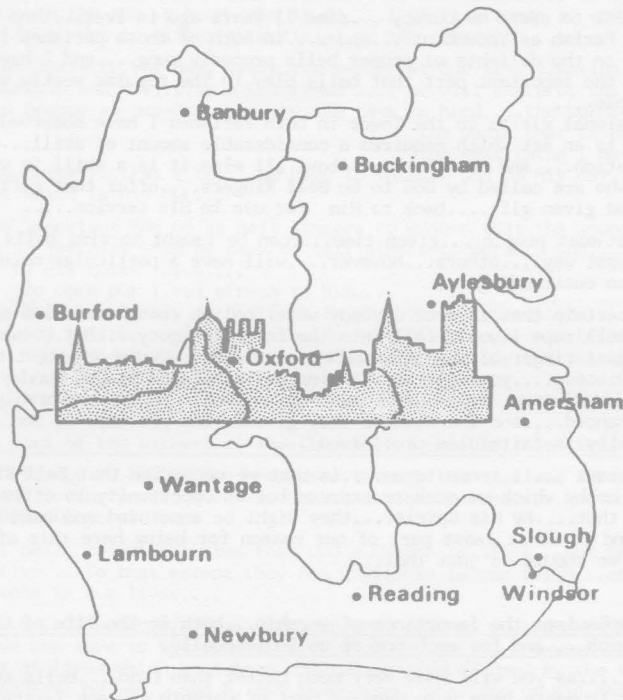


ODD BOB
Newsletter
of the
OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD



ODD BOB - OXFORD DIOCESE; Berks, Oxon, Bucks

ADDRESS GIVEN AT THE SERVICE AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1987

Preacher - The Rev. Tony Holmes, Vicar of Bucklebury.

Introduction:

When I was thinking about this service earlier in the week and what I might say to you, very briefly, on the occasion of your Guild Annual Meeting it occurred to me that there are possibly three particular reasons why Bell Ringing is so important in the life of the Church.....

Firstly

Because of the opportunity it provides of serving God.

Like many of my fellow incumbents....I suspect...my own education in the art of Bell Ringing is rather sadly lacking....

I grew up as a Christian in two town Churches in Worthing....the first of which used recorded bells as a prelude to worship each Sunday...the second had a single bell....rather tuneless bell....which was tolled rather monotonously by the Verger five minutes before every service....You will imagine that neither encouraged me to feel that Bell Ringing was either desirable or worthwhile to practise to enhance Sunday worship....

But then I went to serve my curacy ...some 11 years ago in Iver....and later came to this Parish as incumbent....andin both of those parishes I have been treated to the delights of proper bells properly rung...and I have come to appreciate the important part that bells play in the regular weekly worship of God's people....

From my occasional visits to the Tower in both Parishes I have observed that Bell Ringing is an art which requires a considerable amount of skill...patienceconcentration....and commitment...Above all else it is a skill in which those of us who are called by God to be Bell Ringers....offer that gift which is a God given gift...back to Him for use in His service....

I imagine that most people...given time....can be taught to ring bells even if in only a modest way...others...however...will have a particular natural gift which is often outstanding....

I am fairly certain that if ever anybody were foolish enough to allow me within inches of a bell rope I would fall into the former category....But....whether you are a modest ringer of limited ability...or one with the greatest natural gift in the Diocese...your gift of Ringing Bells offered to God Sunday by Sunday is a gift through which God's name is honoured....and the worship of God's people is enhanced....and the witness they give to the presence of God's Church in the community is faithfully proclaimed....

What is important ...it seems to me....is that we recognise that Bell Ringing is not simply a hobby which we seek to express but an opportunity to offer our gifts to God that...by His Spirit...they might be annointed and ~~used to His~~ Service....and it is at least part of our reason for being here this afternoon....that we should do just that....

Secondly

Because it emphasises the importance of worship...both in the life of the Christian Church....and for each one of us individually.

Historicallyas you will know very much better than I do...bells and loud percussion instruments have been used as part of worship of many faiths...In our reading this afternoon we were reminded that in the Old Testament Silver Trumpets were used by God's people of old....both as a call to battle...and as a summons to Worship and Praise God.... Worship was then and is now....at the centre of the life of God's faithful people...

From about the 7th Century Bells have been widespread in their use in the Christian Church in this country and in Europe....and....today....Bellringing is as much part of the worship of God's people as the Organ Voluntary....the Anthemand the Prayers...and the Praise....

This afternoon the bells have been rung as a prelude to this act of worship in which we meet together to give Praise and Thanksgiving to God....and to dedicate ourselves afresh to Him in the task of calling God's peopleto God's house...to worship Him....

Worship has been described as the greatest and most important activity in the life of the Church....It was for this very purpose that man was created...Just as men are most human when they open themselves to God...so the Church is most fully herself when her members combine to give glory to God....offering those lives to Him...in love...in Praise...and in Thanksgiving...

For those of us who have an active part to play in calling God's people to worship ..or in leading them in Worship there is an obvious danger.....

Whether as Bell Ringers

Choristers....

Organists.....

Servers.....

or whatever.....

and perhaps particularly as clergy.....

It is very easy to become so immersed and involved in the part we have to play ... week by week...in the job we have come to do...that it becomes an end in itself... and our worship of God is either superficial or non-existent....

Having been a chorister for many years...a server at one time...having been involved in leading worship and now...as a Clergyman ...I am well aware of the ease with which one can become so pre-occupied by the task in hand....the words I am reading..

the music that is being sung...

the next thing I have to do....

that I easily forget...that I too...am here to worship God on His day...and to give Him that which is His due...

Equally it is important for us as Bell Ringers to ensure that the sound of the bells that we ring so joyfully week by week to call others to Worship God....does not dull our own ears to His quiet voice....

To open our lives afresh to Him...

To kneel humbly at His feet in worship and adoration..

and to take our place with the rest of God's people before his throne..

to give thanks to Him for who He is...and for what he has done

for us in the cross...

Thirdly

Because it is part of the witness of the Church to a non-Christian Society

Again ...historically ...bells have been used through the ages and throughout the world to witness to the presence of the Church in the Community...and to the on-going faith of God's people

The ringing of bells today proclaims that God's Church is alive...and that God's people are active....To that extent they are a witness to our faith...and a witness to God's presence in our lives....

But we must never...I believe...lose sight of the greatest ...and most important witness that we can give to the communities in which we live and work ...is the simple witness of lives which have been changed and transformed by the touch of Christ...by the love of God...and by the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit..

In the final analysis our faith is not to do with Bells or Buildings...It is about the individual knowing God's forgiveness.... being sure of Eternal Life...by the indwelling power and presence of the Holy Spirit...

And unless that has been our individual experience then we cannot be the kind of witness that God would have us be in the Community in which we live....

But...when this experience of knowing and trusting God personally for ourselves through a living experience of the Risen Christ is truly our experience....Then we shall find that as we live .. day by day for Him.... others will be drawn by our faith to a living knowledge of God for themselves.....

Not by Ringing Bells....important though this may be....But by what they see of Christ in us.....

ODD BOB - OXFORD DIOCESE; BERKS,BUCKS,OXON.

Once again ODD BOB has twenty pages. For this we have to thank all those who have contributed to it in any way - especially the Branch Secretaries (and some wives). Apparently a Report for ODD BOB is a fair exchange for painting the outside of the house on a sunny afternoon!!

Facts and Figures have had to be curtailed due to the unexpected death of Neil Allnatt and of Doug Exon while ODD BOB was being compiled. I had hoped that this edition would be able to be printed without the need for OBITUARIES. However it was not to be.

