

Oxford University Society of Change Ringers

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2010

New Officers

At the AGM on 30 November John Camp retired as President after serving for ten years. The Society thanked him warmly for his hard work and presented him with some wine as a token of its appreciation.

This is a complete list of the Officers elected at the AGM:

President	Jeremy Pratt
Senior Member	Dr. Stephen Cameron, Keble
General Secretary	Stuart Nelson
Master	Kirsty Monk, Hertford
Treasurer	Hannah Guggiari, Merton
Secretary	Elizabeth Cooke, Wadham
Librarian	Sean Whitton, Balliol
Steeplekeepers	Stephen Dann, Lincoln & David Giles, Corpus Christi
Webmaster	Claire Bell, Christ Church
Brookes rep.	(vacant - no ringers this year)
CC rep.	Mark Bell

Vice Presidents Quentin Armitage, Doug Beaumont, David Brown, Ian W Davies, Peter Giles, Stephen Ivin, Paul Mounsey, Donald Niblett, Dermot Roaf, Betty Robbins, Andrew Stubbs and Lester Yeo were re-elected and John Camp was elected on his retirement as President.

Bell Restoration Fund

BRF Trustees: Senior Member and Treasurer ex officio
Andrew Stubbs
Christopher Poole

Mark Shepherd and Alex Byrne have been re-elected as Independent Examiners.

Life Members

The following have become Life Members:
Keith Anderson (Clinical Trial Service Unit)
Roger Barnes (Kellogg)
David Giles (Corpus Christi)
Sian Haseldine (Oriell)
Matthew Malek (Department of Physics)

2010 Annual Dinner

The 2010 OUSCR Annual Dinner will take place on Saturday 6th of February, at 7.00 for 7:30pm. It will once again be at Harris Manchester (this is the tenth successive year there). The guest speaker will be Martin Cansdale, Master of the Ancient Society of College Youths. Simon Bond will propose the toast to the Guests, and Kirsty Monk will

reply for the Society. The Church Guest will be the Rev Dr Peter Groves, parish priest of St Mary Magdalen.

Tickets are now on sale for £50 to include a white wine reception, wine and port. The menu is: Rustic Minestrone Soup served with Parmesan Cheese; Guinea Fowl in Parma Ham with Marsala Sauce or Butternut Squash with Fetta Cheese and Caramelised Onions (vegetarian option); Prune and Armagnac Tart with Crème Fraiche; Cheese Board; and Coffee & Chocolate. As usual, there will be pre-dinner drinking on the preceding Friday evening, ringing on Saturday and coffee on Sunday morning. To book your tickets, please send a cheque payable to "OUSCR Dinner Committee" to: Kirsty Monk, Hertford College, Oxford OX1 3BW, enclosing a SAE, details of any dietary requirements, and seating preferences. The closing date for tickets is 24th January.

Printed Newsletter

Following the mailing of this Newsletter, the dedicated account funding it will be exhausted. A number of members have kindly given donations in the last year - I will ensure that they continue to receive a paper copy. Anyone else who is not on e-mail or does not have internet access can get one from next year by sending a stamped, addressed envelope to Stuart Nelson, 22 Weirs Lane, Oxford OX1 4US. Alternatively you can ask a family member or friend to print the latest newsletter from the Society's website: <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ouscr/new/boring/newsletters.html>. The latest Newsletter should be there some time in the first couple of weeks of each new year.

Meeting Dates in 2010

The Society's business meetings are held on Mondays, and customarily take place in Exeter College. Please confirm the venue in advance.

TGM dates - the first Monday in term: Jan 18th, April 26th and Oct 11th.

AGM date - the last Monday in Michaelmas term: Nov 29th.

Society Ties

Last year there were just three Society ties remaining. This year in a minor miracle about half a dozen more were found by Michael Williams while sorting out the Society's filing cabinet in the ringing room at Mary Mag. Half of them were sold on the spot to tasteful and well-dressed undergraduates, so the number remaining is six. The price is being held yet again at £3.00 each. They may be purchased from the General Secretary.

The Annual Tour

Monday 5th April - Thursday 8th April 2009 (Easter Week).

The tour will be based near, but not in, Cambridge. Huntingdon is the option being currently investigated. As there was no volunteer for overall arranger, different people will organise each day.

On Easter Monday, we shall go to Peterborough. We have the cathedral for a peal in the morning, but those not involved in this can ring elsewhere. Nigel Herriott is organising Monday.

On Tuesday, we shall go to Cambridge and ring at the city centre towers, including the new 12 at Great St Mary's and the Catholic church. Richard Smith (CUG and steeplekeeper at GSM) is organising this.

Wednesday will be based around Ely and will be organised by Paul Mounsey.

Thursday will be spent south of Cambridge and is being organised by Ian Davies.

John Camp is organising accommodation and transport and acting as co-ordinator.

No doubt there will be people present from Easter Sunday until Friday morning. We hope that as many of you as possible will come for all or part of the tour.

The Society's History

Copies are available for £30 each (including postage and packing), made out to 'OUSCR History', from the general secretary.

