



In Touch

November 2011

Christmas celebration

**This year the celebration will be at St Martin's,
Fenny Stratford on Saturday 10th December.**

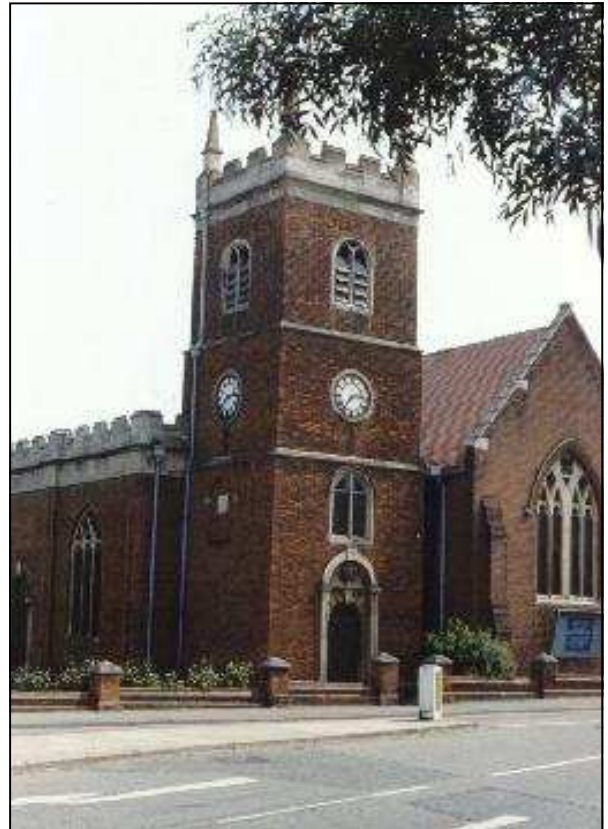
5.00 Ringing
5.45 Christmas Service
7.00 Fish and Chip Supper in St Martin's Church Hall
(next to the church), followed by Quiz

For the supper, there is a choice of Cod, Chicken,
Sausages or Vegetarian Pancake Rolls, with Chips
(limited availability of Chicken – order early to avoid
disappointment).

Price £7.00 per person including tea, coffee and mince
pies. You may bring your own drinks, but no alcohol.

Names and food orders to Helen Stanworth (01280
814172 or email secretary@northbucks.org.uk) in
advance, or by 5.15pm at the very latest on the day. No
money, no meal!

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



In this issue :

The Big Ring Pull update	page 3
The new simulator at Newport	page 4
Simon Read joins the Cumberlands	page 5
My Steeple Aston Course experience	page 5
Peals and Quarters	page 6
Branch Rounds and Call Changes Practices	page 7
Tower news	page 8
Teaching the Teachers course report	page 10

*The Charmborough Ring which is booked for the
recruitment event in Middleton Hall on Feb 11th.*

Who's Who 2011—2012

Chairman	Brian Newman	Great Linford	chairman@northbucks.org.uk
RDL Buckingham & Guild Rep	Richard Stanworth	Padbury	rdl_bh@northbucks.org.uk
RDL Milton Keynes	Alan Marchbank	Great Linford	rdl_mk@northbucks.org.uk
RDL Newport Pagnell & Archivist	Doug Hird	Newport Pagnell	rdl_np@northbucks.org.uk
Secretary	Helen Stanworth	Padbury	secretary@northbucks.org.uk
Treasurer	Sheila Watts	Emberton	treasurer@northbucks.org.uk
Guild Rep	Hugh Butler	Whaddon	guildrep2@northbucks.org.uk
In Touch Editor	Jonathan Griggs	Hanslope	intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk
Branch Website			www.northbucks.org.uk
Guild Website			www.odg.org.uk

Dates for your Diary

November

- 19th Joint Practice with Towcester Branch at Towcester 7.30pm
- 26th Guild 10 bell striking competition at Shrivenham

December

- 2nd Rounds and Call Change practice at Stoke Goldington 7.40pm
- 3rd Guild Ten Bell training day at Aston Clinton
- 10th Christmas Celebration at Fenny Stratford 5pm

