

# Blog 2020

**29<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

It has been an extra-ordinary year, most of which has been spent under lockdown of some sort or another depending on the seriousness of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We have done as much as we can to keep ringing, most of which has been virtual using Zoom and an online ringing app called Ringing Room. We have only managed to ring for church services on three occasions, each with three ringers. This was allowed with approval of the Rector and churchwardens, using guidelines set up between the CofE and the CCCBR, and having carried out a risk assessment to establish what would be deemed “safe”.

We did ring for one wedding, when four of us rang in two “bubbles” of two, David and Sheila P and Phillip and Sheila G. This was also allowed under the risk assessment. Sheila and I tolled the tenor for a funeral. Otherwise, the bells have been silent, apart from the regular chiming of the clock and chiming apparatus.

The government was going to ease restrictions for Christmas and the CofE and CCCBR agreed social distancing of 1 metre. This would have enabled us to ring five bells for the Christmas Eve midnight service. Unfortunately, infection rates rapidly escalated during December and although we could have continued with our plan it was decided that the risk was too high and we cancelled the ringing.

There was some small consolation in that six of us were able to ring 8 handbells for two services on the 20<sup>th</sup> December. We rang outside and at least made a joyful sound for a short time.

Tower inspection and maintenance has continued throughout the year and the bells are ready for our return whenever we can be there. At the time of writing we are not allowed to ring because we are in a Tier 4 area.

The year started with much promise. Some first quarter peals were rung and ART certificates awarded, then activities suddenly halted on 20<sup>th</sup> March when the government announced the first lockdown. Since then we have held 76 Zoom sessions, either for a social chat in lieu of our Thursday practices, or using Ringing Room on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to learn new methods and ringing together. (two separate teams). It's not the same, but it has kept us together, helped us learn new things, and has been very enjoyable. On a positive note, eight of us have managed to quarter peals in Ringing Room, no mean achievement given technical difficulties often encountered!

Thank you to all our ringers for your support in these difficult times.

Phillip George

Tower Secretary

## 16th December 2020

We have been practising weekly using Zoom and an online app called Ringing Room.

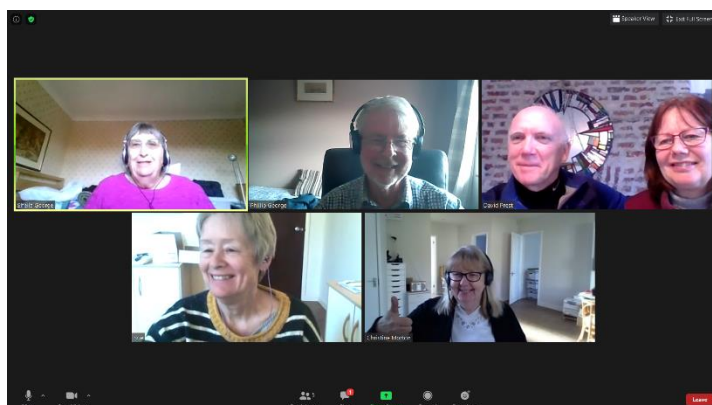
We are able to ring our usual repertoire and some ringers have learnt new methods, so good progress has been made and we have enjoyed our time together.

As we approached the end of the year we set ourselves targets to ring two quarter peals. With four of the same ringer in each attempt this would enable eight of us to take part.

We encountered many technical problems with wi-fi connectivity and had several attempts. But, on 30th November and 16th December we scored the quarters, much to the relief of everyone that we had achieved our objectives.



QP No1: Tricia, Sheila, Phillip, Hazel, David, Sheila P



QP No2 Sheila, Phillip, David, Sheila P, Sue, Christine

Well done everyone, we look forward to continuing our ringing next year when we will learn more methods. Ringing Room sessions will continue for some time until the pandemic is over and we can fully return to the tower.

## 19th October 2020

Our next opportunity to ring was for the 10.00am service on Sunday 18th October. Ringers were Christine, Sheila and Phillip. All went well and we rang Rounds on three for 10 minutes. Phillip chimed the service bell.



Christine, Sheila and Phillip

## 2nd October 2020

Elizabeth de Clare, b. 1293, received the estates of Clare (Suffolk) in 1314. The de Clares had property in Gransden and the advowson to the parish. (the right to appoint a priest).

In 1326 Elizabeth became the Lady Clare, and in doing so inherited great wealth. She presented three rectors to our parish in her lifetime.

She maintained a high character for piety, and love of learning, and in 1338 re-founded University Hall in Cambridge. In 1346 she rebuilt the college (it took on its current name of Clare College in 1856), and the parishes of Litlington, Great Gransden and Duxford were appointed to its maintenance.

