

Colmworth Bells and Bell Ringing

We are fortunate at St Denys in having one of the nicest light rings of bells in the area. The old oak frame was erected around 1630 and our oldest bells were cast in 1635, so bells will have been rung in Colmworth for almost 400 years. Interestingly, a ringer from those times would probably recognise some of the methods (*and tunes*) rung at Colmworth today.



Thanks to the hard work and generosity of a previous generation , our bells and their fittings were completely restored in 1985. A new steel frame was installed and a sixth bell added to the ring. In the past two years, we have overcome an intrusion of doves and pigeons, and hope all is now clear.

We do however have a currant problem - a shortage of ringers. Only a few years ago we had plenty, but now have some difficulty in finding six ringers if anybody is away. Losses have been for good reasons: two deaths, age and infirmity, moving away or too many alternatives (particularly relevant to children) but we do now need new recruits.

Bell ringing can be a fascinating hobby, regardless of how far a beginner progresses. It is suitable for anybody, male or female, between the age of 12 and 80, providing that they are reasonably fit; my own experience illustrates this. I began to learn, aged 14, but had to give up after three months when I was offered a place in the school choir.

Forty years later, I was seeking interests in my retirement and took up a suggestion from my local church to try again. It all came back, like riding a bicycle. For the past thirty-five years, I have enjoyed it immensely, and am only now giving up because of my inability to stand upright.

Bell ringing is really fun, as well as some exercise. Once you have learnt the basic techniques you will always be welcome at other towers, bearing in mind that 5000 are available for ringing in this country. It is a very inexpensive hobby, and if you ring for a wedding, you can expect to be paid.

If this inspires you to have a go, do please telephone Felicity Evans on 01234 376887

Humphrey Chetwynd-Talbot

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