

WHEELTAPPER

WINTER 2005/6

RINGING FOR BRUNEL

A peal in Bristol?

As you are aware from previous issues of Wheeltapper, Ken Baker has plans to ring a peal for Brunel on the anniversary of his birth on Saturday 8th April. It now looks as if the peal will be in the afternoon of the 8th in Bristol (tower yet to be confirmed). This allows ringers to visit the many linked attractions in Bristol that weekend. Ken is still looking for interested parties to ring and would appreciate an indication from members who would like to be considered for inclusion in the band. Contact Ken direct at:

ken.baker@thameslink.co.uk

Or contact the Secretary direct at:

grrsecretary@aol.com

Or fill in the form in your envelope and post to the Secretary (see below):

A Quarter in Portsmouth?

A little known fact is that Brunel was actually born in LSWR territory in the Portsmouth area and in later life turned his attention to the secondary railway in the south west (the GWR). To mark the place of his birth, Martin Boulton has suggested that it might be a good idea to ring a quarter in the place of his birth (tower to be confirmed). We actually think that St.Mary, Portsea was his local parish church. This is a nice idea, that allows non-peal ringers to be involved in the celebration as well. The quarter could be on either the Saturday or the Sunday of that weekend, so flexibility is there for us to manage.

How about a quarter in Swindon to boot?

And, of course, Brunel had a very large presence in Swindon as well, so how about the possibility of a quarter there on the same weekend as well (again, no tower yet confirmed)?

Arrangements:

So, to help co-ordinate our activity, you will find in your envelope a simple form to fill out! It asks if you would like to be involved at some point over the weekend. It also asks which event(s) you would be interested in and on which days. All you have to do is fill the form out and post it to the Secretary.

Alternatively, you can contact either Ken Baker or Martin Boulton direct, or send an email to the Secretary at:

grrsecretary@aol.com

If we get enough interest from you, hopefully we will be able to mark the weekend with a series of ringing events to celebrate the life and work of one of the finest engineers of Britain's railways.

More information on the anniversary:

For more information on events to mark the anniversary, go to the specially developed website:

www.brunel200.com

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Full 2006 itinerary at a glance!*
- *A full report on the Great Central Autumn tour;*
- *Details of the Brunel celebrations weekend*
- *Tonbridge bells moved by BRL;*
- *Antique rules!*



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

2006 SUBS	2
GT CENTRAL	2
SPRING TOUR	3
2006 AGM	3
AUTUMN TOUR	3
RULES!	3
GUILD DIARY	4

2006 SUBSCRIPTIONS

2006 subscriptions are now due and a white renewal form is attached to this newsletter. If subs for 2005 are still due from you, you will also find a red 2005 form along-side the 2006 white one. This means that 2 years subs are due from you. Subs can be sent in the post to the Secretary.

As you are aware, subs have been at £5.00 for adults and £2.50 for juniors / OAPs for some years now and it was agreed at the AGM that they will continue at this rate for the next year as well. As normal, if you are paying by cheque, please make sure that cheques are made payable to "The Railway Industries Association of Church Bell Ringers" rather than the "Railway Guild" or "Guild of Railway Ringers" - It makes paying them into the account so much easier if made out correctly! Thanks for your help!

The following memberships have now lapsed (over 2 years in arrears): Andrew Bond (Dagenham) & Jimmy Johnston (Erskine).

Tony Manktelow - Secretary

GREAT CENTRAL AUTUMN TOUR

The 2005 Autumn tour centred on the Great Central Railway, running through rural Leicestershire between Loughborough and Leicester. The day began with a ring at the bell foundry tower in Loughborough. A quick march when then necessary to get us to Loughborough Central station for the 11:30 departure south. We left the train at the intermediate station of Rothley and walked the mile or so (it was a mile or so as well! - the sign posts in Leicestershire underestimate the distances between villages!) into Rothley village. Lunch was taken at a decent hostelry and ringing at Rothley followed. The equally distant march back to Rothley station followed, ensuring that the calories taken on board at lunchtime were well and truly taken care of by the time we arrived back at the station! A few minutes spare allowed those present to debate the pros and cons of the "best aperient for adults" before climbing aboard the southbound departure to Leicester North station. Leicester North is the terminus of the railway today and is situated just south of the site of Belgrave and Birstall halt. The nearest station to our last tower of the day—Belgrave.



The Foundry

This wonderful enamel sign was tucked just inside the door of the Gents toilet on Rothley station platform. It formed the basis of much balderdash and piffle until our train finally arrived! →



← Our return train waits for departure from Leicester North for the run back to Loughborough Central.



