

In Memory of Stephen (Steve) Goddard

Steve, was born in February 1958, attended Terling School, Essex and learnt to ring at the village church. After leaving Braintree High School, he joined the RAF in 1976 as an Aeronautical Propulsion Engineer working on Phantom Jets and latterly as a Flight Engineer before retiring in 2006. Steve saw action in the Falklands during 1982 and was awarded the South Atlantic Medal with Rosette and a General Services Medal for his part in Air Operations over Iraq in 1997 as well as the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. He served on both Nimrod and VC10 fleets, before becoming an extemporary flying instructor and Master of the RAF Guild of Bell Ringers.

Steve was a keen Bell ringer with 90 peals to his credit, 3 of which were rung overseas in Washington DC and Brisbane, Australia. Along the way he pealed Doubles to Royal with 18 of Grandsire Triples and Caters. Terling was his most popular tower with 12 peals.

His first Peal was at Rayne in 1973 and the last at Terling in 2015 marked with a Peal Board celebrating the life of Philip Rothera.

It was Philip who taught him to ring at Terling and ~ 50 years ago the tower was covered in scaffolding as the old spire shingles were being replaced. Back then Health & Safety was not taken very seriously, the scaffolding left open and easily accessible in the evenings. Steve and possibly one or two members of the congregation seized the opportunity to scale the spire and a young Mr Goddard inscribed his initials somewhere near the top— possibly on the bottom of the weather vane but we could not possibly comment.

Whilst based at Brize Norton, Steve spent his evenings ringing at some of the local churches and would often start at one tower only to leave part way through to go to another. Oh and rest assured there would be a convenient pub to reminisce about the evening's events.

Steve was always keen to help others and following his retirement from the RAF and now living on the beautiful Gannel Estuary, Cornwall, he became a leading light in the project to restore the bells at St Columb Minor, Newquay, and was appointed as their tower captain. He was also one of a group of volunteers that helped repaint the bell frame as part of the renovation of the bells at Terling. Surprisingly, St Columb Minor's bell frame has 'traces' of the same paint....

It's likely that as a serving member of our most distinguished flying service there was 'time' between waiting for planes to be readied for action or simply putting them away at the weekend! This gave Steve and his fellow airman lots of time to gather information on a wide variety of subjects, so wide in fact that Steve was everybody's friend if there was a pub or village quiz on the horizon!

However, his favourite subject was perhaps beer and his knowledge got him talking to a lady at the Square and Compasses Beer Festival (2010) at Fuller Street, Essex. She (Liz) was enquiring as to the likelihood of their being any 'Spingo'. There wasn't, then she said "I bet you don't know where it is brewed". Unfortunately for her, the man serving behind the bar knew the pub where it's brewed and served, namely the Blue Anchor at Helston. You could say this chance encounter was, 'Love at first sip!"

So, it came as no surprise to us when he announced that they would marry (2012) at The Knights Templar – It used to be the Union Bank, now a popular City Pub just off Fleet Street. Steve would have delighted in telling you that this glorious building was used for filming the scene featuring Middle Temple Church in the Da Vinci Code. By chance, the day after their wedding he rang at the RAF Church aka St Clement Danes, a quarter peal of Grandsire Caters for the annual RAF Service.

Now living near Colchester, Steve joined St Peter's Church and became their ringing master supporting band members and helping the band grow.

Sadly Steve contracted Lymphoma cancer and following a long hard battle died on 23rd August 2018 with his funeral held at Terling in September.

Steve was a wonderful son, husband and friends to many. He will be greatly missed by those whose life he touched.

Word Count: 730