

# EBSB NEWS

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December 2021

## EBSB WIN GUILD TEN BELL CONTEST



This, the first Guild striking competition for just over two years, was held at Amersham on 27<sup>th</sup> November. Our hopes had been raised by the prospect of the Guild six-bell final at the beginning of October but the combination of a venue about as far north as possible and the fuel delivery crisis put paid to that. The 10-bell was not without its problems. It was due to be held at Aston Clinton until a crack was discovered in the tenor. Our branch band already had a practice booked at Cookham for the evening before, which seemed ideal until the venue was changed.

A huge thank you to Ros Garrett-Bowes and the Amersham ringers for providing such a successful morning at relatively short notice. The ringing chamber was fully ventilated with two windows and the door onto the roof open on what was a fairly chilly day. A carbon dioxide meter recorded a very safe level during the ringing, increasing as bands changed over between touches but never exceeding the recommended maximum. A sound feed had been set up so that the judges (Kate and Paul Flavell – again) could listen from the comparative comfort of the vestry and the other bands could monitor each test piece from inside the church. With so many conversations to catch up on after many months, the general hubbub of renewing acquaintances and purchasing items from the fund-raising and book stalls, the sound of ringing was largely drowned out for all but Kate and Paul.

The test piece was a very simple three-course touch of Grandsire Caters, deliberately chosen and succeeding in encouraging a high entry of six branch bands. Another, from Central Bucks, had withdrawn only a few days before.

The order in which the bands rang and their scores:

1)	East Berks & South Bucks	3h16 (peal time)	81%
2)	Vale of the White Horse	3h11	63%
3)	Old North Berks	3h12	66%
4)	Reading	3h12	75%
5)	Newbury	3h16	73%
6)	Banbury	3h11	65%

The judges noted that, following impressive opening rounds, most bands had difficulty with some odd-struckness around the middle and with small bells clipping the larger ones. Ringing first is never easy but we set a fairly steady pace (for Amersham) and were criticized for some rushed leads and for the fact that our ringing deteriorated slightly as it went on.

The EBSB band was Patricia Newton treble, Angela Darvill 2, Charles Botting 3, Ken Darvill 4, John Davidge 5, Matthew Johnson (cond.) 6, James White 7, David Cox 8, Robert Newton 9 and Martin Whitaker tenor. As winners of this contest we now have the honour of organising a band to represent the Guild in the Tewkesbury Shield competition in May, where the test piece will be a course of Yorkshire S Royal. As for the other bands, Banbury were just delighted not to be last!

*Robert Newton*

## Report of Guild General Committee Meeting

On Saturday 27 November I attended the meeting of the General Committee of the Oxford Diocesan Guild held at Cuddington.

There was splendid tea and cake that we were offered on arrival before sitting down to be welcomed by The Master, Katie Lane.

The first business of the meeting was to hear the results of the 10-bell competition held at Amersham that morning. The judges presented the trophy to John Davidge of the EBSB band and Katie presented the judges with a token of thanks and they left the meeting.

Katie then addressed the meeting saying how much she appreciated being able to meet face to face again and that she was grateful to all for attending. She asked the meeting to take a few moments of silent reflection to consider the effects of the pandemic on all of us and on ringing, including the losses that have been suffered and changes we have all had to accommodate. For those of us still here she remarked how encouraging it was that we are prepared to go on and to continue to do the thing we all enjoy i.e., ringing bells.

A book of attendance was passed round for signatures and to add any apologies. Items of Any Other Business were invited. There were 2 – the Oxford Botanic Gardens and an update on safeguarding. These would be discussed later as per the agenda.

As usual the minutes of the previous meeting on 13 March 2021 (on Zoom) and the reports of the subcommittees had been circulated previously. A point of clarification of the minutes was raised after which these were proposed and accepted by the meeting.

Matters arising from the minutes included the FE Robinson Silver Bowl which had been bequeathed to the Guild. Katie reported that Charles Morrish was in the process of making a snug box to hold the rose bowl so that it could be taken round the Guild.

Stuart Gibson reported there had been no further developments in registering the Guild as a charity. He will report back when there are. The last item of Matters Arising was “Survival & Recovery Post Covid”. This is still in progress as the pandemic is not over yet. We heard that the picture is very varied with some towers almost back to normal while others have not restarted at all. In some branches towers are helping each other out with teaching and with ringing.

The meeting moved on to consider any Correspondence. Ken advised that had been 2 items. One is a reminder from Heather Browning for the Branch Secretaries to provide their items for inclusion in the Annual Report. They will be going out in early January so please send these in as soon as you can. The second was a letter Katie had received from William Bosworth, editor of the Ringing World thanking us for a

donation of £500 received from the ODG which he said had been a “pleasant surprise in these challenging times”.

The meeting went on to consider the various reports previously circulated. For F&GP, Andrew Goldthorpe has added a full list of the all the towers in the ODG and it would be helpful if Branch secretaries could check that this is accurate. Membership software is still being looked at and after mid-January it is expected there will be some proposals.