Both of these men unobtrusively made a big contribution to the Exercise and the Guild. Each did this in his own way; Neil during the War Years by helping to keep ringing alive in Oxford and in the Post War Years when he was one of the band which under the conductorship of Walter Judge made Oxford one of the leading centres of ringing; Doug quietly keeping the bells of Dorchester Abbey ringing for 40 years as Tower Captain. We all regret that he did not live to hear the bells ring out once again after the Restoration work had been completed. However Brian White was working in the tower when a request came for the Tenor to be toll-
-ed to announce Doug's death. So the Tenor's first public task -after being rehung was to announce the death of a man whose great joy it was to ring it.

May I draw your attention to all the advance notices sent in by the Guild Secretary as well as that for the Cumnor Ringing Day. The sermon at the Guild AGM is printed in this issue as it was received too late for the June copy. M.R.C.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

- | | |
|---|--|
| The Master | R.A.Thorne 3,Broad Gap,Bodicote, Banbury,Oxon OX15 4DE
Tel. Banbury 62476 |
| The Deputy Master | Mrs A.M.Carpenter, 41,Napier Road, Crowthorne,Berks.
RG11 7EJ Tel. Crowthorne 775036 |
| Hon.General Secretary | A.G.Pullan, 23,Cumberland Way,Wokingham,BerksRG11 9AY
Tel.Wokingham(0734) 793488 |
| Hon.General Treasurer | B.J.Gatward, Grange Wood, Mill Lane, Calcot,Reading
RG3 5RS Tel.(0734) 413097 |
| Hon.Librarian | P.Walker, 152, Headley Way, Headington, Oxford OX3 7SZ
Tel. Oxford (0865) 65140 |
| Guild Stewards | Old North Berks/Oxford City/South Oxon/Vale of White Horse Branches
Miss M.R.Cross, 6,Radley Road, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3PO
Tel. Abingdon(0235) 20868
Banbury/Bicester/Chipping Norton/Central Bucks Branches
J.Harris, 95, Buckingham Road, Bicester,Oxon.OX6 7ES
Tel. Bicester(0869) 252089
Chiltern/North Bucks/Witney and Woodstock Branches
G.Foat, 18.Ashfield, Stantonbury, Milton Keynes,
MK14 6AU. Tel. Milton Keynes (0908) 313859
East Berks and South Bucks/Newbury/Sonning DeaneryBranches
Mrs P.M.Newton, 44, Georges Hill, Widmer End, High
Wycombe, Bucks HP15 6BE. Tel. High Wycombe(0494)713834
Peal Secretary
Mrs K.Firman, 8, Crescent Drive, Maidenhead,Berks
SL6 6AQ Tel.Maidenhead(0628)36484 |
| Bell Fund Applications
Towers and Belfries
Committee | Applications to the General Treasurer
Addresses of those responsible for the various Branches will
be found in ODD BOB April 1987 |

ANNUAL FESTIVAL AT HIGH WYCOMBE AND BARN DANCE AT PRINCES RISBOROUGH

Saturday 4th July dawned bright, sunny and warm and by 9.00am ringers from all parts of the Guild were waiting for the first towers to open. For the next two hours ringing was organised at towers along routes leading to High Wycombe. On arrival at All Saints ringers were able to enjoy a cup of coffee and support All Saints' Restoration Fund while listening to a well struck service touch of Cambridge Surprise Maximus before filing into church for the Festival Service.

The sermon at the service was given by the Revd. Michael Roberts who spoke of the important role of the bells and bellringers in proclaiming the presence of the church to the town. He continued by linking this public acclamation of faith with the greater need for christians to make a more public witness of their beliefs. about 130 members and friends made their communion during which the choir sang an anthem and at the conclusion of the service the organist treated those remaining to listen to a performance of "Clarion de Westminster."

Ringers then made their way to the Oakley Hall where shortly after 12.30 Michael Roberts said grace before the hundred or so present enjoyed a splendid buffet lunch prepared by Tricia Newton and her willing band of helpers.

Following further ringing in the afternoon about ninety people gathered at the Community Centre, Princes Risborough for a Barn Dance organised by Roy Woodruff and supporting team. To the rear of the Centre is a playing field which includes an "assault course" which proved popular with the younger generation. Meanwhile the majority of those present spent two hours learning traditional square dancing with intervals to obtain much needed liquid refreshment (a slight problem with the beer pressure gave constant bother to mine host.) After a welcome supper of fish and chips followed by apple pie and fruit salad, dancing continued until around 10.30p.m. so rounding off a very enjoyable day.

Thanks are due to all concerned but particularly to Tricia Newton for the arrangements for the Service and Lunch and to Roy Woodruff for organising the Barn Dance.

Chris Parkinson

ANNUAL REPORT

The Gremlins have attacked parts of the Annual Report although I believe that their efforts have been concentrated on the PEALS. May I apologise to all who have found their efforts either completely completely deleted or otherwise jumbled. The peals which have been affected will be reprinted in next years Report.

Chris Parkinson
(Report Editor)

O B I T U A R Y

Douglas H. Exon died in hospital on 11th August from pneumonia following a heart attack. He had been Tower Captain at Dorchester Abbey since 1937. Throughout those years he had kept the bells going and taught many to ring - some going on to greater heights than Doug ever aspired to. His great love was to ring the Tenor on to greater heights than their teacher ever aspired to. His great love was to ring the Tenor and this he did whenever he could until the bells were removed for the restoration work to be carried out. He also rang her to several peals of Triples. From 1966/67 - 1977 Doug was Chairman of the South Oxon Branch. Well known in Dorchester and the villages around as the local baker he continued to work and ring to the end of his life.

USEFUL ADDRESSES cont.

Education Committee - Queries re Courses. Miss M.R. Cross address above.
Easthampstead Course. Mrs B. May, 4, Halfacre Drive
Spencers Wood, Reading. RG7 1DZ

REPORT EDITOR

Booklets. Mrs AM. Carpenter - address above.
C. Parkinson, 26, Hazlemere View, Hazlemere, High Wycombe.
Bucks HP15 7BY Tel. (0494) 711125

OXFORD DIOCESAN PILGRIM FESTIVAL - SUNDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 1987

Following my explanation in the last issue of ODD BOB of how the ringing arrangements had been arrived at for the Festival, I am very pleased to report that every Branch of the Guild has accepted the invitation to attempt a quarter peal in Oxford on 13th September. Over 100 ringers should be starting their quarter peals at 1.30pm to finish in time for the Festival Eucharist at 3.00p.m. in Broad Street, Oxford.

The Eucharist is to be celebrated by the Bishop of Oxford, Richard Harries, assisted by the Bishops of Buckingham, Dorchester and Reading. At the service groups have been urged to parade their banners. I am sure the Guild Banner will be amongst them.

The following is a list of where the Branch bands are ringing:-

<u>Branch</u>	<u>Tower</u>	<u>Branch</u>	<u>Tower</u>
Banbury	Wolvercote	North Bucks	Headington
Bicester	St. Aldate	Old North Berks	St. Ebbe
Central Bucks	Iffley	Oxford City	Carfax
Chiltern	St. Cross	Reading	New College
Chipping Norton	Marston	Sonning Deanery	Lincoln College
E.B.S.B.	Christ Church	South Oxon	Cowley
Newbury	Magdalen	V. of W.H.	North Hinksey
		Witney & Woodstock	St. Thomas

My enquiries indicate that never before have so many of the Oxford City Towers been open for ringing all at the same time. Hopefully I will be able to report on the success of the day in the next issue of ODD BOB. Of course, if any other quarter peals or special ringing occurs in addition to that advertised as part of the Festival, details can be sent to me and I will report on these too and forward them to the Ringing World for publication.

I would like to wish you all a successful Pilgrim Festival.

