Trinity Hall
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14th December 2007

Dear Member,

As December begins, it is time to update you on the activities on the Guild. I hope that the following brief account reassures you that the Guild has had another busy and successful year.

2007 started in Gloucestershire, where the then Master, Jennie Butler, organised the New Year gathering. A good peal of eight-spliced was scored, as was a date touch of 2007 Stedman Triples. General ringing took place at a variety of local towers, with many members enjoying their first visit to Pershore Abbey. It was good to ring with local Guild members, and I hope that members resident near Guildford will consider attending the celebrations taking place there this year.

The Lent Term saw continued development in terms of methods, with Spliced S Major being regularly rung. Quarter peals were used for consolidation, including a quarter of Spliced S Royal at Great St Mary's. In March, we enjoyed an outing to London with the Oxford University Society, thus helping to maintain our good links with those from 'the other place'.

The Dinner took place at St John's College, with the new President presiding over what turned out to be a most enjoyable and memorable evening. Speeches were given by Dickon Love, Jennie Butler and Chris Kippin, preceded by the traditional course of Stedman Cinques on handbells. Congratulations to Tessa Beadman and Tristan Melen, for whom this was their first appearance in the dinner touch. Guild peals were scored at St Neots, Trumpington and Melbourn, with a visitors' peal rung at Thriplow.

May Week commenced with the Ridgman Trophy at Rothwell, where the band were pleased to be placed 6th out of 10. Later in the day, a band met to ring a peal of Grandsire Triples on the back eight at Great St Mary's, and this is believed to have been the 200th peal on the bells. Sunday saw us enjoying breakfast on Jesus Green and forming a strong team in preparation for the rounders match against the Youths. Unfortunately, the Youth's team was not as numerous, resulting in the Guild winning by default. Other events during the week included a quarter peal of Cambridge Minor at St Bene't's with nine ringers; an outing to Barton, followed by a pub lunch in Grantchester before returning to Cambridge to help move the Guild Library; the traditional punt outing to Grantchester organised by the Secretary, which sadly resulted in one member paying a visit to Addenbrookes; and the Alternative Dinner at Trinity Hall organised by the Master.

The 2007 Guild Week was based at the University of Hull's campus in Cottingham, and was ably organised by Chris Rogers. Chris is to be congratulated on what turned out to be another successful week, especially as the location was several hundred miles away from his home. Highlights included ringing at York Minster and the Beverley tens, and the Guild had the privilege of ringing some of the first few touches on the recently augmented ring at Barrow upon Humber. No peals were lost during the week, with all six that were scored being of a respectable standard. It was pleasing to see Andrew Johnson for most of the week, who was taking a break from his newly arrived daughter Julia Eleanor Bynum – congratulations to him and Theo. Congratulations are also due to Mungo Stacy and Emily Hirst on the birth of their son, Alastair Charles, in April.

On a similar note, a number of Guild members were married during the year: Martin Bright and Nik Baxter, Mark Jones and Lucy Weston, Claire Thomson and Mark Bell, Jonathan Hetherington and Elizabeth Asbury, and Jo Hargreaves and Andrew Hallett. Many congratulations to them, and also to David Brown on his engagement to Gillian Knox.

In September, the Guild learned of the death of a former Senior Treasurer, the Revd. Prof. Charlie Moule, who was believed to be the Guild's senior member. A memorial service will be held in Great St Mary's on 9th February at 2pm. More recently came the sad news of the death of Richard F B Speed (Caius, 1944) on 22nd November, for whom a memorial service will be held at Clifton-on-Teme in due course.

October saw the start of the Michaelmas Term, and with it an encouraging intake of freshers, many of whom have taken a keen interest in the activities of the Guild. Start of term activities included the Freshers' Squash in Tristan Melen's room, a cycle outing to three local towers organised by the Assistant Master, Rob Backhouse, and a college bar crawl led by Philip Earis. During 2007, the following have become members of the Guild: Ralph Bird (Emmanuel), Charles Blackham (Christ's), Emily Russell (Churchill), Jake Suett (Trinity Hall) and Adrian Wallis (Christ's).

Guild practices at St Andrew's and St Bene't's continue to take place each week, and are generally well attended. Methods up to Surprise Major and Minor are rung most weeks, with many members taking the opportunity to expand their method repertoire and conducting skills. A couple of resident peals were scored this term, the first, Plain Bob Major at Trumpington, being a first peal for fresher Emily Russell. Later in the term, a peal of 8-spliced was scored at Great Shelford, and was notable in being the first peal of Major on the augmented bells. Towards the end of November, a most enjoyable London Outing took place, ringing at four towers in central London followed by a Brick Lane curry. Thank you to all those members who travelled to support this. In the final week of term, a large number of current students met at 12 Victoria Street to enjoy a home-cooked Christmas Dinner, and this proved to be an excellent way to conclude the term.

Service ringing at Great St Mary's continues to be well attended, with at least 10 bells being rung most weeks. I would like to thank all those who support Guild ringing, both students and non-students alike – your presence is invaluable and greatly appreciated. Many students are ringing regularly with the Cambridge Youths on Monday evenings and are benefitting from the 12 bell ringing opportunities available there.

2008 should see further developments regarding the Michaelhouse project, and members will of course be kept informed. At a most useful meeting in November, the Guild formally voted to proceed with the project. If the project comes to fruition, I believe the new ring of bells will be a most valuable asset to the Guild, and the Cambridge ringing fraternity as a whole.

I am hopeful of another successful year, and hope to see many of you at the Dinner at Queens' on March 15th or at other events during 2008.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Yours faithfully,

Luke T W Smith
Master, CUGCR