

ODD BOB



Newsletter of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers
website: odg.org.uk/



A quarter peal farewell to Revd. Canon Judy French
(see Chipping Norton report at page 17)

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From your Editor...

Don't forget to check regularly the Guild website at odg.org.uk/ and your branch website.

In particular the EBSB Fund Raising website address is: bellfund.org.uk. Contributions for the next issue, please, by the end of April 2015.

Rob Needham

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Master's Mutterings

As this is my first "muttering", I thought I would start with a brief introduction! I ring at Drayton St Leonard, a challenging ring of 6 in South Oxon Branch, having learned to ring in 1980. I have held a number of posts in my branch, and am currently Ringing Master and Training Officer. At Guild level, I was first elected to General Committee in 1981 and in recent years have been Minutes Secretary, Children's Officer, Steward and General Secretary (not all at the same time!). I ring mainly on 6 bells, but most months manage to ring on 8, 10 and 12.

Since being elected Master in May, I have visited 10 of the 15 branches for practices, service ringing and meetings, and it is always enjoyable meeting ringers around the Guild and being made welcome. Sharing a piece of ringing with people I have not met before is a privilege and a joy. I have been to a Dedication (Horley); the unveiling of a Blue Plaque (to Alfred White, at Besselsleigh); and accompanied our young ringers to Worcester for the Ringing World National Youth Contest.

On that subject, one of my first jobs has been to get a small group together to set up monthly practices for youngsters to give them experience of ringing together as a band in readiness for the 2015 RWNYC. To give them relevant practice, we have agreed a minimum standard and currently have 20+ on the books!

I have just returned from the Steeple Aston Course, where I was tutor for a Grandsire Doubles group. How lucky we are as a Guild to have courses such as those at Radley, Steeple Aston, and the Michaelmas Course, where "students" can have a concentrated day, and helpers are willing to ring the same thing over and over again.

How rewarding to watch people improve and see their confidence grow. Sometimes it is gradual; sometimes there is a “light bulb” moment when it suddenly makes sense. Occasionally people learn something they hadn’t expected to! This is all good, and I hope that many of you will consider applying for courses in 2015, starting with the Radley Course in the Spring.

Read more about my first year in office in my blog which resides on the Guild website; and I look forward to meeting more of you over the coming months.

Hilarie Rogers, Guild Master

National Youth Contest, 5th July 2014, Worcester

It was the morning of Saturday 5th of July 2014, the day of the Ringing World youth contest, and while my mum and my little sister were downstairs, dressed, and admiring the programme for the day ahead, I was still in bed. My sister remarked on the fact that although the programme had timetabled bacon rolls at 9am, there was no mention of lunch. My ears pricked up at the words ‘bacon rolls’ and I decided to drag myself downstairs to join the conversation.

“Did you say something about bacon rolls?” I said.

“That’s why they did it,” my mum said wisely to my sister, “to get the teenagers up in the morning.”

It is a renowned fact that getting teenagers out of bed before 10am on a Saturday morning is something nearly impossible to do, but indeed, today, over one hundred teenagers from all over the country had not only woken up but were actually excited for a day of ringing.

This enthusiasm may have been for the bacon rolls, but that is unimportant.

It was soon after I discovered the presence of bacon rolls in Worcester that we started on the 3 hour drive. On arrival for registration, we discovered that the attraction of the bacon rolls, though powerful in their incentive for waking up, did not solve our family’s lack of punctuality and we ended up missing them anyway. At least I was there to miss them.

The first event I went to, after registration, was the 12-bell master-class. I had just managed to walk up the stairs into the ringing chamber, which was packed full of people, when I was greeted with the question:

“So, on 12 bells, do you ring faster or slower than if you’re on 6 or 8?”

Faster, duh.

“Actually,” he said, “on 12 bells you ring slower, but the bells strike closer together.”

Ok, I thought this was a 12-bell master-class, not a lesson about playing on words. Though I think I only said that to cover the ‘duh’flation of my pride...

This masterclass taught me that ringing on 12 bells means hearing nothing but one very long and messy ‘gong’. I spent most of the time with the person beside me telling me to ring faster, then slower, then faster again, and my inability to hear the bells meant that I still don’t know if he stopped nagging because my striking actually improved, or because he just gave up. I like to believe the former.

One of the highlights of my day, though (closely following lunch and the exciting discount from Pizza Express, obviously), had to be our team ODG's turn in Worcester Cathedral's Teaching Centre. This was a room just below the ringing chamber of the real twelve bells that consisted of eight dumb-bells, each weighing roughly 5 hundredweight (due to their rather large bell wheels), which are connected to Abel software. I won't lie; I have no idea what that is.

This means that you can either ring in a group (with the sounds of the 'bells' projected by a speaker) or individually with headphones. (Not so, unfortunately), there was a technical hitch on the day which meant that we had to ring individually, and very, very, very, sadly, no-one could hear us. It was my idea of ringing heaven.

Being able to ring in the most random places, without anyone around you having the smallest idea, was sheer bliss. I stood ringing my bell-wheel for a full 15 minutes without acknowledgement, and if anyone did look at me, my contentment probably made it appear that I was getting everything right, when I really, really wasn't. By the end, though, I had actually managed to ring a perfect lead of Plain Bob Triples, which was, I found, exceptionally satisfying.

I discovered, however, that Plain Bob Triples was the only method that I seemed to be able to ring, and attempting Bristol Surprise Maximus, when you can't see any bells, is rather difficult. It might have helped could I ring Bristol Surprise Maximus at all; I expect even the simulated sounds were struggling...

After this, it was our turn in the competition, and both the ringing and the photo prior to the ringing were rather traumatic (the photo definitely left a mark).

The stay of the sixth bell had rather worryingly broken earlier on that day, which, as you can imagine, didn't make us feel a huge amount more confident, but luckily it was our good friend Jack who was ringing it. He, unlike me, can actually ring Bristol Surprise Maximus (and, it appears, bells without stays). Other than that, though, we found the ringing went reasonably well!

After that we had only to wait for the results, and if you hadn't guessed, we did some more ringing to fill the time (though we might have done a little bit of shopping as well). We went to another 12-bell tower to practise my fantastic listening skills, and luckily there was a small boy about 10 who seemed to share my lack of ability of ringing on 12, who rang the bell before me, which meant that whenever there was a rather nasty bit of striking from my general proximity, everybody assumed it was him. It really wasn't.

Having rung at various towers around the city (St Swithun, St Stephen, All Saints', the Cathedral, Old St Martin and St John-in-Bedwardine) as well as listening to the rehearsal of the choir in the Cathedral (which was, may I add, fantastic), learning how to ring Plain Hunt on handbells, eating ice-cream, admiring the city, and generally having a fantastic summer's day, it was eventually time for the results. All of us sat waiting in nerve-racking anticipation in the College Hall for the results which would tell our teams if we had got the grade we thought we deserved. We did lots of clapping and cheering until Bedfordshire were, for the second year running, pronounced the winners.

After that we did some more clapping and cheering and also some thanking, and finally we got onto the topic of next year.

“And the location of next year’s contest will be in OXFORD!”

Our team cheered the loudest of all the others, and I cheered the loudest of our team.

“It’s in Oxford!”, I whispered once the cheering had died down, “which is about half an hour away from my house, which means that next year I can actually wake up at a humane time!”

