

**St. Martin's Church,
Horsley**

Our Bells





The Church Bells of St Martin, Horsley

September 10th was the 25th Anniversary of the Re-Dedication of Horsley Bells by the Bishop of Gloucester in 1989. This followed a complete restoration of the bells, frame and fittings by bell hangers Whites of Appleton from Oxford.

Work was mainly financed by a £30,000 gift by Frank (Bunny) Arkell, of Sugley Farm, Churchwarden. He had intended to leave the money as a legacy in his Will, but was persuaded by Village residents to release the funds before his demise. As a result he was able to enjoy the sound of Horsley Bells across the fields at Tickmorend for a number of years

Prior to restoration, Horsley bells had not been swung for some 50 years, the medieval oak frame was rotten, the wheels broken and the bells hanging precariously 60ft up in the Chamber. A chiming gear had been fitted and some locals still remember using the hand operated Ellacombe gear for Church Services.

The 6 bells, some dating back to 1632, together with their oak frame were taken down by Whites and removed for restoration. Horsley bell ringers, Walter Wright, Syd Heaven, with the PCC and others, ensured the new steel bell frame was built with a capacity to take a further two bells. Installation and re hanging was completed during August 1989 ready for practice ringing.

Due to a 50 years silence, few local ringers were available, so training from scratch, by local volunteers began on Wednesday evening 20th September and has been going ever since.

Our present Captain of the bells joined in 4th October, two weeks later, and became Tower Captain in August 1993.

To celebrate the re-dedication, a repeat quarter peal of one rung by the Bisley Society of Youths in 1829, was rung on 17th Sept 1989.

This quarter peal, 25 years on, was repeated on the original 6 bells prior to 6 o'clock Evensong on 28th September 2014. This was the first Service held at Horsley by our new Vicar, Rev. Mike Smith.

The 6 Horsley bells were increased to 8 by adding a new pair 5 years later. These were cast in the White-chapel Foundry, London, and installed in 1994 They were donated by Walter Wright and David Carter in Memory of lost close relatives.

The fine 8 bells of Horsley are rung regularly; still mainly with support from outside the Village. Horsley bells are used as the 8 bell monthly training centre for the 18 towers of Stroud Branch, a Member of the Gloucester and Bristol Association of Church Bell ringers.



We have recently fitted a Simulator to the Bells, to encourage local training with the bells operating silently . We need local ringers urgently. Practice every Wednesday 7.30pm or earlier, by arrangement .

Stan Burrage, Tower
Captain, Horsley.



*Why don't you come along and join
in the fun?*