

Things that go CRASH in the night!

On the evening of Saturday 17 June we had a District 10 bell practice at East Meon in the Alton & Petersfield District. It was a perfect summers evening - and as in so many other occasions, you wonder "how many ringers will turn up to an "out of District" practice on such a beautiful evening?". When I arrived just before 7.30pm there were several ringers there already and it looked like it would be a fair turn out.

The practice was in the very capable hands of Ben Carey. Our first touch was the easier Special Method (Little Bob Royal), we were less than 30 changes in to the touch when there was a loud "CRASH"; dust and cob webs fell from the ceiling. A clapper had fallen out, but which one? The ringer of the offending bell knew at once, "it's me" said Tom Bishop.

By this time the ringing chamber was filling up fast. We rang the bells down and ascended the ladder to the bells. On closer inspection we discovered that the crown staple bolt had broken, not the clapper. As luck would have it the previous tower captain Bill Harris was with us, he said that the old clappers (which were replaced when the bells were augmented to 10) were still in the tower. He managed to locate the 7th (old 5th) clapper on the floor. Now all we needed was a large spanner. There were not many tools in the tower just a screwdriver, pliers and a small adjustable spanner. I shouted down to the (by now full) ringing chamber, "Has anyone got a large adjustable spanner in their car?" Their was silence, "I've got an adjustable spanner but it's not very large." said Brian Baverstock. "OK that will do".



We managed to remove the split pin with the pliers and remove the loose nut from the crown staple bolt. When we tried fitting the old clapper we found that the bolt was a couple of inches too long because the new cast iron headstock is more compact than the old Elm Headstock. We managed to pack it out with several washers from a couple of the other old clappers. By this time Brian was back from his car with the spanner; it wasn't much bigger than the small spanner we already had, but we

were able to nip the nut up tight enough with it - enough to last the evening, at least. Bill found a bottle of white spirit and a rag for Ben and I to clean our hands while the bells were being raised again.

We carried on with the practice which was a rushed evenings ringing because we had lost 3/4 hour sorting out the problem. At least it didn't happen to the East Meon ringers, as they were ringing for Sunday Service the following morning.

Smart Ringer



The Fellowship of Narnia Youths

The birth of a new society

On Monday 10 April, the recently formed "Fellowship of Narnia Youths" held their first AGM. I always knew it would come to this eventually; but it was peal fees that finally forced the society into being.

The Narnia Campanile was installed by Matthew Higby & Co in the summer of 2001; Mini-Rings in the immediate area were thin on the ground, and building up a following takes time and dedication. Within a few months Ian Carey had organised regular monthly practices. Looking back those early practices were very basic and void of any good ringing on higher numbers, as those not used to Mini Rings battled to control their bells.



As time went by Quarter Peals were rung, usually when practices were thin on the ground. Standards soon improved as people became more familiar with the bells, on Tuesday 3rd June 2003 the first peal was rung including a few Mini-Ring veterans. From that time peals started to flow, the more we did the faster they became as we "gelled" producing better and better ringing.

The Fellowship came closer into being with the impending release in the cinema of the Disney film "The Lion the Witch & The Wardrobe", when the Carey's organised a group outing to the "VUE" Cinema at Gunwharf Quays in Portsmouth. Then it was decided after a peal attempt that our very own society should be formed; the benefit of this would cut out the endless sending up of peal details and fees to the Guild.

Then came the big problem of choosing a name. There was what seemed like hours of discussion, the outcome of that evening was undecided despite some very good ideas. However at our next meeting it was announced that we were henceforth to be called "The Fellowship of Narnia Youths" or FONY for short!

So the date for the AGM / Dinner Day was set. It was decided it was to be held on the first Monday in Holy Week and henceforth to be held on the same day for the foreseeable future.

The Lamppost
Publicity officer