

Bells peal out for RAF Waddington Freedom Parade



On Friday 24th April 2009 the City of Lincoln marked the 50th anniversary of RAF Waddington being granted the freedom of the City. Around 120 personnel from RAF Waddington exercised their right to parade/march through the City of Lincoln with Colours flying, bayonets fixed and bands playing, in what was also their homecoming parade.

Shortly before 11.30am the City centre of Lincoln came to a standstill as the police cleared the way for the parade. Then at exactly 11.30am the parade set off from City Square on Waterside South, and the bells at St Mary le Wigford Church pulled off in rounds before going into changes for a Quarter Peal.

The Regiment marched down Sincil Street and through Cornhill, before turning onto the High Street by St Mary le Wigford Church. Then once the parade had reached the City War Memorial on the High Street, just a few hundred yards up from St Mary le Wigford Church it came to a halt, and the official salute to the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Lincoln, Councillor Ron Hills, and to members of Lincoln's Civic Party took place. This was then followed by a fly-past of planes stationed at RAF Waddington after which the Mayor made a speech and inspected the Regiment. The parade then continued on up the High Street, passing the Guild Hall and Stonebow, and finally came to an end at City Hall.

The parade was lead by the RAF Waddington Pipes and Drums followed by the RAF Waddington Band. The event was a very colourful and exciting occasion, with hundreds of people turning out to line the route to show their support, on what was a lovely sunny day. As well as shoppers, tourists and well wishers who stopped to watch the parade, many veterans and past RAF personnel also turned out.

The bells at St Mary le Wigford, which is the Civic Church, and stands on the High Street in the centre of the City, by the railway station, were requested to be rung especially for the occasion, during the parade. After the Quarter Peal we received many comments saying how nice it was to hear the bells pealing out over the parade. The band that rang the Quarter Peal consisted of three ringers who ring regularly at St Michael's Church Waddington, two of whom are members of the local Waddington band.

CITY of LINCOLN
St. Mary le Wigford
1272 Plain Bob Minimus

- 1) Christopher C P Woodcock (C)
- 2) Jean Williams
- 3) Angela Holt
- 4) Colin Watson



This was then followed by another Special Service held at St Mary le Wigford Church on Sunday 26th April 2009 to mark the laying up of the Standard of the Lincoln Branch of the Association of Wrens. The Service was attended by the Deputy Mayor (*as the Mayor of Lincoln was attending the St George's Day Service at the Cathedral*) and by members of Lincoln's Civic Party. The bells were rung for approx 40 minutes before the service by the following ringers:

Yvonne Woodcock, Jean Williams, John Nicholson and Raymond Cucksey.

Christopher C. P. Woodcock