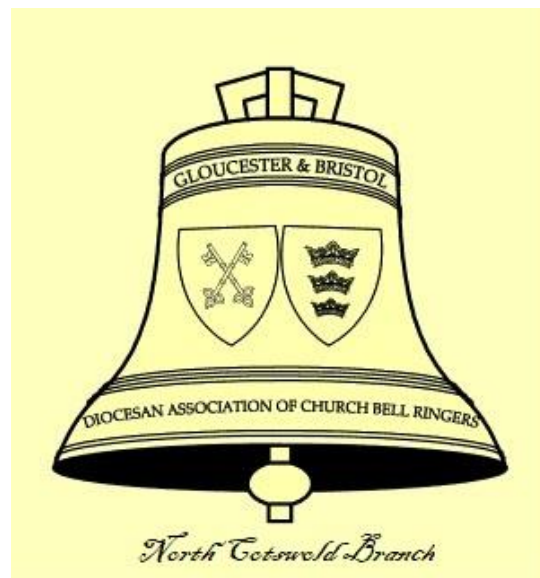


*Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan
Association Of
Church Bell Ringers
North Cotswold Branch Newsletter*



Issue 4: Winter 2024.

Branch Officers and Committee Members

Officers

Chair & MC* Rep	Martin Penny	Email: martinpenny99@btinternet.com
Vice Chair	Phil Street	Email: phillip.street@btinternet.com
Secretary	Ashley Ellison	Email: ellison.ashley@gmail.com
Ringling Master	Jackie Hands	Tel: 01789 720802
Deputy Ringling Master	Jess McCarthy	Email: jessmccarthy1990@gmail.com
Treasurer	Isobel Murphy	Email: isobel.murphy@btinternet.com

*G&B Management Committee

Members

Roland Greenhill Email: roland.greenhill@icloud.com
Tim Woodgate Email: sarawoodgate@btinternet.com

Dates for the Diary

October 2024

Saturday	19 th	Branch Striking Competition	Moreton in Marsh	12.00pm
Monday	21 st	Branch Committee Meeting	Ebrington	6.00pm
Monday	21 st	Branch Practice	Ebrington	7.30pm

November 2024

Wednesday	20 th	AGM	Stow on the Wold	6.45pm
Wednesday	20 th	Branch Practice	Stow on the Wold	7.30pm
Thursday	21 st	FSG Mid-Week Tour	Leicestershire & Northants	

December 2024

Thursday	12 th	FSG Mid-Week Tour	TBC	
Thursday	12 th	Branch Practice	Upper Slaughter	7.30pm

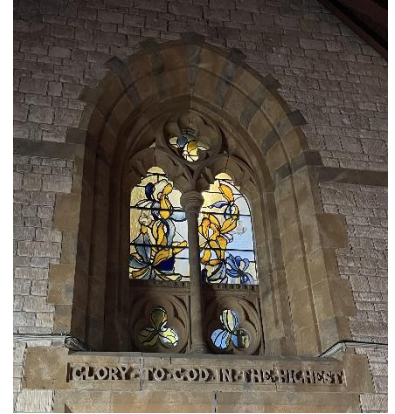
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View from the Chair

Welcome to the Winter edition of our newsletter. As we move into the time of shorter days, we start looking forward to all the Armistice and Christmas time ringing. At the same time I am looking back over the last 20 months of being Chair of the branch as I am standing down from the role at the November AGM. Together we have re-invigorated the branch, reviving many of the good things such as this newsletter, branch practices and branch outings.

For the first time in over a decade the branch entered a team in the Croome Trophy and I was presented with The Ringing Master's Sabin Clapper for the work done in resurrecting the branch. In addition Neil Garner was presented with the Littledean and Purton Trophy for his work setting up the Pebworth Bells website with its dedicated area of training materials.



We also took the decision this year to work more closely with the Four Shires Guild of Bell Ringers and we ran the branch striking competition as a joint venture with the FSG on 19th October. The day was a great success and with Mickleton winning the Rose Bowl and Broadwell the Salver. I'm sure that the Committee will reflect on the day and see if this is something that we should continue given the ringing environment we now operate in.