Hence our connection with Clare College, which continues as our patron, and with whom we enjoy very close and friendly relationship. Parishioners frequently attend choral evensong in the chapel and occasionally exchange visits of the respective choirs are arranged.



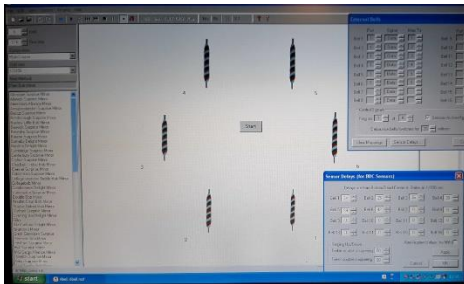
Newly painted tenor clapper flight depicting the Clare family coat of arms

## 19th September 2020

Although the new simulator was installed in June I have not been able to calibrate it until now. This was because we were not allowed to ring any bells during lockdown. Since being able to ring again, albeit only three or four bells, we have rung for three services and a wedding. The parish had at least heard some bells and so would not take any notice if I rang them individually to calibrate the simulator. I obtained permission from the rector and churchwardens to do this and completed the task this week.

David Bagley, the supplier, had given me some settings, which he said, should be ok for a ring of six similar to ours. I rang each bell with the sim also sounding. The sim struck at the instant each bell struck, the settings were spot on, and much more accurate than the former Saxilby set up we had on only two bells.

The whole exercise only took the time to ring each bell up and down. So now, we are all set to use the sim on all six bells if we wished, but that is a long way off due to the continuing seriousness of the virus pandemic and restrictions on ringing.



Abel software showing the sim settings for each bell

## 11th September 2020

Pizza and Beer (other drinks are available) were enjoyed at The Chequers PH in Little Gransden on Thursday evening (normally our practice night) when Gransden Bell Ringers met as a whole group for the first time in six months.

It was good to catch up in person, rather than via our weekly Zoom sessions. Thanks to Bobby, our host, for providing excellent fresh baked pizzas from his new oven. David arranged the evening and we chose to eat in the garden next to the new pizza oven. The pizzas were excellent and we were able to chat across the tables giving our latest items of news live instead of via Zoom.

The evening became chilly but we appreciated the open fire in the pub when we paid our accounts.

A splendid evening and lovely to see everyone.





L-R: Georgia, Tricia, Phillip, Glynn, Sheila G, Sue, Hazel, Ant, Matt, David, Chris, Sheila P



Ant & Sue with Sheila & Phillip



Georgia, Tricia, Glynn, Hazel, Matt and Sheila P



David and Ant (back) Sheila P, Chris, Georgia & Tricia with Sue in background



Chequers hanging baskets



Bobby's new pizza oven

## 29th August 2020

On Tuesday 19th August a second midweek service was held, this time at 6.00pm. We again rang the bells and included a different three ringers on this occasion. David Prest supervised the safe ringing and was accompanied by Sheila Prest and Georgia. Once again, the procedure for ringing safely under the Covid restrictions worked well and the bells were rung for 15 minutes.

Here are David, Sheila and Georgia pictured after the ringing.



### 13th August 2020

Today, three bells rang out over the parish to announce a church service, the first to be held in Great Gransden parish church for almost five months.

We rang in accordance with our risk assessment and procedure, which is based on guidelines given by the Central Council of church bell Ringers, Public health England and the Church of England. The documents were approved by our Rector the Rev Rachel Blanchflower.

We were excited to be able to ring, even on three bells, and everything went according to plan and procedure. We received favourable comments from parishioners, and we hope to be able to ring for every midweek service as they are scheduled in the coming months. We will also try to make sure that all our ringers are given the opportunity to ring and each session will include a bubble of two ringers plus one other. Philip & Sheila G and David & Sheila P make up the two bubbles.

Ringers today were Sheila and Phillip plus Sue. Next week they will be David and Sheila and Georgia.



## 5th August 2020

Manufacture of the clapper stays has been completed and they have all been tried for safety. It is unlikely that the new sim will be used in the foreseeable future because of severe limitations on who can access the tower at any one time and duration. However, it is all set to go as and when we are authorised.



Church services are to resume during August in the form of midweek services. We will have two opportunities to ring and have agreed amongst ourselves to share the ringing to enable as many as possible to take part. We have decided to ring three bells comprising a bubble of 2 plus another ringers. This will involve six ringers over two services and we will schedule future services similarly.

## 25th July 2020

It is frustrating for all of us not to be able to ring in the tower but we are keeping in touch weekly using Ringing Room. This, at least, will help with theory and listening practice. As reported last week, apart from new tail ends and the installation of the sim on all six bells, Phillip has been busy making new clapper stays for all of them.

