



Oxford City Branch Hugh's News

Produced fortnightly by Paul and Hugh, with contributions from other ringers.

Monday 9th April 2012



Our voyage to the 'lost' village of Imber! St Giles Church (6) 2cwt - Friday 6th April.

Imber is first mentioned in a charter of 967AD and was always a remote village even before the military began to take occupation of Salisbury Plain at the end of the 19th century. By the 1930s the army had taken possession of the majority of land hereabouts. The urgent need for locations mirroring the villages of Normandy prior to D-Day led to Imber being evacuated for American troops to train for such close-quarter combat conditions. Promises to villagers that they would be able to return to Imber after the war,



never materialised, with only a handful of days at Christmas and Easter being set aside for the purpose of religious worship. The church was placed in the hands of the Church Conservation Trust in recent years with the current ring of six bells installed in 2009. Two dozen ringers converged on the excellent **Bridge Inn** in West Lavington at lunchtime prior to our proceeding in convoy to the church amidst the MOD land that is usually only traversed by tanks or armoured vehicles. A significant proportion of the



many non-ringing visitors who had taken the opportunity to enjoy this rare tourist attraction were suitably intrigued by our ringing so as to want to view and photograph our efforts. Everyone agreed that the long journey was worth the effort so as to paraphrase that: "We were there!" *Hugh Deam.*

Minor & Doubles Training Day at Iffley (6) and Nettlebed (6)

The weather may not have been as sublime as on our Spring Outing two weeks ago, but to compensate there was much tangible progress made by several of our participants, both at the six-bell practice in the morning at Iffley and at the doubles mini-outing at Nettlebed in the

afternoon. The name 'Nettlebed' denotes the propensity of nettles here in centuries past, a circumstance which saw linen cloth produced from the thread that they yielded. The Fleming family, including Ian Fleming - the creator of super-spy James Bond, lived in the manor house here, and so we were licensed to trill on the bells of the early Victorian church set at the heart of this Georgian inspired village. Our thanks are due to both towers for the use of their bells. *Hugh Deam.*



Dates for your Diary

Full details from Hugh Deam on 07899-871079, or email: hugh.deam@btinternet.com

Tuesday 10th April (tomorrow!)	Advanced Practice at Headington (8) 7½cwt (Postponed until 2 nd week in April because of Holy Week. All experienced ringers are welcome.)	8.00pm-9.00pm
Saturday 14th April	Branch Practice at South Leigh (8) 10cwt (Combined Practice with Witney & Woodstock)	10.30am-12.00pm
Saturday 12th May	Branch Half Yearly Meeting + 6-Bell Striking Competition at Horspath (6) 5.00pm onwards. (Towers wishing to enter the Striking Competition should contact Hugh by 1 st May to be eligible.)	
Saturday 26th May	Late afternoon 5 and 6 Bell Method Mini-Outing at Tackley (6) 13cwt and Rousham (6) 8cwt (including a picnic at Rousham).	Times to be confirmed.
Saturday 16th June	6 Bell Practice at Charlton on Otmoor (6) 14cwt.	Time to be confirmed.
Saturday 23rd June	Branch Summer Outing to South Wiltshire towers (details to follow)	
Saturday 7th July	Stedman Triples Practice at South Leigh (8) 10cwt (Combined Practice with Witney & Woodstock)	10.30am-11.45am
Saturday 14th July	Branch 10-Bell Practice at St. Thomas (10) 11cwt.	6.30pm-7.45pm

Local Practice Nights

Mondays:	Garsington (6), St Aldates (6).
Tuesdays:	Headington (8), Kidlington (8), Horspath (6).
Wednesdays:	Iffley (6).
Thursdays:	Wolvercote (6), St Giles (8), Stanton St John (5), Cowley (6).
Fridays:	Old Marston (6), Wheatley (6), North Hinksey (6) (6.45-7.45).

For full details go to the Oxford City Branch website: www.oxfordcitybranch.org.uk

Any information or photographs for inclusion in *Hugh's News* please email me: paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk