

**ALL SAINTS KINGSTON UPON THAMES  
INVENTORY OF RECORDS HELD BY THE BELL RINGERS  
IN THE BELL TOWER, to the end of 2003**

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## 1. Attendance Book Covering the period 18/12/1934 to 14/12/1937

- 1.1.06/05/1935 – Bells rung at 0615hrs for the Jubilee of the King's Accession.
- 1.2.16/6/1935 – Ringing suspended until further notice following report from Taylors (Bell Founders) that the bells were unsafe.
- 1.3.17/04/1937 Dedication by Lord Bishop of Southwark (Rt Rev RS Parsons) following overhaul, new fittings & recasting of the front 4 by Mears & Stainbank.
- 1.4.12/5/1937 Ringing for Coronation (King George V1). Ringers paid by Council
- 1.5. June - July 1937- ringing limited because clock people were occupying tower

## 2. Visitors Book 17/4/1937 to 25/1/1956

- 2.1. First entry lists those who rang in the opening touches at the dedication ceremony (see 1.4) Ringing Master was T.W.Taffender
- 2.2. Book covers period of Second World War, September 1939 to May 1945. Few visitors during that time – one in 1940, none in 1941, six in 1942, 7 in 1943 Including Ernest Morris of St Margaret's Leicester, and 16 in 1944. (See 3.3)
- 2.3. During June 1952 a total of 727 visitors visited the belfry and the bells during an All Saints Church Exhibition (individual names not recorded). (See 3.15)

## 3. Minute Book from 1939 to 1980

- 3.1. At the meeting held on 24/1/1939 it was reported that the former secretary had failed to return the society's books. There were 10 ringers, help from others at Croydon and Beddington was acknowledged. Ringing master was **F.E.Hawthorne**.
- 3.2. At the 19/12/39 meeting it was reported that since the outbreak of war it had not always been possible to ring the usual number of bells for Sunday Service because one member had joined the forces and others were engaged on Civil Defence work. Former ringer Mr Strutt was to be invited to return and help out.
- 3.3. At the 14/12/40 meeting the secretary H.W.Barrett reported that ringing activities had been considerably curtailed because of the **ban on ringing** Church bells following an Order of Council which took effect on 13/6/1940 and which prohibited all ringing except by the Military or Police authorities. He said "The order came as a **stunning blow** to all ringers and it is worth recording the following extract from the Ringing World on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 1940 'For the first time for more than a thousand years no Church Bell will sound on Sundays in all the land'". Practice nights had continued with handbell ringing, but air-raid alerts had limited even these.
- 3.4. Those present at the meeting on 13/12/41 were told that member Mr C Rayner, who had joined the army, was now a prisoner of war in the Middle East.
- 3.5. On 8/12/42 it was reported that Mr Rayner's parents had found he was now a POW in Germany and was in good health. A collection to help with the cost of parcels they sent him was proposed. Another member HW Andrews, also in the army, was now in Persia but his mother had said he was not in need of extra comforts at present. Eight of the bells had been silenced to enable practices and

teaching to resume on a fortnightly basis. On 11<sup>th</sup> November the Prime Minister had announced that the **ban on ringing would be lifted** on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November between 9am and 12 noon **to celebrate the Allied victory at Alamein**, and with the assistance of some visitors all 10 bells rang from 9.45 until just before 11am and were much appreciated.

- 3.6. The 1943 meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> December. The wartime **ban had finally been lifted in June**. One of the ringers, Mr W Nash, had been ill. It was suggested that the ringers make him a donation from their funds, but the President (the vicar, Rev Canon T.B. Scrutton) said he had money in hand for deserving poor people and would give him £1.10shillings from this fund. The office of Teacher, previously incorporated into that of Master, was now taken by Mr GC Goodman. Mr Hawthorne continued as Master.
- 3.7. The meeting for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 1944 was held on 21<sup>st</sup> December. Mr Andrews was still serving overseas and Mr Rayner was still a POW. To help others engaged on work of National Importance the practice night had been changed from Tuesday to Thursday,
- 3.8. By 13/12/45 Messrs Andrews and Rayner had been back ringing, a long-standing member Mr W Maxwell had died, and a lady probationer had begun to learn – the **first mention of a woman**. Three peals had been rung which included local members Goodman, Hawthorne and Barrett, the two in November being part of Kingston's Thanksgiving week. Ten muffles had been purchased at a cost of £10.
- 3.9. During the year to 30/11/46 the Teacher had spent much time helping young ringers at Merton and Thames Ditton. Discussions took place about ringing for Evening Service on Sundays, and whether there was a clause in the Savage Trust prohibiting this.
- 3.10. At the meeting held on 11/12/47 Miss Peggy Kitchen and Miss Hilda Taylor were elected as the **first women members** of the Society, w/e/f 1/12/46. At the request of the President (Canon Strutton) the **bells were rung for Evensong** on All Saints Day 2/11/47, and there had been much speculation as to how many years has elapsed since this had happened. **Mr Barrett** took over as Master, in addition to being secretary, treasurer and steeple-keeper. Mr Andrews became the Teacher.
- 3.11. At the 9/12/48 meeting it was decided that, as the verger Mr Harling was to retire, they would stop the Verger's payment out of the ringers accounts of £1.15sh for chiming. Remembrance day ringing had been interrupted by the entry of a Corporation Official who had been asked to make sure the clock stopped at 11am. The President was to write to the Town Clerk about this. Practice and Service ringing was well supported and of an increasingly good standard, and more Evensong ringing had been done. The **King and Queen had visited Kingston** on 27<sup>th</sup> October, the bells had been rung during the afternoon, and later a peal of Stedman Caters, including seven locals, had been rung to commemorate the occasion. Local ringers had attempted an 8-bell peal earlier in the year but this had come to grief after two hours excellent ringing. Local member Mr G Peck had celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday by conducting a quarter peal.
- 3.12. A Special Meeting was convened on 11/9/1950 to elect new officers. Mr **Barrett was having to resign** as he was leaving the area. He had joined in

May 1930, been Honorary Secretary and Treasurer for 13 years, steeple-keeper for 10, and Master since 1947. He spoke of his reluctance in having to vacate these posts, and praised the good fellowship and team spirit of the band, which had made his tasks so light to perform. He felt the Society could rightly claim to be one of the leading service ringing bands in the county. Members were equally reluctant to see him go. **Mr GC Goodman took over** as Master, Miss BM Harris became Hon. Secretary and Treasurer (taking over the cash balance of £2.16sh), and Mr HG Andrews became Steeple-keeper

- 3.13.** The 1950 AGM was held on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Mr Barrett in his last report as Secretary referred to the success of the first outing organised by the Society. On July 15<sup>th</sup> 29 ringers and friends had been to Reigate, East Grinstead, Uckfield, Eastbourne (All Saints and Christchurch + lunch), Brightling, Burwash (tea), and Fairwarp. Future outings were hoped for. Mr Goodman spoke to the President (Canon Scrutton) about the admittance to the belfry of **Mr TW Taffender**, and asked whether the resolution that **he should not ring at Kingston** still held. The President confirmed that it did.
- 3.14.** At the 13/12/51 AGM the new Master reported a successful year of ringing and social activities. There had been another outing (a coach load) to the Hook Norton and High Wycombe area, and another new activity had been a ringers social in the Church Hall for about 50 ringers, relatives and friends. **Former Secretary Mr TW Taffender had died, and the books of the Society which he had retained when he left had been reclaimed.** The Master also said that under the rules he was bound to pay each member £2 for ringing, but the increased size of the band made this impossible with the funds available. He wanted to vary the rule to allow the band to dispose of the funds as they saw fit. The Vicar had no objection and this was agreed. He asked for a new rule, that ringing stop five minutes before the service began to allow time for a short organ voluntary, and this was agreed. **Canon Strutton** also announced that he was **leaving the living** and this would be his last meeting as President. He thanked the ringers for their help and was sure the new incumbent would find a very happy state of affairs so far as ringing of the bells was concerned. The ringers expressed their sorrow at his departure.
- 3.15.** The 1952 meeting was held on 4<sup>th</sup> December. The new vicar was Rev P Magee. **Mr Goodman regrettably resigned** as Master due to his impending departure for Singapore, **and Mr FE Hawthorne was elected** in his place. The ringers agreed to contribute £5.5s towards the cost of 12 guineas for two electric fires for the belfry. The churchwardens promised to have a leak in the roof checked. During the year there had been another outing, this time to the Sudbury area, and another Christmas social. Ringing had continued every Sunday morning and once a month in the evenings. Ringers had also rung at short notice on the **death of King George VI**. Through the Town Clerk and the BBC, the band had rung a course of Grandsire Caters for a **broadcast to Kingston in America**, many copies of which had been sold to the band and other interested persons. In June the ringers had taken part in the Church Exhibition, taking turns on four consecutive Saturdays in giving talks and demonstrations on bellringing. About 1,000 people had all climbed up to the ringing room, and the majority went a little further to see the bells as well.
- 3.16.** The 1953 meeting was held on 28/1/54. Ringing had been maintained fairly well, but the members were scattered and travelling was always a problem, and

the two old gentlemen Messrs Blondell and Grimwood could not be expected to be too regular during the worst of the winter weather. A proposed outing to the Isle of Wight had been cancelled due to lack of support. Instead of a Christmas social a dinner had been held as a farewell to Mr Goodman, and Mr Hawthorne had presented him with a leather toilet case from the ringers. Several members had redecorated the belfry and were thanked by the churchwardens. A successful **peal of Bob Royal**, conducted by Mr Hawthorne, had been rung on 30<sup>th</sup> May **to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II**, and there had also been ringing on Coronation Morning. The vicar had received a few complaints about noise, and the possibility of having boards at the louvre windows was discussed. Barbara Harris had to resign as secretary because she was being posted overseas and Miss M Lewis was elected, and a new post of deputy master was created, to be held by Mr GW Morris.

