

ODD BOB



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



South Oxon Branch Outing to Corfe Castle

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Education Committee



STEEPLE ASTON ONE-DAY COURSE

Saturday 28th October 2017

9.15 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.

This course will provide tuition & practice on basic methods from Plain Hunting to Plain Bob Major.

Applications are invited from Guild Members only.
Priority will be given to members who have not attended before.

Cost: £25

For further details and an application form please email
steepleastoncourse@odq.org.uk

or write, with SAE to

Richard Stanworth, 11 Valley Road, Buckingham MK18 7BW

The Application Form will also be available on the Guild Web Site
www.odq.org.uk

Closing Date For applications is 15th September 2017

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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 October 2017.

Rob Needham

Data Protection Act 1998

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.

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Master's Mutterings

This issue is due to be distributed at the Guild AGM. Once again, an imaginative array of activities has been planned to celebrate all that is enjoyable and interesting about ringing. The meeting itself will be taking place, at which I sincerely hope that all vacancies will be filled. The various activities undertaken by the Guild rely on people being willing to hold positions of responsibility, and the tasks when spread out are much more manageable. If we do end up with vacancies, do consider whether you might be able to help.

It has been encouraging to read in branch newsletters and websites about work being undertaken in towers across the Guild. Previously unringable towers are now ringing – and others have been put in good shape for years to come. The fourth “object” of the Guild is “the promotion of interest in the care of all the bells within the Diocese”. This covers not only our own bells, but also those of any neighbouring villages where there are no ringers and the bells are in a poor state. Often the incumbent or PCC would like to do something but don't know how. We have a Towers and Belfries sub-committee that can respond to requests from parishes, and is willing to offer advice when asked.

Care of bells includes regular maintenance as well as larger jobs – we are encouraged to keep a record of monthly, six-monthly and annual tasks, as it is very easy for time to pass by and jobs to get forgotten. You may find that some of your ringers are enthusiastic about maintenance tasks, and again the more the jobs are spread around, the less of a burden they become. Setting aside a regular monthly maintenance session, and showing people what to do, is a good way of tackling this. The Towers and Belfries sub-committee can visit and inspect as part of its Tower Maintenance Award, and if you pass muster you will get a certificate to display!

Finally, I would just like to mention the young ringers of the Guild, many of whom ring together in different branches and towers, run their own ringing, and arrange quarter peals and peals. Some of them also attend the monthly practices

we hold in preparation for entering a band in the Ringing World National Youth Competition, which this year is on 1st July in Birmingham. We have an excellent group of youngsters, working hard on their ringing and striking and supporting each other, and I wish them every success on the day.

Hilarie Rogers, Guild Master

Education Matters

The Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) has developed many good ideas and resources to support ringing teachers and their learners. One of their initiatives is to encourage towers to work together as an ART Teaching Hub. In the summer of 2016, the five towers of Hurst, Sonning, Twyford, Waltham St Lawrence and Wargrave, all close to each other geographically to the east of Reading, formed the Loddon Ringing Hub.



The five towers had already been helping and assisting each other; as an ART hub it gave the opportunity to formalise the links and allow the towers without ART trained teachers to access the *Learning the Ropes* (LtR) scheme.

All new learners in each tower now follow the ART *Learning the Ropes* scheme. This structured learning programme starts from the very first bell handling session, and follows a progression through a series of levels, a bit like grades in music. A student reaching the top level, Level 5, can competently handle a bell, ring up and down in peal and has mastered basic change ringing. They will have rung 6 quarter peals including one of Plain Bob Minor inside. The Loddon Hub has three learners who are now close to achieving this, two of whom have only been ringing for 18 months. All the learners benefit from the structure of the scheme and having specific goals to work towards.

The teachers share the teaching in all the towers, and some specific practices are held to help learners master skills for a particular level. These have included having three or four students concentrating on dodging and place making for level 2, or plain hunt and covering for level 3. Students can also gain Loddon Hub certificates for attaining specific goals, not necessarily as part of the LtR scheme.

The Friday evening Young Ringers' practice at Twyford, is supported by teachers and ringers from all the Hub towers. The young learners are making good progress as a result, with 12 year old Matthew recently ringing his first quarter. Joining together in this way benefits both learners and teachers; teaching ringing cooperatively is a very positive way to operate, and is definitely more fun. Also as the experienced ringers come together more often, we find we are ringing more quarters and experience some better ringing for ourselves, than if we worked in isolation in our own towers.

In June Sonning Deanery Branch is hosting an ART Module1 course (learning how to teach bell handling and bell control), so that more of our ringers can become trained teachers.

Jacquie Hazell, Education Sub-Committee member, and Vinni Sullivan

Sarah Beacham Youth Group Award

The Sarah Beacham Youth Group Award is offered by the *Association of Ringing Teachers* (ART) for outstanding work with groups of young ringers. I applied on behalf of the Abingdon Society of Bell Ringers. In our application I explained the background of the Society and various aspects of our work with young people:

Firstly how we recruit young people and train them with daily ringing lessons (“intensive training”) over a week or two in the school holidays. We have held nine such courses between 2013 and 2016 and taught 18 young people and seven adults on those courses. Having a full simulator in our tower means we can tie all the bells and produce the sound of the bells using a computer. We turn off the two bells we are using to teach handling and use the remaining eight bells to hold a practice for our other young ringers whilst the intensive training is going on. It is a bit chaotic but good humoured and helps the new young people to become assimilated into the group better than if they were taught on their own.

