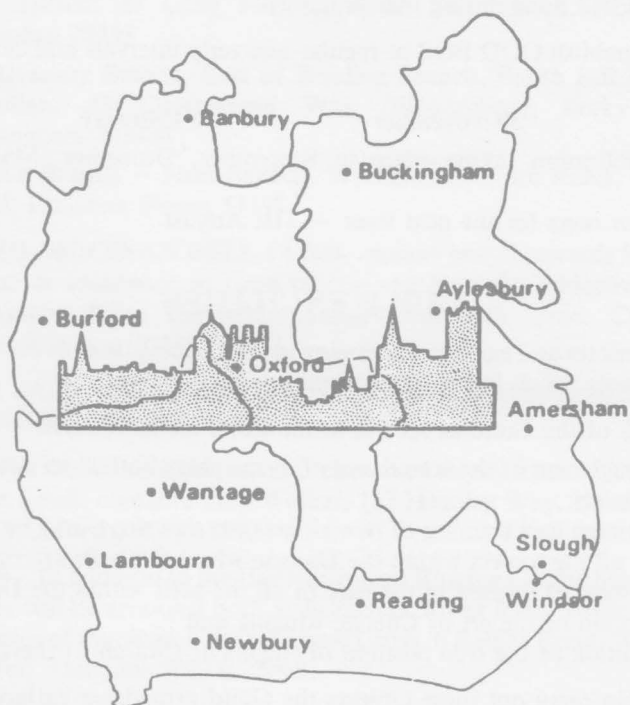


ODD BOB
Newsletter
of the
OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD



ODD BOB – OxforD Diocese; Berks, Oxon, Bucks.

This copy of ODD BOB may be late as no one volunteered to take on the office of Information Officer at the Guild's A.G.M. at Charlbury in May. It is being produced this time by a number of Guild and Branch Officers who believe that it is an excellent way of communicating with members of the Guild. It also makes us aware of what is going on not only in our own Branch but of the many activities which are taking place throughout the Guild. This Guild is one of the largest both territorially and numberwise. This means that members in the branches at opposite ends of the Guild do not know anything about each other's activities. 'TWIGS FROM THE BRANCHES' helps us to overcome this. IS THERE ANYONE WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO UNDERTAKE THIS OFFICE?

DAPHNE POLLARD. As stated in the last edition of ODD BOB Daphne did not seek re-election as Information Officer – keeping her word that she would only do it for one year. During that year of office she not only edited four copies but produced three from scratch; producing them on the dates she had said she would. The content also became different and wider in outlook. At the A.G.M. at Charlbury her resignation was accepted with regret. The Master thanked her on behalf of the Guild for all that she had done during that year.

It is hoped to publish ODD BOB at regular quarterly intervals and closing dates for copy will be:

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 31 August | 30 November | 28 February | 31 May |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|

each year, publication taking place in September, December, March and June respectively.

Closing date for copy for the next issue – 31st August.

GUILD FACILITIES

The Guild promotes and encourages ringing in the Diocese. It does this by providing a variety of services which foster ringing and related interests.

The OBJECTS of the Guild as set out in the Rules are as follows:

- the encouragement of the attendance of its members both at service ringing and at public worship;
- the recruitment and training of new ringers, so that there may be regular service ringing in all the towers within the Diocese where the bells are ringable;
- the promotion of interest in the care of all the bells within the Diocese;
- the promotion of the art of Change Ringing and
- the recognition of the true position of ringers as Church workers.

In order to help carry out these Objects the Guild provides a variety of services as follows:

Towers and Belfries Committee. The Towers and Belfries Committee exists to help your tower with any problems which you might have with your bells, their fittings, sound control or the tower itself. We can, in co-operation with the Education

Committee, arrange a maintenance course for your area, or on a smaller scale, show you what you should be doing to maintain your own tower.

If you would like some help or need to have your bells inspected, please contact one of the following:

Banbury or Chipping Norton Branches – Graham Clifton, Stedman Cottage, Steeple Aston, Oxford. Tel: Steeple Aston 47273.

Witney or Witney and Woodstock Branches – Richard Stevens, 19 Thames Avenue, Bicester, Oxon. Tel: Bicester 243920.

Central Bucks, North Bucks or North E.B.S.B. Branches – Mark Dobson, 6 Cautley Close, Quainton, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 4BN. Tel: Quainton 216.

Chiltern Branch – Terry Wagstaff, 6 Firs Close, Whitchurch, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 4LH. Tel: Aylesbury 641755.

Newbury Branch or West of Reading Branch – Robert Grange, c/o 8 St. Mary's Hill, Cheap Street, Newbury Berks. Tel: (daytime only) Newbury 42961.