As a final item from me I have been asked many times the following questions:

1. Who owns the bells?
2. Should we be having an annual tower meeting?
3. How is the Tower Captain appointed?

There is lots of information available on the CCCBR website with a new document called 'Running a Tower' that you can access at [Running a Tower | Running a Tower \(cccbr.org.uk\)](http://cccbr.org.uk)

But the simple answers are:

1. The legal ownership of the bells is vested in the Churchwardens. The PCC has a duty for the use, maintenance, and insurance of the bells (they don't belong to the ringers!)
2. Yes - hold a meeting when all officers are appointed. The appointments may be subject to confirmation by the incumbent. Ideally, meetings should be held annually. Others may be held as required. The agenda should be distributed in advance together with a request for items to be included in any other business.
3. Normally, the Tower Captain is appointed by the incumbent of the church concerned. This is a responsible position in a church with bells and should be in writing, ideally for a defined period of time. The incumbent will usually consult the ringers as to who is appointed. This may be from a recommendation made at a tower AGM with the incumbent present, but arrangements vary from church to church

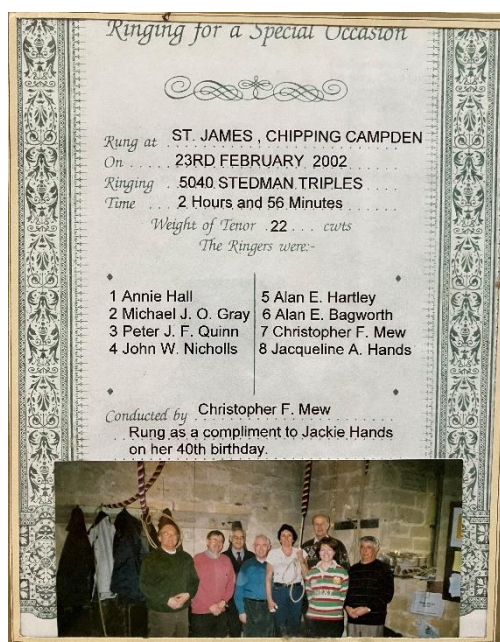
I hope you find that useful and as always, we welcome feedback from all our members. Please feel free to contact any member of the Committee with questions or ideas.

Keep Ringing!

Martin

IN CONVERSATION WITH ... OUR RINGING MASTER – JACKIE HANDS

Whilst modestly relating the story of her life, it soon became clear that Jackie is something of a Wonder Woman. A Prefect and House Captain at school, she could turn her ability to many sports including netball, hockey, tennis, rounders, football, plus 800m and 1500m running. Bell ringing began at the age of 13 and methods from 15, eventually mastering Cambridge, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, Superlative, Double Norwich, Stedman Caters, 11 peals at Chipping Campden and a quarter peal every Sunday at Ilmington, and the list goes on.



When her parents split up, she went with her sister to live with grandparents in Shipston, where it was very cold in winter and the fire was lit at 7.00am. She helped her grandfather on his allotment where she met the Cummings boys, while her grandmother spent all day knitting cardigans and jumpers! Then at 17 she wanted to join the army, but instead found work at Stratford-on-Avon Cannery, which made catering cans mainly of baked beans and fruit. She started on the shop floor and then progressed to Quality Control Assistant, starting at 5.30am and often ending at 10.00pm. Occasionally, when in need of a break, they would stop the machinery by putting an upside-down lid into it, and go to sit by the canal! After meeting Robin at Cannery, they married in 1983 and lived in Jasmine Cottage in Brailes with second-hand furniture, a Silver Cross pram for baby Michelle and a dog called Rex. Robin continued at Cannery and Jackie worked in a fish and chip shop every Friday and Saturday night, often taking some home to sit by the fire with a 2pt flagon of cider. Though real ale has been a favourite over the years, with frequent visits to The Eight Bells or Volunteer in Campden after ringing.