Secondly I explained how we have organised outings for all the young ringers in the area in each school holiday since 2012. We make sure that every outing involves not only some ringing but also a social activity of some sort, so that all the young ringers get to know each other, whatever stage their ringing has reached. It has resulted in a far stronger group of friends and young ringers in our branch than in any other area of the Oxford Diocesan Guild.

Thirdly the encouragement for many of our better ringers to attend ART courses to learn how to be teachers of ringing themselves, so that when we run intensive ringing training we have a number of trained teachers available. Two of our teachers including me are fully qualified teachers, and four others are part qualified. Some are able to help on daytime courses such as those for our young ringers, and others who are of working age are more useful for evening courses such as that planned for summer 2017.

In addition to the tower bell ringing we do, we run a tune ringing team which starts each October and practices carols for the Christmas season after which we disband until the following October. We invite all our young ringers to join the hand-bell team, and most do. With our silver waistcoats and rhythmical performances, we provide a public face for the tower bell ringers and we are welcomed in carol services and old people’s homes around the town.

A measure of our success may be seen in the ODG band for the Ringing World National Youth Contest. Abingdon young ringers have taken part in the ODG team for the last four years. In 2016 we made up half of the team and the team came joint second!



The efforts of the Abingdon Society of Bell Ringers mean that we are now seen as a beacon of how to work with young ringers in the Oxford Diocesan Guild. Our branch is seen as a “hot spot” of young ringers. We are proud to be recognised by the ART for our work. Susan Read

[At the ART Conference on 11th March, Susan was presented with the

Sarah Beacham Youth Group Award (see photo); our congratulations to her and the Abingdon ringers – Ed.]

Safeguarding Policy

At the March Spring Committee Meeting I gave feedback from the discussion that had taken place the previous day with John Nixson, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

The most controversial point was the requirement for every tower to have a children’s officer who will be DBS checked and who will not be the tower captain or the trainer. This has caused consternation because many towers will not have enough members who are either able, suitable, or willing, to be appointed. It will often be impossible to comply with the requirement to have the children’s officer in attendance whenever unaccompanied minors are present; ringers attend voluntarily and often irregularly.

Therefore, I have contacted John again and explained that we are all very anxious, not only to support safeguarding policy and practice, but also to encourage and enable young people to take up ringing and provide the ringers of the future. This particular requirement will make it less attractive to teachers, tower captains and learners.

John Nixson has replied that he fully understands the challenge that we face and he will do some more canvassing across the other Dioceses to make sure that, as much as possible, we are all being consistent. There is a real tension between ensuring safe practice and encouraging children and young people to learn to love ringing – we need to find the best and most pragmatic position to reinforce safety without compromising the whole thing.

As soon as I have any more information from him I will circulate it through the branches.

Meanwhile it is so very important that we are mindful of keeping children and adults safe, but we must not allow safeguarding matters to restrict the recruitment, retention and teaching of young ringers.

Catherine Lane, ODG Safeguarding Officer

Tower Maintenance Award Scheme

Since the last report there the number of current awards in the Scheme has fallen by two to nineteen. The number of towers participating or expressing an interest is now eighty-seven, which is about twenty per cent of the four hundred and forty-two towers listed in the annual report last year. There have now been one hundred and forty-two inspections (of which twenty-four were preliminaries), resulting in one hundred and fifteen awards (seventy-four Gold, twenty-six Silver, and fifteen Bronze).

Adderbury, Reading (St Giles), Henley-on-Thames, and Clewer have all renewed Gold awards, while Stratfield Mortimer (St Mary) gained a Silver at the first attempt. Congratulations to all of them. The number of expired awards has risen by three to twenty-five. T & B committee members continue to contact the expired towers with the aim of persuading them to renew their awards. However it is a bit of an uphill task with many towers content to display their certificate even though it is many years out of date. What we really need is certificates which “self destruct” after two years!

The number of Branches having a tower in the “current awards” list has fallen to eight out of the fifteen Guild Branches, with Chiltern branch no longer having a current award. EBSB has regained its predominant position, having previously been overtaken by both the South Oxon and Reading branches. Details are as follows:

EBSB	5	(4 Gold, 1 Bronze)
Reading	4	(3 Gold, 1 Silver)
South Oxon	3	(Gold)
Sonning Deanery	2	(Gold)
Witney & Woodstock	2	(1 Gold, 1 Silver)
Newbury	1	(Gold)
Old North Berks	1	(Gold)
Banbury	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. As well as dealing with the general condition of the tower and bells from a maintenance point-of-view the resulting report will also highlight any possible health and safety issues.