O.N.B., V.O.W.H. or Oxford City Branches – Either Bernard Stone, 3 Bell Close, Grove, Wantage, Oxon. Tel: Wantage 66673
or Colin Turner, 27 Long Furlong Road, Sunningwell, Abingdon, Oxon. Tel: Abingdon 22335

Sonning Deanery Branch, East of Reading Branch, South E.B.S.B. Branch – Tony Pullan, 23 Cumberland Way, Wokingham, Berks RG11 9AY. Tel: Wokingham 793488

South Oxon Branch – Noel Bartlett, Wychelm, Chinnor Road, Aston Rowant, Oxon. Tel: Kingston Blount 51197

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN BELL FUND makes grants towards bell restoration. Any donations or assistance in fund raising will help this objective. Contact the General Treasurer, Brian Gatward, Grangewood, Mill Lane, Calcot, Reading RG3 5RS. Tel: Reading (0734) 413097.

BOOKS FOR SALE. At General Guild Meetings and some Branch Meetings you will find a travelling bookstall.

LIBRARY The Guild maintains a comprehensive Library from which books may be borrowed. For details contact Philip Walker, 152 Headley Way, Headington, Oxford OX3 7SZ. Tel: Oxford (0865) 65140.

EDUCATION In addition to the Easthampstead Ringing Course held in September, ringing courses will be arranged both at Branch or tower level. These can be one day courses or a series of evenings. Contact Marie Cross, 6 Radley Road, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3PQ. Tel: Abingdon (0235) 20868.

The Education Committee has produced leaflets on the following topics:

Method Ringing: Plain Hunting and Bob Doubles; Grandsire Doubles; Stedman Doubles and Triples.

Belfry Maintenance: Belfry Care and Maintenance; Rope Splicing; Sound Control.

Courses: How to Run a One Day Ringing Course; How to Arrange a One Day Bell Maintenance Course.

Bibliography Bibliography – a list of books about bells etc.

Handbells A booklet on Change Ringing on Handbells is in the process of being written. It will cover learning to ring double-handed.

The 8mm film 'Birth of a Bell' has been purchased by the Education Committee and is available for hire (charge £5.00). This 25 minute film covers the casting and tuning of bells. There is also a VHS video copy of this film for hire and a Betamax copy could probably be made if required: contact the General Secretary.

EXHIBITION DISPLAY MATERIAL and stands are available for tower open days, Public Libraries etc. Contact Ken Darvill, 3 Copners Way, Holmer Green, High Wycombe, Bucks. Tel: High Wycombe (0494) 713217.

The General Secretary is Tony Pullan, 23 Cumberland Way, Wokingham, Berks RG11 9AY. Tel: Wokingham (0734) 793488.

GUILD STEWARDS At the A.G.M. at Charlbury the Guild once again elected four Stewards. Last year only three people could be found who were willing to fill this office. As a result there has been a re-adjustment of the area they will serve. The Stewards are there not only to act as liaison between the General Guild and the members but also to serve the Branches in any way they can or you feel they can help.

Banbury / Bicester / Chipping Norton / Central Bucks Branches

J. Harris, 95 Buckingham Road, Bicester, Oxon OX6 7ES. Tel: Bicester 252098

Chiltern / North Bucks / Witney and Woodstock Branches

Mrs. A.M. Carpenter, 41 Napier Road, Crowthorne, Berks RG11 7EJ.
Tel: Crowthorne 775036.

Old North Berks / Oxford City / South Oxon / Vale of White Horse Branches

Miss M.R. Cross, 6 Radley Road, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3PQ.
Tel: Abingdon 20868

East Berks and South Bucks / Newbury / Reading / Sonning Deanery Branches

M. Till, 17 Qarrington Close, Thatcham, Berks RG13 4YE. Tel: Thatcham 66186

EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Advance Notice – There will be a Handbell Course for those who have taken the Handbell Course at Easthampstead and wish to progress further. It will be taken by Katharine Firman and will be held in February 1987.

Easthampstead 1986 – This year all the places on the Course have been filled by members of the Guild and every Branch is represented by at least two members. The Branch Secretaries are to be congratulated on this. The Course was oversubscribed especially at the elementary levels. If you were unable to get on the course but would like help before the 1987 Easthampstead Course, please let Marie Cross know. It may be possible to arrange a day course for you.

Booklets – Katharine Firman has almost finished the 'Booklet on Learning to Ring Handbells' and Anne Carpenter one on Conducting for the Inexperienced. One is also

in preparation on Bob Minor and Kent Minor. We hope to bring up to date and re-issue Booklet No.2 A Bibliography of Books about Bells, Change Ringing etc.