Address List and Websites

The General Secretary maintains the Society's address list, of nearly 330 members. The vast majority are now on e-mail. If you would like a copy of the list, either electronically or on paper, please ask.

Email addresses are held on the website and by the secretary, but the master list is maintained by John Camp for use on the mailing list. This is used for important announcements and the dissemination of this Newsletter, and all members are strongly encouraged to join it. You can do so either by e-mailing ouscr-admin@bellringers.net or by visiting http://www.bellringers.net/mailman/listinfo/ouscr_bellringers.net.

19 members are currently lost. If you can help us trace any of the following, we would be grateful:

Catherine Bannister, Rosemary Clark, Paul Crane, Lindy Ellis, Maurice Gray, Andre Gren, Sally Hawksworth, Douglas Hird, Anne Lambert, Andrew J Loveland, Jeremy McCabe, Melanie Milan, JD Mozley, David Newman, Nigel Sheppard, Richard Tapper, C Turnbull, AJ Vincent and Jonathan Wilson.

Please be sure to tell us if you change e-mail address.

The OUS website can be found at <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ouscr>. There is also an online peals database <http://www.ouscr.org.uk/peals/> and a non-residents area ('Badger's World') <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/ousgensec/>.

Tewkesbury Shield 2010

On 1 May 2010, the OUS will be participating in the annual Tewkesbury Shield, ringing a plain course of Cambridge Surprise Royal. Eligibility is not restricted to Resident

members - any life member of the Society can also ring. The Master, Kirsty Monk, is organising the band and is keen to hear from any member who would like to ring for the OUS and who can take part in practices between now and then. Please contact her - kirsty.monk@hertford.ox.ac.uk - for more details.

This year's competition will be heavily Oxford-centric, as the Oxford Society and the Oxford Diocesan Guild are also participating.

275th Anniversary of the Oxford Society

As readers of the Ringing World will know, 2009 was celebrated as the 275th anniversary of the Oxford Society of Change Ringers, of which many members of the OUS are also members. As well as numerous peals, the festivities revolved around an informal ringing day on 25 April and a formal dinner in Balliol on 5 September. The ringing day involved splitting the participants into teams for a series of ringing-related challenges, including eight-bell, twelve-bell and raising and lowering, as well as plenty of refreshments. The dinner was preceded by simultaneous ringing at all the Oxford city centre towers.

Residents' Review

Bob Wallis, the immediate past Master, writes:

Resident members of the Society continue to ring and socialise in Oxford as strongly as ever. Tuesday practices at Mary Mag are well supported, and the pre-practice quarter peals have seen many successes. Monday night St Thos practices also do well, but this year have had more focus on more advanced 8 bell ringing than 10 bell ringing. We continued to have a termly 12 bell practice at Reading, always a worthwhile occasion, and an opportunity for residents who rarely ring on 12 to improve in this area. Continuing thanks to everyone who supports practice nights.

Service ringing has continued much as before, with 9am quarter peals at St Thos striking fear into the hearts of the hungover, followed by Mary Mag ringing. Fortnightly SMV and New College ringing has provided some good ringing, including a quarter peal at SMV and a Remembrance Sunday quarter at New College. The loss of St Ebbe's for service ringing last March was a shame, but it's hoped that following some inspections from the Diocesan bells advisor and White's that ringing will be able to resume soon. We also had news in November that the gudgeon on the 4th at SMV is broken, so service ringing there may have to cease for the time being.

The batch of learners from 2008's freshers' fair continued to improve through Hilary and Trinity, ringing call changes by the end of the year. 2009's freshers' fair saw record recruitment with over 30 people turning up to the first teaching session at Mary Mag. Numbers have now reduced to a more manageable level, and teaching is going well. We also gained a good number of already proficient freshers.

Peal ringing was less successful than normal this year, with only 2 being scored, though the residents keenly ploughed through 50 quarter peals.

The termly outings were successful again this year. John Camp took us and the CUG around Northampton last Hilary, and Kirsty Monk organised the summer outing to the east of Oxford. Thanks to them for their efforts, and to everyone who turned out to

support enjoyable days. The OUS's other regular events, the dinner and tour were also enjoyed by residents.

This year's SUA striking competitions were held in Oxford, and I'm very pleased to report that the OUS won both the 6 and 8 bell competitions, and can also be proud of organising a very enjoyable weekend of events for those attending. Many thanks to everyone involved in this, and with everything else throughout the year.

Bob Wallis

Congratulations to the residents on another SUA triumph – the OUS has now won the 8-bell competition for four years running and the 6-bell competition for the last three years.

Ten years as President

John Camp writes:

I have enjoyed my time as President and have been proud to occupy the post. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to do so (and for the wine – a judicious selection of claret and burgundy). The nature of the job has changed over the years. I don't recall that Canon Wigg had a lot to do with the resident members, though he was conscientious in attending AGMs and the annual dinner, when it became part of the society's calendar.