Something of a party girl, Jackie is reluctant to divulge many details, but she was willing to tell of her attendance in August at the annual Hells Angels' Bulldog Bash at Long Marston airfield, to see 100s of bikes, watching dragsters and live shows, then on to the pig roast at the Bakers Arms in Broad Campden. One year it rained heavily and leaked through the marquee roof, so Jackie (aged 40 and dancing in a denim mini skirt and wellies with a flask of gin tucked inside), slipped headlong in the mud along with Robin, and afterwards they had to clean out the car they'd borrowed from Michelle. Every Christmas and New Year it would be the Civvy Club, suits for gents and dresses for ladies, dancing to a live band till 3.00 in the morning and 50p for the minibus home. Nowadays she likes a bet on the horses, fishing in Broad Marston lake, and playing snooker, darts and dominoes.

Jackie has a lifelong love of animals, as a girl riding a pony called Gypsy which her mum looked after, has always had a dog, once had 11 rabbits and a polecat named Susie, and now lives in Lower Quinton with dog Archie, female cat Thomas (!), 4 rabbits, hens and a pair of ducks for eggs, whilst to-ing and fro-ing to Broadwell to manage a property there. With all this going on in her life, thank goodness she still finds the time for ringing.



In conversation with Ashley Ellison

North Cotswold Branch Ringing Tour Saturday 12th October 2024

On a fresh autumn morning 15 ringers and 4 guests set off for a day's ringing in 5 very diverse towers within Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire

SATURDAY 12TH OCTOBER				
TOWER	POSTCODE	BELLS	TENOR	OLDEST BELL
Bibury St Mary	GL7 5NR	6	9-0-15	1723 (ALL)
Coln St Aldwyns St John Baptist	GL7 5AG	8	7-2-26	1724 (7)
Windrush St Peter	OX18 4TS	6	7-1-13	1707
LUNCH 1PM TO 2.15PM Inn for all seasons OX18 4TN				
Fulbrook St James Great	OX18 4BN	6	4-0-13	1661 (T)
Shipton-Under-Wychwood St Mary	OX7 6BP	8	14-3-0	1628 (5)



Although the weather was a typical autumn day in England, we arrived at the first tower ready and eager to take part in a good day's ringing for all. The picture of Bibury St Mary gives a good idea of the leaden skies – but also the beautifully laid out and maintained churchyard.

To keep the ringers entertained either side of an excellent lunch at the Inn for All Seasons, our organiser, Phil Street, threw in an anti-clockwise ring at Windrush and a 4cwt ring at Fulbrook.

Phil aimed to accommodate all ringers and at all levels, and during the day we rung a selection of methods from Rounds, Call changes, Plain hunt 5/7, Plain courses of Grandsire/Bob Doubles and Stedman, and touches of Grandsire & Bob Doubles.

We had a fantastic pit stop for lunch at the Inn for All Seasons for a hearty meal where we had a very warm welcome and were well looked after by Emma and the team. At the end of the day we took a group photo of the ringers that you can see on the front page.

Phil wanted to say a big thank you to Peter @ Bibury, John @ Coln St Aldwyn, Caroline @ Windrush, John @ Fulbrook and Chris @ Shipton Under Wychwood for their warm welcomes and organising access to the towers.

During the day it was great to see so much improvement from the developing ringers. Henry in particular did well, but so did Peter, Neil, Jackie & Marilou who all rang plain hunt on 7 and/or trebling to methods.

Hopefully more people will come on future branch tours to help us widen the repertoire of ringing we can do and make full use of the lovely bells available to us in and around the area.

(PS Ashley insisted we mention the 2 large spotted pigs next to the churchyard at Fulbrook - apparently New Zealand Kunekune according to the local knowledge)



Father of the Groom - The Campden Bells Ring for an American Wedding

(Author – George Osborn)



Two Harbors – Lake Superior



Bride & Groom

In July my son Josh married a lovely American girl, Skyler, on the shore of Lake Superior near the town of Two Harbors.

During the planning I suggested a live lead from Chipping Campden so the bells could ring the couple out of the ceremony. They liked the idea but thought that neither the Internet connection or 'phone signal in the sticks of Minnesota would be up to it. But a professional quality recording could be played over the sound system if one was made.

As it happens, in 1978 a Gloucestershire recording company, Saydisc, recorded a ringing tour titled "Bells of the Cotswolds" which included a touch of Grandsire Triples at St. James, Campden. I was on the tour and think I rang the 3rd or 4th for this touch.

So as the newlyweds walked down the aisle, the bells of Chipping Campden sounded out over Lake Superior with the Groom's father in the team.

