

# Hereford Bulletin

## Upcoming Events

**Sat 29<sup>th</sup> Feb** – Hereford Cathedral Practice 6:30pm

**Sat 28<sup>th</sup> Mar** – Hereford Cathedral Practice 6:30pm

**Fri 16<sup>th</sup> – Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Apr** - Hereford Ringing Course

**Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Apr** – Hereford Cathedral Practice 6:30pm

**Fri 1<sup>st</sup> – Sun 31<sup>st</sup> May** - Quarter Peal Festival

**Fri 8<sup>th</sup> May** – VE Day

**Sat 9<sup>th</sup> May** – Guild AGM Bridgnorth District

**Sat 30<sup>th</sup> May** – Hereford Cathedral Practice 6:30pm

**Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Jun** - District Practice Wellington 7:30pm

**Sat 27<sup>th</sup> Jun** – Hereford Cathedral Practice 6:30pm

**Sun 5<sup>th</sup> Jul** – Striking Competition & BBQ Tower TBC

**Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Jul** – Hereford Cathedral Practice 6:30pm

## Cathedral Practices

Ever wanted to ring on 10 Bells? Did you know that the Cathedral holds practices once a month that are open to all ringers? You don't have to be an expert ringer, but you do need to be able to handle a bell confidently. There's always an opportunity to ring rounds and called changes.

Ringers meet at the bottom of the Tower at 6:15pm, for more information contact Nicky on [njaubrey@hotmail.com](mailto:njaubrey@hotmail.com)

## District AGM

The District AGM was held at Burghill on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January. It was a chilly day but that did not stop over 30 people from attending, the ringing both before and after the meeting was varied and there was something for everyone. Luckily there was Soup on hand to warm everyone up after the service which was well received.

The Peter Hughes Trophy was awarded to Ian Thornewell from Marden by Caroline Priestley. The band at Marden were struggling to learn Grandsire, as they were all learning the method at the same time, so he organised Grandsire Doubles training days for them, with help from Nicky.



*Ian Thornewell*

There was a discussion on Bell Maintenance and the Roles and Responsibilities of Steeple keepers and Tower Captains. It was decided it is important that all Towers should be advised to have a Bell Maintenance Logbook, this should be filled in every time any work is done as this a record of due diligence.

Mark Pugh has agreed to provide some Tower Maintenance training days, Barbara is gathering names of those people interested. If this is something you would like to attend, please contact Barbara. KP

## Your Committee.....

**Ringing Master North** - Nicky Aubrey [njaurey@hotmail.com](mailto:njaurey@hotmail.com)

**Ringing Master East** – Caroline Priestley [carolinepriestley@me.com](mailto:carolinepriestley@me.com)

**Ringing Master South** – Vacant (Nick C-T) [ctgroundcare@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ctgroundcare@hotmail.co.uk)

**Junior Ringing Master** – Jacob Morrison

**Secretary** – Barbara Fox [anthony.fox41@btinternet.com](mailto:anthony.fox41@btinternet.com)

**Treasurer** – Henry Webb

**Management Committee Rep** – Dan Christie

**Bell Restoration Fund Rep** – Anne Newman

## Training Days

The Committee wants to be able to help support the Ringers in the district the best they can. In order to do this, they need your help. If you want to learn a new method, practice a method, need help with teaching bell handling or organising an open tower you need to let the committee know.

**Not sure where you fit in??** We've shared out our towers between the three areas just to make it a little easier for the Ringing Masters, we do have a lot of towers, so if there's something you need help with please get in contact with your area master. Of course, we'd love to see you out and about at any of the towers and we're happy to help anyone who needs it

### North - Nicky

6 Bodenham  
3 Brinsop  
8 Burghill  
6 Canon Pyon  
8 Hereford, All Saints  
10 Hereford, Cathedral  
8 Hereford, St Nicholas  
5 *Hereford, St Peter*  
6 Holmer  
6 Marden  
6 Moreton on Lugg  
6 Pipe cum Lyde  
6 Sutton St Nicholas  
6 Wellington

### South - Nick

6 Abbey Dore  
6 Allensmore  
4 Bacton  
6 Clodock  
6 Eaton Bishop  
6 Ewyas Harrold  
6 Kentchurch  
8 Kingstone  
8 Madley  
6 Michaelchurch Escley  
6 Much Dewchurch  
6 Peterchurch  
6 Preston on Wye  
5 Tyberton  
3 Vowchurch

### East - Caroline

6 Fownhope  
6 Hampton Bishop  
8 Holme Lacy  
6 Little Dewchurch  
8 Lugwardine  
5 *Mordiford*  
6 Stoke Edith  
6 Tarrington  
5 Weston Beggard  
6 Withington  
6 Woolhope  
8 Yarkhill



### Ring out for Peace Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020

At 7pm bells are invited to ring across the nation again in celebration of 75 years of peace. The aim is to involve as many bells as possible to mark this important anniversary. Can't manage 7pm? Don't worry, anytime that afternoon, evening or over the weekend will be fine. Bellboard has an event to link your special ringing to. More info at <https://cccbr.org.uk/2020/01/10/ring-out-for-peace/>

### Quarter Peal Festival

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May – Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May

That's right, a whole month of quarters! This year we've decided to extend our district quarter peal festival to make sure that everyone who would like to ring a quarter gets the chance to.

