



# Oxford City Branch Hugh's News



(Produced fortnightly by Hugh Deam and Paul Lucas. All contributions are welcome.)

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2011



## Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Minor at Chilton (6) Bank Holiday Monday.

Paul Lucas, Hugh Deam, Judy Kirby, Bernard Masterman (c), Donna Murphy and Roy Jones.

The emblem of Chilton village is a rook, the reason being that the ring of elm trees that once surrounded the church were home to many rooks. Close by the village is the Rutherford Appleton laboratory which is Britain's leading centre for academic computing and research physics, having collaborated in the Ariane rocket project and with NASA. It was from a runway in Chilton that the RAF glider spearhead took off for



Normandy at the beginning of D-Day. The church retains a 12th century nave and 14th century chancel. The stone tower is Victorian with bells dating from 1633 - 1892. The bells were silent for some time due to structural problems but were restored, along with the clock, around the Millennium. The ringing room is cleverly designed to maximise the use of available space, with bells as flawless as they come and always a warm welcome. *Hugh Deam.*

## The Adventures of the St Giles Tenor in London.

We are in London at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. It is so exciting! Bells are cast here and travel to all parts of the world. And London is amazing. *Hardly any horses to be seen and such tall buildings!* A lot has happened since I entered the tower at St Giles in 1632 and we Royalists in Oxford defended Charles I in the English Civil War. I was shocked to learn he was beheaded and later old London town burnt down. So my surgery has gone well. First I was stripped of my fittings and I weighed in at 14cwt (I believed I was lighter) and then set up to be tuned. But I must admit I was very anxious. And fearful of ending up cracked. That no 3 bell was telling tales again and getting me all worried. Tales about 'chip tuning' - taking off



pieces on the inside profile with a hammer - whilst being turned by donkey power with a violin was being played to get the pitch right. *But it was nothing like that!* Now they use a calibrated tuning fork called a 'soundbow' to pare off the metal. For those who don't know, this is a rather ticklish experience, but I have been tuned to a high degree of musical accuracy by Nigel Taylor, Whitechapel's head bell tuner and he is very pleased with me. Soon all eight of us will be tuned and we will be in harmony - even good enough for John the tower captain who is very hard to please! I've heard that my 21<sup>st</sup> century ringers 'are turning up everywhere' to ring, but I'm sure they will come back to St Giles for we will be a fine ring of bells; one musical instrument, in the best English 'full circle ringing' tradition. *Margaret Marsh.*

## Hugh is already planning next year's Spring Outing, which will be in Huntingdonshire on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

This is the list of potential towers from which four will be picked:-

- Eaton Socon St. Mary (8) 13cwt
- Eynesbury St. Mary (6) 13cwt
- Croxton St. James (6) 10cwt (ground floor ring)

*Lunch will probably be at the Duncombe Arms, Waresley.*

- Caxton St. Andrew (6) 7cwt
- Gamlingay SMV (8) 16cwt
- Great Gransden St. Bartholomew (6) 13cwt

**Make a note in your next year's diary!** *Hugh Deam.*



## Dates for your Diary

Full details from Hugh Deam on 07899-871079, or email: [hugh.deam@btinternet.com](mailto:hugh.deam@btinternet.com)

Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> September	Advanced 8 Bell Practice at Headington (8) 7½cwt	8.00pm-9.00pm
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> September	Branch 6 Bell Practice at Garsington (6) 9½cwt.	10.30am-11.45am
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> October	Six Bell Practice at Iffley (6) 10cwt.	10.00am-11.15am
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> November	Advanced 8 Bell Practice at Islip (8) 8cwt. (To be confirmed) (This will replace the scheduled Practice at St Giles - for obvious reasons)	10.00am-11.15am
Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> November	Branch AGM at Wolvercote (6) 8cwt.	From 3.30pm onwards
Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	10 Bell Practice at St Mary Magdalen (10) 7cwt.	6.30pm-7.45pm

## Local Practice Nights:

- Mondays:** Cowley (6) (7.30-9.00), Garsington (6), (8.00-9.00), St Aldates (6) (2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> week only).
- Tuesdays:** Headington (8), Kidlington (8), Horspath (6).
- Wednesdays:** Iffley (6).
- Thursdays:** Wolvercote (6), St Giles (8) (out of action until November), Stanton St John (5).
- Fridays:** Old Marston (6), Wheatley (6), North Hinksey (6) (6.45-7.45)

Note: Most Practices start at 7.30pm, but before turning up, check the details of the Ringing Times, Tower Captains and Correspondents, by going to the Oxford City Branch website: [www.oxfordcitybranch.org.uk](http://www.oxfordcitybranch.org.uk)

Any information or photographs for inclusion in *Hugh's News* (subject to space available), please email me: [paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk)