



# Central Bucks Branch

**Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers**

## **Newsletter OCTOBER 2010**

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Dear Ringers

*Here we are in Autumn* with long hours of darkness – what better time to go out every evening ringing round our fantastic range of towers attending the various branch and tower practices. Don't forget a torch though! Meet up too at the *CBB Christmas lunch* January 8<sup>th</sup> in Bierton. Do come along – see inside for more information.

This newsletter reports on successful summer activities as well as offering information and services e.g. get your Ringing World diary in a bulk buy!

*Subscriptions 2011* will remain at the same rate of £6. As a way of supporting the *ODG Bell Fund*, from which CBB has had a net gain over the last few years, you are urged to add a sum, however small, to your membership. Subs will again be due by **1<sup>st</sup> March**. If you want to get ahead send a cheque payable to ODG Central Bucks Branch to CBB Treasurer John Lomas 30 Church Street, Wing, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 0NY.

*The next edition in the spring* will have the copy date of the end of February so that the AGM outcomes can be reported. *Tower news welcome.*

*Keep in Touch* between newsletters by supplying an email contact (tower or personal) and by checking the website [www.bellringing.biz/cbb](http://www.bellringing.biz/cbb) where full versions of documents are published and latest news posted.

*Finally* many thanks to Ryan Noble for his contributions to this newsletter

*Editor*

**EDITOR:** DIANA SLEVIN T-01296 713903 E- secretary@cbucks.odg.org.uk

# Chairman's Clatter

*It seems to me that ringing as a hobby, sport, call it what you will, is going through a bit of a resurgence.*

We have some very enthusiastic young people in our branch, who have suddenly found an activity which is different from the norm and gives them great pleasure. And from my perspective that enthusiasm has made my ringing experience more pleasurable. Actually I'm sure there are few things in life that have an appeal to such a vast age range and it's really nice that the young don't mind 'hanging out' with the old. So, ok, we may not like the fact they learn at such a speed we feel left behind, and we may not like being told what to do by some young 'whippersnapper' who thinks he knows better than us who have been doing this for decades, but those young whippersnappers are the future and they want to learn. I for one am really glad they learn so quickly because it means I have much more help when I have to get something in my head which, with advancing years, becomes more and more difficult.

Leading on from that too, is the fact that many ringers are happy doing the basics. They don't want to be proficient in all sorts of methods; they just want to enjoy what they do. Shouting and 'throwing a wobbly' at them is not enjoyment and, unfortunately, I have spoken to several ex-ringers who are 'ex' because someone did just that. These young things seem to have an endless patience which I have sometimes found lacking in older ringers.

So, there are two things we should think about here, the first is that we shouldn't begrudge the young getting ahead or let pride get in our way and spoil the relationship we have with them. The second is that ringing is something we all do for pleasure and there are ways of dealing with mistakes which our youngsters, so far, seem to have got off to a tee.



*Jan (left, at Dalston on the outing P8)*

*Jan*

# MEMO FROM OUR RINGING MASTER!

Having just got back from another successful Branch outing, to the outskirts of London this year, (thank you to Jan and Hal for organising that), my thoughts turned to all the various group activities we ringers enjoy during the summer period. I have been fortunate to have been invited to join tower outings and a ringing holiday this year. Both have afforded the opportunity to spend time with ringers I don't see much of, as well as visiting new areas in the countryside and 'grabbing' new towers – what more could a ringer want? The holiday was extra special this year as the organiser attained his 60<sup>th</sup> 'tour' by providing us with 60 or so towers to ring at in rural Suffolk. What a fantastic example to us all of commitment to ringing.

How many of you have been on a tower outing, or enjoyed a training course perhaps, in the last 12 months? Now Autumn is approaching we all start to think of longer evenings and things to do to keep ourselves occupied. Why not consider a day course to improve your ringing skills? There are several advertised – think about it and get in touch.

