



LINCOLN DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Guild Officers

**Master - Mrs Susan Faull : Secretary - Leslie G Townsend : Treasurer - Ms Nicola Jones
Peal Secretary – Emma Southerington : Librarian – Mrs Judith Williamson.**

To contact any of the above please consult the Annual Report or visit the Guild website at <http://ldgcb.org.uk>

Newsletter No 7 Editor – John R. Ketteringham Email : <newsletter@ldgcb.org.uk> November 2006

Any opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the contributor and not necessarily those of the Guild Officers or represent Guild policy. Because the Newsletter is published on the Guild website any email addresses are published in a form which may help to reduce the possibility of 'Spam'. Therefore, when using these addresses '-at-' must be replaced with '@'. This Newsletter is published on the first day of May, August, November and February. Contributions are welcome and are published at the editor's discretion. If any amendments are made the contributor will be consulted. Contributions need to be with the Editor four weeks before the date of publication to allow for editing etc before checking by the Guild Master.

Ring the Changes : Change Children's Lives

No doubt most bellringers have seen in the *Ringing World* The Central Council Public Relations Committee request that, wherever possible, ringers celebrate the 125th anniversary of The Children's Society by arranging sponsored ringing to raise money for this worthwhile cause.

Please reserve the period between September and December 2006 for sponsored ringing for The Children's Society. In particular, please consider ways in which young ringers can take part: young people who can help disadvantaged youngsters.

The aim of this ringing project is to achieve, not just sponsorship for The Children's Society, but also local promotion of ringing and especially attracting youngsters to learn to ring. Please ensure that all sponsored ringing is publicised well in advance in parish magazines, local newspapers and local radio.

From the Editor

This is the last issue of the Newsletter before Christmas so I have included another of Rodney Meadow's masterly articles on Belfrymanship in case you need something to read over the holiday. It hardly seems possible that another year is drawing to a close and it has certainly been a busy one for the Guild. My best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year and I am grateful to you for your support and encouragement both with regard to the Newsletter and for my limited return to active bellringing.

I have had several enquires about the flag which has been appearing in the heading of recent Newsletters. It is the new Lincolnshire flag which won a competition run by the county magazine Lincolnshire Life and Radio Lincolnshire. The design incorporates the green of the Lincolnshire Wolds and woods, the gold of the crops and beaches, the blue of the sea and sky and the red cross and fleur de lys of Lincoln. Flags in several sizes are available and there are also Lincolnshire flag badges, car stickers, fridge magnets and tea towels from Lincolnshire Life magazine.

Bells and Sir John Betjeman

As I expect many of you will know Sir John was a great lover of bells and the majority of his poems include a reference to them. He did learn to ring and his interest in bells was recognised by the Central Council when he was elected a Vice-president.

Sir John visited Lincolnshire many times usually staying with his University friend Jack Yates in Louth. Sir John with Jack Yates, Henry Thorold and John Piper visited many Lincolnshire churches. One that springs to mind is Huttoft where Sir John and Jack Yates stayed to Evensong and they were amazed when an Indian priest entered to conduct the service! This resulted in the poem *A Lincolnshire Church* and I was pleased to be able to contribute an article about Revd Theophilus Caleb to the recently published book *Betjeman's Lincolnshire*.

In honour of Sir John a ring of eight bells has recently been installed at Christ Church, Hampstead. The *Ringing World* dated 29 September includes reports of peals and quarter peals rung to commemorate the centenary of the birth of the future Poet Laureate many of which include footnotes recording his interest in bells. One of Sir John's poems is entitled 'On hearing the Full Peal of Ten Bells from Christ Church Swindon, Wilts.' and it was pleasing to see a peal in an appropriately named new method on these bells.

My Australia Trip - Part 3

Lilja is a young ringer from Willingham by Stow. She spent five months of her gap year in Australia. She is taking part in various voluntary projects and trying to do a little ringing too. A report on her first month in Australia was published in Newsletter No. 5 and her second month in No. This is the final epistle.

After 6 weeks of Conservation Volunteers projects (weeding) I started the long trip down the East Coast of Australia, from Cairns to Sydney. I had a great time with CVA, however I don't want to see another weed for a long time!!