Undergraduates, and even the increasing number of people staying on for further degrees, cannot provide much continuity. Once upon a time, the dinner could be organised by a student whose college had an amenable steward. Today, a college is likely to have a 'conference organiser' or 'facilities manager', who prefers to deal with someone more established. Unlike our friends in Cambridge, we have had very few members who have stayed on as college fellows. I am pleased that we now have such a good relationship with Harris Manchester College. We shall be holding our tenth consecutive dinner there in 2010.

The job of President (as I have seen it) has been about liaison between the residents and the non-residents and trying to ensure, without micro-meddling, that the society operates smoothly as an entity. Websites and email make communication easier, while increasing the need for co-ordination between the people who run these things. Older members can be a source of advice, and that role is widely shared among the 'badgers', as we have come to be called.

Regrets? One is that I haven't been able to do much ringing during my time of office, for various health-related reasons. Another is that the society has rung nearly all its tower-bell peals during the last ten years at St Thomas's and St Mary Mag's. Lovely bells; easy to get for peals; but too seductive. Come on! Where are the peals on difficult bells and in lovely Cotswold village towers? My final regret is that the last ten years have passed so quickly.

I know that Jeremy Pratt will do a good job and I wish him lots of happiness in doing it.

John Camp

From the new President

Jeremy Pratt writes:

It is indeed an honour and a privilege to have been elected President of the Society, and I will endeavour to serve the Society to the best of my ability. Past Presidents I have known (Elliott Wigg, Rodney Meadows, Andrew Stubbs and John Camp) present a variety of role models, and it is hard to know which to choose to follow. Not only has Exeter College now produced two Presidents, but the small village of Chearsley (population around 500) on the Bucks/Oxon borders where I live has also produced two – Elliott Wigg was Vicar of the parish when he was elected.

My principal task here is to thank my predecessor, John Camp, who has served as President of the Society with distinction over the last ten years. He has devoted much time and effort to the Society, and the Society has benefitted considerably from his contribution and wise counsel, and in particular for his development of the communications across the whole membership. We are most grateful to him, and I hope he will continue as an active participant in Society activities. I am particularly grateful to him for ensuring that organisation of the 2010 Tour was not left to his successor, and I do encourage members to support it.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Dinner in February.

Jeremy Pratt

Members' News

Peter Hughes () married Jenny Ellins in October 2008 and now lives in York. He is a member of the Minster band and rang in the final of the National 12-Bell Contest at St Paul's Cathedral in 2009, where it was good to bump into OUS contemporaries Mike Ovenden and Phil and Liz Barnes.

Obituaries

Jenny Orchard (nee Unsworth, St Hugh's College 1967-1970) died on 26 October 2008.

Nigel Orchard writes:

Jenny Orchard died on 26th October of a rare form of cancer, diagnosed in July 2004, and for which only palliative treatment is available. She was 60 years old.

Jenny and her twin sister, Sue, learned to ring at Oxford where Jenny was reading for a Physics degree. I was also at Oxford and we met through ringing which I had started just before I came up. Though we were good friends at Oxford, we did not get together seriously until a few years later and married at St. Cross, Oxford, in March 1973 in the presence of many ringers who are still close friends. It was pleasing to us to be part of that select band of husbands and wives who were each members of the Society. Having got her degree in Physics and rung her first peal, Jenny moved to London to start the long road to qualifying as a doctor and rang with the ULSCR for which she was for a time the Treasurer.

She was not a prolific peal ringer, her total being 112, but there were few years after her first peal in which she did not ring at least one. With reduced family commitments as the children grew up, she rang more peals and rang five, including three of 8-spliced

surprise royal, in 2004 before the illness struck. She rang three peals of cinquies. She rang 17 peals for the Society, the first in 1972 and the last (at Jewry) in 2003.

My career caused us to move quite a lot and we were at various times members of the band at: Hart St. London, Radyr, Llandaff, Chelsfield, Christchurch Priory, Milford on Sea and St. Thomas's, Salisbury. She was a good striker and strong supporter of Sunday service ringing and the local practice. For a time she also rang with the handbell band organised by Maurice Bailey and the late Flora Stocker at Milford.

This regular moving, and her concentration on bringing up the family prevented her from becoming a consultant, but latterly, at Bournemouth, she was a consultant in all but name. Her work in developing a practical test to help decide which Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia patients needed urgent treatment and which could be managed non-aggressively brought her international recognition and she presented a paper on this at the American Society of Haematologists' meeting in Philadelphia in 2002.

She was a loving and supportive wife and mother. Robert and Melanie, our children, both learned to ring but now rarely do so. She was a good cook and organiser and many will remember fondly the picnics, dinners and house parties she arranged and catered for.

Her cancer was both rare and unpredictable in its course but she bore it with great courage and lack of complaint, her concern being always to minimise its impact on her family and others. Apart from a few months in 2005 following her major operation in January that year until the premature and aggressive return of her tumours in that October, she and her family lived with an expectation that she could go into a rapid decline at any time. This was hard for the family, and also hard for her friends to maintain support from a distance over such a period. But the ringing community is a caring one and we have been massively helped by the sustained contact and thoughts of so many friends we met through ringing, many of whom attended the funeral at St. Thomas's church and contributed to some very good open ringing.