- 3.17.** The next AGM was held on 10/2/55. **Frank Blondell, the band's oldest ringer, had died** on 29/3/54. **Mr Grimwood** was still travelling from Hersham to ring, and he **would soon be 80**. It had **not been possible to ring for Sunday service every week** as the band had sometimes been short of five ringers. There were discussions on the best ways to obtain new recruits. A member asked why the income from the **Savage Trust** varied from year to year, and was told it was because it derived from income from securities. A peal of Cambridge Royal to mark the departure of Barbara Harris had failed after 3¼ hours. Another peal comprising a band of "Franks" had been rung in November. In February 1954 the Society's funds had been deposited in a Post Office account. There had been no further complaints about noise from the bells.
- 3.18.** At the 1955 meeting held on 1/12/55 Mr Hawthorne reported that the band had been **further depleted**. The average number of ringers for Sunday mornings was now six and it had seldom been possible to ring on all ten. Evening ringing had only taken place on a couple of occasions during the year. He thanked the vicar for allowing peal ringing, no-one who had wanted the bells had been refused. **Mr Speed** was elected as Master, the post of deputy master was dispensed with, and the practice night was changed to Wednesdays in the hope this would prove more convenient.
- 3.19.** An extra-ordinary meeting was held on 3/10/56 at which **Mr GW Morris** was elected as Master, and George Goodman welcomed back from overseas.
- 3.20.** The 1956 meeting was held on 13/12/56. The **band was still dwindling** and 50% were learners. Mr Goodman's return had given them a boost but he was likely to be leaving again shortly. The times of Sunday morning services had been altered, leaving no time for Service ringing, but the band had done what they could to maintain evening ringing. It had been difficult as so few lived in Kingston. In September they, and the Leatherhead Band had enjoyed an outing to Hampshire, the first outing since 1952. A peal attempt had come to grief because the **wheel of the seventh was faulty**. Some years ago it had been hit by a clapper falling out of the ninth, and it had become so out of true that the rope slipped wheel. **No long length of ringing was possible in its uncertain state**. The Master was asked to obtain a written estimate for the cost of repair. The case of a ringer whose attendance had been very infrequent was discussed. Should he be paid out of the ringers funds? The secretary was asked to write and encourage more frequent attendance.

- 3.21.** At the meeting on 4/12/57 the Master was absent. The secretary reported that ringing was still in a poor state, partly due to the cessation of morning ringing. Only six bells had been rung for evensong for some months. Only one Kingston ringer actually lived in Kingston. The oldest ringer Mr Grimwood of Hersham had had a road accident in August and been unable to ring since. There had been an outing to the Oxfordshire area but this was only possible with the help and support of ringers from neighbouring towers. Hand bell ringing was improving, but this did not help the church the ringers were trying to serve. The **vicar Rev Magee was asked to define his attitude to ringing** - were the bells wanted at Kingston? He said **his own view was that bells were a melancholy sound**, but they were part of the church and should be rung. People liked them, and they directed attention to the church and to the service about to begin. Because of the difficulty getting a band to ring for evensong he agreed that bells could be rung at any time between 0830 and 0930 on Sunday mornings, except for Palm Sunday and Easter Day when services started at 0915. He was also in favour of ringing in the New Year if sufficient numbers could be found.
- 3.22.** At the AGM held on 10/12/58 the picture was more optimistic. Mr Grimwood had recovered and Mr Goodman had returned so there were now eight members and two learners as well as regular visitors from Leatherhead and Wimbledon. **Mr Goodman** was elected as Master. **Alternate morning and evening ringing had been tried and was working well.** There had been a coach outing to the Cotswolds. Another device to improve the wheel of the 7<sup>th</sup> had been tried and a successful peal rung. The ringers had paid for new ropes, but it was **time for another survey of the bells.** The 6<sup>th</sup> in particular was setting very far back and a part seemed to be moving. They felt that Mears and Stainbank would probably provide a compromise solution adjusted to the funds available whereas Taylors would not compromise and might advocate rehangng. Another **problem** was the gaps between the walls and ceiling of the ringing room. The sound-proofing above kept falling through and caused a mess. Various temporary measure to fix this were suggested, from bricks to old socks and cement. A light over the bells would be useful too. In November the ringers had completed a survey form for the **Central Council of Church Bellringers** as part of a **national review** of the state of Sunday Service ringing. They had reported that ringing did not figure prominently in the life of Kingston church. Mr Goodman asked for a greater degree of co-ordination with the church authorities. Ringers wanted to feel they were part of the church, but needed to be able to practise undisturbed and to be told when special functions would prevent Sunday ringing. They would also like to be asked to ring for any special services and would do their best to provide a band. It was agreed that future AGMs be held in October instead of December. There would be less likelihood of disruption by fog.
- 3.23.** At the meeting for the period ended October 1959, held on 28/10/59 there was a long discussion about the **reports received from Taylors and from Mears and Stainbank.** Both had been unanimous about the state of the **bell frame.** It had been cut about when two new bells were added around 1748, and had since weakened, especially near the tenor and the sixth, to the extent that it was **becoming dangerous.** It needed to be replaced. The two estimates were for £1598 and £1795, for taking the bells down, erecting a new steel frame and rehangng. The Master, Mr Goodman suggested that if this was to be done it the ringers would like to have the bells themselves put in order. The roof was due to

be re-leaded, which would provide an opportunity for a louvred tower to be built inside the present one. The existing louvres could be closed with fibreboard and the bells would not be the nuisance they were now. The ringers wanted to **launch an appeal in the town**, to try and obtain enough funds to cover **recasting** the bells as well. This might be a long term job, but Kingston was the county town and justified a good peal of bells. The vicar said that the architect's 5-year survey referred to an urgent need for work on the roof, and the brick and stonework of the tower also needed attention, the estimated cost was £5,450. The two appeals would have to be run separately but concurrently, and it was suggested that Mr Goodman be co-opted onto the finance sub-committee. There had been two outings during the year, one in April to Berkshire, and one in September to Essex. The April outing had been notable because almost the entire season's rainfall had fallen between dawn and dusk. The band had included "one very damp motor-cyclist".

- 3.24.** An extraordinary meeting was held on 21/9/60 to discuss the proposal to set up a **Committee to organise an appeal fund** to repair the bells. Mr Goodman had attended a meeting of the PCC, where it had been suggested that a committee of five should be elected, comprising three ringers and two others. They had proposed that these be Mr M Harrison of the PCC Finance Committee and Mr C Bailey, secretary of the Chamber of Commerce and a well-known Kingston figure. The meeting agreed that these gentlemen be asked to serve. The Borough Treasurer's offer to act as treasurer to the fund was also to be taken up. The ringers representatives chosen were Mr Goodman, Miss Lewis and Mr Putnam.
- 3.25.** The AGM was held on 12/10/60. Mr Goodman reported that a bank account had been opened for the appeal and **1000 letters** were being printed. He had already obtained the support of the Mayor, the Town Clerk, the Borough Surveyor and the Borough Treasurer, and arranged for coverage of the launch in the Surrey Comet. However he was about to take up a new job in East London, and would probably be moving there, so although he would remain involved with the appeal, he was not willing to stand again as Master. Tributes were paid to his hard work, and **Mr Putnam** was appointed to take his place. Miss Lewis was elected secretary, Mr Goodman deputy master, and Mr Eckhof steeple-keeper. The band had lost their oldest member, Mr **CWR Grimwood**, "**old Bob**", **had died in February at the age of 85**. He was universally beloved, and much missed. Mr Goodman had written a tribute for the Ringing World. More learners had joined the band, and tied practices were being held on Thursdays and well as the usual Wednesday practice in order to accommodate everybody's needs. The ringers had visited Whitechapel bell foundry, and in May enjoyed a weekend outing to Somerset. Their annual outing in September had been to Sussex, and the secretary reported that "only one ringer was mislaid this year." Rev Nash, the curate, was chairing the meeting and he was asked whether there was a ban on ringing before 5pm. He knew of no such rule, and it was agreed that **ringing for weddings could start immediately**, with a fee of **one guinea a rope**. It was also agreed to attempt quarter peals on the third Sunday of each month.
- 3.26.** The next AGM was held on 25/10/61. The **appeal for £3,500 to renovate the bells had been launched**, the bulk of the appeal letters to Kingston people being issued on 30/11/60. **£315 had been received** to date. David Putnam,

