

SEPTEMBER '88

IN TOUCH

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH BUCKS BRANCH
OF
THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS



In Touch needs ideas & articles from you...

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An 8 bell
lace bookmark

EVENSONG OF THANKSGIVING AT MILTON KEYNES VILLAGE

On Sunday 10th July, the hard work of ten years restoration work at All Saints, Milton Keynes village, culminated in an Evensong of Thanksgiving. £105,000 had been raised for the total restoration of the church, the second phase of which concentrated on the tower. The Church was packed for an inspiring service, which was led by the Revd. Norman Cotton, and the choir of All Saints Church, High Wycombe. The village children entertained the congregation with hand bells and a somewhat cheeky rendering of a song aimed at the "noise" we ringers make.

For some weeks prior to the service, a completely new band of Milton Keynes village ringers were being trained up as quickly as possible to ring for their own service. Thanks must go to the Wavendon ringers and the Branch Officers for their help. The hard work paid off, for prior to the service, a band composed entirely of village ringers were able to ring rounds - no mean feat in a few weeks! After the service, the Branch Officers rang a Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Minor. Plenteous tea and cakes afterwards at Manor Farm were gratefully received.



The Branch Officers' Quarter Peal Band

The belfry is now resplendent with painted frame, and the ringing chamber has been transformed by a new carpet, seating and other bits and pieces. Practice night at Milton Keynes is held on Tuesdays, 7.30 - 9.00 p.m., and anyone is welcome to come along and help with the teaching. Pictured overleaf are some of the enthusiastic band - congratulations and best wishes to them for the future of their tower!



The Milton Keynes Village Bellringers

(Tower Captain - Tricia Giffard - third from right)

EQUATION ANALYSIS TEST

This test does not measure your intelligence, your fluency with words, and certainly not your mathematical ability. It will, however, give you some gauge of your mental flexibility and creativity. In the 3 years since we developed the test, we have found few people who could solve more than half the 24 questions on the first try. Many, however, reported getting answers long after the test had been set aside - particularly at unexpected moments when their minds were relaxed - and some reported solving all the questions over a period of several days. Take this as your personal challenge.

INSTRUCTIONS: Each quotation contains the initials of words that will make it correct. Find the missing words. For example, 26 = L. of the A. would be 26 = Letters of the Alphabet.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. 26 = L. of the A. | m. 8 = S. on a S.S. |
| b. 7 = W. of the W. | n. 3 = B.M. (S.H.T.R.) |
| c. 1,001 = A.N. | o. 4 = Q. in a G. |
| d. 12 = S. of the Z. | p. 24 = H. in a D. |
| e. 54 = C. in a D. (with 2 J.) | q. 1 = W. on a U. |
| f. 9 = P. in the S.S. | r. 5 = D. in a Z.C. |
| g. 88 = P.K. | s. 57 = H.V. |
| h. 13 = S. of the A.F. | t. 11 = P. on a F.T. |
| i. 32 = D.F. at which W.F. | u. 1,000 = W. that a P. is W. |
| j. 18 = H. on a G.C. | v. 29 = D. in F. in a L.Y. |
| k. 90 = D. in a R.A. | w. 64 = S. on a C. |
| l. 200 = D. for P.G. in M. | x. 40 = D. and N. of the G.F. |

Contributed by Chris Crook of Old Wolverton

June 12th 1954

North Bucks Bellringers Celebrate Golden Jubilee



Eight of the nine veteran ringers, from left to right: Mr. B. Fisher, Mr. H. Sear, Mr. E. Willett, Mr. B. Jones, Mr. A. Crane, Mr. W. Daniels, Mr. F. Mynard, Mr. F. Vickers.

On Saturday over 100 local church bellringers went to Newton Longville to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the North Bucks branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of bellringers. Nine of the ringers at the first meeting were present and eight of them rang the touch before the evening service last Saturday.

The celebrations began the previous day when a peal of Plain Bob Major, 5,056 changes, was rung at St. Mary's, Bletchley, in 2 hours 55 minutes. Those taking part were: Treble J. F. Brooks (Fenny Stratford), 2 H. Sear (Bletchley), 3 W. Yates (Buckingham), 4 J. F. Stonton (Bletchley), 5 F. C. Case (Wicken), 6 D. J. Mosger (Bletchley), 7 R. Cadamy (Bletchley), tenor

G. W. Hollands (Maid's Moreton, conductor).

On Saturday afternoon, following a few touches on the bells, the ringers went to the schoolroom where the 50th annual general meeting was held. The chairman, the Rev. Allan Campbell, presided and pointed out that the branch was started by the Rev. F. E. Robinson of Drayton, near Abingdon, in conjunction with the Rev. C. Leslie Norris, of Newton Longville.

