

# Church News

## News from the Belfry

As a regular reader of News from the Belfry you will have gathered that there is also a social side to bell ringing. Furthermore we support, and are supported by our local towers and experienced ringers often join us on practice night. On St Georges's day last year two of us joined the four ringers at Tolleshunt D'Arcy enabling all six bells to be rung. Our tower outing last October coincided with a wedding at St. Peter's and we invited other local ringers to make up the six.

Earlier this year I spent a few weeks in Stalybridge, Greater Manchester. This was an ideal opportunity to visit a few local towers. As a bell ringer there is an open invitation to ring at towers in the United Kingdom and other towers worldwide. However, it is courteous to check before hand just in case practice has been cancelled. Doves Guide, on the Internet, lists all towers with bells hung for change ringing.

My first visit was to Staley St. Paul. It has a ring of eight bells the Tenor being 18cwt. However we only rang on the six lightest bells commonly known as the front six. The Tower Captain welcomed me at the entrance to the church thus solving the problem of having to find the entrance to the belfry. The bells had a long draught (length of rope between the ringer and the bell) making the bells more challenging to ring. I left having rang all six bells and with a handbook of all the towers in the Chester Diocesan Guild. So I was set to visit my next tower. The next visit was to Hyde St. George. This tower also had a ring of eight bells and an 18cwt Tenor. The ringing chamber was immediately below the bells had a short draught and were totally different to ring.

Are you interested in learning to ring the bells at St Peter's? Contact our Tower Captain Janice Spalding Tel: 01621 892197. You are also welcome to visit on our Friday practice night at 20.00hrs.

Website <http://greattothambellringers.org.uk>

*Andrew Hood*