Those for the treble and second bells were still usable but were only prototypes and had been in service for several years. The new ones are designed on the same lines but made from one piece of wood rather than strips of timber. They look tidier have been made to fit more tightly. The same fixing mechanism has been incorporated, i.e. a small bolt to latch the hinged lock for the clapper, secured by a question mark hook to prevent the bolt from undoing during operation.



No 3 clapper stay was tried on Saturday 24th July when the bell was rung to a quarter peal using the new sim.



**19th July 2020**

The last three ropes have arrived from Mendip Ropemakers, with their new tail ends. They have now been fitted and the lengths adjusted, just waiting for our return to ringing.



Phillip has been busy making clapper stays for the bells ready for ringing the new 6-bell simulator (Abel). The photo shows that on the tenor bell.

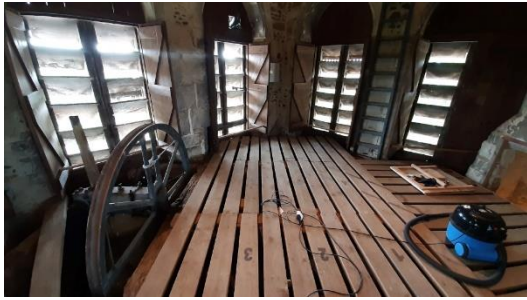


**13th July 2020**

The suspension of ringing has been lifted, as at 12th July, but only if local circumstances conform to guidelines issued by the CCCBR in collaboration with the Church of England and Public Health England. These can be found [here](#). Services at Great Gransden have not started again yet and we are waiting further information from our rector.

In the meantime, the annual tower clean-up is well under way. The ringing room, clock room and old belfry have been completed. The last room to be done is the belfry.





During lockdown the 6-bell sim has been installed and tested. New clapper stays are being made for all the bells, and a bit more general tidying up of cables is required. We will soon be ready for sim practices, but a lot will depend on obtaining permission to hold these within existing constraints.

## 28th June 2020

### Ringers and Singers Safari Supper 2020

Midsummer, and time for our Ringers' and Singers' Safari Supper when members of the church choir and bell ringers enjoy a summer soiree.

Due to restrictions on social gatherings we had to modify our plan for this year. We still had three courses but every family was asked to open their garden and we all had to bring our own food as we were not allowed to share anything.

A clever schedule organised by Sheila G enabled six people to be in each garden for each course after which we moved to a different venue with six different people.

Twenty ringers and singers, six gardens, a heavy downpour followed by a glorious sunset made for a very enjoyable evening, and although we were not able to see everyone it was good to have face to face conversations as a change to Zooming.

Thanks to everyone who opened their gardens. Here is a selection of snaps recording the evening.



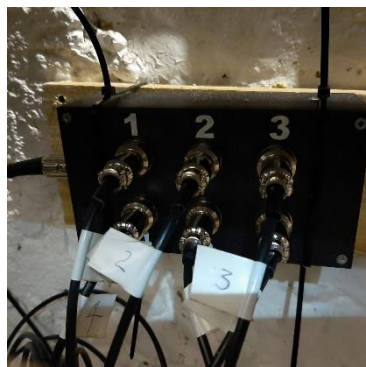


## 25th June 2020

An exciting week!

I have spent quite a lot of time in the tower in recent weeks during lockdown installing our new simulator. Actually, I have been fixing new LED sensors to the bell frame and wiring them into the laptop computer in the ringing room. The equipment was supplied by David Bagley and enables us to ring all six bells "silently" on Abel. Once calibrated we will be able to practice new methods, striking, and practice ringing up and down in peal.

Part of the work involved stripping out the old system which we had rigged up to the treble and second bell, and whilst this has served us well the new system gives us complete flexibility in how many bells and what we ring.



Example of positioning of sensor

Interface box with all sensors attached

## Funeral of Barry Sherman

I was asked by Rev Rachel to ring a bell for the funeral of Barry Sherman. Barry was a local man, and although not a ringer, his uncle and grandfather, "Son" and Frank Sherman respectively were both tower captains at Great Gransden in their time.

I half muffled the tenor and Sheila and I rang for ten minutes each before the funeral service which was taken in the cemetery at 11.00am.

It was good to be able to ring a bell "open" and we are very pleased to have been asked to do this.



Sheila tolling the tenor for Barry's funeral

As we are not ringing at the moment due to lockdown I have held several theory sessions via Zoom. This week, on Thursday, Hazel visited us in the garden and we tutored on Plain Bob Doubles, specifically talking about the circle of work, where to pass the treble and what to do at a bob.