Library Books – The Guild Librarian also hopes to publish a complete list of the books in the Guild Library. There have been many additions since the last complete list was printed and distributed to the towers. Anne Carpenter has a stock of Guild Booklets (10p each plus s.a.e.). Her address is Mrs. A. Carpenter, 41 Napier Road, Crowthorne, Berks RG11 7EJ.

Marie Cross

THE MASTER REPRESENTED THE GUILD

At the Annual Meeting of the Guild Robert Newton resigned as a Central Council Representative and the Master, Ron Thorne, was elected in his place. Robert Newton was thanked for his work in that capacity over the past six years. The other three representatives, Bill Butler, Howard Egglestone and Tim Pett were all re-elected. All the Officers of the Guild were re-elected except Daphne Pollard (Publicity) who did not wish to stand. No one was found to replace her. This is the second year that the Guild has finished its A.G.M. with a vacancy among its officers.

CYRIL KINCH HONOURED

At the Guild's A.G.M. Cyril Kinch was made a Vice-President of the Guild in recognition of his many years of service both to the Bicester Branch and to the Guild. Having joined the Guild in 1935 he became joint Secretary with F. Sharpe in 1948 of the Bicester Branch and its Secretary in 1949. He continued to hold that office until 1973. In 1973 the Bicester Branch made him one of its Vice-Presidents. From 1954 to 1984 Cyril Kinch was a Trustee of the Guild serving it quietly and unobtrusively. Until ill health prevented him, he spent many hours helping the bands in the Bicester Branch and a number owe their existence to his quiet support and teaching.

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN BELL FUND – The First Ten Years

For many years past it has been the custom of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers to secure financial support from individuals and parochial church councils, having responsibility for the upkeep of bells.

In 1975 the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund was set up by the Guild as a registered charity for the purpose of recovering tax deducted from investment income, and to encourage the signing of deeds of covenant in its favour. The objects of the Bell Fund are to raise and collect sums of money and to apply the income arising from the investment of each sum in or towards the repair, maintenance and renewal of the church bells in the Diocese of Oxford.

From the commencement of the fund in 1975 to the end of 1981, 19 grants were voted, totalling £5,175, giving an average grant of £272. The years 1982 to 1985 saw the voting of a further 18 grants, totalling £12,325, and increasing the average grant amount to £684. The meeting of the Trustees in January 1986, approved another 6 grants, totalling £7,500 and again increasing the average grant amount of £1,250.

An analysis of these grants reveals the following information. Grants of £2,250 each were voted for Deddington and Dorchester, towards works costing £15,000, a grant of £1,500 to Thornborough for works costing £10,000, a grant of £1,300 to Hitcham, where the estimated cost is nearly £9,000, and grant of £100 each to Boyne Hill, Maidenhead and East Illsley for more modest works. In addition, the Trustees have been made aware of proposals for work to be commenced during 1987 at Bow Brickhill and Woodstock, and have written to both parochial church councils to indicate support for the work, of at least £1,500.

The estimated annual income available for grants during 1986 is £6,500. It has been possible to vote the grants detailed above, since all available income from 1985 was not applied, due to the few applications received in that year. The capital sum of the Bell Fund now invested exceeds £52,000, and from that the annual income of the order of £6,500 is largely guaranteed, subject of course to interest rate fluctuations.

The original intention was to build a capital sum of £100,000 in the first 10 years, and regrettably that objective has not been achieved, although there has been an upturn in the annual new money raised. In 1985 this figure was some £5,411, and it should be noted that the income available for grants in that year was a larger amount (£5,675). It now appears likely that the annual income will generally exceed the amount of new money raised.

My information of the current state of projects which have been supported by the Bell Fund is as follows:

East Illsley – work completed satisfactorily and grant has been paid.

Standlake – grant of £350 was approved in 1985, and work has just been completed.

Thornborough – work is well in hand and completion expected shortly.

Steeple Aston – grant of £1,750 was approved in 1985, work is progressing and should be finished in the autumn. Local ringers are saving money by self-help on this project and the Guild has arranged accident insurance cover.

B.J.G.



LEGACIES

One evening recently my telephone rang, and it was a solicitor who has a client who wished to leave money in a will to the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund. His question was "Is there a standard form of wording to cover this situation?" The Answer is "Yes" and it is thus:

Form of Bequest:

I bequeath to the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund the sum of free of duty, to be applied to the purposes of the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund, and I declare that the receipt of the Honorary Treasurer or other proper officer for the time being of the Fund, shall be sufficient discharge for the same.

Residue:

I give all my property not otherwise disposed of by this my will subject to and after payment of my funeral and testamentary expenses, to the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund to be applied to the purposes of that Fund.

The Guild Restoration Fund is also a registered charity, and a similar form of wording to this could be used, with the substitution of the title Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers Restoration Fund.