who had been appointed master the previous year, had been promoted and moved to Maidstone. George Goodman had resumed the job, but he had also been transferred and Mr Coatesworth had stepped in temporarily, with the assistance of Mr AS Bishop on Wednesday practice nights. George and his wife Lil were much missed, and had been presented with two engraved pewter tankards when they left. Several other experienced ringers had also left during the year, leaving the band much depleted and dependent on their learners. The **new vicar, Rev Pilkington**, was welcomed to the tower. Ringing for several special occasions had been organised, most notably for the **visit of the Queen to Kingston on 24 March**. The band was split into two parties for ringing on each occasion the Queen passed by, which enabled all to see the procession from the top of the tower. The Surrey Association had visited in September, and the band provided an excellent home made tea, though the secretary was disappointed to find that the éclairs had sold so well there were none left for her. On the social side there had been a Christmas party (the first for nearly 10 years), and three outings, a half day to the Hogs Back, a weekend to Wells, and a coach trip to the New Forest. Mr FE Collins of the Surrey Association had surveyed the bells to see what needed to be done immediately and what could wait, and how long the appeal could safely be allowed to run on. His report was awaited, but it became clear that some **interim work was needed**, and Mears and Stainbank **re-bushed the clappers**, with the labouring work being done by Messrs Wilkins, Bishop, Eckhof and Newman to save costs. The vicar was asked whether he would fill one of the vacancies on the appeal committee, but he felt he did not have the time to give the appeal the impetus it deserved. He suggested Mr Sidney Wood, at present personnel manager at Bentalls, and shortly to be ordained. If willing, he would be an excellent person for the job. **Mr Coatesworth** was confirmed as Master, with Mr Bishop his deputy, Miss Lewis as secretary/treasurer and Mr Eckhof steeple-keeper

**3.27.** By the time of the 1962 meeting, held on 7/11/62, Mr Collins had made his report (see 4.6) and Mr Wood had taken over management of the appeal committee. In May there had been a meeting with Mr Faulkener, the architect, and Mr Taylor of the Loughborough Foundry. At another meeting in July it had been decided to **defer any decisions for six months**, as developments were expected in Kingston concerning industry and commerce, and lunch-time functions including services. The outlook might be going to change considerably so it was best to wait and see. The band had decreased again, and more learners were needed. Rev Pilkington said he would enquire of Tiffins and Kingston Grammar School. Special ringing for the Assizes had provoked criticism in the Surrey Comet, and would not be tried again. There had been another weekend outing to Wells, as well as a coach trip.

**3.28.** The 1963 AGM was held on 16/10/63. Bill Pellow, a fairly new member of the band had died. He had been a valued part of the team and would be much missed. The band were impressed when his widow asked that the money which family members would have spent on wreaths be donated to the bells appeal fund. Mr Harris had returned from Germany and was training three recruits. Mr Bishop of Wimbledon had resigned but continued to attend practices. Some complaints about noise had been received and Rev Pilkington had been to see the people concerned. The question of soundproofing was discussed again, an estimate of £85 had been received but this was thought to be too high. As there had been no more complaints, and none from the market, it was resolved to

leave this matter with the PCC and also to discuss the general state of repair with the architect. **Lunchtime ringing** had started for the new Tuesday services, the bells being manned chiefly by employees of the NPL. Rev Pilkington had spoken to the headmasters of the schools referred to in the previous year, and had also asked the congregation if anyone wished to learn to ring. The weekend outing had been to Hereford, and the coach trip to Northamptonshire. Quarter peals had been rung for the wedding of the master and the ordination of Mr Wood. The bell fund contained £424.10s.7d.

- 3.29.** The next secretary's report covered the period 1/10/63 to 11/5/64. The usual activities had been undertaken, **ringing took place on alternate Sunday mornings, and on most Sunday evenings** because quarter peals were arranged. There was also more handbell ringing, a new year party, a half day outing in Surrey and a weekend outing to Shrewsbury. The book contained no record of an AGM for the year to October 1964.
- 3.30.** The next AGM recorded was that held on 10/11/65. **William Jackson** was elected as tower captain, Michael Green was steeple-keeper, Bryony Moorby secretary, and Bill Jackson treasurer, it having been decided to separate these two posts. There had been many young learners during the year, but disappointingly few had stayed long enough to become accomplished ringers. The bell ropes were becoming worn and Rev Pilkington said he would put this to the PCC to see if they would pay for new ones, as they had done in the past. The belfry fund had increased slightly, but there were no ideas as to how to raise more money.
- 3.31.** By the next year record keeping was back to normal with a secretary's report as well as an account of the AGM, held on 14/11/66. The PCC were thanked for paying for 10 new ropes. There had been a half day outing to four Surrey towers. The Kingston team came third in a handbell competition held at Putney, but last in the tower bell striking competition at Wimbledon. The new lighting in the ringing room was a great improvement, but one more fluorescent strip was needed. The room had also been **redecorated**, instead of brown and green **three walls were now white and one blue**. This had been prompted by a **request from the BBC to take part in a film about bellringing**, shot on 18<sup>th</sup> November. Although the filming took twelve hours the finished product had only lasted six minutes. The **BBC had paid 10 guineas**. The PCC were asked to pay for the paint and the proposed new floor covering – about £52. Anthea Bruce took over as treasurer, and Paul Selwood as steeple-keeper. He and Bernard Stone were thanked for helping to restore the bells and preventing various potential catastrophes. **A 99,000 shillings appeal was launched to raise money for bell restoration**, and Bryony Moorby and Anthea Bruce, with four others, formed a separate committee to run this.
- 3.32.** Following the news that Mr Jackson was to leave, an extraordinary meeting was held on 17/5/67 to elect a vice-captain who would take over when the time came and **Bernard Stone** was chosen.
- 3.33.** The 1967 AGM was held on 29th November with the Rev GW Farmer in the chair. At that time there were 17 ringers, and six who were learning. Average attendance on Sunday was 11. Mr Jackson had left in August and been presented with an engraved pewter tankard. The outing was to Kent, and the church of St Lawrence, Seal Chart was mentioned as being “rather amusing, as

only one of the party found standing up a comfortable position for ringing, the majority preferred to kneel.” An electric bell had been fitted so that visitors could give notice of their arrival by pressing a button on the choir vestry door. The accounts of the society were included for the first time, these showed a balance of £24, with the figures for the **99,000 shillings appeal** being **£68 in the bank and £580 held in Premium Savings bonds**. To boost this fund a walk from Kingston to Cambridge was planned for the new year. Bernard Stone remained master with Miss L Hawes his deputy. Bryony Moorby remained secretary and Anthea Bruce treasurer, while MJ Green became steeple-keeper and a new post of Learners' representative was taken by JP Hull.

**3.34. Rev John Martin** chaired the 1968 meeting, held on 20<sup>th</sup> November. Rev Pilkington had left for Bristol Cathedral on 7<sup>th</sup> January and been presented with a stainless steel tankard by the ringers which he “christened” later in the evening. **Seven ringers had undertaken a four day walk to Cambridge, raising £150** towards the appeal in sponsor money and donations. A new committee was formed to come up with new ideas for fund-raising. The annual outing was to Sussex. An All Saints team won the cricket match at the Surrey Association social and were presented with the Kingston Challenge cup, but they were last in the striking competition. Kingston's first **flower festival** had proved a great success and many people came to see the bells being rung. The only change in the officers was that CD Collin took over as secretary. John Hull had rung his first peal and been awarded the Richard Stevens award for progress during the year.

**3.35.** The rest of the records in this book are on loose sheets of rather scrappy paper, and there are several missing years.

**3.36.** The 1969 meeting was held on 20<sup>th</sup> November. Chris Collin noted that he was the first male secretary of the society for 18 years. Ringing had progressed, with Anthea Bruce ringing her first peal at Thames Ditton with an all Kingston band, and a joint Kingston and St Peters Brighton band ringing a quarter of Bob Maximus at Southwark Cathedral which had been a first for all. Quarter peals generally were up by 50%.

**3.37.** The next minutes are dated 2/1/1974. There was no secretary's report since there had been no secretary for most of the long period since the last meeting. Rev Martin thanked the ringers and said that their enthusiasm and determination to raise money and get the work on the tower finished had been an inspiration to everyone involved. Martin Lazell, Jeremy Pratt and Rosemary and Ray Talbot were among new members who were welcomed to the society. Bernard Stone proposed the election of **Sammy Emms** as an **Honorary Vice President**. He was a Kingston Ringer in 1890 and more recently was a generous supporter of the Tower appeal. **The society had given £1646 to the Mayor's Tower appeal**, and **had saved £677** by doing the work of removing the bells and frame from the tower.

**3.38.** The next minutes are for the meeting held on 5/7/78. There was a £154 balance in the accounts and it was agreed some new ropes should be bought. It was agreed to “try and find the peal board and have it completed.” Thanks were expressed to Bernard Stone for all the work he had put in at Kingston, with best wishes for his future in Wantage. **Jeremy Pratt** was elected as Tower Captain, with Martin Lazell as his deputy and steeple-keeper, with Anthea Rata (formerly

Bruce) as secretary/treasurer.

