



In Touch

November 2009

Great Brickhill bells on the move

Great Brickhill bells have recently been removed from the tower and taken to Whitechapel for tuning and augmentation.

See page 4 for a full account of the project so far.



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Branch Christmas Celebration

**Saturday 12th December
at St Andrew's, Great Linford**

5.00 Ringing
5.45 Carol Service
7.00 Fish and Chip Supper and Quiz Evening



The supper will be in the Memorial Hall, a short walk from the church or sign posted off Marsh Drive.

There will be a choice of Fish and Chips, Chicken and Chips or Sausage and Chips: these will need to be ordered and paid for before the start of the service, as they will be collected during the service.

Price : £6.50 per person including tea, coffee and mince pies. These are licensed premises, so bring your own drink if you wish.

The quiz will follow after the supper, with prizes (!!!) for the winning team. Come along as a tower and make a team.

Names and food orders to Alan and Tine Marchbank 01908 611434 in advance, or up to the start of the service.

Who's Who 2009—2010

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From the Editor . . .

Welcome to this winter edition of In Touch.

Over the last year or so the rehanging and augmentation of the bells at Olney has been the major project reported in In Touch. Now that this project is almost complete, another rehanging and augmentation project at Great Brickhill is just starting its practical phase. This will produce another fine ring of bells, this time in the south of the branch. David Middleton has written an article for this edition which explains the history of the Great Brickhill bells and brings us up to date with the project.

When I took this editorial role on in 2008, I asked that people would send me more snippets of tower news to include in the 'Around the belfries' page. This is the fifth edition that I have put together: considering that there are 39 towers in the branch, it is disappointing that only a dozen or so towers have contributed during this time. So may I please make a plea for some

news from those towers that have not yet responded. After all, the newsletter is only as interesting as the content that people contribute. Any news will do - the current state of the tower, the bells, the ringing, the ringers!

The Quiz and Supper was a great success last year, and the format is being repeated again on 12 December. I hope many of you can make the event.

Just one more thing, the deadline for the next edition of In Touch is: **Tuesday 2nd February 2010.**

Jonathan



Message from the Chairman

Hello again

First as this is the last edition before Christmas, I wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

And I hope to see as many of you as possible at the Christmas social to be held this year at Great Linford.

Brian Newman

from the Ringing Development Leaders

Newport Deanery

The summer months are now behind us and racing between towers to support wedding ringing has subsided until the 'crazy' season starts again in 2010. It did occur to me some weeks ago that as most of these weddings are booked months ahead why do we only start looking for ringers days before. Olney now operates an online church diary system and I can see weddings booked for 2011! Some sort of co-ordination within the three deaneries of the branch would not go amiss so that scarce resources can be correctly utilised across all of the towers. We have an officers meeting booked for the 12th November so I will raise this proposal and report back.



The Emberton Novices Practice held on the 17th October was not successful in that no novices turned up so we need to review our strategy here. I understand that the recruitment day held at Hanslope on the same day was somewhat more successful in attracting new ringers to the exercise. All was not lost at Emberton, an impromptu technical inspection was carried out and we could have had an officers meeting with the five officers present.

The first meeting of the current three year Diocesan Synod takes place on Saturday 14th November in High Wycombe and the Deanery Synod meets the Tuesday following that in Haversham. I will report back with any issues of relevance in the next edition of In Touch.

I look forward to meeting with as many of you as can make it to Towcester on the 21st November.

Guild 10 Bell Striking Competition

It is planned to enter a band, the competition is on Saturday 28th November at Long Crendon. The test piece is a 15 lead touch of Grandsire Caters. We will have two practices for the competition: one on Remembrance Day Wednesday 11th November at Olney; the second practice also at Olney on Monday 23rd November from 8.15pm (in place of the second half of the normal Olney practice night). We currently have a squad of 13 from which the competition band will come but if you have not volunteered yet and you wish to be considered please contact me as soon as possible by email fabianstedman@btinternet.com or phone 07912 059491.

Quarter on the Dorian Six

I've wanted to ring a quarter on the middle six at Newport ever since ringing one at Sacred Trinity, Salford in 1979. In fact, reading through my somewhat battered peal book, I find that I conducted that quarter of Cambridge S Minor, on Thursday 1st November 1979. Stephen Pocock, the Manchester University Guild's resident tenor ringer pointed out that the middle six of a ring of eight would be in the Dorian mode, giving a more interesting musical result than the front six. We agreed that the result was better than the front 6 but, as the tenor at Sacred Trinity only weighed 12cwt there wasn't much need to ring a light 6.

