

# Flowers, Bells & Meadows

## CHAPTER 4. FLOWER FESTIVALS & BELLS

**T**O QUOTE FROM THE INFORMATION SHEET IN St Mary's church, *"There is a ring of eight bells, five from various dates and founders from 1576 to 1716, the sixth (tenor) originally 1638 was recast in 1969 and the iron frame installed in 1970. Two more bells were added in 1985."* ¶ The bells are intrinsic to the church and are the pride and joy of the village. ¶ In June 1970 a peal rang out over Kersey for the first time since Queen Victoria's Jubilee. ¶ This was after five years of intensive fund-raising for their restoration and that of the church tower. ¶ The organisers of this initial fund-raising drive were "The Friends of the Bells", a completely separate body from the Parochial Church Council.



**T**he Friends of the Bells succeeded in raising enough money to restore the bells and re-hang them in a new frame, but a serious setback occurred in 1968 when the Diocesan Architect's five-year inspection revealed that the bells could not be rung safely until the tower itself was strengthened. Since this involved major work on the church fabric and would need a lot more money, the PCC took over responsibility for fund-raising. An Appeal Committee was formed with Ralph Hammond Innes as patron and General Lyne and Mary Mowles (churchwardens) and Michael and Mary Harbinson (PCC treasurer and secretary respectively) as members. An appeal letter was sent out nationally and many donations were received from individuals and organisations all over the world. But much of the restoration money for both the bells and the tower was raised through an annual series of Flower Festivals.

The Flower Festivals, became famous. People travelled miles to marvel at the beautiful flower arrangements and buy from the produce stalls. Year by year the Festivals grew in size. More visitors came and more money was raised, from the satisfactory hundreds of the 1960's to more than £1,000 taken in 1971. Proceeds from other successful events added to the total and by 1971 the necessary work had been completed and paid for, the

final sum required being raised by Ralph Hammond Innes' television appeal.

Key figures at this stage were Ethel and Buster Beeton, both of whom have unfortunately now died. They lived by the Splash in "Cresslands" and were comparative newcomers to the village, although Ethel was cousin to Don Lemon the Kersey vet. She was a keen and skillful flower arranger, and threw herself wholeheartedly into organising the flower festivals. Buster meanwhile conceived the fundraising idea of encouraging people to throw coins into the Splash. He inserted a bucket on corrugated iron in the deeper water near his house and was responsible for the regular collection of the coins. Hundreds of pounds a year were raised from this scheme alone but it was eventually stopped when children were discovered removing coins from the water!

From 1969 onwards Mary Harbinson was responsible for the overall organisation of the Flower Festivals, working in close collaboration with Ethel Beeton, who continued to be responsible for the flower arrangements. After 1971 Flower Festivals ceased to be an annual event but were held at irregular intervals, the money raised being sometimes divided between the church and other causes. Finally in 1988 there was a Village Festival organised by General Sir David Scott-Barrett, which was not centred primarily on the church or flower

arrangements.

Money was raised for the installation of two new bells in 1984 and these were hung in 1985. In the event, however, the bells themselves were donated, each by a parishioner who wished to remain anonymous.

Also included in this chapter is information about “the glebe”, the name commonly used in the village for the field and childrens’ playground which runs behind Kersey Vicarage along the road towards Boxford.

As is the case throughout this Kersey history, contributors have given valuable memories in their own words to enliven the present chapter. These include the glebe, Flower Festivals, bell-ringers, bells in general including handbells, and also the church clock.

#### FLOWER FESTIVALS & FUNDRAISING

**Irene Hasler:** There had been an interregnum just before I came and the parson who came, a young chap, was quite impossible. It was very sad because he wanted to do a good job but I think he sent all the money out to the missionaries or something and never knew what had happened to it.

The parishioners were always being asked for money and never knew what had happened to it. It had all been sent abroad and they couldn’t care less what was happening in Africa or Timbuktu, they were poor enough themselves.

The villagers were used to the likes of Reverend Ambrose and in the old days the vicarage was there for the village, and the field behind the vicarage – the glebe – was used for sports and the Village Produce Association.

The tea was made in the vicarage and carried out. But not so when this young parson and his wife came – in fact she kept two or three goats in the middle of the glebe and put an electric wire round to keep them in – which meant that the glebe was out as far as we were concerned.

It made life very difficult.