Activities were organised for us each day on the "Oz bus". I experienced rolling down a hill in a giant plastic ball, lassoing goats, falling off a mechanical bull, surfing and much more!! Ringing wise though, there were no bells until I got half way down the coast and although I missed ringing at Maryborough by a day, I managed to ring at one of the Brisbane towers, South Brisbane, St Andrew's (6, 7-2-21) which was great after a 2 month break from ringing.

A week or so later I arrived in Sydney where I managed to ring at 8 more towers. On my first night, Tuesday, I rang at Christ Church St Laurence (10, 10-3-8), followed two days later by Burwood, St Paul's (8, 11-0-8). I had managed to time it well and joined a branch practice, the ringers were all very nice and I was invited to ring in a peal there on the Sunday. On the Friday I managed to grab two more towers ringing first at Broadway, St Benedict's (6, 14-0-25) followed by St Philip's (8, 18-2-21) for their evening practices. Saturday I continued with the sightseeing before lots of ringing on the Sunday where I rang for the service at St Andrew's Cathedral (12+1, 29-1-4) followed by a peal of Pudsey Surprise Major at Burwood. Afterwards I went back with one of the other young ringers to his local practice at Turrumurra, St James' (8, 9-3-21) before spending the evening with the Perrins ringing family of 6, which was very nice!! On Tuesday I was able to ring at St James' (8, 10-3-21) and finally, on Thursday, at St Mary's Cathedral (12+2, 34-1-3)

It was very nice to get back to ringing, although I found it a bit testing on the brain, which was very out of practice!! All the bells in Sydney were very nice and easy going. The ringers here, like everywhere else, were very friendly and welcoming, for which I am very grateful. My time in Australia had come to an end and the final part of my trip was upon me, three great days in LA with lots more sight seeing, and the last four days in New York, where mum and dad joined me. Then all too soon my trip was over, a quick journey home from Heathrow meant I could ring for Willingham in the branch striking competition at Saxilby.

It's great to be home again now- my bed is soooo nice!! And I've got lots of great memories.

Bell Repair Fund.

The Society of Rambling Ringers, who visited the County recently, gave the BRF an excellent donation of £944 and our thanks go to them for this. My thanks also go to the towers who forwent their personal donations to enable the BRF to have this very large amount.

The renewals for the BRF Affiliation Scheme are due to go out this month and I ask you all to persuade your Church Councils to join the Scheme. Many are already members and we thank them for their annual donations but new members are always welcome. Remember any donation is a great help to the BRF.

Dot Mason. Administrator

A Lincolnshire Carol

1.
Christmas bells are ringing over wold and fen
Across the moon-bathed earth;
Calling to men in their bitterness
That this is the time of their Saviour's birth.
Glory to God in the highest
And peace, goodwill towards men.

2.
Christmas bells are ringing over wold and fen
From peaceful place to place;
Calling to men in their loneliness
That Christ is the King of their earthly race.
Glory to God in the Highest
And peace, goodwill toward men.

3.
Christmas bells are ringing over wold and fen
From distant shire to shire;
Calling to men in their foolishness,
That Christ is the hope of their heart's desire
Glory to God in the Highest
And Peace, goodwill towards men.

4.
Christmas bells are ringing over wold and fen
From parish church to church;
Calling to men in their thankfulness
That Christ is the end of their soul's long search.
Glory to God in the Highest
And peace, goodwill toward men.

The above carol was written by Revd. J. R. Parkinson who was rector of Trusthorpe from 1944 to 1970. The first line has been amended slightly. Revd Parkinson was a cousin of Michael Parkinson who is a ringer at Lincoln Cathedral.

Happy Birthday your Majesty! On Friday 16th June at St. Andrew's Potterhanworth the band of youngsters from the local Primary School rang a performance consisting of 40 minutes of none stop ringing. They rang call changes calling the bells from Rounds into Queens and back to celebrate the 80th Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The total age of the band was just 74 years which gave an average age for the band of just 10 ½ years. We are very lucky at Potterhanworth to have such an enthusiastic and devoted team of youngsters who turn out every practice night and every Sunday morning to ring! Well Done! For a fuller report and photograph please go to my Newspage http://ldgcb.org.uk/news/other_news.html

Market Deeping Young Ringers on TV: There was great excitement among the ringers at Market Deeping on Monday 14th August, as Anglia television were coming to make a news feature about teenagers and ringing. A reporter attended a wedding and heard the bells ringing. She went up the tower and was struck by the number of older people ringing and decided that she would like to find out if there were any youngsters doing this as a hobby. This led her to the Central Council Public Relations Committee who put her on to us at Market Deeping.