William H Jackson (Christ Church 1953-1957) died on 13 April 2009.

David C Brown writes in the *Ringling World* (extracted):

Bill Jackson died on Easter Monday after a long illness. There can have been few ringers more enthusiastic about the art of change-ringing – and particularly about handbell ringing – than Bill. He was born at Tadcaster in 1935, the son of a ringing father, Gibson Jackson. He learned to ring at Hatfield, South Yorkshire, as a young lad under his father's tuition. Bill clearly showed promise from an early age, and one of his first appearances in *The Ringling World* was as a 13-year old, conducting a quarter peal of Bob Minor in July 1949 at Carlton-juxta-Snaith with a band of boys aged 11 to 13, including his 11-year-old brother.

At this time there was a thriving peal ringing scene in South Yorkshire and Bill was soon part of this. His progress was astonishingly rapid. He went from ringing his first peal (Grandsire Triples in August 1949 at Campbell) one day after his 14th birthday to his first of London Surprise Major just eight months later. Several famous names appear in his early peals, including Ted Cawser, who called many of his early peals, Eric Critchley, Martin Thorley and Ralph Edwards. The bulk of his ringing at this time was done locally in South Yorkshire.

Bill's enduring interest in a love of handbell ringing was kindled from an early age. His first handbell peal – Plain Bob Major – was only his ninth peal when he was just 14.

Bill's peal ringing activities went rather quiet in 1951 and 1952 and this may have been because he was devoting himself to his school work at Doncaster Grammar School. This diversion from ringing paid off because in 1953 he won a scholarship to Christ Church to read Greats. In Oxford Bill rang with the OUS and it was not long before his name began to appear in peals rung for the Society. However, he seems to have struck a balance between ringing and other activities during his four years in Oxford, because he was not a prolific peal ringer at this time. In all he rang 22 peals while a resident member. From a ringing point of view this was a good time to be in Oxford, because members who were either resident or returning regularly included some very notable members of the ringing fraternity. Among the names appearing in Bill's records are those of Peter Border, Wilf Moreton, Stephen Ivin, Don Niblett, John Spice, Rodney Meadows and Robin Turner. After he left Oxford in 1957 he was relatively little involved with the OUS, although he appeared in 'opposition' territory on Easter Monday 1959 with an OUS peal at Great St Mary, Cambridge.

Bill moved to the London area after university and entered a career with ICI, first in advertising and then in marketing. From the late '50s to the mid-'60s he was relatively inactive as a peal ringer, probably partly because of the demands of his career. It was also during this period that he met Heather, whom he married in 1963. They had three children: Edward, Richard and Clare, who were born in 1965, 1967 and 1968 respectively. He was very involved at this time in local ringing, primarily at Kingston-upon-Thames and in the Surrey Association.

In 1967 with a change of jobs to Miles Laboratories in Stoke Poges, Bill moved to Maidenhead, and rang for a time at Cookham. One of his most notable achievements in ringing at this time was his participation in a peal of Bristol Surprise Maximus at High Wycombe in January 1968. Up to this time, the method had only been pealed in Leicester by Harold Poole's band (the first peal was in 1950). Following practices in the Thames Valley area, a peal was successful, conducted by David Hilling, with Bill ringing the fourth.

Somehow he found time between career, marriage and ringing to pursue an interest in rowing, and was a keen oarsman with the Thames Rowing Club. However, at the end of 1968 a major change in his and his family's life occurred with a job move to Toronto in Canada, still with Miles Laboratories. This took Bill to bell-less territory, the Toronto twelve not at that time even being a gleam in anyone's eye. Bill's time in Canada saw some of his most energetic and prolific ringing activity. It was not long before he had made contact with other 'ex-pat' ringers living in the area, and the next few years saw a stream of handbell peals with David Ingram, John Owen and Derek Sawyer.

The next few years saw very productive collaborations with the Smith College (in Northampton, Massachusetts) ringers as well as ones from Boston and Washington Cathedral. A major breakthrough both for him and North American ringers was the step from Plain and Treble Bob methods to Surprise. In October 1971, with a peal of Norwich Surprise Minor, Bill, Marj Batchelor and Geoff Davies rang their first of Surprise in hand and the first in North America. The move to Major was accomplished with peals of Yorkshire in October the following year. In order to get in practice for this, Bill would apparently ring the method on a randomly chosen pair of handbells to the background sound of Bristol Major on tower bells in order to find a basic rhythm to ring to! Finally, Yorkshire Royal was achieved with peals in August and September 1973. Bill also called the first peal of Maximus in North America with a handbell peal of Kent in October 1971.

