

# EBSB NEWS

www.ebsb.org.uk

June 2010

## HIGH WYCOMBE WIN GUILD 8-BELL COMPETITION



l – r Sheila Bruce, Robert Newton, Tricia Newton, Charles Botting, Annie Davies, George Whiteside, David Sullivan, Cliff Davies

The recently augmented ring of St Mary's, Wendover was the venue for this year's contest on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May. This competition alternates between Triples and Major, and the test piece (a plain course of Yorkshire Surprise Major) was very well rung by all seven bands that entered. The judges (Gill and Robin Leale from Kingston) commented that there were remarkably few method mistakes throughout and that virtually all the bands rang the bells very

steadily – several at about 3 hours 12 minutes for a peal, which is measured indeed for the 14 cwt tenor. However, the standard achieved throughout the afternoon indicated that this may have been a wise approach.

A noticeable one-blow error, instantly self-corrected, occurred in the last lead of the winning band's piece. Apparently this caused both judges to jump and resulted in a loud cheer from those listening intently in the churchyard. No malice intended, of course!

The full results:

Place	Rang	Band	Faults
1	4 <sup>th</sup>	High Wycombe	25
2	5 <sup>th</sup>	St Mary with St Laurence, Reading	27
3	7 <sup>th</sup>	East Berks & South Bucks Branch	40
4	6 <sup>th</sup>	North Bucks Branch	45
5	1 <sup>st</sup>	Reading Branch	50
6	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Banbury Branch	52
7	3 <sup>rd</sup>	South Oxon. Branch	62

Patricia Newton was delighted to receive the trophy, not least because she had cleaned it within the previous 24 hours, the High Wycombe band having been successful in this competition at Great Tew in 2009. It was most appropriate that she was ringing the bell given in memory of her parents at Wendover.

Both the Branch band and High Wycombe practised earlier in the afternoon, which evidently helped their cause. They also avoided first spot in the draw, allowing them to benefit from listening to preceding test pieces.

The bands were:

High Wycombe – Sheila Bruce 1, Patricia Newton 2, Annie Davies 3, David Sullivan 4, Cliff Davies 5, George Whiteside 6, Charles Botting 7, Robert Newton (C) 8



The EBSB Branch Band I – r Martin Whitaker, Ken Darvill, Peter Mackie, Katharine Firman, John Davidge, Angela Darvill, Fred Reynolds (David Cox is invisible as he couldn't wait to get to the pub!) – Apologies for quality of pic, it was taken off the website

EBSB Branch – Fred Reynolds 1, Angela Darvill 2, Katharine Firman 3, John Davidge 4, Martin Whitaker 5, Ken Darvill (C) 6, Peter Mackie 7, David Cox 8.

Robert Newton

## DIARY DATES

12 June	Hitcham (6) Branch 6-Bell Competition followed by Practice <i>Special Methods: Plain Bob, Ipswich S Minor</i>	5 – 9pm
24 June	Amersham (12) Thursday Evening Higher Number Practice (10/12)	7.45 – 9.15pm
26 June	Denham (8) Branch Practice <i>Special Methods: Plain Hunt/Plain Bob, Oxford Bob Triples</i>	7 – 9pm
10 July	Stoke Poges (8) Surprise Practice	7 – 9pm
24 July	Chesham (6) Branch Practice	7 – 9pm
31 July	Amersham (12) Saturday Higher Number Practice (10/12)	5 – 6.30pm
6 August	Weekday Practice	2.30 – 4.30pm
14 August	Daytime Novices' Outing	
26 August	Amersham (12) Thursday Evening Higher Number Practice	7.45 – 9.15pm
28 August	Dorney (6) Training Session	7 – 9pm

**Whilst there will be a focus on the special methods at these practices, there will still be plenty of opportunity to ring other methods as well**

## EBSB BRANCH OFFICERS

The following officers were elected for 2010 / 2011 at our AGM held at Marlow on 24<sup>th</sup> April