**I have been told – and not by the donor – that the present owner of Kersey Vicarage and her late husband, having kept a section of the glebe to surround their house, “sold” the remainder to the village for one pound sterling! Information concerning this gift, and about the glebe in general follows:**

*“Extract from the minutes of the meeting of the Glebe Trustees on 2nd June 1994*

*3. The Chairman proposed that in memory of Mr Hyett and subject to Mrs Hyett’s agreement, their generous gift of the Glebe Field to the village should be marked by the formal incorporation into the minute book of the Chairman’s account of the acquisition which appeared in the March 1994 edition of the Village Newsletter. The Secretary will seek Mrs Hyett’s approval.”*

**Extract from Phil Darby's account, as chairman of The Glebe Trustees, follow:**

*"THE GLEBE FIELD"*

*...In 1982 the Church Commissioners indicated that they intended to sell the Glebe land. At a public meeting it was felt that this would be a loss to the village, and a Committee was established to endeavour to acquire the land on behalf of the village. I found myself chairing this Committee. We knew the land was valued at £3,500 but the Committee could not negotiate realistically unless it could find the money. This problem was overcome by a number of individuals and the National Playing Fields Association undertaking to loan the money to the Committee. Fund raising was then put in hand and within a year, by virtue of flower festivals, etc. we had raised £1,500.*

*It was soon apparent, however, that the Committee was not the only body interested in purchasing the land. the Church Commissioners' duty was to achieve the best possible price and the price rose to £5,000. The Committee then made an approach to the V.P.A. suggesting that it might be willing to acquire the land on our behalf, but it was felt the land was over-valued.*

*Mr V Hyett, who had previously bought the Old Vicarage, which the playing field adjoins, then came forward with the proposal that as he wished the field to continue to be used as a playing field, he should purchase the land. The Committee*

*evaluated the situation and realised that, currently, at least 50% of the field was neglected and not used... if this land could be brought into commission, the village would have a playing area larger than it was currently using, and Mr Hyett could have his garden extended. On this basis the Committee accepted Mr Hyett's proposal on behalf of the village, with much gratitude.*

*The Committee then had to be reconstituted, as "Trustees" of a charity which was charged with ensuring that this land should be maintained in good order as a recreation ground and playing field for the inhabitants of the village and, of course, the School. The Trustees eventually became the owners of the land for £1."*

**The next paragraph described the construction of safer access for children to the field, and the voluntary labour used to achieve and maintain its good order. Phil Darby then concluded his account as follows:**

*"In agreeing the sale in 1982 the Church Commissioners insisted that the lease to the Suffolk Education Authority was continued so that the Glebe remained the Sports Field for the School. The Trustees are now bound to honour that agreement for the benefit of the School.*

*The Trustees, as owners can, however, at their discretion, agree to other usage within the terms of the Trust, provided the terms of the lease are not jeopardised."* **Unfortunately**

## **Mrs Sheila Hyett died in February 2000.**



**Irene Hasler:** In an effort to raise some money for church restoration, the parson thought it would be a good idea to have a flower festival. Well, nobody was going to raise any money to go to the missionaries and they weren't behind him at all! So we had a meeting in Ethel Beeton's sitting room to which anyone interested in making money to do things to the church was welcome.

It was chaired by a stockbroker and his rather volatile wife, whose names I can't remember. The idea was that everybody should join in – church, chapel, nonconformist, atheist; “All to be done for the glory of God!” And this is in the minutes, actually.

Well, it was pointed out at the meeting that it was no good setting out to raise money for the church unless it was an object that the village would like to raise it for. (“The village” was just the village folk then). So, what did the village want to do? And dear Mr Mowles said, “Well, before the war we were about to raise money to restore the bells.”

The bells had not rung since Queen Victoria's time. Mr Mowles was a wonderful chap; he was the founder of the Village Produce Association. He worked for one of the farmers, but he had a lot of savvy. He was a member of the chapel at Kersey Upland, though his wife was church warden

at St Mary's for years.

So it was decided – they wanted the bells. Alright we'd raise money for the bells and we'd have a flower festival for that. And there was one condition – that the parson had nothing to do with it, nothing to do with it whatsoever! There was one awful meeting down at Ethel's when the parson was there and he had to sit in the kitchen. You've no idea! And it was a very sad business because you can't get rid of a parson no matter how unsuitable he is. He went in the end – I don't know how it was managed.

We called ourselves “Friends of the Bells”, and we had our own committee and our own secretary – Norah Anderson – and the parson had no handling of the money, nothing, and on that score we got the people behind us. Everyone in the village was visited and asked what they would like to do – “Oh well, I can't do this and that.” “Well, we shall need somebody to run a car park.” “Oh well, I could do that.” “I'll make jam.” “We'll collect money.” And so on.



**Viney Bigg:** We had, I think they call them “talents”, where you're given so much money to start you off and you had to increase it for the bells. And I bought flowers from the nursery and planted them up and got them on a bit and sold them and made quite a lot of money. And Ada Wyatt bought a lot of them off me. She's lovely.



**Irene Hasler:** There was, and should be to this day, a bell fund, because that money never went to the church at all – no money would have been raised if that had been so. We

*Collecting money from everyone who goes through the splash on their way to church. From left, Pamela Rice, Rita Martin and Jennifer Mowles. In the car is Ethel Beaton, one of the prime Flower Festival organisers*

were only about a dozen people, we couldn't have done it on our own, and besides the point was that the village should do it, for their own good they should do it!

We were really fortunate – Ethel Beaton said she would run it and she was a member of Ipswich Flower Club – they were wonderful; she knew so many people who were flower arrangers. And we put on a very good flower festival, really, and we became known for that.

We ran a series of half a dozen over six years, one after another, and we raised hundreds of pounds. We had the tents,

you see, for the stalls. The tents were put up in the school car park.



**Gladys Rice:** We used to have marvellous flower festivals to

get money for the tower and to get the extra two bells. We always had a theme – one year it was Nursery Rhymes and I did, “Little Nut Tree”.

Another year the theme was Businesses and I did “A Milliner” and trimmed all hats up. Both those times my arrangements were on the large font. Mrs Beeton was the organiser, and Mrs Mary Harbinson did one or two I think, but you just can’t believe the people what used to come.



**Eileen Gleed:** There used to be a queue from the churchyard, through the lych gate and past the school, waiting to get into the church.



**Victor Biebuyck:** There used to be some lovely flower festivals here – Ruth Gleed grew all flowers out the back of her cottage near The Bell.

There were loads of rabbit hutches in the gardens then, and big chicken runs and everything, but Ruth always had the flowers. I remember she used to decorate the font in the church. If mum and I were here those festival weekends we always used to go up and see them.



**Eileen Gleed:** The flower arrangements were beautiful.



*Ethel Beaton in the centre, with Cathy Henley, left, and Rachel Mowles carrying flowers for their arrangements in 1969*



*From left: Mary Harbison on her way to the refreshment stall, Noelle Watling with preserves in 1984, and May Peacock and Irene Hasler with her dried flowers*

Mrs Mary Harbison wanted a marble for the eye of one like a dragon once, and I think it was my Kenny cleaned up one and took it up for her. And after the flower festival she come to my door and brought a big box of coconut ice for him. She used to make it and sell it at the festival.



**Gladys Rice:** John Partridge used to send bags full of cabbages. And people would knit things – Mrs Webb used to

knit the loveliest Aran sweaters. Oh, there was a lot to sell.



**Marianne Lash:** Here's a photo of Noelle Watling at the 1984 flower festival. The home-made jam went in a flash. Her husband Brian was studying while they were here to become a vicar as well as a Judge and they used to live in Bouttells. He came back here to give a sermon not so long ago.



**Gladys Rice:** They were wonderful festivals but they took a lot of organising. We couldn't have done it without the head ones who organised them. Mrs Beeton was very good. And Miss Hasler – she used to do no end of dried flowers and bullrushes to sell. Mr Chambers used to help sell things – he was a good seller! And his wife used to do a flower arrangement for the festival. We used to have tea and cakes outside in tents where the car park is now. Mrs Mowles was the tea lady and Verena and I used to serve the tea.



**Eileen Glead:** I used to take scones up and they'd go, and I used to go back home to make another batch!



**Gladys Rice:** And we stood there for three whole days! That was our job, and Mrs Jarvis used to come and help us sometimes because there was just these hordes of people. Our legs got tired and the grass used to get wet, but we loved it. We were younger then, you see.

