



6<sup>th</sup> May 2005

## **Master's Report 2004-2005**

The past 12 months have been a very successful period indeed for the Guild, seeing a great diversity of activity and a significant increase in the quality of ringing produced on a weekly basis. The progress made this year can be attributed in the first place to the intake of freshers in October who joined a strong existing core of student members and then to the commitment exhibited by many to develop their ringing during the year. This has resulted in the Guild now standing in a position of great strength and leads me to have great optimism for the next 12 months.

Weekly practices at St. Andrew the Great and St. Bene't's have, in general, been well attended and a great number of surprise methods have been rung at both during the year. I think that practices have benefited from the structure and purpose that has been generated by considering particular methods with a clear objective that can be worked towards; on 8 this is a peal of Smith's 23 and on 6 this is a peal of the standard 41. I would encourage my successor to continue working to achieve this goal as I believe that an all student peal of Smith's 23 is within touch.

Weekly quarter peals at St. Andrew the Great and St. Bene't's have been rung throughout the year which have served to reinforce the work done on practice nights and it is testament to both the ability and dedication of current student members that it has been possible to ring such a variety of methods, culminating in a quarter of 14 spliced surprise major in March.

As an addendum, it was necessary to alter the time of the weekly practice at St. Andrew the Great during the year at the church's behest and the Guild are currently not permitted to ring quarter peals there on weekday lunchtimes either. The situation is of some concern and will require further attention imminently.

The standard of ringing at Great St. Mary's has improved dramatically from last year, with surprise maximus now being regularly rung very competently. This is in part due to the focus that has been instilled by the Guild's entry in the National 12 Bell Striking Contest but this improvement has also been facilitated by the many resident non-student members who have attended Sunday evening ringing. As well as thanking them I would also like to express my gratitude to Phil and Liz Orme of the Cambridge Youths who have shown great support for the Guild during my time in charge. Guild members are always welcomed at Youths practices and I know that many derive much benefit from attending.

One of the most notable achievements of the year was the very creditable performance of the Guild band in the National 12 Bell Eliminator at All Saints in Worcester. It is a measure of the current strength of the Guild that we could even enter a band in this most prestigious contest for the first time in many years, but to have reached such a respectable level and perform so well on the day was even more reassuring. I would like to thank everyone who rang in the Guild band for their commitment and enthusiasm but I must mention a few people in particular without whose assistance this certainly wouldn't have been possible. Firstly to Edwin Carter,

Simon Farrar and Jonathan Shanklin for not only driving us all over to Worcester on the day but also for driving over to a practice a few weeks in advance. Secondly to Jill Galloway and Richard Smith for opting to support the Guild effort and finally to Philip Earis, not only for choosing to ring in the Guild band but for conducting practice touches, quarter peals and the test piece on the day and providing me with support and advice whenever required.

I hope most sincerely that the Guild will not have to wait several years again before re-entering this competition and I urge my successors to do everything they can to continue the momentum and build on this year's achievements.

Much handbell ringing has taken place in the last 12 months with many of this year's freshers becoming particularly involved. The Dinner Touch was rung in very competent fashion and included first time appearances by Leigh Simpson, Jennie Butler and Dale Winter; congratulations to them.

This year has also been particularly productive in terms of extra-curricular activities. An action packed May Week began with the Guild vs. Youths rounders match, which I know the Youths are keen to participate in again this year in search of revenge and concluded with the Alternative Dinner at Homerton. There have been a good number of college bar crawls, formal halls, parties and many other entertainments on offer and of course the Annual Dinner at Churchill. As always, the Dinner took a great deal of organising and I am particularly grateful to Kate Langley for her assistance in this regard.

Combining the ringing and social aspects of the Guild were Guild Week in Cumbria, New Year celebrations in Surrey and various outings including a trip to London before Christmas and the joint outing with the OUS around the Kettering area in March.

I would like to conclude by thanking all those who have assisted me throughout my tenure and in particular the Senior and Junior Officers who I have worked with. I hope that everyone has enjoyed the past year and feels that they have got something from their ringing. The year has at times been testing but I am very confident that the Guild is now enjoying a particularly successful period and that I hand over with things in good shape. I have great hope and indeed expectation that the Guild will continue on to new heights of achievement over the next 12 months and I look forward with great anticipation.

Stephen J. Ward  
Master CUGCR.