Chairman	John Davidge	01494 873325	<a href="mailto:chairman@ebsb.org.uk">chairman@ebsb.org.uk</a>
Ringling Master	Katharine Firman	01628 636484	<a href="mailto:master@ebsb.org.uk">master@ebsb.org.uk</a>
Deputy Ringling Master	Jan Galloway	01494 728941	<a href="mailto:deputy@ebsb.org.uk">deputy@ebsb.org.uk</a>
Secretary	Mandy Salter	01628 530241	<a href="mailto:thesecretary@ebsb.org.uk">thesecretary@ebsb.org.uk</a>
Treasurer	Graham Firman	01628 636484	<a href="mailto:treasurer@ebsb.org.uk">treasurer@ebsb.org.uk</a>
Independent Assessor	Stan Barlow		
Representatives on the Guild General Committee	John Davidge, Maryanne Roach, Margaret Carlyle		

# MEMBERSHIP

A warm welcome to the following new members of the Branch:

## AMERSHAM

Delia Meehan

## CLEWER

Leslie Hollingbery  
Andy Bell  
Chris Ward  
Jonathan Sturt

## FULMER

Celia Thomas

## HUGHENDEN

Andrew Ottaway

## PENN

Lesley Dawe  
John Whiteman  
Thomas Sharpe

## BRAY

Sam Maynard

## COOKHAM

David Kirkham  
Caroline Kirkham

## HAMBLEDEN

Daniel Riddoch  
Marianne Tierney  
Cherie Wilcox

## LANGLEY

Shane Rainer (re-election)

## WEST WYCOMBE

Lucy Lee

## CHALFONT ST GILES

Georgina Blair

## DENHAM

Ron Rogers  
Tom Griffiths

## HIGH WYCOMBE

Francoise Allen  
David Sullivan (elected  
to the Branch)

## OLD WINDSOR

Bob Hudson  
Jean Sinclair

## WOOBURN

Bill Schaaf

Congratulations also to John Dieppe and Wenda Fowles who were presented with certificates testifying to their 50 years' membership of the Guild.



Pictured are Marianne Tierney from Hambleden with her Membership Certificate and John Dieppe and Wenda Fowles with their 50 years' Testimonial Certificates. John Davidge in the background.

## A NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT AT PENN

Before deleting a mass of my ramblings from my PC files, I re-read the piece I wrote about recording Penn bells in 1961 (Newsletter, October 2009) and it occurred to me that in commenting how the numbers of Penn ringers had fallen from 20-odd in the mid-1950s, I might have unwittingly given the impression that Sunday service ringing had declined. In fact, despite reduced numbers, the Penn ringers achieved a notable and commendable quarter-peal only a short time before our visit. Just in case the details have faded from local memory, they ought to be remembered and recorded:-

PENN, BUCKS: On 21<sup>st</sup> Jan 1961: 1,260 Grandsire Doubles: Miss L Randall 1, Mrs D Stopps © 2, Miss A Jollye 3, Miss B Mathieson 4, C E Stopps 5, A W Randall (aged 82) 6.

First quarter by the Sunday Service Band at Penn since augmentation in 1929. First quarter for ringers 1 and 2.

What a splendid achievement!

*David G Rowlands*

# TOWER NEWS

## HIGH WYCOMBE

Our fund raising continues to go well. About £105,000 has now been collected, and we have donors for all but three of the new bells, some of which have been paid for in full already. We are most grateful to EBSB members who voted at the AGM to grant us £2303 from Branch funds, and for the donations we are receiving from towers and individual ringers. A small working group is sending out applications to various grant-making bodies, with mixed (mostly negative) results. If all goes well with raising the rest of the funds and getting the faculty, we are aiming for the work to start in spring 2011, with the new bells being dedicated at the beginning of November.

We are pleased to report that Sammy Martin (aged 11) has rung her first quarter peal – treble to Grandsire Triples. Well done Sammy! Sammy has benefited from attending practices at several towers in the branch, and we are most grateful for the support and encouragement she has been given.

