

ODD BOB



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



Bill Butler, obituary page 4

Contents

Master's Mutterings	3
Bill Butler, obituary	4
Young Ringers' Half Term outing, 2nd June 2021	5
Tower and Belfry Maintenance Course.....	6
Flying Stone delivers pulling power	7
A footprint on Eternity	8
ART teaching revived	9
ODG 10-bell course, Shrivenham – 6 Nov 2021.....	10
The Three Rs in Safeguarding.....	11
Towers & Belfries Committee.....	12
Tower Maintenance Award (TMA)	13
Librarian's Report	14
Paying Peal Fees electronically	14
News from the Branches	15
Banbury	15
Bicester	16
Central Bucks	16
Chiltern	16
Chipping Norton.....	17
East Berks and South Bucks.....	18
Newbury	19
North Bucks	19
Old North Berks	20
Oxford City.....	20
Reading	22
Sonning Deanery	24
South Oxon.....	25
Vale of the White Horse	26
Witney and Woodstock	26
Guild Officers for 2021/2022.....	28
Branch Secretaries	29
Diary of Events for 2021/22.....	30

From your Editor...

Don't forget to check regularly the Guild website at odg.org.uk/ and your branch website. This Odd Bob and past issues are held on the Guild website.

The EBSB Fund Raising website address is: bellfund.org.uk.

Rob Needham

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

As members should expect, a record of their membership is maintained on a combination of paper and computer systems. These records are used solely for the administration of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers and for notification of future events to members. They are not made available to anyone for commercial purposes. If any member wishes to inspect the records held, please contact the Guild Secretary.

© 2021 Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

Master's Mutterings

St Salaberga of Laon (C600-660), had a daughter, Anstruda, who was terrified of storms. One day Salaberga was given a small bell, miraculously delivered to her by a cow, which she used to protect her daughter from her fear.

This curious snippet of information illustrates how the Roman custom of ringing a bell throughout the house when a storm threatened was transferred to a Christian tradition. In the Middle Ages, when performing wonders was a way of life and often the only challenge to hostile demons, larger church bells were known to be rung to drive harmful spirits out of the upper air while bands of people roamed through the fields and sounded small bells and other noise makers to drive demons away from crops.

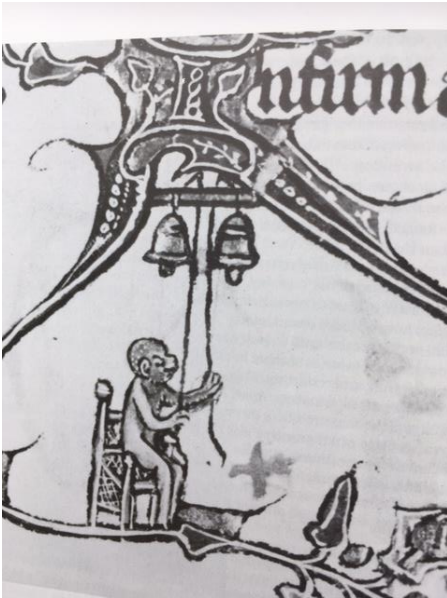
Gradually, and thankfully, ringing is resuming in many of our towers and if I imagine being transported back in time, I like to fancy that our bells have played a role in driving away the misery of the last 18 months and raised the good spirits of all those who hear them. Judging from the many positive words I have received I am in no doubt that our return to ringing is appreciated.

And we have much to celebrate!

Two bands from the Guild entered the Ringing World National Youth Contest: Our ODG ringers won the Method Ringing trophy for the second time and the Berks and Bucks Young Ringers did well in the Call Changes section. A huge amount of hard work and dedication goes into the competition from everyone involved - the ringers and their tutors, the hosts, judges and support network and it was no mean feat that, after all the disruption of Covid, the event took place at all and was such a resounding success. My congratulations, appreciation and thanks go to everyone involved.

The Rev. F.E. Robinson's Silver Commemorative Bowl has now been received into the care of our Guild. There is the story of its history in Issue 5760 of the Ringing World and on the Guild web pages. I have taken it to several events so that members are able to see and hold it themselves; it is really magnificent!

We now have a display table tablecloth for use throughout the Guild. Please contact me if you would like to use it for an event.



While a good number of towers within all the Branches are now ringing regularly for Sunday Services and practice nights, there remain some who are finding it more of a challenge. It is reassuring to see open days, barbecues, striking competitions and various other social events taking place which have helped keep the ringing activities and comradeship vigorous. However, there are a variety of reasons why some towers have not been able to pick up where they left off in March last year: revised service schedules, ageing ringers, changed priorities and unsuitable ventilation are just a few of the difficulties. We must become inventive and flexible and strive to help one another in any way we can to re-start ringing throughout the Guild. As I have said before, there are officers

and ringing friends who can advise and help, so please ask!

This little caricature of a ringer comes from a decorated medieval manuscript: sitting down, no clothes and a cute hairstyle... a new recruit perhaps?

Catherine Lane, Guild Master

Bill Butler, obituary

Mention his name in the ODG and ringers smile, for Bill meant someone special to us all. Our collective and individual memories embrace so much that he stood for: our friend, the very compass of our Guild. And now that he is no longer with us to turn to, we are in shadow and the Guild is muted, subdued without him.

Bill was respected and celebrated by so many ringers and for so many different talents. His was an eminent presence because of his skills, his astuteness, his judgement, his humanity. Bill's firm, gentle guidance with new ringers gave confidence and inspiration; more experienced ringers enjoyed the challenges presented; Guild officers knew that his wise counsel would always be a steadying hand on the rope.

Bill's writing, books, articles, records will remain accessible to everyone; He was relied upon to run courses and deliver lectures on a wide range of ringing topics. Many tower captains have benefitted from his Tower Leadership seminars

Those of us who are privileged to have known him and delighted in his company, will remember him with great affection and esteem.

William Butler was an outstanding gentleman and the ODG will forever be thankful for his influence, his contribution, his belonging with us.

He was elected to the ODG in 1946, initially ringing at Clewer, and remained a full member for 75 years. By 1954 he was secretary of the East Berks & South Bucks Branch, which at that time contained 44 towers. On moving to the Newbury Branch he was their Branch Ringing Master from 1961 until 1966. From 1970 he was the Guild General Secretary, followed by Guild Master serving for 6 years in each role. For 7 years from 1988 he was Librarian for the Guild, which reflected his love of books and his wide range of ringing interests. He had earlier written a fascinating and informative book on the first 100 years of the Oxford Diocesan Guild. Since 1981 he has been a Vice-President as well as Trustee of the Guild. In the 1970s he was heavily involved in the Education Sub-committee including organising the Easthampstead residential courses.

These interests carried over nationally on to his work with the Central Council where he served from 1957 to 1960 and then from 1966 onwards. He represented the Oxford Diocesan Guild until 2012, was a Life member from 2012 to 2018, and a Fellow since 2018. He attended 49 meetings. He served on the Education Committee from 1970 to 1987 (Chairman 1975 to 1986), the Library Committee 1978 to 1981 and 1990 to 2005 (Chairman 1999 to 2005) and the Biographies Committee from 2011 to 2014. He was an ex officio member of the Administrative Committee from 1975 to 1986 and 1999 to 2005.

