



SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITIES GUILD OF CHANGERINGERS ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 12, 2005/2006

From The President

This Guild newsletter comes late partly because of a missing book. In the lead up to Christmas I came across a Christmas carol that had bellringing at its centre. I decided it would be used as part of this letter and duly put it to one side. Despite ringing various church musicians after Christmas it has gone astray.

I tend to collect liturgical books, hymn books and commentaries which 'could be useful one day'. Another carol book in my possession contains 'The bellman's carol', which has no mention of bells at all! Another carol, 'Ring out the bells' goes to the tune *Past three a clock*: 'Ring out the bells the joyful news is breaking; ring out the bells for Jesus Christ is born!'

An alternative version of 'Unto us a child is born' starts thus: 'Jesus Christ the Lord is born, all the bells are ringing! Angels greet the holy one and shepherds hear them singing, and shepherds hear them singing.'

The missing carol (has anyone got a copy of Carol Praise?) goes to *Sweet chiming bells*. As is often the case, despite there being thousands of carols we get tied down to the fairly predictable, without which Christmas is not Christmas. We have tried to break out of the pattern of having just the familiar carols by having extra services that are slightly different. 'Ding dong merrily on high' had a few outings in the twenty or so Christmas services this season along with 'Silent night', 'O little town' and 'O come all ye faithful'.

Amongst my Christmas presents this year was Paul Cattermole's book *Church bells of Norwich*. A casual flick through on Christmas day and more reading since has been enjoyable. Holy Trinity church, a place where I came to faith and where Clare and I met, is equipped with tubular bells, now derelict. The magazine of 1890 records these words of the Rector, "May the bells of our confession of Christ ring out clearly to all around, and our lives be increasingly fruitful in every good word and work to the praise and glory of God".

A month later he was moved to poetry:

*'But these eight new Tubular's various chimes,
Will send forth sweet music, at all sorts of times:
On high days and holiday, bridal days charming,
At same time suffering and sorrowful calming'.*

In the December 1898 edition of *The Bell News and Ringer's Record*, J Armiger Trollope wrote an article on the bells of Norwich. He rounds off his article "Concerning the peals of three, what shall I say? In a word, you can get good bells,

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or visit the Guild web site at:
<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/~sugcr>



medium bells, and perfectly hideous bells. There is also a set of tubular bells [see above], which can hardly be called a success (they are ringing now as I write). But to appreciate all these, the visitor should stroll through the city just before eleven o'clock on Sunday morning, and he will hear close upon one hundred bells from nearly fifty churches, all clashing against the other, and above all, the sonorous roar of the famous twelve at St Peter-at-Mancroft".

There may not be as many ringers, as there were over 100 years ago, but the appreciation of their skill by church and non-church people is still high. The Guild is blessed by having the genuine support of the clergy at St Maries', which is something to be cherished. As always our annual dinner is one opportunity of gathering and socialising and catching up with the Guild past and present. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Paul Cubitt

NEWS FROM THE CURRENT GUILD

This year SUGCR has had both its ups and downs regarding the ringing at St Marie's. We have said goodbye to Matt Beadman, who graduated in July of 2005. Matt was ringing master of the guild for 2 years and a talented ringer who is missed at ringing and at social events. We have also said a final goodbye to Jon Collett, who has been popping back to Sheffield while writing up his thesis for his PHD. Jon has now secured work in Bedfordshire and we wish him the best of luck in his new job.

This year has also seen several new members join the guild. Jenny is a first year studying Chemical Engineering and Chemistry, and has been ringing for several years back home in Oxfordshire. We have also welcomed Emily and Marie. Emily is also a first year studying Civil & Structural Engineering, and had some handling lessons prior to coming to university. She is now ringing rounds and call changes. Marie is a second year student who started handling lessons this year and is making good progress. We have also welcomed back Chris and Nikki. Chris is a second year politics student who started bell handling lessons at the end of his first year. He has carried on with handling lessons and is making good progress. Nikki is a third year psychology student who started handling lessons at the beginning of last year. She is making good progress and is ringing rounds.

During the last year we have achieved a good standard at practices and for service. We have sometimes struggled for service ringing and would invite people to join us if they are in the area. In the early part of the year we rang the bells for the various services relating to the Death of Pope John Paul II, which involved fully muffling the bells with the tenor open at back stroke throughout the whole period from his death until the appointment of the new Pope. We then removed the muffles and rang the bells fully open for the appointment of Pope Benedict XVI and all the associated services. I would like to thank all the ringers from SUGCR and neighbouring towers who made it possible to ring for all of these services.

The guild has also been on its Easter tour to Guildford, which Mathew Beadman organised. Everyone had a great time, which included ringing at various towers in Guildford including the Cathedral, as well as a quarter peal being scored at Stoke. We also went boating on the canal and got quite wet while some people sat in the pub on the side of the canal and watched us. Recently some of the guild attended the Northern Universities Association meeting held at Manchester. We all had a great weekend and rang at several towers in and around Manchester, including the Town Hall.

Unfortunately at the end of the year we had a problem with the clapper on the 5th bell which had to be removed and sent to the foundry. This resulted in us missing the last few practices of the year. However this has all been sorted out now and normal ringing will resume in January. We ended the year with a traditional Christmas Dinner hosted by Katy Idle (Vice Master), when approximately 20 people came to dinner and fun was had by all. Many thanks to all who were involved with the Christmas dinner and who made it possible.

Finally I would like to thank everyone who has supported the ringing at St Marie's making it possible to ring for services, practices and special events.