So, fast forward 30 years and to the somewhat better ring of eight at Newport. We were considering what to do for the combined All Saints / All Souls Sunday and, after deciding we would not have enough ringers for both Newport and Lathbury in the morning, we turned our thoughts to an evensong quarter. Then the thought of the Dorian ring occurred. For an all Souls service it is perfect: according to reliable musical sources, the tone between the 6th and 7th is such that it gives them a proper minor feel and for ringers, the sense that something significant is missing makes the ring particularly suitable for this occasion.

Newport Pagnell, Bucks

SS Peter & Paul

Sunday, 1 November 2009 in 44mins (14)

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1 Elly Cooper

2 Tine Marchbank

3 Simon Read

4 Nick Read

5 B Douglas Hird (c)

6 Nick Ashton

Rung on the Dorian 6 for All Souls Service

Next stop, half muffled triples for Remembrance Day.

Doug Hird

David Phillipson

Great Brickhill rehanging starts – at last!

Great Brickhill's bell rehanging project began in October after the need was recognised more than 20 years ago. Hugh Butler, the previous tower captain, first obtained estimates for the job in 1991, but did not receive support at that time, and so the opportunity for a Millennium Bell Fund grant was missed. However, in 2000, a new plan and fundraising for the church restoration was launched. The church bell project was included in the plan after cracks in the tower appeared in the apex of the chancel cross arch, which was blamed on movement caused by the instability of the flimsy wooden bell frame and its supporting timbers, and we were required to stop ringing the Tenor and fifth bells. Since then, we have been restricted to ringing minimus and singles on the light four bells, with the last ring of all six being in 2000, half-muffled for the funeral of one of our ringers, Val Hartwell.



Graham Clifton lowering through the new trapdoor



In 2004, David Middleton restarted the project, which includes augmentation to an eight and complete refurbishment of the ringing room with hardwood benches and panelling. The fund raising target of £130,000 was achieved early this year after the old redundant Baptist Chapel site in the village was sold, managed by the Parish Council, which awarded a community grant of £58,000 for the village bell project from some of the proceeds. A Landfill Tax grant has been awarded by WREN through Bucks Historic Churches Trust, and other grants are from the Sharpe Trust, the Oxford Bell Fund and the ODGCBR Restoration Fund, the remainder being raised by the Church and parishioners. Our

thanks go to the fundraisers and all those benefactors and parishioners who have contributed and worked on fundraising events to finance the project.

Great Brickhill bell tower was built in the mid 13th century, and bells have probably been rung there for more than 700 years. Its bells were first documented in 1637 in the same year as the foundation in London of the Ancient Society of College Youths, when there were five full circle ringing bells, and the sill timbers of that old bell frame remained supporting the later frame, although the bells have been recast several times. Three of four lower primary supporting timbers probably date back to the construction of the tower in the 13th

Century.



The tenor's a tight fit going out

The six existing bells were cast in 1789 by William and Thomas Mears at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. The No. 2 bell was recast in 1840, probably because it sustained damage. A clue to the reason for the damage is in A.H. Cocks book of 1897, "Church Bells of Buckinghamshire", in which he wrote, "All the stays are *double*, made of two pieces of wood, one on each side of the stock,

crooked, so as to meet, and form one perfectly invulnerable stay, capable of allowing the canons of the bell to break, without themselves receiving the slightest injury!". It may be that the canons were broken in that way in 1840, necessitating the recast.



Sills of the 16th/17th Century five-bell frame standing on the older primary timbers

Great Brickhill continued

Until the bells were sent to Appleton by Whites on 30th October, the weights of the bells were only estimated, but after removal of the headstocks, the bells have been weighed as:

Tenor 14 - 1 - 20
5th 10 - 1 - 14
4th 8 - 2 - 02
3rd 7 - 2 - 16
2nd 5 - 2 - 10
Treble 5 - 2 - 10

There is also the Sanctus bell, the original of which was probably destroyed in Cromwell's Commonwealth when the puritans believed that service bells were implements of Catholicism, and Parliamentary troops were garrisoned in the village. The Sanctus bell was replaced in 1681 after the restoration of the monarchy, and will be rehung with the main bells. That bell is the earliest known bell cast by George Chandler of Drayton Parslow.

Records show that in the Parish, "A piece of land 1 acre 3 poles called the Bell Rope Piece lets for £2/10 per annum which sum is applied in buying bell ropes for the church and paying the ringers." It is not known when ownership was transferred, but that land is now farmed by Michael Turner, whose tractor loaded the bells for transporting to Appleton.



Villagers, ringers and bell hangers with bells ready to go

The project is being managed under the direction of the architects Caroe & Partners. The first step was to cut a trapdoor in the ringing room floor and remove the ceiling to lower the bells. The old redundant clock case was removed to make room for eight ropes. During the week ending 30th October, the bells and all the wooden frames and supports were removed by Whites of Appleton. The bell frame and its supports were constructed in three sections:

- 🔔 The main frame holding the bells is the top layer constructed in 1789, but the timbers are of such flimsy dimensions that in 1896 they had to be braced with steel brackets and tie rods by Mears and Stainbank of Whitechapel. Under instruction of the

Rev. M. Nepean, the bells received new headstocks and fittings, and the Whitechapel Sales Day Book shows a charge of £101-15s-0p for the work.