B.J.G.



DATA PROTECTION ACT 1984

At the recent A.G.M. the following resolution was approved: In order to conform with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1984, the members of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers hereby confirm that they are in agreement with details of their names and addresses being retained on a computer file for the purposes of Guild administration.

The Guild in passing this resolution has clearly decided not to register its computer membership file, since members were of the opinion that the Act was never intended to apply to associations such as the Guild, and this is therefore an administrative procedure to ensure that the law is fully complied with. This opportunity is taken to advise members who were not at the meeting of the decision.

B.J.G.



DEEDS OF COVENANT

For those who wish to subscribe to the Bell Fund or to the Restoration Fund and who pay income tax at the standard rate, both of these funds, being registered charities, can reclaim the income tax on the subscriptions. This is achieved by signing a deed of covenant for four years, or more. This greatly increases the value of the subscriptions to the fund, at no cost to the subscriber.

Covenant forms may be obtained from me.

Historically, this form of fund raising has not proved very popular. The possible reasons for this were discussed at the recent A.G.M. Likely concern is the commitment for four years. Clearly if a person's circumstances change and the covenant is unable to be completed, then there is no penalty. It merely means that since the donation was not made, then the tax cannot be reclaimed. If there are any other doubts, then please contact me, and I would be happy to explain the position in detail to individuals.

B.J.G.



75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE RINGING WORLD RINGERS' DAY IN LONDON

DATE Saturday, 20th September, 1986

Outline Programme

Morning There will be ringing in towers around three circles outside the City of London. Details will be available from the Ringing World.

Afternoon Ringing at at least 15 towers within the City of London.
1.30 - 3.30 pm

4.00 pm Service at Southwark Cathedral. Preacher Dean Gilbert Thurlow
Tea. 5.15 pm Glaziers Hall
Tickets (Tea and admission to towers) Adults £2.50. Under 16s £1.50
The Whitechapel Bell Foundry will be open most of the day.
Note: Early application for tickets to the Ringing World Ltd., Penmark House, Woodbridge Meadows, Guildford, GU1 1BL as only 600 tickets available.



In Memoriam Arthur D. Barker

At the meeting of the Guild General Committee held on 8 March, 1986, members stood in silent tribute to the memory of Arthur. The members were unanimous in their desire to mark their affection and gratitude for his services to the Guild and to ringing in some tangible way. It was indicated that there is work on Stoke Poges tower in which he was closely interested and accordingly a donation of £100 was approved from Guild funds to Stoke Pages P.C.C. in support of this work.

I undertook to forward the cheque, with an accompanying letter to Mrs. Barker, and in due course received the following reply.

March 20 1986

*Cambridge, Wexham Woods,
Slough, Berks, SL3 6LQ.*

*To the members of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of
Church Bell Ringers.*

I thank you all for your gift to our Tower Restoration Fund at Stoke Poges in memory of Arthur. It will help to ensure that the Tower and Bells are safe for many years to come.

When next any of you visit Stoke Poges to ring you will pass the spot where Arthur lies, looking straight up to the Tower and bells he loved.

Yours sincerely

Gladys E. Barker



MAY DAY RINGING DAY

The May-day Bank Holiday is now firmly established as the Guild's 'Open Ringing' and 'Eight Bell Striking Contest' day. This year open ringing was in the Bicester Area and the Contest at Bicester.

Two routes were available, both starting at 9.00 a.m. from Thame and Wolvercote and finishing at 7.00 pm at Souldern and Launton respectively, having covered 12 towers each during the day.

Reports from various groups mentioned springy ropes and one broken rope, but no other complaints. On the other hand receiving special mention was the good tower stewarding including the tower which opened early to accommodate visitors arriving

before the advertised time. Congratulations to all tower stewards and to John Harris for his excellent organisation of the ringing day.

The Eight Bell contestants had been offered a more leisurely day. Eight teams had entered; the draw had taken place prior to the day and conductors notified of their ringing time.

Shortly after 2.00 pm John Harris appeared at Bicester to greet the judges, Andrew and Ann Wilby, and gathering a miscellaneous band around them, tried out the bells. Having noted the peculiarities, the judges were taken to their Seat of Judgement and strictly at 2.30 pm the first team struck off, to be followed at 20 minute intervals by the remaining teams, unobtrusively marshalled by Len Cox and met in the tower by John. By 5.00 pm, all over, the judges collected and taken to tea where ringers had been congregating since 3.00 pm enjoying the marvellous tea provided by the Bicester Ladies under the direction of John.

