



Magazine of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Issue 16

Spring 2015

Awl a'huld



St Peter's, Wenhaston. See back page.

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From the Editors

On the day I am writing this, March 8th, I have seen my first brimstone butterfly of the year. That, to me, is the official beginning of spring! Now we can all start our plans for the spring and summer, organise our ringing tours, check the lists of weddings at our churches, plan open tower days on Village Fete days and all the other extra activities that the warmer weather and lighter evenings bring. When you are enjoying these events, spare a thought for your magazine editors, take some photographs and send in your stories for the summer issue of the magazine. As always, please send your contributions, with photographs whenever possible, to magazine@suffolkbells.org.uk or by post to Sue Freeman, High Meadow, Martens Lane, Polstead, Colchester CO6 5AG. Copy for the next issue by the end of June please.

To return to the current issue, I am always pleased when we have a 'follow-up' story from a previous issue; this time George Pipe's account of the dedication 50 years ago of the bells at Washington Cathedral stirred some memories for Andrea Alderton—see her article on page 11.

On page 13 Sue Tye continues the story, begun in Issue 14, of her bell-ringing client with learning difficulties.

The Young Ringers are very active, thanks to all those who organise social and ringing events for them. More help would be very welcome as they begin to prepare for the Ringing World National Youth Contest to be held in July at Oxford.

In this issue David Salter begins a new series of articles on beginning conducting. Let's hope he will convince budding conductors to have a go.

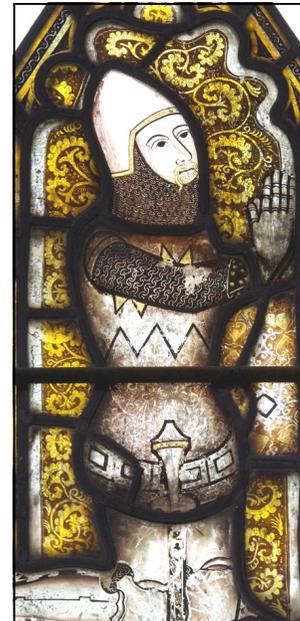
We are delighted to have, as our centre page spread this time, Simon Rudd's article about the St Peter Mancroft Appeal. This has significant implications for ringing in East Anglia and is certainly a cause worth supporting.



Editors' Quiz

Left: this head is of John Simpson, local apothecary and benefactor at Debenham. This memorial to him was erected in 1671 in Debenham church. No one recognised him!

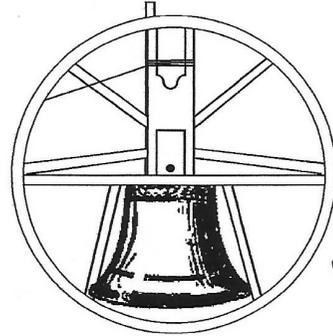
Right: this time we have made it easier by showing the whole image, not just the head. This window is to be found in a church in the North West District. A prize will be awarded for the first correct answer drawn out of a hat at the end of May. If you think you know in which church this chap is to be found, please contact the editors as above.



Richard Gates and Sue Freeman

A lifetime's collection of bellringing memorabilia
by world-renowned ringer

George Pipe



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North East District: Awl a'change

Following the NE District AGM in November, there have been some changes to the Committee within the district. Jason Busby has retired as Chairman and Julie Rapior has reduced her role from Secretary and Treasurer to that of Treasurer alone. The District sends its heartfelt thanks for their dedication and commitment to the promotion of ringing in North East Suffolk. Michelle remains as District Ringing Master; once again the District sends thanks for her continued contribution.

New blood comes in the form of a new Chairman, me, and a new Secretary Chrissy Blunt, neither of whom is a hugely experienced ringer. Chrissy was taught by the DRM at Reydon only two years ago and I was taught to ring by Philip Gorrod at Halesworth; after all, I couldn't watch Flea progress without learning myself!