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. **And it's all free!**

Current Tower Maintenance Scheme Awards

Gold Award

Clewer (St Andrew)	EBSB	Expires 30.04.19
Henley-on-Thames	Reading	Expires 31.03.19
Reading (St Giles)	Reading	Expires 31.03.19
Adderbury (St Mary)	Banbury	Expires 31.12.18
Stratfield Mortimer (St John)	Reading	Expires 31.10.18
White Waltham	Sonning Deanery	Expires 31.10.18
Chalfont St Peter	EBSB	Expires 30.11.18
Thame (St Mary)	South Oxon	Expires 30.09.18
Thatcham (St Mary)	Newbury	Expires 31.05.18
High Wycombe (All Saints)	EBSB	Expires 28.02.18
Berrick Salome	South Oxon	Expires 31.01.18
Cookham (Holy Trinity)	EBSB	Expires 31.12.17
Sonning (St Andrew)	Sonning Deanery	Expires 30.11.17
Dorchester (SS Peter & Paul)	South Oxon	Expires 31.10.17
Freeland (S.M.V)	Witney & Woodstock	Expires 31.07.17
Harwell (St Matthew)	Old North Berks	Expires 30.04.17

Silver Award

Stratfield Mortimer (St Mary)	Reading	Expires 30.04.19
South Leigh (St James)	Witney & Woodstock	Expires 30.08.17

Bronze Award

Fulmer (St James)	EBSB	Expires 30.11.17
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Expired awards

Finchhampstead (St James)	Sonning Deanery	Expired 31.07.07
Stoke Mandeville (St Mary V)	Chiltern Branch	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 30.05.09
Purley (St Mary)	Reading	Expired 31.01.10
Benson (St Helen)	South Oxon	Expired 31.10.11
South Stoke (St Andrew)	Reading	Expired 31.03.12
Wokingham (All Saints)	Sonning Deanery	Expired 28.02.13
Wantage (SS Peter & Paul)	Old North Berks	Expired 31.08.13
Letcombe Regis	Old North Berks	Expired 30.09.13
Bray (St Michael)	EBSB Branch	Expired 31.10.13
Chalfont St Giles	EBSB Branch	Expired 30.09.14
Kintbury (SMV)	Newbury Branch	Expired 30.09.14
Tadmarton (St Nicholas)	Banbury Branch	Expired 30.09.14
Deddington (SS Peter & Paul)	Banbury Branch	Expired 31.12.14
Peasemore (St Barnabas)	Newbury Branch	Expired 28.02.15
Wargrave (St Mary)	Sonning Deanery	Expired 31.07.15
Great Milton	South Oxon Branch	Expired 31.08.15
Hungerford (St Lawrence)	Newbury Branch	Expired 30.09.15
Denham (St Mary)	EBSB Branch	Expired 31.01.16
Mapledurham (St Margaret)	Reading	Expired 30.11.16
Cropredy (SMV)	Banbury	Expired 31.12.16
Chalgrove (SMV)	South Oxon	Expired 31.01.17
Ellesborough (SS Peter & Paul)	Chiltern	Expired 31.03.17

Towers & Belfries Committee

The committee has met once since November, with an attendance of five. Four inspections/visits have been carried out, details of which are shown below:

- Henley-on-Thames (TMA inspection)
- Hitcham (becoming difficult to ring)
- Stratfield Mortimer – St Mary (TMA and Grant inspection)
- Wargrave (improving roping)

A maintenance course will be organised for later this year.

The committee is preparing a display to be used at Guild Meetings to promote the help that we can give.

John Davidge, Chairman T&B Committee

Librarian's Report

There have been nine library enquiries since Odd Bob issue 95. These have been about:

- Loan of 1970/71 Ringing Worlds
- Information from Church Bells of Buckinghamshire about Monks Risborough
- Advert in 2002 Ringing World about Guild Ringing Day
- Enquiry from librarian of another Guild about J.W.Snowden's 1905 book '*Grandsire*'
- Loan of ODG Educational leaflet about Stedman
- Date of election for Sonning Deanery branch members
- Peal at Burford on 22 Aug 1947
- Evidence of ringing taking place at Black Bourton before they became unringable – no positive evidence found
- Burford Guild of Bellringers

Trial electronic archive of Guild material. The Guild committee meetings in November 2016 and March 2017 agreed that development of the electronic archive should continue. There will be a need for people to scan or photograph the documents in the library and branch secretaries will be contacted about this. In the meantime, if anybody feels they may be interested in doing some work in this area, please email the librarian.

Work is also continuing on sorting through the papers and folders. They are in the process of being placed in box files and will in due course be listed in the library catalogue.

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

Our Advent Carol Service took place at Hanwell with the villagers also attending. This was a very enjoyable evening with a section of handbell ringing by our local ringers.

Adderbury ringers entered the annual Decorated Christmas Tree festival held in their church and took the opportunity to advertise ringing with information leaflets. They won the *Best Decorated Adult Tree* with an imaginative bell theme using coloured pipe cleaners as the ropes, Lego figure ringers and illuminated model bells, with a model of the church spire topping the tree.

Steeple Aston ringers raised £1200 for Macmillan Cancer Care with their annual Christmas handbell ringing around the village. In January the birth of Olivia Clarke first grandchild to Nick & Lydia Powell, was marked with a quarter peal. There are 3 teenagers ringing at the moment who are making good progress one of whom, Jack, has entered the Guild *Young Ringers Award* scheme, been elected assistant steeple keeper, and attended his first branch AGM recently. The photo shows him receiving his ODG membership certificate from the branch chairman, the Rev Sue Burchell.



The Cropredy bells had to be silenced for essential roof repairs over Christmas and New Year, and after five months resumed at the beginning of April just in time for the first wedding of the year and Easter. The tower band was able to continue a weekly practice at Horley, who welcomed us and for which we are very grateful. On return to Cropredy for the first practice back, everyone was very excited, so much so that unfortunately one of our learners broke a stay at the beginning of ringing. This provided a learning opportunity for her to accompany the tower captain the following day to mend it!