The excitement that remained in the air for a while after the hall had emptied I think shows the annual success of the youth contest. It is a worry of every ringer anywhere we go that in a few more years there will not be enough wide-spread passion for our hobby to continue, but I think that after the enthusiasm demonstrated by every young person on that day, these concerns can remain settled for a while.

Until next year, we will have to be satisfied with going to Pizza Express for the normal price and waking up after 9am on Saturdays, though for our team, I think we will have to wait for two years until we have to wake up early on a Saturday...

Hopefully next year I will also be in time for the bacon rolls.

Sammy Martin (age 15), High Wycombe

Safeguarding report: September 2014

I continue to attend the two Safeguarding meetings held at Diocesan Church House in March and September. These meetings have a wide brief and a very small amount is pertinent to bell ringers.

There is a small, steady flow of enquiries from individual towers usually requesting information about best practice. The information that I am able to provide them with can all be found in The Safeguarding Handbook for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults and on the www.oxford.anglican.org link. It has not been changed since 2013.

I urge all towers to keep an attendance register, ensure at least two tower members are DBS checked, and to take sensible precautions by following the Code of Conduct. There are still ringers who are reluctant to use an attendance register. It is good practice to retain a record in case there is an allegation made in the future; a simple register establishes who was present at a practice or for service ringing and can therefore be used as evidence should the need arise.

The DBS process is exceptionally slow at some times of year. There can be a three-month time lag between the application and the receipt of the certificate.

I now understand that if the check is not clear then Stephen Barber will be made aware, as all disclosures are notified to his office. If there is no news it is most likely that the check is clear but the date and issue number of the certificate can be requested by the administrator who submitted the application.

There is anxiety about the ease of online grooming of children and vulnerable adults. Tower captains and trainers should bear this in mind and notify me or Stephen Barber (stephen.barber@oxford.anglican.org) if they have concerns.

Katie Lane, Children’s Officer

Educational matters

The yearly cycle of courses is nearly over. Demand for the two autumn courses (Michaelmas & Steeple Aston) was markedly down compared with normal but this may be a temporary effect. The Michaelmas course broke with tradition by not being concentrated on a single centre. Each group used a cluster of towers in a different part of the Guild, making it easier to select suitable towers with modest travelling between them. This seemed to work well.

At the AGM in May awards were made for the Young Ringers Award Scheme, which concluded at the end of March. Gold awards went to Jack Page and David Thomas, a Silver award went to Callum Cockburn and Bronze awards went to Fiona Kemm, Lauren Hollis and Isaac O'Shea. Congratulations to them all and particularly to Jack Page who, as in 2011, took the shield for best overall participant. We plan to run the scheme again from April 2015 to March 2016 so please encourage any young ringers you know to look out for the announcement.

We are keen to encourage the development of more ringing teachers across the Guild. The Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS) has shown itself to be a good basis for doing that and running it on a local basis has proved most successful because of the importance of following up the initial course with a period of supervised teaching practice. If you think there would be interest in running ITTS in your local area there is now plenty of experience that you can draw on from where it has already been run. For more about ITTS, see: ringingteachers.co.uk/itts

If you are involved or interested in any aspect of training in your branch, please put Saturday 7th February 2015 in your diary. That is when we are holding the next Training Meeting, the event where you can find out about ideas for training in the Guild and other branches, and share your branch's experience and problems with like-minded ringers. The meeting will be held at Long Crendon and will combine discussion in the morning with lunch and a practical session afterwards. Full details will be sent to all branches in due course but in the meantime please let us know if there are any topics that you would particularly like included.

Finally a couple of reminders. We are happy to offer help or advice on any aspect of training if required – just ask. We are keen to encourage more training activity at local level, in whatever form, so if your branch doesn't currently run training events but you think it might be desirable to do so, please feel free to discuss it with us.

If you think that a grant could help you to improve the way you do training in your tower, for example by investing in training equipment, the Guild offers grants, see: odg.org.uk/education/#GRANTS. There is advice on the acquisition and use of training aids at: odg.org.uk/education/TrainingAids.php. We also have an e-mail support network for ringing teachers in the Guild to share ideas and problems, see: odg.org.uk/education/teaching.

John Harrison, Education Sub-Committee Chairman

Towers and Belfries Committee Report

The committee has met twice since the last report, with an average attendance of eight. Twelve inspections/visits have been carried out, details of which are shown below:

- Bow Brickhill (inspection and advice on rehangng/augmentation)
- Chesham Bois (determine feasibility of converting from chiming to “full circle” ringing)
- Compton Beauchamp (replace rope)
- Dorney (inspection after building work)
- Fringford (general inspection & report)
- Hinton Waldrist (grant inspection)
- Horley (grant inspection)
- Kirtlington (general inspection & report)
- Radclive (inspection and advice on restoring for chiming)
- Radley (review quotes with Rector)
- Thame (TMA)
- White Waltham (TMA)

A maintenance course for the Sonning Deanery Branch was run in June as well as three for the Vale of White Horse Branch. A further “Guild-wide” course will have been run at Chalgrove on the 1st November, as well as a “correcting Odd-Struckness” course at Coleshill (VofWH) on the 16th.

A publicity mailshot to those towers listed in the Annual Report as “unringable” resulted in three requests for inspections and advice, and four churches had attended the *Ringng Roadshow*.

There has recently been an increase in the size of the grant available from the Guild’s Bell Fund, which has increased from 10% to 20%. An application in the early stages of a project and the awarding of a provisional grant may well help to get the project started (especially now that the grant is 20%). It also helps the trustees plan future grant allocations and budget income (occasionally a large job comes up which requires the trustees to budget income over two years). Some churches have been advised that it is necessary to obtain a faculty before applying for a grant but this is **not** the case and, as mentioned above, the trustees welcome the earliest application possible.

When applying for a faculty, the form asks for details of the scheme, the cost, the contractor and how it will be funded. If these details, whilst not formally required when applying to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) for their approval, are not given, then they may well be requested, resulting in a delay before the faculty application itself can be submitted.

One last point on grants. When a grant has been given and the work has been completed, a Towers & Belfries committee member carries out an inspection. Following a request from the trustees, the inspection is done to ensure that the work has been completed to specification and to a suitable standard, and will then recommend that the Grant be paid. Very occasionally this is found not to have been the case and the grant has, at least initially, been refused. It is therefore very important that churches, **before placing the order**, negotiate a “retention” (as would be done on a building project) of at least the amount of the grant. This will give them a “lever” (and prevent them from being temporarily out-of-pocket) in the event of a dispute. Very rare, but not unknown.

John Davidge, Chairman T&B Committee

Tower Maintenance Award Scheme

Since the last report the Tower Maintenance Award Scheme has fallen back slightly, with the number of current awards now standing at nineteen, a decrease of six. The number of towers participating or expressing an interest is eighty-two, which is about seventeen per cent of the towers listed in the annual report last year. There have now been one hundred and fourteen inspections (of which twenty-seven were preliminaries), resulting in eighty-two awards (forty-nine Gold, twenty-three Silver, and thirteen Bronze).

The number of expired awards has risen slightly and is now eighteen. T & B committee members continue to contact the expired towers with the aim of persuading them to renew their awards. The awards for Clewer, Thatcham, Chalfont St Giles, Kintbury and Harwell have expired since the last report and it is hoped that they will soon attempt to renew them. Thame has renewed its Gold award and White Waltham converted a Silver to a Gold.

