



# Striking Features

Welcome to the Latest Striking Features.. Below is a letter from Barbara Le Gallez suggesting we make the most of the chance to ring for the Olympics, even though it is not our usual type of performance. I would agree with this, so if your tower is considering whether to ring on Friday July 27th, please do so. It does not have to be 'proper' ringing; all it needs is to ring the bells half way up and down again, and to ensure that the reason for this is published before hand. Any people will have heard about this from TV and newspapers so might even be expecting it.

The next District event is the Outing on 14th April; the itinerary is on the back page. Contact Phil Bailey for more details.

The main focus for Jubilee ringing will take place during the first week in June. Please contact Dee Smith if you or your tower want help ringing a quarter. See article on the back page.

Sue

Dear Editor,

At first I thought that Martin Creed's All the Bells project was rather silly, but now I have been won over by the argument that it is a wonderful chance to promote bellringing to people who would otherwise have no interest whatsoever in it.

There have been a number of imaginative suggestions for suitable types of ringing in the Ringing World. Some of them sound rather fun to do and I would quite like to try them out.

However, I am a bit nervous about taking the initiative and would appreciate some guidance from the District Committee. Could they perhaps consider this subject at their next meeting and see if there is any way they can encourage and advise local bands, and maybe even coordinate some activity?

Yours faithfully,

Barbara Le Gallez

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★ The next issue of ★  
★ **Striking Features** ★  
★ will be at the ★  
★ June meeting at ★  
★ Oakington ★  
★ Please send any ★  
★ Articles to me by ★  
★ the end of May ★  
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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Competition– Guess where this is!  
(Couldn't find a bell cartoon)

**Thanks to contributors: Barbara Le Gallez and Janet Garnett**

## **Come bell ringing with Charles Hazlewood - the view from St Edwards**

The first I knew about what became known as 'the Charles Hazlewood thing' was an email from Ali Finn, tower captain at St Edwards in Cambridge. Was I free on a Saturday afternoon, Friday evening and most of the following Saturday, and would I be interested in taking part in a ringing event being staged for a BBC4 documentary?

I should explain that there is a group of ringers who are available in the centre of Cambridge on a Wednesday lunchtime and attempt a quarter peal at St Edwards most weeks, and I coordinate the bands. Ali herself and Tom Ridgman, who has close links with St Edwards, were available to take part in the event but the rest of the local St Edwards ringers had declined and suggested that members of 'the Wednesday Crew' (as they call us) should be invited to take part.

Ali's email went on to explain that the ringing event involved experimental music making with Charles Hazlewood, which would involve chiming the bells with ropes direct to the clappers. GSM (Great St Mary's) and StAG (St Andrew the Great) were also taking part and would be likely to have a mainly student population, so could we provide a non-student contrast, and also a reasonable balance of genders?

I replied that I was free for most, but not all of the times required, and sent out an email to collect some more ringers. Predictably, the replies were divided into those who had heard of Charles Hazlewood, and would be pleased to take part, but were irretrievably committed elsewhere, and those who weren't particularly interested in experimental music, didn't really want to be in a TV documentary but could be available for at least some of the times.

The first Saturday session was intended to film the setting up of the chiming ropes with some ringers arriving for a practice at chiming them, and Charles Hazlewood to direct what was chimed. So we concentrated on getting six ringers to turn up for that, as afterwards we would have more idea of what was required. When I arrived at St Edwards, having left a District Ringing meeting to get there, Ali and Tom, and the film crew, were in the bell chamber setting up the chiming ropes.

For each bell, a rope was tied round the clapper, taken round a pulley attached to the bell frame and then tied onto the main bell rope. So pulling on the bell rope swung the bell and also pulled the clapper towards the bell so it could be chimed repeatedly. The angles were critical and the chiming rope jammed in the pulley if they were not correct. The images which were eventually included in the documentary apparently showed Ali drilling into the bell frame, but actually she was drilling pilot holes for the screws holding a pulley block onto a piece of wood clamped to the bell frame. The chiming ropes would be removed so that the bells could be rung normally during the week, and would have to be replaced for the second practice and for the performance.

When all the ropes were rigged and the ringers were assembled, Charles revealed that we were to chime phrases from Greensleeves and sang what he wanted. So we all had a go at that, with varying success as the chiming ropes came off the pulleys. Charles said that he would write down what we were to ring in the performance, and we would have that version for the next practice, which could be whenever we wanted as there would be no filming required. It was also obvious that Ali and Tom were the main focus of the filming, and the rest of us were just bodies on the ends of ropes, which would make it easier to recruit ringers who were camera-shy.