Members enjoy the sun at the end of the day. Some of the group gather after ringing at Belgrave, before heading home. →



Rothley



Belgrave

SPRING TOUR—SHEFFIELD SUPERTRAM (1ST APRIL)



Plans are well advanced for the Spring tour to Sheffield Supertram! The date for the tour is Saturday 1st April. The day will commence at approximately 11:00 from Sheffield Midland station. This allows members from most parts of the country to get there for the start. The tour will centre on the superb Supertram system in the city and will include ringing at around 4 towers on the system. There will be a little bit of walking as well, from tram stop to tower & back, but we hope to keep this to a reasonable level. Lunch will be on the hoof and I'm sure that the more experience tram-bashers amongst you will manage to grab sarnies and squeeze a few pints from local hostelrys as we progress through the day. The target finish time is approximately 18:30 at Sheffield Midland station, giving reasonable time for you to get yourselves home.

Full details of the tour will appear in the next issue of Wheeltapper.

2006 AGM—SWINDON STEAM (1ST JULY)



The 2006 AGM will take place at Swindon, home of the GWR. The day will be based around a chance to visit the famous steam museum of the Great Western Railway in the old works. Ringing will be centred on the bells in the town centre. For non-ringers, there is the chance to look around the retail park also to be found at the old works.

More details in future issues of Wheeltapper.

AUTUMN TOUR—THE MID NORFOLK RAILWAY (16TH SEPTEMBER)



The 2006 Autumn tour will be based on the Mid Norfolk Railway, running between Dereham and Wymondham. A chance to sample the line, ring on some fine Norfolk bells and drink some Wherry!

More details in future issues of Wheeltapper.

RULES, RULES, RULES.

As you will remember, the ancient ritual of asking for rule changes at the AGM was interrupted last year by some members asking after the rules and enquiring about their content and general state of well-being.

In my opinion, the rules are outdated and have not seen the light of day really since the formation of the Guild was triggered by railway privatisation and the demise of the British Railways Staff Association (BRSA).

The debate at the AGM left some inaugural members going off down memory lane, remembering initial meetings of the new Guild in the Rising Sun public house in Reading—we have come a long way!

So far, in fact, that it is probably time for the rules to be completely overhauled. With this in mind, a set of the original 'MultiMate' rules is enclosed in your envelope. Your task, should you choose to take it, is to propose some changes for consideration at the next AGM—I can hardly wait.....(if you do take up the challenge, please let me have notification of proposed/suggested changes well in advance of the AGM to allow for their inclusion in the meeting)!

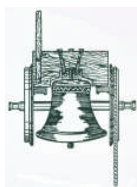
Tony Manktelow (secretary).

THE GUILD OF RAILWAY RINGERS

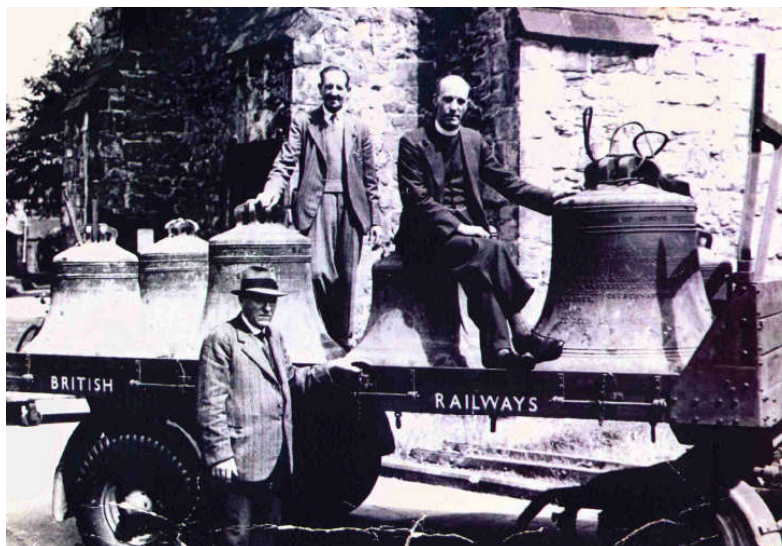
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Tonbridge bells on the move—courtesy of British Railways!



The above photograph was included in a very early edition of *Wheeltapper*, before most of you were on-board as members. I thought it worth dusting off and showing again, as it shows the strong links that exist between ringers and railwaymen. The photograph was discovered in Tonbridge tower, some years ago when I lived and rang there. It is no surprise that the help of a railwayman should be involved in the work on the bells as Tonbridge is a railway town with a long history of railway workers and the tower has been home to many railway ringers over the years. As for who the people in the picture are, I'm open to input from you if you know.

Tony Manktelow (secretary).

GUILD DIARY—MAKE A RECORD OF THE DATES

1st April 2006:

Guild spring tour on Sheffield Supertram.

1st July 2006:

2006 AGM at Swindon's STEAM museum.

8th/9th July 2006:

Brunel anniversary events.

16th September 2006:

Guild autumn meeting on the Mid Norfolk Railway.



A scene from the Autumn tour on the Great Central Railway in Leicestershire

Please note that other events can and may be held in addition to these dates. Please feel free to volunteer to arrange a tour!

Details should be sent to the Secretary for inclusion in *Wheeltapper*.

All Guild events are also advertised in *The Ringing World*.

Tony Manktelow - Secretary