The number of Branches having a tower in the “current awards” list remains at nine out of the fifteen Guild Branches, with EBSB still maintaining its predominant position (just) but with Sonning Deanery and South Oxon improving theirs, as follows:

EBSB	4	(3 Gold, 1 Silver)
Banbury	3	(3 Gold)
Sonning Deanery	3	(2 Gold, 1 Bronze)
South Oxon	3	(2 Gold, 1 Silver)
Newbury	2	(2 Gold)
Central Bucks	1	(Gold)
Chiltern	1	(Gold)
Reading	1	(Gold)
Witney & Woodstock	1	(Gold)

If your tower is in one of the remaining seven, how about trying to get your branch included by gaining an award?

The main features of the award scheme are as follows:

- There are three award grades (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) based on the results of an inspection using a marking sheet that is made available, in advance, to participating towers to enable them to prepare for the inspection. The grades will be based on the percentage of the "perfect" mark (currently 235), as follows:

Gold	85% +
Silver	70 – 84%
Bronze	55 – 69%
- The award takes the form of a certificate that is current for two years from the date of inspection (rather like an MOT) and can be displayed in the tower
- Towers holding current awards are listed in Odd Bob and the Guild Report
- Each inspection is carried out by judges from the Towers & Belfries committee and the detailed results of the inspection are made available to the tower
- Inspections can be requested at any time, via the Secretary or the Chairman of the Towers & Belfries committee (addresses near the back of Odd Bob), irrespective of whether the request is for an initial inspection or to try and improve an existing grade.

If you haven't already started, why not consider taking part? We will provide you with all the details of how you will be marked so that you can plan what has to be done to get an award; if asked, we will even do a preliminary inspection before you start, to help the process. If you do gain an award you can be confident that your tower and bells are in a good, safe condition and, whether or not an award is gained, you will be given useful information on how they can be improved.

Current Tower Maintenance Scheme Awards

Gold Award

Chalfont St Peter	EBSB	Expires 31.12.14
High Wycombe (All Saints)	EBSB	Expires 31.12.14
Cropredy (S.M.V.)	Banbury	Expires 31.12.14
Adderbury (St Mary)	Banbury	Expires 31.12.14
Deddington (SS Peter & Paul)	Banbury	Expires 31.12.14
Reading (St Giles)	Reading	Expires 31.01.15
Chalgrove (S.M.V.)	South Oxon	Expires 31.01.15
Peasmore (St Barnabas)	Newbury	Expires 28.02.15
Ellesborough (SS Peter & Paul)	Chiltern	Expires 31.03.15
Freeland (S.M.V.)	Witney & Woodstock	Expires 31.06.15

Hungerford (St Lawrence)	Newbury	Expires 30.09.15
Sonning (St Andrew)	Sonning Deanery	Expires 30.09.15
Winslow (St Laurence)	Central Bucks	Expires 30.09.15
Denham (St Mary)	EBSB	Expires 31.01.16
White Waltham	Sonning Deanery	Expires 30.09.16
Thame (St Mary)	South Oxon Branch	Expires 30.09.16

Silver Award

Fulmer (St James)	EBSB	Expires 30.04.15
Great Milton	South Oxon	Expires 31.08.15

Bronze Grade

Wargrave (St Mary)	Sonning Deanery	Expires 31.07.15
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Expired Awards

Dorchester (SS Peter & Paul)	South Oxon	Expired 30.09.05
Finchampstead (St James)	Sonning Deanery	Expired 31.07.07
Stoke Mandeville (S.M.V.)	Chiltern	Expired 31.12.07
Warborough (St Laurence)	South Oxon	Expired 31.12.07
Easthampstead (St Michael)	Sonning Deanery	Expired 31.12.08
Winkfield (St Mary)	EBSB	Expired 31.05.09
Purley (S.M.V.)	Reading	Expired 31.01.10
Benson (St Helen)	South Oxon	Expired 31.10.11
South Stoke (St Andrew)	Reading	Expired 31.03.12
Cookham (Holy Trinity)	EBSB	Expired 31.05.12
Mapledurham (St Margaret)	Reading	Expired 30.11.12
Wokingham (All Saints)	Sonning Deanery	Expired 28.02.13
Henley (S.M.V.)	Reading	Expired 31.08.13
Wantage (SS Peter & Paul)	Old North Berks	Expired 31.08.13
Letcombe Regis (St Andrew)	Old North Berks	Expired 30.09.13
Bray (St Michael)	EBSB	Expired 31.10.13
Clewer (St Andrew)	EBSB	Expired 31.05.14
Thatcham (St Mary)	Newbury	Expired 31.05.14
Chalfont St Giles	EBSB	Expired 30.09.14
Kintbury (S.M.V.)	Newbury	Expired 30.09.14
Harwell (St Matthew)	Old North Bucks	Expired 30.09.14
Tadmarton (St Nicholas)	Banbury	Expired 30.09.14

John Davidge

Librarian's Report

There have been 5 library enquiries since Odd Bob issue 90. These have been about:

- Newsletters in Vale of the White Horse branch.
- Papers relating to the creation and early years of the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund.
- The Guild/Association for which peal at St Ebbe's, Oxford on 16/10/1982 was rung.
- Photo of Henry Lawrenson for Bell Fund article in Ringing World.
- Ringers at Hinton Waldrist during 1950s and 1960s.

The bookcases which I purchased in the early 2000s are almost full now, and it is necessary to obtain a further bookcase to allow the library to continue to expand. This is an opportunity to review the library with particular reference to its size, and I have written a short paper which has been discussed at September's F&GP meeting, and is due to be discussed at the Guild Committee meeting in November. In short, the paper asks whether, with six bookcases full and about ten boxes of other material, the Guild is content for the library to grow as it has heretofore, or whether the Guild should review the situation regarding the library. I will report any developments in this area in the next issue of Odd Bob.

The usual reminder, if you would like some information, or would like to visit the library or borrow a book, you are very welcome to, just let me know.

Doug Beaumont

News from the Branches

Banbury

On June 1st there was a Rededication service for the bells at St Etheldreda's Church, Horley, led by the Right Revd. Bishop of Dorchester and attended by the Guild Ringing Master, Hilarie Rogers. This was an opportunity for the fledgling band of Horley ringers to participate with visiting ringers (see photo on back cover).

The traditional striking competition in June was hosted by Mollington this year and Julie and Andrew Hazeldine kindly came along to judge the ringing. Of the six teams entered in the method ringing section, Steeple Aston was the winner, Bloxham came second and Adderbury A came third. Two teams entered the call change section and Tadmarton were the victors. Steeple Aston went on to represent the Branch at the Guild six bell striking competition in October.

The Branch outing in July was around the Ross-on-Wye area; Barry Davis (having a family history in the area) selected the towers and Brenda Day kindly did the organising. Starting in Ross-on-Wye, the ringing continued at Linton, and then a well-earned lunch and a rest nearby. Ringing resumed at Newent then to Dymock and finally to Bromsberrow where Barry's great grandfather learned to ring.

At the beginning of August some of our towers, including Steeple Aston, rang half muffled to commemorate the centenary of the start of WW1.

