

# LDG NEWS

NEWSLETTER - THIRTY FIVE / MARCH 2017 / [www.leicesterldg.org](http://www.leicesterldg.org)

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## EDITORIAL

It is always sad when the Guild has to bid farewell to members who have contributed so much to the Exercise. The obituaries in this edition refer to four of our members who have provided nearly two hundred years service to ringing in general and the Leicester Guild in particular. They are each deserving of our gratitude.

Spring is upon us and, with the longer hours of daylight and, hopefully, warmer weather, it is an opportunity to get out and do a little more ringing. There is always plenty going on. We encourage you to check the Guild website and take the opportunity to sample a little of what is on offer.

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## NO LONGER WITH US

**GEOFFREY ARMITAGE** of Husbands Bosworth died on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2016 after a long battle with cancer.

**RACHEL FOSTER** ( nee Harris ) formerly of Hathern passed away on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016 in Newcastle surrounded by her family. She and her mother Celia Harris had only recently relocated to Northumberland. She rang at Hathern for 40 years.

**JILL STANIFORTH** ( nee Poole ) of Leicester Cathedral sadly passed away during the early hours of Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2017. Jill was 88 years old.

**ROBERT KILBY** – a past member of the Countesthorpe band passed away on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March at the age of 76, after a short illness.

## SNIPPETS

### EASTER RINGING AT BELGRAVE

Guild members have been invited to ring at the, now closed, St. Peter's, Belgrave on Easter Day between 12.15pm- 1.15pm. All welcome.

## BRF 100 CLUB DRAW RESULTS

### January

1st Prize Nos 84                      2nd Prize Nos 119                      3rd Prize Nos 109

### February

1st Prize Nos 32                      2nd Prize Nos 115                      3rd Prize Nos 99

### March

1st Prize Nos 16                      2nd Prize Nos 118                      3<sup>RD</sup> Prize Nos 148

### Alan Jacques Award 2016

At the AGM in October 2016 James Lowe from Ab Kettleby was presented with the annual Alan Jacques award. James was the very worthy winner for all the work done to augment Ab Kettleby bells. James gave a talk on the argumentation project at the AGM, congratulations James!!



WE NEED MORE NOMINATIONS FOR THIS AWARD.

The nominations are open to all including those already nominated. Please complete your nomination form for the 2017 award by going to the following link:  
[http://leicesterdg.org.uk/joomla2/images/downloads/Alan Jacques Award Nomination Form 2017.doc](http://leicesterdg.org.uk/joomla2/images/downloads/Alan_Jacques_Award_Nomination_Form_2017.doc)

Or go to the website via this link:  
<http://leicesterdg.org.uk/joomla2/index.php/enr/alan-jacques-award>

## AROUND THE DISTRICTS

### Hinckley :-

The district has had a very encouraging start. The evening meeting at Burbage in January was well attended with ringing ranging from rounds to Surprise Major. February saw us visit Kirkby Mallory and Desford. Tea was served in the new facilities within the church at Desford. A wide range of minor methods was rung in the evening before retiring to the Bell where we managed to squeeze into a corner of the packed pub for the customary pint or two. Although I was unable to get to the March meeting, being at an SRCY meeting presenting an appreciation to Michael Brown, it was well attended at both Fenny Drayton and Higham-on-the-Hill. All in all, a good start to the year.  
**M. Angrave, District Chairman.**

### Leicester :-

The Leicester District has continued to hold successful midweek meetings and Saturday morning focus practices in January, February and March. In April we are going to Knighton on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7.30pm-9pm. In May we are going to Arnesby on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> and June we are going to Aylestone on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>. Focus practices are held on the first Saturday morning at 10am, usually at St Margarets. Please contact [leicester@leicesterdg.org.uk](mailto:leicester@leicesterdg.org.uk) for confirmation of the venue and the focus.

Angela Preston

### Market Harborough :-



Things have been quiet in the Harborough District recently. Our District Practices have been held with mixed attendances but the Surprise practices have been well attended over the months. The main news for our district at present concerns two of our long running members. Ray Martin from Great Bowden and Betty Morley from Church Langton will be among the 182 men and women who will be presented to Her Majesty the Queen at Leicester Cathedral during the annual Royal Maundy Service on 13<sup>th</sup> April. They will receive specially minted Maundy money as recognition for their contributions to the church and the community over the years. The tradition has been going on in some form since 600AD and Leicester is the last of the country's 42 cathedrals to hold this service, this being the first time it has been held in the city. I'm sure you would all like to join me in offering Ray and Betty our congratulations and best wishes for their special day next month.