## HANDBELLS

**Neville Whittell:** It's comparatively easy to play handbells because you can count the bells down easier than you can the

ropes. You can ring exactly the same on handbells as you can on tower bells, as well as tunes. Rachel Wells keeps the Kersey church's set in her front room. The headmaster who used to be here, Tom Veasey, had handbells in school but they looked like tuners – a fork with a split in it – and a little hammer on the top which strikes when you flick it – and they had aluminium handles. They were really nice actually.



**Kate Bellman:** Neville's got his own set of handbells and he taught us methods on those at his home – the Fletchers used to come as well. We learned methods on handbells and then went to the church and rang them on church bells.



**“WE LEARNED  
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BELLS”**

**Sheila Zerbrugg:** It is over 30 years since I came here so memory is not what it should be. I don't want to leave out anybody when I talk about learning to ring the handbells. Cecil Fletcher used to take care of the tower bells and also unearthed the old handbells. He and “Nibby”, Norah Orris, Linda Fletcher and the Mitsons, John (lay elder) and Rita (very musical) and myself all used to

practise in the Reading Room. Bill Hacker and Bess who lived in The Old Gardens were very musical.

Bill was able to teach us how to ring using the number method. Rachel Wells and her sister-in-law and Geoff Williams rang too. We had great fun but the timing was difficult. We were not very good but we performed in church sometimes and some of us rang for the Innes at one of their Christmas parties (mentioned in Dorothy Innes book – “Home is My Garden”).

Some rang with the carol singers in the two pubs as well and money raised by handbell ringers allowed us to buy a music stand still used in church.

When we were talking about it today, Rachel reminded me that Jill Harbinson also helped the ringers and, later, Peggy Darby. My son, Nicholas, went to Australia the year my husband died, which was awful. But one of the nicest things that happened was when he came home for Christmas one time. I'd invited the handbell ringers to come here to play and we were having fun and a drink when he walked in. He was so thrilled to hear us and he was a good sport so he joined in and had a go instead of me!

## THE TOWER BELLS, HYMNS, CELEBRATIONS AND FUNERALS

**The following is an excerpt about the Kersey church bells from a letter written to Michael Harbinson in the early**

**1980s by Miss Alice Jackson, whose father used to farm at The Priory in the 1920s:**

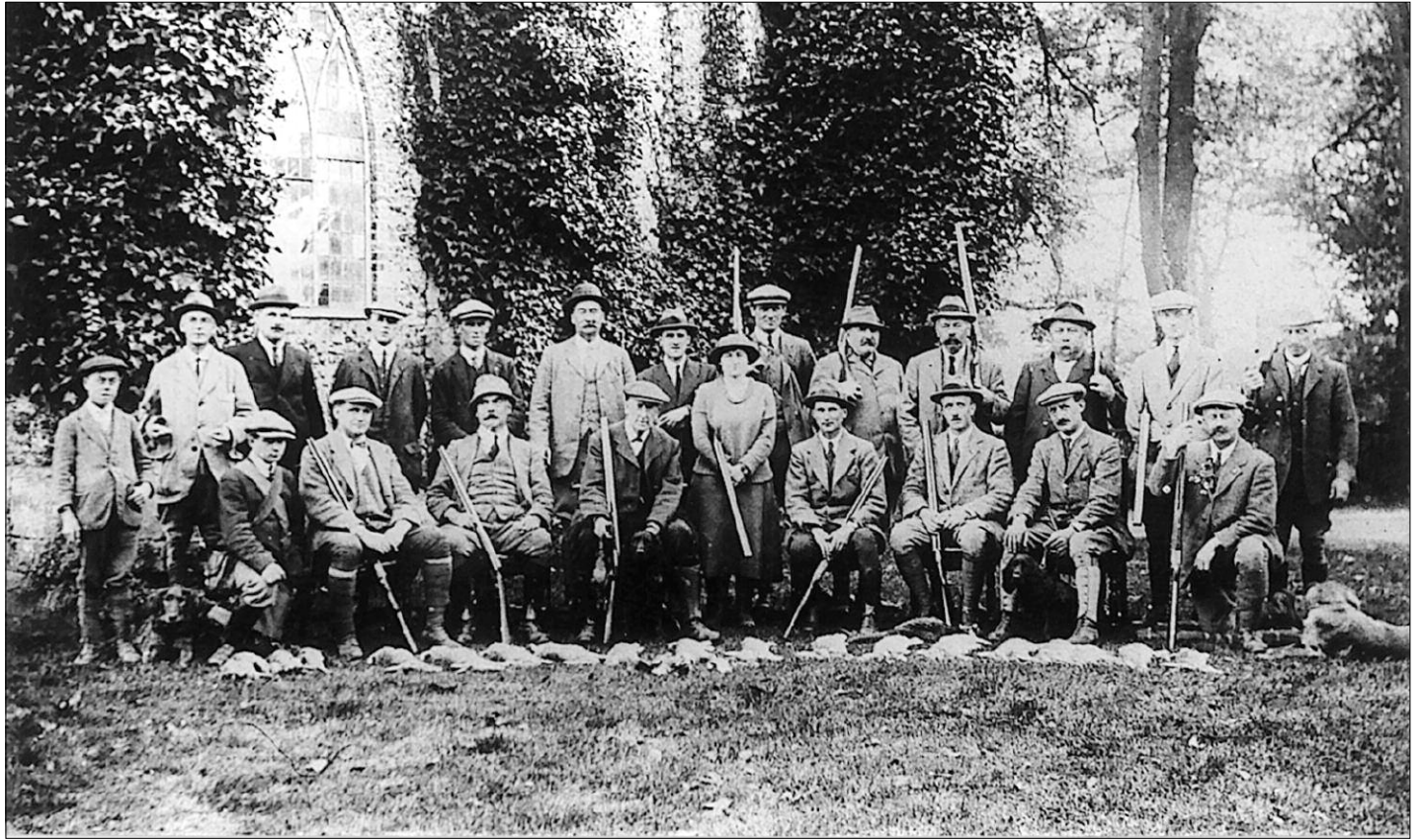
*“There was an interesting article in the East Anglian Daily Times about the new bells you are hoping to add to the tower. I wonder if the bellringers still play hymns on the bells before a service? They used to play from 10.30am until 10.50 before morning service. It was lovely to hear them. They always played the same one just before 10.50, and as we had no wireless in those days I was always listening for that last hymn as I knew we had to start for church. I can't remember what hymn in the morning, but in the evening it was “Abide With Me” and even now when I hear that hymn I think of Kersey and the lovely childhood we had there.”*