Or a new 'ringing' book? Ryan Noble is collecting names for those who would like a Ringing World Diary for next year so we can put in a bulk order. Also, we will be placing an order for the 'Companion' books by Steve Coleman. If we order a number we can get a good discount. They are very readable and there's one for every level of ringing. Again, get in touch if you are interested.

Of course, there are always different towers to visit for their practices and service ringing too. I'm sure your support, at whatever level, would be much appreciated.

Happy ringing!

Heather

Sept 2010

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## BRANCH DIARY

**Branch Practices 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays** from 6.30pm- 8.30pm unless otherwise stated.

**2010/11**

**NOVEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>**

**DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>**

**8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY**

**12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**

**12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**

**9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**

**BRANCH PRACTICE LONG CRENDON (10)**

**BRANCH PRACTICE CUDDINGTON (8)**

**BRANCH DINNER BIERTON (6) RINGING  
BEFOREHAND.**

**BRANCH AGM WINSLOW (8)**

**BRANCH PRACTICE WADDES DON (6 – STEEL ) )**

**BRANCH PRACTICE WING (6) (TBC)**

# SPECIAL PRACTICES 2010

**6-BELL PROGRESS PRACTICES ON TUESDAYS**  
(NORMALLY 3<sup>RD</sup>), 7.30PM, AT STEWKLEY.

19<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER

16<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER

**8-BELL PROGRESS 1<sup>ST</sup> TUESDAYS 7.30-9PM AYLESBURY**  
2<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

**8-BELL ADVANCED PRACTICE 4<sup>TH</sup> SATURDAYS 7-8.30PM.**

23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER

27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER

Details are subject to confirmation Any queries please contact Hal Drysdale or Heather Dobson or check on website [www.bellringing.biz/cbb](http://www.bellringing.biz/cbb)

## BRANCH OFFICERS

**BRANCH CHAIRMAN:** Jan Robinson 01525 385420  
[chairman@cbucks.odg.org.uk](mailto:chairman@cbucks.odg.org.uk)

**VICE CHAIRMAN:** vacant

**SECRETARY:** Diana Slevin 01296 713903  
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**TRAINING OFFICER :** \*Halisi Drysdale 07921 337816  
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**GUILD REPS MARKED \***

**WEBMASTER** Ryan Noble 07941 083414  
[webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk)



# BIG BEN & BRANCH OUTINGS

## **Big Ben Young Ringers Outing -Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September**

The group of youngsters and parents went by train from Aylesbury late enough to take advantage of off peak and group fares. However, this didn't leave any room for delays but we arrived as one group at Portcullis House - the hard bit was over!

The tour guide started with the warnings: we were going to climb 334 narrow and winding steps etc. Some looked worried, but only just, this is standard stuff for Bellringers. From the base of Big Ben's tower, looking up the shaft that housed the winding staircase we could see this was a long climb. The steps were luxury in comparison to any tower we, as ringers, had visited – wide, even and complete with railings. The climb was divided into 3 stops, the 1st half way up in a room explaining the construction of the tower and the bells, and those involved in its design and build. Our guide talked us through the history then on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> stop, the Clock Room.

The Clock Room was impressive, the mechanism was so simple that it felt like we really were inside a gigantic Grandfather clock. The single beam of the clock held three cylinders, each with a cable wound around it, these cables were attached to weights which were below the room in the central shaft that extends all the way down to the base of the tower. The barrels and weights are the driving force behind the clock and its chimes – and therefore the power behind Big Ben's hammer. The speed of release of these weights is governed by large paddles which use the air as a brake. We saw these in action as the 11:45 chimes set about ringing. The history and working of the clock was explained, including the need for accuracy in the mechanism. The clock is accurate to within a second a day, impressive for something that was built when clocks were considered to be extremely accurate if they lost +/- 2 minutes in a day! The pendulum is adjusted to achieve this tolerance by placing or removing old 2 penny pieces from a collar around the arm. Simple and effective.