Tony Pullan

SIX BELL STRIKING COMPETITION

SATURDAY 3 OCTOBER 1987

WITNEY AND WOODSTOCK BRANCH

Each Branch is invited to send one team to compete in the Guild Six Bell Striking Competition. Will 1987 be the first year that all the Branches have been represented?

- 2.00 p.m. Heats at Stonesfield and Combe
- 3.30 p.m. Tea available at North Leigh
- 4.30 p.m. Results of both heats at North Leigh
- 4.45 p.m. Final at North Leigh
- 7.00 p.m. Results of Competition and Presentation of Cup.

Chief Judges :- The Rev. and Mrs P. Newing.

Entries to:- Mrs Anne Carpenter, BY WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER
41 Napier Road,
Crowthorne,
Berks RG11 -7EJ

TEA TICKETS - PRICE £1.00 - FROM:- Mrs. C. Ross, Duck End Cottage, Sutton, Stanton
Harcourt, Oxford. OX8 - 1RX

PLEASE ENCLOSE AN S.A.E.

NO TICKET NO TEA

PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT YOUR TEAM

TOWERS OPEN FOR GENERAL RINGING:-

- 2.00 - 4.00p.m. Cassington
- 2.00 - 4.00p.m. Witney

BRANCH SECRETARIES MEETING

FRIDAY 2nd OCTOBER 1987

7.30 p.m.

CHURCH ROOM, RADLEY

WAS YOUR BRANCH ONE OF THE TWO NOT REPRESENTED AT LAST YEAR'S MEETING?

If not, why not? This informal meeting, no top table, no tape recorder, gives your Branch Secretary and/or Treasurer the opportunity to talk to the Guild Officers and vice versa. Subjects discussed will cover next year's diary of events, the method for the next Eight-Bell Competition, subscriptions, membership, plus many more.

Do you have any thoughts or ideas you think the Guild should know about? Ask your Branch Secretary to present them at the Secretaries' Meeting on Friday 2nd October, and if your Secretary can't get there, ensure that somebody else can so that your Branch is represented.

Tony Pullan

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

SATURDAY 28 NOVEMBER 1987

ASTON ABBOTS, BUCKS

The Autumn Meeting of the General Committee of the Guild is to be held at Aston Abbots, Bucks. The bells will be available from 1.45 p.m. and the meeting will start at 2.30 p.m. Tea will be available for those who advise :-

Terry Wagstaff, 6 Firs Close, Whitchurch, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22-4LH
Tel Aylesbury (0296) 641755

by Wednesday 25th November 1987.

The Agenda will include a discussion on Public Relations, when the role and need for an Information Officer, the Guild News Letter "ODD BOB" and Branch News Letters will be covered.

If you, the "average" Guild Member wish to contribute to the meeting, pass your comments to your Branch Representatives on the General Committee, or alternatively drop me a line with details.

Tony Pullan

FOR SALE

GUILD BADGES	TEMPORARILY OUT OF STOCK
ANNUAL REPORTS	£2.25 (INCLUDES POSTAGE)
GUILD HISTORY	£3.00 (INCLUDES POSTAGE)

AVAILABLE FROM:- Tony Pullan,
23, Cumberland Way,
Woosehill,
Wokingham,
Berkshire RG11 - 9AY

EXTRACT FROM 'REPORT ON THE 1987 GUILD FESTIVAL' IN THE SONNING DEANERY BRANCH NEWS LETTER.

.....At the end of the day the Guild Master and Secretary were seen discussing future Festivals. In recent years the involvement and co-operation of towers and Branches has worked exceedingly well. Dorchester Abbey and the South Oxon Branch hope to stage the 1988 Festival. I expect 1989 will see the return to Oxford with the City Branch and Oxford Society working together again. Could 1990 see the Sonning Deanery host the Guild Festival as part of the 800th Anniversary at All Saints, Wokingham?

A.G. Pullan

RICHARD HARRIES - BISHOP OF OXFORD

Following the consecration of Richard Harries in St. Paul's Cathedral on Ascension Day he was enthroned as Bishop of Oxford at Christ Church Cathedral on Tuesday, 30th June. It was in December 1986 that the announcement of Bishop Patrick Rodger's successor was made, but in his previous position as Dean of King's College, London, Bishop Richard had numerous commitments to fulfil.

The enthronement service was conducted by the Dean of Canterbury Cathedral in the presence of 900 invited guests from the Diocese and representatives of other churches. The service was broadcast on BBC Radio Oxford, a fitting sentiment to Richard Harries who is a frequent broadcaster, but best known for his "Thoughts for the Day" on BBC's Radio 4 Today Programme.

As Bishop of Oxford, Richard Harries accepted the invitation to become President of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers. In honour of his enthronement many quarter peals have been rung throughout the Diocese.

A.G.P.

QUARTER PEALS FOR THE BISHOP'S ENTHRONEMENT

ASTON CLINTON,BUCKS:- 29 June 1260 Doubles (2 methods)
BLEDLOW,BUCKS:- 29 June 1260 Doubles (2 methods)
CUDDINGTON,BUCKS:- 28 June 1260 Doubles (3 methods)
LONG CRENDON,BUCKS:- 30 June 1260 P.B.Minor
CUMNOR,OXON:- 30 June 1260 Doubles (4 methods)
NORTH HINKSEY,OXFORD:- 30 June 1260 P.B.Minor
OLD WINDSOR, BERKS:- 30 June 1260P.B.Doubles
OXFORD (S.Aldate):- 30 June 1260 Doubles (2 methods)
RADLEY,OXON;- 2 July 1260 P.B.Doubles
READING,BERKS(S.Giles) 30 June 1260 Erin Triples
STONESFIELD,OXON:- 30 June 1260 Doubles (11 m/v)
TILEHURST,BERKS:- 30 June 1260 Grandsire Triples
WINGRAVE,BUCKS:- 30 June 1260 Doubles (2 methods)
WITNEY,OXON:- 29 June 1260 Grandsire Triples
WOKINGHAM,BERKS (All Saints):- 30 June 1260 Single Oxford Bob Triples
WOLVERCOTE,OXFORD:- 30 June 1260 P.B.Doubles
WOODSTOCK,OXON:- 30 June 1260 Grandsire Triples

DETAILS OF THE ABOVE IN THE RINGING WORLD OF July 31.1987

PEALS RUNG FOR THE BISHOP'S ENTHRONEMENT

THATCHAM,BERKS:- 26 June 5040 Yorkshire S.Royal

O B I T U A R Y

NEIL I. ALLNATT - It is with regret that we learn of the death of Neil Allnatt at the John Radcliffe Hospital on August 5th. Neil was well known in Oxford ringing circles where he had been an active member of the Oxford Guild and the Oxford Society since the early 1940s. He joined the All Saints and St Martins Band and that of Christ Church Cathedral under the leadership of W.F.Judge, becoming a member of the band which gained the Spliced Major record for the O.D.G. and helped to rebuild Oxford ringing under the Secretaryship of Vic Bennett, the conductorship of W.F.Judge and the guidance of W. Collett. Neil took over the Ringing Mastership of All Saints after the departure of Walter Judge and served one spell as Chairman of the Society. He continued in the former office until the Church became the Library of Lincoln College. He continued to ring there for practice and at the Cathedral on Sundays until illness called a halt.

The writer remembers him best not only for his reliability in the multi-method peals but as an always cheerful and encouraging cycling companion in the days when we had to cycle to towers which were not on a railway line or bus route. He was always cheerful whatever the wind and the weather and encouraged one on on a long haul against a head wind and with hills facing one. More recently he used this gift to encourage younger ringers to advance. Neil will be much missed by those who knew him well.

BROKEN PROMISES - THE STORY BEHIND A QUARTER PEAL

It is a fairly standard practice that when a ringer is about to be married that his or her fellow ringers offer to ring at the wedding free of charge. It is also customary to arrange to mark this special occasion by ringing either a peal or a quarter peal.

