

Brinkworth

The bell on the front page of this newsletter is Brinkworth's third. When the bell was rehung at some point, because of the damage the crown bolts had to be set further out than was desirable, and this we think was the cause of the bell making more of a clank than a ring when you heard it on it's own.

As is usual, the wooden headstocks on bells 2 to 6 had gudgeon pins, about an 1¼ to 1½ inches in diameter, protruding from the ends. These were held in ball bearings mounted on the frame to support the bells. Alarmingly, however, one of the fifth's pins had sheared off leaving only 2 or 3 inches to support the bell and the tenor was even worse, about one inch remaining, just enough to go through the metal plate on the end of the headstock!

From John Tuck:

"Work is progressing on the bells. New cast iron headstocks have been cast to replace the 5 wooden ones which were fitted to the 1663 bells, but it is decided to retain the more modern steel headstock on the 1924 treble bell. Two of the bells have had their conservation welding work done, and the others are being prepared. There will be inscriptions on each of those new headstocks. Careful measurements have been taken of the bell frame in the tower to ensure the gudgeon pins at either end of the headstocks are machined correctly to accept new bearings that will be bolted to the frame.

"Before the bells return, the 1903 bell frame is to be painted and improvements made to the bird proofing of the louvres before the bells return. Practical assistance and/or materials to do this will be very welcome.

"Grants towards the cost of the refurbishment have been received or are promised from :

The Malmesbury Area Board of Wiltshire Council,
The Jack Lane Charitable Trust,
The Central Council of Church Bellringers,
The Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers,
The Chippenham branch of The Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers,

Littleton Drew

Some of you may have noticed, in the recent G&B Annual Report, that a new tower has appeared in the Chippenham Branch. I wonder when that last happened? It is Littleton Drew, they have three unringable bells and are looking to get them restored. The tenor is 7cwt (others unknown) and the dates are 1: 1480, 2: 1510 and 3: 1520, so they are quite old. The woodwork is unsafe so I have not been able to photograph them for you. It is thought they may be augmented to at least 5. The current ring is anti-clockwise.

The Garfield Weston Foundation,
The Sharpe Trust,
Church Care (Church Buildings Council),
and of Landfill Tax courtesy of Messrs Crapper and Son (Landfill) Ltd,
plus donations from individuals and from events held in the village.

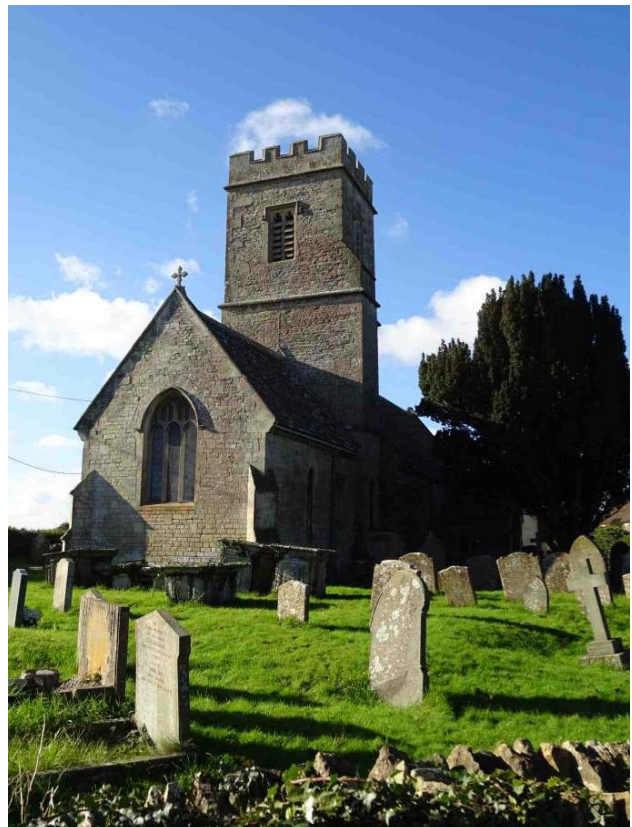
"To add to this it is intended to run a competition to guess the weight of the tenor bell which has never before been weighed, but has been estimated to be eighteen and a half hundredweights. Just to confuse you guesses will need to be given in kilograms. A prize (any offers?) will be given to the winner, and it will cost you £1 per guess.

"The clock was installed 120 years ago to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and has been wound by hand ever since. It will now be fitted with electric winders."

[Photos on next page...]

Latest news:

As far as we know the bells are still at Soundweld. The Treble has a flat crown and will retain it's iron headstock. The Third and Tenor were damaged at some time in the past when they lost their cannons, but the welded repairs should leave them with flat crowns. The 2,4 and 5 will most likely be fitted with canon retaining headstocks. For the importance attached to Brinkworth's bells see Ringing World, the last issue of 2016 and the table of grants given by CCCBR and HE. Brinkworth was one of 13 churches given grants, but will get more than 25% of the grants given.



Brinkworth continued

