

Ringling Around and About in the Huntingdon District



Issue No 18: June 2024



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From Gamlingay ringling room during the Ringling Festival – photo by Georgina Nichols

This month's newsletter is a little short on news and is therefore only six sides!!

The highlight in June was the Ringling Festival, the first that has been tried in the District, and which was highly successful. There have been other newsworthy items but not as many that would fill eight pages. The summer months are often quieter – District-wise with people on holiday and ringling reverting to 'tick-over' mode.

Whilst we were enjoying our ringling festival at Gamlingay the National Twelve Bell striking competition was being held at Chilcompton in Somerset. I was able to listen to the live steaming of the first four teams via YouTube. The ringling was excellent and is well worth listening to. The full 8-hour video can be found here, which includes interviews with the ringling, and you can scroll through to find the ringling and see the bells in changes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zxya6T2alRw> If you just want to listen to each team the recordings can be found here, <https://www.12bell.org.uk/recordings2/>

We don't have any 12-bell towers in the District, but we do have a ten-bell tower, St Neots. Ringling on higher numbers is excellent training for listening and ropesight, even in Rounds and Call Changes. I strongly recommend attending one of the 10-bell practices at St Neots when they are held for the Association. You will be warmly welcomed and I'm confident that you will enjoy it. Similarly with the 12-bell events held at Cambridge Gt St Mary's when they are open to everyone.

Please send me news of your tower's ringling, practices, outings, training, maintenance or quarter peals. And please send photographs.

District Ringing Festival – 15th June

Caroline had the idea of running a ringing festival to encourage ringers to enter an informal striking competition. Gamlingay was chosen as a venue as it had a church hall close by where tea could be provided. Sheila George organised a treasure hunt within the church which ringers could do if they wished, and everyone engaged in friendly chatter at no risk of distracting the ringers in the glazed ringing room.

Thirty-six people attended, which included the two judges – Cass Boocock (Gamlingay) and Peter Mackley (St Ives). They hid themselves away whilst the ringers nervously rang their test pieces. There were three categories, Rounds, Call Changes and Method ringing. To encourage ringers of all capabilities to take part a tower could enter all three and method ringers could support their less experienced ringers and then go on and ring in the method section. A lot of ringers rang at least twice as there were eight teams.

Ringling started with the three teams in the call change group. Then followed the two Rounds teams and we finished with three method ringing teams, which included Grandsire Doubles, Plain Bob Doubles and Plain Bob Minor.

During the ringing, several people occupied themselves with the treasure hunt, and tea and coffee was available in the church. The local ringers and friends had prepared an excellent ringers' tea, but before we tucked in the judges announced the results. Peter made some brief comments about each piece of ringing and Cass announced the results as follows:

Rounds Group: 1st place Buckden. 2nd place Ramsey

Call Changes Group: 1st place Gt Gransden, 2nd place Gamlingay, 3rd place Ramsey

Method Group: 1st place Ramsey (PB5), 2nd place Gamlingay (PB6), 3rd place Gt Gransden (G5)

The winners were presented with chocolate medals and all other ringers with smaller medallions. The judges received gifts of chocolate and wine!



Peter Mackley and Cass Boocock



Certificates and medals

Thanks were given to the judges for their work, to the local tea operatives, including Nigel and Sylvie Strong (Godmanchester) for preparation and serving the food, Sheila for the treasure hunt, and special thanks to Caroline Stevens for organising the whole afternoon.

Several ringers had not taken part in a competition before, and it was good to see towers venturing out to meet one another. Afterwards, we managed to ring some handbells, two course of Plain Bob Minor rung by David Paynter 1-2, Phillip George 3-4 and Elspeth Novice 5-6.

Everyone went home feeling good about the afternoon, having tried something new and achieved success even if not by coming first! We've received a lot of good feedback and hope that this event has encouraged ringers to join us at our other events.

Ringling Festival Gallery

Here are some photos taken by Dan Stevens and Phillip George



Rounds Group Winners
Buckden



Call Change Group Winners
Great Gransden



Method Group Winners
Ramsey



Gamlingay Team Ringers



Ramsey Team Ringers



Sheila presents the prize
for the Treasure Hunt

Moving on Meeting at Holywell – Saturday 1st June

There were only eight of us for the 'moving on' practice at Holywell today (1st June). Apologies had been received from some but it was a disappointing attendance, perhaps due to bank holiday week!

It was a shame, because we rang London Minor, Thelwall Bob and Kent, all useful intermediate methods. However, with fewer ringers there was a good opportunity for learning to call Plain Bob Minor, a valuable skill for any ringer and appreciated by those today learning to conduct. Andrew Smith was the duty ringing master.