**Mary Holden:** When I was quite a young child they used to play hymns on them bells, they were lovely. That was in the Reverend Ambrose's day. He was very nice but very strict. If the boys didn't touch their cap when they met him he'd give them a clip round the ear!



**Verena Manning:** When my dad was sexton, after he'd filled a grave in, he'd go and play a hymn on the bells so the people would know that the grave had been filled in, and would then go up and look at the flowers.



*Alice Jackson in the centre of a shooting party at The Priory. Her father, Stanley Jackson, is second right front row.*



**Neville Whittell:** You can't play tunes on these bells as they used to years ago. Each bell is on a wheel and when it is rung now it swings full circle until the nave is vertical. But when they were in an unsafe condition to be rung, they just hung there in the tower and someone arranged some ropes onto the clappers so they could be chimed. So, instead of the bell moving, the clapper was just pulled to the bell and they were able to play some tunes on them.

They don't toll when there's been a death now like they used to in some places. That's described in Dorothy Sayers' "Nine Tailors". It's probably traditional in certain areas.



**Verena Manning:** My mum used to toll the death bell when anyone died in the village. I'm not quite sure how it went, but I think mum used to pull three times quick for a man and twice quick for a woman and then leave it for a little while and then pull again. And I think it was one for a child. She used to take me up there, and sometimes my sister too, and sit us on a big box.

When Grace Farthing's grandad died, Mum had to toll his age because he died young but she still had to pull that over forty times. And I'm sure that there was a storm on and the thunder was banging around while she counted "ONE, TWO

.."

And of course, they used to toll the bell at the funerals. Mum would be tolling the bell as the coffin was carried towards the church and then the sexton would knock on the belfry door as the coffin passed and she'd stop.

Dad had to give up as a sexton because of ill health, because he was wounded and gassed in the first world war, and he had a duodenal ulcer. So Reg Farthing's uncle Bob took the job over then.



**Kate Bellman:** Usually now, apart from regular services, we play as a celebration – at weddings and that sort of occasion. We rang for Viney and Frank Bigg's 50th Wedding Anniversary, as a surprise. That took about fifty minutes. And we rang a quarter peal for Michael Harbinson's 80th birthday.