So now we could find our final band, requiring availability on the Saturday, starting with a general meeting and pep-talk in the Crowne Plaza hotel at about noon and going on until some unspecified time after the performance as we had to wait in our towers until the film crews could get round to us all. However, fortunately, Sue Binns was one of our ringers and she was also required to look after some of the visiting handbell ringers, so the film crew were scheduled to come to St Edwards first. The other question was lunch, but we were assured that lunch would be provided in the towers.

After some more emails, we assembled seven ringers who were at least mostly available for the required times, and could all manage a common practice time, taking the view that one extra would allow for contingencies and give us one person who could concentrate on communication and coordination. Tom and Ali had had a chance to improve the chiming ropes since the first experiment, and all the bells were now equipped with shock cord to pull the clapper away from the bell again to give a clearer tone and allow more frequent chiming.

We also had our music, written out by bell numbers, and a description of the order of the phrases and the pauses between them. We were pleased to find that everything did make sense, the chiming ropes worked well, and we could make a reasonable stab at Greensleaves, at least the parts within the range of the bell notes, so the practice was deemed a success and we were as ready as we could be for the performance.

On the final Saturday, everyone was supposed to turn up at the Crowne Plaza hotel for a 'briefing' and to get the hand bell and tower bell ringers together in one place. The hand bell ringers were having their practice in the meeting room, wearing white and black as they would be visible in the Market Square during the performance. The tower bell ringers drifted in individually in a disorganised way, and some enquired anxiously 'is there a dress code?'. But it was nice to meet friends who were part of the other bands, and we sorted ourselves out for the briefing with the hand bell ringers looking smart and organised in the front and the tower bell ringers looking dishevelled at the back – not much interaction between them for the programme's producer.

Then we were dispatched to our towers, with our own personal camera man in attendance. He insisted that we did anything remotely photogenic, such as arriving at the church, or coming in to the ringing chamber, at least twice so he could film several angles. Tom was wired up with a microphone and earpiece, and there was a lot of coming and going, trying to get sound and visual communications and recording to work. The image which made it to the documentary shows us all looking at a monitor showing the Market Square upside down. We did seriously suggest rotating the monitor, but a technician arrived to switch some plugs and all was well. Our camera man did his best to keep us occupied, filming us as he asked searching questions such as 'what does it mean to you to be here?' But luckily he was prepared to accept 'I can't add anything more' after the first couple of answers. Eventually, the monitor showed increasing activity in the Market Square, Charles Hazlewood mounted his rostrum and gave the signal for GSM to start the performance. With Tom in charge of communications, we chimed our phrases as well as we could, and the Greensleaves theme was taken up and expanded by the massed handbells in the Market Square.

The message came through that we were to stay by our bells as the performance would be repeated in 15 mins, which stretched to over half an hour, but eventually we did it all again. Then the recording equipment was dismantled and the full film crew arrived to do closeups of each one of us, most of which, probably wisely, never made it to the final programme. And finally we were finished and on our way home with Greensleeves still sounding in our ears.

When the documentary was shown in December, the whole performance did come together, just as the producers said it would, and the St Edwards contribution was small but significant. A surprising number of people said that they had seen me on TV, which I think says something interesting about how we recognise people. When I watched the programme, I had to work out where I was in the St Edwards shots, but I don't think I would have recognised myself if I hadn't known where to look.

The ringers who took part in the performance at St Edwards were Sue Binns, Ali Finn, Jackie Latham, Geoff Reed, Tom Ridgman, Felicity Webster and myself. We all agreed that it had been an interesting experience and we were pleased to have taken part.

Janet Garnett



Charles Hazelwood outside Great St Mary's with the Handbell Ringers

## A Ringing Invitation

At Landbeach (4, 11 cwt) we have had a simulator for several years. We find it an invaluable teaching aid. It allows learners to practice their bell handling without annoying the neighbours, while still being able to hear their bells. More than that, it lets you practice any method on any number of bells until you have perfected it.

I can endorse the simulator personally - I am sure that I would have got nowhere with my bell ringing without it. Everything about ringing was excruciatingly difficult for me to learn. (*It still is!*) It was only because the simulator gave me the chance to practice anything from bell handling to Cambridge Max for literally hours at a time that I eventually reached an acceptable standard in anything.

*However* - we currently run three weekly simulator practices here at Landbeach, mostly for visitors from other towers. Their use of the simulator ranges from learning bell handling to practising Bristol Major. We are sure that there are a lot more ringers who would benefit from using the simulator, but our band's two teachers can't take on much more teaching. So we would like to invite you, as a member of the EDA, to visit us and use our simulator. You could bring a group of your own learners and teach them yourself, or you could practice a method on your own (with a companion for safety reasons).

