

# *Ringling Around and About in the Huntingdon District*



**Issue No 35: November 2025**

*Editor – Phillip George*



Ringling at Ramsey on the  
15<sup>th</sup> November

## **In this issue**

<b>Ringling meeting at Ramsey</b>	<b>page 2</b>
<b>Moving on meeting at Gamlingay</b>	<b>page 3</b>
<b>New member at Alconbury</b>	<b>page 3</b>
<b>Geoff Burn tower survey</b>	<b>page 4</b>
<b>Sheila George comments on the tower survey</b>	<b>page 5</b>
<b>Performance ringling during September</b>	<b>page 6</b>
<b>Association subscriptions 2026</b>	<b>page 7</b>
<b>Monitors of the month</b>	<b>page 8</b>
<b>District Secretary advertisement</b>	<b>page 8</b>

## **The end of our ringling year – set for changes in 2026!**

We held our last meeting of the year on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November. We were lucky to have avoided the torrential rain from storm Claudia the day before which might have kept some of us away! The bells sounded out as the light faded in the late autumn afternoon, but there was light and cheer in the ringling room and later when we enjoyed sumptuous tea. What better way to end a busy year? See the report on page 2.

I have mentioned the Central Council initiative Ringling 2030 in several recent issues. This highlights the desperate need for new ringers and ringling teachers. Coincident with this, Geoff Burn carried out a tower survey in the District earlier in the year and I included a link in the last newsletter to a summary of his findings. The details were emailed to members on Caroline's update on the 7<sup>th</sup> November.

Geoff's summary can be found in on page 4. In addition, Sheila George has studied the data closely and presented her own comments to members at the business meeting at Ramsey. These can be found on page 5. Please take time to read Geoff's and Sheila's notes, look closely at the detail and consider where we might be in 5 or ten years time! The mantra is recruit, recruit, recruit! I know from my own tower experience how difficult this is, but we must find ways of filling the gaps in the number of ringers and most importantly those who can teach. A tower can have many ringers but if it hasn't got a good teacher it will struggle to survive.

Also in this issue, the committee have made some changes in responsibilities for some of the officers. This has reduced the responsibilities of the District Secretary and aligned certain jobs with other officers. A booklet has been produced which will be circulated shortly .

## Ringing and Business Meeting - November - PG

I counted at least 35 ringers in the ringing room for our meeting on the 15th November. That's no surprise as our November meeting is usually well attended, but more so at Ramsey when we always receive a cheerful welcome from T/C Cathy Moulton and all the local ringers.

No fewer than a dozen towers were represented and we had a couple of visitors too. Ringing masters Andrew Smith and Cathy Moulton skilfully co-ordinated the ringing which included Kent Lt Bob Minimus, Call Changes, Cambridge, Grandsire, Plain Bob, and special method of the day Ramsey Bob Minor.

After the ringing we enjoyed a sumptuous tea of baked potatoes (with sides) followed by gorgeous home-made cakes, all accompanied by hot drinks.

The business meeting followed when we elected as ringing members, **Eileen King** (Alconbury), **Maddie Coxsedge** and **Jess Coxsedge** (Somersham).

The president reminded members that we will need to elect a new District Secretary next year as Caroline is not seeking re-election, and anyone interested in the role should make themselves known.

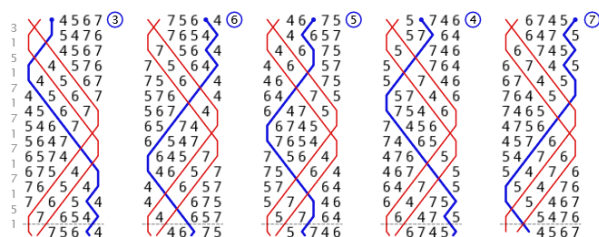
Reports were received from the District Committee, the Training Officer (Ed Groome), and Geoff Burn who had submitted data from his tower survey. Sheila George presented her analysis of the data and challenged us all to recruit, recruit, recruit!

Cass Boocock proposed a vote of thanks to the vicar, Rev Joe McGill for use of the bells and church, and to the local ringers who worked so cheerfully and tirelessly in preparing and serving a lovely tea.