Would you like to ring a quarter? Maybe you haven't tried one before and you're not sure what to expect or you're looking for a new challenge. Whether you'd like to tick off a new method, consolidate one you've rung before, have a shot at calling or go for your first, remember it doesn't matter what happens it's a great way to practice the thing you've been learning with a steady band.

Need a little help organising? Not sure if you're ready or what you should have a go at, just ask your ringing master, they'll be able to help find the ringers, tower, conductor...

Conductors - there is an event on Bellboard to link your quarter to.  
Good luck everyone and remember to have fun!

**Would you like us to send you the [Bulletin](#) via email or perhaps you've got something to go in the next edition?**

Please let us know by sending an email to [hereforddistrict@outlook.com](mailto:hereforddistrict@outlook.com)

You can also request a paper copy for your tower

The Bulletin will also be available at [www.herefordbellringers.org](http://www.herefordbellringers.org)

**Do you use social media?** Several of our towers have their own little space in the world, why not have a look to see who can find....



## Spotted on Bellboard....

**Hereford Diocesan Guild**  
On Friday, 27 December 2019 in 42m  
**Michaelchurch Escley, Herefordshire**  
St Michael  
Tenor: 5-3-10 in C

### 1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Nick Chapman
- 2 Libby Davis
- 3 Carol Williams
- 4 C Martin Foster
- 5 Steve Williams
- 6 Nick Cooper-Tomkins (C)

To welcome Aimee Rose Foster born 24-12-2019. First inside Libby Davis.

**Hereford Diocesan Guild**  
On Sunday, 12 January 2020 in 46m

**Burghill, Herefordshire**  
St Mary the Virgin  
Tenor: 10-0-20 in G

### 1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Briannie Price
- 2 Fran Watkins
- 3 Kris Perruzza
- 4 Elizabeth Donovan
- 5 Anne Newman
- 6 Jason M Walker
- 7 Andrew Watkins (C)
- 8 Len Hand

First of Triples on the treble for Briannie  
Rung for Evensong

On Wednesday, 4 December 2019 in 47m  
**Allensmore, Herefordshire**  
St Andrew  
Tenor: 10-3-18 in G

### 1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Libby Davis
- 2 Carol Williams
- 3 Lesley Meredith
- 4 Steve Williams
- 5 Nick Chapman
- 6 Nick Cooper-Tomkins (C)

First inside Nick Chapman, Belated St Andrews day 1/4 to launch St Andrews 2020 calendar.

**Hereford Diocesan Guild**  
On Sunday, 9 February 2020 in 43m  
**Canon Pyon, Herefordshire**  
St Lawrence  
Tenor: 10-3-2 in G

### 1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Len Hand
- 2 Fran Watkins
- 3 Jason M Walker
- 4 Kris Perruzza
- 5 Nicky Aubrey
- 6 Andrew Watkins (C)

First of Minor (1)

**Well done** to everyone ringing their firsts of things, it's great to see. These are just a few we've noticed. Let us know what you have been up to and we'll pop it in next time!

## From the Towers....

### Michaelchurch Escley

We are a new band (all starting from scratch) and have been learning to ring for about 3 years. We usually practice rounds, call changes, plain hunt on 5 and sometimes 6, plain courses of Grandsire, Bob Minimus and Bob Doubles (depending on attendance). Practice night is Friday 7:30 – 9pm followed by drinks at the Bridge Pub, Michaelchurch Escley. Visiting Ringers are always welcome! Contact Libby on 01981 510463 [libbydavis2003@hotmail.com](mailto:libbydavis2003@hotmail.com)

### Bodenham, Marden & Sutton St Nicholas

On the first Wednesday of the month Bodenham, Marden and Sutton St Nicholas have grouped together to hold a joint practice, a great way to help the bands progress with their ringing. The practices will rotate around the three towers so check first if you fancy joining them!

### Bodenham & Marden

Both churches have unfortunately become victims of the recent flooding and significant damage has been done. They have set up a JustGiving page to raise money to help get both churches back into use as quickly as possible. If you would like to donate there is a link on the district website.

### Canon Pyon

We have recently had Mark Pugh the Guild Belfries Officer visit us along with the Oddstruckness meter. The Treble was found to be oddstruck the opposite way to the rest of our bells. Luckily this was rectified with a little adjustment of the twiddle pin, now we're all oddstruck the same way. Let's hope this makes them easier to ring!