What this rather rambling introduction is designed to demonstrate is that no matter what your experience and competency in ringing, you have a part to play in the District as a whole. It might be encouraging people in your tower to visit other towers, or attend District events. It may be baking cakes for a striking competition tea. It may be talking about ringing with your friends to encourage them to learn. In a rural county such as Suffolk, it can be difficult to travel to other towers and meet other people. To this end, we have created a Facebook group for the North East District (affectionately known as NED, with its own mascot Stedman the Hedgehog!) If you or anyone at your tower would like to join the group and see what's going on around the District and make new friends in the process, please search for 'North East District' in Facebook. If you can't find it, please email me at nechairman@suffolkbells.org.uk and I will send you a personal invitation.

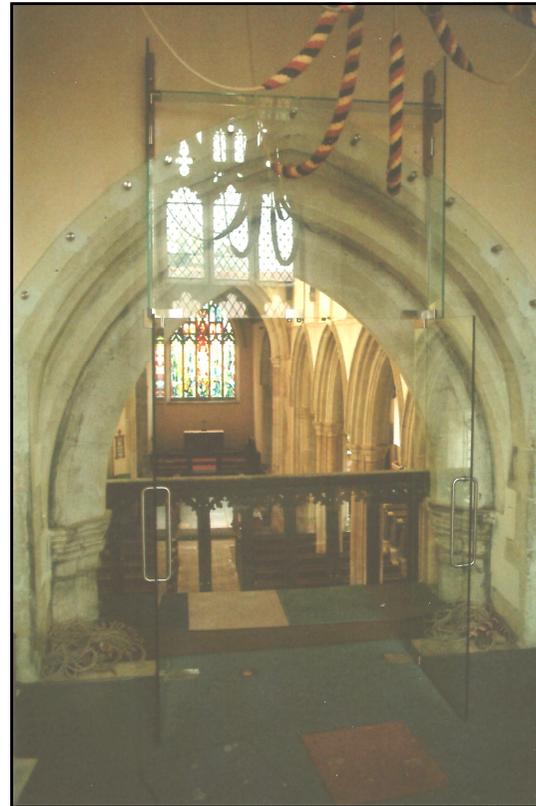
Some other news from the district is that practices have been restarted at Wenhaston after a few years' silence (1st and 3rd Fridays at 7:30 PM). A new Sound Management System has been installed by Jonathan Stevens at Halesworth. Preparations are going well for the Guild Social that will take place on 26th September (many thanks to SW District for making this date possible!) Keep this Saturday free for an interesting, and varied day out in North Suffolk.

Ed Rolph



From the South West - a new screen at Boxford

For me one of the pleasurable duties bands have is ringing for a wedding. This is because, as with Sunday service ringing, we are ringing to some purpose and putting into action all that has been learned during practice nights. We hope it is adding to the bride and groom's special day and it is always a pleasure to give pleasure to others. We know what an amazing activity ringing is but many people are totally unaware of it so I particularly like ringing in a tower where the wedding party can watch us ringers at work and therefore realise that there are real people on the end of bell ropes. Of course not every ringing chamber is visible to the congregation and until last year St Mary's, Boxford was one of these. However the PCC put into action plans to have a glass screen replace the wooden shuttering that had blocked the view of the ringing area from the people below and last March the new screen was put in place.



Looking down into the nave from the ringing chamber

This alteration has greatly enhanced the West end of the church making it lighter and allowing the sun to pour into the church in the afternoons and it is now possible to get on to the balcony that overlooks the nave. I can see the possibility of a hand bell ringing performance from this potential stage.

The other benefit of the new screen is that it allows people in the main body of the church to watch us ringers at work. Of course this means that we have to be respectably dressed even on very hot afternoons although if at the end of a wedding service the father of the bride wants to watch me pulling the tenor wearing only string vest and briefs (like Onslow in 'Keeping up Appearances') then he will have to pay extra. Otherwise the audience below will just have to enjoy the Boxford ringers doing their best to maintain this great English tradition.