Also in August, Cropredy played host to the *Fairport Cropredy Convention*, a large music festival attracting up to 20,000 visiting people who camp in the village and surrounding area for three days. This event was instrumental in helping raise funds to augment the bells from six to eight a few years ago. The two new bells are dedicated to the villagers of Cropredy and Fairport Convention. It has now become a custom for visiting ringers to come along and join the local band to ring for the opening of the festival (and the Sunday church service) and it's always pleasing to see



regular and new faces come along for this. In September the Cropredy ringers gather for a BBQ in a pretty garden orchard by the canal, expertly organised by Brenda Day. All the ringers, young and old and their families come along and enjoy playing games together and having a natter in the setting sun.

The Guild ringing course held annually at Steeple Aston took place in October and many Branch ringers enjoyed going to help and support the students.

Heather Bletchly

Bicester

Branch practices have been generally well attended – top marks went to Piddington in May where 15 ringers from 8 branch towers attended – and our youngest recruit (10 year old Sam Cole) has become a regular! Thanks to the enthusiasm of Anthony Cole, branch members have found them useful and a good number have been able to try something a little harder than usual, which is the best way to learn, and just what these practices are for.

By popular demand, Anthony also arranged a special ringing up & down course in July (with assistance from Jeremy Adams and Mike MacArthur) for three branch members using Bicester and Caversfield towers. It was much appreciated by those who came – and a good lunch helped too!

The Branch BBQ and striking competition was held in September in Islip again. We only had two teams but it was still worth having the competition, giving everyone a go, and encouraging the new recruits who took part. Caversfield took to the tower first and rang call changes as the band was not ready for method ringing (two of the band have been ringing less than 9 months and are only 10 and 13 years old respectively). It was a very good effort with some good ringing and was awarded 28 faults by our judges. Islip rang second and chose plain courses of Grandsire Doubles which went well and earned only 17 faults making Islip the winning team for the second year running. We were very grateful to James and Julie Champion for making a long journey to judge for us.

On Thursday 25th September the Reverend Verena Breed was installed as the new Team Rector at St Edburg's, Bicester. This was a good excuse for a quarter peal to celebrate.

1260 Plain Bob Doubles (on front 6)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Helen Parkinson | 4 Jeremy Adams |
| 2 Ian Smart (1 st inside) | 5 Anthony Cole (c) |
| 3 Steve Walker | 6 Janet Smith |

Sadly this year the Bicester branch lost its oldest member when Hilda Jane Jones, born at Blackthorn, died at Piddington on 22nd July, two months short of her 98th birthday. Hilda's husband, Ernest (Son or Sonny) Jones, who died in 1977, was Tower Captain at St Nicholas, Piddington, and her brother Len Busby rang at Piddington. They were active members of the Bicester branch. She had two children Philip and Wendy Taylor, both ringers. Wendy is Churchwarden now at Piddington.

At her funeral, which was a thanksgiving for her long and active life, many tributes were paid to her. Her main interests were her family, her garden and the Church, for which she was Churchwarden for many years as well as undertaking numerous other jobs.

The local ringers rang 'open' at her request while her coffin was carried to the cemetery opposite the church; afterwards they were joined by two ringers who rang in a quarter peal at Sonny's funeral – Ron Russ and Willie Haynes. RIP Hilda.

Kathryn Grant, Anthony Cole and Willie Haynes

Central Bucks

It was with great sadness that we heard at the end of October of the death of our CBB president Mary Lee. Mary came to Bucks from Derbyshire in 1955 and joined the ODG in May 1955. She and Dick built their house together in Quanton and moved in straight after they were married in November 1962. A dedicated and reliable ringer, until recent ill health prevented her, she rarely missed a practice or Sunday service ringing apart from their annual 3 week driving holiday to Europe. She will be missed by all who knew her.

The branch also recently mourned the death of Trevor Rossiter from Hardwick. A true country gentleman who viewed his ringing as part of his service to the church.

The regular branch ringing has continued throughout the summer. The monthly midweek mini outing has seen numbers range between 6 and 16 but very few are from CBB; we seem to have a core group from all over – Chiltern, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. Depending on the skills of those attending we ring everything from Plain Hunt and Plain Bob to the likes of Cambridge, London and Beverley. Lunches in a local hostelry are always a most essential part of the day – lots of good food, good conversation and laughs. We try to keep the maximum travelling time for anyone to an hour and this means we can range within the branch or into the outer circle of the adjoining branches. Having been at this for three and a half years now though, we are beginning to have to retrace our steps but hopefully it's the ringing we go for and not the tower grabs! We always welcome anyone new who wants to come along, so if there is anyone out there with nothing to do on the third Thursday of the month, look out for the notices that should be in all CBB towers, or go onto the CBB Facebook page for details!

The 8-bell practice at Aylesbury on the first Tuesday of the month is always very well attended and we get through a lot in an evening. The 6-bell *Progressing* practice at Stewkley varies in numbers but we all gain much from it, especially those keen to move on from rounds and call changes. The second Saturday of the month branch practices are often not so well attended. Maybe the time in the evening is bad for people, although we always go to the local hostelry afterwards – one would have thought that would be tempting enough – or the day is wrong, we don't know, but I do not think the problem is confined to CBB! The decision to change the advanced/surprise practice to a monthly quarter peal targeted towards specific needs seems to have been a good one with several people ringing quarters in new methods from Grandsire Doubles through Grandsire and Steadman Triples to Cambridge Major.

The branch missed out on its annual outing this year for various reasons. Plan B, to have a coach to the Ringing Day at Newbury racecourse, also fell by the wayside although some branch members went under their own steam and had a very enjoyable day out. Hopefully there will be enough support for an outing in 2015.

Finally we would like to thank Aylesbury for upholding the honour of the CBB in their recent victory in the Orchard Cup and our commiserations to Chiltern Branch.

Jane Vowles

Chiltern

The branch was responsible for setting up a mini ring at the Towersey Festival in August. This was the brainchild of John King, who negotiated with the Festival Committee and put in a great deal of work obtaining the ring, setting it up, and getting helpers to demonstrate the art on these traditionally-hung hand bells. They were quite a challenge, even for the experienced ringers, as the bells were so light! This obtained quite a bit of interest from the Festival visitors.

This summer the Wendover tower was enlivened happily by our ringer Roz's wedding, for which all our eight bells were rung – with a little help from our friends – before and after the ceremony. We also marked the 90th birthday of our one-time tower captain Bob Gerhardi who was sadly unable, due to ill-health, to attend the celebratory lunch or enjoy the immaculate quarter peal rung by some of his erst-while colleagues in the Branch.

Our token teenager has alas departed (temporarily) for university but we are fortunate in welcoming two new competent ringers plus one fast-improving learner, and are looking forward to broadening our repertoire on 8 bells. As always we are heavily indebted to Alan Bentley and Roger Powell for their invaluable assistance and encouragement.

Colin Walter has carried on running his monthly classes, which have been attended by people from both this and nearby branches; Ruth Groves looks after the Branch training mornings, which remain popular.

Richard Booth has continued to organise the monthly midweek outing which usually takes place on the first Tuesday of each month. We visit 3 towers that are hopefully grouped closely together, usually one 8-bell tower and two 6-bell towers, with two in the morning starting at 10am and one in the afternoon, finishing at about 3pm. We spend an hour at each tower, with lunch at a pub. All levels of ability are catered for, from rounds upwards, and everyone has an enjoyable and sociable time. An illustrated report is published on the Chiltern Branch Bulletin Board (chiltern.odg.org.uk/Bulletin.html) following each outing where you can read details of where we went and what was rung.