And so, when Richard Daw, a ringer at Iffley, announced that he would shortly be getting married to Patricia Sparrow at St. James', Cowley, everyone was highly delighted and the Iffley ringers agreed to celebrate by ringing a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles immediately after the wedding service.

On the appointed day and time the Treble ringer called "Look to" as the bride and groom left the church and the band went into some nicely struck rounds and Queens. Next into Grandsire and the fine beat continued at just the right steady pace - then disaster struck - the rope on the third broke! We had barely rung 60 changes before the quarter peal had come to an abrupt end. Finished. No spare ropes and far too dangerous to climb amongst the bells without ringing them down. Outside the click of the photographers' cameras could clearly be heard in the bell-less quiet.

A red-face and embarrassed band apologised to the puzzled couple and promised that they would make amends as soon as possible. While Richard and Patricia set off for their honeymoon in Paris, the ringers decided that they would attempt a quarter peal of Bob Minor at Iffley the following day (Sunday).

The next morning fate struck again. While ringing for Morning Service the rope on the 4th broke! Fortunately there was a spare rope in existence and a repair was quickly made.

PROMISE FULFILLED

On Sunday 29th March at St. Mary's Church, Iffley, Oxford, 1440 Plain Bob Minor was rung to celebrate the wedding of Richard Daw to Patricia Sparrow at St. James', Cowley on the previous day. The band was as follows:-
Treble Amanda Pullin; 2nd. Anne Stacey; 3rd. David Pullin; 4th Mark Hunter; 5th Roy Goodwin(C); Tenor Tony Hunter.

ROPE SPLICED BY BLIND RINGER

On the Monday following the wedding, Bernard Masterman, the blind and highly talented ringer from St. Giles', Oxford attended the Cowley practice. On hearing the story of the broken rope he immediately excused himself from ringing, went into the church and neatly spliced the rope together again. It was later replaced and has given good service ever since.

R. Goodwin

PEAL BOARD DEDICATED 36 YEARS AFTER THE EVENT AT SLOUGH

On 26th March 1951 the first peal was rung on the newly augmented ring of ten bells at St. Mary's, Slough. The method was Grandsire Caters and was the second attempt, the first having failed the previous year after three hours ringing when one of the band, 85 years old Frank V. Sinkins, couldn't stand up any more! It was Frank who had originally mooted the idea of augmenting the ring to ten, on the grounds of the status of the church in the developing town.

Bill Birmingham, who conducted the successful attempt, always wanted the peal recorded in the tower, although this was never achieved. Thus it was that, following his retirement as Tower Captain early this year, an oak board recording the peal was presented to Bill by the ringers and congregation at a dedication Choral Evening on Sunday 12th July 1987 in recognition of his forty-two years service as Tower Captain.

Open ringing preceded the Service, conducted by the Revd. Alan Bignell, and was

attended by upwards of fifty ringers from the E.B.S.B. and other branches of the Guild, together with Bill's ringing friends from the Middlesex County Association. They were joined by an almost equal number of St Mary's congregation. The service was followed by tea in the church, during which touches of Kent T.B. Major and Grandsire Triples were rung on handbells by Kath Firman, Pat Newton, Bill Butler and Andrew Deamer.

Jeff Birt.

THE FESTIVAL DRAW

At their January meeting the Bell Fund Trustees were faced with finding a volunteer to organise the 1987 Draw. Mark Dobson, who had undertaken this task in 1985 and 1986 was unable, due to work pressures, to do it for a third year. After a sudden rush of blood to the head, I said I would consider taking it on!

Arriving home at 11.30p.m. I posed the question to Wenda - 'How do you feel about us organising the Guild Draw?' 'You can if you like, but I am not going to get involved - I have enough to do keeping up the supply of flower cards for the E.B.S.B. Stall!' However, the same question to my son the next evening met with more enthusiasm and after a discussion with Mark to find out what was really involved, we volunteered. The books of tickets arrived in time for distribution at the March Committee Meeting, after which all was quiet until the A.G.M. when we collected about 1500 counterfoils.

It was early June before the counterfoils really started to come back and the folding commenced in earnest.

Fifteen thousand tickets later we arrived at the Guild Festival complete with the only thing we could find that would take such a number of counterfoils, a dustbin, made redundant by the arrival of a 'wheelybin'. Needless to say Wenda took pity on Colin and myself as we disappeared beneath a pile of tickets and helped out with the folding.

Towers should by now have received, through their Branch Secretary, a list of the prize-winners and all that remains for me to do is to thank all those who sold tickets, also those Branches and individuals who contributed prizes, all of which went towards making this a record Draw.

Derek Fowles

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD LEADING PEAL RINGING SOCIETY IN 1986

With 261 peals rung in 1986, the O.D.G. rang more peals than any other society. We replaced the Yorkshire Association which had been the leading society for the previous four years.

Katharine Firman
Peal Secretary

APOLOGY FROM THE PEAL SECRETARY

Apologies to Mike Cole for omitting his name from the Leading Peal Ringers List in the last ODD BOB. He rang 22 peals in 1986.

Katharine Firman

ARTHUR D. BARKER MEMORIAL FUND

Mrs Gladys Barker writes

'I thought you would be pleased to know that the sum of £1,106 was donated to the St. Giles, Stoke Poges Tower Restoration Fund in memory of Arthur'.

STEEPLE ASTON BELLS

From the Banbury Branch News Letter -

.....it is very difficult to know where to begin, especially as Steeple Aston made the front page of The Ringing World plus many honorable mentions and a few photos in the Banbury Guardian. The reason for all this much publicity, as all Branch members know, is that we removed the six bells and large, heavy, ancient and mostly rotten oak bell frame ourselves and, with a little help from Brian and Frank White and Whitechapel, retuned the bells, installed an 8 bell cast-iron frame and joyfully rang them for re-dedication on 23rd November 1986. A happy occasion to which we welcomed many Branch members.

Having been successful in our fund raising, thanks in no small part to the support of you all, directly and through the Bell Fund, we have also purchased two new trebles. They were cast December 22, 1986 and four of us went to Whitechapel to attend their birth, we now anxiously await their baptism prior to hanging in the tower. "THE FACULTY" is now at the Church door asking if anyone objects! Why, in heavens name did the Diocese see fit last year to let us put in an 8-bell frame in the church and then demand another £40 and another mile of red tape, before saying we can put a 7th and 8th (well 1st and 2nd actually) bells in? Indeed there is much about the Diocesan involvement we would criticise - not the principle that they should have a say in what happens to the local church - we are but temporary tenants and some restraint or 'pause for thought' should be necessary before foisting our wishes on future generations - what we object to is the illogicality of decisions and the ridiculous amount of paperwork involved - no wonder the parish share keeps going up.

While we have been most generously helped by many trusts and individuals I would like, without appearing ungrateful to question the administration of at least one charity. They wanted colour photos, reams of forms completed, made phone calls to us from London at peak times, wanted to insist on various procedures - and at the end of it all gave £150.

Back to Steeple Aston. Having got (almost) eight bells we have set about teaching learners. For some reason - all female - ranging from 10 to (well) over 21. Unfortunately it does look as if cupid has robbed us of one promising new comer - but we soldier on. Regular attendance by two Duns Tew ladies and various other friends all helps our practices to go with a swing.....

Dorothy Clifton

Received for ODD BOB -

The final chapter in the restoration of Steeple Aston bells was completed in June. The two new Trebles were hung on 18th June by Whites of Appleton and, after necessary adjustments, were rung for the first time for the Patronal Festival on 28th June. All the ringers present were surprised how well the Simpson Bells fitted in with the original six of mixed origin and age. It is now hard to believe there has not always been 8 bells. It was just 3½ years since we started obtaining quotes. The total cost of the work was about £23,500.