Sadly, three branch members have died this year and will be missed. In early January, Jim Flux from Deddington collapsed in the ringing chamber during the Sunday Service ringing. The emergency procedure for such an eventuality (devised by the Hughenden ringers and circulated only a few months beforehand) was invaluable in getting the right emergency response.

In March Roger Stranks, Tower Captain of Duns Tew, died after a short illness. Roger joined the Guild in 1956 and stayed at Duns Tew as well as ringing at Westcote Barton, Sandford St Martin and Great Tew. He was always willing to help other towers for wedding or funeral ringing as well as his local community and church. Roger sometimes accompanied Graham Clifton on jobs for Whites of Appleton and he was pleased to assist with the refurbishment of St Paul Cathedral bells and have the opportunity to have a test ring. After Roger's

remembrance service, a quarter peal of Bob Doubles was rung with his son Simon and grandson Tom (whom Roger taught to ring) also in the band.

Most recently, Les Underdown from Cropredy died after a prolonged illness. Les celebrated seventy years of ringing in 2012 but soon after, ill health gradually prevented him continuing though he remained a member. He was Tower Captain for many years and taught a lot of people to ring, including myself forty years ago and two other current band members. I recall as a teenager, everyone would ring 'their bell' and rang call changes with Les reciting the ringing order line by line from a blackboard. Les supported many activities in the village and was awarded the British Empire Medal last year, of which he was very proud.

Heather Bletchly

Radley 2017

I attended this one day course, organised through the ODG Education Committee by Ann Osborne, on Saturday 8th April. The aim was to give learners of all ages and competence levels the opportunity of dedicated rope time on a chosen method: Plain Hunt, Grandsire Doubles & Triples, Plain Bob Doubles, Minor and Major.

After registration we split up and headed off for a tutorial, followed by three ringing sessions. The Plain Hunt group visited Garsington, Little Milton and Wheatley. In all, 15 towers were visited by 25 students and around 125 helpers. The warm and sunny day provided a great backdrop to the day, with a pub lunch and evening meal giving the opportunity to socialise and swap experiences. While waiting for the Little Milton tower to open, we performed the moves for Plain Hunt in a kind of routine that probably would have made *You've Been Framed* rather than *Britain's Got Talent!* Nevertheless, it was an interesting way to think the method through.

The benefit of ringing in different towers with varied weight bells, concentrated work on improving technique, together with willing and cheerful helpers, made the day one I would strongly recommend to learners in the Branch.

Once again, my thanks to all who made the day a success. All that remains is practice, practice, practice!

Kevin McNiff, Cropredy

Bicester

This year's AGM was held on Saturday 22nd February at Kirtlington, thanks to the arrangements of the wonderfully enthusiastic and energetic Steve Vickars, and a service, which included the Guild Master, led by Mrs Penny Wood. This year we elected 3 new members from Kirtlington and Ludgershall before heading to the golf club in Kirtlington for lunch.

Kirtlington was also the tower for our March branch practice when we were joined by the newly installed Rector who had a go at ringing backstroke. The April branch practice, held at Stratton Audley, was attended by 11 branch

ringers from 5 branch towers where we witnessed Anthony Cole's demonstration of one person ringing two bells – and at Stratton Audley too!

On Saturday 19th April Jeremy Adams arranged an outing in the Witney and Woodstock Branch area: ringing at Freeland, North Leigh, Witney, Ducklington and Yarnton. Eleven ringers came and encouraged Penny Wood's first try – ringing with commendable skill the backstroke at Ducklington and Yarnton!

Preparations have been made for the hosting of the Guild Ringing Day on 1st May with the 8-bell striking competition in Islip. Opening 17 towers within the Bicester Branch (the smallest in the Guild) has stretched us and we are particularly sad to be losing the Cole family to the Highlands of Scotland later this year. We all wish them well – we will miss their major contribution to the life of the Bicester Branch but are confident the friendships made with them will continue.

We were sad too, in February, to lose another Bicester Branch member from Piddington when Wendy Taylor died after a long illness; we send her husband Chris, also a ringer, our sympathy.

Kathryn Grant

Central Bucks

A big well done goes to Julie Haseldine. On the 8th April Julie rang her 1000th peal, at Long Crendon – Grandsire Caters. Congratulations to her!

At the beginning of April, over 30 members of the Central Bucks Branch embarked upon their second outing to London, expertly coordinated by Jeremy Pratt. This gave us a good opportunity to ring at some of the many churches our capital has to offer.

We started at Chelsea Old Church, then to St Margaret, Westminster, a well earned lunch followed at the Feathers, Westminster. We then moved on to St Mary Abbots in Kensington, followed by St Stephens in Rochester Row. Lastly we visited St Saviour, Pimlico. This is where we ended an excellent day for our journeys home. Many thanks goes to Jeremy for organising a brilliant day out.

Rachel Sheppard

Chiltern

The AGM was held at Great Missenden in March and there was an increased attendance this year which was very welcome. The Branch service was greatly enjoyed by everyone, especially with a full choir and a wonderful duet rendition of the Magnificat. A splendid ringers' tea followed. Many thanks to Chris Potter, Lucy Wilson and the Great Missenden ringers for making such splendid arrangements.