Perhaps an even bigger milestone was the accomplishment of the first peal of London Surprise on handbells in North America, which Bill conducted in November 1973, the other ringers being Martha Locke, Ann Martin and Alice Parker. Bill had got in some

intensive preparation a few weeks before when, on a visit to England, he rang his first two handbell peals in the method with some expert help from John Mayne, Chris Woolley and Roger and Kath Baldwin. The North American milestones were only achieved after considerable practice and failed attempts, often during long weekends where most had driven huge distances to ring together. During this time the North American Guild of Change Ringers was formed and Bill was a founder member. The Guild came into being in 1972: Bill was the first Secretary/Treasurer and later served as Central Council representative from 1978 to 1995.

The North American period in Bill's life came to an end in 1974, when a work move to ICI Pharmaceuticals took him back to England, where he settled in Wilmslow in Cheshire. Still fired with the enthusiasm that had sustained his ringing in America, it was not long before Bill became deeply involved in handbell ringing in Cheshire. Bill was a welcome addition to the handbell peal band and soon took over the organisation of the group. During his time in Chester Bill rang 162 peals for the Chester Guild. A notable performance during this time was the record length of 13,664 Yorkshire Surprise Major on handbells with David Atkinson, Bob Smith (who conducted) and Alan Scholfield. This record stands today.

Apart from handbell ringing, Bill was a regular tower bell ringer at Prestbury, where his three children all learned to ring, and then at Wilmslow. He rang an occasional tower bell peal but most of his Cheshire peal ringing was on handbells. Although Bill was a proficient conductor and had called many of the peals in North America, he did not really enjoy it, and for the most part he was happy to leave the conducting to others. Bill's forte was planning, and long before computer spreadsheets he had his own paper version, on which bands and peal attempts were planned out for several weeks ahead. Changes to his planned arrangements were not well received!

Towards the end of his time in Cheshire, Bill's life went through some major upheavals. He embarked on a major career change. Becoming disillusioned with corporate life he decided to set up his own business. He settled upon a pizza takeaway business and opened a shop in Burnage in 1980. It was also around this time that his marriage to Heather ended. The upshot of these life changes was that he did very little peal ringing in 1978 and 1979. In 1981, in search of a clean break he decided to move from Cheshire and settled in Norfolk, where he set up a pizza business in Norwich.

His time in Norfolk was very fulfilling and happy on several fronts. He met Jill at his local squash club and they married in 1982. Jill was then a nurse at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. They bought an idyllic country cottage at Brandon Parva near Wymondham, and this was the setting for many happy days of handbell ringing. Those who visited found the last few courses of peals particularly difficult because of the delicious cooking smells coming from the kitchen as Jill prepared the post-peal repast. Bill was also at this time applying his able business brain to getting his pizza shop off the ground and financially profitable. This was a period when the large chains had not yet started to corner the market in Norfolk and Bill found the Norwich public took to his delicious fare. As with all his activities, Bill took intense care and researched recipes thoroughly to ensure that the products sold by his business were first class. For a time, he ran both a restaurant and a takeaway business.

On the tower bell ringing front, Bill became a member of the St Peter Mancroft band in Norwich. Bill undertook a project to extend the repertoire and improve striking. In typically thorough fashion, he took the band back to basics and even got the band to ring with one handbell each in order to appreciate how perfect striking could be achieved. At the same time, Bill's move to Norfolk and enthusiasm for handbell ringing had not escaped the notice of those in not too distant Cambridge, where there was also

a body of keen and capable handbell exponents. In the early '80s the Cambridge ringers were starting to break into Surprise ringing on higher numbers on handbells. In 1984 Bill made his first forays across to Cambridge for peals of London Royal and Spliced Surprise Major, followed in 1985 by peals of Cambridge Maximus. It was a particular pleasure for him to be reunited in many of these peals with Marj Winter (nee Bachelor), now living in Cambridge following her marriage to Alan Winter.

From 1988 onwards he began to move into much more difficult territory when the Cambridge band embarked upon an 'alphabet' of Surprise Maximus methods. For the next three years Bill was involved in peals of over 30 different Maximus methods of varying degrees of difficulty, some right place but also many wrong place London and Bristol variants. The culmination was a peal of Zanussi Surprise Maximus in June 1990. Two particular highlights of this period stand out. The first was a peal in a method of his own devising named after his home village: Brandon Parva Alliance Maximus – a London variation. The second was the record length of 15,047 Grandsire Caters rung at his house on June 29th 1989. Despite his fascination with complex methods and the mental stimulation they provided, Bill loved the music of Grandsire Caters and this was shared by several ringers in the Surprise Maximus band. There was therefore great willingness to go for this record. With an extremely musical composition by the late Albert Tyler, the peal was accomplished virtually without blemish. The umpires included Albert himself, as well as that great Norfolk veteran and advocate of Grandsire Nolan Golden. (The peal was rung on Bill's own beloved set of bells which he had commissioned from Whitechapel. In typical fashion, Bill had stipulated that his bells should have 'a lot of metal' and wanted bells a size larger than would be normal for the key he specified. After some heated discussion with the Foundry he eventually had his way.)

