

## Bell Ringing

Church bells present the unique sound of England. We have over 5000 ringing peals (sets of bells) whilst the rest of the world have 70.

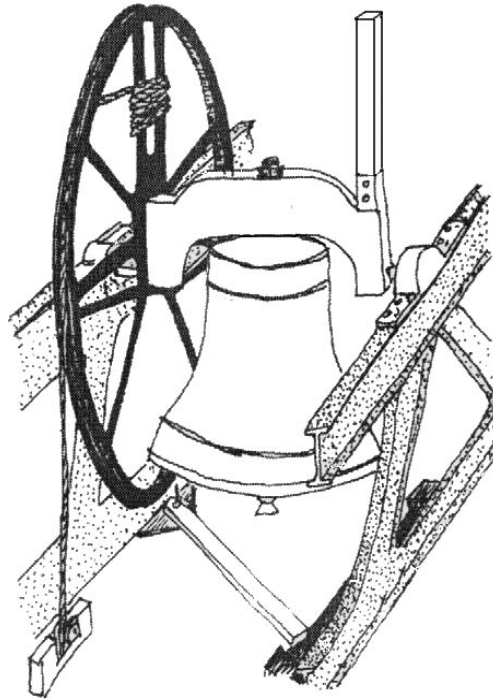
Over the centuries the bells became an essential part of life not only by calling people to church but also to tell them of important events and to give warnings. Coronations, festivals, great victories and many more events are celebrated with the ringing of bells. During the last war there was no bell ringing; the bells were to be a warning that we had been invaded. Finally the bells were rung to show our victory.

The Joyful sound of ringing church bells still evokes all the magic and beauty that is forever England.

## The Art of Bell Ringing

Bells are rung full circle. This means that the bell turns a complete circle when it makes one ring. The bell starts mouth up, swings all the way round and ends mouth up. It is then made to swing back the other way. It is stopped from continuing round by a stay and slider. This method of handling big bells enables the ringer to place the sound accurately and the sound rings out while the bell is pointing upwards. Thus bell ringing in Britain has developed and become a music of its own.

A bell hung for full circle ringing



## Learning to Bell Ring

All people from all walks of life and of all ages learn to ring. We, at Ashford, fondly remember Maurice who was blind and rang with us. First you need to learn bell handling; how to make the bell go fast and slow and how to make it sound at the right time. Then there is all the fun of learning the different methods (patterns). When each bell is rung once it is called a *change*. Experienced ringers might ring a peal; 5040 changes without errors. Peals are the very best ringing. They take between two and four hours so, more often, a quarter-peal might be attempted.

## Ringers

Ringers can practice in their local church and are welcome to join other practices.



There are the standard methods that are rung at most towers so you can join in with any band and ring. It is exciting to ring other bells that handle differently and to try different approaches with other teams. Different towers have different numbers of bells. The more bells there are the more complicated the ringing gets and the harder it is to hear exactly where you are. Too few bells and the music is too limited. Six or Eight bells are ideal. Some bells are very heavy and ring gloriously deep and slow notes and others are crisp and light.

Visitors are very welcome at Ashford. They join us on Sundays and often help us learn new methods, sometimes by joining in quarter-peals.

## The Ashford Bells

There are six bells at Ashford tuned for ringing. Two date back to 1612, one 1750, one 1939 and then two further bells were added in 1966. The oldest three were recast in 1954.



There is also a small bell called a 'Sanctus Bell' that is chimed at certain times during the communion service. It is not intended for full-circle ringing. It is considered the oldest of the Ashford bells and has often been dubbed the "pancake bell".



## The Inscriptions

Bells are cast with an inscription telling us when and why they were made.

<u>Bell</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Inscription</u>
Treble:	2 2 23	<i>Jean Whittaker 1907-1965</i>
Second:	3 0 14	<i>Jean Whittaker 1907-1965</i>
Third:	3 1 10	<i>Glory be to God on high God save the Queen In memoriam Harry Ernest Sherlock Vicar 1912-1939</i>
Fourth:	3 3 4	<i>I H C Gloria in Excelsis Deo G H Circa 1600-1612 Recast 1954</i>
Fifth:	4 2 0	<i>Richard Bennett C W 1750 Thomas Hellesley Founder Ashford-in-the-Water Recast 1954</i>
Tenor:	6 0 6	<i>I H C Gloria in Excelsis Deo - 1612 Holy Trinity Recast 1954</i>

## Ringling Times

Tuesday 7.00 - 8.30 pm  
Sunday 9.00 - 9.40 am

For further information on ringing and learning to ring contact:  
Linda Pelc 01629 815280

# The Bells



## Of Holy Trinity Church Ashford-in-the-Water