- 3.39.** At the meeting on 16/5/79 the Tower Captain reported that the band had had its most successful year since it was re-formed after the bells were rehung, with the ringing of the **first peal on the twelve bells by a local band**, and second place in both the call change and ordinary striking competitions. The accounts showed a balance of £217, and it was agreed to buy some more ropes and to put the peal fee up to £6. The churchwardens offered to buy a book to keep the photographs of the restoration work safe. Geoff Paul became the new deputy tower captain.
- 3.40.** The 1980 meeting was held on 20 July. Vice-president Brig Freddie Rushmore took the chair and thanked the ringers for all they had done. The church had a good choir and the best band of ringers in the Diocese. Restoration of the louvre windows was to begin next Spring, and the Trustees had re-activated the tower appeal. Another £20,000 was needed on top of the £14k already collected. Jeremy Pratt reported a successful year and thanked the band for their support, and for the excellent ringing at his wedding. He was not standing again because he was expecting to move. **Martin Lazell** was elected to replace him, and Kate Parlett was elected secretary. The missing peal board was now accepted as lost, and a replacement was to be ordered. The Churchwardens Audrey Lyndon and Freddie Rushmore offered to donate a board to record the details of the first local peal on the twelve and this was accepted with thanks. To prevent further deterioration of the boards Chris Ridley was asked to try and replace the surrounds on those that were broken. **Sammy Emms, the Society's Honorary Vice-president and Benefactor, had died**, and a quarter peal had been rung in his memory.

#### **4. Book of retained correspondence from 1936 to 1990**

- 4.1.** Letter 28/2/36 from Rev Scrutton to Mr Duffell to say that as so few ringers had been to practices he was relieving the verger of door duty until he was convinced that the ringers needed his attendance.
- 4.2.** Extract from **Ringing World 23/4/37 reporting on the restoration**, completed in time for the **Coronation**. "For years the bells had been 'a lumpy old lot', and gradually the necessity of overhaul forced itself on the authorities. The bell frame has been strengthened, a new belfry floor and deadening ceiling has been provided, the front four bells have been recast, the rest sandblasted and retuned, and the whole peal hung, with new fittings of modern type, on ball bearings. A great improvement has been effected in the tone and the bells now 'go' admirably, but as the old frame was utilised the ring still runs 'the wrong way round'" Details of the history of ringing in Kingston and of the various recasts were included, as well as a report of the service and of the opening touches.
- 4.3.** Photocopy 21/4/37 of the **extensive coverage by the Surrey Comet** of the restoration – heading "Kingston's Ancient Bells Ring Again. Rededicated after centuries of service. Four hundred years history reviewed". The history review covered **extracts from the old vestry minute books**, and included references to special ringing occasions no longer recognised, such as pancake day, and the anniversary of the failure of the Gunpowder Plot – the latter continuing until 1832. Also mentioned is the installation of a new belfry floor and deadening ceiling, with the deadening coming from packing the ceiling with **dried seaweed**.

- 4.4. Letter 12/10/59 from Whitechapel to Mr Goodman explaining why their single row, self-aligning ball-bearings were far superior for bell hanging than double row ones.
- 4.5. Three quotes for outings in 1961, one for a four course dinner for 20 people in Wiltshire on May 14<sup>th</sup> at 8 shillings and sixpence per head with a shilling extra for coffee, one for a Saturday tea in New Milton at 4 shillings and sixpence for cold ham and tongue salad, bread and butter, cakes and tea, and one from Epsom Coaches for hire of a 29-seater coach for £21 10sh.
- 4.6. **Report 31/1/62 from Mr Collins** of the Central Council Towers and Belfries Committee on the state of the bells in which he describes the timber bellframe as not being in a fit condition to do the work required of it. A complete new frame is needed and he recommends one of the modern steel and cast iron structures. The bells themselves either need a whole recast and tune on the latest harmonic principle, or at the very least number 8 needs recasting to add metal to bring it up to standard weight for note. (see 3.27)
- 4.7. Copies of letters to the Surrey Comet March 1962 , countering criticism of the ringing for the Assizes (see 3.27)
- 4.8. Brief copies of reports on bellringers activities for inclusion in report of the PCC for 1968 and 1969.
- 4.9. Receipt 15/1/70 for £1.5s to confirm Kingston bellringers were registered under the Betting Gaming and Lotteries act
- 4.10. Letter 29/6/70 from secretary of PCC thanking ringers for their help with the parish breakfasts.
- 4.11. Extract from Parish magazine May 1971 describing ringers outing to Shropshire in March
- 4.12. Extract from Parish magazine July 1972 reporting **removal of the bells** to Whitechapel for storage

Football Club, including his reminiscences of **George Strutt** “six feet tall, the handsomest man in Kingston and always magnificently dressed, except when bellringing”. He also remembered how he and other choirboys, as a “tower stunt”, had run up the 52 steps to the belfry onto the bellframe and out onto the roof, to sit on the edge of the parapet beside the pineapples, for which they received a severe reprimand.

- 4.20. Another undated press cutting recording the presentation to Sammy Emms, by Bernard Stone, of an album containing 91 photographs of the restoration. Sammy was then 94, and described as the oldest living bellringer and a generous contributor to the Tower and Bell restoration appeal.
- 4.21. Letter 19/12/73 from Rowan Bentall thanking the ringers for the excellent ringing before the Carol Service for Business people.
- 4.22. List of the inscriptions and weights of the restored Peal of twelve bells.
- 4.23. Card showing photographs/sketches of the church circa 1610 (with spire), 1950 and 1972
- 4.24. Order of service for the rededication service 6/10/73
- 4.25. Pamphlet published December 1973 about the **clocks** in the church. The most recent was built by Gilletts in Croydon in May 1973. The four tunes for the carillon were Easter Hymn, Hanover, St Davids, and London New. Hanover had a false note and Gilletts offered to replace it “but Alderman Hall preferred its retention even with the false note.” **The clock and carillon are the responsibility of the Corporation, but the driving rods, dials, hands, and striking mechanism of the clock, and the activating levers, wires and hammer mechanisms in the bell frame are owned by the Church.**
- 4.26. Ringing World 22/2/74 commemorating the 150th anniversary of the London County Association. Thomas H Taffender is pictured on the back page.
- 4.27. Letter 25/6/75 from Hugh Cawdron (architect) to Bernard Stone congratulating the ringers for their work on the tower which led to the **Heritage Year Award** from the Civic Trust
- 4.28. Letter 24/9/75 from Whitechapel Bell foundry to Bernard Stone enclosing a photocopy of the Heritage Year Award
- 4.29. Undated press cutting covering Bernard Stone's leaving presentation. Gifts from the ringers were an inscribed tankard and a photograph album recording the restoration work on the tower between 1972 and 1973. Hugh Cawdron also gave him a piece of the old tower, suitably inscribed.
- 4.30. Undated press cutting of an old photograph taken from the tower, with the comment that most of the buildings shown are now gone.
- 4.31. Letter 25/5/77 from Sammy Emms to the vicar enclosing a cheque so that the bellringers could have a drink on the Queen's Silver Jubilee day “from a well-wisher”
- 4.32. Ringing World 23/5/80 covering the Centenary of the Surrey Association, All Saints' tower featured on the front page.
- 4.33. First Class Certificate awarded to Kingston in the Richmond Upon Thames Music Festival (for ringing at Isleworth)

- 4.34. Request 9/2/82 to Mr G Brown for four more peal boards, followed by letter 22/8 to his widow saying how sorry the ringers were to learn of his death, and how they appreciated his work which would give lasting pleasure for generations of bellringers to come.
- 4.35. Wodge of correspondence 1982-85 concerning the unsuccessful attempts by Eayre and Smith to make a new clapper for the tenor. (see 7.2 - 7.5)
- 4.36. Note 10/7/86 to tower captain Geoff Paul from parish clerk Dick Ryder enclosing extracts from the 1986 Quinquennial survey which related to the tower.
- 4.37. Bills from Pritchards for 12 new ropes, six purchased 12/12/86 for £277.15, six on 4/12/87 for £314.70
- 4.38. **Letter 19/6/87 from Dick Ryder detailing the timetable for the installation of the new organ**
- 4.39. Letter 30/8/88 from Alan Buswell giving the result of his researches into the **bell in the centre of the belfry floor** – cast by Gillett and Johnstone in January 1911 for the Birks(?) Education Committee, 17½ inches diameter and weight 1cwt.0.5
- 4.40. Account 22/1/88 from Whitechapel for £189.75 for work done to the 9<sup>th</sup> bell
- 4.41. Copy of secretary's report for year to 30/8/89 reporting the discovery of old papers and minute books in the floor well when it was opened up during the rehangng of the tenor. (see 4.41)
- 4.42. Order form 16/1/88 from United Reform Church for £85 rent of hall and 40 tables for Surrey Association AGM
- 4.43. Bill 18/4/89 for peal board with correspondence soliciting donations from ringers towards the cost (peal rung 2/8/87 to congratulate John Martin on becoming a canon of Southwark Cathedral)
- 4.44. Correspondence culminating 8/5/89 with Loughborough Bell Foundry concerning purchase of new rope mats.