Diana Young

## **Melton :-**

Melton District has had a good start to the year with some well attended meetings at Stathern, Gaddesby and Branston. There have been a number of quarter peals rung in the district over the winter :-Cambridge Minor at Twyford, Alnwick at Branston and a Grandsire Combo of Reverse Grandsire, New Grandsire and normal Grandsire at Twyford to name a few.

In May we are combining the monthly meeting with an LDG walk and on June 17<sup>th</sup> are doing a tour of the Richard 111 exhibition followed by ringing at Leicester Cathedral ( everybody welcome – details to be released shortly).

Note that the April monthly meeting is at Saltby and is a week earlier than normal to avoid Holy Week.

## **Peter Brown**

## **Loughborough :-**

We started January with a good meeting at Loughborough Parish Church, where 36 ringers squeezed into the ringing chamber for a very enjoyable evening. It was great to see many people ringing on 10 for the first time, and to have others come along that rarely ring on 10. Richard had his work cut out running the ringing, but everyone had a good go and rang well.

February saw us visit Wymeswold, where we had another good meeting and it was great to see so many local ringers. The refreshments provided were much appreciated, especially the very tasty lemon drizzle cake. Thank you again for making us so welcome at your tower.



## **Students at Copt Oak**

On 4<sup>th</sup> March we held our annual training morning at Copt Oak, Markfield and Belton. Students from various towers worked on their call changes, plain hunt and plain bob and all did very well and made lots of progress. It was good to see some of last year's students return and to see the progress they'd made in the meantime. Huge thanks must go to the tutors, helpers, key holders and those providing refreshments for generously giving up their time to come and help with the training morning. We couldn't do it without you!

Everyone is very welcome at district events, please do keep coming and supporting us and if there's something that you would particularly like to ring just let the person running the ringing know.

Izabelle Bimson

## **Syston District :-**

The first combined Syston District/Progressing Ringers took place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February at Swithland. It was good to see the ringers from Swithland who, I am sure, benefitted from the event. Plans are underway for the half yearly meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Please put this date in your diaries!  
CNJF

## **L.D.G. EDUCATION & RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE**

### **COMMITTEE**

The 2017 committee is:

*Chairman:* Mark Pendery

*Secretary:* Tony Croft

Members: Carol Franklin, Peter Brown, Mick Angrave, Arthur Rees, Stephen Aldridge, Pam Fisher, Heather Morris, Andrew Young, Nicky and Dave Carling.

### **Rising Ringers**

Since the last Newsletter one meeting has taken place in January at Oaks-in-Charnwood.

We will continue the bi-monthly meetings during 2017, the dates are as follows, but, please check the LDG Guild Calendar going forwards for possible date changes and locations. Please attend if you can.

- ✧ Saturday 27th May 2017
- ✧ Saturday 1st July – Ringing World Youth Contest
- ✧ Saturday 22nd July 2017
- ✧ Saturday 23rd September 2017
- ✧ Saturday 25th November 2017

### **Progressing Ringers**

Three meetings have successfully been held at Hathern, Anstey and Ratby since the last Newsletter. Monthly meetings will continue in 2017 but please check the LDG Guild Calendar for dates and locations.

We are entering a team into the Ringing World National Youth Contest this year 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/>*

***HELP!*** ~ *For both Rising and Progressing Ringers sessions can we appeal for helpers to come forwards as early as possible. Mark and Heather do a sterling job on organising and arranging the running of these sessions BUT it is not an easy task so the more regular help they can get the better we can provide a good experience for the students. Heather just had a torrid time to get sufficient help for the last meeting. So please come along, we can never have too much help at these events! We also would like people to volunteer to run hourly sessions at the Progressing Ringers to ensure everyone as far as possible gets something from the event.*

*Please email*

*Progressing Ringers ~ Heather <[madablia60@gmail.com](mailto:madablia60@gmail.com)>*

*Rising Ringers ~ Mark <[mark.pendery@btinternet.com](mailto:mark.pendery@btinternet.com)>*

*to say if you **ARE** coming and in what capacity - don't need to know if you're not coming!*

*We would like to thank all the helpers who give up their time to help throughout the year, without them it would not be possible to continue to run these groups, so, keep coming please.....*

### **Alan Jacques Award**

Nominations for the 2017 award are now open.....