This was our last meeting of the year. Our next event is the ADM at Bluntisham on Saturday 17th January.



Harry and Emma helping at teatime.



Single Oxford Bob Triples

Photographs will be published only where the Editor is satisfied that consent has been obtained from someone who has legal responsibility for the child or vulnerable adult.



## Moving on meeting at Gamlingay - PG

We had a super 'moving on' practice on Saturday morning the 1<sup>st</sup> November at Gamlingay.

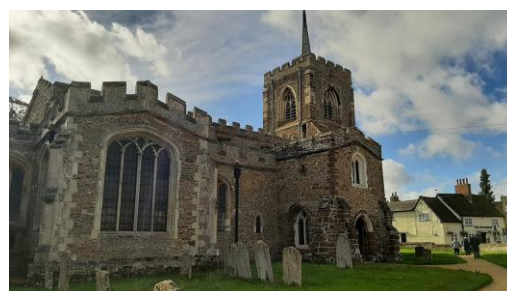
About fifteen ringers of varying abilities enjoyed the bells and the experience present meant that we were able to help with call changes on 8 and Plain Hunt on 7. There were also opportunities for treble ringers in hunting and treble bobbing.

The first session included a touch Grandsire Triples, a plain course of St Simons Triples (a first for some), a half course of Cambridge S Major and a course of Plain Bob Triples, all of which were successfully rung. A pre coffee-break touch of Plain Bob Major (W,3B,M,H) was beautifully rung and was immediately followed by an ad-hoc theory session to discuss calling position nomenclature.

Ringling Master, Andrew Smith, stirred us from our break, encouraging us to return to the ringing room where Grandsire Triples was rung followed by Yorkshire S Major and Plain Hunt.

Thanks to Andrew for looking after the ringing and to the Gamlingay ringers for hosting the event and providing refreshments.

Good fun, good fellowship and good ringing.



## Eileen Page - new member at Alconbury - PG



Eileen Page, ringer at Alconbury, was elected as a ringing member of the Association at the business meeting held at Ramsey on the 15<sup>th</sup> November.

She was unable to be present but on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November Mark George, tower captain, presented Eileen with her membership certificate during their practice night.

Congratulations to all new members and welcome to the Association.

### **My comments**

Where numbers are shown they represent home ringers and the pluses are visitors

It is sad how many perfectly ringable towers are not rung more often:

occasionally 16

rarely 8

never 7

Rarely/never rung towers probably have a greater risk of falling into the unringable category

How can we promote ringing in these towers?:- Help with open days?

Arrange ringing visits?

Specific training in 'home' towers

Promotion of singles/minimus methods?

Some information about the average age of ringers would have been useful

There were some notes attached which I have summarised as follows:-

### **Assistance with ringing**

Alconbury

Brampton (for weddings)

Caxton (more competent visitors)

Gamlingay (more visitors)

Great Gidding (help with practices & service ringing)

Great Gransden (visitors welcome)

Great Paxton (always glad of help)

Great Staughton (list of contacts willing to ring for weddings etc)

Hamerton

Little Paxton (always glad of help)

Somersham (shortage of ringers)

Whittlesey St Andrews (visiting ringers would be welcome)

### **Assistance with bell maintenance/steeplekeeping**

Caxton

Croxton

Gamlingay (improved access)

Great Gransden (advice needed occasionally)

Great Staughton (advice on splicing ropes)

Holywell (issues with clappers on 5 & 6)

Somersham (general maintenance advice)

Spaldwick (help with oiling bearings)

### **Training**

Alconbury

Brampton (insufficient experienced ringers to help 2 learners)

Great Gransden (2 ART trainers in tower)

Great Paxton (always glad of help)

Hamerton

Holywell (difficulty moving learners onto plain hunt & methods)

Great Paxton (always glad of help)

Ramsey (always appreciated)

## Tower Survey Analysis – *Sheila George*

### **Geoff's Survey 2025 SJG**

I found Geoff's survey very interesting and have examined the figures further.

But by now the figures may have changed, and the results also depend on what questions were asked in the first place.

61 Ringable towers.

### **PRACTICES**

21 practice so 40 do not. So just over 1/3 hold a regular practice of these 11 (1/2) rely on visitors and 15 have joint practices.

