

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



IN TOUCH

Issue No 7
OCTOBER 1999



St Mary's Wavendon

Cover picture

Our church at Wavendon, one of several locally dedicated to St Mary, dates mainly from the 13th Century, although the tower was not added until the 15th.

Whilst not perhaps being one of the churches noted for its architectural antiquities it has never the less one or two interesting points such as the two piscinas in the side aisles where the two altars were in the middle ages, the Holy Water stoup by the south door, and the stone corbels in the nave are 15th Century.

The six bells were recast from a peal of five in 1952, and are held to be one of the finest light peels in the area, from the "look two, treble's going....." they ask to be moved along quickly when they have a beautifully clear and precise sound.

We here at Wavendon are getting the bells back into the habit of being rung regularly. After a number of years of not having a band here, and with much help from other towers some eight people have learnt during the summer months, with much enthusiasm and only one broken stay, and one broken clapper (sorry Marcia!). The latter caused much consternation for a few strokes with six people ringing and looking from one to the other as only five bells sounded.

The ringers are protected from any interruption as they ring from a platform, access to which is via a trap-door which is held in place by the simple expedient of the ringer on the fourth standing on it - it is at least an incentive to ringers to arrive on time or being left on the ladder getting bruised knuckles!

Dick Ivory

Report from the half-yearly meeting

There were no surprises at the half-yearly general meeting of the branch on September 4, but a great deal of delight that so many turned up ringing started on the tricky five at Tingewick, and then on to the fine eight at Buckingham. There was a simple service, a fine tea and a brief meeting, followed by further ringing at Buckingham by a great crowd of people who overwhelmed the large ringing chamber.

Points from the meeting:-

A new practice night : Doug Hird announced that a Surprise practice would be held on the 3rd Friday of every month, starting with Hanslope on October 15th.

Dates for 1983 : Branch events for 1983 are
AGM 6 March at Lavendon
Striking Competition 22 April
Barn Dance 9 July
Half yearly meeting 3 September

There is now no excuse for arranging a tower outing on these days and you ought to let the Vicar know well in advance that you can't accept weddings on these days either.

Teenage practices : Ron Thorn (new Guild Master) reported that elsewhere in the Guild teenage practices in the school holidays had been a great success, both in improving ringing and in helping young ringers to get to know each other. Do we want them in North Bucks? Can we organise them? Where should they be held? Are there enough young ringers to make it a success? Responses please to the officers or stewards. The occasions might transcend branch boundaries - how far are young people able/willing to travel?

New bells in Milton Keynes : Milton Keynes Development Corporation have approved in principle the scheme to give the Downs Barn church/community centre a tower and bells and assigned a generous budget. The next stage, in liaison with the architect and the church, is to bring the idea into concrete reality. Watch this space for how you can help this come about.

Barn Dance

This year's annual Branch Barn Dance was held on Saturday July 24 at Wavendon Community Centre. More people came along than in recent years and the dancing was enthusiastic, if not always of championship standard! Caller John Todman and local band Music Folk had no difficulty in persuading everyone on to the floor to 'split the willow' etc and some people must have been secretly practising since last year because we were all complimented on our ability to learn the dances very quickly. A delicious supper was provided by Philippa Harrison and her band of helpers and the evening passed energetically and all too fast. Everyone seemed to have a good time and we look forward to an even bigger and better event next year. Many thanks to all the organisers and helpers for a most enjoyable evening.

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An Unusual Visit

Recently 3 members of the North Bucks Branch had the privilege of ringing for H.R.H. Prince Philips birthday. Nothing out of the ordinary you may say, no, only the ringing took place at the Curfew Tower Windsor Castle.

The party arrived at 7.15pm., negotiated with the constable on the gate and met by the ringer in charge, then introduced to the tower steward. Walking into the ringing room was like walking into an 'olde worlde barn' with huge pillars and beams, all of wood supporting firstly the clock room and at the top the bell frame housing a peal of 8 hung anticlockwise, tenor weight approx 26 cwt.

When the bells had been raised the usual journey took place, to knock over the seventh clapper which invariably goes up the wrong way. Another happening is that the third is apt to cast wheel regularly.

On the call of 'Grandsire Triples' one of the party took hold of the third and another the tenor. Treble going, gone was the call. After two strokes, Oh dear, the third cast wheel and set at backstroke? "Front two stand, back five keep on rounds" called out the conductor while the rope was fed back onto the wheel. When the touch came round the member on the tenor had lost $\frac{1}{2}$ stone in weight through sweating; indeed they are not easy bells to ring and strike, certainly NOT learners bells. "Thats it," commented the ringer on on the third. "I will not be asked again after that spectacle." But she was wrong, and asked twice more during the enjoyable evening.