For the Learning & Development Workgroup, Robert Newton added that there was a successful course for learning Grandsire Caters held at Shrivenham on 6 November of which there was a report in Odd Bob which he commended to readers. The E bells were on the top table of the meeting. He urged tower members to make use of them. A new move is the launch of the national Young Change Ringers Association (for under 30s). The Ringing World National Youth contest took place in Worcester (which was won by the ODG band) and Robert offered congratulations to all those who took part and the helpers and supporters.

John Davidge paid tribute to Keith Vernon who had done so much to help the work of the Towers & Belfries subcommittee. New members are invited to help with the work of this important group.

The Central Council Reps report had been circulated. Katie commended it to the meeting.

The meeting moved on to review the Diary of Events. Ken went through the items. The next General Committee meeting is set for 12 March and will most likely be held in Wendover. It will be combined with the Bell Fund AGM. The Radley course is fixed for 9<sup>th</sup> April and the Ringing Day will be held in the Sonning Deanery branch. The 8-bell competition is likely to be on the same day as the AGM on 21st May in the Reading Branch. The Michaelmas course is on 24<sup>th</sup> September and Steeple Aston on 29<sup>th</sup> October. The 6-bell competition will be on 1<sup>st</sup> October in the Newbury Branch. Ken said he would send out the 15-year plan of Guild events to Branch Secretaries.

The subject of Financial Matters was the next item to be considered. It was agreed unanimously that subscriptions would remain at £8 for resident and associate members and also for non-resident ringing members. Peal fees would remain at 50p per rope. The Guild Budget this time is a reasonably “normal” one after last year. In response to a question Stuart Gibson, Treasurer, confirmed that the cost of the Young Ringers going to Exeter for the National Youth Contest have been allowed for. The budget was proposed and approved.

Under AOB June Wells said that there have been some changes to safeguarding rules. It had been difficult to get the information about the changes but she has now established that tower captains will need to undertake C3 training. The earliest date for a course will be June 2022. A kind offer has been made by EBSB Branch to help with some training too. This new training is only required every 3 years and June reminded everyone that primarily it is the Church’s responsibility to ensure it takes place.

Katie told us about the contact she has had with Oxford Botanic Gardens which is celebrating its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is located just under Magdalen Tower and it has been suggested that there should be ringing not just there but across Oxfordshire in July 2022 as part of the culmination of their celebrations and in conjunction with the Oxford Society. She is keen that we should participate in this activity since it is good publicity. She asked for support throughout the county and to be advised on what is being planned.

Katie thanked Cuddington for being such good hosts and thanked all of us for attending before bringing the meeting officially to an end. There was ringing afterwards for those who wished.

*Ros Garrett-Bowes  
EBSB Branch Representative*

## Editorial

Many thanks to all who have contributed to this newsletter. I was particularly pleased to read about the quarter peal rung at Clewer in memory of our dear friend William Butler. Obituaries for Bill have recently appeared in Odd Bob and in the Ringing World so I have not included anything in this newsletter. However we will remember Bill at our next Branch AGM and I anticipate that an obituary will be circulated then.

It is good to read that ringing has been getting back to some sort of normality, but as I am putting this together we are all being urged to get our booster jabs and wear masks again. Whether we will be able to continue ringing into the New Year remains to be seen. We do have a few things planned in the Branch for next year:

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> January - Branch Practice at High Wycombe 10.00 am to 12.00 noon

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> February - Branch Practice – venue and time TBA

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February – Tower Captains' Meeting – Cookham – 10.00 am

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April – Branch AGM, hopefully at Iver

These are all subject to change if Covid restrictions prevent them. Further practices and other events will be organised nearer the time as we know what will and will not be allowed next year.

In the meantime, I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and good ringing in 2022.

## News from Towers

### Chalfont St Giles

At present we are struggling. We are ringing regularly for the morning service and, with the help of Keith Sugden from Denham, are generally managing to ring regularly at least six. I've been teaching two learners, one (Grania Wright) for Fulmer and another (Louise Gill) for Chalfont. Grania rings with us on Sundays when Fulmer are not ringing and has just managed to ring rounds and call changes for service on her own with nobody standing by. Louise started later but will hopefully shortly be able to do the same.

I would very much like to re-start ringing for the evening services but we are not strong enough at present, we also have a new Rector starting in January, which may also affect the pattern of Services.

We are managing to practise most weeks, but only with the help of friends from other towers (Denham, Amersham, Chesham, Hughenden and Fulmer)

*John Davidge*

### Clewer

Like many other towers our numbers are depleted as we have lost three ringers who moved from the area and a few others for various other reasons. However were very excited at a recent Friday practice when we had 9 ringers and had to take turns! We only manage a full band for one or two services a month but we do try to ring something each morning service. A few of our ringers ring at 3 or more churches each Sunday.

In October Clewer hosted the EBSB Half Yearly Branch Meeting when Vikki was elected as Deputy Ringing Master for the EBSB.