Ken Darvill, Guild Secretary

Young Ringers' Half Term outing, 2nd June 2021

It was a brilliantly warm sunny day when we met at Long Wittenham for the young ringers outing. After a lot of wet weather the grass was long and soft to walk on, and it was tempting to ignore the pretty church where the six ancient bells were waiting for us. A dad and his 15 year old daughter had cycled there from Oxford and were sitting eating a picnic under a tree in the churchyard. We met up with friends, as we had in the past, and it was a great pleasure to chat with each other again at last. One could almost forget that we hadn't met like this or rung together for the 15 months of the pandemic.

We were twelve young ringers (between 8 and 16 years old) from five branches of the ODG. Fourteen adults were there to provide the transport (and to have a brief ring ourselves if there was time).

Those bells had previously been very out of tune and difficult to ring, partly

because of the long draft. But after a local appeal, the bells had been retuned, rehung and had rope guides installed. We were the first visiting ringers! We rang rounds, plain hunt and grandsire doubles.

Alban, a twelve-year-old ringer, had been asked to record the bells by his father, who sadly couldn't be there because he would be at work. He worked as a bell hanger, and had recently spent many months with a



trainer at hand, learning a new skill, that of bell tuner. These bells had been the first project that he had worked on alone. He was keen to hear how they sounded together. He should be proud! Those bells were really sweet and mellow to listen to (and easy to ring of course).

At the allotted time, we drove on to Brightwell where the parents of one of our young ringers had invited us to hold our refreshment break in their lovely back garden. They had erected a big gazebo for us and Daphne had once more made a tasty selection of cakes, biscuits and scones and served tea, coffee and soft drinks for us. A very happy time was spent there and it was a wrench to leave. But the eight bells awaited us.

Our young ringers had already regained some of their skill at ringing and the ringing at Brightwell was a definite improvement over the previous tower. A dad supervised a happy football kick-around in the churchyard and we had to call in whichever young ringers we needed for each piece of ringing. We rang rounds on eight, plain bob doubles, grandsire triples and Cambridge Minor (that with some adult help).

We must definitely do this again – in the summer holidays perhaps!

Susan Read, Old North Berks Branch Training Officer

Tower and Belfry Maintenance Course

St Mary's, Ivinghoe, Saturday 23rd October 2021

I cannot say how proud and pleased I was to have volunteered our tower as host for this course. Three years ago I attended the course at Weston-on-the-Green and before I left I said that if the committee would like to hold a course over my side of the county I was more than happy to host it. We managed to book a date for 2020 but that had to be postponed due to Covid restrictions, and we finally managed to secure a date for 2021.

The course was fully booked with people travelling from far and wide, many of the attendees hadn't been to St Mary's before. Our ringing chamber was large enough for all those who wanted to ring, and our belfry layout didn't deter anyone from climbing over the frame (we have quite a big step down from the three to the others). I don't think we've ever had that many people in the belfry before!





I can honestly say that I learned an awful lot on this course – there is nothing quite like having a bank of experts look at your tower. It's great to join the course and look at other towers – but having others look specifically at yours and spot things you haven't or offer advice on things you are unsure of is very useful and re-assuring. More

re-assuring is knowing that, as a fairly new Tower Captain and a total novice at maintenance, I'm not on my own – there is help and advice from the committee when I need it, all I have to do is ask – and ask I will! I already know that I need new wooden blocks to support the baldricks!



I would like to say a huge thank you to Tony and the Committee for running the course and to everyone who came along, and I'd like to finish with two pieces of advice:

- 1 Volunteer your tower – people are coming to learn not judge!
- 2 The best cleaning product I've found for keeping ringing rooms nice is the local Scout Group; ours do a community challenge which involves spring cleaning the church – I offer a tower tour in exchange for some Hoovering (works wonders!).

Corrall McCormack, Tower Captain, St Mary's, Ivinghoe

Flying Stone delivers pulling power

Bodicote bellringers' veteran airman, David Stone, completed his latest mission on June the 8th and delivered new pulling power to the St. John the Baptist tower in Bodicote.

With the morning sun shining down, David donned his royal blue, tower-team polo shirt to sally forth to Enstone airport where he hopped into the seat of his Piper Archer.

David's orders were to make the solo flight, heading North East to Nottingham airport to complete an airlift of new bell ropes. Safely on the ground,



David identified his contact dressed in a uniform similar to his own. Making rendez-



vous with 'Andy', despatched from his base at *Ellis Ropes* in Loughborough, the pair worked diligently to ensure the cargo of long-awaited new bell ropes was safely stowed aboard.

The return flight required David to revisit the skies over Loughborough, Leicester, Southam and Banbury before landing safely in the green countryside of West Oxfordshire. From his home airbase, David transported the ropes by road to Bodicote where they were eagerly received, all present and correct, by Bodicote's tower captain Martin Saunders. Martin completed the final part of the mission, taking the ropes off the ground again, to see them hanging proudly where they are now – in the tower.

Alicija Gilroy, Bodicote Tower Rep

A footprint on Eternity

In the church they are ringing a quarter peal (Alison Merryweather-Clarke's 1,000th). In my cottage nearby I am kneading bread, shaping the loaves I will be eating this week. As I push the dough, experiencing its elasticity and anticipating the pleasure of its smell and taste, I think, too, of the pleasure I experience listening to the sound of the bells.

Lockdown, initially, was a time of tremendous silence. The planes overhead ceased, the motorbike boy racers on the bypass ceased, cars driving through the village ceased. Instead of the clamour of the modern age, we shifted centuries and heard the world as it used to sound: the pulse and buzz of insects, the whistle and trill of birdsong, the surprisingly noisy shuffle of the hedgehog in the undergrowth. Nature reclaimed our towns and cities – goats pruned hedges in Wales, sheep played on children's roundabouts. For the first time in aeons, as a whole world, we watched and were reminded that we were only a very small, peripheral part held in the embrace of something huge.

People have always known this and are forever forgetting it. Hildegard of Bingen, who lived some 900 years ago, referred to herself as a feather on the breath of God, and I feel that these months of Covid have shown us just how like a feather we are, how this breath can both spin us around and uphold us. Like that of the butterflies, which returned because the road verges were not being cut, we were compelled to see that ours is a transient fragile life dependent on Nature's patterns, and the chance behaviour of others. We flicker temporarily, we make a small sound, we pass.

During the pandemic, at first, the church bells were completely silent. As the first impact wore off and we were allowed to open churches, a solitary ringer was allowed up the tower to announce the time of prayer. It struck me, on one of the Sundays I was there alone, that this ringing was more closely medieval than our usual ringing, that this physical church was medieval, and that these stone pillars and walls I have grown to love had already stood, had witnessed the bewilderment and terror of people in this place during that other pandemic, the plague. Passing under the lintel, stepping into the church, is like passing through a time portal. They stepped where we step, they stood where we stand, they heard what we hear. Many

parts of old churches have been renovated or modified, but the steps leading up to belltowers have invariably been left untouched, their surface curved where other feet have trod, the stone rubbed smooth by the feet of past centuries. Time travel is even more intense if you are a bellringer!

