



February

PLAIN HUNT WORKSHOP

Saturday 1st March. 10.15am - 12.00.
PRESTON

New ringer, wanting to get to grips with Plain Hunting?
Just want to understand the process to be able to ring PH better?

This is a workshop for you. Learn with an experienced band around you.
Some theory with practice and rope time.

Interested? To book a place contact Sue Webster suevw@sky.com

Second Saturday Sessions for 2025

(<https://pdg.org.uk/events/second-saturday-events>) for any updates.

February 8th 2025, 14:30 – Ringing Up and Down in Peal at Great Oxendon

With advice and practice for either one of these activities, this would suit ringers who are members of bands that regularly lower and raise their bells but do not have enough ringers who can do so in peal.

If interested please contact Simon Dixon (master@pdg.org.uk).

March 8th 2025, 15:00 – Bell Maintenance at Great Oakley

This is aimed at those who are interested in the mechanics of the bells and would like to learn a bit more, especially about how to keep the bells and fittings in good working order. It will be a mainly practical session held up in the belfry and would suit new recruits as well as existing ringers, it will also cover looking after ropes and stays; learning how to change a rope and stay, how to adjust the length of a tail-end, and how to splice a broken rope.

If interested please contact Simon Dixon (master@pdg.org.uk).

Ringling Practice Times

February Practices All commence at 7.30pm. Unless otherwise stated.

Mon 3rd Gretton. 10th Gt Easton. 17th Caldecott (tbc) 24th Harringworth

Mon 3rd Edith Weston. 10th Edith Weston. 17th Edith Weston. 24th Edith Weston (7pm)

Wed 5th Brooke. 12th Braunston. 19th Brooke. 26th Braunston.

Thurs 6th Uppingham. 13th Nth Luffenham. 20th Uppingham. 27th. Lyddington.

Items for the next newsletter
Friday 28th February
to suevw@sky.com

www.rutlandbellringing.org
Webmaster: Nigel Barrett
webmaster@rutlandbellringing.org

Rutland Branch AGM 2025

A very successful and lively AGM was hosted by Uppingham on January 11th, with pre meeting ringing at Preston and Uppingham towers. A big thank you goes to Jill Cannings for leading the service and to Diana Wordie for playing the organ. A huge THANK YOU to all who helped in the provision of food, who served teas and coffee, assisted in the preparation and tidying up afterwards and generally kept things running smoothly.

We had approximately 30-35 people attending, with the Guild represented by the President Alistair Donaldson, Treasurer Chris FitzGerald, Secretary Helen Allton and Cathy and Simon Dixon .

Once the plentiful tea had been consumed and the serious details of the meeting were concluded the fun part of awarding certificates began. A number of people achieved a 'first' in the centenary year of the Guild. Some ringers achieved their first Quarter Peal, some their first QP on 8 bells, Thomas Saunders for his first conducting a method. Towers that rang celebratory call changes '100 for 100' were acknowledged.



This year we have new representatives elected to serve on the committee, whilst others have changed their role. Brian Newman has stepped down from Ringing Master and is taking a break from being a committee member to concentrate on other matters. Simon Forster has been Treasurer for many years but decided this was the year to pass on the job to someone new. Alan Ellis has also decided to stand down from the committee. Our thanks to all for their work and contribution to the smooth running of events in the Rutland Branch, over quite a number of years.

The following were elected as Officers and Committee Members for 2025

Chair : Alan Wordie

Ringing Master : Ian Bell

Deputy R.M. : Roger Scholes

Secretary : Sue Baker

Treasurer : Jonathan Gibbs

Membership Secretary : Tracey Lawson

Steward : Ted Phillips

Newsletter Editor & Press Correspondent : Sue Webster

Website Management: Nigel Barrett

ART Module 1 course at Uppingham

Six Rutland ringers embarked on an exhilarating journey with the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) Module 1 course on Saturday, January 25th.



Guided by the ever-enthusiastic Rebecca Odames, an experienced ringer from Knighton, and joined by the lively Joseph from Leicester University, the day was set for some serious bell-ringing fun!

The Module 1 course is all about mastering the basics of bell handling. From teaching absolute beginners to ring rounds like pros, to safely raising and lowering a bell, this course had it all. Most of the training took place in the ringing chamber, where practical exercises were mixed with theory to ensure new ringers get positive feedback, learn in their preferred style, and progress steadily.

In the ringing chamber, after Rebecca's impressive demonstrations, we got hands-on with the ringing exercises. The first exercise was raising the bell, which was a fantastic way to get familiar with the rope's tension and movement in a safe and controlled manner. The teacher manages the hand stroke and finally sets the bell, making sure everything was smooth and secure.



One of the key principles was to complete the exercises with the bell slightly below the balance, keeping everyone safe and protecting the stay. The course emphasised progressive improvement, starting with the backstroke, moving to the hand stroke, and finally putting it all together.