- 🔔 That frame stands on the bottom sills of the old five bell frame dating from the 16th or 17th Century and recorded in 1637, but those timbers are very rotten and worm eaten, and can no longer support the frame, which rocks on its foundations when the bells are rung. That movement stresses the tower walls, and may have contributed to the cracks, although they may have been caused by old subsidence.
- 🔔 The old sills stand on five parallel primary timber supports which take the full weight of the bells, frame and other timbers. The ends of those timbers are rotted and were shored up in the 1920's, but the resultant dislocation probably initiated the instability of the frame and the cracks in the tower walls. English Heritage requires that three of those timbers are to be preserved, and they may have to be hung in the Tower under the new ringing room ceiling after the new bell frame has been installed.

The frame supports will be replaced by an interlocked grillage of steel girders anchored into the walls to brace the tower, and a new eight-bell cast iron bell frame will be constructed.

On 30th October, two new small bells were cast by Whitechapel, bringing our ring of bells to eight, and those will be tuned at the foundry with our six larger bells, where they were cast. The Treble and Sanctus bells have hair-line cracks, which are to be welded by Soundweld of Suffolk. The eight bells will be returned to Appleton, where Whites will provide new fittings and fit them into the new bell frame assembly.



Whitechapel casting the new No.2 bell

After the tower walls have been repaired, the steel girder grillage will be anchored into the walls, bracing and strengthening the tower, and the bells will be rehung in the new frame ready for ringing. The ringing room is to be refurbished, and the project is scheduled to be completed in April/May 2010 to create a very fine 14cwt eight within the North Bucks Branch of the Guild.

David Middleton

Ray Vickers' 75th birthday celebrations

Not everyone manages to reach the age of 75 years and even fewer still ringing peals, but Ray Vickers made the most of his by ringing in his birthday peal at Maids Moreton. The after-peal party was intended to be a surprise organised with the assistance of Ray's little sister Christine and his diary secretaries. After the peal we staggered into the Wheatsheaf to discover a select party in progress already celebrating Ray's birthday. Never short of a few words Ray produced notes for his speech from a pocket, was this party really a surprise to him? During his speech Ray explained that one of the benefits of achieving the age of 75 is that you get a free television licence, and the benefit is even greater if your birthday is late in the month because it starts from the beginning of the month of your 75th birthday. I am really looking forward to that.

Andrew Spencer

Maids Moreton, St Edmund

Wednesday October 21st 2009, 2hrs 47mins

5040 Spliced Surprise Minor

15 methods:

Carlisle, Chester, Munden, Westminster, Allendale, London, Wells, York, Durham, Beverley, Surfleet, Lightfoot, Wearmouth, Cambridge, Ipswich.

- 1 Ruth Stokes
- 2 Julie A Haseldine
- 3 Raymond A Vickers
- 4 Andrew J Spencer
- 5 Christopher C Stokes
- 6 Andrew Haseldine (C)

Ray's 75th birthday peal

Ray and his peal band



Lead On!

Polly the dog here.

Just back from holiday in Cornwall where we visited quite a few beaches and I think they are brilliant, all that space to run about in, sand to dig in and not to mention the sea . . . good to paddle in but tastes a bit funny (definitely not good to drink).

Of course there was ringing in the evening. Driving along some very twisty lanes and it was very dark, sometimes foggy, could be scary for some, but not me of course! Without something called Dove's Guide on the 'Sat Nav' we might not have arrived at some of these towers. In fact The Family use it a lot to get to ringing destinations. It's full of the names of towers. I've been having a look through and there are some places I would very much like to visit, maybe someone could arrange a tour.

Here is a list of the places I have found:

Leeds

Wyre Piddle (I am a Wire-hair Fox Terrier so have a particular interest in this one)

Woughton (have I pronounced that right?)

Barking

Barkingside

Nash

Barkby

Barkston

Barkway

Great Tew (especially if it's one of those rawhide shoes).

I'm not sure what the bells are like, but they all sound good to me!

If you know of any other places I might find interesting, do let me know via this publication.

Now, I wonder, how about a "Dogs Guide" . . .



[Editor: for your interest Polly, I suggest you also visit Chew Magna, Puddletown, Furneux Pelham, Pawlett, Walkhampton and of course . . . Pooh Corner?]

Bells for thought

While on a weekend break in the Cotswolds earlier this year, we stumbled across a National Trust property called Hailes Abbey and decided to have a look around; needless to say somehow bells managed to make an appearance.



As you can see from the photograph above, taken in the museum, the scale shown by the foot of a dummy monk in the background shows that this is quite a small bell. I was curious and decided to investigate further.