The alphabet peals were only the beginning of Bill's involvement with technically hard handbell ringing. In 1990 and 1991 he was a participant in the bands that rang the first peals of Cambridge and Lincolnshire on 16 bells. Then from 1992 until 1995 he was a central member of the band that tackled an alphabet of entirely new methods, some of ferocious difficulty for handbells, named after Fens. The performances of the band were captured in an unusual way when Jill, Bill's wife, a talented artist, painted a striking picture called 'The Fenmen', which was later marketed as a jigsaw.

For these peals and many others, Bill would typically join forces for the journey over with the late Frank Price, who lived part of the way along his route at Newmarket. The combination of the two was a rich source of anecdote. Frank was a handbell ringer of exceptional talent, but perhaps had less dedication to scoring peals and tackling complex methods than Bill. On one occasion when Bill picked Frank up on the way to a particularly difficult peal, Frank remarked on seeing Bill's blue line: 'you can tear that up and throw it out the window, Bill'. The rest of the journey was spent with Bill (successfully) trying to persuade Frank to tackle the method after all.

In the early 1990's, those who rang with Bill regularly became aware that all was not right with his health and he revealed that he had been diagnosed as suffering from multiple sclerosis. Bill was determined that MS should not curtail his activities and he battled determinedly against the increasing ravages of the illness, maintaining a dedicated fitness regime. He retired from his business in 1994. Increasingly he found handbell peals draining and had to give up tower bell ringing. In his last few handbell peals he was so determined that he would strap himself to his chair, because he could no longer haul himself back up if he slipped from being upright. Jill and Frank would between them transport him to peals when he could no longer drive. His last few peals were in 1998 and were memorable ones: Bristol Maximus in January, Stedman Caters with Quilla Roth – one of his old American friends – in March, and finally a complex

composition of Stedman Cinques on May 13th. His last tower bell peal was at St Michael's Cornhill in May 1991. In total he rang 709 peals.

Bill's inability to ring any further peals by no means quenched his thirst for new projects. He had assiduously tape recorded most of the Fens methods and 16 bell peals and set himself to learning how to edit these recordings and produce tapes and CDs of them. This project absorbed him for many years and was only completed around the time of his death. He was still able to enjoy ringing vicariously when members of the handbell band would periodically visit to ring a peal, with Bill listening attentively from downstairs to the sounds emerging from Jill's studio upstairs.

Outside of ringing, Bill set himself to learn a new language – German. In typical fashion this was no mere dalliance with the language but a full-blooded assault, involving visits to Germany and intensive tuition and vocabulary learning. His efforts resulted in his achieving a distinction in the highest qualification in the German language awarded by the Goethe Institute.

Bill remained as active as possible until near the very end of his life. Unfortunately he developed a chest infection which he was unable to fight and died on Easter Monday 2009. At his funeral tributes were paid by his two sons, Edward and Richard, David Brown and his German teacher, Kathy Norris. Those who knew him recognise Bill as a remarkable man in many ways. His enjoyment of the music of ringing and energy for tackling the mental puzzles that handbell ringing threw up was inexhaustible. He was an inspirational leader and a superb and meticulous organiser. He was a very courageous and extremely determined man, never willing to admit defeat in anything he undertook, nor to accept that others should do so. We shall miss him enormously.

Paul Cattermole (Dept of Education 1963-1964) died on 31 July 2009.

Maureen Gardiner writes in the Ringing World:

Paul gave a lifetime to bells and bellringing.

He learned to ring in Beccles as a 12 year old living opposite the church when his curiosity was aroused by the sound of bells on practice night. In Norwich, where aged eight he had won a scholarship to the Norwich School, he joined the St Giles practice. He also hauled his friend Peter Adcock along, an early manifestation of a lifelong ability to involve others in ringing. By the age of 16 he was teaching fellow youngsters and forming bands.

Paul's parents moved to Worcester and he did A levels at Bromsgrove High School, being firmly directed towards mathematics as a degree subject despite his love of history. At university in London and Oxford his peal ringing took off, and his ringing repertoire widened considerably. However he came to hate urban life in London and this profoundly influenced his future.

As a mathematics teacher at the King's School in Worcester, Paul's willingness to take on outside activities meant that he built up an array of other responsibilities, teaching sailing, as a Scout leader, and running the school's Activity Centre in the Brecon Beacons at weekends and in the holidays. He also rang extensively and taught ringers (of course!) and most importantly he met Barbara, then teaching at the Girls' Grammar School. They shared many interests including a love of the outdoors and of walking, and together they started the Schools Ringing Society. They married in 1973 and moved to Norwich with Paul's appointment as Head of Mathematics at the Norwich School. A year

later they settled in the South Norfolk village of Tharston, Paul's home for the rest of his life and where their daughters Alice and Sarah grew up.

Paul's interest in church buildings started in school holidays, travelling with his father around Norfolk. Thus began a fascination with the archaeology and history of bells and their churches. This matured into an immense and scholarly knowledge which underpinned his roles as Diocesan Bells Advisor, first in Worcester and for 31 years in the Diocese of Norwich.