At the AGM Brian Robson stood down as Interim Branch Secretary and was succeeded as Secretary by Clare Carpenter. Brian was thanked for doing a sterling job for over 10 years. All other Officers were re-elected. Members remembered Colin Darvill (Great Kimble) who had passed away during the year. The Branch's finances were in a healthy position and the Branch monthly 100 club raises substantial funds for the ODG Bell Fund each year – over 80% of Branch members participate in the 100 Club each month.

Also at the AGM, three representatives from Slapton attended the meeting and reported on the project to restore Slapton's 5 bells and augment to 6. A new bell has been sourced from the Keltek Trust and the PCC is busy raising the £80,000 needed for the project. They have been promised various grants from the Guild and a number of grant making trusts and local organisations. They are preparing an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Branch agreed a grant to the project. Whites of Appleton have been appointed to carry out the project which is hoped to commence in January 2018 and be completed in November 2018 in time to commemorate the end of World War I. Richard Booth from Marsworth has offered to train a new band of ringers from scratch. The Slapton project was featured in the Easter edition of the *Ringing World* in a report on how the Central Council's Bell Restoration Committee gives support to parish bell projects.

Slapton hope to hire the Charmborough Mini Ring at their fete on 26th August to involve the village in ringing. Also hoping to hire the Charmborough ring is Ivinghoe for their fete on 10th June. Both villages hope that Branch members will support them in demonstrating ringing and offering locals the chance to have a go.

Clare Carpenter

Chipping Norton

Branch members helped with refreshments and stewarding at the 10-bell striking competition held at Banbury on 26th November. The ODG General Committee meeting followed at Chipping Norton in the afternoon.

The first two Branch practices of 2017 took place at Spelsbury and Hook Norton on Saturday mornings and were followed by pub lunches.

The Branch AGM was held at Charlbury in March. The Claire Tarrant Award was dedicated by the Revd. Sally Welch at the service, where we were pleased to see several members of Claire's family.

The criteria considered for the Award were the ringer's commitment to a tower/benefice, ringing progress, the ability to co-operate with other ringers, involvement in Branch activities and a leadership role in the ringer's home tower/benefice. The Award for 2017 has been presented to Nicki Unwin of Taynton.

Thanks go to the Charlbury ringers for their help with the arrangements and hospitality at the AGM. We welcomed Colin Lee, our Guild Steward, to the meeting. All of the Branch officers were re-elected. Russell Ingham was elected a new member and Frances Canham re-elected. Both are members of Charlbury tower.

Restoration work began at Taynton in February with the removal of the bells.

Fund-raising activities are being planned by Ascott-u-Wychwood ringers; initially they are looking to have remedial work carried out on their tenor bell. Major restoration work is also planned for Shipton-u-Wychwood bells.

Special practices have been arranged for Plain Bob Doubles and Minor, and some members took part in the Radley one-day course.

Christine Harris

East Berks and South Bucks

Eleven ringers from the Hambleden Valley band travelled across the Welsh border in Monmouthshire in November to ring with their recently-retired tower captain at three towers near to her new location. Ringing at St Bridget's, Skenfrith, was reasonably proficient and after visiting the remains of Skenfrith castle, the team took off for St Nicholas church in nearby Grosmont. This also had the remains of a castle in the village and the church was steeped in history but, sadly, there was a lock-out. St Teilo's church at Llantilio Crosseny's 4cwt ring took some getting used to but the tinkly sound was absolutely delightful.

The Christmas social was held at Beaconsfield. After the ringing, around 35 branch members gathered in the Fitzwilliam centre for the festivities. They were soon busily engaged in three quizzes displayed around the room: Dingbats and photographs of cathedrals and people to be identified, often fiendishly difficult. Who would have thought a plain bespectacled youth would metamorphose into the gorgeous George Clooney! There was a most delicious meal and the amazing cupcakes, made by multi-talented Beaconsfield ringer Jen, were decorated with iced bells, ropes and sallies in the Beaconsfield red, white and blue. After the meal there was a demonstration of handbell ringing by the experts and then everyone was able to take part in seasonal tune ringing.

The post-Christmas outing was to Hertfordshire with four rings of eight bells, none too taxing in the weight of the bells. In the first, the estate church at North Mymms, the ringing room is the top part of a stepped gallery meaning that the ringers of the back bells are in the interesting position of being lower than the other ringers. Unfortunately, the lunchtime pub could not cope despite pre-ordering so many missed the start of afternoon ringing at St Michael's. However, subsequent ringing at Codicote and Kimpton was in the beautiful countryside of mid-Hertfordshire.

Having noticed that members are more likely to come to a practice at their own tower because they are more comfortable ringing on their own bells and alongside their own band, Branch Officers decided to experiment with having practices that are orientated around the needs of one tower, or in some cases two or three neighbouring towers, with experienced helpers being drafted in to assist. The aim of these tower-orientated practices is to enable the local ringers to practise methods that they would not normally be able to do at their normal tower practices, perhaps because of a shortage of more experienced ringers. Two such practices have occurred so far, at Winkfield and Burnham, both attracting more ringers than at regular Branch practices, and matching expectations.