At last the moment of truth. Andrew Wilby commented on each team's performance, congratulating the conductor of one team for reorganising and teaching them the method in the interval between the practice ring (rather mediocre) and their excellent test piece. The results: 1st Wokingham (53 faults) just pipped East Berks and South Bucks (55 faults); closely followed by 3rd High Wycombe (64 faults) and 4th North Bucks (65 faults) with 5th Banbury, 6th Chiltern, 7th Bicester and 8th Chalfont.

After a vote of thanks to the judges, Wokingham were presented with the cup, and thus ended a memorable day. Thank you Bicester Branch, to all Stewards, to the ladies for the tea, to all incumbents for allowing us to ring their bells and to John Harris for organising the day.

Henry Lawrenson
Deputy Master

□ □ □

OPEN RINGING DAY AND EIGHT BELL STRIKING COMPETITION

This was a most successful day due in large measure to the careful organisation by John Harris and all those who helped him. As a result the Bell Fund has benefited to the sum of £235.00 which is well up on 1985 but slightly down from 1984 which was an exceptional year. As the money was received promptly from the towers it is already earning interest.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Tower contributions – Thame route | £139.00 |
| Wolvercote route | £138.25 |
| | <hr/> |
| | £277.25 |
| Proceeds from 8 bell competition | £ 47.75 |
| | <hr/> |
| Final Total | £325.00 |

B.J.G.

□ □ □

95 Buckingham Road,
Bicester, Oxon.

Dear Editor,

May I be spared a small space in 'ODD BOB' to express my sincere thanks to all, the people who in any way helped with the "May Day Open Ringing Day and 8 Bell Competition" and also the Guild A.G.M. Day.

To list all the individuals concerned would undoubtedly fill a whole edition and so I would appreciate it if all these kind people would accept my thanks and appreciation en bloc.

Yours sincerely,
John Harris
Guild Steward



TEWKESBURY SHIELD

This year the Oxford Diocesan Guild sent a band to take part in the Tewksbury Shield Striking Competition. The following represented the Guild: Bill Butler, Helen Diserens, Pat and Robert Newton, Barbara Payne, Tim Pett (c), Mike Poole, Tony Pullen, Colin Turner, Stephen Smith.

The results were as follows:

1st Chester Diocesan Guild, 75 faults; 2nd Lichfield Archdeaconary Society, 87 faults; 3rd Worcestershire and Districts Association, 142 faults; Oxford Diocesan Guild, 149 faults; Gloucester and Bristol Association, 188 faults. Hereford Diocesan Guild, 190 faults; Midland Counties, 209 faults.

The Guild band rang first and were congratulated on the rounds of their practice piece which were perfect.



TWIGS FROM THE BRANCHES

Banbury Branch:

At the A.G.M. all the principal officers were re-elected with the exception of the Treasurer. David Robson of Bloxham was elected to this post. Several new members were elected on to the Social Committee and we all look forward to cricket, Aunt Sally and any other social delights they come up with. Steeple Aston bells have been to Whitechapel and are now back in Appleton. The bell tower was incredibly clean and new netting fixed to the windows but the jackdaws have immediately returned. Any suggestions? The next fund raising event is a "Walk About and Open Gardens" on 13th July.

Deddington's fund raising is hotting up with a Disco complete with Radio One Disc Jockey in July.

The Branch entered a team in the Guild 8 Bell Striking Contest and we were pleased with the result, 5th out of eight teams.

Service Sheets for Ringers' Meetings: A few years ago a Clerical member of the Banbury Branch drew up a form of service for use at Ringers' Services. It is a fairly

traditional collection of prayers, suggested readings and psalms with six ringers' hymns: Ring forth Holy bells; The sacred bells of England; Set them nobly in the steeple; Unchanging God; Rejoice in the truth that Christ Jesus is King; Ring out ye bells below. We are now going to print this sheet in booklet form. Is any other Branch interested in ordering any and does any one have any other hymns for inclusion? Enquiries and offers to Graham Clifton, Stedman Cottage, Middle Aston, Oxford.

Branch Practices:

| | | | |
|----------|---------------------------------------|---------|--|
| June 21 | Great Tew | July 19 | Swalcliffe |
| Sept. 20 | Branch Striking Contest Lower Heyford | | |
| Oct. 18 | Half Yearly Meeting – Bodicote | Nov. 15 | Steeple Aston <i>Graham Clifton</i> |

Chipping Norton Branch:

A successful first time Skittles Evening was held at Hook Norton in April.

At the Branch A.G.M. on 10th May, the Rev. T.Thornton was elected Chairman. All the other officers were re-elected. Nine new members were elected to the Guild.