**Viney Bigg:** Just look at this plaque – it's part of a London door-step and I'll read you what it says: "At St Mary's Kersey on the 15th January 1983 a quarter peal was rung to celebrate the golden wedding of Mr and Mrs Frank Bigg – 1,260 changes of plain Bach doubles –" and the names of all the ringers and the conductor. That was all arranged by the bell-ringers, we knew nothing about it.

“EVEN NOW  
WHEN I HEAR  
*ABIDE WITH ME*  
I THINK OF  
KERSEY AND  
THE LOVELY  
CHILDHOOD  
WE HAD THERE”



**Kate Bellman:** We were recently asked to ring for a memorial service and we asked if they'd like the bells muffled – which is putting a leather piece over one side of the clapper – so one strike is open but the other is muffled and very mournful which sounds beautiful. But this was a

thanksgiving for this gentleman's life, so the bells were left unmuffled.

We do ring them muffled for Armistice Day and also for New Year's Eve. Then Neville actually rings the twelve midnight strokes and then we nip up the tower, take the mufflers off and ring them open when the New Year is here!

That's a tradition that we've kept for many years now, haven't we?



**Neville Whittell:** We only missed one year because we couldn't get enough ringers.

Do you remember in 1995 on the fiftieth anniversary of V.E. day? We started out quite early. We were going for a quarter peal here but a rope broke on us so we couldn't do that. But we rang a quarter peal at Acton and then had to

ring at Edwardstone and then we went to Boxford and had a ring. And then we went to Boxford Fleece and had a lunch! They had a street party in Boxford too, so we had quite a nice day actually.

We hope to do the same for the Millennium as we have always done, if we can get enough people to ring. The National bell-ringing for the Millennium is proposed for midday on the first of January 2000 but we've spoken with the PCC and they would like to have it at midnight as it's always been here, and miss out the midday ring on the first.



**Kate:** The person who thought up the ringing at midday on the first didn't realise that we ringers ring in more than one church, so therefore we can't be helping out another team if we're ringing at our own church. So it's better that the times are staggered really.



**Neville:** The longest ring I've heard of was a group of eight in 1963 at Loughborough Bell Foundry. They played a Plain Bob Major – “Plain Bob” is the method and “Major” tells you that it's rung on eight bells. And they rang the 40,320 Bob changes which took them eighteen and three quarter hours non stop. No, they didn't stop at all!



**Kate:** They used plastic bags, so we were told. They were all men! Fancy actually ringing a method for eighteen and three quarter hours.



**Neville Whittell:** I started bell ringing when I was fourteen. My two brothers and I followed in our father's and his father's footsteps! We moved from Stowmarket to Hadleigh and I used to ring there, and then Cecil Fletcher – Verena and Nibby's brother – came to the practice one Monday night and he asked me if I'd come and help them in Kersey, which I did. And that was twenty-seven years ago! I looked after the tower at first, but Frank Bigg did it for some years while my family were small and then I took over again after he had a heart attack. He lived for a long time after that, though.

Apparently there was an old ringer who used to live in Essex and had a horse and cart, and he used to go out ringing on a Sunday afternoon. He'd go round picking up six people to ring and they rang a Seventy Plain Bob Minor here in, I think it was 1885. From six bells that's the maximum number of different changes you can get. So, if you ring a peal, you ring seven seventies. These people also rang at Bildeston at about the same time and also

Edwardstone – all bells which, when I learned to ring, couldn't be rung.



**Kate Bellman:** I started in 1979 when the late Frank Bigg who lived across the road from David and me asked if we'd like to learn. He introduced us to Neville and he began to teach us and, from then on, we didn't miss any ringing that we could possibly help, and I've been going ever since.



**Neville:** I've always found, wherever I go, that the comradeship is quite good. We certainly have to concentrate – you only get one go at it, you see! It's quite challenging in a lot of ways especially, I suppose, for the caller.

**Kate:** I seldom call because you call to a pattern and I've got to remember that pattern and also remember what I'm ringing and, because I'm not as experienced as Neville, I can get into a muddle – so I usually decline!



**Neville:** You have to be in the right place, so the first bell to go has to be the first, right through to the last one. And you have to be in the right spot – so there is a reasonable amount of concentration, because you need to pull the bell rope just

hard enough for it to want to go where it needs to go so that it doesn't clash with the one in front! We try not to leave the bells neck-up because, where there's access to the tower, that's not safe. In fact, you have to leave a warning notice if they are left on "stay" as it's called.



