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Newsletter - January 2024





The Reverend Ivan Howitt

The Guild is very sad to announce the death of the Reverend Ivan Howitt, who passed away on the 3rd January 2024 after a short illness. A Service of Thanksgiving for Ivan will take place on Saturday 10th February 2024 at 2pm. It will be held at their local Church, St Mary's, Barton on Humber DN18 5EZ. The Guild offers its sincere condolences to Valerie, Ivan's wife, and their family, over their loss.

Ivan was a much respected and loved member of the Guild. His lively, thoughtful, and warmly received contributions made over a very long period will be remembered by all with whom he had association. He joined the Guild in 1988, served as Guild secretary between 2007 and 2012, becoming Vice President in 2016 and again in 2023. In more recent years, Ivan also undertook to administer the Guild Facebook pages, adding items of interest, the RW Thought for the Week written by members, and many photographs of Guild activities past and present. Ivan successfully rang some 13 peals for the Guild between 1989 and 2008, ranging from minor to royal, and including one at Hedon, York, on becoming the vicar there.

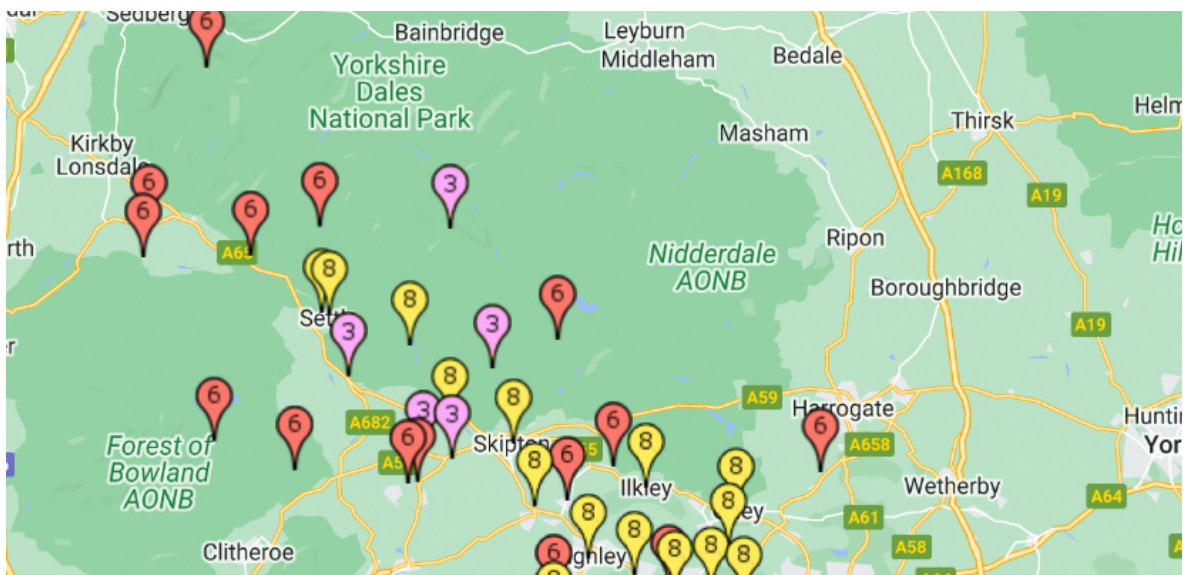
His higher education was at the University of Kent, gaining a BA in 1981, and the Sarum and Wells Theological College. He commenced his first curacy at Herne Bay, Canterbury in 1983 and his second on the Isle of Thanet in 1987. Between 1990 and 2003, Ivan held several incumbencies in the Diocese of Lincoln including for 8 years as the Rural Dean of Lawres. For a shorter period, he was also a Chaplain to the Seafarers Mission at Hull. In 2003, Ivan was appointed as vicar of Hedon, in the Diocese of York. Leaving Hedon in 2009, Ivan joined the Harton Benefice, not far from York itself, becoming Rector of the Group in 2012. Retiring in 2013, but with permission to officiate in both York and Lincoln Dioceses, Ivan and Valerie, moved finally to Barton upon Humber, North Lincolnshire.