**Criteria** ~ *"The Award will be given each year to an individual whose presence in his or her tower has proved beneficial to the rest of the band in whatever capacity. This may be a newcomer, but not necessarily a young person. It may not be the best ringer, but someone who has consistency and determination. It is a person who as Alan Jacques would say, "does their best and enjoys the ringing". Alan Jacques was a role model for the new ringer and encouraged all ringers to come and enjoy the ringing community. "You'll always be welcome in any group of ringers" he would say, and this was an important part of supporting the ringing community."*

So, if you know someone who fits these criteria please nominate them? Nominations should be sent to by 31st July 2017.

This year's award will be presented at the Guild AGM on Saturday 28th October 2017. Nominations should be sent by 31st July 2017. A nomination form can be downloaded from:  
[http://leicester.org.uk/joomla2/images/downloads/Alan\\_Jacques\\_Award\\_Nomination\\_Form\\_2017.doc](http://leicester.org.uk/joomla2/images/downloads/Alan_Jacques_Award_Nomination_Form_2017.doc)

### **Guild Proposed Courses:**

**Learning with a Simulator Course** for teachers and Tower Captains in 2017 Q2/3 at Hathern

**Bell Maintenance Course** on Saturday 11th March 2017 at Ratby with Andrew Higson. Already fully subscribed. Would you like another one later in 2017?

**Ringing 10/12 Bells.** Perhaps as a Focus Practice of ringing on high numbers possibly at St Margarets?

**Conducting Course** (perhaps two courses Bob Calling and Conducting as separate events?).

**Listening Course** at Oadby.

**Striking Course:** A provisional date has been fixed for a striking course - Provisional date Sat 13th May. Watch the Guild Diary on the website for final date.

**Rope Splicing Course** is being planned for 2017.

**ART teachers M1 & M2** courses.

Please let us know if you are interested in any of the above so we can gauge demand from the Towers and Districts for these and possible repeats? Is there anything else you would like us to look at providing for you, our members?

Send us an email to [education@leicester.org.uk](mailto:education@leicester.org.uk) to let us know what you would like from us in this respect?

Tony Croft

## PROGRESSING RINGERS

“The Progressing Ringers’ meeting took place in February and after a slightly slow start we ended up having just enough helpers and plenty of committed and enthusiastic learners from Twyford, Wigston Magna, Loughborough, Burbage, Ratby and Oadby. People came with clear goals for what they needed to practise and we rang plain courses of Bob Doubles and Minor, touches with people unaffected and touches with bobs and singles depending on what area people were working on. Stedman and Cambridge Minor and Major also made an appearance. Towards the end we rang plain hunt on 7, a new experience for some, and worked on listening to the striking and keeping the rhythm steady and even as we moved from rounds into changes. Andrew Young provided some invaluable feedback and coaching points to help with this tricky but important issue. Many thanks also go to people who helped with the teas and to Stephen Bennett for going out of his way to help out.”

Heather Morris

## YOUNG RINGERS

A team from Leicester will be entering the Ringing World National Youth Striking competition on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 in Birmingham. This will be a great opportunity for our youngsters to experience ringing in Birmingham. Plans for the day are being prepared and it is likely to include an opportunity to ring on the 16 bells at the Bull Ring. The entrance fee for the team has been very kindly donated by Tony Parker. We have a pool of 10-12 young ringers who are likely to take part in the event. More information nearer the time.

Mark Pendery

## OBITUARY – Rachael Mary Foster

Rachel was deeply loved, she has touched so many hearts throughout her life in so many ways, and we all remember her warm, loving and generous nature. She has rung at Hathern and in many towers in Leicestershire and further afield for over 40 years.



The Hathern Band in particular are all going to miss her enormously.

Rachel was born to Tom and Celia Harris in 1966, and was their only daughter. This date coincided with the augmentation of the Hathern bells with the addition of the 2 trebles by Taylor’s on the same day and Tom was torn as to where he should be!

Rachel went to school locally, at Hathern Primary, then Limehurst in Loughborough, then Burleigh College. She stayed into the sixth form, and went on to do Business studies at Loughborough College. Work beckoned, and Rachel found a role in the typing pool at Herbert Morris’s, the local Crane company. She progressed quickly on through a secretarial role, personal assistant and then on to be a tendering engineer. During

this time, through her circle of friends, she met Dean.