In a report made in 1554/5 during the reign of Queen Mary when monastic property was being examined with a view to re-establishing religious houses stated:

"This certificate indented of the true and just weight of five great bells sometimes Hailes' bells standing upon the Green in the Court of Hailes . . .

. . . the first of these bells weighs the just weight of 944 lbs

the second bell 1065 lbs

the third 1281 lbs

the fourth 1511 lbs

the fifth bell 2016 lbs

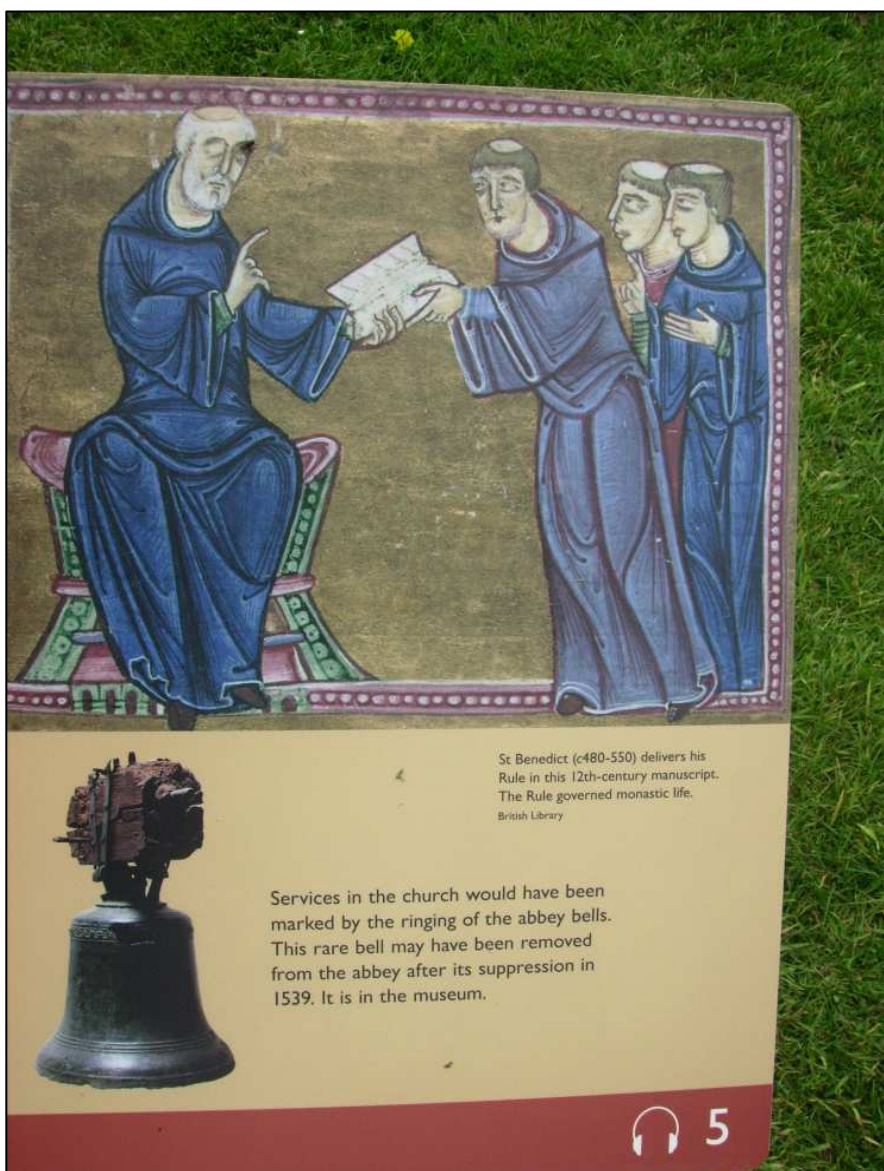
. . . the greatest bell of the said five bells is broken in the cam and must be cast again before he serve, as we think"

Now it doesn't seem likely that the broken bell was any of those above so it is a bit of a mystery. Also does anyone know how bells were rung in monastic times?

Roger Everson



Hailes Abbey is a ruined Cistercian monastery in Gloucestershire that was once a major medieval pilgrimage destination. Founded by the brother of King Henry III in 1246, it was dissolved by King Henry VIII in 1539. The abbey now lies in ruins. Remains of the dramatic cloister arches survive, along with artefacts displayed in the museum. Amongst these artefacts is an ancient bell roughly made of poor quality metal that might have been removed from the abbey after its suppression in 1539.



St Benedict (c480-550) delivers his Rule in this 12th-century manuscript. The Rule governed monastic life. British Library

Services in the church would have been marked by the ringing of the abbey bells. This rare bell may have been removed from the abbey after its suppression in 1539. It is in the museum.



