

Ringling Around and About in the Huntingdon District



Issue No 16: April 2024



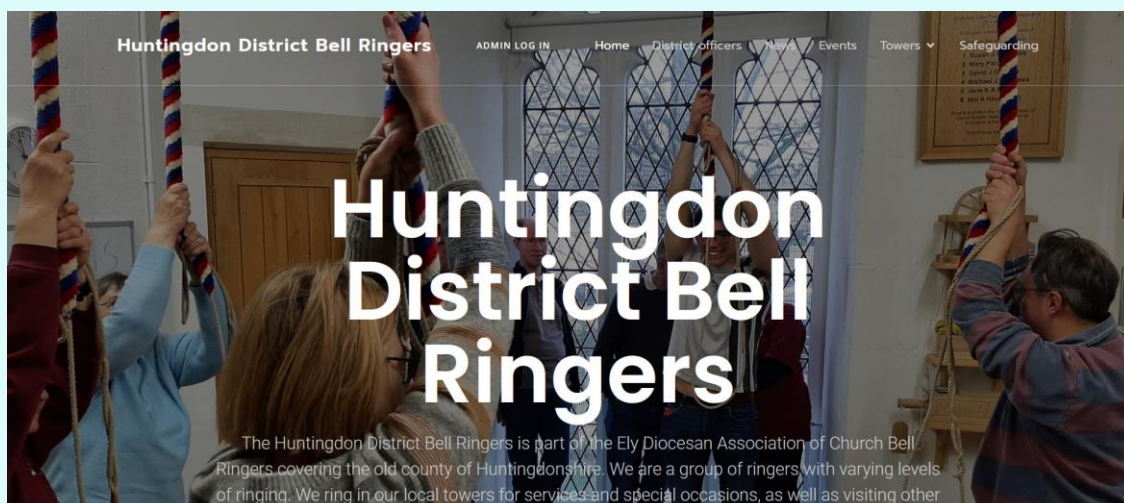
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A ringer in silhouette in front of the ringing room window at Somersham.

[New Huntingdon District Website](https://huntbells.org.uk/) - <https://huntbells.org.uk/>

The new website is now live. Our webmaster, Dan Stevens, has been working to populate it with up-to-date information as well as the usual tower details. There is more information to be added so please bear with Dan as he continues to work on it. Please contact him with comments or questions. webmaster@huntbells.org.uk



Quarter Peal Afternoon – 6th April by Sheila George

This year the District Committee has re-introduced QP attempts on some 1st Saturdays of the month. The first of these was on Saturday the 6th of April.

Back in 2005 I started to organize QP attempts on a regular basis and this carried on until 2016, latterly with the help of Jez Bottley and Andrew Smith.

Four attempts were organized this month taking into account what ringers had requested.

Unfortunately, the Cambridge S Major at Hemingford Grey was lost. Plain Bob Doubles at Holywell included a 1st inside, well done Mel Sherwood. Norwich S Minor at Houghton included a 1st in method (no photo taken!!), well done Sharon Williams.

A call change 'Peal' of 60 on thirds was rung at Great Gransden for those not yet up to change ringing quarter peal. Details can be found on BellBoard.

Our next District Quarter Peal Day will be on Saturday the 3rd of August.



Holywell

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Sheila J George
 - 2 Roger Beaman
 - 3 Mel Sherwood
 - 4 Janet Butlin
 - 5 Phillip S George (C)
 - 6 Cathy Moulton
- First inside - 3



Great Gransden

Call Changes

- 60 on Thirds
- 1 Sheila J George (C)
 - 2 Sheila Prest
 - 3 Tricia Williams
 - 4 Nigel Strong
 - 5 Phillip S George
 - 6 David Prest



Houghton

1320 Norwich Surprise Minor

- 1 Barry Smith
 - 2 Sharon Williams
 - 3 Caroline Stevens
 - 4 Andrew Stevens
 - 5 Nick Smith
 - 6 Iain Hayden (C)
- First in the method 2



Monthly Ringing Meeting at Somersham – 20th April

We've had a super ringing meeting at Somersham. The ringing room was pretty full when Sheila and I arrived to the sound of the bells being rung up. There were more behind us on the spiral staircase as we squeezed in. About 27 attended during the afternoon although a few came and went during the 90-minute session.

The ringing masters, Cathy Moulton and Andrew Smith, selected a wide variety of methods to be rung for all capabilities. We opened with Grandsire 5. Some less experienced ringers, new to the tower, enjoyed call changes several times; and Plain Hunt on 6. A touch of Stedman 5 didn't quite make it but a plain course did, and Cambridge and London were in the surprise repertoire. A handy little touch of spliced Plain and Little Bob was enjoyed by everyone and a touch of Plain Bob 6 appeared at the end.



