

### **Diary of a Novice Campanologist (Bell ringer)**

I have always liked the sound of Church bells and so when I read in this parish magazine "News from the Belfry" that new bell ringer recruits were welcome at any Friday night practice, I decided to join.

It was a cold February evening in 2016 that I just turned up and my adventure began. I was invited to try a rope and then to climb the ladder to see the bells.

Since then I have started to learn about pulling the ropes, sounding the bell and ringing in a 'band' (team). There is quite a bit to learn, in particular the jargon - and what jargon!

- ⇒ The ropes have a Sally and a Tail, a handstroke and backstroke;
- ⇒ The bells have a clapper and are of different weights, a treble to a tenor;
- ⇒ At St. Peter's there are six bells and the different sizes give the different tones and the lovely 'ding dong' sound.

Bell ringing, whilst not easy, is so enjoyable and I am told only takes 10 years to perfect, 20 if you want to be good at it.

With the help of Janice (the Tower Captain) and the camaraderie of the 'band', I have made progress, and in January 2017 (one of those 10 years) I was elected to membership of the 'Essex Association of Change Ringers'. I have now rung at a number of church towers including Danbury, Tollesbury and Inworth. I have taken part in a 3 day ringing course at Coggleshall and topped it when, with 5 others from Inworth and Great Totham, came first in a Call Change Competition (May 2017).

I enjoy church bells now even more and can pick out good ringing where ever I go.

Bell ringing is such a good activity, with good company, fun and such a sense of achievement when you get it just so!

Come and join us at St. Peter's in Great Totham.

*Duncan Grant*