All around the Belfries

Emberton

We've had a bumper season this year – five weddings! Not many compared with some towers, but a lot for us. We'd like to thank all the ringers that have helped us out when we've been short. At the last wedding we were supplemented by ringers from Riseley in Bedfordshire, and Bozeat and Grendon in Northants! Our thanks to them, and also to our Branch ringers for their support.

During August the tower captain, Sheila Watts, celebrated a significant birthday. Very significant – OK it was 60 . . . Those present at the practice on the actual day shared in a special birthday cake. The previous Saturday a few friends came round and tried their skills on handbells – a special arrangement of Happy Birthday had been composed by Natalie from Hanslope! The birthday girl had her own solo, incorporating a bicycle bell . . .

We're looking forward to our first tower outing for some years on 14 November. Phil is organising a leisurely day around Northamptonshire, and rumour has it that there might be more coffee shops than towers . . .

An outing of a different sort took place on Friday 23 October. Carrie once again exercised her new found amateur dramatic skills and some of us went to see her in a production of *The King and I* over the Branch border at Turvey Village Hall.

We were sorry that there was little support for the Branch Elementary Course, held at Emberton, on Saturday 17 October. However, Alan Marchbank and Simon Read took the opportunity to inspect the bells and we benefitted greatly from their expertise. Thanks, Alan and Simon.

Sheila Watts



Newport Pagnell

Our learners are increasing, literally in one case, and improving. With 7 at Rounds, 3 starting Plain Hunt and 3 starting method ringing, practices are still busy. This is backed up by considerable interest and support from the congregation and clergy. Five of the band joined the Cathedral ringers at Oxford a few weeks ago for the ordination of Karen Browne as a Deacon. Here we learned that the college authorities put a lower age limit on access to the ringing room. This we ignored so a good time was had by all.

Doug Hird

Hanslope

Most of the action at Hanslope during the last few months has been centred around the recruitment and training of new ringers.

The three learners who started earlier in the year continue to make good progress and they are now able to join us for Sunday service ringing.

On Saturday 17 October we held a Bellringing Open Day in an attempt to attract some more people to join the Hanslope band. In the preceding week we put flyers though the door of nearly every house in the village inviting anyone who was interested to come along. The Citizen newspaper also published a short article about the event. It proved a successful venture and although we did not have crowds of people attending, we now have a further five people who are interested in learning to ring and who are currently being taught at a separate tied bell practice.

Sheila Blenkhorn



Padbury

October saw a flurry of activity in the tower with the planned maintenance work going ahead. On Saturday 17th the ringers removed the clappers and pulleys from the belfry and lowered them to the ground, all carefully marked up as instructed by Whites so that they would know exactly how they were fitted. On the Monday Richard and Helen loaded them up in their car and transported all the pieces to Whites workshop at Appleton.

On Thursday 29th October, Mark Walker brought the refurbished clappers and new pulleys back and, with help from Richard, John and Helen, refitted everything. He also greased the main bearings, tightened everything up and made sure it was all in good order for ringing.

We now have a ring of bells almost unrecognisable from those of a few weeks ago. The 'go' is much improved and there is almost no odd-struckness in the bells. A few new noises have appeared, but this is due to everything being nice and tight, instead of the clappers rolling around inside the bells.

Whites have done a good job and we are extremely pleased with the work. There will be a few weeks of 'bedding in' as the clappers now strike the bells in slightly different positions and the new pulleys are still a little tight. A peal attempt in November will no doubt help this process.

Richard Stanworth

From the Archives

Newport ringing in 1910, nearly one hundred years ago

It is always interesting to speculate what ringing was like before we had the rings of bells we have now. In the archives we have a wealth of news cuttings that describe what it was like. For example, Newport's ring of eight is now almost 100 years old and, it is tempting to speculate that before 1911 ringing at Newport would present some difficulties. However, the local papers tell a different story.

Towards the start of 1910, the local band were progressing and trying to score peals and quarters. They didn't manage a peal on the old ring but rang a quarter peal on the 6th April for the marriage of Miss Ethel F. Bull and shortly after that:



On Sunday May 1, at the Newport Pagnell Parish Church, a quarter peal of Double Norwich Major 1248, was rung for morning service in 50 minutes by the following eight members of the Bedfordshire Association:- T. Best (Fenny Stratford), treble; E. Herbert (Woburn), 2; C. Herbert (Woburn), 3; C. Mortimer (Bromham), 4; F. Mynard (Emberton), 5; C. W. Clarke (Bedford), 6, conductor; H. Sear (Bletchley), 7; W. Freeman (Olney), tenor.