Ringin is usually by a set band who are paid and the ringin place is handed down from father to son and so on. Usually the band are allowed visitors twice a year so indeed they were privileged to be allowed to join the 'By Appointment Band,' to which thanks were duly expressed. Looking round the ringin room all the peals rung there have been recorded by the presence of a peal board. During a touch of Stedman Triples, one member went upstairs with a tape recorder; the piece was later played back to about 15 ringers with approval. The recording remains a memory of 'That Tower.'

Anon

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A Touch of Irony?

Pass the treble in 3-4 ... that's right, the bob didn't affect me, four blows behind again ... tedious stuff, this - it ought to carry a Central Council Health Warning: "Ringin Bob Doubles can damage your rope-sight" or something like that ... still, it gives you

a chance to think about more interesting topics, like ... (whoops! - sorry, Fred, that should have been my 3-4 dodge) ... they come too close together, I always think, when you're ringing on five ... give me a nice course of Double Norwich any time, or a nice round of Double Diamond, if you insist ... anyway, where was I? Oh, yes, that newsletter thing Brian was handing round, good idea and all that, lets people know what's going on in the ... (ah, remembered that time, lay to the treble, that's it, and then lead again ...) - funny name, though, wonder who thought that one up ... I suppose it's meant to be a - what's the word? - "double-entendre" is it? - perhaps you only call it that when it's meant to be suggestive, I don't know ... bother! that was another dodge I just missed, didn't see it coming at all, must try to keep my mind on the ringing, such as it is ... still, only one more lead, bob at the end and we'll all be home and dry and put out of our misery ... of course, newsletters only work if people take the trouble to read them - like they don't when you pin up the Branch Practices programme or last year's subs. reminder ... good, there it is at last, "Bob!", make long fifths and ... "Go again!" ??? - you must be joking ... no? oh well, down to lead and back to sleep

.....couldn't have stood much more of that ... funny thing, you know, there was a time when I really used to enjoy Practice Nights ... still, it's somewhere to go on a Tuesday and get away from the telly ... clutch out, change into third ... wonder what's on the radio at this time of night ... no, anything but that! - it's a worse racket than our striking, if such a thing is possible ... Radio 4, that's more like it ... what did she say? - well, now, how about that for a coincidence! ... "In Touch - our magazine for the visually handicapped" ... maybe somebody is trying to tell us something

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This summer, on two practice nights in July and August, Great Linford saw an unusual number of visitors. We were taking part in the Development Corporation's 'Activities for Children' programme, by holding an Open Evening to show people the bells and how they are rung. We had expected a moderate amount of interest but were overwhelmed when 70 people turned up on the first Open Evening! Our practice was limited to ten minutes at the end of the evening - the rest of the time was devoted to mini-lectures on ringing to seemingly endless groups of enthusiastic visitors. The second Open Evening did not attract so many people (probably because it was a very wet evening) but those who did turn up seemed to enjoy the experience. Visitors,

ringers and MKDC alike regarded the experiment as a great success and we will probably be asked to repeat the Open Evenings again next year. Alas, we didn't acquire any new recruits but perhaps next summer.....?

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News in brief

Diary orders : Brian Baldwin is taking orders now for the 1983 Ringers Diary. Anyone who wants to order a Diary, please contact Brian by early November.

Branch Secretary : Martin Petchey has announced his intention of resigning as Branch Secretary at the next AGM. Nominations will be invited before the meeting, but in the meantime if you have a burning urge to take on the job or know someone who you think might be suitable, please get in touch with one of the Branch Officers (a full list is on the back page of this Newsletter).

'In Touch' colour supplement : This edition of 'In Touch' contains a special supplement listing practice nights, times of Sunday ringing and tower contacts for all the towers in the branch for which information was available. You might like to pin this up in your tower for easy reference.

Branch course : The annual Plain Hunt/Plain Bob course will be held at Woughton on the Green on Saturday 20 November. Please give names of anyone in your tower who would like to go on the course to Martin Petchey (MK 312910)

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Fred Pateman's Diamond Wedding Anniversary

On June 2nd the Buckingham band celebrated the Diamond Wedding anniversary of Fred and Mrs Pateman by ringing a quarter peal of Stedman Triples. Fred learned to ring at Cranford near Kettering at the age of 10. In 1915 he moved to Wicken and was married at Old Wolverton on June 2nd 1922. Fred moved to Buckingham in 1940 and is still ringing with the Buckingham band.

Buckingham 2 June, 1260 Stedman Triples:
Betty Linnell 1, G E Green 2, R A Vickers 3,
J Lewis 4, W A Yates 5, J Linnell 6, G W Holland
(Cond.) 7, M Howard 8.