This is a new venture for us and we will have to work out the details as we go along. We would obviously have to supervise your ringing to some extent, at least for the first session. The churchwardens are happy for the bells to be used in this way, within reason, as long as we don't clash with other church activities. We would like visitors to pay 50p steepelage per ringer per session (as we do ourselves). This goes to finance work on the bells, which the church can't afford to pay for.

All our bells can be rung through the simulator. The third is suitable for initial teaching of bell handling, while the treble and second are fine for a learner once basic bell handling has been mastered. The tenor is good for someone strong to practice ringing smoothly, or for learning how to ring methods on a heavy bell. The only drawback is that we have only the one computer, playing through loudspeakers. So, if one ringer wants to practice a method, the other bells can still be used for handling practice, but have to be silenced. I would love to set up a proper teaching facility, with multiple computers playing through headphones, but that's for the future.

We really feel it's a shame that this useful resource is largely lying idle, and would love to share it with you, so please get in touch with me, Barbara. If you are dubious about using the simulator, we can arrange a time for you to come over and try it out.

I look forward to hearing from you. My contact details are as follows:

Barbara Le Gallez, 01223 860283, [blegallez@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:blegallez@yahoo.co.uk), 113 Waterbeach Road, Landbeach, Cambs. CB25 9FA

## Quarters and a Peal

Chatteris, Sunday 8 January 2012.  
1260 P B Minor. Richard L Thomas 1,  
Colin A Johnson 2, Gavin Philpott 3,  
Andrew Stracey 4, Sue Marsden ©  
5, Richard J Edgley 6.

To congratulate Chatteris resident  
Dave "Boy" Green, former British  
and European Light-Welterweight  
boxing champion, on being awarded  
the MBE for services to charity in the  
New Years' Honours list, and also a  
birthday compliment to Alice Moden,  
Chatteris ringer.

Rung before Evening Service

Swaffham Prior, Fri 10th Feb, 2160 P  
B Minor. Marion Robinson 1, Alan  
Barber 2, Colin Johnson 3, Sue  
Marsden 4, Dick Prime 5, George Tho-  
day ©

6. Rung on the 50th anniversary of  
Alan Barber's first peal, rung at  
this tower with the same conductor.

Over, Monday 19 December 2011.  
1344 Plain Bob Major. Andy Marshall  
1, Marion Robinson 2, Janet Garnett  
3, John Causer 4, Philip Bailey 5,  
Sue Marsden 6, Roderick Johnstone  
7, Edie Robinson © 8. For the 90th  
birthday of Douglas Robinson, hus-  
band of 2 and father of 8\

Oakington, Saturday 4 February  
2012. 1260 Grandsire Doubles.

Andrew Marshall 1, Marion Robinson  
2, Janet Garnett 3, Edith Robinson 4,  
Philip Bailey © 5, Simon Edwards 6.

Rung half muffled prior to the funeral  
of Liesl Alexander (wife of the Vicar of  
Oakington), praising God for her life  
and ministry to others.

Histon, Sunday 8 January 2012. 1260  
Plain Bob Minor. Michael Davies 1,  
Geoff Grayton 2, Janet Garnett 3, Hel-  
en Atkins 4, Camilla Hagggett ©

5, Will Scheilling 6

First as Conductor.

## Ely Diocesan Association

Bay 11 February 2012 in 2h 58 (13)

5056 Cockup Bridge Treble Place Major

Composed: A M Barber

Burwell, Cambs

St Mary the Virgin

Saturd1 Richard F Prime

2 Susan E Marsden

3 Dee F Smith

4 Alan M Barber (C)

5 David J Hawkins

6 Christopher N McCarthy

7 Michael G Purday

8 Alan P Mayle

First peal in the method, named after  
the iconic bridge on the Burwell Lode.

x 3 x 4 x 5 x 36 x 4 x 1 x 2567 x 7 lh



# Dates for your Diaries



Date	Place	Time	Event
14th April	N Essex: Hadstoch 10am Ashdon 11.30 Hempstead 2.30 Wethersfield 4pm Sible Hedingham 5/30	All Day	District Outing –Contact Phil Bailey
5th May	Littleport	6.30-8pm	Meeting
7th May	Northwold	All day	AGM– Meeting at 2pm. See EDA Website or Onlible update for ore
2nd June	Oakington	6pm	Striking Competition
2nd-10th June	Everywhere!		Jubilee Ringing
7th July	Over	6pm	Barbeque
4th Aug	Stretham	6.30-8pm	Meeting

## Ringing for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee

I will be arranging quarter peals for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in the week of June 2nd –June 10<sup>th</sup>. If there are any special requests of methods or towers then please let me know.

I would like to make a record of all our district ringing for the Jubilee. Please forward me details of ringing as it happens. This applies to all ringing, not just quarters.

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