6 can manage on their own – Alconbury, Buckden, Catworth, Great Gransden, Kimbolton, Little Paxton and Ramsey

### **SERVICE RINGING**

20 ring regularly but regularity not defined. GG ring regularly but only once a month as there are no other services.

Of these 20, 6 manage to field full bands with no visitors which represents 1.5% of total no of towers.

14 ring occasionally but again only 2 do not need help of visitors.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Numbers ringing for practices and services about the same 32%

More and more joint practices are happening, but does this mean Sunday Service numbers are reduced?

No of towers who are self-sufficient 10%

One further important question –

What is the average age of the band?

Eg at Great Gransden we list 8 ringers of which 90% are in their 60/70's

Dare I suggest that a lot of towers would report the same!

In 5-10 years time many towers will be in decline with no one to take over as officers -TC/Steeple keeper etc and no one to teach new recruits.

It probably won't bother most of us, but we need to be looking toward 2030 and the Central Council's recommendations for the future.

What can we do? Not sure – recruitment, recruitment, recruitment?

Despite being a very visual presence in the village and we continue to drip, drip what we are doing through social media etc but it is constant hard work.

Our recent Rusty Ringers event when we invited lapse ringers we had taught over the last 50 years to come and see what we had done in the tower only attracted a few (6) and we counted up that a further 12+ still lived in the village who did not take up the invitation.

I leave it to you to mull over and report back to your towers and share what successes you have so that others may copy and benefit.

## Performance Ringing in October - PG

It's been a relatively quiet month although there have been some significant quarter peals in the District.

**Woodston** were first off the mark on the 1<sup>st</sup>, ringing Grandsire Doubles with a 'local' band!!

The first special quarter peal, a date touch actually, was at **Great Gransden** on the 4<sup>th</sup> to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary to the day of the bells being rung for the first time after a major restoration project to rehang them. The band included five of the original ringers. Phillip & Sheila George, Catherina Griffiths, and Mark and Rebecca Banner. With thanks to David Griffiths for joining us. We had some super ringing which included Cambridge, Plain and Little in 69 minutes..



Phillip, Dave, Sheila, Rebecca, Catherina, Mark



The front six at **St Neots** were rung on the 8<sup>th</sup> to a farewell quarter to Mike and Amy Maranto who were then returning to the USA. This was Mike's first quarter peal and it was rung half muffled for Remembrance too.

Catherina, Dave, John, Mike, James, Ruth



Another special quarter on Armistice Day, the 11<sup>th</sup> was at **All Saints, Huntingdon**, where a half muffled quarter peal of Doubles (5m) St. Osmund's Bob, Eynsbury Bob, St. Martin's Bob, St. Simon's Bob; 300 changes Plain Bob. This was the first in methods (except PB) for Georgie Hunt.

The bells are now available again and the locals are keen to have them rung.

**Hilton** was visited on the 14<sup>th</sup> and rung to Cambridge. This was Tom Ridgman's 1000<sup>th</sup> quarter. Tom is president of the Cambridge District. Congratulations, Tom.



Above: Iain, Andrew, Georgie, Caroline, Richard, Jezz.  
Photo: Helen Medlock

Left: Sheila, Catherina, Naomi, Becca, Tom, Phillip

Another special was at **Holywell** on the 21<sup>st</sup> when Wells Surprise was rung which was Roger Beaman's and Nicholas T Smith's first in the method. Then, on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Cambridge S Major was rung at **Holywell** with a largely Ely District band. Philip Bailey (President of the Ely District) conducted it and it was his 2000<sup>th</sup> quarter. Also ringing was Vanessa Webster, former ringer at Houghton, who has clocked up 25 quarters at HG. Congratulations both.

Sunday the 23<sup>rd</sup> was red letter day for Rev'd Paul Hutchinson. Paul installed as an honorary canon of Ely Cathedral. The previous day he rang in a quarter peal of Cambridge Surprise Major at **St Neots**, his parish church, which was conducted by his son. John. This was David Griffiths first of surprise major. So I think this is the quarter peal of the month! Many congratulations, Paul.