If any tower is contemplating re-hanging or augmenting their bells we invite you to come any Tuesday evening at 7.30p.m. to see and hear what can be achieved.

Dorothy Clifton

PS.

The charity with the red tape have been in touch with us and urged us to pursue our request!! Do they read the Branch News Letter? D.C.

TWIGS FROM THE BRANCHES

BANBURY BRANCH - from the Branch News Letter.

For our ninth annual Spring Bank Holiday outing Graham Clifton's happy band of ringers and friends of the Banbury Branch decided to travel to Yorkshire. Perhaps it was because we felt that Wilfrid Moreton and Jo would allow us to ring at Wakefield Cathedral, or maybe we just wanted to visit "Last of the Summer Wine" country. I am not sure but we were warmly welcomed and thoroughly enjoyed our week-end.....

Anne Thorne

Vicar of Bodicote retires - The Rev. Donald Bishop is retiring from Bodicote after an incumbency of 27 years. He was the driving spirit behind the augmentation of the original five bells tonight. His steady support and encouragement has done much to maintain the healthy life of the band there. He has also been supportive of Guild activities in the area. A Peal of 5040 Grandsire Triples to mark his retirement by members of his own band and the Branch with help from the Bicester Branch. With that peal the Master circled his own tower!

ADDERBURY - we are ringing at Adderbury on Thursday evenings from 7.30p.m. until 9.00 p.m. This regular practice is in addition to Sunday ringing at 9.30a.m. ...We are pleased to welcome experienced ringers to join us because we have about 14 learners. They came in response to a publicity drive last Autumn. We also attracted some people back to ringing and so were able to ring on Christmas morning - the first time one of our band had rung since 1966!

All of our learners started to ring at the same time and so most are in the same stage - all able to ring rounds and call changes. We hope to introduce Plain Hunting soon, this depends on an 'experienced' band being around our learners.....

Charlotte Holmes

BODICOTE - This year our fortunes have fluctuated with practices hovering between 6 and 8 bell methods. However it is good to report that several learners are making good progress. Congratulations to Charlotte Furneaux on ringing her first quarter peal. With Sarah Misconi and Rosemary Hemmings also plain hunting we have further quarters on the horizon. With Helen, Jenna and Victoria we are on the verge of becoming a female dominated tower.

Ron Thorne

ST. MARY'S BLOXHAM - At a recent Branch practice at Bloxham, I set up my computer in the Ringing Chamber, which enables one to ring a lashed bell, so that it produces a sound on the computer, which rings all the other bells. You can ring any method (even Cambridge Maximus!) but you ring entirely by ear, as there are no other ropes to look at! It is very good practice, and everyone who came had a go, either ringing rounds or something more ambitious. (Our Branch Secretary had a go at Stedman Caters).

If any other towers would like the system demonstrated, it is fairly portable, and I can set it up in your own tower.

Alan Griffin

DEDDINGTON - As you know the bells are back and ring much easier than before and the sound is good. We have a bit of trouble with the 'clapper rattle' but this seems inevitable, according to the write up in The Ringing World. Now there are eight ringable bells, whenever there are sufficient ringers we are going all out to ring Triples methods and are making good progress in this direction. Unfortunately it is not often we have eight ringers on a Sunday.

Bill Iving

DUNS TEW - Although there has been discussion about a 6th Bell, no progress has been made this year... In fact we have deliberately not pursued plans this year since the church roof is desperately in need of a complete replacement costing £30,000 and all fund raising is devoted to this need at present. Nevertheless we have, at long last, removed the Saunce Bell from the tower, and Robert Stranks has replaced the headstock. We now need to refit the centre spindles and all metalwork. With some supporting woodwork in the tower we hope we can have the Saunce Bell ringing again soon after a very long silence.

Martin Curren

GREAT TEW - Former tower captain, Bert Morley, after one unsuccessful operation, has now had a successful operation on one of his eyes and we are pleased that his eyesight is much improved. Another of our long established ringers, Ivor Clifton, is at present recovering from a car accident. We hope he is soon better and able to ring with us again.

Our Vicar, Rev. H. Colchester, will be retiring in September. We will be 'sorry to see him go as he has been very supportive in all matters related to bells and ringing. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

Tune ringing on the handbells is practised regularly. Several youngsters are now taking an interest and progressing well. Our new set of handbells is on order and

due to be collected from Whitechapel in November.

Sue Burchell

MOLLINGTON - We have six young learners ranging from 9 to 11 and three of those are plain hunting. The older members are still loyal so on special occasions such as Easter, it's nothing new to see as many as seventeen in the tower.

BICESTER DEANERY BRANCH

BRANCH DINNER - It was good to see several towers represented at the Branch Dinner on 19th May at The King's Arms, Bicester. Twenty two Branch members attended from far and wide....which amounts to 25% of the membership, with the gentlemen out numbered by the ladies - what lucky boys! Also present as guests of the Bicester tower were Mr and Mrs Gardiner from Shabbington. Mr Gardiner had made three beautiful keys for Bicester Tower and these were on display and admired by all.

New faces included our Ringing Master, the Rev. John Nixon and his wife, Elizabeth. There was little support for a Branch Dinner last year and fears of a poor turnout proved unfounded. Richard Stevens, who organised the event, did a grand job gathering so many ringers and persuading The Kings Arms management to keep the cost at £8.00.

RECUPERATING - Les Burnell entered hospital on 18th May for a long awaited operation. I am glad to report that he is now well on the way to recovery and is back at Ludgershall ringing again.

PROMOTION NEWS - Phyllis Grace has been appointed Vice-Captain at Launton. Bert Massey continues as Tower Captain and Mike MacArthur remains as correspondent. Angela Marfleet has now taken over the reins from Willy as Captain at Woodeaton.

SPRING CLEAN AT WESTON ON THE GREEN! Tower Captain, Bob Hessian, tells me that the tower has had a much needed spring clean. A considerable amount of debris and unmentionable 'you know what' has been removed and the bells have been overhauled. Wire has now been placed over the louvres in an effort to keep the birds out.

Of late Bob has been too short of ringers to have regular practices and the bells haven't been too active. However, due to a roaming band recently bringing the bells to life again with a quarter peal, some villagers were so delighted to hear the bells again as part of village life, that several asked to be taught bell ringing. Bob would be pleased to have a helping hand from time to time and now with the big clean up you won't need to wear protective clothing or take your can of fresh air!

CHILTERN BRANCH

Aston Clinton ringers held an outing to Derbyshire on 30th May with guests from neighbouring towers and the usual sprinkling of non-ringers. The weather was somewhat indifferent, but did not spoil our enjoyment of the bells of Shardlow, Derby Cathedral, Etwell, Repton, Melbourne and Whitwick.

The Branch was responsible for the organisation of the Barn Dance which was held during the evening of the Guild Festival. Much of the work had already been done before I was elected secretary, and the outcome was a credit to all involved. The evening was also financially successful (despite the attendance being lower than the previous year) raising £70.00 for the Guild Bell Fund.

Our congratulations to Nigel Woodruff and Sheila Guy on their wedding at Aston Clinton on 18th July. This was a true ringers' wedding; the bride and groom both learned to ring at Aston Clinton, as did the best man and two of the bridesmaids! Other ringers present included the groom's parents, the best man's in-laws, and numerous other branch members. We wish Nigel and Sheila every happiness in their new home near Chichester.

Bledlow tower held an outing to Hampshire on 1st August. Towers visited were Sherfield on Loddon, the 8 and the 9 at Basingstoke, Deane, Wootton, Church Oakley and Sherborne St. John. The day was well arranged by Caroline Stonham and a good time was had by all.