A committee was appointed, a member of each tower represented being elected. Among them was Canon Forrest, of Swanbourne, who recently retired.

The Rev. Allan Campbell then mentioned the names of nine ringers at the first meeting who they were pleased to see

with them at the golden jubilee—Mr. H. Sear, Mr. A. Crane (Bletchley), Mr. E. Willett (Shenley), Mr. W. Daniels (Bletchley, formerly of Shenley), Mr. B. Fisher (Olney), Mr. F. Mynard (Emberton), Mr. B. Jones (Maid's Moreton), Mr. F. Rowe (Fenny Stratford) and Mr. F. Vickers (Linslade). Mr. Edwin Yates, the 80½ years-old veteran ringer from Stony Stratford was to have been present, too, but he unfortunately fell from his cycle and was unable to travel.

Mr. R. H. Howson, the secretary and treasurer, in his report said membership was slightly lower than last year, but the branch had a credit balance of £11.

On the proposition of the Rev. C. E. Wigg (master) the Rev. Allan Campbell was re-elected chairman. Mr. Howson was also re-elected and Mr. Vickers was appointed to assist him as auditor. The Committee—Messrs. H. Edwards, W. Dillow (Stony Stratford), J. E. Whitlock (Wolverton), E. Lathall (Newport Pagnell) and F. Vickers (Buckingham)—agreed to serve for another year.

The next annual meeting will be held at Shenley.

Four new members from Olney were welcomed and it was agreed to send a message of greeting to an old ringer, Mr. Walter Sear, who is unfortunately in Tindal House Hospital, Aylesbury.

In recognition of his services as secretary and treasurer to the branch for the past 15 years, Mr. Reg Howson, of Newport Pagnell, was presented with a testimonial. The chairman paid tribute to his work and thanked him on behalf of the members.

Mr. Frank Gibbard, secretary of the central Bucks branch, and Mr. William Hibbert, the Guild secretary, were among those present.

The evening service was conducted by the Rev. L. C. Butler (Rector) assisted by the Rev. Allan Campbell. The sermon was preached by the Bishop of Buckingham, the Rt. Rev. R. M. Hay. The Rev. C. E. Wigg acted as Bishop's Chaplain.

Basing his address on the text "Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world," the Bishop said a fifty years jubilee was rather a delightful time.

It was not too long for some who were at the first meeting to be there at the 50th. But it was a long time, too, because so much had happened.

The events during that period had included the rise and fall of nations, the enslavement and liberation of peoples, battles won and battles lost. All world shaking events, but he supposed more recently they could include the scientific discoveries fraught with such unlimited and terrible possibilities, and the ranging of the world into two great camps.

It was to mark great events that men had always found bells so satisfactory and appropriate. Almost every historic event was marked by the ringing of bells. Kings and Queens were crowned, victories were celebrated, peace proclaimed, and when those things happened the bellringers came into their own. They were then recognised as useful members of the community who rendered great service.

Similarly in the different world of personal feelings and emotions the ringing of bells was one way of giving voice to the great emotion of the human heart. The muffled, merry peal of wedding bells; the sad solemn tolling expressive of sorrow; the harsh calling of the alarm bell, the signal of fire or invasion.

"If our Church bells and the efforts of those who ring them can remind us of God, his constant concern of our daily lives and our need of His grace in all our doings—so much the better," said the Bishop.

"So far I have only spoken of one of the great multitude who hear the bells you ring. But what of you who ring them. You give pleasure . . . I suppose you at times give a certain amount of pain—but that is only of all proportion to the pleasure you give.

"But you also get pleasure by the practice of your art. Bellringing has a great fascination because it satisfies some great deep need of the human spirit . . . something more than arithmetical motions, or a certain amount of skill, or ordered harmonies of sound. Far more indeed than that.

"Is it not because you recognise in the sound of bells that you ring a type of the glorious Gospel of God? The message of God's love?