St Neots: James, John, Phillip, Desmond, Charlotte, Nick, Paul, Dave

The usual monthly qp was rung at **Godmanchester** on Sunday the 23<sup>rd</sup>, this time of Single Oxford Bob Triples, which was a first for Peter Mackley and Jo Lerpiniere.

And finally, at **Bury**, a visiting band rang 1272 Reverse Cottesloe Treble Place Singles, which is believed to be the first blows in the method!



### Subscription renewals for 2026

Association subscriptions for next year become due on 1 January 2026. This will be our second year with renewals handled by our on-line membership system. The system will start sending renewal reminders with instructions in early December.

Even if you do not pay a subscription (for example if you are a Senior Ringing Member or an Honorary Member) please complete the renewal process to confirm the information we hold about you and that you wish to remain a member.

### Payment arrangements

For all concerned it's easiest if individual members pay their own subscription on-line by credit/debit card. This hugely reduces the work needed by our volunteer membership secretaries. If necessary, individuals can pay by bank transfer, or by cash or cheque to [District membership secretaries](#) (see below). *Please don't make bank transfers without checking account details* - some accounts have changed since last year.

Some members manage memberships for other members. This is often done for children and sometimes for wife/husband to manage a husband/wife's membership. See [Managing Other Members](#) for more information about this.

In a few cases, towers pay subscriptions on behalf of their members. This is still possible, though it creates a lot of work for everyone. See [Payments by Tower or Church](#) if this may apply to you, and if you will be making the payment please contact your [District membership secretary](#) (see below) as soon as possible.

### Rule changes for 2026

Two rules relating to membership were changed at the 2025 AGM:

From January, members whose subscriptions are more than six months in arrears will cease to be members of the Association. This was previously twelve months.

Also from January, new members will pay a subscription when elected whenever in the year that happens. However if they are elected in October, November or December they won't be required to pay a subscription in the following year.

### Outstanding payments for this year

About 60 people who were members in 2024 have not renewed their subscriptions this year. Under the old rules they will cease to be members at the end of December.

We have done our best to contact them all, and some have confirmed that they no longer want to be members. But most have not responded and for some we don't have working contact details.

If you know anyone who might not have paid but might want to remain a member, then please encourage them to contact their [District membership secretary](#) (see below) soon.

### Contact information for the District Committee

President – Phillip George

Secretary – Caroline Stevens

Membership Secretary – Roger Beaman

Ringing Masters. Andrew Smith and Cathy Moulton

Training Officer – Ed Groome

Webmaster – Daniel Stevens

Bell Advisor- Geoff Burn

Committee Member

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# THE BACK PAGE

## *Ringling Around and About*

### **Advance Notice – Ringling Around and About – PG**

Whilst I have enjoyed collating and publishing this newsletter it has been difficult to encourage ringers to submit their stories. It takes quite a lot of time to bring it all together, even the shorter 6 page issues. I also feel that it should be on-line rather than a printed copy. If someone would like to take it on please let me know. If not, Issue No 36 in December 2025 will be the last one! Your feedback is always welcome!



## **Monitors of the Month!**



All Saints Huntingdon – Photo: Jezzy Bottley



Great Gransden – Photo: Phillip George

## **Advertisement for a District Secretary – Phillip George - President**

### **Summary Job Responsibilities**

- Liaise closely with the District President to agree agendas for meetings and discuss other District business as required.
- Liaise with the Association General Secretary as required.
- Working with other District Officers to ensure that all relevant business is transacted at ringing and committee meetings.
- Notify District ringers of forthcoming business meetings.
- Notify District Committee Members of forthcoming committee meetings.
- Prepare agendas for business meetings.
- Request reports from District Officers as required.
- Writing and distributing minutes of meetings and recording agreed action points.
- Follow-up on outstanding agreed action points to ensure completion.
- Attending District Committee meetings.
- Annually prepare a detailed report of the year's District events to present to members at the ADM, and for printing in the Association Annual Report.
- Signatory on the District bank account
- Able and willing to respond to urgent situations in the District.
- Attending Association General Committee meetings (two) to represent the District.

You will receive support and guidance from myself and the committee  
More details can be obtained from Caroline or myself.