*Patricia Newton*

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2010  
All Saints High Wycombe  
1260 Grandsire Triples

1. Samantha J Martin
2. Charles M S Botting
3. David Sullivan
4. George Whiteside
5. Josie Martin
6. Patricia M Newton
7. Robert H Newton (C)
8. David J Twissell

First attempt: 1

For Evensong and to welcome Kenny Baldock (born this morning),  
grandson for Josie and nephew for Samantha.

## BEACONSFIELD

Two quarter peals of note were successfully completed recently. Pamela Coles rang her first of Stedman Triples on 11<sup>th</sup> April, the band being: Pamela Coles 1, Mandy Salter 2, David Rowlands 3, Angela Darvill 4, John McCutcheon 5, Rex Agg 6, Kenneth Darvill (C) 7, Geoffrey Hopkinson 8. The quarter was rung for Evensong and to welcome the new Team Rector, Jeremy Brooks (recently arrived from Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire).

Rex Agg celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April with a quarter of Rutland Surprise Major. The ringers were Pamela Coles 1, Mandy Salter 2, Angela Darvill 3, Anne Agg 4, David McKenzie 5, Rex Agg 6, Kenneth Darvill (C) 7, Geoffrey Hopkinson 8.

Older members may remember David Asher who was a member of the band at Beaconsfield for many years up to 1992, and shared with Luis Stenning responsibility for winding the church clock. We are sorry to have to report that David died in early May and was cremated at Amersham.

*Rex Agg*



Rex's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Quarter Peal Band – photo taken at Dorchester Abbey during our outing on 5 June

# BRANCH QUARTER PEALS

**Two Branch quarter peals were rung on 27<sup>th</sup> March**

**Oxford Diocesan Guild**  
**Chalfont St Giles, Bucks**  
St Giles

Saturday, 27 March 2010

**1280 Cambridge Surprise Major**

- 1 Katharine Firman
- 2 John Hearn
- 3 Sam Maynard
- 4 Chris Nunn
- 5 Fred Reynolds
- 6 Trevor Scott
- 7 Graham Firman (C)
- 8 John Payne

**Oxford Diocesan Guild**  
**Cookham, Berks**

Holy Trinity

Saturday, 27 March 2010

**1282 Yorkshire Surprise Royal**

- 1 Marcia Dieppe
- 2 Mandy Salter
- 3 Sheila Bruce
- 4 Angela Darvill
- 5 Alison Bailey
- 6 Maryanne Roach
- 7 Ken Darvill (C)
- 8 Martin Whitaker
- 9 Graham Firman
- 10 David Cox

First in method: 2, 5

# MISBOURNE DELIGHT

## (Recollections of Fulmer 1950s – 1960s)

The concept of “The Misbourne Valley” for a group of EB&SB Branch ringers was a very real one at this time and centred on George Swift and especially the evenings at 26 Field Way after the weekly Chalfont St Peter practices: towers involved were Little Missenden, Amersham, both Chalfonts, Denham and Fulmer. Iver was “allowed” as a sort of extension since the Misbourne flowed into the Colne at Iver! It was even jocularly proposed at one time that we form a Misbourne Branch. The whole concept was given ringing credence when John Mayne’s band rang the first peal of Misbourne Delight at Fulmer, though I don’t think they claimed it due to the Double-clapping phenomenon referred to below: I think they rang it again, but renamed “Alderbourne Delight”.

Two brilliant ringers I recall associated with Fulmer were George and William Gutteridge, who were nominally at Stoke Poges but seemed to join Fulmer whenever they fell out with the dreaded tower captain at Stoke, Arthur Barker. Both Gutteridges rang in several peals at Fulmer in the 30s and 40s. I never knew George – he died before I was born, but he was associated with Iver (the only Guild member there) for a while in the 20s and 30s. In later years I only ever saw Bill on George Swift’s ringing outings (they worked together in Gerrards Cross). Bill was one of the few Stoke ringers who would answer back to Arthur as good as he gave. (Sylvia Atkins was another: she and ADB used to go on at each other like Harold and Olive Rogers, only more so!)