Richard Gates

ITTS Successes

In 2012 the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme first came to Suffolk. Since then we have hosted six courses in Suffolk, sponsored by The Ringing Foundation and offering accreditation to The Association of Ringing Teachers. Recently it was decided that to progress successfully through to accreditation, new mentors, teachers and pupils might benefit from follow-on meetings where they can practise new ideas and gain further experience and support. Monthly meetings have been held, starting in November 2014, at different towers where members have embarked on the teacher training scheme, and now the following ringers have achieved accreditation:

New Mentors Pat Ward (Rattlesden) and Shirley Girt (St Margaret's Ipswich)

New Teachers Andrea Alderton (Woolpit), John Girt and Roger Coley (St Margaret's Ipswich).

In summer 2014 Ben started 'Learning The Ropes' at Woolpit using the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme. His teacher, Pam Ebsworth, became an accredited teacher with this scheme before moving from Somerset to Suffolk in 2013. On Monday 9th February Ben was presented with his Level 1 certificate, proudly watched by his Mum, Dad, younger sister and 10 ringers. And meanwhile in Bardwell, Teresa Ives gained her Level Two certificate.

Congratulations to you all!



Pam Ebsworth with pupil Ben

Pam Ebsworth

AGM at Felixstowe Saturday, 11th April

3pm - 4:30pm Ringing at St. John's

5pm - 5:45pm Tea in St. John's Church

5:45 - 7:15pm AGM in St. John's Church

7:15pm - 8:30pm Ringing at St. John's

Exhibition in Masonic Hall open 10am-8pm closed 5.45pm-7.15pm

Exhibition open on Sunday morning 10am - 1.00pm

Park on the streets or in Garrison Lane car park .

Contact: Ralph Earey 01473 743812.

A bell chimes at Hargrave



Left to right: Shirley Rogers, Ann Ruston, Jill Upton (churchwarden), Jill de Laat, Justin Rabett, Deidre Wiseman, Revd Cheryl Collins and Peter Reddick (churchwarden).

was rung 22 years later at the news of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The bells hang in an early 16th century frame but none has been rung for many years.

Much work has been done recently to the church: the roof over the north aisle has been repaired, the brick tower has been repointed and other repairs undertaken. And now we have a chiming bell after many years of silence. The second bell was made good for chiming and rehung in time for Christmas. The work was carried out by Alan Moulton and Paul Ebsworth assisted by Chris Nunn, for which the PCC was very grateful.

Jill de Laat

Jill chimes the bell before Sunday service on 7th December 2014

There are three bells in the tower of St Edmunds, Hargrave. The treble was cast in Bury St Edmunds in 1622 by Thomas Cheese and James Edbere. Two years later the Mayflower sailed with the Pilgrim Fathers to America. The second was cast at Whitechapel by Thomas Mears II at the commission of Elizabeth and Sarah White in 1841, four years after Queen Victoria ascended the throne. The oldest is the tenor, another Bury bell, cast in 1566 by Steven Tonni and dedicated to Elizabeth I. No doubt it



Mancroft Appeal300 Official Launch 16th February



Many of you will have already heard much about this project to mark the 300th Anniversary of the first ever peal, rung at St Peter Mancroft, Norwich on 2nd May, 1715. The official launch event for the project was held in the church on Monday 16th February when invited guests from the other Norwich towers, officers of the Norwich Diocesan Association, and from surrounding Associations, local dignitaries and representatives of many local organisations joined with St Peter Mancroft Guild members to hear in more detail about the exciting plans for the tower. As well as hearing from Simon Rudd, the Mancroft Appeal300 Chairman, there were a number of other keynote speakers. The project has three patrons: The Lord Bishop of Norwich, Graham James, Caroline Jarrold and The 8th Marquess Townshend from East Raynham.

Each gave short speeches endorsing the project and encouraging support. The main speaker was Mark Regan, the Master of the Worcester Cathedral band and he gave us an exciting insight into the background to the



amazing training centre that they created at Worcester and which has inspired us in turn. We were delighted to welcome George Pipe, one of ringing's greats, from Ipswich. He also gave us a morale boosting message.