After the course, participants registered on the SMARTringer website for a multiple-choice test. Full accreditation as a ringing teacher follows the completion of a logbook with a mentor.

A huge shoutout to Rebecca for an inspiring course, and to Ted and Sue for making Uppingham available and tying the bells to protect the neighbours' ears.



Greetham

Work on Greetham bells and framework is currently underway. Five of the six bells were lowered for the first time in over 100 years and the sixth for 75 years. The bell frame will now be rebuilt and the bells are with Taylor's of Loughborough for refurbishment. All being well they will be ringing out again in about four months' time.



Caldecott

The pest control person is convinced we are now pigeon proof after fitting wooden frames, new mesh and then Perspex along the bottom of the apertures as the birds were backing in to use the upper ones as a latrine.

Now the grand clean up begins before the double deck scaffolding and boards are removed through the bell trap doors. Removal of guano from the bell areas has proved lengthy.

His original comment when quoting was 'difficult but doable' and the latest was 'its been a steep learning curve'. It could be the understatement of the year.

No date given for re-roping yet. *Mary Davidson Church Warden.*

Giles Hopkinson

In Memorium

Giles Hopkinson, a member of the Rutland Branch for many years died peacefully on 27th December 2024, aged 93 years. A funeral is to be held on February 28th. Details from H.J. Pantin, Funeral Directors, 01223 891226

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Due now for 2025

Full Membership - £10.00

Juniors and Students - £5

Members above the age of 75 are not required to pay a subscription, but are invited to make a donation.

Rutland Branch Bank Account - The details are :

**Account Name : Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers - Rutland
(PDGCBR Rutland for short)**

Bank : Lloyds Bank

Sort Code : 30-99-50

Account Number : 58639962

We have a new Treasurer this year, elected at the last month's AGM.

Jonathan Gibbs jonathan_gibbs@me.com

The easiest way to pay is by bank transfer to the account above. Please use your Surname and Tower as reference. If on-line banking presents difficulties for please contact the Branch Treasurer on the email above.

Guild Fund Raising

At our recent AGM, The Guild Treasurer, Chris FitzGerald, made us aware of this online giving scheme. There is a facility for donations to be made in support of the Peterborough Guild of Church Bellringers. The Guild has a Bell Fund which exists to support churches in the Peterborough Diocese in works associated with care of bells, and a Training Fund to assist in aspects of recruitment of ringers and training. For more information see the Guild website <https://pdg.org.uk>



Shop online and raise money for Peterborough Diocesan Guild Of Church Bell Ringers

Give as you Live Online is the free and easy way to raise money for Peterborough Diocesan Guild Of Church Bell Ringers when you shop online with 6,000+ stores.

From holidays and travel, to clothing and gifts, you can raise hundreds of pounds from your everyday shopping, all at no extra cost to you.

Registering with the site enables you as an individual to shop online via that site. Retailers who have also pledged to work through the online giving websites, commit to give a proportion of your spending to your designated charity. The potential downside is the mail and marketing the website then generates.

Chris FitzGerald, as sponsor, can see who has raised contributions, but not any details regarding items purchased. For more information Chris has written a piece in the latest Guild newsletter, now out. Or contact him on treasurer@pdg.org.uk. He is very happy to answer any questions on this.

Come Out On Thursdays (COOTS) – Spring 2025

Thank you to all those who have previously joined me on Thursday evenings to ring Quarter Peals; **the DOODLE booking system is now open for the Spring season from February to April 2025**

The idea behind COOTS is to give all ringers across the Guild an opportunity to ring and really get to know some methods that are on their "wish-list", e.g.

- plain methods such as St. Clements Bob Minor,
- some of the '41' surprise minor methods,
- or from the Pickled Egg Surprise Major series.

If you are interested please let me know **when** you are available, and **what** you would like to ring.

1: So I can best coordinate ringers, conductors and towers I have set up a DOODLE Poll

Please click on <https://doodle.com/meeting/participate/id/eVo0QMMa> to create a profile and fill in your availability. This will enable all of us to see how each evening's bands are shaping up.

- Note you can change your availability at any time, just log in again and click the "Edit" pencil by your name.

2: If you are new to the Group please let me know the following background information by emailing coots.alistair@gmail.com :

- Where you live (approximately!) so I can choose appropriate towers
- What methods are on your "wish-list",
- If you are willing to call a QP
- or if you are just happy to ring!
- Any other comments or restrictions?

3: I have set up a WhatsApp Group for COOTS members so that we can keep in touch, especially if there needs to be any late changes.

- If you are happy to join the COOTS WhatsApp Group please let me have your mobile number and I will add you.

If you would prefer not to use DOODLE please just email me your availability and 'wish-list' directly.

Lastly if you know of someone who would benefit from joining COOTS please do ask them to get in touch with me.

Alistair Donaldson

coots.alistair@gmail.com

07968-280216