It was a very pleasant afternoon and here is a photo of Phillip using a pointer at a safe distance!



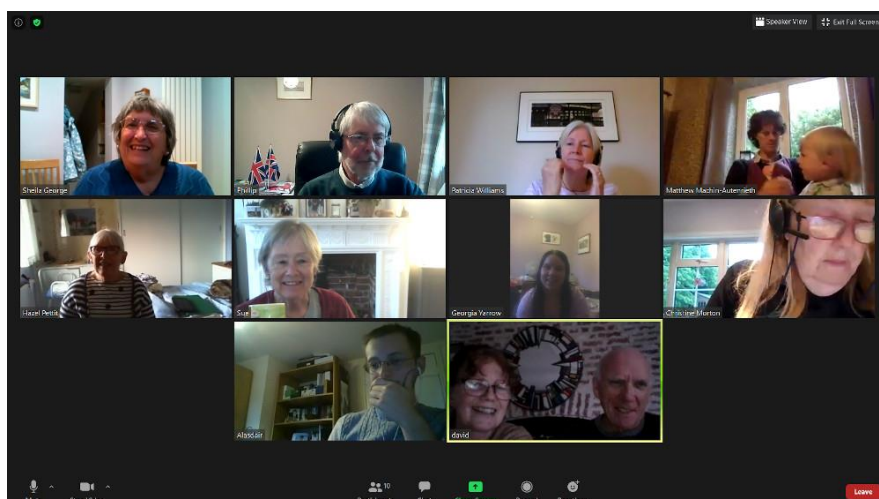


## 12th June 2020

We have had quite an exciting week between us. We have held our usual two Ringing Room sessions and have had some success in our ringing as well as a lot of fun chatting and working together.

The Tuesday group rang 120's in Plain Bob Doubles and very nearly achieved a 120 Grandsire. So nearly there and with a little more practice will succeed. The Wednesday group did manage the latter. This was the first 1260 Grandsire Doubles for Gransden ringers using Ringing Room. Tricia continues to develop her plain hunting and tenor behind skills and all in all we are making steady progress.

We met on Thursday for our "practice night", this time at 7.30pm. It was formerly at 7.00pm to allow time for the session to finish so that people could clap for the NHS. This weekly event has now ended so we reverted to 7.30pm, a much more sociable time which was easier for several members. So, it was good, last night, for us all to be there, the whole team. It was a delight to be able to say hello to Reuben and to see baby Maya again, just a little over a month old. Great to see Alasdair again, Georgia was able to join us and Susanne made a fleeting visit.



Top: Sheila, Phillip, Tricia, Matt, Maya and Reuben  
Middle: Hazel, Sue, Georgia, Chris  
Bottom: Alasdair, David, Sheila

This week also saw the announcement of the results of the Central Council's six bell Youtube competition. There were 28 entries and I had entered three videos, two of which were of our bells.

I was very excited to hear that one of them, a 2-minute clip of a half muffled peal rung on 9th November 2013, which I conducted, received a highly commended comment. This can be viewed [here](#).

I also submitted our entry in the 2018 Hunts District striking competition and a clip from a peal at Caxton. Unfortunately, these were not placed, but the judge, Matthew Hilling, said how difficult it was to judge the competition with all bands displaying some lovely ringing.



The winning team rang Devon call changes at Kenn in Devon. You can listen [here](#)

#### **4th June 2020**

This week we have continued our Zoom meetings using Ringing Room and successfully rung 120 Plain Bob Doubles and 60 Grandsire Doubles. A 1:1 theory session was held between Phillip and Tricia to talk about counting places when ringing Plain Hunt. The session also included theory of place notation. This is level 3 theory for Tricia who is at the beginning of level 2 in the tower.

At practice on Thursday Tricia had set a 10-question quiz for us with all the questions having a bell ringing theme. This proved to be more challenging than expected. The highest score was 6 but everyone enjoyed it and the friendly social banter of the session.

Phillip explained that he had written a risk assessment for returning to the tower, although it is expected that this will not be possible for a long time due to social distancing requirements and the high risk of infection in the country at present. A copy will be shared with everyone and Rev Rachel.

#### **29th May 2020**

On Thursday 28th we met as usual on Zoom at 7.00pm. On this occasion we had a slide show presented by Phillip which was ringing based but with some local history pictures too. The slides included memories of our ringing outings to such places as Taylor's bell foundry in Loughborough, a visit to Worcester Cathedral and the Severn Valley Railway, a guided tour of Elgoods Brewery in Wisbech and our excellent weekend in Durham a few years ago. We are looking forward to returning to the tower and organising another outing.