In addition, we received a short video message from Adelaide Cathedral which has a training set-up similar to the one which we envisage. Guests were then invited to visit the ringing chamber to see some ringing and to look at the display items that had been put on show in the church.

So – what is our project all about? There is a misconception that we are just creating a training centre in the tower. There are several separate elements which form our vision. The two key thoughts behind our planning have been

- To develop the art of change ringing, both locally and more widely, through education and training.
- To bring the rich history of ringing in Norwich to the attention of a wider audience.

The core of the project centres on these main elements:

- Installation of a ringing teaching and heritage centre (RTHC) where members of the public will be able to come to find out more about ringing and, in particular, our unique place in its history.
- The installation of a new ringing room floor at a higher level in the tower in order to make space for the RTHC.
- The RTHC will house eight ‘dumb bells’ linked to computer software, which will enable novice and developing ringers to learn and practise with relative physical ease and without disturbing members of the public.
- Strengthening the bell frame.

Ancillary work such as the screening of the tower from the church to avoid activity in the tower disturbing those using the church and vice versa, and installation of air conditioning.

So, as you can see, this will be both a **Teaching** and a **Heritage** Centre, where both ringers and the general public can visit. This is a facility not just for us in Norwich, but for the whole region and we will be actively encouraging groups to visit and use our facilities, so that means you too! Our bells will also



become a little less fearsome as the draft of rope will be reduced by at least a third. We cannot achieve this without a lot of hard work and the official launch is just the firing of the starting gun.

You can find out more about our project at our website www.mancroftappeal300.co.uk or about the Guild on www.mancroftbells.co.uk. Of course, we would also like to ask for your support.

If you would like to donate to our fund, then there is an online giving site at <https://mydonate.bt.com/events/mancroftappeal300> and please accept our grateful thanks.

Simon Rudd

Photographs of St Peter Mancroft here and on page 12 and of the appeal patrons by Ros Burrough.

Young Ringers

Suffolk's young ringers have continued to meet every month and have so far enjoyed a day's ringing at Ipswich towers, tried out the newly restored six at Rattlesden, rung at Woolpit, Benhall, Saxmundham and St Gregory's Sudbury, and most recently enjoyed their annual February half term visit to Grundisburgh, which was followed by a highly sociable meal at the East Coast Diner in Woodbridge.

(This latest meeting was preceded by two quarter peals which represented achievements for two young ringers: Jack Robinson from Mildenhall and Richard Stevens from Rendham.)

It's been great to welcome lots of new young ringers to this friendly and informal group which meets for fun and friendship as much as for ringing. In a group such as this, turnover is rapid, with members seemingly struggling with handling one minute and storming through 8 spliced the next Well, not quite,



The young ringers in the ringing chamber at Grundisburgh

but it's a dynamic group with always new ringers coming through.

Would you like to be involved? The group always needs people who are willing to mentor these young ringers, whether with handling or with getting to grips with a new method or ringing a quarter peal. Please don't wait to be asked! Why not get in touch with George Salter, Ralph Earey or Ruth Suggett, if you would like to help.

The next event is a 12 bell workshop at the Norman Tower on 15 March, when Amanda Richmond will be coaching our young ringers in the art of 12 bell ringing.

Advertise in this magazine

To advertise in this magazine in full colour from as little as £10 per quarter page, email magazine@suffolkbells.org.uk.

Help with art work can be provided if needed.

This practice will start the focus towards our goal of taking part in the annual Ringing World National Youth Contest in Oxford, on 11 July.

Young ringers' events are always advertised in the What's On.

Ruth Suggett

Washington, May 1964 Postscript

Following the article about the dedication of the bells at Washington Cathedral by George Pipe in the last edition of *Awl a'huld*, I thought a short postscript to this exciting event might be of interest.