Dean and Rachel became the proud parents of their first daughter Ella, in 1992, then their second daughter Leah in 1994. Rachel became a full time Mother, and met a new circle of friends in the village. Rachel was a natural mother and was utterly devoted to Ella and Leah. The girls were the most precious things in her life. Ella and Leah successfully graduated from university, the result of many years hard work from both them and from Rachel's nurturing, guidance and help which she also used to great advantage in her ringing at Hathern to help others learn and develop.

We have happy memories of Rachel facing new challenges and exercising her expertise, such as playing piano for Hathern amateur dramatics performances, playing the organs at Coventry and Lichfield cathedrals, ringing in Leicestershire and further afield and we even remember her fulfilling a childhood dream of flying a helicopter.

We went to ring at Leicester Cathedral while the Hathern bells were unringable, when we had the clappers and the 4th's gudgeon repaired in 2016, where she was able to ring competently with the Cathedral band on 10 bells.

Five years ago Rachel and Dean, bought a smallholding in Northumberland, where they planned to lead a quieter life. Rachel and Dean moved to their smallholding cottage in mid December last year, and Celia also moved to the area.

All she wanted was for everything around her to be settled. Her devoted family and friends, somehow found the energy and time to make so much happen in the last few weeks before Christmas to achieve exactly what Rachel needed.

Although it doesn't feel that way right now, maybe we've all been so very lucky, fortunate to have shared our lives with such a wonderful woman. Although we will miss her company, her warmth, her generosity, her humour and her kindness, her ringing knowledge, we feel we have become better people and ringers from having known her.

A Quarter Peal of Cambridge Surprise Maximus was rung on Monday, 9 January 2017 in memory of Rachel and Jill Staniforth on the morning of her funeral in Northumberland. A Memorial Peal was also rung for her, including a number of her friends; Yorkshire Surprise was chosen by Celia as this was the method of Rachel's last Quarter Peal rung back in 2015.

### **OBITUARY – Geoffrey D Armitage**

Well let's start at the beginning, and I can hear Geoff bleating for me to get on with it (man) even now, but that's because Geoff is a Yorkshireman. He was born in Wakefield on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1943, but was expected the day before – well that's Geoff all over – late even for his birth. Even when Geoff did come into the World, the professionals didn't know whether mum and baby would survive, so the announcement had to be postponed but to spite the Doctors they both did survive. After this, his parents were told not to even dare to have another and so Geoff is an only child.

Geoff was quite a sickly child and always seemed to have some lurgy or other, until it was found he had an allergy to tea, hence why Geoff always liked coffee. Someone not that long ago mixed up some mugs of tea and coffee and Geoff took a swig only to find it was tea and promptly threw it back up again – so the allergy was still there. At age 8 he got a Scholarship to Durham Cathedral Choristers Choir School where he spent 5 years and where he got a lot of his voice and musical training. For his more practical Education he went to Bradford Grammar school, and although Geoff would say it's not what it was, it still exists as one of the top 10 Independent schools today. It was not without incident as Geoff managed to blow up a Chemistry Lab.

From there Geoff went to Lampeter to study Theology, since mum & Dad wanted him to become a Priest and Geoff needed the Degree, but even then Lampeter had started to slide and they couldn't

answer Geoff's Theological questions so after 2 years he left. That was the end of the Ordination trail so Geoff went away to France – only to discover that the French he had learned was the equivalent of a foreigner learning Shakespeare or speaking Biblical Greek instead of modern; so he had to start again – je suis..Tu es.... It was while abroad he became a Tour guide, rather an amusing one I would imagine before coming back to Blighty, to London where he got a bedsit in Golders Green.

In fact Geoff spent quite a lot of time abroad as we know, doing stints in Scandanavia, the former Eastern Bloc Countries and in South Africa, where Geoff's name was flagged up on many an occasion with the authorities. There are many stories, some quite hair – raising, of his exploits in South Africa and in the USSR with the KGB having more than a passing interest in Geoff. I think it safe to say S. Africa was not the only Country he managed to get himself thrown out of – there was trouble for ringing with black people and I was told of the time he got smuggled out hidden in the boot of someone's car. To Geoff...everywhere was bugged and there were reds under the bed – most of the communists in his opinion now inhabited Westminster. Geoff Also did some stints in the Alps as well as France and Spain. There are a lot more things that could have been told, but Geoff felt lots of things had to be kept quiet to keep everyone safe.

