

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS
NORTH BUCKS BRANCH - QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Issue No 2
June 1982



St Edmund's, Maids Moreton

Cover picture

The church was built in 1450 by the daughters of the Lord Peovre, and stands on the site of an earlier church. A font belonging to the late twelfth century is still in St. Edmunds. During the Civil War in 1642 the church was badly damaged by the Parliamentary Forces under Oliver Cromwell, as an entry in the registers reminds us.

Until 1906 there were five bells in the tower at which time Mr George Ward, a member of a local baker's family, offered to provide a sixth bell. Alfred Bowell of Ipswich was given the job and a new fifth was added between the old fourth and fifth. The ring did not sound too good but the bells went well and continued to do so until about 1947 when the tenor became cracked. In 1950 all the bells were recast and rehung and are now an excellent Taylors ring.

G.W.H.

Stewards wanted

We still need someone to act as a steward in the part of the Branch to the west of Milton Keynes. We need someone who is in touch with the active towers in the area and who can act as a channel of communication not only between the towers and the Branch committee, but also between the towers themselves. Any volunteer (or volunteers), please get in touch with Martin Petchey or any Branch officer.

Obituary

Rev. W. E. Douthwaite who was Rector of Lavendon for fifteen years until his retirement two years ago died on May 8th. The bells were rung half muffled before and after the funeral service and following a requiem mass on Wednesday the 19th May, a quarter peal of doubles, dedicated to his memory was rung. The methods Grandsire, Reverse Canterbury Pleasure, St. Simon and Plain Bob were the same ones rung for a quarter peal to commemorate his retirement two years earlier.

During his incumbency and largely due to his enthusiasm, Lavendon bells which had been unringable for nearly twenty years were rehung in a new frame and augmented to six during 1974.

Striking competition

On Saturday 24th April 8 bands of ringers gathered at St. Mary's, Clifton Reynes for the annual striking competition. This was a very good turn out, representing a 100% increase on the number of bands entered last year. The methods rung were either Plain Bob or Grandsire, with only one tower, Stony Stratford breaking away with London. It was a close fought contest with only 20 points separating the top four bands but eventually Old Bradwell emerged as the clear winners, and now go on to the Guild final at Ewelme on Saturday 5th June. The full results were as follows

1. Old Bradwell	22 faults
2. Buckingham	29
3. Stony Stratford	38
4. Woughton on the Green	42
5. Great Linford	76
6. Newport Pagnell	86
7. Lavendon	88
8. Bletchley	132

The judges, Brian and Susan Threlfall, in announcing the results, commented that poor leading was responsible for many faults. Obviously a lesson to be learned for next year!

It makes a change

Add a bit of splice to your ringing! - it works wonders for your ego, and makes those eternal call-change-crunchers feel splendidly inferior. However it can also mean learning a lot of new methods - particularly if yours is a five-bell tower - and that is certainly liable to take the gilt off the gingerbread, unless you are very careful. What one really needs is some nice extents using the methods one already knows - not Braywood, Welford, Coxwell and Haddiscoe Place Bob! Someone once told me it was not possible to get an extent by splicing St. Simon's and Plain Bob - I imagine they must have been trying to do it in complete courses, which is indeed very, very false - and being a bit of a sceptic I had a go at proving them wrong. This was the result:

(Start Plain) 2345
 - 2354 (St Simon's)
 - 4523 (Plain)
 - 5342 (St Simon's)
 - 2453 (Back to Plain and start again!)

There is one problem though - they tell me you are supposed to include at least one plain lead of each method in a spliced peal, so ring 42 of these and technically it's a half peal of Bob Doubles and that's all - except for one large headache for some unfortunate member of the C.C. Peals Committee. Anyone know of a nice light five that hasn't been pealed lately...?

Newport outing

The Newport band's first outing of the year took ringers from the Newport area to Lincolnshire. The first ring, Market Deeping (6), were cast within a few years of Great Linford bells, by the same founder, Joseph Eayre of St. Neots. The irregularly loud ring at Boston (6) was followed by lunch and ringing at Bourne (6). Surfleet's leaning tower and light ring of 12 proved most entertaining but the magnificent tower at Boston provided by far the best ring, and view, of the day, although only two of the more intrepid of our number ventured to the top.