Up we went again, this time to the top of the tower and into the Bell Chamber. These are big bells! The four chime bells sit around the centre bell, Big Ben, one in each corner of the tower. The largest of these chimes is 4 tons! Big Ben was the star, hanging from huge steel girders and looking every bit of its 14 tons (13tons 10cwt 3qtrs 15lbs to be accurate). When the 12:00pm chimes and hour struck, we all had smiles on our faces - the noise was incredible! The force of the striking hammer against the Great Bell meant that the mass of Steel work supporting the bells vibrated for several minutes after the strikes, you could feel this when you touched or leaned against it. This was definitely an experience to witness, especially after the history lesson on the way up. The men who built this really did have a vision – to awe the rest of the world with their technology of scale and accuracy.

On the return down the spiral staircase, we stopped again at the clock level, this time to walk behind the four clock faces. Again scale is hard to describe, but each one is at least as high as two floors of a house (around 20ft or 6 metres). We were lucky with

the weather – the sun was out so all the hands cast clear silhouettes on the translucent pearl glass that made up the face. From this close vantage we were shown that the minute hand can be seen to move every 2 seconds on its journey around the hour. The 12:15 chimed as we walked around the floor, all that remained was to descend back to the ground floor and exit... or so we thought! As a bonus our guide took us to view Westminster Hall. This was part of the original building, and the oldest part of the Palace which was mostly destroyed by fire. The hammer beam roof was reputed to be 13<sup>th</sup> century, forming an enormous covering to what was the most powerful court in this country... monarchs and high standing lords were tried and sentenced here. On the floors are brass plaques commemorating the Kings, Queens and Nobles who laid in state within the large hall before their burial. A treat to see and a really good end to a fantastic morning.

After lunch – it was time for ringing. We walked to Holborn with a gorgeous ring of Mears & Stainbank. We rang rounds and call changes, plain hunt and Grandsire Triples. For one it was her 1st experience of ringing at another tower, so there was



some adjustment to the idea that most rings hang clockwise and are much lighter than Wing! Definitely one to return to, especially for the novelty entrance, a tiny hobbit sized door which we almost had to crawl through! From here by tube to the next church, Spitalfields with its maze of steps to the ringing chamber and fantastic ring of 8 cast by Gillett & Johnston of Croydon. We were more adventurous ringing the back six to Cambridge Minor plus a variety of methods and call changes.

We finished off our trip with a group photo outside Spitalfields. Families with younger ringers headed home but handful of us stayed for a cheeky pint a good time to run over some of the theory before returning.

The trip was made possible because of two people, Alan Bentley who organised the Big Ben booking and Ryan who booked the 2 excellent towers and ran the practices and making sure we each had a good ring. - many thanks to them both.

In all a fantastic day out with some really good ringing, and for the adults a couple of good pints. Thank you to all those that took part and put up with my planning. Lets see if we can do the same for another group next year

*Hal :)*

## **SO, TO THIS YEAR'S BRANCH OUTING Saturday September 11<sup>th</sup> .**

Setting off far too early for a Saturday - well, for some of us - we had a good journey into North London. The forecast had not been particularly good and as the rain started to spit on the windscreen I thought it would be right, but by the time we got to the first tower it had disappeared, so no soggy feet - always a worry when you wear open sandals!



North London has as many different Churches as it has Cultures. *Hackney* for instance, is a massive, open, whitewashed with brown damp stains, theatre of a building. This is a building to get lost in as I found when I tried to get back from the very convenient conveniences and couldn't remember which door went where. It's 10 bells ring beautifully and there was an opportunity for the more experienced ringers to have a go at something other than the usual Doubles and Triples.