Geoff was taught to ring at Lightcliffe in the late 50's , then a 20cwt 8 and ringing his first peal in 1960 at Tong, Bradford – and there hasn't been one since. He always relished saying that it wasn't the actual bells that are at Lightcliffe now he was taught on, having being replaced by a ring of , what Geoff called "bicycle bells" in 1970 due to the fact the old ring was shaking the tower to bits.

We than go onto Geoff's teacher training which he did in Weymouth of all places , but it wasn't there he met his future wife to be , Janet. Geoff went up to Harrogate to see his parents and went to the St. Peters practice, where, to quote, there was this bird standing next to a learner who over pulled and broke the stay. That gave Janet rope burns to her hand so Geoff, like the Gentleman that he is, took her home so she could sort her hand out. The day after, as Janet had the day off, and Geoff was going out to get some ash for a new stay, he rang Janet and asked if she would like a ride out. The rest, as they say is history, and they were married at Bures St.Mary on the 19<sup>th</sup> June 1975

If you're keeping pace with all the Geography of all this you're doing well!

In October 1976 they left Weymouth and came up to Great Oxenden, just a month before Helen was born, and it was just after this event that Geoff had his introduction to the kingdom of the Wartburg, or as we liked to call them – Warthogs. His motor bike had been driven off the road and was unusable but he had a friend in of all places, Colne, who knew of a stranded shipment of Wartburgs which had gone to Simpsons in Colne and been converted to Right hand drive and they became Lancastrians. He asked to borrow one urgently as he needed to get to work, but having previously not been a fan of the cars, the very slippery 2-stroke oil slope was born. On the subject of born, Paul came along in 1980, a Brother for Helen. Then comes the move to Husbands Bosworth in 1983

Geoff carried on doing academic work on and off over the years and he got his OU Degree in music, mainly for his own pleasure which rekindled his previous interest in music. The clock and belfry work was usually confined to School holidays but in 1985 Geoff had to finish teaching woodwork, metalwork and French due to arthritis. I've never heard of arthritic French before but apparently it was because he couldn't get across a classroom quick enough if anyone was in trouble. It was then Geoff did clock and belfry work full time as well as the other things he was up to.

In the late 80's Geoff's parents moved into the back flat at HB so they could be kept an eye on as they weren't getting any younger. His Mother lasted about 4 and a half years and dad died shortly afterwards. It's obvious that Geoff had his fingers in many pies – Clock shaped pies, Carrillon shaped pies, bell shaped pies and Church shaped pies. He was a member of the British Horological Institute, where he had been on the Board of Directors for quite a while and Geoff was for 18 years President of the Wartburg owners club which it was then (and I hope I've got this right ) the Wartburg Trabant. He was representative of the British Carillon Society, where his knowledge of languages was useful, the small but friendly Euro Carillon Society and the world Carillon Federation.

Geoff's faith meant quite a lot to him ( even in spite of Lampeter) and was solidly C of E. He had been churchwarden here for about 10 years and before that at Lubenham for many years and ringing master at quite a few towers around here for a lot of years.

I obviously couldn't try to skirt around 2009 and Paul's death, which was life changing. Although Geoff never really wore his heart on his sleeve and wasn't really prone to emotion per se – it really did get to

him and seemingly never really got over the whole situation, because he lost not only a son, but also the heir to the business. That's been the case ever since and nothing would be the same again. On top of all this, as we know Geoff's health had already been giving concern with the cancer in 1999, his diabetes and the cancers return in 2009

We do have some anecdotal stuff – remember all of this is the anorexic address – it had to be slimmed down an awful lot, but there again Geoff had had a very eventful, interesting and varied life.

**OBITUARY – Ian John Fraser**  
**7<sup>th</sup> December 1937 – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

Ian was born in Rotherham in 1937 to Cicely and John, a local headmaster. As a small boy he was fascinated by how things worked, earning him the nickname “Clockie” when his uncle taught him how to dismantle and re-assemble clocks and watches.

He went to Rotherham Boys' Grammar School a year yearly, an academic child. Later he gained a Physics



degree at Manchester University and in 1960 took the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education at University of Leicester, beginning his connection with the city.