Branch Practices: 7.30 – 9.00 pm

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|--------|---------|
| July 5 | Leafield | Aug. 2 | Kingham |
| Sept. 6 | Charlbury | | |

Kenneth Wakefield

Bicester Branch:

March 22nd saw two evednts in the Bicester Branch. Firstly, in the morning 5,040 of Stedman Triples was rung in 2 hrs 51 mins at Bicester, dedicated to the engagement of Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson.

Sally Stevens (Treble), Richard Stevens* (2nd), [Richard has now circled the tower], Clifford East (3rd), Eddy Houghton (4th), John Keats (5th), Ron Shepherd (6th) [Ron normally rings at Sydney's St. Andrew Cathedral but is over here for a year on a teachers exchange course presently living at Worthing and taught to ring by Richard Stevens]; Bill Butler (7th), John Harris (Tenor).

Secondly, during the afternoon, Brill tower had a visit from the Central Branch of the Ladies Guild. Freda Cannon, President of the Ladies Guild said members ages ranged from young teenagers to almost octogenarians. They meet every fifth Saturday as the Ladies Guild but ring at weekly branch practices otherwise. They had visited Chinnor, Haddenham and Long Crendon on their way to Brill, the next stop being Quainton.

Formed to encourage ladies into towers, the Guild allows husbands and sons to 'tag' along to practices and outings but they cannot be members.

It seems odd in this day and age of equal opportunities that the College Youths (formed in 1637) and the Ladies Guild (formed in 1912) and other secular groups still stick to their own preserves but one wonders for what purpose – tradition perhaps? Miss Alice White's name is unknown outside ringing circles but it should be synonomous with Emily Pankhurst's and Florence Nightingale's for her breakthrough into an all male dominated scene; "and never the twain shall meet" (with apologies to Rudyard Kipling!

Talking of secular groups, on my way round visiting towers, I came across a bevy of young beauties at Middleton Stoney, whose ages range from Cathrine 16, Dawn 14 and unidentical twins Rachael & Helen 11, all kept well in hand by Geoff James (their father) with the help of Jill and Jen (nicknamed 'Bill and Ben' by the girls). The sallies (blue and gold) reflect Geoff's support of Oxford United F.C. They are a struggling band, happy to have visitors help out. Perhaps those young 'likely lads' at Kirtlington might like to take an occasional trip down the road on a Monday night and help Geoff's bevy but DO ring first. I'm sure Geoff would like to have some male company now and again. "Perhaps the twain shall meet after all." (more apologies to Mr. Kipling!)

Welcome back to ringing to Cynthia Constable from Launton Tower and Kate Brice from Bicester Tower.

How many of you will be ringing bells on your holiday this coming (hopefully) summer? I'm sure it would make interesting reading for members to see where bells had been rung. Please let me have details of bells or any methods rung and any comments you may have on the holiday bells. Let's see who rang furthest from the Bicester Branch. Les Burnell rang at St. Paul, Papanui (5), New Zealand a couple of years ago but I'm not expecting you all to go to the same lengths! Are there any personal anecdotes, amusing or otherwise, about the Open Ringing Day? Details by **23rd August** please. So come on, **GET PEN TO PAPER**.

The Branch is very pleased to hear that at the Guild A.G.M. on 17th May, the meeting ratified a proposal that Cyril Kinch should become a Vice-President of the Guild in recognition and appreciation of his 30 years as a Guild Trustee and 20 years as a secretary of the Bicester Branch.

The Whist Drive held on the 21st May at Ludgershall Village Hall raised £68.10 for the Branch Bell Fund. Our thanks go to Phyllis East and helpers for organising the Whist Drive and a **BIG THANK YOU** to BICESTER, ISLIP, LUDGERSHALL & STOKE LYNE Towers for donating such a variety of prizes.

I hope this is an appropriate moment to include the following poem:

Are you an active ringer, the kind that would be missed?
Or are you just contented that your name is on the list?
Do you take an active part to help the work along?
Or are you simply satisfied to be a "just belong"?
Don't be "just a ringer", but take an active part!
Think this over, ringer, you know right from wrong,
Are you an involved ringer, or – do you "just BELLong"?

So, with this in mind, come and participate at the ANNUAL CRICKET MATCH with the Banbury Branch during the afternoon of Sunday, 20th July 86 at Bloxham. Further details later but make a note in your diary NOW to be an "ACTIVE" ringer on that day.

Jill Ward

East Berks and South Bucks Branch

A **Barn Dance** was held on 19 April at High Wycombe, organised by Pat Newton in aid of the Bell Fund; a very enjoyable evening with about 100 people attending and making a profit of £96.

The Lorna Newton Cup Knock-Out Contest for 1986 has got underway with the completion of the first round: 21 teams have taken part, the same number as last year.

The Branch AGM was held at Hughenden on 26 April, with about 65 members present.