So, the big day arrives! Ordinary teenagers were what were requested. Lizzy, Johny, Deborah, Phil, Ed, Eleanor and Robert were available, and being (almost) normal, fitted the bill exactly.

The morning was spent cleaning up the tower and discussing what we were all going to say when the cameras arrived in the afternoon. As the morning wore on, the excitement intensified and I was beginning to worry that after a lunch at McDonalds, they would be quite uncontrollable! You wouldn't believe that for three and a half minutes on TV it took three and a half hours to film!

The film follows the youngsters at home doing the things ordinary teenagers do, like playing on the computer, play station and listening to music. Then it was off to the tower to film some ringing and the all important interviews. Everyone did brilliantly and came across as totally natural and really sensible (Phew! That morning preparation must have been worth it!). The kids discussed why they like ringing, including learning new skills, the mental challenge of peals and methods, making new friends, doing social activities and apparently even meeting people in the army! Then it was my turn. After watching how brilliantly the kids had done, I was getting nervous! Fortunately, the reporter really put me at ease and I was more concerned about how much of my 37 weeks pregnant stomach was in the shot, than anything else! (Too much, by the way).

The report was shown on Anglia Tonight on Thursday 17th August and was fantastic. It was really well edited and definitely shows ringing in a very positive way. It comes across as a really fun, exciting and "cool" thing to do. You were all brilliant! So brilliant that the Lincolnshire Free Press even called the following week to say they had seen the news and wanted to do their own feature. It just shows, you never know who's watching, and hopefully the piece will have ignited a spark of interest in others too.

On Thursday 10th August, three ringers from the **West Lindsey Branch** embarked on a **sponsored 'bells and bikes challenge'** to raise funds for the Guild's publicity, training and recruitment project, which is based around a portable ring of 6 'Saxilby simulator' units. The plan was to ring a quarter peal in each of the six branches of the guild, biking between all towers. Lilja, Ian and Richard were joined by the Guild Master, Sue Faull and young ringer Rae Todd for a number of the quarters and over 50 miles of cycling. The day got under way at 6.45am with a quarter of Bob Minor on handbells at Messingham (West Lindsey branch) and concluded at 8.40 pm, 81 miles and 6 quarter peals later at Bicker (Elloe Deaneries). A big thank you should go to all those who sponsored and supported this event, which it is expected will have raised over £400 for the project.

The quarter-peals were rung at Messingham (Thistle Downe, Scotter Road) (West Lindsey Branch), Middle Rasen (Northern Branch), Wragby (Central Branch), Coningsby (Eastern Branch), Horbling (Southern Branch) and Bicker (Elloe Deaneries).

For a more detailed article and photograph click here : http://www.ldgcb.org.uk/news/other_news.html

West Lindsey Young Ringers Activity Day - On Monday, 21st August, seventeen young ringers from the Branch and six young friends from other branches of the Guild met at Messingham for another enjoyable day of ringing and social activities. There was a session of general ringing, followed by a picnic lunch, more ringing and quarter peals. Everyone then let off steam playing rounders at the local playing field. This was followed by garden games, handbell ringing and ringing on the new set of ten ceramic bells (plant pots!), recently installed in the garage at the home of the Till family by Tom Blyth, another of our young ringers. The adult helpers, ably masterminded as usual by Michael Whiting, prepared a barbeque catering for more than forty ringers.

Four quarter peals were rung during the day, two on tower bells and two on handbells. Three of the quarters were conducted by young ringers, including a very proficient first as conductor. It was good to see so many young ringers making new friends, especially those who had little previous experience of ringing away from their home towers.

Ed – I disguised myself as a 'young ringer' and can recommend this type of event as a good way of getting the youngsters together during the school holidays. I certainly got in some much needed practice on the pots!