"Far and wide your bells proclaim the message of Almighty God. They are not merely summonses for an unwilling people to come and do something they don't want to do. They are proclaiming, world-wide, God's love.

"Your bells soften their sorrow, but deepen their joys; allay their fears and divert their perils."

Contribution from Jack Piggott of Emberton

BOOK REVIEW

Elphick, G. P., THE CRAFT OF THE BELLFOUNDER (1988)
Published by Phillimore f15.00

During the last couple of years a number of works describing the history and development of church bellringing have been published. Elphick's book is devoted to describing the developments of the bellfounder's art from earliest times.

The first chapter deals with the origins of bells and casting techniques using examples from all over Europe and the Far East. Chapters two to eight each describe the developments of a stage in the creation of a bell: Design, Moulding Materials, Moulding, the Metal, Furnaces and Casting, Tuning, and Clappers. The ninth chapter looks at Cracks and Repair. The book ends with a glimpse into the future of bellfounding.

Elphick has gathered a great amount of information from documentary and published sources and his own examination of bells, and he has succeeded in presenting it in a clear, logical and interesting way. Much of the text is necessarily full of technical data but it is supplemented and clarified by the numerous photographs and line illustrations. The result is a very readable book.

This book will appeal to any ringer who has ever wondered about the process of bellfounding and not been satisfied with a short description of casting. It will also interest anyone who has pondered questions like "Why are ... bells the shape they are/clappers shaped like a thistle/some bells more tuneful than others? These and many other questions are answered by this book. My two reservations are the lack of a proper academic bibliography which might deter further study; and the price, ask the local library to order a copy, or perhaps the Branch Education Committee could buy a copy for the Branch.

Nicki King
1st June, 1988

QUARTER PEALS

ALL SAINTS, MILTON KEYNES VILLAGE

Sunday 10th July, 1988

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Sheila Watts | 4. B. Douglas Hird |
| 2. Godfrey L. Foat | 5. Alan Marchbank |
| 3. Andrew King | 6. David Phillipson (C) |

Rung by Officers of the North Bucks Branch of O.D.G.C.B.R. after a Service of Thanksgiving marking the completion of ten years restoration work.

ALL SAINTS, EMBERTON

Sunday 24th July, 1988

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Sheila Watts | 4. Owen Warren |
| 2. Lawrence Bendelow | 5. Charles J. Knight |
| 3. Judy Crocker | 6. David Phillipson (C) |

First Quarter Peal "inside" for Lawrence Bendelow.

THE UNDER 18'S STRIKING COMPETITION

Two of us from the Newport Pagnell tower decided to enter the striking competition at North Hinksey on the 9th July. After a pleasant drive through the country to Oxford which took about an hour we arrived at North Hinksey.

Arriving at the tower we found a group of people waiting outside of the church who were to take part in the competition. Although it was due to start at 7.30pm one team arrived late and so we had to wait. The organisers asked for a band to ring up the six bells in the tower. The parents of the competitors helped.

There were three teams in all who took part, but only one team was made up of three who had no team ready and three people from the other two teams.

The teams were given a two minute practice time before going into their actual competition piece. For the competition piece the teams could do anything from rounds to what ever they could do in their team.

The mixed group of us came runners up while one of the other two teams came first.

Everyone who took part in the competition received a certificate. It might have been better if more people could of taken part because it didn't seem seem to be like a competition but just a branch practice.

It was a very enjoyable evening, but perhaps next year we could enter a branch team.

Nicola Ramsay & Nicola Busby.
of Newport Pagnell

NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

DIARY OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER SAT. 3rd	Quarterly Meeting & Striking Contest	Haversham & Hanslope Wicken
FRI. 16th	Branch Practice	Thornborough
FRI 30th	Surprise Practice	Newport Pagnell
OCTOBER SAT. 1st	ODG 6 Bell Final	Loughton, Shenley, Bradwell, Old Wolverton
FRI. 7th	Branch Practice	Stowe
FRI 21st	Branch Practice	Fenny Stratford
NOVEMBER Fri. 4th	Branch Practice	Simpson
FRI. 18th	Branch Practice	Bletchley
DECEMBER SAT 3rd	Christmas Extravaganza.	Great Linford

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS DIARY REPLACES ANY EARLIER ARRANGEMENTS.