Also, on Thursday, the South Cambridgeshire District Council magazine dropped through the letter box and on the inside back cover is a photograph and brief write-up of the Gransden Ringers explaining what they have been doing as a group during lockdown. This, as well as our articles written for Tower Talk and Artworks helps keep ringing in the public domain and advertises our tower in particular.

#### **24th May 2020**

On Thursday 23rd May the ringers held their annual meeting online. This had been postponed from the 9th April and as it became clear that the lockdown would continue for some time we decided to hold the meeting via Zoom. All key documentation was sent to ringers in advance (as usual), and this enabled a speedy and concise meeting to be held chaired by Sheila George.

The usual business was transacted. The current officers were re-elected, Tower Captain: Sheila George, Deputy Tower Captain: David Prest, Secretary/Treasurer: Phillip George. We discussed tower activities during lockdown, which take the form of Zoom meetings, as previously reported here, and we talked about tower maintenance, which included outstanding work on three tail ends, the visit by Whites just before

lockdown regarding the 5th clapper, and we agreed to purchase a David Bagley system to expand our simulator capabilities.

Minutes of the meeting and various reports are retained on file.



The ringers during their AGM. From top left.

Sheila G Sue Taylor, Phillip George, Christine Morton, Alasdair Catmur, Sheila and David Prest, Hazel Pettit, Tricia Williams, Georgia Yarrow.

## 11th May 2020

Friday 8th May was the 75th anniversary of VE Day. We had been asked to ring the church bells and would have planned a quarter peal but lockdown prevented any sort of formal public celebrations. Instead, gardens and houses were decorated and families had picnics in their gardens or communal spaces (keeping to social distancing) and a very enjoyable time was had.

In Little Gransden Sheila and Phillip rang a quarter pal on handbells on their front lawn. This attracted the neighbours (previously advised) and some passers-by.



Sheila and Phillip on the front lawn of Nutbells after the quarter peal

**Tuesday 5th May 2020**

Matt and Susanne are delighted to announce the birth of their first daughter, Maya, on the 4th May. We send our very best wishes.



We have had several Zoom meetings in the last few weeks, as a team and also in smaller groups or 1:1 meetings.

We have had a couple of attempts at ringing together in Ringing Room with varying success. It has proved difficult as a whole group mainly because we are all using a variety of devices, tablets, laptops, desktops and mobile phones, and it has taken a couple of sessions to begin to understand Ringing Room and how best to configure our devices. However, it has been great fun and an opportunity to meet and chat together. The actual ringing has not been successful in a large group.

Working in smaller groups has been much better. A team comprising Phillip, Sheila, Chris, Hazel, David and Sheila met to ring call changes and another group - Tricia, Sue, Phillip, Sheila and our ringing friend Pam Wakeling from Fincham rang Plain Hunt on 5, PB5 and G5, with Trivia covering for the first time. At the time of writing we have two more sessions arranged.

1:1 sessions have also been held between Phillip, Tricia and Sue to cover theory at L2 and L4 in the Learning the Ropes Scheme. These have been excellent and we have really made use of the time to have detailed discussions on the subject. "Homework" has been completed and both Sue and Tricia have now been signed off for their respective theory levels.

Theory targets	Teacher Initials	Date
Understand concept of place in row	✓ B	5/5/2020
Ringing Jargon	✓ B	19/4/20
• Backstroke	✓ B	5/5/2020
• Luffhead	✓ B	5/5/2020
• Treble/henor	✓ B	19/4/20
• Up/down	✓ B	5/5/2020
• In/out	✓ B	5/5/2020
• Quick/dow	✓ B	5/5/2020

The Level 2 assessment is the same as the Level 1 assessment but more ticks are required to pass at Level 2. Please see page 11.

**L2 THEORY**  
ONLINE SESSIONS 1/4 + 18/4. DISCUSSING HOW TO CALL CALL CHANGES. UNDERSTANDING WHY/WHEN WE GET OUT OF SYNC. HOW TO MAKE THE CALL.  
L2 THEORY ONLINE SESSION 5/5/2020. (2000)  
FURTHER DETAILED DISCUSSION WITH B. ABOUT DEVICES, NOT CALL CHANGES AND EXPLAINING PARTICULAR RINGING SESSIONS. HOW TO GROUP WORK BY TALKING WITH THE RINGERS. GIVE D. LEE. HAD A PLEASANT AND PASSING TIME ON ALL REMAINING L2 THEORY TARGETS. B.