## 5.Visitors book from 10/3/56 to 15/12/99

- 5.1. Contains names of visiting ringers and others, until the end of the century when a new book was started
- 5.2. Entry for 18/11/66 gives names of ringers and **Blue Peter** people involved in BBC film (see 3.31)
- 5.3. Signatures of those involved in the first try-out of the restored 12, 5/9/73: the opening band at the dedication 6/10/73: and the first quarter peal 7/10/73
- 5.4. Signatures of those who rang on the occasion of the **Queen's visit** to Kingston 29/7/92 (opening of the Bentall Centre)
- 5.5. In 1974 two peals were recorded in the book. From 1987 peals and quarter peals were regularly recorded. **With the start of the new century a separate peal book was brought into use.**

## 6. Photographs of the rehangng and augmentation Easter 1972 – Sept 73

- 6.1. Two albums giving a blow by blow account of the work done. The books

themselves were donated by churchwardens Audrey Lyndon and Freddie Rushmore in August 1980 (see 3.40)

**6.2.** Box of slides on the same topic (Note: these are the property of **Anthea Rata**)

## **7. Minute book 1981 – 2003**

- 7.1.** At the meeting on 21/6/81 Churchwarden Freddie Rushmore reported on the current situation regarding **repairs to the louvre windows** which were likely to cost around £99,000. Substantial donations and loans had been received and he hoped work would start soon. A donation of £250 from the ringers funds was approved. It was also agreed that the **ringers accounts should be audited** in future. The peal boards were discussed, some needed repair, and it was hoped that the new ones would be ready for dedication on All Saints Day 1981.
- 7.2.** At the 18/7/82 meeting the **tower work was all but completed**, leaving £18,000 in interest-free loans to be repaid over five years. The **new peal boards** had finally been dedicated in March. Only one had been paid for by the ringers. Three had been donated, one by Jeremy and Anne Pratt, and two by Freddie Rushmore and Audrey Lyndon. **£215 had been spent on a new tenor clapper**. The accounts had been audited by Jeremy Pratt, although these were qualified as there could be no check on income. **Geoff Paul** was elected as tower captain and ringing master, with Martin Lazell his deputy and steeple-keeper and Kate Parlett as secretary/treasurer. Social activities had included the tower captain's new year party, and a dinner at the Haven Hotel.
- 7.3.** The 1983 meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> July. Geoff Paul expressed the ringers' thanks to Freddie Rushmore for his help and friendship over the years. Stuart Guppy now joined Joan Park as churchwarden. The local band had **nearly** rung a quarter peal of Grandsire Cinqes for the re-ordering dedication service, but had been interrupted by the architect. The new tenor clapper was not entirely satisfactory and Eayre and Smith were to do some more work on it.
- 7.4.** At the 15/7/84 meeting it was reported that the **saga of the tenor clapper continued**, with Eayre and Smith now to make another, which would hopefully allow the bell to be rung up "right". The numerous social and ringing activities had included a visit to Claremont Gardens for a Victorian/Edwardian picnic and firework display. In May an **all ladies band of Cumberlands** had rung a record length of Yorkshire Surprise Maximus and it was hoped to purchase a peal board to commemorate this achievement (their peal fee of £54 would go towards this). Martin Lazell and Jane Randall were congratulated on their forthcoming wedding
- 7.5.** On 21/7/85 the tower captain reported on a difficult year, with the band in a precarious position as several stalwarts were moving away. Congratulations were offered to Martin and Jane on the birth of Sam, and to Rosemary Willy on her forthcoming marriage to Harry Brockway. Ways of attracting potential recruits were discussed. **Eayre and Smith had been unsuccessful** in rectifying the problem with the tenor clapper, and had now taken it away and refunded our money. It was agreed to now **consult Whitechapel** about this. Of the various ringing activities and social events the highlight had been a ringing tour of Scotland organised by Sue Unsworth. A tour of the Whitechapel Bell Foundry had also taken place. Donations to the church appeal continued, and the ringers bank account held £750, which the treasurer felt should be increased to enable

any necessary work to be afforded without having to approach the church for funds. The vicar, **John Martin**, thanked the ringers for all they did, especially Geoff and Kate. In turn the ringers expressed their gratitude for the excellent relationship they enjoyed with the church officers, and wished it to be recognised that such good relations were not enjoyed by ringers everywhere.

- 7.6. By the 20/7/86 meeting **Whitechapel** had been approached about the tenor clapper, but advised that the problem was that the **headstock was too heavy** for the bell and that a new one was needed, which would be very expensive. There had been a quinquennial inspection, which had recommended repainting the flagpole, removing debris on the ring beam, and restricting access to the roof and putting duck-boards there to prevent further wear. The ringers asked that **duck-boards be put all round round the flagpole**, as the rope needed to be wrapped round the pole to stop it flapping. There had been two weddings, that of Rosemary and Harry had led to Rosemary moving away, but **Kate's wedding to Paul Flavell had brought a new ringer to the tower**. Congratulations went to all, and Paul was also elected as steeple-keeper.
- 7.7. On 19/7/87 there were only five ringers at the AGM and one of those was soon to move away. Two more had moved during the year, but David and Judith Robinson, recently returned from abroad, were to ring with us when they could. There were considerable discussions of ways to attract new people, both youngsters and adults. The flagpole had been painted but the duck-boards around its base were too close to be walked on. John Martin was congratulated on becoming a canon. The usual donations were made, the £50 to the church now being towards the organ fund.
- 7.8. At 17/7/88 Geoff had a happier report to give as regards numbers. There were more ringers at the Poly, enabling them to form their own ringing society, and although Mike and Angie Jasper had moved away we had been joined by Mark and Anne Wood from Lichfield. The highlight of the social events had been a weekend ringing outing to the Isle of Wight. There was a change of officers, both Geoff and Kate felt they had held their posts for long enough. **Paul Flavell** took over as tower captain, and retained the post of steeple-keeper. Mark Wood was elected as deputy tower captain and Maggie Paul took over as secretary/treasurer. **Fred Pembleton was chosen to make a new headstock** for the tenor. The Surrey Association had offered a donation of £400 towards the cost of this, and the ringers agreed to make substantial donations themselves. In view of this we would not make our usual donations to the Surrey Association and the the organ fund. **John Martin announced that he would be retiring in 1989**. He thanked the ringers for all their help and support, and for inviting him to their dinners. The ringers thanked him in turn.
- 7.9. The meeting on 16/7/88 was held during the interregnum and chaired by the church wardens. Paul reported that a **local band peal to mark the retirement of Canon John Martin had been successful**. As a retirement gift he was given a replica of the peal board erected to mark his becoming a Canon in 1987. The usual mix of social events and ringing outings had taken place, and 9 out of 11 quarter attempts had been successful. Equally **successful** had been the re-hang of the **tenor on a lighter headstock**. Fred Pembleton had done a good job and the problem of ringing it up "wrong" was completely cured. There was still a need for new recruits although our latest one, Ralph Murwill was making

good progress. During the re-hang a lot of **old papers, dating from 1934, had been found underneath the trapdoor** in the ringing room. The secretary had summarised these and her report was filed with the minutes. Finances were in a reasonably healthy state, but that was because the ringers had made substantial contributions to some of the expenses themselves. Churchwarden Liz Walker expressed surprise at this and felt that it was not widely enough known or appreciated by the congregation. Maggie undertook to do a summary of the meeting for News and Notes. Future expenses were discussed and it was agreed that we ask Fred Pembleton to make a new set of pulley blocks.

**7.10.** The meeting of 29/7/90 was the first to be attended by the **new vicar, Rev Richard MacKenna** and new churchwarden Ruth Kirkley. Both were welcomed. Richard had joined All Saints in the January and been welcomed with a peal of Grandsire Caters. Among the other ringing successes was 10-year old Ralph's first quarter, of Plain Bob Minor. Linda Payne and Adrian Wheeler had joined the band during the year. The back six pulley blocks had been replaced and the go and handling of the bells was much improved. The new device for winding off the clock hammers was also a success. The ringers had opened the tower for Missions Open Day, but been very disappointed with the poor results. All the other activities had taken place outside the church and there had been no publicity at all. Richard said he hoped to appoint a publicity co-ordinator in future. The ringers felt that there should be no problems about taking future visitors up to the roof, provided they wore flat shoes and were shepherded away from the lead folds. Clearing out under the bells, re-varnishing the floor, and re-painting the belfry were all discussed. The ringers made another donation of £75 towards the cost of the new organ, bringing their total up to £225. Chris Ridley was working on a review of all the peals rung in the tower, the first having been in 1782

**7.11.** By 11/8/91 new pulley blocks had been obtained for the front six bells, six new ropes had been obtained, and a partial clean-up under the bells done. Our "A" team had won the six-bell striking competition, 8 out of 9 quarter peal attempts had been successful. There had been no local band peal attempts but a visiting band had rung the 200<sup>th</sup> peal in the tower. Linda Payne and Colin Foddering, and Caroline Prescott and Chris Ridley were congratulated on their marriages. Mark and Anne Wood had moved away, but Jeremy Spiller and Debbie Wilds were no back for their final year at the Poly. **A new access bell with internal wiring had been installed**, the cost of £420 being shared between the church and the ringers. The National Westminster Bank had begun to impose bank charges, and the meeting agreed the treasurer's proposal to change to Giro bank, which did not. Wedding fees were increased to £60 - £5 for each of 8 ringers and £20 for the funds. Peal fees would remain at £2 per rope, but a non-returnable deposit would be charged at the time of booking to discourage late cancellations. Paul was asked to contact Fred Pembleton again about the **tenor, which had developed a tendency to slip wheel.**