The Tower Captain at Fulmer for many years from the 1930s was a lady, Flo Gudgin, who lived at Heath Lodge and was very friendly with the three Fletcher sisters at Beaconsfield, Phyllis Moss (Mrs Cecil Mayne – John’s mum) and Edna Bedford at Uxbridge. Edna’s brother, Fred, who rang at St Margaret’s Uxbridge sometimes got Mike Sheehan and myself to turn out on Fulmer practice nights in the early ‘60s. My memory may be playing tricks but I think Flo only rang call-changes. Another Fulmer stalwart at this time was Ted Briden, who moved to Chalfont St Peter and became a regular there.

I organised a quarter there in Dec 1960, and we had trouble with one bell, the second I think, having a tendency to double-clapper at backstroke. When we went up to look we found the bell seemed to have a rubber “buffer” arrangement inside, not unlike that in a handbell. If rung “gently” the double Backstroke note was not too obtrusive, so we gave George Swift the job. Why the bell was so fitted, we had no idea. That quarter incidentally was arranged to give an elderly Iver ringer his first quarter on a hunting bell, and by chance included both the Ringing Master of the EBSB Branch (George) and his Middlesex S&W counterpart (Russ Gotham); John Camp of Amersham conducted and David Ward of Slough and myself, made out the band. (Fulmer, Bucks – 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec 1960: 1,260 Grandsire Doubles: Harold Chadwell 1 (1<sup>st</sup> away from cover), George Swift 2, John Camp © 3, David Ward 4, Russ Gotham 5, David Rowlands 6).

Almost a year later I organised a peal there from “Misbourne Valley” regulars at Chalfont and the bells rang perfectly with no double-clapping. It was a useful peal in that it included two first peelers and two firsts of doubles. (Nov 18 1961, 5040 Doubles: Ann Seymour 1, Rosalind Hicks 2, David Rowlands 3, Bernard Collins 4, George Swift © 5, Harold Chadwell 6; in 2hr 48min). It was Ann’s and Harold’s first peal. She rang at Denham and shortly afterward became Mrs Bernard Collins. Bernard moved to Denham where he became tower captain. In the mid-60s and later in the early mid -70s they used to alternate practices between Denham and Fulmer to keep Fulmer going.

*D G Rowlands*

Footnote about George Swift

Anyone looking back at old peal reports may be puzzled by the lack of a “George Swift” ever mentioned. That is because until the 1980s, when he rang a lot of peals with his lodger, Bob Crocker, George always appeared in reports as “E G Swift” or more often as “Edgar G Swift”.

Just in case anyone wants to know, Misbourne Delight (a 3rds place Delight minor) was re-named “Alderbourne Delight” and is:

34-34.16-12-1236-12-36 LE: 146253

# BRANCH TRAINING DAY AT FULMER

On 22 May we held a Branch Training Session on Plain Bob Doubles at Fulmer. Seven students attended the training and the helpers were all pleased with the amount of progress that they made during the afternoon. Here are some of the students' thoughts about the day.

## **Steven Ridlington-White – Chalfont St Peter**

I had often driven past the church in Fulmer admiring its quaint village setting, tight streets, and affluent neighbours. Thus I looked forward to the opportunity of ringing her bells.

Beginners Practice at Fulmer (6 bells) began with the date set in the diary. John Davidge then very kindly phoned me the week before Practice night to announce he would be dropping off some Bob Doubles homework as preparation!

The unseasonably hot day for May arrived; I negotiated the parking, and confidently strode into the church.