He joined the choir and bell ringers at the then church of St. John the Divine, remaining a ringer there until the Church closed. Eventually a close friend introduced him to the parish of St. Mary Magdalen with St. Guthlac, Knighton. Ian was a very musical person, and joined the choir there early on, not only singing the tenor for many years, but also playing the violin in the church band, adapting music for other instruments, delivering it and encouraging musicians of all ages. In every activity in both churches he was a perfectionist, but more importantly he was a kind and helpful person. He treated those who needed help with gentleness but could show a wry, even acid, sense of humour.

Comparatively recently he joined the Parkinson's choir, and the U3A where he helped with the Music Appreciation Group and “Music reading made easy”. Ian also took on the position of ‘100 club’ administrator, a job he did with enthusiasm and commitment.

We are pleased that Ian was still able to ring with us at St. Mary's until a fortnight before his death. We valued him and we miss him.

Jane Salt

## OBITUARY – Jill Staniforth ( nee Poole )

born 28/10/1928 – passed away 7/1/2017

From its birth in 1946 Jill was a member of the Leicester Diocesan Guild of Church Berringers for over 70 years. She was also its first Lady President in 1968.

*‘What a fine lady she was – in principle and manners, in the way she treated people and her graciousness. Not afraid to have an opinion and to speak her mind – the truth, a woman of substance, as were her parents. And one of the finest lady ringers of ALL time. Jill made a huge contribution to the Ringing Exercise which binds us together.’*

The above comments were received in a sympathy letter and used in Jill’s Eulogy given by her daughter Rosemary at Leicester Cathedral on 9th February 2017.

“Jill’s ringing achievements could easily fill a *Ringing World*” a quote by George Pipe in his *Ringing World* tribute to Jill (issue 24/2/17)

Her peal total was 478, conducted 22, tower bells 310 and in hand 168.

She learnt to ring on handbells during 1939-45 and on tower bells with the clappers tied during the War period when regular tower bell practices were still held even though the clappers were tied. Jill became a member of the Leicester Cathedral Band. She was taught by her father Harold J Poole who had already become an expert at ringing tower bells as well as handbell ringing and was now the Ringing Master at Leicester Cathedral. Jill’s mother was described in *‘The Ringing World’* as being “the foremost lady ringer in the country” – ringing her first peal in 1919. Jill had a very good pedigree!



### Here is just a collection of some of Jill’s firsts

**27th September 1942** – Her first peal at the age of 13 was rung on handbells. She was the youngest handbell ringer to have achieved ringing Stedman Triples in hand. 70 years later she was to celebrate this milestone with a quarter peal of the same method in 2012.

**Age 15 years – 21st October 1944** Cambridge Surprise Maximus was rung at Leicester Cathedral, the youngest ringer to have ever taken part on Tower bells in this method. This was reported in ‘TIME’ magazine in USA on 6th Nov 1944. Her first Tower bell peal was on 6th January 1944.

**In 1950** she was a member of the all Ladies band to ring at York Minster for a special service for the rededication of the ‘seven sisters window’ at the Minster, which had been stored for safety during the war.

She was a member of her dad’s band that rang the first peal of Bristol Surprise Maximus and in the same year ringing Cambridge Surprise from Minor to Maximus on tower bells and handbells.

Jill was President of Ladies Guild 1959-1962.

She was the first lady to be appointed to the *Ringing World* Committee.

Jill as a member of the Royal Society of Cumberland Youths and with



Joan Beresford were the first ladies to ring a peal at St Paul's Cathedral, London. Jill and her late husband Peter were both enthusiastic ringers who welcomed all to their home in Leicester. This included forging a life-long friendship across the water in the USA, welcoming many young ringers and organising tours for them in Leicestershire.

Jill was involved with the running of ringer's teas for many AGM's and also the annual dinners which she organised for the Guild. She was also part of Leicester's winning team for the first Twelve Bell competition which was held in Bristol. The following year this was held in Leicester, where again she was in the winning team. This event has now become the National 12 Bell competition.

Jill was a 'trailblazer' who will be sadly missed by all, especially the smile and the wonderful infectious personality, enthusiasm and knowledge of ringing.

Rosemary Mason  
Daughter of Jill

	hand bells	tower bells
Stedman Triples	2	2
" " Caters	2	3
" " Cinques	1	1
Plain Bob Royal	1	-
" " Maximus	1	-
Cambridge Surprise Major	-	1
" " Royal	-	1
" " Maximus	-	1
Superlative Surprise Major	-	1
Bristol " " "	-	1
London " " "	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>29</b>

## GUILD BELL MAINTENANCE COURSE

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March saw a group of enthusiastic ringers gathered at Ratby. Not for ringing, but for this year's Guild maintenance course; I enjoy these occasions so was delighted when Mark Pendery asked me to run the course again. This year we had representatives from a wide area - Ratby, Wigston Magna, Leicester St Margarets, Long Whatton, Great Bowden, Markfield and Stathern.