A quarter peal was rung at Little Missenden to mark the retirement of the Bishop of Oxford at the end of September.

Chris Green

Chipping Norton

Our Branch Practices continue with the usual regulars in attendance, together with some ringers from the host tower and local benefice, the venue and particular weekday evening influencing the number present. In addition, our Ringing Master, Claire Tarrant, has organised special focused practices at Asthall on the third Tuesday of most months, and some Surprise Practices on Saturday mornings with help from ringers outside the Branch. All these practices have been very much appreciated by the participants.

As only a few ringers were available at the time, plans were not taken forward for a Branch outing in June but, more recently, ringers from the Burford Benefice, with others, have visited Ross-on-Wye and other towers.

The Revd. Canon Judy French, formerly Vicar at Charlbury, became the new Archdeacon of Dorchester in June and a Vice-President of the ODG. A quarter peal bidding her farewell and wishing her well in this role was rung at Charlbury in May. The photo on the front cover shows, L-R: Maureen Sparling, Denise & Mike Summers, the Revd. Canon Judy French, Barry Canham, Joanne Murphy and James Bennett.

The centenary of the outbreak of WW1 was marked with ringing at Ascott-u-Wychwood and Charlbury, the latter ringing at 11 a.m. on 4th August.

It has been decided that the Branch AGM next year will be held at an earlier time of day than in recent years and that it will still be held on a Saturday. This followed consultation by email and discussion at a short business meeting in October following the Branch Practice at Chadlington.



Jean Datson celebrated her ninetieth birthday in September. To mark this occasion, a peal of Plain Bob Minor was rung at Spelsbury by a band that included Claire Tarrant, her daughter, her grandson Mark Tarrant and three other Branch members (see photo).

Lately in ringing circles, Jean has been known particularly for her role as the founder member of the 43ers. Jean has also been admitted to the Fellowship of St. Birinius at

Dorchester Abbey in recognition of her contribution to Church life and the wider community.

November marks the tenth anniversary of the restoration and augmentation of Fulbrook bells. The sound of six bells coming from that tower instead of just three is greatly appreciated by the ringers and most of the local residents! Photographs of the restoration are to be exhibited in the church during November and at the December branch practice that will be held there.

Next year our Branch practices in January and February will again be held on Saturday mornings followed by a pub lunch for those who would like to stay.

Christine Harris

East Berks and South Bucks

The annual Lorna Newton striking competition reached its final stage at the Branch half yearly meeting at Clewer on 11th October. Six teams entered and the leading teams were placed very close together, with only two faults separating the winners (High Wycombe B) and the runners-up (Bray). The photo shows the victorious team.



High Wycombe now have a clean sweep of striking competition wins, their A team having won the Branch 6-bell competition and the Guild 6-bell, not to mention the Guild 8-bell contest earlier in the year. Let's hope this augurs well for the 2015 national 12-bell competition!

Beaconsfield Tower was sad to say goodbye to Anne and Rex Agg who have been members at the tower since they moved to the area 29 years ago. During that time Rex was Ringing Master for five years, Deputy Ringing Master for one year and rang five peals and 187 quarter peals. He also held various Branch Officer positions. Anne was Deputy Ringing Master for 12 years and rang 40 quarter peals – she was also the unofficial 'social secretary' organising many of the tower's social events. Anne and Rex also did a lot to support the surrounding towers and Branch over that time and they will both be much missed. We wish them well as they move back to Hitchin.

On Monday evening, 4th August, a band of local Holy Trinity Cookham bellringers rang a quarter peal of 1260 changes of Grandsire and Plain Bob Doubles to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the start of WW1. Two Cookham ringers were killed in action during this war: Private Charles William White (died 2 October 1916) and Private Walter Thomas Gillman Woolford (died 18 September 1918 aged just 19).

Although today we have a lovely ring of 10 bells at Cookham, back in 1914 there were just 6 bells in the tower. It was felt appropriate, therefore, that this quarter peal should be rung on those same 6 bells. The ringers were Ruth Daniel, Timmy Mallett, Mandy Salter, Claire Fisher, Marcia Dieppe (conductor) and Freddie Daniel. Before the start, the vicar, Fr. Nick Plant, joined us in the ringing chamber for few moments of prayer and quiet reflection. The bells were rung half-muffled, and the ringing took just over 45 minutes.

Congratulations to Maurice Edwards, who with a peal of Cambridge Surprise Maximus at Amersham on 4 October achieved the notable total of one thousand peals on 12 bells. Only six other ringers have reached this milestone, of whom two are no longer with us. All Maurice's peals have been on tower bells, with a high proportion rung at St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham.

Peter H Mackie

Newbury

[Nothing received from the branch.]

North Bucks

The Guild AGM was held in May on a warm and sunny spring afternoon at Downs Barn, Milton Keynes. This weather may have helped to generate the best turnout for some years, at a meeting which marked both the 21st birthday of the bells and a changing of the guard at the top of the Guild. Prior to the AGM ringing was available at Great Brickhill, Woughton-on-the-Green and Downs Barn. The ‘service touch’ at Downs Barn was rung by a band drawn exclusively from the Branch’s *Big Ring Pull* recruitment project held two years previously.

The Branch social and 6-bell striking competition in June was kindly hosted by the ringers at Maids Moreton. The weather was warm and sunny, defying the forecast, so we enjoyed the cakes and sandwiches in the sunshine in the Churchyard. Maids Moreton did a fantastic job with the tea, stewarding, and looking after the open ringing before the competition. The judges for the event were Ian and Alison Willgress of Nether Heyford who were complimented as giving the best verbal feedback that many people had heard, offering encouragement and constructive comments. The winners were Hanslope, who went on to represent the Branch at the Guild 6-bell striking competition hosted by the Old North Berks Branch.

The inter-branch striking competition with Towcester Branch was held in July. The afternoon’s events kicked off with a joint practice on the eight at Stony Stratford. There was a good cross-section of ringers from both branches and the ringing ranged from Bristol Surprise Major to Plain Hunt. This was followed by a picnic which was held on the Stony Stratford water meadows. The weather was glorious and it was a very enjoyable addition to the social calendar. After the picnic, the ringers reconvened at Wicken for the striking competition. This year it was a closely fought contest, with North Bucks winning by 2 to 1, and avoiding their usual defeat.

The new Branch website (www.northbucksbranch.org.uk) was launched at the beginning of September. This was designed to make Branch information more readily accessible, and it includes forthcoming events, tower and officer information, as well as bulletins from the Guild, etc.

The Branch Autumn Meeting was held in September at Newport Pagnell, at which we were pleased to welcome the ODG Master, Hilarie Rogers. An excellent tea was provided by the host tower. The meeting prompted much debate about whether or not to continue to hold autumn meetings – North Bucks is one of the few branches which still continues to hold one.

The Branch Training Day was held in October. This year the course was on ringing up and down in peal. It was quite a tiring day for those who attended both the morning and afternoon sessions and no doubt there were a few aching muscles on the Sunday morning. But it was all worth it as everyone made progress during the day and were all much more competent at ringing up and down in peal by the end of the course.

As well as all of this we have been holding monthly branch practices, monthly eight bell practices, and monthly Bob Doubles, call changes and Plain Hunt practices.