The final of this year's **Guild Striking Contest** was held in the Eastern Branch with eight teams competing at Willoughby for the John Freeman Cup and five at Alford for the Edward Colley Plate. The first two teams from the Branch Striking Competitions compete for the Cup and the third and fourth teams compete for the Plate.

Barry Brown and Mark Pendery from the Leicester Guild judged the Cup competition. First and second places were very closely contested, with Bourne (Southern Branch) winning, ringing 6 Spliced Surprise Minor in fine style. Messingham (West Lindsey Branch) were the runners up.

Brian Buttery and Peter Sleight from Grantham were the judges for the Plate competition and were hidden in a summer house in a nearby garden. Although it was a bright, sunny autumn day it was quite chilly. Peter had to bounce a basketball around in order to keep warm but assured us that he didn't miss too many faults. Scotter, (West Lindsey Branch) won the competition with Eagle (Central Branch) runners up.

An excellent tea was provided by Eastern Branch members, and Branch and Guild secretaries, Kate Meyer and Les Townsend were thanked for their arrangements for the day. For a photograph of the Cup Winners please go to my News Page <http://homepage.nflworld.com/john.ketteringham/news.htm>

The Guild Publicity, Recruitment and Training project.

On 17th September we received the wonderful news that the lottery fund "Awards for All" granted the Guild the full £8600 that the project committee had applied for. Additionally nearly £600 was raised by the sponsored bike ride and quarter peal day. With other donations previously given, the Guild has the best part of £10000 and we should soon have very high quality interactive display materials, including the simulator, to take around the county. Congratulations to the members of the project committee, and we look forward to this exciting new venture.
See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/lincolnshire/6066384.stm>

The Lightning Conductor

As we were approaching Wragby to ring a quarter peal on the morning of 22 July we could see dark clouds to the south and could hear the distant roll of thunder. Soon after we had started ringing the storm broke seemingly overhead and the lights went out several times. This reminded me of the second most frightening incident in my ringing career.

We were attempting a peal on the ground floor ring of six at St Stephen's, St Albans in 1964. When we started it was quite a pleasant morning but during the second extent we could hear thunder and the storm seemed to be virtually overhead. Eventually we could hardly hear the bells for the noise of rain and thunder. Our ringing was brought to an abrupt end as the tower was struck by lightning! We were all deafened and half blinded by a sudden intense flash of lightning. I was ringing the treble and the rope was torn out of my hand. The ringer of the fourth felt a shock through the damp rope.

Of course we got out of the tower as quickly as possible and I'm afraid the bells virtually rang themselves down. The fire brigade quickly arrived and the wooden spire was examined and eventually it was agreed that there was no danger of fire. However, it was discovered that the lightning conductor from the top of the spire terminated in a joint to the metal bell frame close to the treble and there was no direct path to earth from this point. The only path was through the conduit pipe of the electricity supply and through the clock wires which pass close to the fourth bell. The metal frame of the clock is anchored to the floor of the tower.

So much for the medieval belief that bells drive away thunder!

Diary Dates

4	November	Eastern Branch	Coningsby - Learner's Practice	6 - 9 pm
11	November	Central Branch	Quiz Night at the Cathedral Centre Lincoln	730 pm
18	November	West Lindsey Branch	Burton on Stather	630 - 9 pm.
25	November	Southern Branch	Ancaster and Heydour	Morning practice
25	November	Caistor	Joint Surprise Major Practice	7 - 9 pm.
2	December	Eastern Branch	Freiston, Butterwick - Carol Service, tea, meeting	ringing. 3 - 9 pm
9	December	Central Branch	Carlton-le-Moorland	Carol Service
9	December	Northern Branch	Walesby - Ringing 6-730 and after the Carol Service	
13	January	Central Branch	Caythorpe	AGM
20	January	West Lindsey	Kirton for ringing and Service, tea at Scotton and AGM	
			evening ringing at Scotter.	
27	January	Southern Branch	Stamford	AGM
27	January	Northern Branch	Caistor	AGM
1	February	Eastern Branch	Swineshead	AGM
10	February	Central Branch	Welton	Ringing 230 - 4 pm
10	March	Central Branch	Nocton	Ringing 230 - 4 pm
10	March	Northern Branch	Lacey - Spring meeting	