January 2012

- 6th Rounds and Call Change practice at Newport Pagnell 8pm
- 21st Branch Practice at Newport Pagnell on the simulator 4pm

February

- 3rd Rounds and Call Change practice at Old Wolverton 7.40pm
- 11th The Big Ring Pull Recruitment event at Middleton Hall 9-7pm
- 18th Branch 10 Bell Practice at Olney 10.30am
- 25th The Big Ring Pull "Have a go day" at Downs Barn 10 - 5pm

March

- 2nd Rounds and Call Change practice at Emberton 7.40pm
- 5th-17th The Big Ring Pull - Intensive training at Newport Pagnell
- 24th Branch AGM at Great Linford 3.30pm

From the Chairman . . .

Welcome to this autumn edition of 'In Touch'. As you may all know by now The Big Ring pull is all systems go with a date for Middleton Hall next February and I'm sure there will be plenty of news later in this edition about all that's happening.

I went to the first of the Teach the Teacher days at Downs Barn on Saturday 22nd to help with the catering and to meet those on the course and from my view the course went very well. I hope that the follow up event goes as well and the branch ends up with a new and enthusiastic group of teachers and one more step to our goal of recruiting more ringers.

There is of course all our usual programme of events, but can I also draw your attention to the special practices catering for all levels detailed on Page 7.

As this is the last In Touch before Christmas I would like to wish you all a happy Christmas and new year.

Brian Newman

Deadline for next edition . . .

The deadline for contributions for the next edition of In Touch is **Tuesday 31st January 2011.**

Jonathan

Big Ring Pull - update



Teaching the teachers

The initial part of the project, the course to improve the teaching skills in the branch, has taken place. There is a full report on page 10.

The Recruitment Event

Saturday 11th Feb (thecentre:mk)

The key focus of the recruitment event in Middleton Hall will be the sound of bellringing from the Charmborough ring - this will draw the public to stop and listen and hopefully they will be tempted to have a go.

WANTED - Ringers

We need some teams of ringers to provide some simple demonstration ringing on these light bells during the day; and also to provide guidance and support to all the people who want to have a go.

Ringing small bells is not easy and we need to make the best sound that we can. There will be a couple of practices for those who can help on Alan Marchbank's mini ring during December and January. Please note that there will not be any opportunity for general ringing or grabbing on the Charmborough bells on the day - we are on display and we need to deliver a polished performance. To volunteer, please contact Richard Stanworth.

WANTED - Manpower

We will be installing the Charmborough ring into Middleton Hall late on Friday night and will be dismantling it on Saturday evening. If you can help with this then please contact Richard Stanworth.

WANTED - Ringers who like to chat!

We also need ringers who can talk and engage with the public, to explain about bellringing, our recruitment process and the training we are offering. Thank you to those of you who have offered your services already for this. If anyone else can help then please talk to Alan Marchbank.

Promoting the Recruitment Event

There will be flyers to hand out to members of the public on the day, advertising the training course. There will also be display stands and banners. Prior to the day, the event will be advertised by:

- 🔔 Touch screens at entrances to thecentre:mk
- 🔔 Digital posters in the centre
- 🔔 Get Smart leaflets distributed around the city
- 🔔 Local press, radio and TV
- 🔔 Local parish magazines

In addition TheBigRingPull website will be launched before Christmas and will be promoted on all publicity. It will have information about the recruitment event, the training course as well as more general stuff about bellringing, its history and how to get involved locally.

Training the new recruits

Saturday 25th Feb (Downs Barn)

This is the introductory training session for the new recruits. Here new learners will have a chance to have a demonstration of proper bells, have their first lesson and then, if keen, sign up to the intensive training course at Newport. New learners can either attend the morning or afternoon sessions.

5th to 17th March (Newport Pagnell)

This is the intensive training course using the new simulator. We have scheduled a number of evening and afternoon sessions over the weekdays to which new learners can attend. Each session is repeated. It culminates on the final Saturday with the 5th session. Below is a provisional timetable for the training.