I started by giving a brief health and safety talk about what is essentially common sense, something that sounds obvious, but it's amazing how often accidents are caused or made worse by not using common sense. The example of Robert Wood, who had a lucky escape when he lost his footing whilst doing routine maintenance and came off second best to a Hastings stay and had to be flown by the Yorkshire air ambulance to hospital in Middlesbrough (his case was used on a recent television show), was used to illustrate how things can go badly wrong.

Duly chastened and with instructions to look for and point out to me any hazards, my charges ascended the tower to look at the bells. I'm pleased to say that a number of potential hazards were identified, fortunately none of them was major but something for the locals to address.

The bells at Ratby hang in an unconventional frame; it comprises of a single grillage of steelwork with the pulleys and Hastings slider brackets being supported from the belfry floor. Perhaps because even with this arrangement the bells hang half way up the louvred windows is the reason the more conventional cast iron and steel frame was not installed by Taylors in 1896. The frame was laid out for eight bells, although the two trebles were not installed until 1931. As you might expect, the engineering on the installation is very robust and apart from regular maintenance and painting it is just as it was left, even the plain bearings on the back six are still working well. The tower is significantly larger than the room required for the bells which was very useful in that it allowed plenty of room for us to walk around and look at the installation.

The bells are hung with very typical ringing fittings, cast iron headstocks, wooden wheels, clappers, pulleys, stays and sliders. We talked through the potential problems with all of these and what it was possible for the steeple keeper to repair and what needed more professional attention. After a welcome break for drinks and biscuits we concluded our discussions in the belfry by ringing one of the bells up and



<u>Bells committee</u>	<u>R &amp; E Committee</u>	<u>Fund Raising Committee</u>
Peter Brown	Stephen Aldridge	Sally Brown
John Cook	Michael Angrave	Pam Fisher
Stuart Hale	Pete Brown	Carol Franklin
John Jelley	Tony Croft	Alison Harvey
Jim Lackenby	Pam Fisher	Rosie Mason
Garry Mason	Carol Franklin	Mark Pendery
Sue Mason	Heather Morris	
Mark Pendery	Mark Pendery	
Arthur Rees	Arthur Rees	
Gwenyth Tyler	Andrew Young	

- The PCC affiliation scheme to the BRF is continuing. The committee also looked at the 2016 draft accounts.
- Thanks were recorded for the work Brenda did as Guild Treasurer.
- Izabelle was thanked for her work on maintaining and updating the website. Please keep sending her any articles and changes that you would like to put on the site.

**CNJF**

## **CENTRAL COUNCIL NEWS**

You may know that the Central Council Public Relations Committee, with help from other ringers, has been working for some time on a set of PowerPoint presentations that ringers can use to explain our wonderful hobby to others. This is something that we have often been asked for so we believe that many ringers will find these really useful. Please do tell your members about this. The first set is now available on the Council's website here :-<https://ccabr.org.uk/2017/03/19/powerpoint-presentation-to-use-for-pr-purposes/>

You will see that they include speaking notes and cover

A general overview of ringing.

A presentation to those particularly interested in the science & mathematics of it all.

A presentation for those interested particularly in history.

A 'recruitment' presentation.

Still to come in the future are:-

A template for bell restoration funding applications.

A recruitment presentation for youth.

A 'tower leaflet' with generic content as well as areas for specifics for your tower – an aid to help create your own leaflet if you don't have one.

And did you know you can now subscribe to the Council's website so that you get automatic notification of new items?

Sign up here :- <https://ccabr.org.uk/subscribe/>

Kate Flavell

## L.D.G. ROPE STORE

The Ropes at the LDG Rope Store at Twyford have now been measured and catalogued, details to be published on the website when my computer stops crashing! If you need ropes before then just contact Pete Brown (Melton Secretary) with details of what you are after.