Gary Reading

Old North Berks

As is usual, it has been quite an active summer for the branch. Our monthly general practices, surprise major practices and particularly our ‘improvers’ afternoon practices have all been quite well attended. We would like to thank everyone from other branches who have kindly supported us and helped to make these fun occasions with a lot of good ringing. Donations from attendees have been collected at our afternoon practices and have been 50p per attendee for many years. It was decided at our September Branch Committee meeting that donations for the host tower will increase to £1 per attendee from 1st January 2015.

We held a very successful outing in July and would like to thank Philip Roberts of Harwell for organising this for us once again. Approximately twenty branch members and friends visited Bray, Maidenhead, White Waltham, Warfield and Hurst. All enjoyed the day, which also included a pub lunch in White Waltham and afternoon tea at Warfield. A barbecue, with over thirty members and friends in attendance, followed at the home of Stuart and Naomi Gibson. As ever the food was excellent and there was fun on the croquet green. Thanks go to Philip, Janette, Stuart and Naomi for arranging yet another super day for the Branch. As previously agreed, the proceeds of the barbecue and raffle were donated to the North Moreton bell restoration fund.



The North Moreton bell restoration and augmentation project is now approaching completion. The frame has been rubbed down, repainted, the bearing plates put in place and rotten floorboards replaced. The original five bells, plus the new treble and Sanctus, were rehung in the tower at the beginning of October by Whites of Appleton and local volunteer helpers.

Although the bells have been rehung, they will not be rung until the gallery has been built. This has been delayed by the need to complete the installation of a kitchenette and accessible toilet at the same time, and the faculty to permit these works is imminent. Currently there is a £66,000 shortfall, however sufficient has been raised so far for the bells and gallery. It is hoped that various grant applications will be successful in November and December, and that building work will start early in February 2015. It is anticipated that the bells will be able to be rung in March /April, and that practice nights will be held on Mondays.

Our next fund raising project will be the rehunging of Radley bells. Many of you will know Radley well through attending the Guild’s annual Radley course,

which has been running for many years. It is still being determined exactly what work will be carried out, but it is estimated that the cost will be approximately £35,000. The Branch has offered to raise £3000 towards this sum over the next eighteen months, and we are currently looking at ways that this target can be achieved. If any Guild members would like to make a contribution directly to the Radley appeal please contact Daphne Pollard or Stuart Gibson.

Our next social event will be on 22nd November and will be a barn dance and supper at Drayton village hall. Dances in the past have always proved to be very popular, and I am sure that many of our members, together with their families and friends, are polishing their dancing shoes and watching ‘Strictly’ for tips.

Gill Loyd

Oxford City

[Nothing received from the branch.]

Reading

The Saturday morning practices take place on the 2nd Saturday of the month from 10.00 until 11.30 and aim to help towers that have either learners or those members wishing to improve. Attendance at these practices vary.

The Surprise practice generally takes place on the 3rd Thursday of the month at Shiplake and is well supported with regular visitors from other Branches.

A new midweek, daytime Surprise practice is under trial; this take place on the first Wednesday in the month and is popular with those who have retired from work – so far attendances have been reasonably good.

Our Branch six bell striking competition took place at Mapledurham and attracted ten teams including a young person’s team. The winners this year were Caversham who went on to represent the Branch at the Guild six bell competition. Thanks to Alan Marchbank, our judge, and the Mapledurham ringers for the arrangements and the excellent tea.

A first for the branch was in October, when Reading branch took part in a joint 8-bell striking competition with Sonning Deanery branch. The competition this year was organised by Sonning Deanery branch, and unfortunately the date was not ideal for some of the stronger Reading bands. We put in a band made up of ringers from 3 towers, which came third. Next year Reading will get to organise the event and choose the date!

I am sorry to report the passing of Gus Gray of Checkendon and Avis Rosser of Shiplake.

Ken Baker

Sonning Deanery

Over the late May bank-holiday weekend Sonning held its biennial *Scarecrows and Open Gardens* event. Sonning bell ringers, both tower and handbells, used a very familiar WWI recruitment poster picture and modified it for tower bell ringers. It was hung from the battlements of the tower and fixed at the bottom with guy-lines to peg it out taut. This recruitment poster has been offered to any tower in the branch that wants it for an open tower event.

In May and June several learners started their training with the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS). Some of the learners had already been learning without the framework of ITTS but decided to join the scheme. There have been 4 learners at Waltham St. Lawrence, 3 at Sonning and 2 at White Waltham learning to ring with ITTS.

The weekend 19th/20th July was a busy one for Wokingham St. Paul's. While members of the congregation were out and about in town, the ringers of St. Paul's celebrated the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the church with a peal! The method was Berkshire Surprise Major, which was chosen because the first peal in this method was rung in the tower in 1934. On Sunday 20th July the Bishop of Oxford made his first visit to the parish to celebrate the 150th anniversary Eucharist. This provided an opportunity for a quarter peal involving some of the tower members and regular visitors.



Several towers marked the centenary of the start of WWI. Ten ringers from Waltham St Lawrence rang the bells, half-muffled, for 45 minutes before a solemn commemoration in music and poetry of the start of the First World War. The church was lit mainly by candles, lit by those who came to the commemoration between 8.30 and 11.00pm. At the end all lights were extinguished and the congregation left in both silence and darkness.

Hurst attempted a peal of half-muffled Grandsire Triples. Unfortunately the attempt was unsuccessful after the clapper of the 4th fell out after about an hour. They continued to ring and rang half muffled for the memorial service at 7pm.

Easthampstead rang a quarter of Plain Bob Doubles half-muffled on Monday 4 August to commemorate the start of World War 1 on this day in 1914.

Congratulations to Connor Bannister, ringer of the 2, for a first quarter inside.

On the same day St. Paul, Wokingham, rang 1260 of Grandsire Triples half muffled prior to the Vigil Service commemorating the 100th anniversary of Britain entering the First World War. Congratulations to Ashley Gray with a first quarter on the tenor.

At All Saints, Wokingham, a peal of Yorkshire was rung on 13 September as a wedding compliment to Siân Haseldine, formerly one of their ringers. The next day the tower rang a quarter of Plain Bob Minor and Kristin Fitch achieved a first quarter inside.

In October the towers of Twyford and of Hurst decided to combine their practice and service ringing, and now both towers alternate with a practice on a Monday and service ringing on Sunday. A similar arrangement has been used for years by Shottesbrooke and White Waltham towers. About a year ago Sonning and Wargrave started supporting each other on a regular basis, but in this case both towers have kept their same practice night each week.

The branch outing on October 11th was to four towers in the Aldermaston area, two in the morning, a good lunch in *The Butt* at Aldermaston Wharf, and two in the afternoon. Our thanks to Pam and Andrew Elliston for organising it.

A new venture for the Branch took place in October when it held the first joint 8-bell striking competition with Reading branch. The competition this year was organised by Sonning Deanery branch at All Saints, Wokingham, and the winner, by a very small margin, was St. Andrew's, Sonning (see photo on back cover).

Rob Needham

South Oxon

Often I have lamented the absence of outings in our branch – but this past April we had a mini-outing to the West Oxfordshire area! We visited St Mary the Virgin in Witney and SS Peter and Paul in Church Hanborough before lunch at The Kings Arms in Kidlington. These half day outings seem to suit us and 12 keen ringers were able to attend. I must admit it was educational for me, in that I learned the hard way that there are two (two!) St Mary's churches in Witney. I have tried to blame the satnav for taking me to the wrong one – but that only goes so far!