We are now allowed a full band of ringers on Sundays, and the feeling among us, in spite of anxiety at how much we have forgotten in the pause and silence of these past months, is joyful. Like the bells, we have been released from inactivity and silence into a circle of sound. As ringers, we are a community, others' bells greet us, our sound calls out to them, travels across time, spreads into the air around, leaving its reverberations for the village, for the birds and insects to feel, for the distant stars to sense.

Back in my kitchen my bread is risen; the peal at the church is finished. The ringers, no doubt, will feel satisfaction and joy as they follow each other down the spiral steps, their modern feet stepping into the curve and rubbing the stone that ancient feet rubbed. Perhaps this is all we can do, but perhaps it is all we need to do – like others before us, to bake our bread, to offer our ringing, and to become aware that although slight in the scheme of things, our actions make a mark and leave a small footprint on eternity.

Marysia Hermaszewska (Ducklington)

ART teaching revived

In March 2020, Paul Lewis led the last Association of Ringing Teachers M1 bell handling training course before ringing ceased in the face of COVID-19. It was fitting that Paul should lead the first M1 course in our new, cautiously optimistic world.

We met at Longcot in the Vale of the White Horse on Saturday 18th September. Our group included ringers who had taken the course before lockdown and had forgotten everything; towers without learners, towers with a great many learners and towers looking forward to recruiting some new learners. It included a member of the recently victorious ODG youth squad within a wide range of age and teaching experience.



We worked on approaches to teaching backstrokes, handstrokes and the combined stroke, both when a bell is down and when it is up. Then we looked at teaching ringing up and ringing down and critiqued our own handling styles. Finally we practised the skills of taking the rope from a learner, retrieving a dropped rope, and offering other forms of physical assistance.

A big learning point was the experience of role playing as the learner. The practical elements of the course were done in groups of three. After a demonstration from our tutors Paul and Nick, each of us would take a turn playing the learner, the teacher and the mentor. The teacher would explain the exercise and talk the learner through. The learner would try to forget their knowledge and follow the instructions from the tutor. The mentor would observe and add feedback for the teacher. As the learner it was interesting to find some of the exercises hard to do. Focusing on a micro-element of bell handling, or mirroring someone's hands doing an action, felt strange and required more of my brain than just ringing on autopilot. It made getting good instructions from the teacher more important. Seeing, listening, and feeling from the learner's perspective were very valuable

Excellent tuition, as always, was what we came for and was what made the day so enjoyable. As a bonus we had a perfect setting; we were the first training group to enjoy the brand-new kitchen, the elegant meeting/viewing gallery, and the new stone floor at Longcot. We had a superb lunch out in the churchyard, warmed by the autumn sunshine and under the benign eye of the white horse on the hill.

Many thanks to Paul and Nick Brett for teaching us; to Susan Read and Tony Crabtree who organised the day, to Mark Curnow who tied and untied the bells and to Lucy Laird and Revd Norma Fergusson for lunch and for making it possible to meet at Longcot.

Dorothy Hall and Elizabeth Mullett, Oxford

ODG 10-bell course, Shrivenham – 6 Nov 2021

What a day to remember - the first ODG course to take place since the start of the pandemic. It was wonderful to be back on real tower bells after so long.

Four very keen students, with Tony Crabtree and helpers, enjoyed an excellent day of 10-bell ringing, starting with plain hunt and moving on to a range of touches of Grandsire Caters as our bell-handling skills gradually re-emerged from the rust of the last 18 months or so.



For those for whom one bell is not enough, there was a chance to try handbells as well, thanks to Lindsay and Joe.

Over tea and cake (of course), we agreed that it had been a great day, and a perfect way to re-start the calendar of ringing events that we have all missed for so long.

Huge thanks and appreciation to Tony and the helpers; see you in a tower somewhere soon!

Sue Portsmouth

The Three Rs in Safeguarding

No, that's not a typo and yes, there are three Rs in safeguarding, in my mind at least.

Not surprisingly, all has been very quiet on the safeguarding front during the past almost two years but now towers are beginning to resume ringing for both service and practice, so our thoughts return to the need to keep the members of our band safe.

As a retired primary school teacher who spent a good deal of time concentrating on the traditional three Rs, I have been considering what the key precepts of Safeguarding might be. In my opinion they are Rights, Responsibilities and Rules.

The first R refers to the right that we all have to ring in a safe and secure environment where people treat each other with respect and have a regard for each other's needs (two more Rs there).

Of course with every right comes a responsibility - the second R. With the right to be treated respectfully and with consideration comes the responsibility to do the same for others.

Which brings me to the third R, rules. Most of the enquiries I get are about the Guild's Safeguarding rules, though in truth they are mainly recommendations which are made with the aim of helping the ringers in our towers to do a good job of living up to their responsibilities. Many people I speak to think that it's all about restrictions and exclusion when in fact it's quite the reverse, it's about safe inclusion for everyone including the most vulnerable. By necessity there are some basic recommendations that our leaders and trainers need to be particularly aware of, some of which involve a bit of paperwork, but the main responsibility is something that applies to all of us - the need to be aware. Fortunately, cases of abuse in ringing are rare but they do happen and it's up to all of us to be vigilant, primarily to ensure there is nothing wrong in our towers, but also to be aware of signs of abuse to our members elsewhere.

As I've said in the past, it really isn't onerous once things are in place and it's really just a vehicle to ensure the smooth and safe running of our towers. We can then get on to the important task of rebuilding that lovely supportive community that ringers are famous for, and have some fun. A safe and happy tower can only be a positive when it comes to that other R which is so important to us at the moment - Recruitment.

June Wells, Guild Safeguarding Officer

Towers & Belfries Committee

The T&B committee has met once since the last Odd Bob report using Zoom, in August. It should have been face-to-face, but the practicalities of the pandemic dictated otherwise.

At the end of September, we heard the sad news of the passing of Keith Vernon; one of our longest serving and most experienced members. He gave his time and expertise willingly and cheerfully and will be sadly missed.

After missing several courses to Covid, we finally held an October course at Ivinghoe – where we had planned to be a year earlier. Six committee members were there and the chance to chat face-to-face was very useful. We were made most welcome by our hosts at Ivinghoe and had twenty students from all over the ODG. Judging by the quality and variety of the discussions and debates, the students learned a lot. You will see a report from one of the participants elsewhere in this edition of Odd Bob. The next course is in the diary for 26th February at Radley and will be our popular rope splicing and rope management course. Please watch out for details and feel free to email the secretary tbsecretary@odg.org.uk or me tbchair@odg.org.uk if you would be interested in attending. If you would like to host a course, either for the Guild or locally, for your Branch, please get in touch.

The T&B page of the ODG website [Towers and Belfries - Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers \(odg.org.uk\)](http://odg.org.uk) has more new material since my last report and many useful links. More material is being loaded all the time. You will also find contact details and the services offered by our members.

We would still like more members. Thirteen may sound a lot, but we have three counties with 450+ towers on the patch so we are spread quite thinly! You don't have to be experienced but you do need to be interested in learning and gaining from the expertise of the other members.