Tricia's Level 2 theory record

Theory targets	Teacher Signature	Date
Understand concept of Blue Line	✓ B	1/4/2020
Know circle/order of work	✓ B	4/5/2020
Understand concept of Place Bell	✓ B	4/5/2020
Write out method *	✓ B	1/4/2020
Be aware of where the treble is passed	✓ B	4/5/2020
Know what happens at a call	✓ B	4/5/2020
Know what happens the following lead	✓ B	4/5/2020

\* See Level 4 resources at [www.learningtheropes.org](http://www.learningtheropes.org)

**L4 THEORY SESSIONS ONLINE 1/4/20 + 18/4/20**  
WHICH WAS PL. PLAIN FOR MINOR. PL. STANFORD DUBOIS 120 PLAIN BELL STRIKES. ALSO BY PLACE NOTATION. DISCUSS ORDER OF WORK, WHERE TREBLE IS PASSED. INTRODUCED TO BKS + THEIR EFFECT.  
4/5/2020 FURTHER GOOD DISCUSSION AND OPEN QUESTIONS (2000) ON THE OUTSTANDING THEORY TARGETS.  
SUE DEMONSTRATED GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF ALL THE ELEMENTS OF THE THEORY SYLLABUS FOR L4. PL.

Sue's Level 4 theory record

The Cambridge District webinars have continued, the latest being The History of Simulators, given by David Bagley, and Change Ringing in Cambridge in the 18th Century presented by Gareth Davies. Both excellent presentations and attended by Phillip & Sheila, and David & Sheila P. ([See training page for links](#))

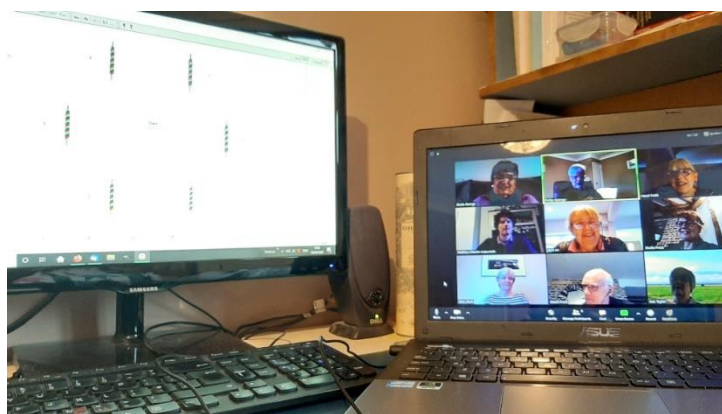
### **17th / 18th April 2020**

I met via Zoom with Sue and Tricia on these days to talk about theory. Sue is working on level 4 (change ringing) in the LtR scheme, place notation, circle of work etc, and Sue is now on level 2 learning about call changes, up and down terminology and pricking out. We had some very good sessions with more to be arranged.

### **16th April 2020**

As planned, we met on 16th April via Zoom to ring call changes on Abel. I ran Abel on the desktop and, having published a sequence of call changes, everyone in turn made a call and I controlled Abel. This was a very simple idea and was quite fun but everyone had to wait their turn and of course there was no actual ringing. However, it was successful and worth doing.

The main advantage was that we were all able to meet online and have a chat and it is hoped that we can meet again next week with more ideas.



The team meeting on Zoom to ring some call changes

### **11th April 2020**

It is Holy Saturday and we look forward to a strange Easter. Lockdown has stopped all ringing as well as all face to face social activity.

Thankfully the ringers are keeping in touch using emails, texts, WhatsApp and Zoom but its not the same as the physical contact and weekly meeting with one another. I am visiting the church about once a week to regulate the clock and whilst there I take advantage of the simulator and ring a quarter peal. We are all going to be out of practice by the time we return to the tower.

In the meantime, some of us are attending webinars arranged by the Cambridge District. The first was about ringing in Cambridge in the 16th and 17th century. This



was a very interesting presentation given by Gareth Davies. During Holy week we attended a training session on Blue Lines. This was about the structure of methods and was very comprehensively presented by Stephen Burr, the Cambridge District President. Notes from this can be found [here](#). Further presentations are planned to include belfry maintenance and care, and one on conducting.

We will also be holding our own social gathering on Thursday 16th April when we will be trying to ring interactive call changes on Abel, using Zoom. Watch this space.



### 3rd April 2020

We had talked about designing a logo for ourselves to wear on sweat shirts and the like. Ringers were asked for ideas and one which Sue suggested found favour with everyone. This was developed with input from the band and Rebecca was asked to prepare some artwork for us.

After several iterations a final design was agreed and we placed an order for garments. The clothing arrived in mid March and we planned to arrange a group photograph on the 26th but the lockdown due to Covid-19 prevented us from meeting again. We didn't want to postpone our launch and to overcome this everyone took selfies, and these were compiled into one photographic record.