JohnWhite

CHIPPING NORTON BRANCH

Frank Tucker, who had been a ringer at Ascott-under-Wychwood for thirty years and tower captain for seventeen years moved to Devon in July to spend the rest of his retirement there. We wish Frank and Mrs Tucker a happy retirement in their new home.

We welcome Claire Tarrant back to the Branch after a short period in the Old North Berks Branch. Radley's loss must be Charlbury's gain.

Branch Diary:-	Oct.3	Branch Practice	Chipping Norton	7.30 - 9.00 p.m.
	Oct.10	Autumn Meeting	Chadlington /Spelsbury	
	Nov. 7	Branch Practice	Ascott-under-Wychwood	7.30 - 9.00p.m.
	Dec. 5	Branch Practice	Shipton-under-Wychwood	7.30 - 9.00p.m.
			Ken Wakwfield	

EAST BERKS AND SOUTH BUCKS BRANCH

BRANCH 6-BELL STRIKING CONTEST:- This was held at Winkfield on 13 June and was judged by Mike Till of Thatcham.

The results were:-

1st.	Amersham	19 faults	5th.	High Wycombe B	48 faults
2nd.	High Wycombe A	21 "	6th	Chalfont S.Giles	53½ "
3rd	Winkfield	33½ "	7th	Chalfont S.Peter	57½ "
4th	Beaconsfield	38 "			

Congratulations to Amersham on regaining first position after a gap of several years of being 'almost there' in 2nd and 3rd position. They will represent the Branch in the Guild Contest on 30October.

Thanks to David and Liz Struckett and the rest of the Winkfield ringers for their organisation and for providing the tea.

Katharine Firman

OTHER E.B.S.B NEWS WILL BE FOUND ELSEWHERE.....M.R.C.

OLD NORTH BERKS BRANCH

The Annual St.Birinus Pilgrimage took place in June, starting on the Berkshire Downs above Blewbury, It followed the route taken by St.Birinus when journeying to Dorchester and bringing Christianity to this part of the country. Five churches on the route opened their towers and we rang as the pilgrims passed by. This was much appreciated by those who walked, and all who rang felt that we had encouraged and supported the pilgrims on their long 12 miles journey on one of the hottest days of the summer.

Our Annual Branch Barn Dance takes place on Saturday 17th October at Sutton Court-enay. Appleton Hall is not yet repaired after the fire in March!

Work has started on Sutton Augmentation and should be completed early in September.

The August Branch Practice - an afternoon one-took place on the second Saturday on the S.W.border of the Branch. We had planned to ring at three of the towers in the Ridgeway Group of Parishes; Letcombe Regis (6),Childrey (6) and Sparsholt (4). We have only recently discovered that Sparsholt is in the Wantage Deanery and so falls in the area covered by the O.N.B. The afternoon ended with four towers instead of three. The Rev.Ian Marsh,who has charge of the six Ridgeway parishes is a ringer. He joined us for the afternoon and offered to open Letcombe Bassett Tower where he had got the three bells ringing again. His offer was eagerly accepted by everyone present. So by staggering the ringing times and Ian Marsh going ahead to unlock the towers we fitted all four in and some gained their first experience of three and four bell ringing. Some people even bragged that they had circled one tower! At Sparsholt we found not only the bells interesting but Ian Marsh's love for old churches made the Church come alive for many of us. There were many hidden 'gems'.

Our next 3 Tower Branch Practice will be on 14th November at Appleford 2.30p.m.
Long Wittenham 3.30p.m. and Aston Tirrold 4.30 p.m.

The semi - finals of our Branch striking contest will take place during August.
Cumnor v Abingdon, Brightwell v Appleton. The final will be decided at Radley
before our Half Yearly Meeting on Saturday 12th September.

Len Cox

Cumnor are holding a Ringing Day in aid of their Bell Restoration Fund on 26th
September. Notices will appear in the Ringing World and elsewhere.

OXFORD CITY BRANCH

The Half Yearly Meeting of the Branch was held at Marsh Baldon on Saturday, 13th
June. This was the first time that a meeting had been held at Marsh Baldon for 25
years. A typical village service in the church was followed by an excellent tea
served in the adjoining medieval barn. The warm summer weather allowed us to hold
the meeting outside in the garden and everyone agreed it was one of the best loc-
-ations that had been used for a Branch Meeting.

The St. Giles' ringers visited the Malvern Hills area for their annual outing on
27th June. At the very last minute the local coach hire company were unable to
provide a coach and so the ringers eventually set out in a mixture of minibuses
and cars. Despite the initial set back, fine weather and excellent organisation
by John Pusey guaranteed a successful outing. Towers visited were:- BADSEY,
MALVERN LINK, GREAT MALVERN PRIORY, ECKINGTON, PERSHORE ABBEY and PERSHORE PARISH
CENTRE.

On 11th July, the Branch held an 'Under 18 Striking Competition' at North Hinksey.
This had been an idea suggested by Ray Rook and now arranged by our Ringing
Master, Len Porter. Only three teams entered the competition but all of the
ringers were in the under 18 category. Result:- 1st St. Giles, 2nd Abingdon,
3rd Horspath. All the participants received a special certificate to mark the
occasion and St Giles and Abingdon were presented with commemorative plaques. John
Pusey and myself were the judges.

It was a great pleasure to hear these young ringers, full of determination, pract-
-ising and planning their strategy for a successful ring. Their enthusiasm set a
fine example for the adults to follow.

Roy Goodwin

READING BRANCH

The Reading Branch recorded 132 Quarter Peals in 1986, over 100% up on the previous
year., 21 out of 25 towers being rung to quarters. This additional burst of activ-
-ity seems to be concentrated in Caversham, Pangbourne and South Stoke. 16 ringers
rang their first quarter and three conducted their first quarter. The first
quarters seem to be concentrated in the Swallowfield Shinfield and Pangbourne
towers with Mortimer following on. Other towers providing first quarters were
Bradfield, Mapledurham, S. Giles and South Stoke.

Tilehurst continues to remain in the top 10 of the Guild League Table and who
knows, Pangbourne (15), Caversham (13) and South Stoke (12) could be in among them
next year if the present trends continue.

Extract from Branch News Letter - Bobbie May

PANGBOURNE - Ringing is a funny business, one minute there is a strong band with
plenty of members making steady progress and then in the space of six months we
lose one learner and three experienced ringers and a fourth tells us he will be
moving shortly! All is not bad, however, as we have gained one ready made ringer
who has lessened the blow. Even so we are going to be stretched throughout the
summer as holidays take their toll. Despite the setbacks we recently achieved a
quarter peal of Bob Minor without outside assistance and soon we hope to be able
to repeat it with a resident Sunday Service Band.

Extract from Branch News Letter - L. Palfrey

ST GILES- At the AGM ,Steve Bucknell, the University Ringing Master retired. He was thanked by everyone for the job he had done during the past year. Joyce Vernon the Assistant Ringing Master also retired. Joanne Smith was welcomed as the new U.R.M and Rosemary Scott as A.R.M. for St Giles. Keith Vernon remains as Steelekeeper and Toni Vernon as Secretary.

Extract from Branch News Letter

SONNING DEANERY BRANCH

WOKINGHAM St. Pauls -The St Paul' Bell Fund recieved a cheque for £137.15 as a result of the Tower Open Day organised by the White Waltham and Shottesbrook ringers at White Waltham on 25th May. Further money was raised when Easthampstead Tower invited St. Paul's to sell some of its pottery while they served after service coffee. Binfield, All Saints raised a further £110 for the fund by organising a successful skittles evening. St Paul's A team were the winners. The total donated by the Branch and towers this year before the skittles evening stood at £1,475.78. A great effort so far. A letter of appreciation and thanks has been received by the Branch Secretary from the Rev. Peter Rapsey of St Pauls Wokingham.

