

# The Church of St Nicholas, Deeping St Nicholas

Deeping St Nicholas is located on the southern edge of Lincolnshire and is in the Elloe Deaneries branch of the Lincoln Guild.

The bells are a superb Taylor six of 1908, being 6-0-22 in B. A popular tower for peals, they sit near the top of the list of the most pealed bells in the Lincoln Guild, 152 having been rung to date.



The bells had been silent for about 20 years until the run up to the millennium when a local band was taught to be able to 'ring in' the new century. Ringing has continued since, and whilst experience is lacking there is a keen band.



It was a shock to find in March 2007, on doing some regular maintenance, that the top tier of the frame had a couple of severe cracks close to a part of the frame that had already been plated. Ringing was suspended and quotations were sought to put the bells back in ringing order. It was even more of a shock to find that nearly £15,000 would be needed to get the bells and fittings back in good order.

The villagers were very enthusiastic to help to get the bells ringing again and supported and helped at fundraising activities. A wind farm was under construction near by and a fund had been set up by them to help community projects, we were very grateful to them for giving us £7500 towards our

project. This meant we had sufficient funds to instruct Taylors to go ahead with the work.



The bells were lowered in their pits in August 2007 and all fittings, together with parts of the frame taken off to the bell foundry. This left us with easy access to a very corroded frame and a lot of hard work to do. A company specialising in mobile shot blasting, Steadblast were asked to have a look at cleaning the frame. It was to be quite a challenge for them, having to get a 4 inch air pipe 90 feet up into a 8 x 8 foot chamber full of bell frame, having been told no blasting should go near the bells sitting in their pits. They quoted an extremely good price for the work and turned up on a very cold and wet day in September to do the job. A day and a half later they were packing up their equipment, job very successfully done. What a difference, gleaming bare metal!



Next paint brushes were the order of the day and a liberal first coat of Hammerite was applied to the frame by the local ringers. The belfry looked pristine. In early December Taylors returned with refurbished clappers and wheels, new pulley boxes, and galvanised replacement parts for the frame. The weather was again absolutely foul, very cold and very wet. This proved too much for one of the bell hangers who came down with an extremely bad case of flu. A short delay followed before work could continue.



Taylors knew how keen we were to have the bells back in ringing order for Christmas and just managed to complete their work during the third week of December. Following a successful trial ring a peal was arranged with the help of Emma Southerington to celebrate having the bells back.

## Lincoln Diocesan Guild

Deeping St Nicholas, Lincolnshire  
S Nicholas

Saturday, 22 December 2007 in 2h35 (6)

### 5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (12m)

(12m: (1, 2) Bourne, Cambridge, Hull, Ipswich, Norfolk, Primrose (3, 5, 7) Cambridge, Ipswich (4) Berwick, Beverley, Hexham, Surfleet (6) Durham, York)

- 1 Mandy Dawson
- 2 Robin H Rogers
- 3 Andrew J Davey
- 4 Jonathan J F Stokoe
- 5 Ian Dawson
- 6 Emma J Southerington (C)

First peal on the refurbished bells.

50th peal: 5

In January 2008, disaster! The tower suffered serious water ingress and the ringing chamber and bells were badly affected. A channel in the stonework around the steeple had weathered away and also rain was coming in from higher in the steeple. Silent bells again. Scaffolding was erected inside and out of the tower. Eroded stone work was replaced and an extra floor put in above the bells, with drainage, together with a sound lantern to avoid the sound bouncing around the chamber that had been created.

This work was very successful and coincided with the rather belated arrival of the new ropes, the final part of the jigsaw. Sunday service ringing has now resumed along with our weekly practice, and of course, peal ringing.

Philip N Green

The Deeping St Nicholas bell ringers would like to express their thanks to all the villagers, Wind Prospects Ltd., The LDGCB Bell Repair Fund, Steadblast ([www.steadblast.co.uk](http://www.steadblast.co.uk)), Taylors Eayre and Smith Ltd and V Couzens (Stamford) Ltd. for all their help and support with this project.