It was reassuring to see so many helpers (6) and so many 'students' (7). We rang Bob Doubles from 5 pm to 7 pm with a 10 minute refreshment break (refreshments very kindly laid on by Mandy Salter I believe). Whilst originally thinking it would be enjoyable to practice varieties of beginners things, e.g. Plain Hunt, call changes, and Bob Doubles, the session turned out to be very useful just focusing on one method for the entire duration. I think we all came away having learnt a lot, despite the various stages of our student status' ranging from never having rung Bob Doubles to me thinking I knew it and need not fear – but John had to restart me 3 times on my first go since my brain had gone to mush and I had forgotten all my homework AND our personal tutor revision prior to touching the bells. Oh well, so much for my youthful arrogance.

I look forward to the next Beginners Practice, and will remember that a different church can take time to warm up to but is well worth it.

## **Gill Twissell – High Wycombe**

For me the training was most helpful, and very well organised. Also, it's so confidence building to have all those really proficient helpers.

Although I was useless at working out what to do on any other bell than the two, it was very good to have been put in the position of having to try to work out the order of work 'on the hoof', so to speak. It gave me a better insight into what Bob Doubles actually entails, and made me count my place, (albeit inaccurately). It may be a long time before I can get it right, but it was a real push in the right direction! I also liked the Fulmer bells very much. If only all bells were so easy.

Thank you very much for organising sessions like these. It helps people like me enormously.

## **Alison Bayley on behalf of Penn ringers**

Thomas and Caroline from Penn attended the Fulmer Training having only had two Practice Nights to attempt Bob Doubles from an inside bell. It was difficult for them to count their places but John Davidge had all his pupils practising the counting even if they were not ringing. They were impressed by the number of helpers who gave them support and quite relieved that they didn't have to ring for two hours non stop! The homework that John had set them now makes more sense having had the practice. Caroline came away, having learnt that counting your place is essential and she was able to convey this fact to the other learners at Penn. They were both grateful for the welcome refreshment break and the time to socialise with the other pupils.

## **Maureen Hossack - Clewer**

We are so pleased that we attended the training evening. It was really enjoyable and informative and everybody was so helpful and didn't mind what silly questions we asked. Dave says that with John's tuition he is less confused than he was. The same goes for me. It was also nice to talk to other ringers that are at a similar stage to us. We will certainly try and attend all the training sessions that we can. We feel it would be good for other aspiring ringers to attend these really good training evenings. Thank you to everybody for your help.

# SUMMER WALKING OUTING

## The walkers waiting (resting!) outside Goring church



The summer outing this year was on 8<sup>th</sup> May, and the weather forecast was for rain! I wondered how many people would turn up. But ringers are an intrepid bunch and all 26 who were expected arrived in good time either at Goring for car transfers to Purley, or directly at Purley itself. The church is tucked away on a housing estate, and has a ground-floor, fairly light ring of 6. We enjoyed ringing various methods from call changes to surprise minor.

The walkers (all but our Chairman, who said he was driving the rescue vehicle) then set out, winding a short distance through the housing estate to

the river. After a few minutes we joined the Thames Path at Mapledurham Lock, which is very well kept with pretty flower beds, and shortly afterwards we glimpsed Mapledurham House, and the church and mill through the trees on the opposite bank of the river. The walk continued on the river bank beside meadows up to the approach to Whitchurch Toll Bridge, where we diverted into Pangbourne, arriving in good time to disperse to various tea rooms for welcome refreshments.

Pangbourne has a slightly heavier ground floor ring of 6, and we had a good ring there, including various methods from call changes to Cambridge minor. Whilst waiting in the church here I noticed that we had been joined by a lady who is not (yet) a ringer, with her dog. The Hambleden ringers had invited her to come on the outing in the hopes of persuading her to learn to ring. A novel recruitment initiative!

The walk continued through Pangbourne, over Whitchurch Bridge (no toll for walkers) and up Whitchurch Hill, which is fairly steep and narrow with picturesque cottages on either side. But the climb was not too arduous, as we turned off half way up the hill onto a farm drive. There followed some steps, down and up, and then a gentle descent through woodland with occasional views across the river to the farmland beyond. Our route then rejoined the bank of the Thames for the last couple of miles to Goring. We arrived at the church a little ahead of schedule, giving plenty of time for the group photo.