Unfortunately we did not have our standard 6-bell competition in the spring due to lack of towers entering. We shall try again in 2015.

A notable milestone was reached by Brian Gray this year. At the Chalgrove Vicarage garden party over the summer, Brian celebrated 30 years as Chalgrove Tower Captain and 50 years in the Guild. Presentations were made on behalf of St Mary's PCC by Rev Ian Cohen. Andrew Davis, Chair of the South Oxon Branch, then presented a Guild Testimonial to record Brian's achievement. Catering for the event included a bell-shaped cake provided by Teresa Davis.

St. Helen's Church, Berrick Salome, has begun fund raising for the full refurbishment of the bells. The bells are 17th century and were last refurbished over 100 years ago in 1908. Fundraising is underway and they expect the bells to be out of the tower in spring 2015.

In the last Odd Bob I reported that one of our ringers became ill in a tower and needed to be stretchered down. I am very pleased to say that six months after her dramatic exit from the Chalgrove tower, Margaret Coombe rang a course of Plain Bob Doubles. She received a well-deserved round of applause. We are all very pleased that she is continuing to ring!

Vale of the White Horse

The Branch 6-bell striking competition was held at Hinton Waldrist in May. Faringdon came first out of the six teams and the hosts received the Ringing Master's award for the most improved band. Unfortunately Faringdon were unable to represent the Vale at the Guild competition later in the year owing to the indisposition of one of the ringers.

A good number of Vale ringers accompanied Tony Crabtree and the Stallpits mini-ring to the *Ringing Roadshow* at Newbury. There was a steady stream of visitors throughout the day and Tony estimated that about 400 ringers had tried the bells. Stella Johnson, a thirteen year old ringer from Buckland, had been invited to join the panel that led the seminar *Young in an Old Ringers World* and she made some useful contributions to the debate. With so many ringers around we had no problem arranging a last minute quarter of Cambridge Surprise Minor on the mini ring before dismantling it at the end of the day.

Two ringing families had cause for celebration during September, with the weddings of Isobelle O'Hagan and Danny Taylor at Stanford in the Vale and Sarah Crabtree and Gareth Bradbury at Shrivenham.

Harriet Munday scored her first peal ringing inside to Yorkshire Surprise Major, and Stella Johnson rang her first quarter peal covering to mixed doubles on Tony's mini-ring.

Gloucestershire was the destination for the Branch Outing on 13th September, with ringing at Chipping Sodbury, Wickwar, Wotton-under-Edge, North Nibley and Tetbury. The outing coincided with the Historic Churches Trust *Ride and Stride* so Tony Crabtree, Andrew Rainbow-Ockwell, Nicola Roberts and Clare Knock decided to cycle up and down the hills between the towers and were rewarded with a good amount of sponsorship money from the car driving contingent. Thanks to Anne Jones for organising the towers, good weather, and an excellent tea provided by Uley WI.

Sadly Tony Willis, who made a major contribution to the recent re-hang of the bells at Buckland, died on 30th September aged 76. He had been a ringer there for 65 years.

Lucy Laird

Witney and Woodstock

On Monday 5th May our Branch hosted the Guild Ringing Day and 8-bell striking competition. Ringers from many parts of the country visited the 22 towers that were open at various times of the day and we are very grateful to our neighbouring towers of Buckland and Kidlington for supporting us. The striking competition was held at Witney with Chris Povey and Richard Lewis-Skeath as judges. Seven teams entered, with High Wycombe winning by the slender margin of 0.25 faults. Many thanks to the towers and volunteers for making this a very successful day. Over £1,400 was raised for the Guild Bell Fund from the Ringing Day and striking competition.

Our annual Branch striking competition was held at Cassington on 14th June. For many ringers it was their first experience of ringing at Cassington following the renovation of the bells. Woodstock repeated their successes of previous years, by winning both call change and method competitions, and went on to represent the Branch at the ODG's 6-bell competition in October. We were very thankful to Richard Lewis-Skeath for judging the competition. Post competition food and drinks were taken at The Red Lion to conclude an enjoyable evening.



Witney and Woodstock Branch 6-bell striking competition winners.

*L to R: Bernard Coggins,
Malcolm Fairbairn, Richard White,
Ian Davey-Wilson,
Jane Burgess, Ron Burgess*

On Saturday 5th July our summer social was held at Combe. The event was well attended and commenced with ringing at St. Laurence, after which we adjourned to *The Cock* pub for drinks and a barbecue. Presentations of *Firsts Fortnight* certificates were then made, to recognise people's progress in taking up the challenge to ring something new. A very entertaining Aunt Sally game brought this most enjoyable evening to a close.

A band which included three Branch members, Lorna Curtis, Alison Merryweather-Clarke and Richard White, rang a peal of Cambridge Surprise Major at Milton on 20th September as a retirement compliment to Rt. Revd John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford.

Richard White kindly arranged the Branch Outing on 18th October to Hampshire. A splendid outing was enjoyed by 20 ringers who were grateful for the opportunity to ring at five superb towers. Our first tower of the day was at Bentley followed by Holybourne. Unfortunately, we didn't have the pleasure of meeting Alan Titchmarsh, a resident of Holybourne, so as to ascertain remedies for our ailing plants. Lunch was taken at The Swan, Alton with time afterwards to visit a very interesting museum in the town and some of our party were fortunate to watch the 2:00pm departure on the Watercress line. Ringing recommenced in Alton, followed by Chawton, where the Austen family regularly worshipped – Jane's mother and sister are buried in the churchyard. Our final tower of the day was at Basingstoke.

I end this report on a sad note. The Branch was very sorry to lose two of its members. Ted Dixey of Bampton passed away on 11th May and Alan Cornish of South Leigh on 2nd September. Both gave outstanding service to the Witney and Woodstock Branch spanning many decades.

Michael Probert

Points from Peals

There have been fewer peals recorded this year than in the comparable period last year. This is probably because there have not been the significant royal events.

A number of firsts have been recorded:

- First peal: David Meakin
- First as conductor: Jack Page Spliced Surprise Major (8m)
- First handbell peal of Bristol Maximus and, at age 16, the youngest to do so: Jack Page.
- Firsts in methods:
 - Grandsire: James W S Crawley
 - Double Norwich Court Bob Major: Andrew R Freer, Joe D R Norton, Edmund H Mottershead
 - Lincolnshire Surprise Major: Andrew R Freer
 - London Surprise Major: Richard Lewis-Skeath, Alan F R Bain and Lorna Curtis completing standard 8
 - Rutland Royal: Jack Page, Thomas H O Evans
- First Surprise on handbells: Marcia L Dieppe
- First of minor: Claire E Tarrant
- First on 10: James M Champion
- First Surprise inside: Alison T Merryweather-Clarke (Cambridge)

Methods: First peal in the method on handbells, Dorking Surprise Royal.

Personal Milestones: Significant peal milestones have been achieved by Richard E White (50), Christopher P Cole (100), Joanne P Druce(100), Sarah B Ewbank (150), Graham A C John (400 handbell peals on 12 bells), W John Couperthwaite (600 tower bell as conductor), Julie A Haseldine (900), David A Cornwall (1,000).

And peals together: Catherine M A Lane & John Pladdys (100), Bernard F L Groves & E John Wells (400), William Butler & John C Sheppard (500), William Butler & Michael Hatchett (500th tower), Andrew Haseldine & Christopher C Stokes (600), June D Wells & E John Wells (850).