His research into the bells of the Norwich Diocese led to a PhD from London University in 1985, and he wrote many publications, books, monographs and local guides. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 2004 and was described as 'one of our best scholars at work on regional history'. His research was meticulous and he enjoyed its challenges. He loved cracking the 'code' of Medieval Latin, for example, a skill he taught himself.

As Norwich's Bell Advisor he immediately initiated inspection of all the diocese's towers, creating a database of enormous value for future projects and on-going maintenance. He also brought together a volunteer team dedicated to the support of belfry restoration. In the 30 years that followed he and they worked on 65 major restoration projects and many smaller ones. Paul had huge respect for craftsmanship, believing it to be as valuable a contribution to society as that of people who were 'educated'.

In restoration projects Paul excelled in finding solutions that reconciled the demands of conservation and the need to create sustainable ringing facilities for the community. His creative energy and wide knowledge often opened up unexpected opportunities and found ways forward to achieve them. Paul's masterly way with words made him formidable in argument, and he had some memorable confrontations. He also forged working relationships of deep mutual respect and his loss in restoration activities will be keenly felt.

Paul's influence in teaching also stretches down through the decades. The roll call of ringers that he taught is very large indeed. Paul was an inspired teacher, able to light the way to learning with a combination of clarity and enthusiasm which struck sparks of ambition. He was inclusive, equally ready to teach learner bands and advanced practices. If your interest was kindled and you were prepared to put the work in to learn, he was endlessly patient, totally focused on helping you. He had high standards and believed that good ringing, well learnt and well struck, was a fundamental aim and no-one who rang with him had any doubts about the need to achieve it!

Paul himself rang over 300 peals, 201 for the Norwich Association, He particularly enjoyed five and six bell methods and between 1965 and 1984 he held the Association record for the most Doubles methods to a peal. He did most of his ringing in rural Norfolk, valuing the tradition of ringing in country churches and doing much to maintain it.

He contracted aspergillosis, possible from belfries or ancient documents. It was first evident in 2002, and although medical staff at London's Brompton Hospital finally eradicated it, the consequent damage was too great and he died weeks before his 68th birthday. New Buckenham church was packed for an intensely moving funeral service.

Paul could not have lived the life he did, or found such fulfilment without the support of a close and loving family, Barbara his wife, and Alice and Sarah.

Iolo Davies (Jesus College 1938-1940 and 1945-1947) died 5 April 2009.

Ellis Thomas writes in the Ringing World:

The following are extracts from a report that appeared in *The Lion* June 6th 1964, which was the weekly school newspaper of Cowbridge Grammar School produced by Iolo:

"Look to, then. Treble's going... gone." Down come the red, white and blue salleys in order, each to fly upwards again and out of sight an instant later as the unseen wheels revolve, each carrying its load of up to three fifths of a ton of metal. Each bell somersaults, slowing down as it comes back to the point of balance mouth upwards; and in each case the clapper, its swing governed by its own centre of gravity, catches up, at three-quarter circle, with the upper side of the moving bell and hits it from within after another split second. Down they all come the other round at a pull on the tail end of the ropes, for the backstroke blow, the treble ringer trying to judge to perhaps a hundredth of a second the precise point of time at which to pull in order to lay his blow correctly behind the handstroke blow of the tenor. We are in rounds, and in a moment more El will say, "Go next time," and the Peal attempt will have begun.'

Iolo was born in Newport, S. Wales in 1920, but in his early childhood the family moved to the Mumbles, Swansea. There he excelled at the Grammar School both in the classroom and as a sportsman. Following his father, he studied the classics and was awarded a Meyricke scholarship to Jesus College, Oxford in 1938. Two years later he volunteered for the Royal Artillery, and served in Malta and Italy.

By the end of the war he was fluent in French, German and Italian, as well as Welsh. After the war he returned to Oxford, and played college rugby, rowed in the college eight, and completed his degree. In 1947 he was appointed classics master at Cowbridge Grammar School and became a boarding-house master. He was fully involved in the school and local community, playing rugby for the town fifteen. The school harriers, drama society and ringing society all benefited from his support. He established a weekly school magazine, *The Lion*, which ran until the Grammar School closed in the early '70s.

At some time in the 1950s he learned to ring at Cowbridge under the supervision of Robert E. (Ted) Coles, and his first peal of Grandsire Doubles on the tenor was in September 1954. The school boarding house was adjacent to Holy Cross church, and Iolo encouraged any pupils who joined the ringers; many learned to ring from time to time, but not all persevered. At the time I learned to ring in 1961, the band of active school ringers was quite small. Iolo himself rang the tenor, or trebled to doubles. However, with his encouragement the school band progressed and grew in numbers. By February 1962, *The Lion* reported on a quarter peal by pupils from the Grammar School and the Girls' High School.

'Today (Sunday) has been a great day in the annals of the School's campanologists, and indeed in the history of Cowbridge. For the first time since the bells were cast, and that was in Headmaster Durel's days in 1722 – and his name is on the Second bell as donor and benefactor – a Quarter Peal has been rung by a band consisting entirely of Cowbridge School pupils. The Quarter was rung for Morning Service today, and was of 1,260 Changes of Grandsire Doubles with 7, 6, 8 covering.'