WOKINGHAM All Saints - The tower secretary is Stephen R. Smith I, 24, Priest Avenue, Wokingham, RG11 2LX, and not as printed in the Guild Report.

SOUTH OXON BRANCH

CHINNOR - Now have an all local band capable of ringing quarter peals and Colin Ede conducted his first quarter of Grandsire Doubles.

GREAT HASELEY, GREAT MILTON, LITTLE MILTON now share a priest in charge who is very keen that all three towers should ring for services; subsequently Great Haseley's Monday practice has benefitted by being attended by ringers from the other two towers. Hopefully all three towers will soon be ringing on Sundays.

BRANCH PRACTICES - These have been reasonably well attended, and we were very pleased to welcome Anne Carpenter, the new Deputy Master who came to the Warborough practice on the 27th June.

STRIKING COMPETITION - Eric Harmsworth (Chinnor) arranged a six bell striking competition with four towers competing at Berrick Salome on 6th June. 1st Aston Rowant; 2nd Chinnor; 3rd Wheatley; 4th Tetsworth. Wheatley are to be congratulated as they are - with the expert tuition of Marie Cross - struggling manfully with plain hunt and Bob Doubles. Aston Rowant will be going on to represent the Branch in the Witney and Woodstock Branch in October.

Cyril Lawrence

VALE OF WHITE HORSE

We have had the usual Branch Practices, some well attended, others not so.

Our outing in July to the Worcester area went very well with 24 ringers and friends on the coach. Once again I had a phone call late on the Friday evening to say that the second tower was not available due to work being done on the tower the next day. After many phone calls, everyone in that area either had practices or had gone on holiday, I managed to get a tower for our second stop. It was a very good ring and our thanks are due to the lady who helped me out. The third tower were very noisy bells and obviously in need of some work to tighten wheels etc. I had to leave the coach at Pershore at tea time as I had to be elsewhere in the evening and naturally everyone tells me I missed the best of the day - not that I believe them!

We have two teams entered for the Striking Contest and so we hope to have a band to represent the V.W.H. in the Guild Contest in October.

Our Autumn Meeting this year is different in that we are trespassing into O.N.B. territory for the evening ringing. See relevant Ringing World for details. (Sept) A Quarter Peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung at Stanford to celebrate the engagement of Nigel Hull, a Stanford ringer and Dawn Hogson from Yorkshire.

Jayne Maire 1; Nicola Jones 2; Anne Greenley 3; Paul Haskell 4;
Jackie O'Hagan (C) 5; Martyn Hull 6; Ian Greenley 7; Colin Tapley 8.

We wish them happiness in the future.

Anne Jones

WITNEY AND WOODSTOCK BRANCH

On what must have been the only fine day in June about a dozen members of the Branch (and several dogs) took part in a "Walk and Ring" which the Ringing Master had organised in the Malvern Hills - at least walking was in the Hills! Starting from the northern end above Great Malvern the walk took us along the ridge, with glorious views and many exhilarating climbs and descents, right to the southern end where the route drops down to the village of Bromsberrow. Enthusiasm was such that two members of the party actually did the walk in both directions, a total of at least 20 miles. The ringing (with, it must be said, a somewhat depleted band) took place at Bredons Norton on the way home, where those with sufficient energy left enjoyed the very nice six bells.

In roughly the same direction, but on a different occasion, we were once again fortunate to be able to join the Tewksbury Abbey ringers on one of their practice nights, which gave many of us our first experience of 12-bell ringing (and wonderful views from the tower of the Abbey).

Practices are continuing on the first Saturday of each month, two towers being visited on each occasion, with reasonable attendances. In addition during the month of August, 8-Bell practices are being held weekly at Witney.

Catherine Ross

The Branch is holding a Ringing Day in October. It has been arranged to allow a handbell peal attempt to take place. The intention is for this to take place in a location which would allow visitors to listen without disturbing the ringers. In the afternoon the ringers will give a demonstration to those interested. Other events are also being planned for the day.

From the News Letter.

CENTRAL BUCKS BRANCH

Since the AGM we have had our 6-Bell Striking Contest at Bierton. Amazingly we had a lovely sunny day and contestants had a relaxed time listening to some reasonable ringing. A scratch band of supportive learners was narrowly saved from performing when our Aylesbury ringers arrived at the last minute - with a tale of a reluctant bride's late arrival! In the last analysis Arthur White (Chiltern Branch) judged Quinton the winners for the second year in succession. Watch out for them at the Guild Competition!

Branch Practices are being well attended and are now under the guidance of Dick Lee, Ringing Master. Dick has re-introduced a special method for each monthly meeting: as I write I am nervously mugging up Norwich Surprise! More details can be had by phoning Dick (Quinton 507) or Terry. Often members worry about joining these practices - please don't! All are welcome and each practice encourages rounds and call changes as well as the special method. I have been helped greatly by ringing with different people and on different bells. Even a difficult ring of bells helps one to appreciate one's own set all the more.

Lastly, thanks to the Guild Raffle Organiser. We at Central Bucks may not have been able to attend on the day, but the number of prizes won by our members indicates our support. Congratulations to Mr Fowles on passing the £1,000.00 mark!

Carole Wagstaff

NEWBURY BRANCH

THE RINGING MASTER'S RAMBLINGS -I have been trying to remember what has been happening in the Branch since the last Newsletter and my initial reaction was "not a lot". First there was the 6-Bell striking contest - 3 teams entered, Thatcham to go to represent the Branch at the Guild final. There was a skittles evening later at Inkpen, arranged by Helen Weavers, with the Andover District of the W & P at which the ladies competed with the others. I'm not sure who won, but everybody seemed to enjoy the convivial atmosphere. In May the Branch entered two towers for the Guild 8-Bell striking contest. Unfortunately the judges didn't know top quality ringing and neither team got further than the heats. I gather that several towers were grabbed during the day, though.

The next event ,also in May was the Guild AGM which was held at Bucklebury,with various towers open during the day. This is a major event in your Guild Calendar and I was disappointed to see so few Branch members present on home territory. Congratulations are due to Joan Marshall and her team who organised the proceedings at Bucklebury, which went without a hitch.

Since then both Hungerford and Thatcham have held very successful outings; There has been a Youth Activities Display, at the John O'Gaunt School in Hungerford at which the Branch was represented. The Branch Practice at Thatcham on 9 June was attended by a reduced Thatcham band and nobody else. Short of ringing up everybody in the Branch the day before, and again on the evening I do not see what more I can do to persuade people to come to these practices. I can see now why previous Ringing Masters have decided to give up.

From the Branch Newsletter

FACTS AND FIGURES

Young Tenor Ringer. Kevin Haseldine was born on February 20th 1986; but who would have believed that just 14 months later - when the bells had been rung down after morning and evening Service ,as Grandfather East worn out by Easter Egg munching- tried to toll the tenor, 14 month old Kevin took the end of the rope and helped him to chime it. As Baby Kevin stands all of 2' high -this is an amazing feat. His mother Janet tells us he knows the theory of ring already. Ludgershall thinks this may be a record - are there any challengers?

Bicester Deanery News Letter

Now for the other end of life - Percy Newton rang a peal of Bob Major at West Wycombe for his 83 Birthday and Harry Badger rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Triples to celebrate his 70 years as a ringer. He rang the same bell as he learned on in 1917.

Family Birthday Quarter Peal -Three generations of Darvills rang a Quarter Peal for the Birthday of R.W.Darvill at Aston Abbots- Grandsire Doubles 1.4.87

Stan Scott passed his 200th peal mark on 11.4.87

Peter and Diana Bridie have rung 250 peals together and Diana passed the 350 mark on 1.5.87

Pat Newton has rung her 400th Peal - Cambridge S.Royal in Hand on 13.5.87.