**7.12.** By 16/8/92 the **Rev Jim Bates had replaced Richard MacKenna at All Saints.** He was welcomed to our AGMs and thanked for his hospitality in holding the meeting at the vicarage. Quarter peals had been rung for Richard's farewell, Jim's arrival, the release of Terry Waite, and several anniversaries including Dick and Ella Ryder's Golden Wedding and David Neild's 25 years as organist. A peal had also been rung for the Ryders, and for the christening of Chris and

Caroline's son, Phillip Prescott Ridley. Nicola Trafford had joined the band, as had Ralph's brother Philip. Whitechapel Bell Foundry had been to inspect the bells. No major problems were found. Jeremy Spiller had made a **slap board for the tenor** which had stopped it slipping wheel, and was thanked for his work. **Peal boards from 1874 to 1909 had been cleaned and mended.** There was one board which in a particularly poor state of repair, and an estimate of £150 for restoration had been received. After discussion it was agreed to accept this, and that half the cost would be met from the ringers funds, the other half would be paid by Paul and Kate Flavell. The possibility of fund-raising by opening the tower to visitors, including the roof, was discussed. There had again been disappointingly few takers when it was open during Missions Day, but this was probably due to the absence of publicity again. Jim asked Maggie to write and formally ask for clearance, so that he could check out the church insurance.

- 7.13. By the time of the 19/9/93 meeting the peal board restoration had been completed to such effect that redecoration of the ringing room no longer looked so necessary. Maggie had contacted **Simon Grout** to explore the **possibility of moving the finances** under the umbrella of the church, but this could not be done without actually incorporating the ringers funds with those of the church. The **halyards on the flagpole** had broken when the flag was raised at half mast to mark the death of Rowan Bentall. A steeplejack was soon to fix new halyards to the flagpole, fill cracks, renew fittings and paint it. Maggie had asked once again if duck-boarding could be extended to cover the whole roof, but Dick Ryder felt that cost would rule this out. The ringers voted £200 towards this. **Ringling at 0530 on Easter morning** had been followed by breakfast at the Flavells'. Only the latter event had proved universally popular. Sue Unsworth was welcomed back from her three years in Malawi.
- 7.14. The 1994 meeting was held on 21<sup>st</sup> August. 1994 saw the first ordinations of women priests, and **Audrey Smith of All Saints had been ordained** at Southwark Cathedral in May. To commemorate this Kingston ringers rang a quarter peal of Yorkshire Surprise Major, and also a peal of Plain Bob Major. The peal was Ralph Murwill's first at his first attempt, and was rung by a mainly local band in three hours on one of the hottest days of the year. The usual social events had taken place, with the outing being a weekend in Lincoln organised by Geoff Paul. Chris Ridley said we ought to have more notices around the church to remind people about the bells and ringers and he also offered to produce a booklet on the subject. Tower Captain Paul Flavell said he had stood for election to the DCC as a way of raising the ringers profile in the church. There were more discussions about **peal boards**. Paul had ordered one for Ralph's first peal, to cost £310, and obtained an estimate from Linda Moores to restore the lettering on the 15/2/1839 and 15/12/1844 boards. This was £390, but because those boards were slate she could not guarantee that restoration would be successful. Opinions varied between thinking of peal boards as a communications medium which ought to be clear, and as a decorative and historic document in their own right which ought not to be destroyed by restoration. No vote was taken, the ringers decided to continue discussions when they were back in the ringing room.
- 7.15. At the 10/9/95 meeting it was announced that the ringers had decided not to go ahead with any more peal board restoration for the moment. The new muffles purchased were giving trouble and Paul was to talk to Pritchards about

them. Chris was still working on his booklet, Geoff was to write new notices for display, and Maggie had arranged for details of our ringing times and contact points to be on the visual display in the new Information Centre in the Market Place. An elegant **new spider**, made by a local blacksmith to hold the ropes clear had been installed, the lights had been fixed, and a new(ish) vacuum cleaner obtained. Paul reported that there was now a nucleus of ringers capable of ringing 8-spliced, and the repertoire was increasing all the time, with a programme of quarter peals designed to help ringers to progress. Paul was re-elected as tower captain and steeple-keeper, Geoff was re-elected as deputy tower captain. Maggie said she wanted to stand down as secretary. Now that she and Geoff had retired they were likely to be away more and she was concerned that this would mean correspondence for the ringers being delayed. Nicky Trafford was elected in her place. Maggie retained the job of Treasurer. Regarding finances, it was agreed to put up **wedding fees to £80**, and increase **peal fees to £3** per rope. We would buy a bookcase/sideboard to hold the ringers' historical records, and have the rope tops professionally spliced with polyester to extend their wear. The donation to the church building fund was £200, representing £100 held over from last year and £100 for this year. Experienced ringers Elva Ainsworth and Hilary Small had joined us, as had Katharine Lankey, and learners Angela Page and Anna Murwill were making good progress although Philip Murwill had stopped ringing.

**7.16.** At the meeting on 29/8/96 Paul reported continued good progress in the ringing. Among the quarter peals rung had been one **in memoriam to Dick Ryder**, former Parish Clerk and good friend to the ringers, who had died in the winter. We welcomed to the band experienced ringer Peter Barker who had moved here from Chester. The highlight of the year had been the weekend outing to Lundy Island in superb weather. The 4<sup>th</sup> clapper had come out a couple of times and a new fibre washer had been fitted. Rope splicing had been done, some of the ropes inverted, and a programme of maintenance planned. We had got rid of the old table and bought a chest of drawers to hold all our clutter. Kate had provided a small fridge to keep water in (and champagne for New Years Eve). Proposed extra items were an extra heater and a fan, and **in lieu of our annual donation to the church we would pay for new signs advertising coffee mornings**. The usual social activities had been undertaken, including the annual dinner at the Haven Hotel.

**7.17.** A successful programme of quarter peals was reported at the AGM on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1997. **Chris Ridley's booklet about our bells and bellringing had been published** (paid for by Freddie Rushmore), June Sampson of the Surrey Comet had interviewed Paul and Kate for an article in the Surrey Comet, and Kate and Maggie had recorded a session with Jim Bates on Kingston Radio taking about the Millennium and stressing that anyone could learn to ring. The highlight had been the **full refurbishment of the clappers** by Pembletons. This had cost £1127, and apart from a £200 grant from the Surrey Association had been paid for out of the ringers funds. Maggie had enquired about getting the power point in the ringing room re-connected to the mains, but the quote for this was £482 because the cabling was old and in imperial sizing. It was decided to wait until the church was rewired as part of the extension scheme before considering this again. We had entered two teams in the six-bell striking competition at Limpsfield Chart, and team B were delighted to have been awarded second place, ahead of team A in third. Hilary and Elva had moved to

Boston USA, Sue was working in Delhi, but John Hind had joined us from Durham. Six new ropes were to be ordered from Pritchards. There had been a change in dinner venue to Café Rouge and this was deemed a success. Jim said that the Market Place was to be pedestrianised and he would like the ringers to write to Kingston Council expressing reservations about this because of the impact it would have on the life of the church. **English Heritage had turned down the plans for the extension to the church so they were now applying for lottery money.** He asked the ringers to give him a list of any work that needed doing to the bells or belfry which could be included with this application.

- 7.18.** At the meeting on 23/8/98 Paul reported another year of progress with his programme to develop the overall standard of ringing by all members of the band. On the death of **Diana, Princess of Wales**, the bells had been rung half muffled for morning service, and there had been a half muffled quarter peal the same evening. June Sampson's article in the Surrey Comet had resulted in six new learners including Colin Hall, and although Angela Page had moved to Somerset we had been joined by **Mike Bangham** who had returned to ringing after several years away. A major success had been the ringing of two quarter peals of Plain Bob Maximus on consecutive Sundays to celebrate **Geoff Paul's 60 years as a ringer.** The outing in July had been to Northumberland, well organised by Nicky except for the weather which was cold and damp. The church had bought a **new flag** and halyard ropes which had been fitted in time for Pentecost. For future reference, the flag is 52 ft high from the tower roof, and new halyard ropes should be 115ft in length. The electric chiming hammer had developed a fault, it occasionally dropped onto the bell, and had to be tied off before every peal attempt.
- 7.19.** The next AGM was held on 29/8/99. The emphasis continued to be to encourage, develop and widen the abilities of the local ringers. A peal had been rung in October 1998 to mark the **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the new 12 bells** in 1973. There had been a quarter peal to mark the **90<sup>th</sup> birthday of former tower captain George Goodman.** Ralph Murwill had decided to stop ringing due to a range of other interests, but Helen Green had arrived. The ringers were concerned about the new development of **flats at Charter Quay**, near the church, and had suggested pre-emptive action to avoid potential complaints. Jim said that he proposed a welcome pack for residents which would include times of services, and ringing. Paul proposed a change of year end for the accounts, to 31<sup>st</sup> December, and all agreed. Maggie stood down as treasurer and Mike Bangham took over, all other officers were re-elected unopposed.
- 7.20.** Following the change of accounting date, the next meeting was held on 25/2/2001. 18 quarter peals had been rung during the 18 months. The highlight had been **ringing in the Millennium** on New Year's eve 2000, followed by a quarter starting at 0037 and finishing at around 0130. We had also taken part in the National Celebration of ringing at noon on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2000 and have a framed certificate to prove it. We had a new high quality visitors book which we had started on 1/1/00, and which was designed to last for the next 100 years, and we started a new peal and quarter peal book to keep them separate. Our outing to Brownsea Island had been a great success in lovely weather. Sadly Judith Robinson had to give up ringing due to arthritis and Peter Barker had moved back to Chester. Numerous attempts had been made to fix the

“electronic verger” but without success. Nicky stood down as secretary and was replaced by Maggie, the other officers were re-elected unopposed. Discussion took place as to whether the ringers should have an **asset register**. Churchwarden Eric Atkins said that they were required to have an inventory and it would be useful if the ringers had one as well. Everything inside the church legally belonged to them, even if it had been paid for and brought in by the ringers as a group or donated by individual ringers.