*Dalston*, is another huge, cavernous building, this time dark and imposing with lots of panelling, stained glass and fancy brickwork. Much polishing was in evidence not only from the smell but also the squeak of your bottom as it tried to get a grip on the spotless pews. The tower was not in such a good state. The stairs to the ringing chamber were attached perilously to the sides of the enormous, dark, square edifice, but this was nothing to the bells themselves. These I think are not rung very often and still reside on their old bearings; their tendency to ring themselves down however hard we pulled caused problems for even the best ringers. Not too pleasant either when dust, cobwebs and other belfry detritus drops on you from above - Oh I am glad I didn't try the 2nd! (Pic on P2)

Here it becomes difficult to remember details - *Holloway*; neat, whitewashed, cosy and an easy 8 bells. After lunch, *Highgate*; resides in a nice neighbourhood and appears to have no cash flow problems and another nice 8. *Gospel Oak*; sits in the middle of a relatively recent housing estate, fronted by flats. This was our first 6. On exiting the Church I thought we were to be accosted by an irate citizen complaining about the awful noise but was pleasantly surprised when he complimented us on our efforts and 'so nice to hear the bells rung, it doesn't happen often enough'.

Last of all *Edgware*, our emergency location. A small church with a dainty tower and play area for those of us who reverted to childhood. Another 6 and as with most of the towers, reasonable to ring. All in all we covered everything from call changes to Stedman doubles to Grandsire Triples and Caters. Early home, we were in time to watch the Last Night of the Proms; a fitting end to a fantastic day.

**Jan**



# ORDER, ORDER!

Heather and I have been talking about various things that we can order in for branch members and towers. 2 Ideas are to order **Ringing World diaries** for people and also to order a range of **books by Steve Coleman**.

**The Ringing World diary** is something that has been produced for many years now and it is one of the handiest things a ringer can come across! A pocket sized diary – split into half diary and the other half being both simple and complex methods and touches. There are three types of diary – standard, deluxe (standard, but with a pencil) and leather bound – the prices have yet to be announced, but should come out in the next couple of weeks. Last year, deluxe edition was about £6.75. You can see pictures and also find out about other things they sell on their website: [www.ringingworld.co.uk](http://www.ringingworld.co.uk) after Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> September.

**The Steve Coleman ‘Companion’ books** are some of the best books for people learning to ring, moving on to simple and complex methods and calling methods. The books cover many topics, and are thorough, but easy to read, taking you through each step of learning something. Normally the books are just under £15 each. They are suitable for both tower bookshelves and individuals.

The list of books is as follows:

**The Bell Ringer’s Early Companion (EC)** – For beginners, introducing ringing and going up to Plain Hunt

**The Bell Ringer’s Bedside Companion (BC)** – For everyone, running ringing, ringing call changes and method

**The Method Ringer’s Companion (MRC)** – Plain hunt up to basic Surprise Major

**The Bob Caller’s Companion (BCC)** – For people wanting to move on to call things starting with basics right up to short touches and quarter peals

If you want better descriptions of the books, visit: [www.ringingbooks.co.uk](http://www.ringingbooks.co.uk)

Please note, as we are ordering in a group, we will most likely be able to get around a 20% discount from the full price.

We will ask for the money nearer the time of ordering, but in the meantime, please let one of us know if you wish to be included in the order and what items you want.

**...And finally...** if there is something you think we ought to be ordering i.e. other bell ringing books, leaflets, training aids or similar items, please let us know as we may be able to do another.

Ryan Noble

07941 083414 or [webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk)

## TOWER NEWS

### Message and Invitation from North Marston

*During August and September, we had our bells refurbished. -They are now easy to handle and sound great!*

Over the coming months we will be doing more to improve what we've already got, which will eventually include sound control, so that the bells can be rung more than that which is desirable to the neighbours listening outside!

One thing that we have had installed already is a *simulator* on all 6 of our bells. This is an excellent training aid for striking as well as practicing methods and for use as silent practice.

*We would like to invite small groups or bands to come and use the simulator for these purposes, whether it is for a learners' practice, striking practice or getting used to ringing on longer drafts. If you, your group or your band would like to come, please contact me -Ryan Noble – 07941 083414 or [webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk)*

## ORCHARD CUP 2010

**Chiltern branch was the host for this year's Orchard Cup.** The annual inter branch striking competition was held at SS Peter and Paul at Ellesborough (6) 8-0-22 not Little Missenden as originally planned. The competition had been won by Aylesbury (Central Bucks) for the past two years, so Chiltern were hoping to make a real effort to win the cup back to their branch!