**Kate:** I was fairly slow to learn – I find that young people pick it up extremely quickly – but when you are in your middle years of course it comes more slowly. It's more of a knack than strength really.



**Neville:** Beginners can start ringing at any age – it doesn't really matter just as long as they're able to ring. It's more size than anything else. If a child is very, very small of course it doesn't work. Some of the bells are reasonably heavy and you're ringing something that probably is twice your weight or more. Generally speaking, ten, eleven, twelve is a reasonable age. They get quite keen too, but then they leave school and normally we don't see any more of them unfortunately.

People don't tend to stay in villages these days whereas, years ago, they used to grow up in a village and stay there. The majority of people used to work on the land in this area, but there isn't the work now of course.



**Sheila Zurbrugg:** There was a memorable time to do with the tower bells. I used to have parties on New Year's Eve long ago in the days when we all dressed up in long dresses and so on, and sometimes it was snowy and frosty when we all went up to the midnight service. On this particular occasion, I decided to open the doors and put on the tape recorder and record the bells ringing in the New Year. We sent the tape out to Ethel Beeton's nephew, Andrew Lemon, who was in the Middle East and I remember him writing back and saying how much it meant to him to hear us all talking and laughing and how clear the bells sounded. Robert and I were very fond of Andrew.



**Neville Whittell:** Sometimes we don't get warm at all when we ring in Kersey church in winter!



**Kate Bellman:** My feet are usually stone cold all through the winter but my body's usually warm. We do have two gas heaters which warm your body but the floor's so cold that, somehow, my feet just never get warm. In fact, they get colder and colder until I get home! The mats that we stand on are really to stop us wearing out the ropes on the stone

floor, because they hit it when you pull them down.



**Neville:** We had a carpet but, because the floor suffers from rising damp, the carpet went mouldy in several places, so we just cut it up into squares and use one each to stand on. At the start of a warm spell of weather it takes the church itself about three days to warm up but then it's nice to ring with the West door open so that you're standing in a breeze. We enjoy that in the summer.

A lot of churches are interesting in their own way because the bells are different and the ringing situations are different. Some towers are so difficult to get up into that it's more like mountaineering than bellringing! Monks Eleigh tower floor, where we used to stand to ring, had the middle missing, which took a bit of getting used to. They built the vestry below there at the turn of the century and they wanted light from the west window to go down there, so they removed part of the tower floor. In fact they didn't leave any floor at all for the ringer of the fifth bell, so they put some planks across and he had to climb over a rail to reach his position and stand in a sort of pen!



**Kate:** Or you may get a tower that's not running regularly and is festooned with cobwebs. And, as you ring, little bits of





*Kersey Church Clock faces were repainted in June 1996*

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plaster or pigeons' nest will come down the guide and shower you!

**THE CHURCH CLOCK**

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**Mary Holden:** I can remember the church clock being put on in 1925 – I used to sit on our front doorstep and watch. The face facing down Church Hill has always been there but the other face was put on the west side.

Then the council house people said they couldn't see the time and so they had it altered to face down Vale Lane. I think that was done when the tower was restored.

**Claude:** I tell you what, there was two clock faces on the church, and one was to face up The Tye for us and one down Kersey Street, and they were put on in 1925. And Mr Tricker and Mr Jackson put the most money towards that clock. And then the Parish Council decided to take that face down what used to face us up The Tye and turn it round to face down Vale Lane. And doing so they had to break it!

Before that Cyril Fletcher and another bloke down The Street used to wind the clock and that kept time with Big Ben lovely.



**Neville Whittell:** I wind Kersey church clock every Sunday morning in the daylight – it's easier then, though there are lights in amongst the bells for when it's dark. It loses half a minute a week and that's ideal because you can pulse it on and then wind it. And we have to pull down a cord in the belfry to stop the clock from striking while we are bell-ringing because it strikes on the biggest bell. Then, of course, we have to remember to free it again afterwards!



**Harold Seggar:** During World War Two we had Americans here. They loved Kersey and they used to get up the top over the pightle and take photos of the village down, you see. Well, my father used to run cows out on the pightle and so one of them said one day, "Can you tell us what the time is governor?" Well, Dad got an old cow standing there so he picked the tail up and he looked in between the legs and he say, "That's half past four." "Cor blimey," he says, "you got a rare cow there what can tell the time." But my father could see the church clock couldn't he?"