All officers were re-elected with the exception of Jeff Birt who stood down as Deputy Ringing Master after 3 years service. He was replaced by Rex Agg; Rex is a relative newcomer to the Branch having moved into the area from Hitchin about a year ago, but in that time he has been one of the staunchest supporters of our Branch activities.

29 new members were elected, including 8 from Beaconsfield which brings this tower's total membership for 1986 up to 34!

The Social Secretary gave details of activities he has planned for the rest of the year. The main one is a new venture for the Branch – a coach outing – to take place on 20 September to the Winchester and Southampton area; there is also to be a Beer and Skittles evening on 1st November. We would be pleased to have support for both of these events from people from other Branches – if you are interested please contact me for details.

Katharine Firman

Our congratulations to Graham and Katharine on the birth of a son. Will there be a family peal of Major in hand sometime in the future?

North Bucks Branch

At last the North Bucks Branch has got itself organised! At its last AGM in March, a number of new and enthusiastic Branch officers were elected. At the next Branch committee meeting, the Branch gained further impetus in the form of Education and Towers and Bells sub-committees. Both these immediately began their work and are making good progress. On a more local level, the re-hanging of the five steel bells at Thornborough is now nearly complete and a new local band is looking forward to ringing them in the very near future.

At its Quarterly Meeting in May the Branch voted as its contribution to the Thornborough Bell Fund the sum of £300. Presentations of Wilfred Wilson's *Change Ringing* were also made to Fred Mynard, Derek Stainsby and Bill Yates in recognition of the work they have done over the years.

B. Douglas Hird

The Old North Berks Branch

Our Annual General Meeting this year was held at Appleton on 10th May. We started off with a service of Evensong which was conducted by the Rector of Appleton, tea followed in the village hall.

We were pleased to welcome to our meeting Tony Pullen, the Guild Secretary, Phil Walker, the Guild Librarian, and also a number of visitors from the Oxford City Branch and also two members from the Bicester Branch. The attendance was not as good as we usually have – I suppose the F.A. Cup Final took its toll.

With just two exceptions all Branch officials were re-elected; the two changes were Alex Sharpe from West Hanney who took over as Newsletter Editor, Barbara Payne

has now other Church commitments and felt that she should stand down, and Bernard Stone from Appleton has taken over from Jill Garlick as our Branch Representative to the Guild. Bernard is also on the Belfries Committee of the Guild.

We will miss both Barbara and Jill on our Branch committee; both have served us for a number of years and we are all sorry to lose them but we all understand the reasons for them standing down. We offer them our very grateful thanks for all the time and hard work that they have put in on our behalf and we hope that they will enjoy their rest from Branch activities. At the meeting 16 new members were elected to the Guild. We hope that they will become efficient and long serving members of the branch and also the Guild.

The Branch Half Year Meeting has been provisionally arranged to take place at West Hanney; the date not yet certain will be either 13th or 20th September.

The Annual Barn Dance will be held once again at Appleton on Saturday 4th October.

L.F. Cox

Oxford City Branch

'South America' raises money for the Bell Fund

On 12th March the Branch Secretary, Roy Goodwin, gave an illustrated talk entitled "Travels in South America" at North Hinksey. The talk ranged from the Inca civilisation in Peru to the problems of inflation in Columbia, Bolivia and Brazil. The hall was full to capacity with ringers and friends and a collection afterwards raised £65 for the Guild Bell Fund. Our special thanks to the North Hinksey ringers for hosting the evening and also for providing the interval refreshments.

Ringling with Refreshments

A rather wet 12th April was the day chosen for the Marston ringing outing. However, in spite of the rain, the outing to the Henley area proved to be both interesting and unusual. It was an excellent and enjoyable trip, well organised by Hugh Deam from Marston. The outing provided a golden opportunity for many young learners to experience ringing in different towers and all of them seemed to benefit from the experience. Throughout the day a running menu of food and drinks were served on the coach – scones with jam and butter, crisps and biscuits, lemonade and apple juice. Song sheets were also supplied and the Oxford City choir, whilst not up to Guild Festival choir standards, provided a good old fashioned sing song on the way home.

This was probably the first ever ringing trip where the ringers arrived home thoroughly refreshed without having entered a pub on the way!

Kidlington again for the Guild Striking Competition in October

Five towers entered the Branch striking competition at Horspath on 10th May. The judge, Peter Heritage from the Old North Berks Branch remarked that the overall standard of ringing was good and has improved over the years. The Kidlington ringers gave their usual excellent performance and were awarded first place. St. Giles 2nd, North Hinksey 3rd, Marston 4th and Headington 5th.