Thought for the Day – A Steeple Keepers Nightmare (sung to the tune of 'On Top of Old Smokey')

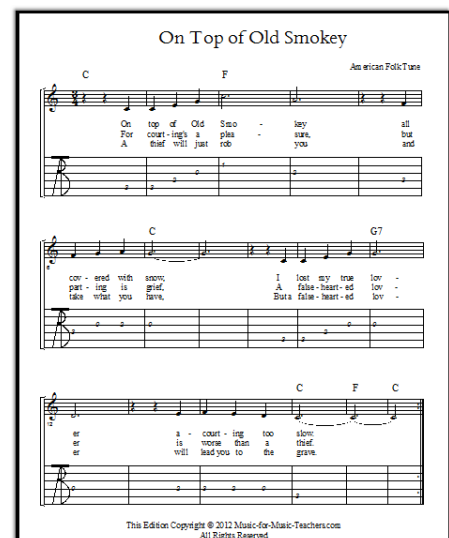
Stay bashing ringer, On the ropes end.
Say you can ring but, You only pretend.

And when the stay breaks then, The treble will fall
And up will go ringer, Tail end and all

And now I must make it, Another new stay
I hope it will last past, The end of the day ☺

Author: Anon

On Top of Old Smokey
American Folk Tune



The musical score is written for guitar in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music. The first system has a C chord and an F chord. The second system has C and G7 chords. The third system has C, F, and C chords. The lyrics are: On top of Old Smokey all / For court-lyng a plee sue, but / A thief will just rob you and. The second system lyrics: cor - ered with sassa, I lost my true lov - / part - ing is grief, A false - heart - ed lov - / take what you have, But a false - heart - ed lov -. The third system lyrics: er a court - ing too slow / is worse than a thief / er will lead you to the grave.

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IN CONVERSATION WITH ... THE RINGING FAMILY WALTERS

Come to Offenham on a Sunday morning and you might meet all of the Ringing Family Walters, Neil, Olivia, Toby & Hannah. Very much like the Von Trapps from the Sound of Music but without the singing and dancing ☺ (more ringing and laughter to be fair!).

As they have all come to ringing in the last four years, we thought you might be interested in hearing from Olivia (the eldest sibling) and Neil (Proud Father of the others)

Olivia

Olivia has been ringing four years, since she was about 14, when she needed a skill for her Duke of Edinburgh award. Olivia's mum had asked her Godmother (who is a ringer at Willersey) about it and her Tower Captain suggested Claire Penny at Offenham, and the rest is history.

When asked about how she feels ringing with people old enough to be her grand or possibly even great grandparents, Olivia said "I think it shows that the new generation of ringers really are up and coming! I do have a favourite older ringer who has taught me a lot about ringing, though there are lots of wonderful people I have met"

Her friends think she's "an absolute nerd" for ringing, and that it's really easy until she corrects them "and then they're like "oh that sounds hard!" She managed to bring a friend once but "can't remember how I talked them into it! Now I can drive I'll just duct tape them up and bring them with me!"

Olivia thinks that being shown the blue line too early makes ringing "too technical" and "overwhelming" and discourages new ringers, especially teenage ones! She can treble, plain hunt and is learning to cover methods. Her favourite method to treble to is "Grandsire, any day of the week!" in particular at her home Tower of Offenham, her favourite place to ring. Olivia had her very first tower tour the day before this interview, in Coventry on the 4 Shires Guild Midweek tour, and "I loved it, I definitely want to do more!"

She has a few memorable moments, 2 of the ones she shared both involved the second at Peabworth! Once when it slipped the wheel, and there was a day "where it (the rope) just snapped and coiled up at Alison's feet! It was terrifying". But she has happy memorable moments too, "my favourite was when Jess and I got put in time out due to giggle fits!"

Away from ringing and working in a coffee shop she likes to relax with a book, baking ("I made a pavlova last week!") or researching ancient Greeks, Romans and currently Egyptians. Her favourite food is anything pasta, but she says, "pesto pasta with cheese is where it's at!"