Peter Brown

## NATIONAL 12 BELL COMPETITION ELIMINATOR

### National 12 bell competition eliminator 25<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at St Margaret's, Leicester

Nearly 2 years ago I received an email from the 12 bell secretary asking if St Margaret's would be willing to host a 12 bell eliminator in 2017. At the time we were about to start an interregnum but the Church provisionally said 'yes'. Our new Vicar, Rev'd Mark Battison arrived in July 2016 and agreed we should go ahead. The other towers hosting on the day would be Birmingham and Sheffield Cathedrals. In November we received a visit from the national 12 bell organising committee and a draft programme was set up for approval by the PCC. Dave Richards brought the strikeometer technology to the tower in early December ready for the teams to start practising. The 12 bell organising committee set the test piece of ½ course Cambridge Maximus and conducted the draw to allocate the teams to each eliminator.

Unfortunately the number of entries for 2017 has dropped nationally so only 5 teams were drawn to ring at Leicester. However, the Leicester Guild elected a new President from 2017 and he wanted the Guild to be involved in welcoming the visitors to our City. A programme was drawn up for the day to include the bacon butties, lunches and cream teas. Our letting agreement does not allow us to sell beer so arrangements were made with The Salmon to cover this aspect on the day!

Our visitors from Walsall, Norwich, High Wycombe, London and Bristol came for practices mid February to mid March, recorded their efforts and went away to analyse and improve their ringing for the big day on 25<sup>th</sup> March.

The day started at 9am when the judges' caravan was set up and the technology team installed their computers and screens. Bacon butties were served for the guests arriving and a Leicester band rang the trial 'test touches' to ensure it all worked. The welcome and draw took place at 11.30 and the teams rang. Lunches and teas were served. The ringers chatted and caught up with friends from around the country including some from our schooldays! We all awaited the results .... Bristol, SRCY (London) and High Wycombe qualified for the final at Southwark Cathedral on 25<sup>th</sup> June. Our event continued into the evening at The Salmon.

I would like to say a big thank you to the Church for allowing us to host the event, **ALL** the catering team who came and helped on the day, the stewards, the cake makers, the washers up, both Marks for their welcomes..... As well as an excellent social event both the BRF and the Church have benefitted from over £250 each from the fund-raising.

CNJF

## HALF YEARLY MEETING

The Half Yearly Meeting of the guild is on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The striking competition starts from 2pm followed by open ringing. Tea is at 5.00pm. Names for tea to [secretary@leicesterdg.org.uk](mailto:secretary@leicesterdg.org.uk) by 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017. Evening socializing at The Royal Oak, Bitteswell.

## CENTRAL COUNCIL'S PRESIDENTS BLOG 2017

Most of you will be looking forward to Easter as the first major holiday of the year and I hope that if you making visits where there are bells join in with local ringing. So often our “home” ringers are away and visitors can often make the difference in fulfilling our role proclaiming Easter Sunday.

Several important events have taken place recently, the first of which was the Public Relations Conference held at Wellesbourne on 25<sup>th</sup> February. The event was well attended, Christopher O’Mahoney, Council Vice President supporting the Caroline Stockmann and Kate Flavell.

On the day, I had to make a choice and attended a Ringing World Board meeting in Andover, as is my custom. The Board will be reporting at their AGM in May but suffice it to say that every effort is being made to maintain the financial viability of the publication including review of content and attractiveness. All the Ringing World team should be congratulated for what has been achieved to date.

The now annual ART conference was held at Old Basing with an impressive array of speakers and many new teaching materials on sale. The conference was reported fully in the *Ringing World* issue of 24<sup>th</sup> March, it was a really inspiring day.

The Central Council Review is nearing completion and Council Officers had the opportunity to hear initial findings at its Administrative Committee held in London on 18<sup>th</sup> March. The Review plus other pre-conference matters meant a long meeting but the with the interest of all ringers at heart.

The following day I had the great pleasure of attending the dedication of the new ring of 12 bells at St Mary’s Taunton. It was a sumptuous occasion with the Bishop of Bath & Wells, Lady Mayor of Taunton and Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Somerset all in attendance. There was ample time after the service to sample a specially made “bell cake” and to ring on the new bells – a wonderful day.

Safeguarding issues are still to the fore and questions regarding “vetting” of visiting ringers are being followed up. We still await an outcome from the process of appointing a new band at York Minster. With the Council meeting in Edinburgh now advancing, I would remind all Council representatives to make sure they have booked for any meals and events.

Finally, have you yet “subscribed” on the Central Council’s new website? By doing so you will be in direct contact and be set to receive information and news, thus becoming part of what is intended to be a nationwide network.

*Chris Mew, March 2017*