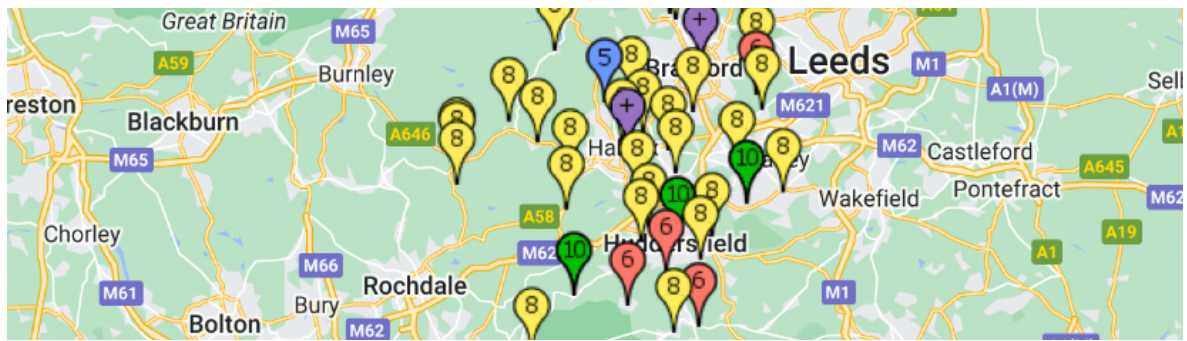
We express our gratitude to Ivan, not only for his long service to many as an ordained priest in the Church of England but also as a bell ringer where he graced us with his presence, his fine ringing skills, good humour, and pastoral support. May he now rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.



Ringling in West Yorkshire beyond Leeds

by Dale Barton - Guild Ringing Master





The Western branch of the Yorkshire Association is unmanageably large. To reach Saddleworth from my home on the west side of Bradford is an 80-minute drive from here under ideal road conditions. However, in a little over ten miles, we can ring at two twelves, one by Gilletts, one by Taylors. In addition, in that radius, we have three more Gillett eights and three Taylor eights. I have come back from ringing tours thinking how blessed we are here with Halifax and Bradford, Skipton and Keighley in reach.

“Too many bells, too few ringers” comments one local tower captain, although six of the eight towers ring for services on Sunday.

Bradford Cathedral is an exception. We have occasionally managed to put together a band from the District for Sunday afternoon/evening services. The Leeds Minster band has rung for services occasionally too. The Young Tykes will have rung for the Bradford Civic Carol Service this year. I am trying to keep the connection between church services and bells alive. Plenty want to ring peals or practice for the twelve-bell competition. The bells had Taylor’s check in 2018 and are due one next year.

We are fortunate to have had several good ringers with leadership skills move into the district within the last few years. The general standard of ringing is improving. At a monthly Surprise Major practice, we regularly ring Cornwall. Handbells are happening. I have rung six quarter peals last year, mainly with people trying Bob Major or Bob Triples for the first time, also my first peal for a while for the Coronation.

The Mid Pennine ringers, a group of retired people who ring, meet monthly for a couple of towers and lunch. They are my only opportunity to ring London Surprise Major and sometimes Spliced. I’m persuaded that quite a number of towers are kept going by this group.

Come and join us. The bells are good, the rate of exchange of the pound is excellent and we are on the edge of some of the finest scenery in England.

Strong possibility of a Guild 2024 Autumn three-day tour.....



Tony Ellis, immediate past president of the Guild, is putting his mind to planning ringing in and around Birmingham over some three days, commencing on Tuesday 1st October. The ringing venues and possible accommodation are yet to be sorted but please all of you Guild Members in the Midlands do come and join those of us who will venture from further afield to participate.

Please watch this space in the next communication from the Guild but please mark the date now in your diaries if you are interested. It will be good to ring together and spend time getting to know each other.