**7.21.** At the meeting on 24/3/02 Paul reported that 2001 had been a very successful year for Kingston ringers. 10 or 12 bells were rung regularly for both services and practice nights, and the **tradition of regular quarter peal ringing to develop our repertoire of methods and ringing on higher numbers of bells continued**. A peal had been rung to celebrate the **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rev Jim Bates ordination to the priesthood**. We rang the bells when the Duke of Kent opened the restored and widened **Kingston Bridge** in June, co-ordinating the start of ringing with an official on a mobile phone. The tower now had a **web site**, created and maintained by Mike Bangham. The Kingston team had won the Holy Week tower quiz for the first time, despite strong opposition from 17 other teams, but due to other commitments had been unable to enter bands for either of the striking contests. Helen Green had moved to Basingstoke, but experienced ringers Diane and Philip Pratt and Debra and Kerry Walsh had joined the band. Emily Wheeler and Colin Hall were making good progress, and Greg Rata was our newest learner. We had tower visits from both the Kingston Society and the Kingston Town Tour Guides. The latter reciprocated by giving 21 of our members a free walking tour round Kingston. The annual dinner had been held at Mike Bangham's local, the Lion at Teddington, when we had been pleased to ring on the set of **10 Taylor handbells** kindly donated to the tower by George Goodman's daughter. George had been tower captain in the 50s, and died in April 2000. Whitechapel had inspected the bells and fittings, there were no major issues revealed except for one or two loose bolts which had now been dealt with. They recommended that the sliders and runners be lubricated and Colin had donated some beeswax for this. The perceived poor go of the 10<sup>th</sup> was thought to be caused by the rope being slightly drawn through the rope hole, together with the relatively new sally sticking in the hole – it should improve as the sally wears. **Emergency lighting** in the event of mains failure had now been installed, and loose floorboards in the clock room fixed, but the service bell had not yet been attended to. This disappointed Jim, who felt that it might be a legal requirement that he should ring a bell to announce the start of services. A clean-up under the bells was still pending. Jim commented that the floor above could do with a clean also. There were **loose floorboards** there. This was one reason why it was not good to take visitors up to that level, and the other was the **awkwardness of that final ladder**. He was sure the **church's insurance policy would not cover visitors** up there. The assets list had not yet been done, churchwarden Eric Atkins said that the bells and fittings, and the peal boards were included in the church inventory but everything else should be listed. **A photographic copy of the peal boards** was suggested. Regarding finances, we had a balance of £4,000 which should be enough to cover any emergency repairs. It was decided to raise the **peal fee to £5** per rope. Last year the ringers had given £1,000 to help launch the tower appeal, and the ringers were now arranging to make **individual donations**. Very few of us had the time to organise or participate in

fund-raising activities, and individual donations would be more valuable because they would be augmented by Gift Aid. So far we had amassed over £1,700. It was agreed that once the final total was known we would either make it up to £2,000 from the ringers funds or donate £200. Jim expressed his thanks and gave an update on the progress of the appeal. Proposals for ringing for the Queen's Jubilee Civic Service on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, and her visit to Kingston on 25<sup>th</sup> June were discussed.

**7.22.** The next AGM was held on 2/3/03. Ringing continued to flourish, with the highlights being the ringing for the **Queen's Jubilee** (involving local ringers in a peal of Grandsire Triples), and for her **visit to Kingston in June**. The new flag (of St George with the Diocesan crest in the first quarter) purchased by the Friends of Kingston church, was flown for the first time, and was temporarily replaced by the Royal Standard as the Queen entered the borough boundary. The Metropolitan Police Special Search team had signed our visitors book when they came to search the tower. The **usual social events** had taken place – dinner at The Lion, barbecue at David and Judith's, New Years Eve party at Kate and Paul's followed by the customary ringing out of the old year and ringing in the new. This happened a **few seconds late** as Radio 4 failed to broadcast Big Ben's chimes at midnight. Mike Bangham had organised an excellent weekend outing to North Wales. Paul had hired an industrial hoover and organised a major clean-up in the tower and a lot of dust and rubbish had been taken away. The boards in the clock chamber were still causing trouble, and Geoff had now fixed them down with coach bolts. Thanks were given to Alan and Philip Pratt for fixing the chiming bell and giving it a new lease of life, to Mike Bangham for donating a glass fronted cabinet to house the George Goodman handbells, and to Maggie and Geoff Paul for donating a chest of drawers to help with storage. The **donations** towards the church appeal from individual ringers had totalled £1821, gift aid increased that by £481.88, and a further £200 from the funds brought the **total up to £2,505.88**. Another £250 was voted out of this years funds. A list of the assets in the ringing room had been prepared, and a copy handed to Eric Atkins. The impending new rules for **Child Protection** were discussed. All officers were re-elected unopposed, with special thanks of appreciation going to Paul for his work as tower captain. A set of muffles which did not slip was wanted, and Paul was to take the relevant measurements to the Ringing Road Show to see what was on offer there. Jim said work was to start on the church roof the following week. The first priority was to save the existing building, which would be enhanced as that work progressed, and then new facilities would follow. The church would be rewired, but the tower would be about the last bit of the building for this, having been the subject of work more recently.

**7.23.** The 2003 AGM was held on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2004. Paul reported on a successful and busy time for the tower. Several **celebratory quarter peals** had been rung, as compliments to Geoff Paul on his 50 years membership of the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths, to Paul and Kate Flavell on their joint 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, to Greg Rata on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, to Jack Lincoln on his 90<sup>th</sup>, for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first peal on the augmented bells, and for June Sampson's 30 years with the Surrey Comet. The most notable of the peals rung was the Bristol Surprise Maximus on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September to mark the **30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the augmentation of the bells from 10 to 12**. We had held an

extra coffee morning on that day and leafleted the church and Market Place to publicise the event, and June Sampson had written an article for the Comet . We received no complaints, and raised £100 for the roof appeal. Former tower captains Jeremy Pratt and Bernard Stone had returned to take part in the quarter rung the following weekend, with John Williamson and Martin and Jane Lazell joining the celebrations afterwards. **Chris Ridley** had created a wonderful **bound book** on the history of the tower with all the peals rung on the bells and he was thanked for this valuable addition to our archives. Experienced ringers Robin and Jill Leale and Andrew and Shirley Bolton were welcomed, and we were pleased to welcome Sue Unsworth back from her travels. We were also fortunate in having many **regular visitors**, notably including Linda Foddering, Tony Bishop, Sue Bailey, Roy Betley-Cooke, Jane Marsters and Elva Ainsworth, but learners still proved hard to come by. Arrangements for the next weekend outing, in 2004 to the Isle of Wight, were proceeding well. The 2003 one had been a relatively local day in Rural Essex. As well as the usual dinner we had held another celebration of Paul's 50<sup>th</sup> and Nicky's 40<sup>th</sup> birthdays. Kingston Council had made the **Market Place a car-free zone**, but fortunately this had not affected attendances at ringing, Paul had attended the **Whitechapel steeple keepers course** and found it interesting and stimulating. Experiments with the soundproofing were under way, to try to improve the clarity of the trebles and reduce the sound of the tenor, which shouts out over the other bells at backstroke. The new flag had been returned to Ellis's twice for repair. Colin Hall had made a sturdy new box for the ringer of the tenor to stand on. The muffle debate continued. Maggie had written a report for the Quinquennial inspection to highlight the leaking dome, the rickety floorboards in the clock chamber, and the need to rewire the tower with additional sockets in the ringing chamber. We had opened the tower for Heritage day, and Maggie was putting monthly news sheets about our activities on the church notice board as well as telling June Sampson when peal attempts were due. People in the congregation would also be invited to come up and see what went on. **Child protection measures** were discussed again, the Central Council of Church Bellringers were preparing their own guidelines, but clergy could say what they wanted to happen in their own churches. Jim said that our church policy was twofold, the protection of children and the protection of those working with children. Still to be done were the peal board photographs (early attempts had not been satisfactory), and another go at the service bell. Donation to the church appeal was £250 and there was the usual donation of £100 to the Surrey Belfry Repair fund. Kate had been telephoned that day by the organiser of the **National Twelve bell competition** asking whether Kingston could host one of the heats on 19/3/05. the two important questions were (1) was anything else booked for that day and (2) did Jim have any objection. Jim said the answers were no to (2) but very likely to (1). **Finally**, Jim thanked the ringers for their friendship, for calling people to worship and for looking after the tower. Maggie thanked him for his hospitality in holding all the meetings at the vicarage, and for the support he, and Eric Atkins and David Robinson the churchwardens, gave us.