Aylesbury were quick to sign up closely followed by Wing who had pipped them at the CBB competition. Results and judges comments as reported by our RM Heather were "**1st Aylesbury** - nice even striking - 34.5 faults; 2nd Aston Clinton - a slip up at the start but got better - 47 faults; 3rd Little Missenden - rhythm not always there? - 57 faults; 4th Wing - probably least experienced band - 92 faults.

Judge Ken Darvill did comment that he felt that doing a whole 240 was beneficial as all the bands seemed to settle and improve as they got further into the ringing. We did alright then - Wing had 2 subs from their original Striking comp band..."

So **MANY CONGRATULATIONS** to Aylesbury – the trophy has gone back to its place in the tower. Will they make it 4 years in a row when we in CBB host in 2011?.

*Start practising now!*

*Ed*

## NOTICE OF CBB AGM 2011

### Saturday February 12<sup>th</sup> at St Laurence Winslow

*Outline Timetable for the day*

Ringling 2.30 – 3.30 Service followed by Tea

Official meeting at 5pm with a short ring afterwards ending at 7.30pm.

Reports and call for nominations to the committee will be sent out in the new year and posted on the Website. Please contact Branch Secretary with agenda items, info and queries

Diana Slevin 01296 713903 [secretary@cbucks.odg.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cbucks.odg.org.uk)

## Ringling World Centenary

*The Ringling World* will be 100 years old on 24th March 2011. They intend to celebrate this landmark in some style on the nearest Saturday – 26th March 2011. So please make a note of the date now!

Events in London will include: Whitechapel Foundry open, Towers open, City Walks, Exhibitions and mini rings, National Youth Contest, Beer Tent, Westminster Abbey activities, Handbell concert. *Tickets are already on sale.*

Visit their website [www.ringingworld.co.uk](http://www.ringingworld.co.uk) for more information to sign up to an email list to receive updates direct.

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**CBB Newsletter**

**October 2010**

### Feedback Form

There are a number of offers in this newsletter– please complete overleaf or send the equivalent information by email to

Diana Slevin CBB Secretary 01296 713903 [secretary@cbucks.odg.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cbucks.odg.org.uk)  
2Redfield Cottages Buckingham Rd Winslow Buckingham MK18 3LZ

o Ryan Noble Webmaster 29 Schorne Lane, North Marston, Buckingham,  
Bucks, MK18 3PJ 07941 083414 – [webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk)



## Central Bucks Branch Christmas Dinner

*Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2011*

The Branch Christmas Dinner will be held at The Red Lion, Bierton on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 7.30pm, with **ringing beforehand at St James' Church, Bierton from 6.00pm-7.15pm.**

Costs will be **£15.50 for 2 courses** (a starter and main **or** main and dessert) and for **3 courses, £19.95**

***Menu details on Website or posters or from Ryan***

*Fresh Coffee with Viennese Mince Pies to follow  
(included for 2 & 3 Course meals)*

Please send your names, menu choices and payments to Ryan Noble  
29 Schorne Lane, North Marston, Buckingham, Bucks, MK18 3PJ

07941 083414 – [webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@cbucks.odg.org.uk)

(Cheques should be made payable to **ODG Central Bucks Branch**)

By 21<sup>st</sup> December (6-bell improvers practice @ Stewkley)

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**Feedback Form - complete and return/email. Tick as appropriate**  
**Cheques payable to ODG Central Bucks Branch**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
RW Diary \_\_\_ copies  
Companion Books \_\_\_ EC, \_\_\_ BC, \_\_\_ MRC, \_\_\_ BCC  
Christmas Dinner \_\_\_ places 2 course / \_\_\_ places 3 course  
Email list for self \_\_\_ and/or \_\_\_\_\_ Tower  
Other \_\_\_\_\_