The Tower Maintenance Award (TMA) is still active, despite the pandemic. Towers are encouraged to ask for an inspection. There is a full TMA report below. Since the last Odd-Bob report, Committee members have been active, within lockdown constraints, with TMA, grant inspections and general advice at the following places: Slapton, Ivinghoe, Witney, Stoke Poges, Cheddington, St Aldate's, Ruscombe, Langford, Broadwell, Little Horwood, Middleton Stoney, Kingham, Letcombe Bassett, Woodeaton, South Leigh, Charlton on Otmoor, Bletchingdon, Ambrosden, Kirtlington, Steeple Aston, Long Wittenham and Wavendon.

There have also been many "return to ringing" inspections done on behalf of or with the local ringers.

Tony Crabtree, T&B Chairman

Tower Maintenance Award (TMA)

Because of Covid and the effects of lockdown, there was little desire, need or ability for bands to do any work on their bells and therefore to have them inspected. So during the first lockdown the T & B committee decided that the renewal date for all awards due for renewal in 2020 would be extended for a year.

Since the last report in 2020 the activity in the Tower Maintenance Award Scheme has been minimal, with only one tower, South Leigh, having an inspection and achieving a Gold award. Congratulations to them.

Obviously, because of the pandemic, and despite the extension, the number of current awards has dropped considerably, from seventeen at the time of the last report to five now. We hope that as the restrictions ease and tower activity increases, towers will look to renew their awards. The number of towers participating or expressing an interest is eighty-eight, which is about twenty-one per cent of the four hundred and forty towers listed in the annual report last year. There have now been one hundred and fifty inspections (of which twenty-seven were preliminaries), resulting in one hundred and twenty-four awards (eighty-four Gold, twenty-six Silver, and fourteen Bronze).

The number of expired awards has risen, again because of the pandemic, and the T & B committee will try to contact the expired towers with the aim of persuading them to renew their awards. Since the last report one tower (South Leigh) has converted an expired Silver award to a Gold, so congratulations to them.

Again because of the pandemic, the number of branches having a tower in the “current awards” list is now only four out of the fifteen Guild branches, with Banbury having gained the predominant position. The placings are as follows:

Banbury	2	(Gold)
EBSB	1	(Gold)
Reading	1	(Gold)
South Oxon	1	(Gold)

Current Tower Maintenance Scheme Awards

Gold Award

Thame (St Mary)	South Oxon	Expires 31.10.21
Chalfont St Peter	EBSB	Expires 30.11.21
Stratfield Mortimer (St John)	Reading	Expires 30.11.21
Wardington	Banbury	Expires 31.12.21
Adderbury (St Mary)	Banbury	Expires 31.12.21

There are no current Silver or Bronze awards

The above results reflect the situation as at the 12th October and because of the effects of the pandemic (hopefully temporary), the list of expired towers has been omitted for the time being (if your tower is not on the list above, its award has expired).

John Davidge, T&B committee

Librarian's Report

There have been 9 library enquiries since Odd Bob issue 104. These have been about:

- Confirm that the peal at North Marston on 31/1/1932 was rung for ODG
- Frank West, ringer in peals at West Wycombe and High Wycombe in 1928
- Peal at Streatley on 27/5/1902: seventh extent method not specified
- Method in peal at Goring on 3/3/1902 – assume Plain Bob Minor
- Peal at Goring on 23/8/1913 – for whom was it the 50th peal? – J Bower
- Peal at Slough, 8/10/1927, membership information for George Wilson
- Footnote information for peal at Long Wittenham on 19/7/1930 – none printed
- Branch rules/Sonning Deanery Branch rules around 1975
- Fred Sharpe's book *The Church Bells of Berkshire* was borrowed.

Further annual reports have been added to the archive website (www.archives.odg.org.uk), 2-3 reports from each of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. The Sonning Deanery Branch are champion providers of data input work in recent years so congratulations to them. There is of course no reason that members of other branches should not make a contribution so if anybody would like to help, please let me know.

The library has a new dehumidifier to keep the humidity in the room in check. If the humidity rises above 75%, which it does occasionally, paper starts to have a slightly damp feel about it. With the dehumidifier operating, the level can be kept below 70% so keeping the paper in good condition. In certain weather conditions the machine extracts over a litre of water per week from the air.

If anybody would like to visit the library please let me know. Covid precautions are still in order, so be assured that the library will be well ventilated. However, as an alternative I am always happy to look up information, so please let me know if you have any queries.

Doug Beaumont, Guild Librarian

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

News from the Branches

Banbury

Banbury Branch remembers Revd. Sue Burchell

Members of the Banbury Branch of the ODG were shocked and saddened at the death, after a short illness, of our friend, fellow ringer, and Branch chairman Sue Burchell. Born in Yorkshire and studying at Sheffield University where she discovered the joys of bellringing, Sue had lived in Oxfordshire for over 30 years. Many of these were spent in the village of Great Tew, where she was very involved in the life of the community. She was tower captain there from 1985 until she moved away from the village to become priest-in-charge in the parish of St Leonard's, Banbury, following her ordination to the priesthood in 2008 and subsequent curacy.

Sue was looking forward to her retirement in August, giving her more time to pursue her bellringing activities and to complete the work on her doctorate. Her ready smile and cheerful, friendly disposition will be greatly missed by her many friends, not only in Oxfordshire but around the country. Sue's funeral took place at Great Tew on 28th September.

Liz Smith

Bloxham Tower News

After having had no ringing for about a year, we restarted in the middle of July. During the next two months we rang all eight bells for eight weddings and two funerals.

We only have half a dozen ringers at Bloxham, but we are ringing every Sunday morning. Colin Lee and his 9-year-old son Simon have been cycling over from Adderbury most Sundays to ring with us, so we often manage to ring all eight bells.

In addition to this, I have suddenly got three learners, so have started teaching again. They have already had two lessons and seem keen, so that is good news. As soon as they can handle, I hope to start Friday practices again.

Alan Griffin

Branch News

Following the relaxation of the covid lockdown in July the Branch has held three well attended 'return to ringing with tea and cake' practices at Cropredy and Horley, aimed at giving members a chance to meet up again and regain confidence in bell ringing.

Four quarters were rung in Sue Burchell's memory by local ringers at Banbury, Mollington, Great Tew and Bloxham.

On 18th September, the Branch hosted the *Guild Ringing Day*; nearly all of the towers were available and the day was a great success.

The Banbury branch held their half yearly meeting on 16th October with ringing at Great Tew and Sandford St Martin, followed by tea, cake, and meeting in Sandford church. The meeting was attended by nineteen members and one new member was elected. This was the Branch's first face to face meeting for two years.

Looking forward, the Branch is entering a team in the 10-bell striking competition in November and will have a social evening in March and hold the AGM on April 30th 2022.

Rosemary Hemmings

Bicester

Our main news since May's Odd Bob is that we've restarted Branch Practices – masked and carefully from August to October in Bletchingdon, Weston-on-the-Green [see photo on back cover], Middleton Stoney, Ambrosden, and Piddington. Fine weather meant that standing outside whilst others rang hasn't been too problematic and also meant that we could watch the International Space Station when it conveniently flew over us at Middleton Stoney towards the end of the practice!