The team, plus Rebecca and Mark (Ratby)

## **21st March 2020**

The government put the country into lockdown on Friday 20th March due to the Coronavirus pandemic. This means the closure of many non-essential business, all churches and a serious limitation on movement around the country. Therefore, all church bell ringing is suspended until further notice.

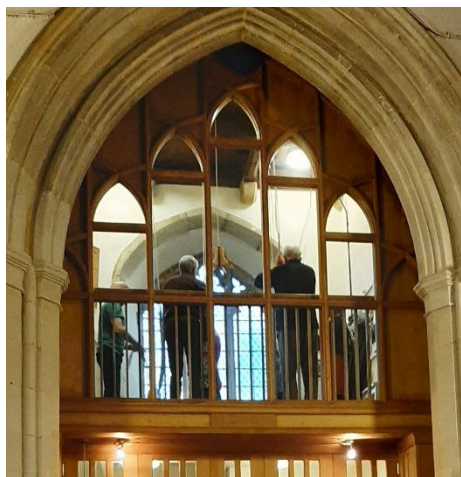
## **20th March 2020**

### **Jon Reed**

It is my sad duty to report here that our close ringing friend Jon Reed died unexpectedly on Thursday evening 19th March. Jon last rang here on New Years' Day in the date touch. Sheila and I ring with him and his wife Naomi every month in our "friends" quarter peal and we have known Jon for many years. He was a gentle person and he and I have spent many an hour discussing ringing theory and other related topics. We shall miss him. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jon, Naomi and their families at this sad time.

## **13th March 2020**

We have had a couple of good events this week, starting with ringing for deanery evensong on Sunday 8th March, when there was a joint choir including our own and augmented by St. Neots, Gamlingay and Gt. Staughton. Sheila G had organised tea for the choir after rehearsal and the ringers were able to welcome two visitors from St. Neots and Gamlingay, the Rev Paul Hutchinson, Catherina Griffiths and John Boocock. We enjoyed our ringing and were pleased to welcome them to the tower.



On Wednesday the 11th three of us went to the ringing practice at Biggleswade. This was our fourth visit in 12 months and on this occasion it was for the benefit of Hazel and Tricia. Hazel had been before and was able to ring Plain Hunt and Plain Bob 7 on the treble, both for the first time. This was Tricia's first experience on ten bells and she commented that it was a very much different sound. She managed very well ringing Rounds and Call Changes. It was a very pleasant evening and we were made most welcome, as usual, by the local ringers.



Hazel and Tricia pleased with their efforts after the practice

## **Coronavirus**

Before practice started yesterday 12th March we discussed the implications of the Coronavirus on our ringing. Guidance from the government today set out steps to be taken in case of illness. At the moment we are not required to carry out social distancing. The emphasis was again made about handwashing. Sanitiser is available for use in the tower. Everyone understands the seriousness of the situation and we agreed to continue ringing until instructed by the government or the church to stop meeting, but that individuals may stay away if they wish.

The following email was sent to the Rector Rev Rachel Blanchflower.

"I want to let you know that during "weekly notices" at bell ringing practice this evening I talked about today's announcement from the government and chief medical officer. Some of the ringers had also seen it on tv.

At last week's practice I emphasised the importance of handwashing before and after ringing and I reiterated this tonight. I reminded everyone that we have sanitiser in the ringing room for anyone to use as they wish.

I also explained that we will carry on ringing as normal until such time that the government or church instruct us otherwise. We hope we will be able to continue but we are aware that the situation in the country will become worse and we don't yet know how our daily lives will be affected.

Everyone understood what had been said and we shared comments on this.

I explained the importance of self isolation if necessary (according to NHS guidelines), or that if anyone felt they didn't want to attend because of the general situation this would be perfectly ok (just let me know).

We have lots of ringing planned at home and away in the coming weeks and everyone is very positive but we will monitor and act accordingly."

Phillip George - Tower Secretary

## 27th February 2020

Well, we have had our new tail ends for a couple of weeks and find them to be very comfortable. They are flax and the same gauge as the old ones, so plenty of weight on the rope for our 13.5cwt bells. They were for the back three which were worn most. We received a very good service from Mendip Ropes and will now consider sending the front three ropes although they are not as badly worn.

Tied bell practice this week was to be to practice Double Bob Minimus but Hazel was called away so we used the sim to do some leading practice and Plain Hunt on 5. It was a very worthwhile session, they usually are. Tricia is coming one well and we covered some call change theory and did some dodging practice in the morning session.

The photo shows the afternoon team.



## 9th February 2020

No much happening in the last two weeks, most of us have had colds which has caused some absenteeism but we have been practising and we rang for the service last Sunday.