Tim Pett has rung his 300th Tower Bell Peal - Bampton Delight Major at Bampton Oxon. It was the first peal in the method.

Alan Ainsworth has called the first peal of River Witham S.Maximus at Rotherham and Geoffrey K.Dodd called the first peal of Swindon S.Maximus for the Guild.

The band based on Thatcham and Highclere has recently scored peals which have either been the first for the method or the first for the Guild:- Havant S.Major (Twyford,Berks 9.5.87); Sidney S.Major (Highclere 13.5.87); Lammermuir (East Hagbourne 21.5.97); the same band also scored a peal of Surlative S.Royal in which there were 5 firsts at Thatcham. Hackpen Delight Major was also rung to a peal for the first time at Hungerford On 16.7.87. Joywick S.Royal was also scored 12.6.87 The Sunday Surprise Minor band based on Sunningwell have now rung all 41 Surprise Minor Methods to a peal.

Congratulations to Joanne Druce who called her first peal of Plain Bob Triples at Tilehurst on 5.7.87 and has circled the tower; also to who conducted her first Quarter Peal of Cambridge S.Major at Chalfont St Giles.

At Witney a band based in the Oxford area scored a peal of Wadworth S.Major in which two members of the band struck their first blows in the method and four scored their first in the method. It was also the first in the method by the conductor.

At Hungerford Bill Butler rang two bells and called a quarter peal of Stedman Triples.

On 7th June a Quarter Peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung for the 900th Anniversary of the Church. This was Sylvia May's first Quarter.

A Quarter Peal of Glasgow S.Major rung at Ambrosden -27.4.87 -was the first blow in the method by all.

On April 24 the Swallowfield/Shinfield Band rang 1260 Doubles in 2 methods, and at Mortimer 1260 P.B.Doubles was rung on 12th April. This was the conductor's (J.Barsby) first as conductor.

DIARY OF EVENTS CONTINUED

November				
28	Guild General Committee Meeting - Aston Abbotts 1.45p.m.			
	S.Oxon	BP	Dorchester	6.30-8.30p.m.
	EBSB	BP	Iver	6.30 p.m.
December				
5	C.Norton	BP	Shipton-u-Wychwood	7.30 p.m.
	N.Bucks	ly	Stoney Stratford	
	W & W	BP	Combe	2.00 p.m.
			Stonesfield	3.15 p.m.
12	Oxford	AGM	Iffley	
	C.Bucks	BP	Wingrave	6.30 p.m.
	O.N.B.	BP	Sutton Courtenay	7.00 p.m.
	Reading	BP	St Mary's Reading	
17	Chiltern	SP	Aston Clinton	8.00-9.15 p.m.
18	N.Bucks	BP	Woughton	
19	Sonning	BP	White Waltham	7.00 p.m.
	Chiltern	BP	Aston Clinton	6.30-8.30 p.m.
	EBSB	BP	Cookham	6.30 p.m.
	W & W		Carol Service at Ducklington (ringing at Witney)	7.30 p.m.

Preliminary Notice - See latter advertisement in the Ringing World

ST. MICHAEL'S, CHURCH, CUMNOR, NR OXFORD

RINGING DAY AND BELLRINGERS' 'SONGS OF PRAISE'

SEPTEMBER 26th 1987

- OBJECTS
1. To invite ringers and friends to a service in S.Michaels Church Cumnor.
 2. To have fellowship with other ringers and friends in ringing and worship.
 3. To promote interest in, and raise money for, the restoration of Cumnor Church Bells.

9.30 - 11.00 WALLINGFORD	12.00 - 1.30 APPLEFORD
10.00 - 11.30 CHOLSEY	12.30 - 2.00 MILTON
10.30 - 12.00 NORTH MORETON	1.30 - 2.30 RADLEY**
11.00 - 12.30 BRIGHTWELL	2.00 - 3.30 SUNNINGWELL
11.30 - 1.00 LITTLE WITTENHAM	2.30 - 4.00 CUMNOR

** It is requested that time be adhered to.

4.00	Service - BELLRINGER'S SONGS OF PRAISE	Collection for Bell Restor-
5.00	TEAS in Cumnor Old School (next to the Church)	-ation.

5.30 - 6.30	CUMNOR	6.30 - 8.00	HINTON WALDRIST
7.00 - 7.00	APPLETON		

N.B. THERE WILL BE NO CHARGE FOR RINGING AT ANY OF THE TOWERS. WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK INCUMBENTS AND LOCAL RINGERS FOR ALLOWING US THE USE OF THEIR BELLS.

NUMBERS FOR TEAS IF POSSIBLE (NOT ESSENTIAL) AND ANY ENQUIRIES TO:-

P.R.Coveney, 24a Oxford Road, Farmoor, Oxford OX2 9NN Tel. Oxford 862994

DIARY OF EVENTS FOR NEXT FOUR MONTHS

September			
5	Newbury		Branch Outing
	Chipping Norton	BP	Charlbury
	North Bucks	½ly	Meeting Newport Pagnell
	W & W	BP	Witney
			Bladon
			7.30 p.m.
12-13	Diocesan Pilgrim Festival Oxford		
	Sunday 13 Sept Quarter Peals		1.30 p.m.
12	O.N.B.	(½ly	Radley
		(Striking	Competition
	C.Bucks	BP	Quainton
	Reading	S.C	Shinfield
			Practice 4.00-4.30p.m.
			Tea + S.C.4.30 p.m.
17	Chiltern	SP	Bledlow
18	N.Bucks	BP	Weston Underwood
19	Sonning	SC	Sonning
	Chiltern	SC	Little Missenden
	Banbury	BP	Cropredy
			Mollington
			8.00 p.m.
25 -27	Easthampstead Ringing Course		
26	S.Oxon	BP	Wheatley
	EBSB	BP	Woburn
			6.30-8.30 p.m.
			6.30 p.m.
October			
2	N.Bucks	BP	Hanslope
	Branch Secretaries' Meeting		Radley (Church Room)7.30 p.m.
3	Guild 6-bell Striking Competition (Stonesfield/Combe +N.Leigh)		
	Chipping Norton	BP	Chipping Norton
	W & W	BP	Aston
			Bampton
			7.45p.m.
10	Newbury	AGM	Newbury
	C.Bucks/Chiltern	Orchard Cup	Padbury
	Chipping Norton	Autumn Meeting	Chadlington/Spelsbury
	O.N.B.	BP	West Hanney
15	Chiltern	SP	Aston Clinton
	Reading	BP	Pangbourne
16	N.Bucks	BP	Wavendon
17	O,N.B.	Barn Dance	Sutton Courteney
	Banbury	½ly	Deddington
	Sonning	Branch Outing	
	Chiltern	½ly	Gt.Missenden (to be confirmed)
24	S.Oxon	Autumn Meeting	Watlington
			BrightwellBaldwin
			6.30 p.m.
	EBSB	BP	Hitcham
			6.30 p.m.
31	W & W	Ringing Day	
November			
6	N.Bucks	BP	Buckingham
7	C.Norton	BP	Ascott-under-Wychwood
	W & W	BP	Eynsham
			10.45 a.m.
14	C.Bucks	½ly	Aylesbury
	O.N.B.	BP	Appleford
			Long Wittenham
			Aston Tirrold
			4.30 p.m.
	Reading	BP	Tilehurst
19	Chiltern	SP	Bledlow
			7.45-9.00p.m.
20	N Bucks	BP	Emberton
21	Sonning	BP	Twyford
	Chiltern	BP	Weston Turville
	Banbury	BP	Adderbury
	W & W	Barn Dance	Bampton
			7.00 p.m.
			6.30-8.30p.m.
			7.30 p.m.