Several towers rang or chimed 73 times on 5th July to acknowledge the NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers' Day. Steve Vickars attended the Ringing Recovery Champions webinar in August on behalf of the Branch.

Congratulations to Gerald Bushby from Weston-on-the-Green who rang his first quarter at Bletchingdon on 24th August and then followed it up with his second at his home tower on 7th October with an illustrious group of ringers – Tony Crabtree, conducting and ODG Deputy Master, Lesley Belcher, Chair of ART, Susan Read, head of the ringing school at Abingdon, Jeremy Adams, joint Ringing Master of Bicester Branch, and Steve Vickars, Branch Training Officer. It was especially appropriate since all have given much time and effort to re-starting the band at Weston and improving the ringing chamber and bells.

Our newest learner in Islip, Dinah Adams, has bravely visited two towers for Branch Practices – it's encouraging for all ringers when newcomers show enthusiasm and aptitude – especially difficult under the circumstances at the moment. And, at the other end of the spectrum we all enjoyed having our President, Willie Haynes, ringing Bob Minor with us at Weston!

Kathryn Grant

Central Bucks

[No news received – Ed.]

Chiltern

The Branch has not yet started monthly practices because most of our members are still somewhat nervous of mixing. However, most towers have started regular practices and service ringing. And a number of towers are hoping to attract new recruits this autumn.

The Branch is currently looking for both a new Secretary and a Treasurer. The Secretary is shortly to move out of the area and Roy Woodruff wants to retire, having been our very able Branch Treasurer for a remarkable 21 years.

Earlier this year the Branch received an approach from the *Chiltern Heritage Festival* to showcase bell ringing as a heritage activity during the *Festival* period, which is held each autumn throughout the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in late September/early October. Popular events are escorted walks, talks and privately curated visits to local houses and breweries – the latter are much in demand!

The Branch arranged three different open tower events, all with refreshments and an exhibition of bell related items and information. A quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung at Marsworth in the afternoon on Sunday 19 September to mark the opening of the *Festival*. There was surprise major ringing at Bledlow in the morning on Saturday 25 September, and the final event was on Monday 27 September in the evening, joining Great Missenden on their regular practice night. The *Festival* organisers had advertised all these events on their website and a number of people had registered their interest in them but, disappointingly, very few people turned up to them.

At long last the exciting news is that the restoration of the existing five bells at Slapton and the addition of a new treble, started on 11 October. It has been a huge undertaking for this small village to raise the funds for this, and at the same time having to prioritise major work to save part of the church from collapsing. The ODG towers and belfries committee, including our Branch Chairman Philip Dobson, have been much involved in the latter stages of the planning to assist the church PCC since they have no experience of what a bell restoration project involves. We look forward to the completion of the project.

Cheddington tower has been shrouded in scaffolding for much of this year although limited practices have been able to resume, albeit on a Friday night once work had stopped each week. But now the scaffolding has come down and Alan Masters hopes to return to their normal Thursday night practices sometime in November.

Clare Carpenter

Chipping Norton

The Chipping Norton Branch AGM was held on Saturday 26th June at Ascott-under-Wychwood with 16 branch members and the Guild Master, Katie Lane, present. The *Claire Tarrant Award* was presented to Daniel Austin of Hook Norton, in recognition of his commitment to ringing in the branch. New officers were elected to the roles of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Ringing Master while the Branch Representative, Website Manager and Public Relations Contact were re-elected.

Ringing across the branch continues to build slowly. Regular monthly branch practices started again in July at Shipton-under-Wychwood and have been held in Chipping Norton, Burford and Spelsbury, each with 12 or more ringers in attendance.

Practice nights have resumed at Burford, and continue at Charlbury, Hook Norton, and Shipton-under-Wychwood. Shipton was pleased to ring Bob Triples for two branch members celebrating a special birthday. They also rang for an afternoon tea fundraising event in aid of the church roof which raised around £1500, and for the start of the COP26 conference on Saturday 30 October.

Christine Harris

East Berks and South Bucks

Ringling in the Branch is gradually getting back to something like normal. There is ringing in most towers now for Sunday service. Some bands resumed practices as soon as they were allowed, others have been more hesitant. It seems that most towers have fewer ringers so the level of ringing is not yet back to what it was before lockdown. During the summer there were many weddings delayed from 2020. Tower captains used the branch mailing list to advertise for wedding ringers. The knock-on effect of this was that ringers from different towers were ringing together and helping each other out.

The first in-person branch event was the 6-bell striking contest held at Penn in August. Three bands entered, and the judges, Ken and Angela Darvill, gave the following results: 1st High Wycombe 16 faults, 2nd Amersham 26 faults, 3rd Clewer 40 faults. It was so good to see ringing friends again after such a long wait.

Branch practices were held at Hughenden and Beaconsfield in September, each supported by only nine ringers, but the Half Yearly Meeting on 9th October at Clewer proved much more popular with 21 members in attendance. Vikki Bulbeck was elected as Deputy Ringing Master, allowing Angela Darvill to take a well-earned rest, and five new members were elected to the Guild.

Sadly, Hughenden bells are currently out of action because of restoration work being carried out on the tower roof, which will take until at least March. Of even more significance is the situation at West Wycombe where there is a ring of eight bells. St Lawrence church is currently closed and the congregation is worshipping at a smaller church in the centre of the village. St Lawrence is an iconic building standing on the top of a hill with its distinctive golden ball on top of the tower. The tower captain, Lyn Lee, had worked hard in the couple of years before lockdown



recruiting and training new ringers who now have no access to their own bells. A public meeting on 11th October shared various options for the future of the church, one of which was to make it into a Festival Church with a management committee working alongside the PCC and for the church to be used for other purposes to generate income, but whether this will happen or not remains to be seen. Either way, repair work

on the tower would be required before the bells can be rung again.

Pat Newton

Newbury

Although mask wearing, open windows and other precautions are still in place in many towers, we are now back to normal practices and Sunday ringing in the Newbury Branch; there have also been some quarter peals and one or two peal attempts.

Monthly practices have resumed with an inaugural post-lockdown, “let’s get back to ringing” event held fittingly at Hampstead Norreys, giving members a chance to ring on the newly rehung six. As a ground floor ring with plenty of space and ventilation, we also held our Branch meeting there, and followed the ringing with the presentation of the *Marshall Shield* award to John and Sheila Craig, who organised the fundraising and project-managed the rehang of the bells.



Meanwhile, open-house lunches, treasure hunts and other fund-raising events have been organised by Maureen Velvick and the East Garston community for their anticipated rehang and repairs to the badly cracked treble.

Our monthly mid-week ring and pub lunch, organised by Sue Smith, has also restarted, with an excellent turnout at Hannington in September and most recently at Pangbourne. These events are very popular, with a relaxed, sociable atmosphere and the chance for a variety of ringing on six.

As we go to press with this article, we are saddened by the loss of Thatcham’s Bill Butler, known across the Guild and indeed, throughout the bellringing community. [See *Bill’s obituary on page 4.*]

In the Branch we now look forward to the Christmas season’s ringing activities with eager anticipation.

Mark Robins

North Bucks

[No news received – Ed.]