This was the preparation for the peal that was to follow later in the year. The local band kept active and:

On Whit Sunday before morning service, the Newport Pagnell Church Bellringers rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles, (somewhat over 2,000 changes). The bells were muffled out of respect for the late King. The plan of leaving the tenor open at backstroke was very impressive and had the effect of tolling at the same time that the peal was being rung. The ringers are to be congratulated on the regular striking. The band was composed as follows:- Messrs. W. Ellis, E. Lathall, W. F. Smith, W. H. Inwood, F. W. Tompkins (conductor), W. H. Hill, F. J. Harris and W. Golding.

In October, it was time for the harvest festival and the ringers joined in with the traditional decorations: (The photo above, showing a decorated ringing chamber, is from the period, but from a different year.)

"The belfry had received considerable attention, a feature here being an ingenious arrangement of corn into the shape of a church bell. Sheaves of wheat and a quantity of fruit and vegetables were also used with good effect"

A few days later the peal of Double Norwich was scored:

On Saturday, October 8, eight members of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Change ringers rang a peal of Double Norwich Court Bob Major, 5,008 changes, in 3 hours 15 minutes, on the bells of SS Peter and Paul's church standing as follows:- Arthur Chapman (Rushden) 1, Cyril Herbert (Woburn) 2, Ernest Herbert (Woburn) 3, James Houghton (Irthlingborough) 4, Mark Lane (Aspley Guise) 5, Charles W. Clarke (Bedford) 6, Harry Sear (Bletchley) 7, William Freeman (Olney) 8, tenor 22½ cwt. The peal was composed by J. A. Trollope and conducted by Charles W. Clarke, and is the first peal of Major rung on the bells and also the first of Double Norwich by the North Bucks Branch.

The year ended in traditional fashion with ringing for Christmas and, probably, New Year. This would be the last significant ringing on a ring that had been in place for nearly 240 years and had become a characteristic part of the town. The next year would bring opportunity and argument and finally a new ring that must have astonished ringers and parishioners alike with their quality.

Doug Hird

Olney bells project

Things are beginning to return to normal; whatever normal is. The decorations have been completed, new ropes have been fitted, a new carpet is down in the ringing chamber, a solid wooden door has been fitted at the top of the stairs into the belfry and the CCTV system is operational and has drawn a lot of very good feedback from the congregation and visiting ringers alike. Now things have settled we will begin some experiments to try and enhance the quality of the sound in the ringing chamber. The sound is impressive anyhow but a little more of the strike note would make things even better.

This morning we completed the fitting and testing of the new electro-magnetic clock hammers and we now await the Cumbria Clock Company to fit and connect the switches between the two chiming clock trains and the new electrical circuitry.

On the 16th August the first quarter peal was rung on the ten and on the 5th September the first peal on the ten was rung, 5055 Stedman Caters in 3hrs and 18 mins. The peal was special for a whole host of reasons and it is detailed in this edition of In Touch. A peal board has been commissioned and this should be up in the tower by the end of November. At the same time we have also replaced a peal board which was lost some decades ago, it commemorates the first peal of Treble Bob by the Branch on 13th October 1906. It will hang next to the existing board which details the first peal of major rung by the branch in October 1904.

Details of the peal will appear together with the front page article in the Ringing World which should be in the edition for the 13th November.

Interestingly I have been in correspondence with Pat Halls who is the Chairman of the Central Council Biographies Committee. She has been enquiring about Frederick Hopper who was born in 1879, learned to ring at Olney and represented the Peterborough Guild on the Central Council in the 1920s. Frederick rang in the first peal on the bells after augmentation in 1903, rang another one at Olney in 1914 and then his last one at



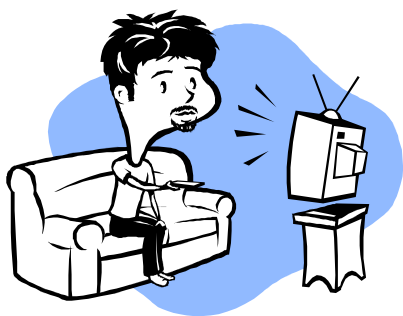
One of the new clock chimes in position

Olney in 1951 for the Guildford D.G. In this last peal he would have been 72 and rang the sixth to Stedman Triples which was called by Alfred Pulling. I believe Frederick may have some Hopper descendants still living in the town and I will be following this connection up further.

It is still my intention to start a ten bell practice on one evening per month but my choice of Friday as being the most widely acceptable night of the week is proving somewhat difficult with the choir practice. Watch this space.

If you are at a loose end any Monday evening, please come to our practice where you will be made most welcome.

David Phillipson



Visual Teaching Aids

Do you need some DVDs or videos to help teach your members to ring? There are a number of titles held within the branch, available to borrow. Please contact the secretary if you want further information (details on page 2).