Much to their surprise and delight, the High Wycombe 12-bell band came third in the eliminator in Leicester on 25th March, 10 years after their last eliminator success at Kidderminster in 2007. So, it's off to Southwark Cathedral on 24th June for the challenge of ringing Cambridge on a newly rehung but significantly heavier ring of bells!

Thirty members attended the AGM held at Chalfont St Giles on 22nd April. It had been decided to experiment with re-introducing a service, using a 'Hymns

of Praise' style; the Incumbent, the Rev Ian Brown, officiated and Fred Reynolds, tower captain from Chesham, played the organ. Members had been asked in advance to suggest their favourite hymns and each introduced "their" hymn.

It was unfortunate that at the subsequent meeting there were no nominations for two important positions that have now fallen vacant. Related somewhat to this situation, the main discussion item was on the topic, "*Should the Branch introduce defined durations of office?*" A number of points both for and against were raised and Branch Officers have agreed to review them before deciding whether to propose this change.

Amersham decided to follow the example of Hughenden by asking for a site visit by the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART, a specialist part of the Ambulance Service) to discuss options for evacuation of a possible casualty from the ringing room, belfry, or top of the tower (the ringers also being responsible for recognising the UK and Commonwealth flag flying days).

The ringers walking outing took place on May 5th to three towers: Caversham, Sonning, and Shiplake, with lunch at *The Bull*, next to St Andrew's, Sonning. The weather was good for walking if a bit windy and it made for an enjoyable outing. [*Photograph on the back cover – Ed.*]

Maryanne Roach

Newbury

2016 has been a busy year in the Newbury Branch and quite a successful one. At our AGM earlier in the year, a new Ringing Master took the reins. Since then, our monthly practices have gone from strength to strength, with growing numbers attending. The new RM, Di Bridle, has given these meetings a real boost with fresh ideas and renewed vigour. Additionally, Di has started weekday daytime meetings, with an hour's ringing followed by pub lunch. Early indications are that these too are popular and will be well supported.

November saw our Branch team come second in the Guild 10-bell striking competition at Banbury. Having already come second in the 8-bell competition earlier in the year, we are of course, pleased with our results and hope we can continue to perform well at Guild level.

On 3rd December nine ringers from our Branch and the neighbouring W&P Andover Branch, jointly took part in ten quarter peals at local towers as part of the '*Bellringers Strike Back Against Blood Cancer*' campaign for sponsorship of £30,000. The ten quarters, organised and led by Ben Waller, were of Julie McDonnell methods and included all stages from Minimus through to Major.

Our AGM in March saw a change of Chairman, with Martin Rice taking over from Richard Marshall and with the vacant Secretary's role being split between current officers, so all duties are now covered.

Amidst gales and rain during the second week of February we held our Branch's Quarter Peal week. This popular and well established annual event serves to boost the profile of the Branch and give ringers opportunities to progress. In total there were 23 performances in 15 different towers and one in hand, in all stages from Singles (for the first time) to Royal, including spliced.

There were an impressive 70 ringers involved, both from our own members and with guests from neighbouring branches and, for the first time, we included 20 minutes of rounds and call changes for the novices. A number of 'firsts' were achieved, with many others gaining valuable experience with strong bands around them, and £50 was donated to the bell fund from ringers' contributions. The week ended with the Branch Dinner, where we reflected on the week's activities and achievements over a fine meal and in good company.

There has been a lot going on since the beginning of November. Tower outings have taken place, new ringers continue to progress and training courses, organised by Lucy Hopkins Till, our Training Officer, are laid on and are well supported. First World War commemorations have continued with some towers marking the centenaries of local ringers' deaths on active service. Half muffled ringing has been observed for Remembrance Sunday and for Armistice Day across the Branch.



Significant birthdays, Golden Weddings, births etc, are all causes for ringing celebration, as is often the case in the Newbury Branch. Rod and Pat Brown of Chieveley recently celebrated their Golden Wedding with a quarter peal, which was also a first for Molly, their granddaughter. The quarter was conducted by Molly's father, Graham.

For those who aren't aware, we have a website at: www.bellsnearnewbury.org.uk, and a Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/groups/1632622187007501/

Our more detailed Branch newsletter is available in PDF form via our website, as are archive copies of meeting minutes for general viewing and reference.

Mark Robins

North Bucks

The 2016 Branch Practice and Christmas Social was held at Woughton in December. Ringing was followed by an update from the officers, thoughts on advent, buffet style eats, and then more ringing.

The bells at St Mary's, Bletchley were rung on the 23rd January immediately prior to the official launch of the MK50 celebrations (the celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of Milton Keynes) at Bletchley Park.

The Branch Annual General Meeting was held at Weston Underwood at the beginning of March. Ringing at the Church was followed by a short service, and then a fine ringers' tea was provided in the village hall. The AGM was held after this. Sixteen new members were proposed, seconded and elected to the Branch and Guild. Three officers stood down, two new officers were elected, and all the other officers were re-elected. Of particular note – our treasurer Sheila Watts stood down after an amazing nineteen years in the role.

As well as this we have been holding monthly Branch Practices, a monthly 8/10-bell practice, and a monthly doubles, plain hunt and call changes practice.