Old North Berks

2021 has been another quiet year for the Old North Berks branch. We have only had two actual branch events, which were both in September. The first was our barbecue, which was held in the garden of Stuart and Naomi Gibson, and our thanks go to them for organising such an entertaining event for more than fifty members and partners. As usual the food was excellent and it was wonderful to see so many there after such a long period of inactivity.

The second event was our branch 6-bell striking competition, which we held at the ground floor ring of Steventon. The judges were Martin Rice of Newbury and Mark Robbins of Hungerford, and we thank them for their expert advice and comments. Six teams entered the competition and it was won by Wallingford. Regrettably the fuel shortage prevented them from taking part in the Guild's competition. Fortunately the weather was fine and, after an evensong service to remember Claire Ward (former tower captain of Steventon), we were able to stay outdoors for a superb ringers' tea.

I am very sorry to report that we have lost two long standing members of the Branch, Helen Diserens of Wallingford and Roy Thorpe of Brightwell, who will both be sadly missed throughout the Branch.

The Branch Ringing School, which is organised by Susan Read, began again in Abingdon at the end of September for an hour each Saturday morning. There are four new learners so far and it is hoped that we will have more in the not too distant future.

The barn dance and supper in Harwell Village Hall, which was scheduled for November has been further postponed until next November. It is hoped that we will be able to hold our usual New Year's Day ringing event and recommence branch practices in January 2022, however this will all depend upon any Covid-19 restrictions imposed at the time.

Gill Loyd

Oxford City

The Oxford City branch towers have all made their own choices about how to restart ringing. At least four towers have been very keen and quickly got practices and Sunday ringing up and running with various numbers as restrictions eased. Quarter peals and attempts have been numerous, and it has been good to see so many ringers returning.



An excellent church open day was held in September at **St Mary's**, Wheatley for all societies and organisations connected with the church. The ringers manned a stall, had handbells, tower bell ringing and Tony Crabtree brought his mini-ring along. This was received positively and exposed 30-40 people to bell ringing and allowed some recruitment.

Brian Lowe has been church warden and tower captain of **St Giles**, Horspath for more years than he cares to remember. It seemed fitting that his ringers organised a surprise ring on the evening of his 80th birthday while he was happily enjoying a pint in his favourite hostelry. He was informed that the bells were being rung and he hot footed it down to the church to see who was ringing without his knowledge! Having ascertained

that he was sober, he joined the band to celebrate his special day.

Headington rang five bells until 20th June 2021 on Wednesdays and Sundays, and also managed to keep the virtual practices going most weeks with those not in the tower. In June Edward James Scott-Brown was born, and attended the virtual practice a few days later with his parents. From the 19th June we were able to ring on all eight bells again, for practices, weddings and services. We carried on with *RinginRoom* for a while, for those not yet ringing in the tower, and then for occasional practices and branch practices. Various quarter peals were attempted on *RinginRoom* and in the tower, in honour of Edward, Beatrice (who was born earlier this year) and Fr. Darren's 10th anniversary as vicar. We succeeded with a QP in the tower on Sunday 8th August for Fr. Darren. This was also Annika Everett's first QP on the tenor, and the first Steve and Annika had rung together.

St Giles, Oxford, was one of the earlier towers to restart ringing as they are able to well-ventilate the ringing chamber. They have discovered that after morning services is a good time for some extra ringing that fits in with the church calendar and is appreciated by those who have attended the service. During June, July and August seven out of eight doubles QPAs were scored, including several firsts. Eight-bell ringing resumed at the end of August, and after a prolonged period of not ringing on more than six bells, this has been surprisingly difficult. They are happy to have not lost any ringers during the Covid period, but with low numbers beforehand are very pleased to have had a successful recruitment campaign with six newcomers,

including two lapsed ringers. Sara Jones was one of the ODG squad who went to the RWNYC in Worcester (although not in the competition band). On 5th October, their tower captain, John Pusey scored his 1000th quarter peal, Plain Bob Royal rung on handbells in his garden, this total being made up of 780 on tower bells, 215 on handbells and 5 online (60 of the non-tower quarters having been rung during the period of Covid restrictions).

Cowley bells will soon be able to be rung again having had a new toilet installed which temporarily blocked tower access. They would like to make visitors aware of these new facilities.

Handbells have also continued well, with several quarter peals (and a few peals) occurring on a weekly basis. The local nature reserve is a favoured location.

Steve Everett, the temporary branch ringing master, has provided valuable support to many towers during the Covid period, both with teaching new recruits and taking part in QPAs. He returned to his home in Turkey at the end of October. We would like to extend our thanks to him.

Rachel Croft

Reading

Recently we have been greatly saddened by the death of Keith Vernon early in October. He died suddenly in hospital after a short illness and he will be missed across the Branch and the wider ringing communities. Keith was our treasurer for over 30 years and a regular presence at St Giles in Reading and branch events. Our thoughts are with Joyce and the family.

Ringing in Reading Branch is up and running in many towers. One or two towers are still facing restrictions but there are numerous practices and plenty of service ringing even if there have been more cancellations than pre-pandemic. Here is particular and encouraging news from a few towers in the branch.

Combined Swallowfield and Shinfield tower report

As the return to ringing approached, it became increasingly clear that a number of ringers active before the pandemic were not planning to return, leaving our respective towers seriously depleted and largely unviable. Following an afternoon meeting at a local pub, it was agreed that as the two churches were already joined through a single benefice, with Sunday services alternating between the two locations, we would agree to merge the two towers and have joint practices and Sunday ringing. Shinfield used to practice on a Monday while Swallowfield used to practice on a Thursday, so to avoid any accusation of bias a third day was chosen - Tuesdays. Sunday ringing (and the following Tuesday evening practice) now switches between the two towers, with practice ringing from 7.30 - 9.00 pm. We maintain two tower captains and committees, and ringing is led by respective captains in each tower - but we have definitely found the solution to be a positive one, providing an injection of some much-needed ringers to each of the towers.

We have had a good combined turn out and a positive response from members. It's great to be able to ring again (despite many useful hours on *Ringling Room!*) and to see old friends again in the flesh and afterwards in the pub. We continue to be cautious, restricting numbers in the tower when ringing is ongoing, wearing face masks and keeping a draft blowing through the ringing chamber at all times by opening doors.

St Bartholomew's Nettlebed

Sadly we had been struggling to get enough ringers for a couple of years pre-Covid due to the usual reasons of age, health and some moving away.

In May I had a request from Jack Page to ring a peal at the end of lockdown in May. Our priest-in-charge was very happy for this to go ahead. I made a short recording of the beautiful striking and put it on the village Facebook [*aka Meta*] page. The result was not only that they achieved their very long peal, but three people showed an interest in learning, and another to return to ringing after about a ten year gap.

As soon as we were allowed more than six people inside, the Ellis family, who usually ring at St Mary's in the Butts, the Bennetts from St Giles, Reading, and Jenny Page from St Peter's Caversham volunteered to help, as some of them were not allowed back in their own towers at that time except to ring four bells. Our priest-in-charge and church warden were very agreeable for us to ring all six bells, which was extremely helpful.