Proposed Training Schedule			Teaching Modules		
			AM	PM	Eve
Sat	25-Feb	DB	1	1	
					10-1 / 2-5pm
Mon	05-Mar	NP			2
Tue	06-Mar	NP			2
Wed	07-Mar	NP		2	
Thu	08-Mar	NP			3
Fri	09-Mar	NP			3
					7-9pm
Mon	12-Mar	NP		3	
Tue	13-Mar	NP			4
Wed	14-Mar	NP			4
Thu	15-Mar	NP		4	
					3.30-5pm
Sat	17-Mar	NP	5	5	
					10-1 / 2-5pm

WANTED - Ringers and Teachers

Teachers are needed during these training days, plus ringers to help with the additional sessions (rope-tying, how a bell works etc.) Course notes are already prepared, so if you can help, please contact Jonathan Griggs.

Finances

The Finance team would like to thank you all for the strong support you have offered to the project. Once all your pledges have come in (just one to go) we will have reached our fundraising target of some £3,000. Of course, generous grants have helped enormously. We are very grateful to the ODG for their grant of £600, for the simulator now installed at Newport Pagnell. The Ringing Foundation has also given the project its strong support – a grant of £1,000. They are showing a close interest in the project, and are particularly keen on the training of new teachers. A big thank you to everyone who has helped!

Jonathan Griggs

Getting to know Abel at Newport

If you have been following the progress of The Big Ring Pull project you will probably have heard of Abel. So who, or what, is Abel?

Abel is definitely a what. What Abel does comes in two parts. Abel itself is computer software that will ring methods. The other part is a set of sensors and some electronics that connect these to the computer. With this, Abel can detect the bells ringing. So, when a bell rings upstairs the computer goes ding at the same time. If the clappers are silenced then Abel can take over and provide the sound for the ringers and the neighbours are not disturbed.

For The Big Ring Pull, we want to teach new people in concentrated teaching sessions over a two week period so this will allow learners to hear what the bells sound like while silence reigns outside.

Installation is pretty straightforward. Sensors have been fitted for all eight bells at Newport and all the wires have been tie-wrapped to the frame. This keeps the installation on a temporary basis until we can deal with the formalities of faculties etc. The sensors themselves are fitted with double-sided tape to the frame sides. As the bell swings the reflective tape reflects the red light from the LED and the sensor produces an electrical signal. The sensors from all eight bells are connected to a box of electronics called the Bagley Multi-bell interface and this sends the appropriate signals to the computer.

To silence the bells, Graham Dilley at Olney has made a set of clapper silencers that are easy to fit and remove. To start you need to get Abel to play the right sound for the right bell. Even if you plug bell 1 into socket 1 on the Bagley Box Abel doesn't always get it right. In fact it can be different on different days! Then adjust the delay between the sensor signal and the ding by running Abel while the bells are also ringing. Both of these are easy adjustments and only take a few minutes.

So what is it good for?

You can "ring" the bells to anything you like and Abel will provide the sound. So this is good for extra practice nights etc. which could run later than the usual 9pm. It appears that quarter peals rung on simulators are allowed but peals are not. There is a good discussion running in The Ringing World at the moment about this very issue.

The front six of an eight are not the best sound. At Newport the 6th is tuned to G. So Abel will sort this out and make the bells sound like they are the back six of a ring of eight in G. Sounds much better and reinforces the correct sound of the method in ringers' minds. Or if you want a change from major scales, you can try out all sorts of different modes.

You can change the sounds so it rings like your own bells or another tower's. All Abel needs is two bell tones and it will generate all the other notes for you. I am building up a collection of bell sounds by different



One of the new bell ties in operation at Newport

founders and from different towers. Perhaps we should have a competition to see if we can recognise which ring of bells we are ringing?

If you have ever wondered what your bells would sound like if they had saved up a bit more and got a bigger ring you can change the note of the tenor. Alternatively you can add more bells so you could hear what a 10 based upon Old Wolverton's 6 would sound like!