The Guild Annual 2024 Low Week Tour (LWT) – Monday 8th to Friday 12th April





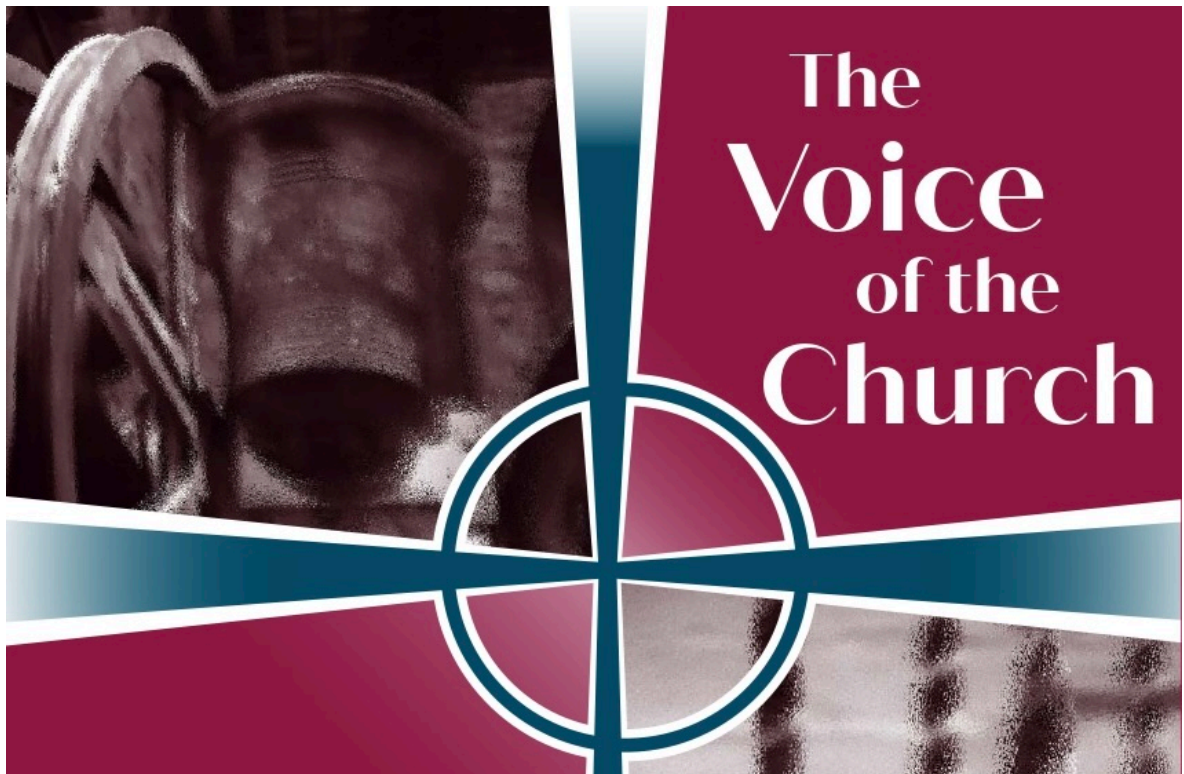
Arrangements for the 2024 LWT are now well in hand. We shall be centered this year (as indicated in the December 2023 Newsletter) in the vicinity of mid Devon – in and around Tiverton. A lot of new towers will be ventured by the Guild – with one or two not visited since 1964 or thereabouts! Lots of sixes, a few eights, and a couple of 10s are on the agenda – but ringing to suit every level of ability. For three days of the week, we will make use of a small coach to get us about.

A good number have already booked accommodation at the Fishermans Cot overlooking the River Exe, but there may still be some additional accommodation available if you are keen and interested in joining. Quite a number from the SW have said they will join for a day or so if they cannot make the full week. Hopefully, this will act as a taster experience for future years and more time spent together.

Do please contact Tim Hawkings (01225 684908) or Jon Rose (07969 008091) if you want to be part of a happy week of ringing, relaxation, and the

if you want to be part of a happy week of ringing, relaxation, and the occasional pub or two or three...and some end-of-day short worship. The Guild AGM will be held during the week – using Zoom, and full details (and costs) of the tour will be circulated by mid-February for those attending.

The Voice of the Church: publication 2023



Our joint publication with the Ringing World (RW) continues to be purchased in small numbers and receives very good reports. Talking with Will Bosworth, Ringing World editor, we came up with the idea that if you are part of an area association/guild gathering or other ringing events, then Will could make available small quantities of the book on a sale or return basis. This is worth thinking about. It came up recently when one of our members pending: Rhona McCune (set for Ordination this summer) sought copies of the book for her fellow ordinands on a training course. This is just the kind of largely non-ringing group who should read the publication and inwardly digest it!

Do contact Will at the RW, if this arrangement interests you. Remember, we are trying to ensure church leaders who know little about bells, towers and

ringing, are informed through The Voice of the Church. And if you have still not seen a copy yourself, then the RW publications is the place to go.

And Finally...

A revised and updated copy of the Guild Membership Directory will be circulated with the AGM papers (paper copy for those who request). A part aim here is to ensure that all members know where each other lives and regionally might consider or plan perhaps a day's ringing together if the journey is not too onerous.

Someone, however, in a given area has to round folk up and indeed look out for other ringing clergy who are not yet Guild members. We gathered in the SW and had two good days together last year – although we have yet to be very successful with our quarter peals! But we learn from each other. Please stand and be counted if you feel able and have the time to organize a regional/local ring.

Meanwhile, a very Happy and Healthy New Year to all Guild members and those who kindly support us in our endeavours.

Jon Rose, President, Guild of Clerical Ringers

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