50th peal of Bristol Maximus in hand: Graham G Firman & Graham A C John.

Most Surprise Major to a peal: Jenny M Page (8m), Josie S Irving (21m), Kenneth R Davenport, Stuart F Gibson (23m).

Most methods as conductor: June D Wells Spliced Surprise Major (23m).

Circled the tower to peals: Stephen R Smith, Shiplake; Brian C Watson, Chalfont St Giles; B Douglas Hird, Milton Keynes, Downs Barn.

50th peal on the bells: David Burbidge, Chalfont St Giles.

100th peal on the bells: Bernard F L Groves, Thatcham.

Yorkshire Surprise Fourteen was rung on handbells at Maidenhead and was the first of Yorkshire S Fourteen on handbells for all the band.

Events: Several peals were rung as a retirement compliment to the Rt Revd John Pritchard, Lord Bishop of Oxford and President of the Guild.

Other notable events marked were St George's Day, Easter, 88th birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth II, the licensing of Richard W Butler as Lay Reader; Amersham, 100th anniversary of the first peal in the tower; Wokingham, St Paul, 150th anniversary of the consecration of the Church; Hughenden, 750th peal in the tower.

Tilehurst, Tilehurst Surprise Major by past and present members of the Tilehurst band. First Peal in the method for all the band.

Personal events: Wedding anniversary celebrations were marked for Shelley and Stuart Horn (10th), Pat and David Moore (Ruby), Shirley and John Bush (Ruby), Philip and Brenda Woodhead (Golden).

Peals were rung for the births of Henry Arthur Cedric Jones, second grandchild of Graham A C John, and Vernon Juan David Paz, the first grandchild of Kate and David Cox; also to celebrate the birthdays of Helen Diserens, Patricia Newton, Jean Datson, Bob Gerhadi, Bill Butler, Beryl Norris, Di Bridle, Katie Lane, Roger Powell and Roy Woodruff.

In memoriam: The Guild remembered: Alan Flood, Anthony H Willis, who rang at Buckland for 65 years; Michael Main of Kings Langley; Peter Campbell and Ann Wheeler of Alderney.

Ken Davenport, Peal Secretary

Paying Peal Fees electronically

If you would like to pay peal fees electronically, instead of sending in cheques, then please contact the peal secretary (peals@odg.org.uk) to obtain the details. Thank you.

Stuart Gibson

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Diary of Events for 2014/15

Some of these dates may change, so you should check the odg.org.uk web site for diary updates on an ongoing basis.

TBC	To Be Confirmed	AGM	Annual General Meeting	AP	Advanced Practice
BP	Branch Practice	EP	Elementary Practice	HY	Half Yearly Meeting
QM	Quarterly Meeting	RCP	Ringling Centre Practice	SC	Striking Competition
SM	Surprise Major	SP	Surprise Practice	CM	Committee Meeting

NOVEMBER 2014

Sat	1	Chiltern	8/10 bell practice	Aston Clinton	7–9pm
Tue	4	Chipping Norton	BP	Chipping Norton (8)	7.30–9pm
Sat	8	EBSB	BP	Amersham (12)	6–8pm
Sat	8	CBB	BP	Long Crendon (10)	7–8.30pm
Mon	10	ONB	BP	Drayton (8)	7.30–9pm
Sat	15	Oxford City	AGM	St. Aldates (6)	6.30pm
Sat	15	Sonning	Tea & Business Meeting followed by Branch Practice	Finchampstead (6)	4.30–6pm 6pm onwards
Sat	15	Chiltern	BP	Great Kimble (6)	7–9pm
Sat	22	Chiltern	Doubles/Minor practice	Aston Clinton	10am–12 noon
Sat	22	Guild	10 Bell SC	Bicester Branch	TBC
Sat	22	Guild	General Committee Meeting	Bicester Branch	TBC
Wed	26	ONB	BP	Chilton (6)	2–3.30pm
Fri	28	VOWH	BP	Longcot (8)	7.30–9pm
Sat	29	South Oxon	BP	Drayton St. Leonard (6)	4–5.30pm
Sat	29	Guild	10 Bell Training Day	Aston Clinton (10)	

DECEMBER 2014

Wed	3	ONB	Surprise Major	Harwell (8)	7.30–9pm
Tue	9	ONB	BP	Cholsey (8)	8–9.30pm
Fri	12	Chipping Norton	BP	Fulbrook (6)	7.30–9pm
Sat	13	EBSB	BP	Cookham (10)	4–6pm
Sat	13	CBB	BP	Great Horwood (6)	2.30–4pm (TBC)
Wed	17	ONB	BP	Sutton Courtenay (8)	2–3.30pm
Sat	20	Sonning	BP	White Waltham (6)	2 – 3.30pm
Sat	20	Chiltern	BP	Little Missenden (6)	7–9pm

JANUARY 2015

Sat	10	CN	BP & pub lunch	Chadlington (6)	11.00–12.30pm
Sat	17	Sonning	BP	Sandhurst, St. Michael (6)	9.30–11am
Wed	28	ONB	BP	Blewbury (8)	2.00–3.30pm

FEBRUARY 2015

Wed	4	ONB	SP	Cholsey (8)	8.00–9.30pm
Sat	7	Guild	Training Meeting	Long Crendon	
Thu	12	ONB	BP	Wallingford (10)	8.00–9.30pm
Sat	14	CN	BP & pub lunch	Hook Norton TBC (8)	11.00–12.30pm
Sat	21	Sonning	Ringling, Service, Tea, AGM, BP	Hurst(8)/Twyford (8) TBC	3–4pm, 4pm, 4.45pm, 5.15–7pm, 7–8.30pm
Wed	25	ONB	BP	Harwell (8)	2.00–3.30pm

MARCH 2015

Wed	7	CN	Ringing, Service, Tea, AGM	Churchill (8)	Ringing 3pm, Service 4pm, Tea 4.45pm, AGM 5.30pm
Sat	14	Guild	Spring General Committee Meeting	Steeple Aston, Banbury branch	
Sat	21	Sonning	BP	Sonning (8)	10.30 – 12 noon
Sat	21	ONB	SC & AGM	Harwell (8)	SC 3.00, Service 5.00 Tea 5.45, AGM 6.30pm
Wed	25	ONB	BP	Marcham (6)	2.00pm–3.30pm

APRIL 2015

Wed	1	Guild	YRA 2015/6	Programme Starts	
Wed	8	CN	BP	Charlbury (6)	7.30-9.00pm
Wed	8	ONB	SP	Drayton (8)	7.30-9.00pm
Sat	11	Guild	Radley Course	[Revised Date]	
Mon	13	ONB	BP	Chilton (6)	7.30-9.00pm
Sat	18	Sonning	SC (6-bell) followed by BP	Waltham St Lawrence (6)	4.00 – 6.00 6p.m. onwards
Thur	23		<i>St George's Day ringing</i>		

MAY 2015

Fri	1	CN	BP	Burford TBC (8)	7.30–9.00pm
Mon	4	Guild	8-Bell Striking Competition And Ringing Day	Central Bucks branch	
Wed	13	ONB	BP	Aston Tirrold (6)	7.30–9.00pm
Sat	16	Sonning	BP	Binfield (6)	10.30 – 12
Sat	16	Guild	AGM, Oxford City branch		Afternoon
Wed	27	ONB	BP	Cumnor (8)	2.00–3.30pm



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