Bellhandling - a tutor's companion by the Central Council (video or DVD)

Look to and Learn by the Kent County Association (video)

Teaching Demonstration recording of Steve Coleman teaching (video)



Quarters and Peals



St Peter & St Paul, Olney

Sunday 16th August 2009

1282 Cambridge Surprise Royal

- 1 Charles J. Knight
- 2 Ruth Stokes
- 3 Margaret Whiteley
- 4 Alexandra J. Marchbank
- 5 Martin J. Whiteley
- 6 David Phillipson (C)
- 7 Christopher C. Stokes
- 8 Jonathan Griggs
- 9 Alan J. Marchbank
- 10 Richard Haseldine

1st Quarter peal on ten bells: Treble

1st changes in method on ten bells: 4

1st quarter peal on the bells since augmentation to ten

For Evensong

St Peter & St Paul, Olney

Saturday 5th September 2009

5055 Stedman Caters in 3 hrs 18 mins

Comp. Robert E J Dennis

- 1 David Phillipson (C)
- 2 Hilarie Rogers
- 3 Alexandra J. Marchbank
- 4 Jonathan Griggs
- 5 Richard Haseldine
- 6 B. Douglas Hird
- 7 James A. Haseldine
- 8 Alan J. Marchbank
- 9 Graham J. Clifton
- 10 Charles J. Knight

1st peal of Stedman: 3 and 4

1st peal of Caters: 6

1st peal on Ten: 10

1st peal of Stedman as conductor and 250th Peal: 1

1st peal on the bells since augmentation.

Rung as a belated compliment to the Rev. Claire Wood who was inducted as Rector of Olney on the 27th. January 2009

St Mary's, Shenley Church End

Saturday 24th October 2009

1260 Bob Doubles

- 1 Claire Reading
- 2 Becky Fawcett
- 3 Gary Reading
- 4 Derek Stainsby (C)
- 5 Ted Fawcett
- 6 John Brookman

1st Quarter peal: 1

Rung to celebrate the 14th birthday on 2nd November 2009 of Claire Reading

St James the Great, Hanslope

Saturday 5th September 2009

1344 Bob Major

- 1 Christine Tribble
- 2 Tine Marchbank
- 3 Ruth Stokes
- 4 Peter Tribble
- 5 Tony Gray
- 6 Stuart Grout
- 7 Chris Stokes (C)
- 8 Roy Keeves

Rung for the opening of Hanslope Street Fayre.

The Assumption of The Blessed Virgin Mary, Stowe

Saturday September 26th 2009

1260 Plain Bob & Grandsire Doubles

- 1 Shirley Webb
- 2 Ann Fletcher
- 3 Jonathan Spencer
- 4 Andrew Spencer
- 5 Laurence Gibson (1st as C)
- 6 Harry Gibson

For the marriage of Harry Manisty and Helen Fry

S Mary the Virgin, Padbury

Saturday 7th November 2009

1320 Spliced Surprise Minor (5 methods)

London, Wells, Beverley, Surfleet, Cambridge

- 1 Helen Stanworth
- 2 Catherine Stanworth
- 3 Richard Yates
- 4 Michael Tinsley
- 5 Richard Stanworth (C)
- 6 John Stanworth

To celebrate the 800th anniversary of the founding of the Church in Padbury.

All Saints, Leighton Buzzard

[No Date Given]

1259 Grandsire Caters

- 1 Richard Yates
- 2 Alex Marchbank
- 3 Catherine Stanworth
- 4 Simon Lockwood
- 5 Bob Churchill
- 6 Alan Shepherd
- 7 Richard Horne
- 8 Michael Tinsley
- 9 Barry R Eglesfield (C)
- 10 Tine Marchbank

Rung for the 20th anniversary of the rededication of the church



OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

Minutes of Autumn Meeting

held at Padbury on 12th September 2009

Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to Padbury, which was soon to join the branch, once the transfer from Central Bucks had been ratified by the Guild.

Apologies for absence

Received from Anne Mercer, Jonathan Griggs, David Joyce, Chrissie Cable, Roy Keeves, and Sheila Blenkhorn.

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held at Hanslope in March, had been published in In Touch. It was proposed by Hugh Butler and seconded by Sheila Ware that the Chairman sign these minutes as true records of the meetings. This was agreed on a show of hands.

Election of new members

A nomination had been received proposing one new member:

Tower	Olney
Name	Coral Bex
Proposed	David Phillipson
Seconded	Charles Knight

Coral was elected without dissent.

Officers reports

Treasurer - The Branch Account balance at the Building Society stands at £982, which is quite healthy. Thank you to those towers who have paid their 2009 Guild Subscriptions. There is only one tower outstanding and it is Tingewick. Thank you for contributing £14 to the Bell Fund today.

The Chairman reminded members that the rules have changed and that all subscriptions are now due by the end of March. As such the ringers at Tingewick are no longer members and are not insured by the Guild. The Treasurer said that she had written to them and pointed this out.