**Hereford Diocesan Guild**  
On Sunday, 2 February 2020 in 48m  
**Hereford**  
Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Ethelbert  
Tenor: 33-3-21 in C#

### 1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Len Hand
- 2 Andrew Watkins
- 3 Fran Watkins
- 4 Robert D Hodges
- 5 Nicky Aubrey (C)
- 6 Jason M Walker
- 7 Kris Perruzza
- 8 Steve Maddox

For Candlemas  
First quarter of Grandsire Triples - 4

# St. George's Brinsop

## 'Ancient Bells Set to Recover their Voices'

The vibrant community of Herefordshire's functioning bell towers is soon to get a new addition – not a high spec ring of 8 that most ringers would probably like – but the opposite end of the spectrum, just 3 bells in one of the smallest tower around..

However the three bells of St. George's Brinsop have their own claim to stardom. They are, for example, the oldest set of bells in the Herefordshire Diocese and have a rarity value in being all from the same bell founder. Fred Sharpe dated the bells to 1450 and ascribed them to Richard le Bellytere, the Worcester bell founder, who is responsible for many bells in Herefordshire.

Furthermore Mediaeval bells, we have found out, despite the rudimentary technology available at the time still set the gold standard for modern bell founders.. Our bell hangers, Nicholsons' of Bridport, have stated that, *'As modern bell founders and ironsmiths, our aim is always to emulate the skills of those mediaeval craftsmen who produced bells of such fine detail and artistry'*.



The Brinsop bells are fine examples of those skills. The three bells weigh 5 ½ cwt, 4 ¼ cwt and 3 ¼ cwt respectively and have diameters of 30 ½ inches, 27 3/8 inches and 25 inches. Around the sound bow a complex script spells out dedications to particular saints, St. Margaret, St. John and St. Michael asking the saints in Latin to pray for us; each letter is crowned and the words are separated with the images of the heads of King Edward 3<sup>rd</sup> or his wife Philippa of Hainault. There is also the insignia of Richard, the 4 diagonal Fleur de Lys, beginning each dedication. How all this was founded into the skin of the bell in those times is pretty amazing.

Coincidentally the saints chosen for these dedications have given us a clue as to the origin of the bells; for in 1440 one John Dansey of Turnastone married Margaret Shelwick and by this marriage inherited Brinsop Court, the local manor house which the Dansey family owned for the next 500 years. Remarkably members of the family got wind of the project to restore the bells and have been in touch, some came to launch the restoration project and others are keenly following progress.

How the bells were attached to the church and operated in the mediaeval period is uncertain but we do know they were rehung in a specially created tower when the church was restored in 1866. The original elm headstocks were kept and the bells were supplied with new locally made wheels (all one piece), new ropes tied at the top of the wheel and rollers, but no stays or slider bars.

So they will have been swung chimed. But this was clearly done with gusto as at some point the clapper in the Second came loose and was rather crudely 'repaired' with a bit of rope or cloth. It was too long though with the result that it struck the side of the bell too low so that the bell developed a serious crack which made it unringable.

The two remaining bells continued to be 'rung' by the local Gamekeeper, Evan Rogers, until 1973. He describes in his dictated biography 'A Funny Old Quist' (a must read for anyone who lives in Brinsop or who wants to know about country life in the early part of the last century, how he rung one bell with his hands and the other (through a loop tied in the rope) with his foot!





The bells have not been rung since. In the intervening years the tower became home to a colony of Jackdaws and since it is 8 metres off the ground with no convenient access it was never cleared out. So that became the first job, once we got access to the tower!

This inaccessibility of the tower has become legendary. Fred Sharpe had to have two goes at it and Henry Chandler, the current Burghill tower captain, remembers helping to renew one of the bell ropes in the 1970's and it taking them 2 hours just to get the ladder up!(He also remembers the bird litter!)

Nowadays it's still a fairly hairy climb up a scaffolding tower.

So with the recent development of techniques for welding bells, a full restoration became a possibility. The funds were raised, the Faculty obtained, bell hangers commissioned and the bells were removed from the tower. The Second has been welded by Soundweld, the cast in crown staples have been drilled out, the bells have been provided with new headstocks, new wheels, stays and slider bars and a new metal frame too as the C19th one was found to be rotten in places.

This week the bells and frame have returned to the church to be re-introduced into the tower and set up for full circle ringing from the floor of the nave. If all goes well, these ancient bells will be able to find their voice again after all these years. Everyone in Brinsop is hoping they don't sound too bad!

PB



## Across

4 135246

5 Sometimes has a spire on top

8 2017 War memorial bell lives here

12 Church timepiece

13 Bell is attached to this

14 Ellacombe.....

16 On five bells

18 I strike the bell

## Down

1 A six bell method

2 Something to ring at Brinsop...

3 Ring before this Sunday gathering

4 1260 changes

7 Only four working bells

9 When you pull the 'fluffy bit'

10 2 to 3, 4 to 5 etc...

15 Possible home to a small flying creature

17 The colourful woolly bit

19 Takes about 3 hours!

20 The thing we have to hold on to

11



6