On November 20<sup>th</sup> we held a very successful Christmas Market, organised by the bell ringers but with a variety of stalls run by other people. We were also able to have some ringers helping non ringers on our refurbished hand bells.

A Quarter Peal was rung on:

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup>. December 2021 Clewer St Andrews ODG  
1260 doubles (480 PBD 780 Grandsire D) in 44 minutes

- 1 Rob Taylor-Ailes
- 2 Vikki E M Bulbeck
- 3 Edward C Westlake
- 4 Anthony D Smith
- 5 James White (C)
- 6 Lesley S Cross

Rung to commemorate the life of William Butler who started his ringing career at Clewer Parish. The band consisted of ringers from the Curfew Tower, Windsor Castle, Windsor, Clewer and Thatcham towers. Frank Blagrove would like to be associated with this quarter peal.

*Diane Darren*

### **Hambleden**



After eighteen months enforced inactivity, we are once again back to normal, thankfully.

During 2021 we have rung the bells, either 6 or 8, at 12 weddings and also have some bookings for 2022 already.

We are always trying to recruit new members and this year we are very fortunate to have two new members from Marlow. Jon, an experienced ringer, and Sam his eldest son who is 10 years old! Sam is learning really quickly and has already rung for his first Sunday service. Both of them are great assets to our Band.

We practise at 6.45 pm on Friday nights followed by a drink at the Village Sports Club! If you are interested in joining us, either, just turn up on a Friday evening or, contact our Tower Captain, Helen, by email at [hambledenbells@mycomputer.email](mailto:hambledenbells@mycomputer.email)

*Sandy Daggart*

*Sam*

### **Penn**

Not just COVIC 19 but the impending departure after some 40 years of both our long serving Tower Captain Alison Bayley and Steeple Keeper Michael Bayley at Penn Tower. Moving house is/can be a lengthy process. This is beneficial to the remaining ringers, giving us valuable time to adjust, adapt and gain additional guidance from both Alison and Michael.

We have made use of our local watering hole, meeting to gather our thoughts and future. Collectively determined to continue the ringing at Penn, also looking at our individual skills from our core 4 ringers. The Penn ringers are actively pursuing appropriate thankyou's to both Alison and Michael for all their years of service and support.

Re COVIC 19 and the Penn ringers. We restarted all masked up for practice nights as from the beginning of September. Blest with warm weather and a ground floor ring, with door open those sitting out were indeed able to be outside. Our ringing was restricted to 45 mins. Much had to be refreshed, memories had faded over time, but it all soon came flooding back. This continued for a few weeks before Sunday Service ringing resumed. All our pre COVIC 19 ringers returned and the 45 mins practice and Service ringing has continued, needless to say masks continue, sitting out is now within the vast Church area.

With the impending departure of both Alison and Michael we that will be left are determined to keep the bells of Penn ringing out.

*Judy Weaver*

*Penn Tower Correspondent.*

## 2021 Branch Events

Following Lockdown, the first event was the Branch 6-bell contest at Penn on 16<sup>th</sup> August which was entered by three bands and ably judged by Ken and Angela Darvill. Having hardly rung for 18 months we all wondered how we would get on but the ringing was of a good standard. It felt strange but wonderful to meet up with ringers outside our own towers, and we were very grateful to Alison and Michael Bayley for providing refreshments.

The results were:

1<sup>st</sup> High Wycombe 16 faults; 2<sup>nd</sup> Amersham 26 faults; 3<sup>rd</sup> Clewer 40 faults



*High Wycombe*



*Amersham*



*Clewer*

Just ten people turned up for the first Branch practice at Hughenden and only nine for the one at Beaconsfield in September, but the Half Yearly Meeting at Clewer was much better supported with 21 people attending the meeting and 17 taking advantage of the ringing that followed. There have been practices at Chalfont St Giles and Lane End, and one at Turville which was particularly popular. This was a daytime practice aimed at helping less experienced ringers, and it certainly achieved that. The final practice of the year was at Winkfield where the local ringers provided much appreciated seasonal refreshments and the first draw of the 100 Club was made.



*Branch Practice at Turville (photos by Nigel Page)*

### 100 Club

Margaret Carlyle finalised the details for the 100 Club for this year. Although we had fewer participants, 133, the income is similar to that of the previous year so we should be able to donate £660 to the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund, the same as last year. Only one of the usual towers didn't respond. The number and amount of prizes has been calculated to allow at least half of the fund to be donated to the Bell Fund. The December prizes are: 1st £50, 2nd £30, 3rd £20, 4th £10, 5th £10 (total £120) The other 9 months will total £60 per month.

The first draw took place at the Branch Practice at Winkfield on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December. The lucky winners were:

- 1st Prize David Sullivan, High Wycombe
- 2nd Prize Roger Webb, Hitcham
- 3rd Prize Rory Haines, Stoke Poges
- 4th Prize David Brooks, Dorney
- 5th Prize Ann Collins, Denham