I learnt to ring in my teens during the 1960s at All Saints' Church in Banstead, Surrey, where the tower captain was Harold Pitstow of Westminster Abbey fame, who was one of the band chosen to go to Washington. He was a member of the Pitstow ringing family of Saffron Walden, a name which appears regularly on peal boards in the area.

Harold (or Mr Pitstow, as we youngsters were accustomed to addressing him) told us that a film was being made of ringing in England to show to prospective ringers in the United States. Some of the filming was to take place at All Saints and I was invited to ring the treble. How scary, but I accepted with trepidation! I imagine I was there to represent young female ringers rather than for my ringing expertise at the time! I had just mastered a touch of Grandsire Triples on the treble and even then made various errors at the end of the touch, but I was assured that these would be cut from the final version.

It was very exciting to be included and I can remember the large and very hot lights used for the filming: no video cameras in those days! It was also a hot day, as I recollect wearing a summer dress (not present day ringing apparel for me), so it must have been a hot spring that year.

I cannot specifically remember George Pipe from that occasion, but I did introduce myself to him a few years ago when he was giving a talk in Bardwell and reminded him of the film. He said he had indeed been a member of the band that day and was the youngest of those who went to Washington.

I never saw the finished film, so I do not know how much of our ringing at Banstead was included. I wonder where it is now..... probably hiding away in a cupboard somewhere in Washington Cathedral waiting to be discovered again by a new generation of ringers.

Andrea Alderton, Woolpit

Borrowing the Mini-ring

The mini-ring can be borrowed by anyone for any reasonable purpose; conditions apply. Contact Brian Whiting on 01449 6677766.

A donation to the Suffolk Guild Bell Restoration Fund is normally required. The level of donation can be discussed with the trustee.

Preference will be given to Suffolk Guild members promoting ringing.

From the Bell News & Ringers Record 8 April, 1911

Controversy and cryptic comments are nothing new but browsing the other day through *The Bell News*, forerunner of *The Ringing World* I came across this:

As we go through the list of rings given in the Reverend William C. Pearson's book (*Principal Rings of the Eastern Counties*. Pearson was Vicar of Henley) we come across peal after peal of interest to ringers. There is St Peter Mancroft, Norwich, still what Shipway calls it, the finest peal of twelve in England. No other tower that we know of surpasses it for comfort in ringing, and very few equal it. The hearing is perfect, the ropes fall in a true circle, the belfry is lofty and splendidly lighted, and the bells go as bells should go. What more do you want?. Every one knows that the old Norwich Scholars were second to none. They rang the first peals of Bob Triples, Grandsire Triples, Stedman Triples, Double Norwich Major, Royal and Maximus, Double Oxford and London Surprise, and the longest at the time of Treble Bob Major, Treble Bob Maximus, Grandsire Caters and Stedman Cinques, which is not a bad record.



Then there is St Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich. We believe we are right in saying that nowhere else has there been a first class band of twelve-bell ringers for so long as here. It was back in the eighties that some of the present band rang in the first peal



of Grandsire Cinques on the bells, and since then they have been getting better and better. At present it is no slight to any company to say that Ipswich has the premier twelve-bell band of England. It is their proud boast that they alone have rung peals on eight, ten, and twelve bells in each of the following methods: Plain Bob, Grandsire, Oxford Treble Bob, Kent Treble Bob, Stedman, Double Norwich, and Cambridge Surprise. The other twelve-bell towers are not to be compared for interest with Norwich and Ipswich. The ring at Great Yarmouth, increased to twelve in 1898, is a very good one of the quality that the Whitechapel foundry turned out about 1800. A good many peals have been rung here usually by visiting bands. The back ten at Cambridge are very similar, but we think the trebles are not so good. It is very curious to notice that if you go by the Great Eastern Railway to Norwich via Ipswich, on your right is a district that contains some of the finest bands of ringers in England, while on your left all across west Norfolk, west Suffolk and Cambridgeshire there is scarcely a band of average ability.

I guess there would have been some fairly lively discussion over the pints of mild when that appeared in *Bell News*! (photos modern! Ed.)