We have been ringing most weeks since the beginning of July and stretching everybody including me as I have relearned Norwich Surprise Minor which I hadn't rung since the 1990s.

With so many thanks to Pete Ellis, Jenny Page and Steve Bennett for giving their time, our learners are making good progress.

Purley

With the help of John and June Wells, Purley have started practicing again and will hopefully be back to Sunday service ringing soon. Support has come from other local towers and this has been a good example of pooling resources to help a tower to return to ringing.

Branch Activity

On a Branch level we had a very successful 6-bell striking competition with six towers taking part, Tilehurst coming out on top. Unfortunately, no team was available to take part in the Guild competition.

We are also looking forward to our first Branch practice at Shiplake which hopefully will have been a great success by the time this Odd Bob is published.

Lindsey Barker

Sonning Deanery

Our Branch Ringing Master, Nigel Mellor, recently conducted a Tower Recovery Ringing review. The survey found that ringing has resumed across the branch, but most towers reported a loss of ringers and approximately half are unable to ring all their bells. Only 4 towers have retained all their ringers. Out of 17 churches, 3 churches are not ringing for either practice or services, although ringing will resume at Barkham once the nesting birds have left! The resumption of branch practices was welcomed by most and consideration will now be given as to which churches would be best to use to minimise covid risks. Dates will hopefully be scheduled soon.

Binfield Tower Update

Having lost 4 ringers over the pandemic period due to various non-covid reasons, we are now just a band of 4. Currently one of the 4 is out of action. Therefore

recruitment of new ringers is paramount.

Our local LETS group (Local Exchange Trading System www.bracknell-lets.co.uk) recently held a *What's Happening in Binfield* event, which was jointly facilitated with the *Foxes Den Community Cafe*. Twenty-three local organisations had stalls, including Binfield Tower to promote bell ringing and recruit new learners. Five people signed up on the day, which was fabulous. We held a new learners introduction session one Saturday and 3 of the learners attended (one was unable to make the date and one dropped out). The learners were taken up the tower to see the bells and then had a go at ringing the backstroke, with excellent instruction from Ken Davenport. All three did very well and were keen to join us for usual weekly practice the following Monday.

Jan Glen



Learner Dave Adams & teacher Steve Wells

Sonning Tower Update

During the Covid lockdowns our captain, Pam Elliston, initiated and maintained weekly social and quiz sessions on *Zoom*, followed by online ringing practice using *RingingRoom*. These were held on Thursdays, our usual practice night, and greatly helped to keep members in touch and interested in ringing. Only one of our members has decided not to return to ringing in 2021.

We have been ringing at the tower since the lockdown eased in early August, first only for Sunday service, with a maximum of 6 ringers and good ventilation in the ringing room, plus hand sanitization when we swapped to ringing a different bell. More recently we have restarted our Thursday evening practices, although they are not as well attended as they were before the pandemic.

In September we set up a Bell Ringers stall at the *Sonning Show*. On the stall there was plenty of information about bell ringing, including the pop-up banner that can be borrowed from the branch secretary. There was a set of small handbells, and some of the visitors enjoyed ringing simple patterns with help from the ringers on the stall. The most popular were the free competitions such as, "Guess the length of the bell rope" and, "Guess the weight of the cake".

We have rung two quarter peals this year, when Katie Thomas successfully rang the treble to Bob Doubles, thereby ticking off one of her last items at Level 3 of *Learning the Ropes*.

In October, the daughter of one of our ringers has started to learn to ring using the ART *Learning the Ropes* scheme. She has had three training sessions and then was able to join in (with help) to ring rounds with the other ringers at our practice night.

Rob Needham

A number of towers rang on the eve of the COP26 Conference on 30th October at 6pm, including Sonning and St Paul's Wokingham.

Jan Glen

South Oxon

Most of our towers have returned to ringing following the release from lockdown – but some are struggling. One has a badly woodworm infested roof beam and is facing the danger of rotten pieces of timber falling onto the bells. Fund raising efforts are underway to carry out the extensive repair work. Other towers are battling with ventilation problems, and others are restricted by their size. But of course we are carrying on!

Two of our towers have reported new service time patterns – meaning that ringers will have to rise early from their beds on a Sunday morning to be in their ringing chambers for an 8.30 am start! Several have enjoyed a surfeit of weddings – with ringers being drafted in from neighbouring towers. A great spirit of co-operation exists between our towers.

Some of our younger ringers have now departed for university – it is pleasing to note that one young person from St Mary's, Thame has joined the university ringing society and is enjoying ringing at towers around London and other wild jaunts organised by the ULSCR!

The majority of our towers are reporting a shortage of ringers which has led to various recruitment drives. Aston Rowant held a “Tower Tours and Cream Tea Afternoon” in August – and were almost overwhelmed with visitors. Sadly no new recruits were forthcoming. Dorchester’s positive approach throughout lockdown, using a combination of handbells and *ringingroom.com* has paid dividends – they have managed to recruit and retain two ringers who are keen to transfer all the theory gained to actually ringing the bells.



Masked ringers at St Mary's, Chalgrove

It is very encouraging to receive positive comments from within our village and town communities. One of our towers (who have had life made very difficult in the past) commented, “We have had so many people say how wonderful it is to hear the bells again and how happy it has made them. It has been amazing; not one complaint.” Long may it continue.

Jane Willis

Vale of the White Horse

[No news received – Ed.]

Witney and Woodstock

St James the Great, South Leigh

It is not every day that a Bishop comes to St James’. The last time was in 2007, to mark the centenary of the installation of the 1907 present ring of bells. It was therefore with excitement that we received the news that the Bishop of Dorchester, the Rt. Revd. Gavin Collins, would be visiting on 25th July, St. James’ patron saint’s day.

This special event was well deserved. The year-long refurbishment of the ringing chamber and work in the belfry and clock tower, which had culminated in the tower receiving a Gold award following a Tower Maintenance Inspection, was to be celebrated with a formal reopening and a rededication of the bells. We bellringers, very rusty after a year with no practice, swung into action, and with the support of fellow ringers from North Leigh, Eynsham, Witney and Kirtlington, we put on our best show on all eight bells for the first time since before lockdown. Some sixty people were there to enjoy it before and after the service in the churchyard. Attendees were then invited to have a go at chiming a bell, while the Bishop himself chimed the early fourteenth century Sanctus bell.

On the day, at a ringers' lunch provided by Heather Horner in Anne Peake's lovely garden, Martin Spurrier was presented with a gift of *Fifty English Steeples* as a token of thanks for all his hard work as our Steeple Keeper. The story does not quite end there. Having nominated Martin for the *Westley Award*, a national award which aims to encourage involvement in bell maintenance and the sharing of knowledge, we were delighted to hear that he had received 'Highly Commended' from the panel of judges. A remarkable achievement given his relatively recent involvement in belfry matters.

We are always delighted to welcome visiting bands of ringers, and no sooner was this possible after restrictions were lifted than we received our first request from a band on tour, two of whom were ringers from Birmingham Cathedral.

On 16th October, a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles was successful. The quarter peal marked the 90th birthday of Phyllis Broome, a former South Leigh resident and author of the two publications *South Leigh Remembered*.