The time went by all too quickly, and a respectable ring down in peal ended the ringing with applause.

The afternoon was full of chatter and youthful laughter creating a lovely friendly atmosphere. Thanks to Somersham for hosting and the ringing masters for looking after us.



Association 12-Bell Practice at GSM – 6th April

The Association was invited to ring on the 12 at Great St Mary's Cambridge (GSM) on Saturday the 6th of April. There were just twelve ringers on this occasion, but we rang Plain Hunt Max, Stedman Caters and call changes on 12.

It is a very worthwhile event; everyone is made welcome and there is a lot of support from more experienced ringers. Do think about going along to one of these practices.

If you need a 'buddy' just ask!



Great Gransden's Spring Mini Outing – 27th April 2024

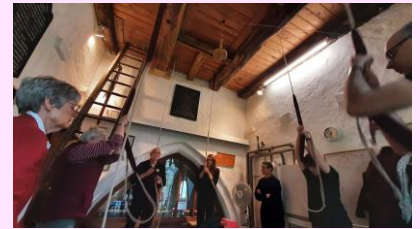
We usually have a mini-outing in the spring and autumn. Gone are the days when Sheila and I would dash about the countryside on a tower grab ringing at over 20 towers in a day! We now prefer a more leisurely day out enjoying the bells and a decent pub lunch!

And so it was on Saturday the 27th of April when we ventured to three towers in Bedfordshire for a splendid day out with a few ringing friends to boost our numbers. The basis of our ringing was call changes but we managed change ringing in all towers and tried to ring a 'performance' piece at each, even in the pub!

The nice little 9 1/4cwt six at Milton Ernest were first where we had a good ring up in peal. The church is dedicated to All Saints but the west tower window in the ringing room depicted St George and the dragon. Josh called call changes here and the performance piece was Cambridge S Minor.



Then on to the 10cwt ring of six at Oakley where access to the ringing room is by a short ladder, and with the trapdoor closed behind us ringing included Grandsire and half a course of Cambridge. The performance piece was a lovely 120 of Stedman Doubles.



Lunch had been booked at The Bedford Arms in Oakley and we were accommodated in the bar area to allow Pippa the Springer to be with us. But it was a very pleasant room and ample time had been allowed for a good pub lunch. There were seven handbell ringers in the group and with permission from the publican we rang Plain Bob Minor with all seven taking part over several plain courses. The performance piece was 120 Plain Bob Minor.



Continued on page 5

Great Gransden's Mini Spring Outing – *continued from page 4*

Suitably refreshed we travelled the short distance to Bromham St Owen's, a 22 3/4cwt eight, and a very nice ring. A couple of ringers had to leave early, and our repertoire was limited to call changes, but we enjoyed the back six to Plain Bob Minor and a touch of Grandsire Doubles was our performance piece here.



We had a great relaxing day with some very nice ringing throughout, and our grateful thanks go to Tricia Williams for organising everything and to the tower captains for meeting us at the churches.

A video summary of our ringing can be found here:
<https://youtu.be/jkjc78YSvFE>

Gamlingay and Gransden Scout Group Visit Gransden Bells

In March, Roger Beaman reported that Needingworth Scouts had visited Holywell church tower. It is a coincidence that in this issue there is a report of another scout group visiting a bell tower, this time it was Gamlingay and Gransden Pathfinder Scouts came to our tower at Great Gransden.

Under the leadership of Paul O'Shea and Chris Elwood sixteen Pathfinders attended on Friday 26th April. They associate themselves with the RCAF 405 Squadron which flew out of Gransden Lodge airfield during WWII. The troop started their visit at the memorial window with a commemoration to the squadron. Sheila George explained that many members of the squadron attended in 1986 when the window was dedicated and she spoke of the fly-past of a Lancaster bomber, the type of aircraft flown from here. I explained the elements in the window including the 804 maple leaves, one representing each airman who had died in combat.



The RCAF 405 Squadron
Memorial Window

Continued on page 6

Gamlingay and Gransden Scout Group Visit Gransden Bells – *Continued*

Into the tower, and we all assembled in the ringing room where a safety prep talk was given before the group divided, one half going to the clock room, supervised by David Prest, Deputy T/C and the remainder up to the bells where I explained the workings of a bell and fielded many questions. In the belfry they saw the 4th being rung and team photos were taken.



Once back in the ringing room Sheila demonstrated ringing and everyone was invited to try the backstroke, Sheila supervised/assisted the older ones on the 4th and I took the younger ones on the treble.