Old North Berks

Our autumn branch quiz and supper night was held at Brightwell Village Hall, starting with ringing on the newly rehung ring of 8. All credit goes to Roy and his ringers for their magnificent organisation of the evening. Thanks also go to the quiz master, Robert, who quickly started putting the nine teams through their paces. At half time we enjoyed delicious chillies, followed by apple crumble or a selection of cheeses. Then it was back to the quiz, with more fast and furious rounds. It was Blewbury's opportunity to shine with their general knowledge (if not their ringing) skills, and their two teams came first and second. In all, the evening raised £410 for branch funds and was a great way to raise money and have lots of fun at the same time.

The social events continued into 2017, with our annual New Year's ringing and refreshments in Abingdon. This was also very well attended, and thanks go to Susan and the Abingdon ringers for making everyone so welcome.

In March we held our six-bell striking competition and AGM at Cumnor. The competition was once again well supported with six teams entering, three of them from Abingdon. It was very pleasing that one of these teams was made up entirely of young branch members. Thanks go to our judges, Jon and Kay Chamberlain of Faringdon, who both said that they had enjoyed themselves very much. The team from Wallingford were the winners and they were awarded our new branch striking competition winner's trophy. They will represent ONB at the Guild's six-bell competition in October.

At the AGM we had a change of some of our branch officers. The vacant position of Training Officer was taken on by Susan Read, who has done so much work with the training of our younger branch members. This left the position of Chairman free, and this was taken up by Rob Nickless of North Moreton, with Dick Peters of Wantage taking on the role of Vice Chairman.

At the Annual Conference of ART, the Sarah Beacham Youth Group Award was given to the Abingdon Society of Bell Ringers. Susan Read has said that the cash prize of £400 will be put towards the purchase of a dumb bell for Abingdon, which will be attached to a computer and used as a training aid.

So far this year we have held two social occasions for our monthly afternoon practice ringers. In January we had lunch together before ringing at North Moreton and in April we held a 'mini' outing, ringing at three towers in the neighbouring Vale of the White Horse Branch. Starting with Shellingford and then on to Longcot, we enjoyed a pub lunch at the *King and Queen* before going on to ring at Faringdon. Our next social gathering will be our full day outing in July to various towers in Wiltshire, with a pub lunch and afternoon tea. This will be followed in the evening by a barbecue at the home of Stuart and Naomi Gibson.

Gill Loyd

Oxford City

At our AGM in November, we were very pleased that Andrew Freer agreed to stand as our new Ringing Master. Since his election he has run several very successful Branch Practices, and is also planning some specific practices for things such as ringing up and down. We also elected Rosanna Cretney as our Branch Representative. The rest of the committee remained unchanged.

We have tried a new time of 5pm on Saturdays for our branch practices, as many members had said they found the morning practices difficult due to other commitments. So far this time has proved popular, but we will keep reviewing how this works for our members. The details of our Branch Practices have now been submitted to the Guild for the diary page, and we will always be glad to see any visitors who would like to join us.

St Giles and Headington both host monthly advanced eight bell practices which are proving very beneficial.

There has been an encouraging increase in new ringers for some towers in the branch, and we are pleased to say that we now have several new ringers making really good progress. One of our young ringers from Headington is making full use of the excellent outings which Susan Read from Abingdon organises, and we hope to have another young ringer also joining them soon.

Two quarter peals were rung to celebrate the wedding of Headington ringer Katy Routh, one at Headington and one at Cowley, and there was also a quarter peal at Headington to celebrate the engagement of Rachel Croft and James Scott Brown – also of Headington.

Looking forward, we hope we can encourage more ringers to come and join us at branch practices, and provide more specific method practices. We are currently planning for our half yearly meeting and striking competition in May, after the success of last year. Finally, congratulations to our Branch eight bell band, who came a very creditable third in the Guild eight bell competition. The team was Robin Hall (c), Dorothy Hall, Andrew Freer, Jonathan Cresshall, John Pusey, Katie Lane, Rosie Cretney and Paul Lucas.

Lindsay Powell

Reading

The first part of 2017 has been reasonably quiet for the Reading Branch. We have held our branch practices at a variety of towers and have run several training sessions for towers requesting such assistance. The young ringers practices have also continued to be well received and well attended.

There has been a considerable volume of behind-the-scenes preparation for the Guild AGM being held at Tilehurst on Saturday 20th May and we are hoping for a brilliant turn out. Everyone is more than welcome!

Our branch AGM, held at South Stoke on Saturday 11th February, was well attended and provoked some interesting discussions.

On the social side, we have celebrated at least one significant birthday with a peal and lunch, and seen several successful days out to places far and near.

All in all, it has been business as usual for the members of the Reading Branch but, as always, we have enjoyed ourselves!

Sonning Deanery

In November last year the teenagers at Wargrave, Kitty and Freddie, passed their Level 4 of the ART *Learning the Ropes* scheme; congratulations to them for their rapid progress under their ringing teacher Vinni Sullivan.

Also in November two of the spokes of the wheel of bell 5 at Waltham St Lawrence had been scored slightly by the clock hammer mechanism; it was decided not to use the bell until it had been examined. The spokes were examined by Keith Vernon who said there was no danger of the spokes breaking, so the bell is back in use.

Shottesbrooke rang in the New Year in traditional style, and afterwards the ringers were treated to mince pies and mulled wine by Lady Christian Smith who lives next to the church.