Our thanks to Roger Beaman for meeting us and to the Revd Valmor Pimenta for the use of the bells. Valmor came to listen to the ringing towards the end and welcomed us to the church. On thanking him his reply was, "Mi casa es su casa" - my house is your house.



Raising Awareness of Ringing at Great Gransden

Our practice at Great Gransden on Thursday the 20th of June was rather exciting. We welcomed ordinand in training, Archie Corbett. Archie was on a one-month assignment, working in our parishes before he returned to Bristol in July.

We invited him to the tower to give him an insight into ringing, (as part of his informal training). He had a go at backstrokes and rang very well. Afterwards, he had a tour of the tower to see the clock and bells.

Em came along after having a first bell handling lesson yesterday, and rang backstroke to Rounds. Em is only here until September but we'll teach her to ring over the next couple of months.

Josh called changes (the test piece for the Fen Tigers in the National Youth Contest on the 6th July), and rang tenor behind to doubles. Others had ringing achievements too.

One of the highlights of the evening was 9 year old Haydn's success in gaining his Level 1 LTR! As keen as mustard, well done Haydn. His certificate presentation will feature in the July newsletter.

Thanks everyone, you are a great team!



News from Ramsey by Cathy Moulton and Paul Kneller

June 1st was our church fete and we were asked to arrange tours of the tower.

We agreed but were somewhat doubtful that many would come as 106 people has enjoyed pulling on a bell rope to 'Ding for the King'.

So we were pleased to have 45 visitors between 1:30 pm and 4:30pm.

We are lucky to have Paul organising us, as his time working on railway timetables meant that we got people up and down the tower without collision.

Visitors were in groups of maximum six people, They were escorted to the ringing room where they saw the ropes , clock pendulum and had a demonstration of ringing a bell (silenced!) as well as a description of how and why we do it!.

The 5th bell was down and the clapper tied so that anyone who wished could feel the weight and swing the bell.

They then went to the clock room to see the clock winding mechanism which dates to 1845. The false ceiling above the nave was also opened and lit up. This year we had the winding mechanism in place so that they could see hand feel how heavy it is to wind up the weights each week.



Finally, the belfry, where they met our ring of six plus the little Sanctus bell, the Ting Tang, which is housed in the belfry for safety. They saw the other end of the bell being rung and had the opportunity to take photographs of the high street from a great vantage point.

June 6th - 80th anniversary of D Day saw us ringing the bells as a company of Royal Engineers, children from the local school, Rotarians and members of the Royal British Legion walked back from the Mortuary Chapel at the graveyard to the War Memorial after a service of remembrance.

The War Graves had been decorated and a cross placed at each one and then an interpretation board about all the War Graves in the cemetery, both WW1 and WW11, funded by Ramsey Rotary club was unveiled by its Chairman

Performance Ringing in the District During June

No detailed analysis for June as the editor has been away.

Ringing or tolling took place on the 6th June, and other dates during the month, at the following towers to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day. Catworth, Elton, Gamlingay, Great Gransden, Molesworth, Stanground, Woodston.

Congratulations to Sharon and Martin Williams who celebrated their Ruby wedding anniversary by ringing a quarter peal of Plain Bob Minor at Holywell on the 27th.

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Ramsey Return Visit to Great Gransden – 13th June

On the 21st of May, Gransden ringers visited Ramsey for their practice night. This was the first part of our 'practice exchange' plan. This evening (13th June) was their turn to come to us.

We were delighted to welcome them and we enjoyed ringing call changes, Plain Hunt 6, Plain Bob 6, Grandsire 5 and a course of Stedman.

Everyone had a good chance to ring and there was also a lot of excited chit-chat.

We also welcomed a non-ringer from Australia, and together with two non-ringing parents of junior members we had 19 attending. Announcements at half time gave notice of the Ringing Festival at Gamlingay on Saturday and the 12 bell practice at GSM on Saturday the 29th 6.30pm to 8.00pm.

The sweet tin was passed around in typical ringing hospitality.

Thanks for coming, Ramsey, we had a great time and we'll see you again soon.



Gransden and Ramsey Ringers

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

Saturday the 20th of July - Ringing & Business Meeting at Catworth

Ringing 3.00pm to 4.30pm

Tea and business meeting

An opportunity to elect new members and to raise any items which you would like to discuss. Please support the District meetings, we need you to help keep develop our ringing and encourage new ringers. Everyone is always welcome.

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

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