The other officers did not have anything to report, the Ringing Development Leaders having published reports in In Touch.

Forthcoming events:

A Calendar of events had been circulated to all present. The Chairman briefly listed the events. The secretary stated that the joint practice with the Towcester branch had now been confirmed.

The Christmas Celebration is still to be confirmed. Alan Marchbank reported that it had been hoped to hold this at Milton Keynes Village, but the hall was not available. He is currently investigating whether it can be held at Great Linford. This will be confirmed and details circulated later. The Chairman reminded members that this is more of a social event with a quiz for a bit of fun and encouraged them to support it.

Alan was asked to update us on the position with the Guild Six Bell competition. Hanslope were the winners of the branch competition but are unable to enter a band in the Guild competition. Loughton, who were second, are also unable to put a team forward, so the team that came third would be next to be asked to enter a band. This is Great Linford. The meeting needs to agree that this is the correct process to follow. The Chairman proposed that Great Linford be asked to represent the branch and this was agreed by the meeting.

Any other business

Display Boards

David Phillipson thanked the branch for their patience in allowing Olney to use the boards for the last two years and apologized for hogging them. They are now available for anyone to use and he will continue to store them at Olney until such time as someone wants them

Ten-Bell Competition

This will be at Long Crendon on 28th November and the method will be Grandsire Caters again. Details of the touch are not yet available. David Phillipson asked that members put themselves forward to him as people who want to take part. He doesn't want to be in the position of having to ring round to drag a ten bell band together. If you think you can ring Grandsire Caters and would like to take part, at least in the practices, then get in touch with him. We will then select the best band to go forward in to the Guild competition. The chairman asked David to put this out on the egroup as well.



OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

Minutes of Autumn Meeting continued

Great Brickhill

David Middleton reported that the bells will be taken down by Whites during the week beginning 26th October and will be transported to Appleton on 30th October. The bells should be on display in the church from about the Wednesday onwards, if anyone would like to come and see them. The timing of the work depend on the bats as work cannot be carried out while they are hibernating.

Steeple Aston

Richard Stanworth reminded members that there were only a few more days to apply for this course and he had application forms for anyone who is interested. He also asked for volunteers to help if they are available on Saturday 31st October.

The Master reported that he had the Guild bookstall with him, which some members had already made use of. He also reported that it looks as if the Revenue will not be bothering to collect small amounts of Corporation Tax,

which is good news for the Guild. The Master also recommended the 'Laying the Right Foundations' Course which was coming up in October. This is aimed at those who teach ringing or who would like to learn to teach ringing. It is a very good course run by John and June Wells and he encouraged anyone who had any interest in that direction at all to go on the course. He said that we should all be interested in it.

Vote of thanks

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of all present to Rev Jenny Shield for taking our service, to Michael Tinsley for playing the organ, and to the Padbury ringers for a splendid tea, of which there was still some left for those still hungry. Members showed their appreciation in the usual way.

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed. There was time for a few more touches before moving on to Hillesden for further ringing.

Wicken Number Puzzle

A local historian visiting Wicken Church (Northants) noted a series of numbers carved into the stonework of one of the windows in the tower. He asked what the numbers represent and the ringers couldn't answer the question. The numbers are:

141341551423444341341143541

The numbers are actually carved in a window in the clock room above the current ringing chamber, so they may well be associated with a previous ring of bells in the tower. The current ring is in the key of F and the back bells are 17th century so the notes are unlikely to have been tuned very much differently from their current tuning for several hundred years.

Does anyone have any idea what the sequence is, possibly a hymn tune?



Andrew Spencer

Training and Bell Maintenance Grants

Did you know that financial assistance is available from the branch for training and bell maintenance ?

If you would like a grant from the branch for assistance with bell maintenance in your tower then please notify the secretary. Applications are discussed and agreed at the next branch meeting.

Assistance for individuals wishing to attend training courses is also available. Up to 50% of the cost of the course can be claimed with a maximum of £50. Please contact the secretary for more details (see page 2).

Helen Stanworth

Branch Notice Board



Joint Practice with Towcester Branch on Towcester's 12

Saturday 21st November 7:00 pm

Ever fancied having a go at ringing on 12 or grabbing Towcester ?
Here is the opportunity. This is a joint branch practice to cater for all standards. Rounds and call changes upwards. Open to everyone in the branch. So just roll up and have a go.



GUILD 10 BELL COMPETITION AT LONG CRENDON

Saturday 28th November

*Speak to David Phillipson if you are
interested in taking part and representing
the branch*



Christmas Celebration

*Saturday 12th December at Great
Linford. See front page for details*



Dates for your diary: 2010

Saturday 16th January	4pm	Branch practice at Fenny Stratford
Saturday 20th February	4pm	Branch practice at Buckingham (tbc)
Saturday 6th March	3:30pm	AGM at Bradwell (tbc)