You can join in with the ringing that Abel generates. Just decide which method and composition and ring your bell in the right place every stroke. No distractions from ropes or scary conductors. No help either! Good fun and remember, outside no-one can hear you ringing. Abel will even mark your striking. It will even work with ringing up and down although, at the bottom, Abel doesn't know when the bells are down and keeps striking on both strokes, so it usually all ends in confusion.

In theory, you can re-map the sensors in reverse order and ring as though the bells were hung anti-clockwise. That would probably work quite well on the front 6 at Olney where the weights are very similar although the rope circle wouldn't be ideal.

We are just getting to know Abel and have only tried out a few of the possibilities but it looks like becoming a really valuable tool for teaching and learning. There are a number of things it doesn't seem to do when connected to the Bagley Box and it seems to be highly focussed on auditory learners but overall it is worth spending time with. Derek Ballard's BelTower software is more visually biased but that is for another article.

We are holding a special tied Branch practice using the simulator on Saturday 21st January at 4pm. Come along and try it out.

Doug Hird

Simon Read joins the Cumberlands

The Society of Royal Cumberland Youths (SRCY) is a bellringing society with members from the UK and overseas. Established in the mid 18th century, the Society has a strong reputation not only for promoting good ringing but also as a friendly and sociable society and has its headquarters at St Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, London. The Society has a special presence within the wider bellringing community. One of only two societies of its kind (the other is the Ancient Society of College Youths), it is unique because its members are elected to join on the strength of their proven ringing ability and who have persevered to achieve a high standard in ringing, usually determined by ability to strike a bell accurately.

On Saturday 1st October, Simon Read was elected as a member of the SRCY. Prior to joining the Society Simon rang at a number of their weekly practices in London, including St Paul's Cathedral. The Sunday before Simon's election the Society's Senior Steward organised a peal for Simon to ring with other members as follows:

Non Association City of London, EC3

St Magnus the Martyr

Sunday 25 September 2011 in 3h 17 (26-3-9)

5067 Stedman Cinqes

Composed: I R Fielding

- 1 Ian R Fielding (C)
 - 2 Shirley E McGill
 - 3 Catherine N Merlane
 - 4 Heather M Forster
 - 5 Edward R Mack
 - 6 Simon Read
 - 7 Michael R Crockett
 - 8 Dickon R Love
 - 9 Benjamin D Constant
 - 10 Claire F Roulstone
 - 11 Alan Regin
 - 12 Adam S Greenley
- 1st on 12: 6



Simon being presented with his joining certificate by the Society's Master, Peter Harrison.

My Steeple Aston Course Experience

On Saturday the 29th of October ringers from all over the Oxford diocese went on the Steeple Aston course. It was truly amazing and I think everyone came away having had an excellent day.

When we arrived, we were shown in and given folders with your selected method. After half an hour of tea and coffee, we knuckled down and hit some theory. We were given an hour to cram as much theory into our heads before we set off to the first tower. The tutors were absolutely amazing and answered every question no matter how obvious the answer seemed to the rest of the group.

My first tower happened to be Steeple Aston, a short walk up the street. Then the magic started. We started with some plain hunt, which progressed into Plain Bob and Grandsire Triples. Before you knew it, the hour had gone and it was off to lunch at the pub.

There was a selection of lunches, but everyone ate light, as we all knew there was to be an extraordinary evening meal later.

Lunch out the way, we all set off for the next tower - a lovely ring of 8. Soon enough we were ringing again.

Plain bob triples, Grandsire Triples. Every time we pulled the rope, we were learning. As fast as before, the hour was gone and it was time to head off to our last tower.

All too soon, we were at the last tower of the day - Bicester, a ring of ten. At this tower you would not believe the improvement we saw in everyone. Although everyone was tired, we managed to ring our methods almost perfectly. I'm sure this was down to sure determination. What ever it was, it worked.

The evening meal was amazing. There must have been enough food to feed one hundred but somehow we managed to polish it off. After eating, we were given certificates to say we completed the course.