If you are interested in attending any of the above please check with the *Ringling World* or the appropriate Branch Secretary

Eastern Branch : Mrs C. Meyer 01507 462625
Elloe Deaneries Branch : Roy Norman 01945 700798
Southern Branch : Ian Dawson 01476 550968

Central Branch : Mrs D. Mason 01522 796079
Northern Branch : Miss L. Bateman 01472 690460
West Lindsey : Mrs D. Scarf 01724 764526

Surprise Royal Practices

These are held on the second Saturday in each month from 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon. Methods to be practiced are Cambridge, Yorkshire Lincolnshire, London, Littleport Little and Bristol. Spliced Cambridge, Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. Note :- Littleport Little will be a method to help us all to progress to Bristol Royal and further as five leads are Bristol Major. A small donation will be required to cover tower donations. Contact – Phil and Dot Mason. 01522 796079. 11 November – Newark 13 January – To be arranged 10 February – To be arranged

Midweek Ringing

1	November	Ladies Practice (see note below)		
7	November	Stamford and Rosendale Surprise Minor	Dunholme	2 p.m.
15	November	South Lincolnshire Wednesday Group	Spalding	2.30 p.m.
21	November	Superlative, Lincolnshire and Pudsey Surprise Major	Stow	2.30 p.m.
5	December	London and Wells Surprise Minor	Dunholme	2 p.m.
6	December	Ladies Practice (see note below)		
19	December	Spliced Surprise Major	Stow	2.30 p.m.
2	January	To be arranged	Dunholme	2 p.m.
16	January	To be arranged	Stow	2 30 p.m.
17	January	South Lincolnshire Wednesday Group : Norwich Surprise	Rippingale	2.30 p.m.
6	February	To be arranged	Dunholme	2 p.m.
7	February	Ladies Practice (see note below)		
20	February	To be arranged	Stow	2.30 p.m.
21	February	South Lincolnshire Wednesday Group : Oxford Bob	Folkingham	2.30 p.m.

Other Practices

Occasional Surprise Major Practices are arranged between the Northern, Central and West Lindsey Branches. If you are interested in supporting these contact the Branch Secretaries for details but do please remember that they are **Surprise Major** practices, so do not turn up expecting to ring Bob Minor! We need to look after and challenge our more advanced ringers and these busy practices serve that need across a wide area. Dates where known are included in Diary Dates above

The **South Lincolnshire 'Geriatrics'** meet on the third Wednesday of each month, except in December. Ringing is from 2.30 pm until 4pm. except in May and September when the start is at 11am. Lunch is at 12 and this is followed by ringing at a second tower in the afternoon. Programme details for 2006 can be obtained from Canon E. Orland (01778 380724) or Ron. Noon (01775 722671)

On the second Wednesday in each month from 1030 to 1200 a practice is held on the six bells at **Wragby** for 'mature' students as Jim calls them. After lunch the practice continues on the eight simulated bells. This practice consists of the better known Triples and Major Methods. For more information contact Jim Sutherland on 01673 858492

The **Ladies** have their own practice on the first Wednesday of each month starting at 1.30 pm. If you are eligible and would like to attend please contact Margaret Parker on 01522 753412 for details of the venue.

If you are thinking of attending any of these special practices do please consider the aims and objectives as detailed. Time is short and it is usually not possible to deviate from the programme. As well as helping to advance method ringing these are very enjoyable social events. If you are not a regular attender at any of these practices it might be as well to check beforehand to make sure the venue etc hasn't had to be changed.

STOP PRESS

It has been announced that Rev Canon Philip Buckler, Canon Treasurer of St Paul's Cathedral, is to be appointed Dean of Lincoln. Canon Buckler, who is 57, has been a Residentiary Canon at St Paul's since 2000. He and his wife Linda have a daughter, Susie, who is about to go up to St John's College, Durham to read Archaeology and Anthropology.

Canon Buckler has been very popular at St Paul's and the Conductor of the St Paul's Guild of Ringers told me that 'our loss is your gain'.

Canon Buckler will not be installed until the new year. Traditionally the Dean is elected President of the Guild so we look forward to welcoming him at our next AGM.