There was a lot of lively chatter as they formed an orderly queue, and we could just hear the two bells ringing on the simulator. They all did very well, showing promise as future ringers, although the evening was not a recruitment campaign.

Having signed our visitors book they all received an "I visited Great Gransden Tower" sticker, and a group photo was taken before leaving the tower.

It was great to have so many youngsters in the tower which made for a noisy, exciting and rewarding evening.
(photos taken and published with permission)



After the visit I received an email of thanks from Paul O'Shea saying that "The Scouts were enthralled, and I am already getting feedback from their parents saying that their children haven't stopped talking about the tower". Chris Elwood later asked if it would be possible to bring another troop to have a look at the tower, probably in September! We are always happy to organise tours for other groups.

Performance Ringing in District Towers During April

Apart from the quarter peal day reported on page 2, District towers have been visited on thirteen occasions during April, several by ringers outside the area.

A milestone quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles was rung at St Ives on the 4th, which was John Bacon's first inside. Plain Bob Doubles was also rung at Stanground on the 5th inst and conducted by Elaine Wilkinson. The Friday Night band, as I call them, rang a quarter at Caxton on the 5th in three minor methods. This was in memory of Nick Smith's sister who had died on Palm Sunday.

On the 9th, Great Gransden was visited by an outside band, setting off in Hull S Minor but settling for Cambridge after two failed attempts at the former! But the ringing was good.

Gamlingay was host to two back-to-back quarters by the area's Golden Oldies group, when they rang Ealing and Painswick S Major.

Handbells have featured twice this month, both at Houghton Bury when multi-method minimus quarters were scored on the 15th and the 23rd.

Double Oxford was rung at Holywell by a monthly quarter peal team comprising three District ringers, two from the Cambridge District and one from Ely. This was a first in method for Becca Glazier of Thriplow.

Hemingford Grey had a visiting band on the 16th when they rang Rutland, and a couple of the ringers were also involved in a quarter of Cambridge S Minor at Brampton on the same day.

Caxton was the venue again on the 17th when two back-to-back QPs were to be rung by a mixed band of District and other ringers. Unfortunately, things didn't go to plan but a 720 of Plain Bob Minor was successful and dedicated to Roger Beaman's eldest brother who died a year ago on this date.

On the 18th a visiting band was successful at Yaxley, an infrequent venue for quarters, when they completed a 1260 Doubles in two methods.

The Ely District returned to Hemingford Grey on the 19th with resident ringer Sharon Williams and rang a 1344 Plain Bob Major in memory of Joanne Dyre.

The last performance of April was the monthly quarter peal for Evensong on Sunday the 29th rung at Godmanchester, which was of 1260 Plain Bob Triples, dedicated to Teresa Thurston.

I think that the performance of the month goes to St Ives on the 4th for John Bacon ringing his first quarter peal inside. Congratulations John.

St. Ives, Cambridgeshire. All Saints
Wednesday, 3 April 2024 in 40m
1260 Plain Bob Doubles
1 Jane K A Hough
2 John Bacon
3 Ann Abraham
4 Peter Mackley
5 Simon Kershaw (C)
6 Richard Holness
First quarter peal on an inside bell: 2

THE BACK PAGE

Association Annual General Meeting - *Saturday 4th May 12.30 to 8.00pm*

Hosted by the Ely District

Ringing

Rampton from 12.30pm

Willingham from 1.45pm

Swavesey from 2.45pm

Service

Swavesey at 4.15pm

AGM *approximately 6.00pm*

Tea

Swavesey Memorial Hall

4.15pm

Vacancy for Association General Committee Representative

We are still looking for a committee member to represent the Huntingdon District at Association level.

This is an important link between the District and Association, keeping each party informed about ringing activities and key business issues. It is a good opportunity to meet ringers from the other three districts (Cambridge, Ely and Wisbech) and have your input into association matters.

Key responsibilities are:

- Attending Association General Committee Meetings.
- Representing District ringers at these meetings and feeding back information to the District Committee as applicable.
- Attend District Committee Meetings.
- Prepare interim reports for presentation to the District Committee or Ringing Meetings as required.
- Prepare a detailed report of the meetings for presentation at the ADM.

You'll receive a lot of support from the other District officers.

Anyone taking on this role would be co-opted to the District Committee for 2024. The general committee meets twice every year via Zoom. The District Committee also meets twice a year, usually February and October, but in person.



Forthcoming Events – See Caroline's Coming Up Next flyer.

Saturday the 18th May Ringing practice meeting at Eynesbury

There will be plenty of ringing from 10.00am to 11.30am.

Friday the 31st of May Association 10-bell practice at St Neots

Everyone welcome from Rounds to Surprise Royal

Contact information for District Officers

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

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