We have been most grateful for tuition and support from Andy Goldthorpe and Alison Merryweather-Clarke, as well as for the generous offer of extra teaching from Hugh Deam with his Marston band of ringers on three Saturday afternoons since September.

Please note the changed practice night: Wednesday 7.30 – 9.00. All welcome.

Evadne Vallance

Guild Officers for 2021/2022

Master	Catherine Lane <i>master@odg.org.uk</i> 4 The Sidings, Station Road, Wheatley, OX33 1FU 01865 874026 / 07885586104
Deputy Master	Tony Crabtree <i>depmaster@odg.org.uk</i> (01793 784064 and 07860 835903)
General Secretary	Ken Darvill <i>secretary@odg.org.uk</i> 3 Copners Way, Holmer Green, High Wycombe, HP15 6SQ (01494 713217)
General Treasurer	Stuart Gibson <i>treasurer@odg.org.uk</i> The Croft, Milton Hill, Steventon, Abingdon, Oxon. OX13 6BD (01235 820491)
Assistant Treasurer	Susan Read <i>deptreasurer@odg.org.uk</i> 30 St Amand Drive, Abingdon, OX14 5RG (01235 529779)
Librarian	Douglas J Beaumont <i>librarian@odg.org.uk</i> 184 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, Berks, RG4 7ND (0118 946 1714)
Report Editor	Heather Browning <i>reporteditor@odg.org.uk</i> 41 Kiln Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berks RG40 3PJ
Odd Bob Editor	Rob Needham <i>oddbob@odg.org.uk</i> 15 Bodmin Road, Woodley, Reading, Berks RG5 3RZ (0118 9267724)
Peal Secretary	Ken Davenport <i>peals@odg.org.uk</i> 47 Brookside, Wokingham, Berks. RG41 2ST (0118 9786554)
Public Relations Officer	Vacant <i>pro@odg.org.uk</i>
Membership Secretary	John F Payne <i>membership@odg.org.uk</i> 53 Walker Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2QU (01628 624490)
Joint Minutes Secretaries	Elizabeth Mullett <i>minsec@odg.org.uk</i> Lindsay Powell <i>minsec@odg.org.uk</i>
Webmaster	Andrew Goldthorpe <i>webmaster@odg.org.uk</i> <i>odg.org.uk</i>
GUILD WEBSITE Server Manager	Richard Stanworth <i>serveradmin@odg.org.uk</i> 11 Valley Road, Buckingham, MK18 7BW (01280 814172)
Assistant Server Mgr	[Vacant] <i>serveradmin@odg.org.uk</i>
Safeguarding Officer	June Wells <i>safeguarding@odg.org.uk</i> 15 Lytham End, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks, RG31 6FG
Guild Stewards	Bobbie May (<i>Newbury, Reading, Sonning Deanery</i>) <i>steward@newbury.odg.org.uk</i> Tony Crabtree (<i>Oxford City, Vale of the White Horse, Witney & Woodstock</i>) <i>steward@city.odg.org.uk</i> 1 Stallpits Road, Shrivenham, Swindon, SN6 8BG (01793 784064 and 07860 835903) Colin Lee (<i>Banbury, Bicester, Chipping Norton</i>) <i>steward@banbury.odg.org.uk</i> 38 Rochester Way, Twyford, Banbury, OX17 3JX (07743 775150) Ruth Groves (<i>Central Bucks, Chiltern, North Bucks</i>) <i>steward@chiltern.odg.org.uk</i> The White Cottage, Hyde Heath, Amersham, Bucks HP6 5RW (01494 783978) Patricia Newton (<i>EBSB, Old North Bucks, South Oxon</i>) <i>steward@southoxon.odg.org.uk</i> The White House, 11 Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Watlington, OX49 5SX (01844 352926)

General Committee members

Angela Darvill
Bobbie May

Wenda Fowles
Ken Wakefield

Mike Hopkins Till

Central Council Representatives *ccreps@odg.org.uk*

John A Harrison

Lucy Hopkins Till

Graham John

Alan Marchbank

Timothy G Pett

Towers and Belfries Sub-committee

Chairman

Tony Crabtree *tbchairman@odg.org.uk*

1 Stallpits Road, Shrivenham, Swindon, SN6 8BG (01793 784064 and 07860 835903)

Secretary

Anthony Williamson *tbsecretary@odg.org.uk*

3 Church Cottages, West End, Combe, Oxon, OX29 8NS. (01993 891 680)

Learning and Development Workgroup

Chairman

Colin Newman *edchairman@odg.org.uk*

Secretary

Robert Newton *edsecretary@odg.org.uk*

The White House, 11 Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Watlington, OX49 5SX (01844 352926)

EBSB Fund Raising website address is: *bellfund.org.uk*

Branch Secretaries

Banbury

Rosemary Hemmings *secretary@banbury.odg.org.uk*

Bicester

Kathryn Grant *secretary@bicester.odg.org.uk*

Church Key Cottage, The Walk, Islip, Oxon, OX5 2SD (01865 373972)

Central Bucks

Anne Pratt *secretary@cbucks.odg.org.uk*

Mead House, School Lane, Chearsley, Aylesbury, HP18 0BT (01844 201611)

Chiltern

Philip Dobson (acting Sec.) *secretary@chiltern.odg.org.uk*

Chipping

Jenny Lewis *secretary@chippy.odg.org.uk*

Norton

Galliards, Hixet Wood, Charlbury, OX7 3SB (07989 509873)

East Berks &

Patricia Newton *secretary@ebsb.odg.org.uk*

South Bucks

The White House, 11 Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Watlington, Oxon. OX49 5SX (01844 352926)

Newbury

Mark Robins *secretary@newbury.odg.org.uk*

13 Sarum Way, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG170LJ (01488 683645)

North Bucks

Brian Baldwin *secretary@northbucksbranch.odg.org.uk*

28 Passmore, Milton Keynes MK6 3DZ (07899 795500)

Old North Berks

Gillian Loyd *secretary@onb.odg.org.uk*

Dornie Lodge, Bessels Lea Road, Blewbury, OX11 9NW (01235 850459)

Oxford City

Rachel Croft *secretary@city.odg.org.uk*

Reading

Lindsey Barker *secretary@reading.odg.org.uk*

Sonning Deanery

Jan Glen *secretary@sdb.odg.org.uk*

15 Beehive Lane, Binfield, RG12 8TX

South Oxon

Jane Willis *secretary@southoxon.odg.org.uk*

Briarwood, Haseley Road, Little Milton, Oxfordshire, OX44 7QE (01844 279468)

Vale of White Horse

Lucy Laird *secretary@vowh.odg.org.uk*

32 Colton Road, Shrivenham, Swindon, Wilts, SN6 8AZ (01793 783519)

Witney &

Woodstock

Andrew Goldthorpe *secretary@witneyandwoodstock.odg.org.uk*

(07709 461597)

Diary of Events for 2021/22

The latest version of the Guild website now publishes dates of both Guild and Branch events, provided a Branch submits its dates to the ODG webmaster. Therefore ODD BOB will not publish dates here unless there is strong representation from the ODG to do so.



September's BP at Weston-on-the-Green



Young Ringers' Half Term outing, [see page 5]