Thanks must go to Tim and Audrey for spending their time on the organisation of an enjoyable day out.

Scouting sponsored ring

The date and time for this event have now been chosen as October 16th 2.30 pm at Fenny Stratford Church. If you are in scouting and can ring on this date please let me know. If your church/belfrey is willing to have a sponsor form give me a ring or drop me a line.

M. R. Nimmo
35 King Edward Street
New Bradwell
Milton Keynes MK13 0BG Tel: M.K. 321011

(Scout Leader Great Linford (St. Andrews))

Newport news

To help us to improve our striking we now ring a quarter peal for Sunday Evensong once a month. The idea is working, as last month we achieved an excellent quarter of Stedman Triples and this month (May) Grandsire Triples. Both were good enough to record and send to "Bells on Sunday".

Information wanted

Nicola King of Newport Pagnell is carrying out a History 'A' level project on bell ringing in the North Bucks area. She is particularly interested in how ringing has developed over the last century, although any information from before this period would provide useful background information. If you have, or know of, any scrapbooks, memoirs, photos, memories or any other information, she would be pleased to hear from you at 13 Dove Close, Newport Pagnell. Alternatively, you can contact Doug Hird at Newport or Branch practices.

Barn dance

There will be a Barn Dance on Saturday July 24th starting at 8.00 in the Wavendon Community Centre (opposite the Church). There will be a bar and food is included in the price of your ticket. Your non-ringing friends will be very welcome. Tickets cost £2 and can be obtained from Brian Baldwin, 28 Passmore, Tinkers Bridge, Milton Keynes (MK 670579), Philippa Harrison, 107 Simpson Village, MK (MK 670040) or Allen Jones, 15 Chicheley Street, Newport Pagnell (Goldcrest 6584).

Guild festival

The annual Guild Festival will be held on Saturday 26th June when there will be ringing from 9.30 am to 7.15 pm in 19 towers in Oxford and the surrounding area. There will be a service in Christ Church Cathedral at 11.30 am followed by lunch in the Great Hall of Christ Church. Tickets for the lunch cost £5 and numbers are limited to 110.

Please send requests for lunch tickets to Miss D. Pollard, 49 Foxborough Road, Radley, Abingdon, Oxon.

If enough people wish to go to the Guild Festival Martin Petchey is willing to organise a minibus. Please tell Martin on MK 312910 if you are interested in this by 12th June.

Bill Butler has served as a Guild Officer for 12 years, first as General Secretary and latterly as Master of the Guild. He will be retiring at the AGM this October and it is hoped to make a small presentation to him in recognition of his service. If you would like to make a donation to this, please send it by the beginning of September to B. Gatward, 9 Goodwin Close, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire.

Quarter peals

This year there is to be no organised quarter peal week; instead quarter peals are to be organised by the Branch Ringing Masters (and anyone else who wishes to) over the next few months for the benefit of learners.

If anyone thinks that they, or their learners, would benefit from a quarter peal, please contact Doug Hird or Derek Stainsby.

We would like to thank everyone who sent in articles for the Newsletter - we actually had more than we have space to publish so if your article isn't in this time, don't worry - we're saving it for the next issue. In the meantime, keep the articles, letters or anything you like flowing in. The next issue of In Touch will be published at the end of September - please send copy to the Editors, Peter and Kirsty Wilson, by the 27th September at 50 Granes End, Great Linford, Milton Keynes (MK 605227).

DIARY

BRANCH PRACTICES

2nd July

OLNEY

Special method:

Double Norwich C B Major

6th August

WAVENDON

Special method:

York Surprise Minor

HALF YEARLY MEETING

Saturday 4th September

BUCKINGHAM

Special method:

Superlative Surprise Major

TINGEWICK

Special method:

Undershaft Doubles