GWP

The Cleaning Power of Bells – part 2

Following the success of the rounds and call changes strategy where we developed a daily cleaning task routine for the gentleman with a learning disability who was having trouble keeping himself and his flat clean, he identified that he wanted to try to develop a routine for larger weekly tasks. Because of his love of ringing we decided to keep a similar format because it had been successful with the daily tasks. We discussed the idea of calling it after a method and he chose Grandsire doubles. Again the occupational therapy clinical assistant discussed which tasks he felt should be on the weekly list and he decided on the six tasks to reflect the six bells.

This system was trialled for six weeks but it did not work for him as he felt it was too much. This was disappointing as the work had begun with great hope but because he was not keeping up with jobs such as tidying the lounge and cleaning the fridge things were beginning to get difficult again. We discussed the situation with him but were struggling to find a way forward as the only hope we had of helping him to keep to a routine was through the bell ringing approach. Nothing else had been as successful and the daily strategies were still working.

My own tower captain came up with the suggestion which finally worked. Rather than choose six tasks to link with the bells choose three to fit with the circle of work and have two lists which could be addressed separately. When we discussed this with the gentleman he felt he would get confused if he had two lists with the same name so he decided that if he had another list called Bob Doubles he could do the tasks on one list one week and the other list the next week. This also gave us the opportunity to include another task because we needed four for the circle of work for Bob Doubles. This system was trialled for another six weeks. This time there was much more success and most of the tasks had been completed each week.

Because he was concerned about really large jobs such as defrosting the freezer which did not need to be done too often but tended to get forgotten the third and final list was drawn up. There was one large job per month and these were called the quarter peals. He said very proudly that he had just rung his first quarter peal and liked the idea of the list because it reminded him of his achievement.

He was given a copy of the magazine with the first article in it. (Issue 14) He was thrilled and when asked if he could understand all of it he proceeded to read it out almost perfectly and much of it in a French accent. He explained that he had been to London at the weekend and had been watching some French street entertainers so he was trying to copy what they did. He was very funny and it was suggested that as well as bell ringing perhaps he should also take up drama. I could hardly remember the shy man who had opened the door to me that first day and struggled even to make eye contact.

Sue Tye

Beginning conducting 1.

Looking back through the Guild history there has always been a lack of conductors. It seems to have been held as the preserve of a few. Yet a very basic understanding of conducting can enhance your own experience of ringing. It can improve your method ringing by following what is going on, improve your own competency and reduce method mistakes.

These articles just give a simple view of what goes on and I would urge you all to take some of it on board to improve your ringing experience.

Firstly let's look at what the conductor is responsible for.

Choosing the touch or method to be rung. (This involves considering the band members and their abilities).

Putting the calls in the right place and checking they are made correctly.

Ensuring the truth of what is rung.

Correcting some mistakes, ensuring the quality of what is rung, given the band/method/bells.

It is not the conductor's job to put everybody right and ring everybody's bells for them and it is not fair on the conductor to expect this.

Some conductors accept that they have chosen the wrong method for the band, the trick is to try to get it right. A band that can ring the most complicated of methods on a good day may struggle with basic stuff the next day. That is one of the fascinations of ringing: you never know what you are going to get until you try. You may be pleased or disappointed. It is most important you learn from disappointments.

So where do we start? The most important advice I ever received about conducting was given to me by Cecil Aldous. His very wise words were, 'Learn to call the plain course of a method first.' This is fundamental to everything that follows and yet is neglected by many budding conductors.

What Cecil meant was, learn what happens in a plain course, who does what with whom and when they do it. How the bells work together and points of reference to help you see where you are in the course.

Let's start by looking at Plain Bob Doubles.

Two points to make about Plain Bob Doubles for those who think it is below them. Firstly it is the most rung method in the country and secondly understanding it and its building blocks reflect across all methods on all numbers of bells. Without understanding the basic blocks, advancement will be limited.

First point of interest is even bells go in (to the front), odd bells go out (to the back).