One thing I had overlooked was that during the quarter peal for Sue to gain her level 3 certificate, Georgia also achieved her level 4. So the photograph this week is of the certificate presentations at practice on the 30th January. A very good start to the year.



Presentation of LtR certificates during practice on 30th January  
L-R Phillip, Sheila, Tricia, Sue, Hazel, Georgia, Sheila P, David



## 29th January 2020

Yet another success story for two of our ringers, this time by ringing a quarter peal. Sue needed to ring the tenor behind to a quarter peal to achieve her level 3 certificate in the Learning the Ropes scheme. We had tried just before Christmas but the ringing came to grief, and so this was a priority for this year.

We organised it to be at Caxton on a Tuesday evening. The ringers here don't practice in January and we knew that the bells would be available, and we are familiar with them. It was just a matter of getting a couple of experienced ringers to help us and Catherina was an obvious choice. We also asked David Griffiths and this left one rope. I saw it as an opportunity for Georgia to ring her first quarter peal inside and she was pleased to be able to ring.

The pressure was on a bit, with Georgia's longest length inside and Sue's L3 certificate at stake but we had a good quarter peal and we all very pleased at our accomplishment.

Many thanks to David and Catherina for ringing with us.



Happy band after quarter peal success  
L-R: Sheila, Catherina, Sue, David, Georgia, Phillip

## 19th January 2020

Sheila and Phillip G went to the Hunts District ADM on Saturday 18th Jan. As usual we enjoyed a "ringers' tea" of sandwiches, cake and lashings of tea. It was a good opportunity to catch up with friends and have a good chat.

During the business meeting we elected Tricia as a member of the association, along with other ringers from different towers in the district. I explained that Tricia started in September and was ringing call changes. This was met with "ooo's" and "aaah's" amongst members. Obviously good progress Tricia!!

At the end of the meeting a very pleasant surprise awaited Sheila. A presentation was made to her of a certificate marking her 50 years as a member of the association. This was greeted with warm applause from everyone. We were not aware that this was going to happen and didn't have time to photograph the event, so at home today we

took the opportunity for a group photo with some of the Gransden ringers. Unfortunately only five ringers this morning, we usually have at least six. Never mind, we rang some nice call changes.

Congratulations to Sheila.



L-R: Sheila P, Tricia, Sheila G, Phillip, Sue

### 10th January 2020

Waking up from the "ringing slumbers" after Christmas, we met for our second practice of the year and were pleased to see Alasdair again albeit briefly before he returns to university in Glasgow. We managed to ring Plain Bob Minor as well as PB5 and G% plain courses.

We talked about a visit to Peterborough cathedral on one of their practice nights and Phillip will arrange this. We are also planning a quarter peal for Sue at Caxton on 28th preceded by practice there next week.



We have intended to replace some tail ends on the ropes and during the week the 4th and 6th ropes have been replaced by spare ones. The spares have not been rung for decades and are a bit springy, but we managed them ok. They need a bit of adjustment as they stretched out during the evening.

Replacement rope on No 4 bell

## 4th January 2020

On Saturday 4th January 14 ringers and partners celebrated the New Year with the annual ringers' party, this year held at Nutbells.

As usual everyone contributed to the meal with a variety of choices for starters, mains and sweet. After each course we were encouraged to change seating venue between the kitchen and the dining room so as to be able to chat with everyone during the evening.

After the meal we enjoyed two quizzes organised by Adrian and David, and finally Sheila and Phillip were presented with gifts as thanks for their ringing leadership during 2019 and for hosting the party.



L-R: Hazel, Matt, Susanne, Glyn, Sheila P, Alasdair, Tricia, Georgia, Sheila G, Sue, Adrian (front), Ant, David, Phillip

Handmade personalised bell decorations presented to Phillip & Sheila



Winning team receiving their prize from David (standing left), Georgia, Tricia, Ant, Hazel, Matt, Sheila G



Phillip & Sheila receive thank you gifts from David

## 1st January 2020

A lovely start to the New Year with a date touch being rung by local ringers and friends.

This was the 25th New Year's Day date touch, and quite possibly the last as it completes a long project (by definition). In fact we have attempted a date touch on 27 NYDs but two have failed, one due to method mistakes and the other due to a mis-call. nevertheless, this has been a great success.

Today's ringing was very good and methods rung included Cambridge S Minor, Grandsire Doubles and Plain Bob Doubles. This is the first quarter peal to be both minor and doubles methods. The details can be found [here](#).

Thanks to all 31 ringers who have rung with us over the last 27 years.

Here is a photo of the band.



L-R: Jon, Naomi, Catherina, Sheila, John, Phillip