I think everyone who went on the course benefited greatly; I wish I had done it earlier. I would like to thank the people who organised it and to encourage everyone who has not already, to book for next year, as it is such a great opportunity to boost your ringing knowledge.

Ella Sheaf

Quarter Peals

SS Peter & Paul, Olney

Saturday 20 August 2011 in 44mins

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Elizabeth Sheaf
- 2 Brian Baldwin
- 3 Nick Read
- 4 Simon Read
- 5 Charles Knight
- 6 David Phillipson (C)

First quarter away from cover – 1

SS Peter & Paul, Olney

Saturday 20 August 2011 in 44mins

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Ella Sheaf
- 2 David Phillipson
- 3 Brian Baldwin
- 4 Nick Read
- 5 Charles Knight
- 6 Simon Read (C)

First quarter peal - 1

SS Peter & Paul, Olney

Saturday 20 August 2011 in 50mins

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Simon Read
- 2 Kate Hollins
- 3 David Phillipson
- 4 Brian Baldwin
- 5 Nick Read (C)
- 6 Charles Knight

First inside – 2

All three quarters rung on the front 6

SS Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell

Sunday 21 August 2011 in 46mins

1280 Cambridge Surprise Major

- 1 Emily Rice
- 2 Simon Read (C)
- 3 Nick Read
- 4 Ryan S Noble
- 5 Catherine Stanworth
- 6 Thomas F M Luxford
- 7 Michael Tinsley
- 8 B Douglas Hird

St Andrew, Great Linford,

Monday 29 August 2011

1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 John B Marchbank
- 2 Christine E Marchbank
- 3 Nick Read
- 4 B Douglas Hird
- 5 Alan J Marchbank
- 6 Simon Read (C)

Rung to celebrate the life of Queenie Liddell, a member of St Andrews congregation and great fund raiser.

St Mary the Virgin, Woburn

Monday 29 August 2011 in 53mins

1280 Plain Bob Major

- 1 John B Marchbank
- 2 Christine Marchbank
- 3 Alexandra J Marchbank
- 4 Raymond Watkin
- 5 B Douglas Hird
- 6 Nick Read
- 7 Alan J Marchbank
- 8 Simon Read (C)

Rung to celebrate the Silver Wedding Anniversary of Nick & Alison Read.

The Midland Hotel, Manchester

Saturday 3 September 2011 in 30 mins

(12F)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- Composed: Traditional
- 1-2 Alan J Marchbank
 - 3-4 Benjamin J Carey (C)
 - 5-6 John B Marchbank

First in hand - 5-6.

Celebrating the forthcoming wedding of Ben Hockenhull and James Marchbank, later today in Manchester Town Hall.

SS Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell

Sunday 16 October 2011 in 49 mins

1260 Stedman Triples

- 1 Simon Read
- 2 David Phillipson
- 3 Benjamin J Carey
- 4 Brian Baldwin
- 5 B Douglas Hird
- 6 Alan J Marchbank
- 7 Jonathan Griggs (C)
- 8 Nick Read

First in method - 4

Ciircled the tower to quarter peals - 1

Dedicated to John Michael Godfrey, (son of Rev. Michael Godfrey vicar of the Parish of Newport Pagnell) who was ordained deacon into the Church of Ireland in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin by the Archbishop of Dublin, the Right Reverend Michael Jackson, on Sunday 25th September. Also in celebration of Alan Marchbank's birthday.

SS Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell

Sunday 18 September 2011 in 50mins

1282 Bristol Surprise Major

- 1 Nick Read
- 2 Catherine Stanworth
- 3 Jonathan Spencer
- 4 Michael Tinsley
- 5 B Douglas Hird
- 6 Andrew Spencer
- 7 Alan J Marchbank
- 8 Simon Read (C)

Rung in celebration for the 20th wedding anniversary of Paul and the Reverend Beverley Hollins

All Saints, Loughton

Saturday 22 October 2011

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Anne McIntyre
- 2 Ann Birch
- 3 Derek Stainsby
- 4 John Brookman
- 5 Gary Reading
- 6 Terry Page (C)