They go to the front and back in the order 2453. This order is known as the coursing order and on all numbers is usually shown with the highest odd bell starting it. So Doubles 5324, Minor 5324, Triples 53246, Major 53246. Traditionally only the five numbers 53246 are used for Triples and above but on ten for example the full coursing order would be 97532468. The coursing order is crucial to following what happens. The bell you turn from the front and back is your **course** bell. The bell that turns you from the front and back is your **after** bell. The only alteration to this sequence is when the treble is involved or the coursing

order changes because of a call. For example if the treble turns you off the front you must be making seconds to the treble. You will lead again and your after bell will turn you from the front. Try watching this sequence when you ring a plain course of Plain Bob on any number and watch the treble moving through the coursing order. 532146, 531246, 513246 and so on.

The first lead end is Queens 13524(6). The second lead is reverse rounds nearly 15432(6). The third lead is Tittums 14253(6). The final lead is rounds 12345(6). These are very easy lead ends to remember. Queens, Reverse Rounds, Tittums, Rounds.

In Plain Bob Doubles the bells do the work in pairs at the lead ends. If we take 2nds & 5ths, lead one 3&4 make 2nds & 5ths, lead two 3&4 dodge together. Lead three 3&4 make 2nds & 5ths. Lead four they dodge together in 3/4. The same pattern is true for the second and fifth: 34, 2nds/5ths, 34, 2nds/5ths.

The analogy I use is the same as my method learning strategy. If you are asked to drive to Norwich for the first time, you would learn the route. The next time you would have learnt most of the route from your previous drive but may have to look up odd bits. By journey five or six the route is clear. You can then be adventurous and visit Diss or Pulham on the way.

So when you next ring Plain Bob doubles, watch and see the sign posts and see how much you can learn just by ringing the method.

David Salter

Ringers' teas. Gingerbread

This is an easy and inexpensive cake to make and is always popular. I sometimes find that it sinks in the middle a bit, but when you have sliced it up it doesn't show!

You will need:

- 450g plain flour
- A pinch of salt
- 1 level tbsp ground ginger
- 1 level tbsp baking powder
- 1 level tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 225g soft brown sugar
- 175g butter or soft margarine
- 175g treacle
- 175g golden syrup
- ½ pint milk
- 1 free range egg, beaten



Line a 20 cm square tin.

Sift the flour, salt, ginger, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda together in a large bowl. Warm the sugar, butter, treacle and syrup until melted, but do not allow to boil. Mix in the milk and the beaten egg. Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients, pour in the liquid and mix thoroughly. Pour the mixture into the tin and bake at 170C for about 1 ½ hours. When cold, cut into squares and enjoy.

St Peter's, Wenhaston

The great treasure of the church is the Doom or painting of the Last Judgement. This remarkable painting would have originally been affixed at the chancel arch, where the drama of its story would have been appreciated by the congregation. You can see the outline of where the three wooden figures of the Rood group and a cross were fixed. Nationally, other surviving Doom (or Day of Judgement) paintings of similar age have been painted directly onto the walls. This Doom however is notable because it is painted onto wooden boards. The two central panels show St Peter on the left, receiving four naked figures wearing only crowns, a mitre and cardinal's hat. This shows that all are equal before the judgement seat. On the right St Michael weighs souls while the devil looks on. Behind him the condemned are being hauled into hell's mouth by red hot chains. Behind him the condemned are being hauled into hell's mouth by red hot chains.



Perhaps as long ago as the mid-1500's, the Doom was whitewashed over. The painting remained hidden from view for generations, and, most importantly, hidden from the attentions of Cromwell's church despoilers. During church restoration in 1892, the boards were removed from the church and taken out to the churchyard. Imagine the astonishment when overnight rain revealed the glorious long-forgotten painting from under its whitewash covering.

Having been carefully restored, the Doom is now on the opposite wall on entering St. Peter's church and remains a focal point of the local community.

Michelle Williams

With thanks to www.wenhaston.net