Supplementary Notes on Belfrymanship by Rodney Meadows

From *The Ringing World* of 29th June 1951

The necessarily brief scope of a Belfrymanship article leaves certain points in need of amplification. While it may be true to say that you can satirise most of the people some of the time, suspicion has arisen that any resemblance to ringers, active or passive, was possibly quite intentional. Any Sunday morning sets the scene

“If I don’t watch myself, I shall be turning up in the next Belfryman article.”

“Well, as a matter of fact, you were in the last one.”

Clearly the last word has not been said. In the Potter spirit, therefore, though with inadequate mastery of the Potter patter, these supplementary notes are offered.

The distinction between a belfryman and a conductor is not always clear. A genuine conductor has no need to be a belfryman; and few are. But circumstances, too, affect the issue. Krenecke’s formula, embodying the most recent research, proves true for most values and may serve as a provisional guide: R being the ability of the person concerned to put the others right, T his tendency to go wrong himself, S the coefficient of friction among the ringers and N the number of bells on which changes are being rung (R, S and T being measured by a device known as the Initometer and expressed in Isospasms where $(S + T)^2 - 2R$ divided by $13 - N$ yields a result of 4.25 or more, we have a belfryman; where below 4.25, a conductor.

From this there emerge two interesting corollaries: (a) That a belfryman will be relatively more common on the higher number of bells; (b) That a conductor in one tower may deteriorate into a belfryman in another.

And now for a cardinal principle of Belfrymanship. Always get your word in first. Take a leaf out of Big John’s book. Mark the crispness of approach. :-

“You’re in 4-5; here with me; no, slow bell now; come on, watch it. ...stand. You can’t ring Stedman unless you get the leads right. Let’s try it again and strike it this time.”

Big John’s doctrine is, up to a point, sound; Stedman goes much better when the leads are right. It goes better still when Big John remembers his Last Whole Turn.

Sometimes in method ringing the situation will get out of control. A yawning chasm gapes beneath your feet. You are lost. Faced with this predicament, some belfrymen copy the eminent statesman and ring on, until they remember where they are. This is all very well with a light bell. Greater weight of metal calls for sterner measures.

PUT SOMEONE ELSE WRONG

The principles of this will be set out in a pamphlet at present being compiled by the Belfrymanship Research Centre, and entitled “Wandering to Some Purpose,” (or How to be Lost in Good Company). These are, of course, emergency tactics. For upsetting others at your leisure, one pretty little move deserves mention, here. This is the Additional Dodge Inducement. In Superlative, for example, on completing your five-pull in 7-8, you take up an attitude of expecting another dodge and then, with a deft flick strike a perfect blow in 8ths, leaving your dodging partner floundering. (Try this.) Then, at a similar position in the next course, you rub it in by remarking: “That’s the last, now down to the front.” Of a well-known Midland ringer, though he has yet to acquire the title of Artful Dodger, one may well ask: “Was this the face that launched a thousand trips?”

On the subject of good and bad striking one embarks carefully. Among indifferent ringers it is not hard to make broad distinctions. But the more accomplished the band, the further one is driven towards the doctrine of Mighty Willie, a prince of tenor men, if not a prolific peal ringer. Both the logic and the definition are simple. Good striking is the way I am ringing my bell, as opposed to the way the rest of the band are ringing theirs. As Mighty Willie also conducts a little, fascinating results follow. In a course of Cambridge Royal, Mighty Willie has been known to start 5-6 instead of 7-8 place, and, at the delicate hint of a few sharp growls from the tenor box, the rest of the band has obediently reverted to the previous lead en mass. To a casual observer the transition is almost imperceptible; so perfect the standard of striking.

Belfrymanship revolves all the time around the subtle interplay of individual and group. The earlier article illustrated the One being welcomed by the Many. Some notes are now appended on the Many being welcomed by the One (known in some parts of the country as Yokelship or Counter-Coachtourship). The situation is easy to gauge; (a) They are in good time, have a lethargic after-lunch look, wives and children struggle in tow. Hustle them up the tower without any unction. Lock the door behind them as “we can’t be too careful. about people wandering in.” Or (b) They are behind schedule, aglow with the tower-snatching fever, their nerves taut and friable, to be soothed only by the sound of still more bells and the bringing round of still more methods. I insist on showing them round the church in painstaking detail.