An 18th Birthday compliment to Sarah McIntyre, and with Birthday good wishes also to Ann Birch

All Saints, Loughton

Tuesday 1 November 2011

1260 Plain Bob Minor

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

First Quarter of Minor - 1

Rung on All Saints Day as a 16th Birthday compliment to Claire Reading



The Loughton band who rang the quarter on 22nd October

Branch News

Two reports on the Rounds and Call Changes practices

When I first set out on the strange, challenging yet oddly rewarding journey that is church bell ringing, I was blessed to join a tower that if not the most advanced, was small and passionate, and this allowed me a lot of time to pull a rope. After much clanking, I now feel I can more than pull a rope in company without being ashamed.

This was indeed a blessing, as I have seen larger bands with more advanced ringers trying to balance the needs of newcomers and longer serving members.

Mick Nimmo and Wendy Price of Old Wolverton and Stony Stratford respectively have been arranging special practice nights that aim to address this for the branch. On the first Friday of each month, practice is being held across a variety of different towers that is rounds and basic call changes only.

So far we have visited Old Wolverton, Stony Stratford, Whaddon and Sherington, with visits to Stoke Goldington and Newport Pagnell planned.

These relaxed yet well organised practices have been well attended, both by new learners and by those who want to tidy up their ringing, and seem to have been received. Much time is given to ringing bells as part of a team; experience I have found is gently, if painfully, tidying my own ringing. I have also witnessed ringers of many years improve in quality and confidence.

So if you are new to ringing, or want to tidy up your rounds and call changes, then look out for the next practice in the diary.

Phillip Starr
Whaddon

Novice Fridays

A recent innovation in the branch is monthly practices on first Friday evenings aimed at novice ringers. The practice consists of rounds and call changes, with lots of help on hand for those who are still learning about bell handling. The total focus on the early stage ringers means that this is the night when you get to ring solidly for as long as you choose to ring, and can get an hour's ringing in if you want to! With the best will in the world, this is never possible in a normal tower practice, when everyone's learning needs have to be considered; while novices do learn from listening to their more experienced friends practicing methods, nothing compares to actual ringing the bells to move you on in your learning.

For this ringer, the Friday night practice is also a chance to spend time with other ringers from around the branch who are at the same stage as me, to make new friends and have a good time! And the solid practice has helped me get to a new stage in my ringing - getting to grips with plain hunt. Thanks to Mick and the rest of the good people of the branch for making these practices happen. Any novices who haven't given it a try yet - come and join us!

The Ringing Rev. (Beverley Hollins)

Future Friday Rounds and Call Change practices are:

2nd December	Stoke Goldington (7.40 - 9pm)
6th January	Newport Pagnell (8 - 9pm)
3rd February	Old Wolverton (7.40 - 9pm)
2nd March	Emberton (7.40 - 9pm)

New 10 Bell Branch Practices

The Branch would like to announce the start of what is hoped will become a regular 10 bell practice at Olney for branch members.

The aim is to improve the 10 bell ringing capability of ringers in the branch and give as many people as possible the opportunity to experience ringing methods on 10 bells. It is hoped to ring everything from rounds, Grandsire Caters, Plain Bob, Stedman to Surprise Royal.

The first practice will be on
Saturday February 18th, 10.30am - 12.00

Experience the Newport Simulator

The branch practice on Saturday 21st January 2012 will be held at Newport Pagnell. All the bells will be tied and the simulator will be in turned on.

There will be opportunities for general ringing and there will be demonstrations of how the simulator can help with teaching and learning.

Come and have go on the branch's latest asset!!

Saturday January 21st *, 4 - 5.30pm

* Date still awaiting confirmation

Tower News

Stoke Goldington

The Saturday morning practice sessions have continued throughout the summer and autumn, and all the new ringers have made good progress under the expert handling tutelage of Roy Keeves, Jonathan Griggs and Phil Haslam. Their most recent challenge was to learn to ring up and down, and they are now moving on to call changes. (Thanks must also go to Alan Cozens, Chas Knight and Nick Read for their assistance.)