Steady progress followed, resulting in a peal of Grandsire Doubles (with outside help) at Llanblethian – the first ever at the tower – by December 1963. In the same month another was rung by the school band alone, so in January 1964 *The Lion* reported:

'On December 17 Cowbridge Grammar School became the only school in Wales to have produced a school band of ringers to ring a full peal. This was doubles in 7 methods, at St Bride's Major, rung in 2 hours 43 minutes.'

In this period when the school ringers built up their skills, Iolo himself also progressed, including peals inside in 7 doubles m/v in 1965, Plain Bob Minor and Major in 1965 and 66, and Grandsire Triples in 1972. The annual camp that he ran at Llangorse near Brecon expanded to accommodate ringers as well as his classics pupils. Under his influence, the Cowbridge Grammar School Society of Change Ringers was formally established during a ringing tour in the Birmingham area. Iolo served the Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association in several capacities: he was Master in 1967, Llandaff Branch Secretary for five years, and for many years he printed the Annual Report of the Association.

But shortly after, great changes arose. In 1971, on the retirement of the previous head, Iolo was appointed Headmaster, a post he held until 1973 – the last Headmaster of Cowbridge Grammar School. This was a period of bitter argument over comprehensive education and the future of education in Cowbridge. Given his commitment to the grammar school principal and to the boarding house, Iolo felt that he had no choice but to fight for what he believed in at whatever personal cost; he was supported in this battle by Josephine whom he married in 1973. When, despite a county-wide petition of many thousands urging that the school should continue in its present form, the County Council decided in favour of establishing a comprehensive school in Cowbridge, Iolo resigned.

Alas, the closure of Cowbridge Grammar School took its toll on Iolo's health. For a year he worked on the Talyllyn Railway project (steam trains and Talyllyn, in particular, were also abiding interests of his). Being a natural teacher he missed the school life and in September 1974 he returned to teaching at a school in Aberystwyth. While in mid Wales he continued ringing, including with the Welsh Colleges' Society. In September 1977 he was the Office Manager of *The Ringing World* for a time and wrote a column for young ringers, but he later returned to teaching at Papplewick School in Ascot, then taught until his retirement at Dean Close School in Cheltenham. It was in Cheltenham that he died in April. A peal was rung in Llanblethian on the day of the memorial service held in Cowbridge.

Although he himself never rang advanced methods, his publicity attracted recruits while his supporting role enabled others to progress, and the Exercise is the richer for this. From my personal viewpoint, he was instrumental in bringing me together with my future wife, and he was at our wedding in 1970.

With help from the Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association, the Swansea and Brecon D.G., and the Welsh Colleges' Society, plus PealBase (after June 1965) it has been established that Iolo rang 27 peals.

During our visits to Llangorse, we continued our quest to renovate bells in silent towers, but the six in St Paulinus church needed work beyond our capacity. The tenor was cast by Evan Evans of Chepstow, like Cowbridge, and is a bell with a fine tone. *Dove* lists them as unringable and unsafe, and they do not appear on the Swansea and Brecon website. It would be a wonderful tribute to Iolo if these bells could be rehung.

Also in the RW printed just after the obituary:

'...this amazing Exercise, first invented in the seventeenth century by old Fabian Stedman. Perhaps, in that tormented century of civil war and religious strife, old Fabian

found a solace in raising a sound of praise that no-one could ever turn into a dusty, or a bloody, theological battlefield, a loud voice that called to heaven in a universal language. Most ringers today would be embarrassed at admitting it, probably, but even now they all know that deep down in this art of theirs there is the feeling it is an act of worship in its own right. It is from this that the ascetic standards of the Exercise are derived, and the desire that the delicate intricate web of sound be well woven.

The work of the treble is so easy that it is monotonous, and here lies its danger. So easy for one's thoughts to wander, on the way down from fifth's. How will this look in the pages of the 'Ringing World' – if we get it, of course - ? ... My feet are cold ... Suddenly, back to reality with a horrid shock. Where am I? For a fraction of a second I feel cold panic. But there is the backstroke blow of the tenor coming down, the salley is in my hands, I must be leading, yes, that's it; here we go again, and I must concentrate harder...

It is a mistake to look at the time, for it you do, the watch hands seem to freeze. But a stolen glance at the wristwatch lying on the floor shows that we are nearly there now. Two hours and forty nine minutes; and, stiff and cramped, we hear El say, "That is all!" We have got it, a record peal for number of methods for our Association. At Cavalli's in Bridgend then, fish and chips is paradise enough.

IOLO DAVIES'

Stephen Ivin (Merton College 1956-1959) died on 7 January 2010.

A full obituary will appear in the next Newsletter.

Stephen read Classics at Merton and was elected Master in Trinity Term 1959, but left Oxford before taking office. He was a first class ringer and composer, and was responsible for the transformation of St Thomas, Oxford and the augmentation from eight to ten of St Mary Magdalen, Oxford.

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