R. Goodwin

Reading Branch

From the Editor of the Reading Branch Newsletter: Did you read the letter in the recent Ringing World regarding how much ringers received for ringing at weddings? Coincidentally the Swallowfield ringers were asked if they wished to raise their fee, which was £1 per ringer and £6 for the tower fund. On asking neighbouring towers, I find the rate varies from £1.50 to £3 per ringer and £3 to £12 which is donated to the bell/tower fund, and one band only pay visitors and their rope fees go towards an annual ringers dinner.

Royal has twice been the order of the day at South Stoke recently for Calcot and Tilehurst Youth (CATY). In case you're thinking that the 9cwt six has been surreptitiously and substantially augmented, we should explain that 'royal' denotes not the method but the occasion. Last time we promised you something on the aims and objectives of CATY. CATY has emerged, and would best be described as a Quarter Peal hit squad, descending on towers where quarters are rarely rung, and going about their wondrous work. So if your tower can't raise a band for a quarter, contact CATY without delay. It's strange how provision of a tower can lead to instant membership.

P.J.S.

Mortimer – please note that the bells of St. Mary's Mortimer, are out of action until further notice. We are doing repair work and currently having problems with some of the clappers which are very stubbornly jammed into their headstocks.

Joan Kemp

Witney and Woodstock Branch

There have been two Branch outings recently; a half-day outing was organised in April to towers in the Bicester Branch, with ringing at Kirtlington, Caversfield, Ludgershall and Brill. And in May 17 members of the Branch and friends enjoyed a most interesting visit to Whitechapel Bell Foundry where they were given a tour of the foundry; there was ringing at several towers on the way home. Woodstock tower had an outing to 3 towers in the Swindon area, Highworth, Shrivenham and Hannington. Branch Practices are taking place on the same basis as last year, with one a month, some at a single tower and some visiting 3 towers in a morning or afternoon, as this seems to work well.

It is sad to have to report the death in March of Bert Payne of Stanton Harcourt, who had been a member of the Guild since 1932, and a ringer and organist at Stanton Harcourt for many years. Although in recent years his health had prevented him from actually ringing, he retained a keen interest in ringing and in the Branch, and hardly ever missed a Branch meeting.

Catherine Ross

DIARY OF EVENTS FOR THE NEXT THREE MONTHS

JULY

| | | | | |
|----|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 4 | N. Bucks | Branch Practice | Lillingstone Lovell | 7.00 – 9.00 pm |
| 5 | V of WH | Branch Outing | Southampton | |
| | Ch. Norton | Branch Practice | Leaffield | 7.00 – 9.00 pm |
| | C. Bucks | Striking Comp. | | 7.00 – 9.00 pm |
| 12 | Guild Festival | | Newbury | |
| | Barn Dance | | Stanford Dingley | |
| 19 | Banbury | Branch Practice | Swalcliffe | |
| | Sonning | Branch Practice | Twyford, Berks | 7.00 – 9.00 pm |
| | Chiltern | Branch Practice | Ellesborough | 6.30 pm |
| 26 | EBSB | Branch Practice | Chalfont St. Giles | 6.30 pm |
| | S. Oxon | Branch Practice | Thame | 6.30 – 8.30 pm |
| 31 | V of WH | Branch Practice | Hinton Waldrist | 7.30 pm |

AUGUST

| | | | | |
|----|--------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|
| 2 | Ch. Norton | Branch Practice | Kingham | 7.00 – 9.00 pm |
| 9 | C. Bucks | Branch Practice | | |
| 14 | Newbury | Branch Practice | Shaw | 7.30 – 9.00 pm |
| 16 | Sonning | Branch Practice | Shottesbrook | 7.00 – 9.00 pm |
| | Chiltern | Branch Practice | Quainton | 6.20 pm |
| | Old N. Berks | Cycle Outing | | |
| 23 | EBSB | Branch Practice | High Wycombe | 6.30 pm |
| 30 | V of WH | Striking Comp | | pm |

SEPTEMBER

| | | | | |
|---------|--------------|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 6 | Ch. Norton | Branch Practice | Charlbury | 7.00 – 9.00 pm |
| | Newbury | Coach Outing | | |
| 13 | Old N. Berks | ½ yearly meeting | | |
| | C. Bucks | Branch Practice | | |
| 20 | Sonning | Striking Comp. | Warfield | |
| | Sonning | Branch Practice | Easthamstead | 7.00 – 9.00 pm |
| | Chiltern | Branch Practice | Little Missenden | 6.30 pm |
| | Banbury | Striking Comp. | Lower Heyford | |
| 26 – 28 | Residential | Ringing Course, Easthamstead | | |
| 27 | S. Oxon | Branch Practice | Tetsworth | 6.30 – 8.30 pm |
| | V of WH | ½ yearly meeting | Great Coxwell | |