The ringers come from Stoke Goldington, Weston Underwood, and Ravenstone, and they are all looking forward to making their 'debut appearance' at a Christmas Service at Stoke Goldington and Weston Underwood. The pictures show the band (and helpers) at an autumn Saturday session, minus Sally and Neil Sinclair, who were away.

Charlotte Hagan and Richard Macgowan (who already had some ringing experience) attended the recent Big Ring Pull 'Teaching Bell Handling' course and plan to help with tuition in the future. Jonathan has also been enjoying using some new skills learned at the course to teach handling!

We are grateful to the many local ringers for helping out with rounds practice over the autumn, and hope they will come and join us for Christmas punch and mince pies on Saturday December 17th.

But most of all, thank you to the new ringers themselves – for their commitment, good company, and enthusiasm which is making the 'Gate Group ringing project' such a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

Sheila Ware

The new Stoke Goldington and Weston Underwood Ringers - and some extras



Hanslope

On the Hanslope outing at the beginning of October, several of our ringers were unable to join us so on the day we ended up as a small group of only nine. We all thought that this might make it a rather tiring day but on the contrary it was most enjoyable and we all stayed together rather than fragmenting into smaller groups as is often the case when there are more people around.

The outing was located in an area to the west of Oxford and south of Witney where we visited some beautiful churches most of which were situated in attractive and also very affluent villages. One particularly noteworthy church was South Leigh where the walls inside the church are covered with the most magnificent paintings.



Sian Haseldine with the mystery ringer

As we entered the ringing chamber at Stanton Harcourt we thought that we had found another ringer to swell our numbers when we saw this chap sitting on a bench intently studying his copy of The Bell Ringers Manual, we even sent Sian Haseldine over to chat him up, but to no avail.

Stanton Harcourt was also memorable for another reason - some of us went off to buy newspapers only to find that the shop and post office were located in a room inside the village pub. Sadly it was too early for a pint but we did have one later in the excellent Blue Boar pub at Longworth. All in all a great day and thank you to Richard Haseldine for organising it.

Sheila Blenkhorn

Tower News - continued

Whaddon

During a recent tower open day at Whaddon the following poem was displayed in the church for visitors to read. It was written by Mary Dalglish, a friend of one the ringers.

Hugh Butler

**Do you sit at home on a week day night ?
Bored and with nothing to do
Then take a stroll along to the church
And join the ringing few**

**To hear the church bells pealing
Will soon be a thing of the past
This 'art' it does need healing
New members will make it last**

**So go along, and join your group
Do not delay, do it now
A friendly bunch are waiting
And they will show you how**

**An ear that's keen to listen
And gentle power in the hand
Will keep the church bells ringing
Far and wide across the land**

Emberton

Emberton bellringers were pleased to ring last Sunday (6 November), in memory of Daniel Wheldon. Dan was born and brought up in the village before moving to America, where he became an internationally acclaimed racing driver. His family still live opposite Emberton Church.

Dan sadly was killed in the IndyCar World Championship race at Las Vegas on 16th October. We were unable to ring for the UK Memorial Service at Emberton on 6 November, because Sky TV cameras were filming the service from our Ringing Chamber! So we rang for the earlier service instead, and dedicated our ringing to Dan.

Sheila Watts

The tower with bat presence (or presents?)

For many years we have known we had bats in the ringing chamber at Hanslope. A couple of weeks ago one of our resident friends actually made an appearance during practice night. He (or she) shuffled out of a hole in a large beam above the treble, turned the right way up and made a small deposit on the ringing mat below. He (or she) then turned up side down and shuffled back into the hole and went back to sleep to the sound of Grandsire Triples.

The moral of the story: make sure you wear a hat if you ring the treble at Hanslope ! You have been warned.

Jonathan Griggs

North Books Stall



I am continuing to operate the North Books Stall - the local source of all bellringing books and literature.

The stall will be at branch meetings and events but if you want anything at other times please e-mail northbooksstall@btinternet.com and tell me what you want and I will do my best to get it to you.

