rang the treble. A Croft ringer and a 1000 pealer Fred had also been in the 1957 peal at Stoney Stanton.

Fred rang his third Christmas Day peal at Whetstone exactly one year later. Plain Bob Minor again and conducted by the late Brian G Warwick.

We have to move forward to 1990 before another Christmas Day peal was rung for the Guild. A peal of Plain Bob Major rung at the Loughborough Bell Foundry and conducted by Bristol ringer, Keith Scudamore. It was the 21st century before the Guild recorded the next Christmas Day peal. 2003 to be exact when 5040 Surprise Minor in seven methods was rung at Copt Oak.

This allowed Robert Graves and son, Philip, to complete the record of ringing a peal on all 366 dates available. Special mention was made of the four ladies in the Grave's household. Robert's wife, Madeleine, and Philip's three sisters who had to delay normal festivities and the present opening. We can only assume that Santa was extremely kind to those four ladies that year.

With fewer peals being rung these days the likelihood of future Christmas Day peals may seem remote and it is thirteen years since the last one. I think that I will keep the handbells handy, just in case.

GWM

GUILD SECRETARY'S REPORT

Annual Report 2014-16

At the last general committee meeting it was decided to publish a report. Richard Bimson offered to act as editor. I am currently updating all the Guild data so that information is as up to date as possible. Please can you check your tower information on the Guild website (www.leicesterdg.org.uk) and let me know if there are any changes to your Sunday ringing or practice times?

Please can you let me know if you are interested in having a copy of the report? We will be discussing the costs and how big to make the print run at the next committee meeting which is on 16th January.

Thank you

secretary@leicesterdg.org.uk

Guild Social

The next guild social will be held on 14th January in the Syston District. There will be ringing at Thurcaston 10.00 – 12.00noon.

During the morning there will be various activities related to the Bell Restoration Fund, so please come and join us.

I have made enquiries about a pub lunch at The Wheatsheaf, Thurcaston and will book some tables for us for those who request it before 7th January 2017

secretary@leicesterdg.org.uk

District Annual Meetings

The annual district meetings have now taken place and the following officers have been elected.

Hinckley District

Chairman :- Mick Angrave

No Secretary

Treasurer :- Margie Brimacombe

Leicester District

Chairman :- Nicky Carling
Secretary/Treasurer :- Angela Preston

Loughborough District

Chairman :- Richard Bimson
Secretary :- Izabelle Bimson
Treasurer :- Liz Twitchell

Market Harborough District

Chairman :- Andrew Young
Secretary :- Diana Young
Treasurer :- Gwenyth Tyler

Melton Mowbray District

Chairman :- John Adcock
Secretary :- Peter Brown
Treasurer :- Wendy Saywell

System District

No chairman or secretary as yet.

Please support all your officers in their work.

The General Committee will be appointing the standing committees at its meeting in January. If you are interested in serving on any of these please let Mark Pendery know.

CAPTION ANSWER

The Answer to the caption set at the Guild Ringing Course submitted by Guy Jibson of Swithland :-

“Hey, don’t even think of making sallies out of my jumper.”

RELOCATION

On 12th December 2016 a quarter peal of 8 spliced Surprise Major was rung at Hathern and dedicated to Celia Harris and Rachel Foster (nee Harris) as they both relocate to Northumberland.

Celia, widow of the late Tom Harris has given 65 years service to the Leicester Guild, 54 years at Hathern, whilst Rachel has given 40 years service to the Guild, all at Hathern.

They leave with our thanks and very best wishes.

Joyce A. Haywood 19/8/1932 – 15/9/2016

Joyce Ann Haywood (nee Fishlock) was born in Surrey and grew up in Banstead, before moving to Wellingborough in 1963, then Ratby in 1968 where she lived for the rest of her life. In 1956 she married Jack Haywood. Joyce had a varied career as a bank clerk, mother to Annette and Anthony, and latterly as a Teaching Assistant at Ratby Primary School. She was well-known and liked in Ratby, with many friends. She was highly regarded for her kindness, and open and friendly nature.

Joyce was introduced to bell ringing by Pam Geary of Billesdon. This came about because in the summer of 1944 Joyce and her mother went to stay with the Norton and Geary families in Billesdon to avoid the V1 missiles that had started to fall at random on London and the Home Counties. Norman and Jeff Geary were bell ringers, and after the wartime ban on ringing was lifted, Pam learnt to ring and showed Joyce the art when she came for another holiday in Billesdon.

This introduction prompted Joyce to learn to ring at All Saints, Banstead, in about 1949/50, taught by Harold Pitstow who was also Secretary of the Westminster Abbey Company of ringers. The Banstead band was very strong at that time, ringing Surprise Major on a regular basis. Joyce progressed to ringing about 4 or 5 of the Standard 8, and DNCBM, but her favourite methods were always Grandsire and Stedman. Joyce's only peal was Grandsire Triples, rung half-muffled for the Guildford Diocesan Guild on the death of Queen Mary in 1953 (RW 10/4/1953 p226). Joyce remained a non-resident life member of the Guildford DG until her death. Another highlight of Joyce's ringing at Banstead was appearing in a live BBC television broadcast from Banstead church in the early 1950s, in a programme about bellringing introduced by Cliff Michelmore.

On moving to Wellingborough, the difficulty of the bells combined with caring for her two young children curtailed Joyce's ringing for a few years, but the move to Ratby restarted her ringing. Joyce never joined the Leicester Diocesan Guild, mainly concentrating on ringing at Ratby, but she was known in the Guild from her occasional attendances at Guild meetings and events. Joyce introduced Anthony to ringing at Ratby in 1973. In 2015 she decided to retire from ringing, after a career spanning 66 years, nearly 47 of them at Ratby. The Ratby ringers celebrated Joyce's 50 and 60 years of ringing, and her retirement, in style.

Never one for quarter-peals or peals, Joyce was however a very steadfast and loyal member of the band at Ratby, ringing regularly for Friday practice, Sunday service, weddings and other special occasions, which is after all the principle purpose of bellringing. Her retirement from ringing and subsequent death has left a gap in the ranks, and she is sorely missed by all who knew her.

A J Haywood Nov 2016





Annual Dinner

Will be held at

Leicestershire County Cricket Club

On

Saturday 25th February 2017 at 7 for 7.30pm

£24 per head

Please send names, menu choices, payment and an indication of who you would like to sit with to secretary@leicesterdg.org.uk by 15th February. Cheques should be made payable to LDGCBR or contact secretary/treasurer to make a bank transfer.

Menu

Tian of Melon and Fresh Pineapple infused with Cointreau

Smoked Salmon Brûléé served with warm focaccia bread

Cream of Winter Vegetable & Barley Soup

* * * * *

Paupiette of Plaice

Filled with a mousseline of asparagus & white grape
Served with a shallot & cream sauce

Honey & Rosemary Glazed Roast Rump of Lamb
Served with a red wine jus

Supreme of Chicken

Filled with a red pepper and chestnut mushroom mousseline with a port wine sauce

Mediterranean Vegetable Wellington
With a spicy tomato sauce

Herb Roasted New Potatoes
Selection of Market Vegetables

* * * * *

Apple & Blackberry Crumble with Custard

Chocolate Tear Drop with poached raspberries & Drambuie

Blood Orange Posset with homemade shortbread

* * * * *

Fresh Ground Cafetiere Coffee, "Red Fox" Mints