Goring tower has a ring of 8, and some of us found some of the bells a bit challenging. But everyone managed to ring something, and some rang surprise major.

We were all glad that the weather forecast had not been accurate, as we had no rain on the whole walk; it had been a little overcast, but it was dry underfoot and almost ideal walking weather. And we did not have to negotiate livestock, stiles (rickety or otherwise), narrow footbridges, or fallen trees – a complete contrast to last year's more rural outing.

The day ended with a very sociable meal at The Catherine Wheel. The 20 ringers who were able to stay were given a private room and were well fed and watered.

Once again we were pleased to welcome on the outing several ringers who do not attend other Branch events. Has anyone got any suggestions where we might walk and ring next year?

*Chris Nunn*

Editor's Note: I am sure I speak for everyone who came on this outing in thanking Chris very much for organizing such an enjoyable day.

# Recruitment and Training

EBSB Committee are aware that a number of towers are finding it difficult to recruit and train new ringers despite their best efforts and creative ideas, and we have been asked if there is anything that can be done at Branch level. The topic was raised at the AGM in Marlow where it was agreed that input would also be requested via an article in this Newsletter.

As a first step, it was suggested that towers may like to comment on their need for new recruits and post their experiences on the Email User Group (just send an email to [ebsbbranch@googlegroups.com](mailto:ebsbbranch@googlegroups.com)), giving brief details of what recruitment methods they have tried and a note as to what worked and what was less successful. This will, no doubt, give rise to some interesting correspondence in its own right and the Committee will also compile a comprehensive list for publication in a subsequent Newsletter.

We should also like to hear other ideas for possible Branch level activities; we could, for example:

- prepare a Powerpoint presentation for use by individual towers when presenting to local organisations (eg Rotary, Lions, Inner Wheel, Townswomen's Guild, Women's Institute, U3A)
- arrange interviews with local radio and articles in the local press
- organise special evenings for social groups (eg Horizons, LooseEnds, Company, Liaisons)
- prepare posters to be put in shop windows (although there is already one available from the Central Council which can have local details added)
- What else?

Another idea would be to link up with an adult education college to provide a structured course using a "blended learning" approach. This could be organised at Branch level, possibly, although not necessarily, at a Ringing Centre (eg Aston Clinton or Shiplake). The main aim would be to teach safe handling but this would be combined with other activities eg church bell practical activity, use of a simulator, hand bells, experience amongst the bells (muffles, sound control ...), relevant visits eg to the Foundry. However, in this case we would have to address the issue of how to feed those wishing to continue ringing back into a local tower where there are people able to continue the teaching. This problem could, however, be avoided if the course is actually run by a cooperative group of 3, say, neighbouring towers close to a particular adult education centre, after assistance from the Branch Committee in course planning, administration, and negotiation with the authorities, and with committed practical support throughout.

Obviously, initiatives such as these will require significant effort and will need to be planned well in advance. Before embarking on any, your Branch Committee needs to be sure that current levels of recruitment are such as to justify such a programme, that sufficient offers of assistance are available, and that the likely outcome would be positive.

Over to you!

*Maryanne Roach April 2010*

**Note:** at the AGM, Tricia Newton highlighted a report "Recruitment and Retention" to be found in full text on the ODG website at:

<http://www.odg.org.uk/documentation.html>

## EBSB BRANCH EMAIL USER GROUP

The Branch email group is proving very useful as a means of communicating with each other, especially to notify of last minute practice changes. Please also use to share your recruitment experiences – see Maryanne's article above. If you have not already joined the group and wish to do so, simply email Mandy: [thesecretary@ebsb.org.uk](mailto:thesecretary@ebsb.org.uk) and she will add you to the group.