By prior arrangement I can have the stall at Olney (Monday) or Great Linford (Tuesday) practices.

Initially the profit will be re-invested to build up the stock a bit, but I plan to donate a proportion of the profit to the ODG Bell Fund.

Alan Marchbank

ODG Training Course

Ten Bell Training Day at Aston Clinton *Saturday 3rd December*

This course provides tuition and practice for those wishing to progress with ringing on ten bells. This year the course will concentrate on Grandsire and Stedman caters. Further details from Richard Stanworth.

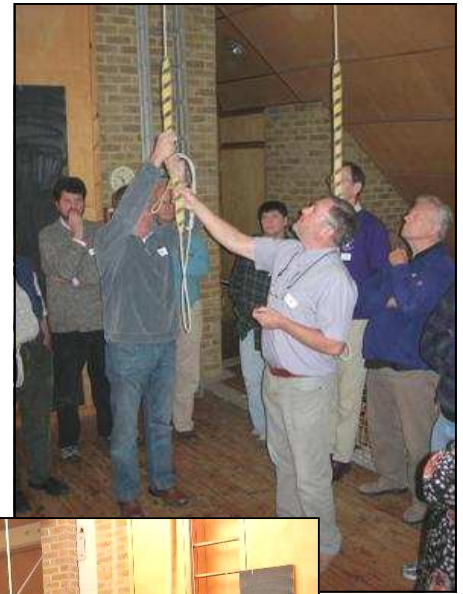
Integrated Teacher Training course

For those of you who missed the North Bucks teacher training course that was run recently at Downs Barn there is another opportunity to take part. Graham Nabb our tutor is running the course again on January 28th 2012 at Kineton (just north of Banbury). Contact Jonathan Griggs for more details.

Teaching the Teachers course



Just over twenty keen and enthusiastic local ringers met at Downs Barn for part one of a two part course on a new approach to teaching bell ringing to new recruits. Course Leader Graham Nabb epitomised the ethos of ITTS in explaining the basic components of the scheme in a clear uncomplicated manner. With regular practical sessions throughout the day using all eight tied bells, the trainees split into small groups to practice what had been taught in the theory sessions. With the high level of chatter and laughter in the ringing room I think it can be assumed the new challenges were being met with enthusiasm and enjoyment. With the superb lunch put on by the catering volunteers - Sheila Ware, Sheila Watts, Trudy Hutching, Ella Sheaf and Brian Newman, I thought the first day of ITTS was a great success, with everyone looking forward to part two where the newly learnt skills would be put into practice on a group of new learners.



Meeting at Olney for part 2 of the course on November 5th the group were hoping for sparklers rather than fireworks. Three young people and three adults volunteered as new learners and they were each allocated a team of two or three teachers and a teacher's mentor. To avoid overcrowding in the ringing room

Jonathan Griggs organised a meticulous timetable affording each group practice sessions interspersed with periods of theory and refreshment. The bells were tied, many thanks to Chas Knight for undertaking this, so that the neighbours were not disturbed during the day. Every student made excellent progress, some ringing almost unaided after just a few hours tuition. The new teachers themselves learnt valuable lessons in trying the new techniques learnt in part one of the course guided by their mentors. Unfortunately one new teacher experienced a mishap with a rope and ended up being taken to hospital with a dislocated finger. He was back by the end of the day, finger strapped up and able to polish off one of the superb puddings which was left over so not all was lost.



Photos from day 1 at Downs Barn

The day ended with the pupils able to ring on open bells for the first time followed by a demonstration of Grandsire Doubles by a select band which received a worthy round of applause.

The whole day was led by John Harrison and Alan Bentley from the ODG and they took feedback at the end of the day from all participants to help with future initiatives. Again with a tremendous spread put on by Helen and Graham Dille, Liz Knight, Ruth Placket, Ella Sheaf, Sheila Watts and Sheila Ware the day was another great success with the new teachers hopefully confident to help make The Big Ring Pull a success.

Ted Fawcett



Putting the skills into practice at Olney

The teachers and catering team at Downs Barn