James Blackburn
Ringling Master

THE ANNUAL DINNER 2006

The 2006 Annual Dinner will take place on **Saturday 18 February 2006** and will once again be at the **Hilton Hotel**, Victoria Quays. Further details about the hotel, including a location map and directions can be found at: <http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/hotels/directions.jhtml?ctyhocn=SZDSHHN>

Menu

Cream of Tomato and Basil Soup

Pan fried breast of chicken, served with a mushroom, cream and white wine sauce

or

Pastry Parcel, filled with artichokes, courgettes, mushrooms and served with a sweet garlic and tarragon cream sauce

Strawberry Tartlet served with a vanilla cream sauce

Tea / Coffee and mints

Tickets are priced at £35 (£30 for current students) and can be ordered (using the booking form, copy attached or downloadable on the guild website) from:

James Stanton: 28 Broom Walk, Sheffield, S3 7XE. Telephone 07812 062579.

Please make cheques payable to "The Union of Students - Sheffield" and write your name and address on the reverse side. Please include a stamped, self addressed envelope with your ticket order. Ticket requests to be received by **Friday 10 February 2006**.

AN UNLUCKY YEAR FOR GUILD PEALS!

Last year I reported that several Guild peal attempts were planned to celebrate the centenary of the granting of the charter for the University of Sheffield. Unfortunately each of these foundered for various reasons, however that at St Marie's Cathedral on Sunday 29 May did go ahead successfully with a Yorkshire Association band. A new method 'University of Sheffield Surprise Major' was rung, as reported in The Ringing World, No 4912. I understand that there are still plans to ring a Guild peal dedicated to the centenary in the near future.

SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY GUILD

Islip, Oxon, St Nicholas (8 cwt)

On Saturday, 8 October 2005

In 2 hours and 46 minutes

5088 Lessness Surprise Major

Composition: S Jenner

- 1 Simon J Reading
- 2 John S Rank
- 3 Catherine A Oram
- 4 Thomas G Scase
- 5 Robin L Story
- 6 Martin J Whiteley
- 7 Christopher M Bennett
- 8 Simon J T Smith

Conducted by: Simon J T Smith

First on 8: 4.

The 2005 Guild peal weekend also proved to be somewhat of an anticlimax, with many of those who took part in 2003 not available for the 2005 dates. We did have enough support for two attempts on the Saturday, but then had difficulty arranging towers. Several towers gave a "should be ok, but have to check" response, only to come back a day or two later with "sorry, not available"! Finding ourselves with only one tower and less than 72 hours to go, we had no option but to cancel one of the proposed attempts.

The remaining attempt at Islip was scored by a band spanning the entire span of Guild history, from founder to current undergraduate member. Many thanks to Martin Whiteley, to Simon Smith (for taking on the thankless task of finding towers), to those who rang, and also those who willingly stood down when the second attempt was cancelled.

Chris Bennett

WHAT FUTURE FOR THIS NEWSLETTER?

You will see from page 1 that the SUGCR newsletter is now in its 12th edition!

When I started producing a newsletter for the Guild during my term as President, I did not see it as being part of the presidential role, to pass on to my successors. However, neither did I see it as being a permanent job for myself!

12 years ago a newsletter seemed a good way of passing on Guild news, and particularly of giving out details of the Annual Dinner in time for interested members to make arrangements to attend. Early editions went out before Christmas, however in recent years it has proved increasingly difficult to keep to that timetable. Other means of communication have moved on, and details of the Dinner are now posted on the Guild website. This year I was not even given details of the Dinner for inclusion in the newsletter, and had to access them myself from the website! Perhaps the newsletter is no longer seen as a serious tool for the distribution of this sort of information?

Content is very dependant on the enthusiasm of the current members, in terms of both the activities they undertake and their willingness to write about them in a way that makes good copy. This varies greatly from year to year. I have also found it disappointing that so few articles have been submitted over the years by the general membership, despite constant invitations to do so. I could probably count on one hand the number of articles printed that have not originated from the President, the current committee, or me. I have found myself wondering whether editions of the newsletter are sufficiently varied to maintain interest.

Distribution of the newsletter also throws up various questions. I have always continued to send out to a member until I receive definite proof (through return of an undelivered letter or email) that the contact details I have are incorrect. Several years ago I thought that emails would ease the task of distribution, however this has not proved to be as beneficial as I expected due to the frequency with which many people seem to change their email address. New university leavers are likely to be particularly mobile, and it is difficult to keep in contact with them unless they take steps to stay in touch themselves.

Although some members do make a point of commenting to me about the newsletter (and I welcome and appreciate such comment), the majority of copies sent out are not acknowledged in any way whatsoever. I have no way of knowing whether these have reached their intended recipients or not, and whether they have been read or placed straight into the bin! I periodically ask that members let me know if they no longer want to receive the newsletter, but only recall one person ever doing so. I am not sure whether this distribution policy is still valid, or a waste of time and resources.

You will probably gather from the above that I have reached a "make or break" point, as far as the newsletter is concerned. I will be asking the committee to consider the future of the newsletter, whether it should continue in its current form, how it should be produced, and by who. I would also invite any past members who have views on this to express them. Please email your comments to the Guild at **SUGCR@Sheffield.ac.uk**, or directly to me and I will make sure they are passed on.

Finally, please note my change of telephone number below, and my lack of a permanent address! Karen and I separated during 2005, and are in the process of selling our house. I am currently living in temporary accommodation, but expect to have a new permanent address soon. However in the meantime I can still be contacted by email or mobile phone.

Thanks as usual to those who have helped with this edition of the newsletter. Very best wishes for 2006 to you all.

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