After this pleasant overture they can hardly avoid co-operating in making their stay unenjoyable. Someone is sure to want to pull the tenor up and a couple more will scamper to his aid when she proves difficult to chime. Let them sweat awhile as

you slyly ignore their efforts and direct the attention of the others to the Visitors Book, before remarking, innocently, "We generally turn 'er when she's up: Morale being suitably deflated, announce gaily, "Well, make yourselves at home. Mind you" (going to the window), "we have to be a bit careful here, local opinion being what it is. But" (looking out, as though expecting to see an irate mob assembling in the churchyard below)."you are sure to be better than last week's lot, as tried to ring Double Norwich." Those who had been nervously bracing themselves for a course of London are by now reluctantly deciding that it had better be Stedman - and good Stedman too - which, of course, it now has very little chance of being.

You are by this time ensconced in your favourite seat and, if not actually stopping your ears, at any rate going through the motions of cerebral repression. "Would you care to have a ring with us?" they enquire. No, you are inclined to think perhaps not. Though they may try to turn the tables on you. For instance, once in Somerset :-

Imposing Visiting Ringer: .How about having a ring with us?

Modest Local Ringer: "No, you folks carry on".

I.V.R. : "Believe me, we're quite willing to fit in for anything you'd like. I don't suppose you get much of a band locally."

M.L.R.: "No thanks. I can always do a little homework."

I.V.R. ; "Homework?"

M.L.R. : Yes, Next Saturday we're going for a non-conducted peal. Only Yorkshire. Mind you, as it's just a local band. Besides, I don't want to tire myself out, do I? " (The implication that the visitors striking is suspect effectively closes this jolly repartee.)

UNOBTRUSIVE DEVICES

Reports are from time to time received from various parts of the country of simple and unobtrusive Belfrymanship devices, While Belfrymanship should not savour of the practical joke (being practical, but never a joke) it is thought fit at this juncture to offer a few appliances and : hints to steeple keepers and tower captains.

(i). The Cynical Sally. Emits the sound. "tut-tut," when passing through the ceiling, should the ringer fail to maintain a tight rope.

(ii). Gramophone record of "The Storming of the Bastille," to be played by amplifier (large) in the vicinity of the church, when a visit proves interminable or peal attempt falls below local standards of striking. When belfry funds are low, a police whistle can sometimes be made to do the trick. Alternatively, given powerful influence with the local council, a road drill may be pressed into service.

(iii). Large mirrors positioned around the ringing chamber. Dodging with self and two others is great fun for strangers.

(iv). Synthetic tower sway. (Application for patent now in hands of Board of Trade.)

{v}. Beams set up at inconvenient places around the rope circle. They need not fulfil any obvious purpose and can be dismantled. (Incidentally, the Belfrymanship Research centre wishes to dissociate itself from the recent scandal in Southern England where movable beams were transported by van from tower to tower ahead of a Saturday coach outing.)

(vi). Enormous diagram of unringable method on wall concealed behind a curtain, to be slyly unveiled while a difficult touch is in progress.

vii). Stuffed birds in glass cases, if possible second-hand and decrepit. These successfully damp the spirit of the most enthusiastic visitor by creating the atmosphere of an indifferent Guild meeting.

And now it is time for a drink, and our finest hour. The company may not have an absorbing interest in theoretical questions. They must be lured imperceptibly down the sticky road. Proceed from the known to the unknown, or rather, start with something that they ought to know (and probably don't} and so involve them in something about which they neither know nor care. Let us take, for example, the False Course Heads in Cambridge :- "There's a point I would like to put to you." The company is politely attentive. I would value your opinion very much. You know, some of the chaps one comes across don't even understand the False Course Heads in Cambridge. You'd hardly credit it, would you?" The sickly silence that follows signifies uneasy assent. Well now, in this little composition of mine here, I've got a second copy. There we are now.. No, really it's my turn to buy them. All right then; a brown ale."

A few more minutes of this and all will be set fair for a jolly evening. Your hapless audience is soon forming a roster, taking turns to escape and prop up the bar counter for a few blissful moments before returning to the inquisition.

That's what I like about being a ringer. It's not only the ringing itself, it's the comradeship.