**7.24. Note: this minute book is still in use**

## 8. Scrapbooks of photographs and press cuttings, beginning June 1984

- 8.1. **Book 1, 1984 – 1992** covers the record peal of Yorkshire Max rung by the Cumberland ladies 28/5/84, and rehangng the tenor 15/4/89 as well as various outings and celebrations, striking competitions and peal and quarter peal cards.
- 8.2. **Book 2, 1993 -2000** covers rebushing the clappers in 1997, and outings etc as before – including the ringing to celebrate the start of the new Millennium
- 8.3. **Book 3, 2000-2004** covers the Royal Visit to Kingston 25/6/02, the celebrations to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the augmentation, and outings etc as before

## 9. Book of retained correspondence 1990 – 2003

- 9.1. Press cutting about John Martin leaving All Saints (see 7.8)
- 9.2. Order of Service for institution of new vicar, Rev Richard MacKenna 9/1/90 (see 7.10)
- 9.3. Notes for Clergy and Churchwardens “Bells in your care” from Ringing World 9/3/90
- 9.4. 1991 correspondence about insuring the **SW Gandy handbells** - All Risks cover now included in Church policy
- 9.5. Copy of the former inscription below the Baptistry East Window, set up by the parishioners in memory of Rev SW Gandy who died 25/12 1851 - this was provided by Parish Clerk Dick Ryder 6/2/91
- 9.6. Letter 19/8/91 from Alan Roberts giving details of early Kingston peals in the Surrey Association peal book – the first entry was a Kingston peal of 1881.
- 9.7. Analysis of Churchwardens accounts of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, provided by Dick Ryder 22/1/92
- 9.8. Extract from Quinquennial survey Jan 1992 relating to the bells and tower
- 9.9. Correspondence with Simon Grout regarding Victorian charity moneys.
- 9.10. Results of Chris Ridley's early researches on peals rung and historical analysis of the rings, provided for 1992 AGM
- 9.11. Press cuttings about the arrival of Rev James Bates, with order of service for his induction 11/7/92 (see 7.12)
- 9.12. Bills from Linda Moores for restoring peal boards, £160 and £220
- 9.13. Bill from Pritchards for 12 muffles, cost £177 30/12/92
- 9.14. Bill from Whitechapel £244 for fixing broken clapper 15/6/93
- 9.15. Letter 27/9/93 to church treasurer enclosing ringers contribution of £200 towards work on flagpole, and suggesting duck boarding the whole roof. (see 7.13)
- 9.16. Response 19/10/93 from Dick Ryder, will ask Church council to agree duck boarding. Also confirming that **church insurance includes half a million pounds for Public Indemnity cover.**
- 9.17. Ringers details included on new Local information data base when the Market House was opened as the Information Centre for the town (see 7.15)

- 9.18. Press cutting 1/11/96, the hour hand had fallen off the south face of the church clock and funds were sought to repair it.
- 9.19. 1996/7 correspondence about wiring in the tower (see 7.17)
- 9.20. 1996/7 correspondence about new coffee morning boards, paid for by the ringers
- 9.21. June 97 letters about clapper refurbishment and grant of £200 from Surrey Assn BRF
- 9.22. Final draft 15/7/97 for the booklet about the bells (see 7.17)
- 9.23. Representations 8/97 to Kingston Town Neighbourhood Committee about proposals to stop car parking in Market Place
- 9.24. Ringers wish list 13/8/97 to vicar regarding desired repairs/improvements
- 9.25. 3/9/97 Invoice for £758 from Pritchards for six bell ropes
- 9.26. 21/8/97 press cutting about the **initial plans for restoration and extensions** at All Saints
- 9.27. Letter 10/4/99 from Kate Flavell to Jim Bates suggesting ways of pre-empting potential complaints about ringing from residents of new development at Charter Quay (see 7.19)
- 9.28. Letter 18/4/99 from secretary to Ringing World listing those who have returned to ringing or started ringing for the Millennium (Note: It was **Mike Bangham** who returned. Of the seven new ones, none remain)
- 9.29. Thank you letter 20/7/99 from George Goodman's wife to say how much he appreciated Kingston's quarter peal for his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday (see 7.19)
- 9.30. Extracts from Ringing World about Data Protection Act 4/2/00, and Radio aerials on church towers 6/1/01
- 9.31. Surrey Association guidance notes on Insurance
- 9.32. Press cutting 6/10/00, June Sampson's feature about the launch of the **public appeal** to save the church
- 9.33. Report 12/7/01 from Whitechapel about the state of the bells
- 9.34. June Sampson's article 15/6/01 about Kingston Bridge (bells rang when the widened bridge was officially opened by Duke of Kent 29/6) (see 7.21)
- 9.35. Correspondence April 2002 about **ringers donations** towards church appeal, total including gift aid £2502.88 (see 7.22)
- 9.36. Order 24/4/02 for new St George's flag £352 + VAT (church to pay) + notes on care of flags
- 9.37. June Sampson's article in Surrey Comet 10/5/02 about the Coronation Stone – at its inauguration 29/9/1850 “the parish church bells pealed all day and the band of the 16<sup>th</sup> Lancers played patriotic music that soon had the dense crowds singing”
- 9.38. Various press cuttings and programme concerning the **Queen's Jubilee visit** to the town and church 25/6/02 (see 7.22)
- 9.39. June Sampson article 22/11/02 about royal visits to Kingston, mentioning

ringing which took place when Queen Elizabeth I came

- 9.40. June Sampson article 28/2/03 about the effect the new traffic restrictions in Market Place would be likely to have on the church
- 9.41. Ringing World article 18/7/03 reporting the **joint 100<sup>th</sup> birthdays of Paul and Kate Flavell** - which also raised money for the church appeal and the Surrey BRF (see 7.23)
- 9.42. Thank you letter to **Chris Ridley** 19/4/03 for the peal book he has given the tower, covering the first 500 (see 7.23)
- 9.43. Assorted letters, press cuttings, publicity material concerning the **celebrations for the 30<sup>th</sup> year since the augmentation to 12, on 27/9/03** (see 7.23)
- 9.44. Appeal update leaflet October 03
- 9.45. June Sampson article 31/10/03 about Queen Anne, whose statue is in the Market Place
- 9.46. Copy of the December 2003 Northern Stars with article about the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations
- 9.47. Surrey Comet article 12/12/03 reviewing June Sampson's career
- 9.48. Copies of assorted representations about parking restrictions around the church, ending with the announcement 19/12/03 that these are to come into effect from 12/1/04 (see 7.23)

## 10. Peal book produced by Chris Ridley in March 2003

- 10.1. The book is subtitled "**Five hundred years of Bells and Bellinging**"
- 10.2. Section 1 details the history of the bells from 1503
- 10.3. Section 2 gives details of recorded ringing
- 10.4. Section 3 gives details of **all the peals** known to have been rung in the tower, a total of 239 up to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2002
- 10.5. Section 4 is an analysis of the peals rung and the ringers
- 10.6. Section 5 is the index of ringers who have taken part in peals

## 11. Photographic record of the peal boards in the Ringing Chamber

- 11.1. Photographs taken by **Geoff Paul** of the **26 peal boards**, which record notable performances from 10/12/1787 to 3/7/1994

## 12. Notes of Belfry Maintenance Seminar 9/8/03

- 12.1. Seminar held by Whitechapel Bell Foundry and attended by Tower Captain, Paul Flavell. Topics covered were the care and maintenance of change ringing bells, fittings and frames (see 7.23)
- 12.2. Also included is a letter from Whitechapel 18/8/03 enclosing copies of a **complete set of their working drawings from 1972** at the time of the re-hang.

They comment that due to lack of funds at the time as much old equipment as possible was incorporated into the installation – also that the work was done three years before the change from Imperial to Metric. They quote the Imperial bolt sizes used

**13. History folder 2003: contains -**

- 13.1.** Publicity material for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the twelve
- 13.2.** Press cuttings about the 1973 augmentation
- 13.3.** General Historical notes about the bells from 1503 to 2003

**14. Ringing World 21/3/08**

- 14.1.** Front page article by Paul Flavell “**The Strutts of Kingston upon Thames**” about the ringing family of father and five sons who rang at All Saints for many years in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Maggie Paul    October 2009**

**A copy of this inventory is held at Kingston Local History Group, Room 46, North Kingston Centre, Richmond Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 5PE, together with copies of items -**

**4.17**

**4.24**

**10**

**11**

**14**