Winchester Cathedral Bells

September saw her go to Winchester University to study Classical studies of Ancient Greece and Rome to go into curation, with plans to join the ringing society at University. For long term ringing, she would one day like to ring at Oxford "no specific tower, it's just a really cool thing I guess?" and would like to learn Rhubarb and Custard, "it would be really fun to learn!"

Neil

“So it all started with me bringing Olivia along so she could get her skills part of the DoE award. Next thing I knew I had been ‘roped in’ to ‘just have a little go’ – and the rest is history!”

But in the family, there were also the twins, Toby & Hannah – 13 at the time. At the beginning they had no interest in ringing but then Toby heard about the chocolates on offer (never underestimate the power of chocolate or free cake!) and once the rest were ringing Hannah thought she’d try it out.

So Claire successfully taught all four of them to ring at Offenham and they haven’t looked back.

When Neil was asked more about the ringing journey, he has been on he said:

“Offenham is my home Tower and I like ringing there – even if Claire puts me on the 2 (which is not my favourite bell; but I’m getting better at it!). We ring at Pebworth as well which is OK and I have been to Badsey and Evesham Bell Tower. I’m working on my Level 3 ART Award and getting better at trebling to doubles and have been told I’m excellent at ‘Festering*’”. His most memorable experience in a Tower was seeing what happened when someone let go of the tail end!

** known as covering to everyone else*



Left to right – Neil, Olivia, Hannah, Toby

Being a professional Carpenter and Joiner Neil works a lot at the weekends so doesn’t get a lot of chance to go on tours and outings. But he would like to ring at a Cathedral and Abbey Towers in the future. But away from ringing the family, including mother Cheryl, like to watch films together, especially action and comedy films. Neil’s favourite is Deadpool. And don’t forget the two cats that make up the family unit!

Neil said that he really enjoyed ringing for Sunday Service with all his children plus Claire & Martin as that was quite a special moment and they all rang well together. He also thought that they each brought something special to the band whenever they ring; Toby calling changes, Olivia’s trebling, Hannah’s bell control in changes, and his own Festering!

Will we ever see Cheryl make up the full family ringing group? Who knows – maybe one day.....

In conversations with Martin Penny & Jess McCarthy

STOP PRESS: ART Module F2

The Association of Ringing Teachers have scheduled a Module 2F course (teaching foundation skills and up to plain hunt) at Malvern Priory on 16th November. For details please go to <https://events.bellringing.org/en/events/courses/teaching-course-module-2f-malvern-priory-worcestershire>

Subscriptions for 2024/2025

Subscriptions are now due for the financial year starting on 1st November 2024:

Subscription rates:

Senior: £20 (of which £12 goes to Bell Repair Fund (BRF), £4.00 to General Fund and £4.00 to the Branch)

Junior*: £2.50 (of which £1.50 goes to BRF, 50p to General Fund and 50p to the Branch)

*Under 18

Associate (non-Ringing) Members: £10 (of which £9 goes to the BRF, 50p to the General Fund and 50p to the Branch)

Tower Affiliation Fee 2024/25 - £20

Please pay by BACS to:

Lloyds Bank - G&B North Cotswolds

Sort Code 30-95-75

Account Number 01676906

For other payment methods please contact the Treasurer

The Branch has funds available to make small grants towards repairs. In the first instance please contact the Treasurer.

Useful Links

G&B North Cotswold Branch - <https://pebworth.icu/G&B/>

The Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers - www.bellsgandb.org.uk

The Four Shires Guild of Bell Ringers - <https://www.fourshiresguild.com>

Dove's Guide for Church Bell Ringers - <https://dove.cccbr.org.uk>

Ringling Resources

Pebworth Bells – Ringling Resources and Links - <http://bells.pebworth.icu>

Association of Ringling Teachers – Ringling Resources and Learning Materials - <https://ringingteachers.org>

FSG Midweek Tours

There is a monthly midweek tour within the Four Shires Guild area. For more information please go to <http://www.4shiresmidweek.org.uk/html/bracket.htm>

All ringers are welcome to attend. In order to achieve the most, attendees should be able to control a bell and ring rounds and changes as a minimum. Support is given to learners, but they must appreciate that all standards will be accommodated and therefore rope time will be limited. Ringers are reminded that they should not consistently attempt to ring beyond their capabilities.