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D I A R Y

Branch Practices

November 5th	Beachampton	Special Method : Undershaft
December 3rd	Bletchley	Special Method : Duffield

November 20th Plain Hunt & Plain Bob course,
 Woughton-on-the-Green

Advance Notice

March 6th Branch AGM, Lavendon

Branch Officers

President	: Very Reverend John Bone, Archdeacon of Buckingham
Chairman	: Brian Baldwin, 28 Passmore, Tinkers Bridge North (MK 670579)
Treasurer	: Brian Baldwin
Secretary	: Martin Petchey, 7 North Street, New Bradwell (MK 312910)
Joint Ringing Masters	: Doug Hird, 21 Little Linford Lane, Newport Pagnell (Goldcrest 6419) Derek Stainsby, 32A Bradwell Road, Loughton (Shenley Church End 492)
Committee Representatives	: John Murray, 1 Brookfield Cottages, Primrose Lane, Old Bradwell (MK 312539) Chris Barnett, 20 Passmore, Tinkers Bridge North (MK 606022)

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TOWER LIST

Monday

- 1) Beachampton (5) 8 - 0 - 25
Mike Gilbert, 10 Main Street, Beachampton
(MK 562154)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : first and third : 10.30 - 11.00
- 2) Chicheley (6) 16½ cwt.
David Robertson, Brickyard Cottages, Chicheley
(Nth Crawley 371)
Practice : alternating with North Crawley 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : first Sunday 5.30
- 3) North Crawley (6) 12 - 1 - 15
Bill Parker, 12 Folly Lane, North Crawley
(North Crawley 226)
Practice : alternating with Chicheley
Sunday : second, third & fourth Sunday 5.30
- 4) Stony Stratford (8) 12 - 1 - 16
Malcolm Hooton, 4 Blenheim Avenue, Stony Stratford
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 8.45 - 9.00
- 5) Wavendon (6) 8 - 3 - 5
Dick Ivory, 3 St Mary's Close, Wavendon
(MK 582744)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 10.20 - 11.00

Tuesday

- 1) Bletchley (8) 15 - 2 - 6
Terry Page, 15 Sunningdale Way, Bletchley
(MK 79178)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 5.30 - 6.00
- 2) Great Linford (6) 16½ cwt.
Kirsty Wilson, 50 Granes End, Great Linford
(MK 605227)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 11.00 - 11.30
- 3) Maids Moreton (6) 10 - 3 - 20
George Holland, 10 The Pightle, Maids Moreton
Practice : 7.00 - 8.30
Sunday :
- 4) Olney (8) 25 cwt
Charles Knight, 18 Bridge Street, Olney
(Bedford 713719)
Practice : 7.00 - 8.00 (Also on second friday in month)
Sunday : 5.30 - 6.00

Wednesday

- 1) Great Brickhill (6) 14 cwt.
Hugh Butler, The Post Office, Gt. Brickhill
(Gt. Brickhill 663)
Practice : 8.00 - 9.00
Sunday : 5.30 - 6.00
- 2) Lavendon (6) 11 cwt.
Brian Clifton, 67 Castle Road, Lavendon
(Bedford 712774)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : third Sunday in month 10.15 - 11.00
- 3) Newport Pagnell (8) 21 - 2 - 16
Audrey Jones, 46 Westbury Lane, Newport Pagnell
(MK 610735)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 9.00 - 9.30 / 5.30 - 6.00
- 4) Old Bradwell (6) 7 - 2 - 15
Martin Petchey, 7 North Street, New Bradwell
(MK 312910)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 5.30 - 6.15

Thursday

- 1) Fenny Stratford (6) 5 cwt
Joan Prior
(MK 320850)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday :
- 2) Hanslope (8) 21 cwt.
Graham Walker, 43 Weston Drive, Hanslope
(MK 510558)
Practice : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 10.15 - 11.00
- 3) Simpson (6) 7 cwt.
Brian Baldwin, 28 Passmore, Tinkers Bridge North
(MK 670579)
Practice : first and third Thursday 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 10.00 - 10.30
- 4) Woughton on the Green (6) 7 cwt
Brian Baldwin, 28 Passmore, Tinkers Bridge North
(MK 670579)
Practice : second and fourth Thursday : 7.30 - 9.00
Sunday : 10.00 - 10.30

Friday

- 1st Friday : Branch Practice 7.30 - 9.00
- 2nd Friday : Olney (8) 25 cwt. 7.30 - 9.00
Charles Knight
18 Bridge Street, Olney
(Bedford 713719)
- 3rd Friday : Branch Surprise Major Practice :
7.30 - 9.00
- 4th Friday : Stoke Goldington (6) 7.30 - 9.00
Owen Warren
8 Town End Crescent, Stoke Goldington
(Stoke Goldington 416)
- Buckingham (8) 27 cwt.
Bill Tares, Bannerlands, Dadford, Buckingham
Practice by arrangement at Maids Moreton on previous
Tuesday
- Sunday : 9.15 - 10.00 except 3rd Sunday

Others

- Whaddon (6) 14 - 2 - 21
Mrs F Parrott, 16 Vicarage Road, Whaddon
No regular practice
1st Sunday 10.30 - 11.00
2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday 11.00 - 11.30