At the Branch AGM most of the officers were re-elected. Changes were that Josh Slade was elected to the new Youth Officer post, Sue Portsmouth was elected Bookstall Officer, and the post of Training Officer was unfilled. Also at the AGM the Branch agreed to book the Charmborough Ring for the weekend of the 2018 Hurst Show and mount another publicity and recruitment event.

Further to the appointment of a Youth Officer, we have set up young ringer practice sessions on the second Sunday afternoon of each month at various towers in the branch. The schedule of dates and towers is on the branch website. All young ringers in the branch are invited to these sessions, which are run by Josh Slade with some experienced ringers to act as helpers.

In March Jane Mellor was assessed on her running of a learners' practice at All Saints, Wokingham; she passed with flying colours and is now a full member of ART (*Association of Ringing Teachers*). Staying with the subject of ART, there will be a module 1 course at Twyford on Saturday 17th June for branch ringers who wish to learn more about how to teach new ringers from scratch.

Sonning tower was open on the Saturday of Easter (April 15th) as part of the St Andrew's family fun afternoon. About 50 people of all ages visited the tower, were told about ringing, and went to the top of the tower for the excellent views. The next day, 16th April 2017, we rang a quarter peal to mark the exact centenary of the death of a Sonning ringer, Sgt Dennis Russell, in WW1.

Also in April the branch held its 6-bell striking competition on the back six bells at Warfield. Three teams took part, Sonning, All Saints Wokingham, and a scratch team from Warfield and White Waltham. The weather was lovely, the competitors stood in the sunshine listening to the other teams' efforts, and the judge, Ian Rees, sat in a wooden summerhouse in the corner of the churchyard with the door wide open. The winners were Sonning (*see photo on back cover*), who can now represent the Branch at the ODG 6-bell final in October in Witney & Woodstock branch.

South Oxon

At the end of 2016 the South Oxon branch held its Christmas branch practice at Little Milton – UP the very long ladder to the ringing chamber for a lovely ring and then DOWN the very long ladder to share mince pies and hot drinks. Aside from the anxiety about heights, it was a very enjoyable occasion. Chalgrove tower also celebrated at the end of year with a quarter peal for two birthdays, that of Brian Gray (Tower Captain) and Andrew Davis (Steeple Keeper). Unfortunately Great Milton ended 2016 with the bad experience of the theft of lead from the church roof.

Our AGM was held in Dorchester-on-Thames on 22nd February. After a service in the very attractive Abbey, we retired to the Abbey Guest House for a fantastic tea and meeting. It was close quarters as the AGM was well attended – but that just made for easier conversation! At the AGM, we elected four new members: Jamie Firth, Robert Johnson, Vivian Muller, and Richard Farrant. Congratulations to them!

Aston Rowant reports on improving their Stedman and ringing occasional quarter peals, and I'm sure they are well underway with the planning for their summer evening get-together. Shabbington always provide fantastic tea and cakes when they host a branch event and their refreshments were most welcome at the Branch 6-bell striking competition which they hosted in April. On the same evening as our competition, Benji Coles, bell ringer at Benson tower, and Hayley Bateman were married at St Helen's, Benson. So, while part of the branch was at the striking competition, several of the Benson ringers were dancing away at Benji's wedding reception!

Towers that report having a strong number of ringers are Benson and Dorchester. Benson have three young learners coming along very well and Dorchester are very pleased to report that they have a band of 13, if not expert, very loyal ringers.

There were several times during 2016 to mark centenaries of events of the First World War; among these opportunities to ring, Great Milton Tower held a special remembrance for the three soldiers from the village, two who were directly related to a current bell ringer. The men remembered were: Harold Tame, William Allen and Joseph Allen, all lost in the Great War.

Early in 2017 Thame tower had two visitors one Monday evening, one from Cornwall and the other from Devon. However, this seemed to have a jinx as no sooner did they start to ring than the tenor's staple pin snapped in the headstock causing it to shed its clapper with a distinctive thud! Unfortunately, this was the bell the Cornish visitor was ringing. A bit later, for some unknown reason, the tailend of the rope the Devon visitor was on unravelled. A real mystery but both said they would come back next time they were in the area. The following day White's were due to do the annual maintenance and were able to do the repair by the next week, just prior to Christmas. Just as well, as the Thame ringers were requested to ring four times on Christmas Eve and twice on Christmas Day. Thame tower has been very busy with weddings as usual. In 2016, they rang for 28 weddings and expect to ring for 21 this year. Warborough tower has also

been busy with wedding ringing, though not quite as many as Thame. Warborough weddings have been quite varied – from typical quiet ‘village’ ones to the ‘society’ weddings which caused the ringers problems with wedding planners trying to get through the ringing area in a panic whilst they were ringing. The problems of a ground floor ring!

[*Stop press: South Oxon branch enjoyed an outing to the Corfe Castle area on May 6th – see the photo on the front cover.*]

Amy Herlihy

Vale of the White Horse

We were saddened to hear of the death of former Shrivenham ringer Peter Anger in January, just short of his 89th birthday. He was Tower Captain in the late 40’s, 50’s and 60’s and taught many people to ring. He was instrumental in organising the augmentation of Shrivenham bells from 6 to 8 in 1948. Neither he nor his widow Cheryl had rung for many years, but his daughter Ann Eyles, son in law Tim and their children Peter, Lucy and Alan, continue the family ringing tradition.

On a happier note, Anne Jones and family rang a quarter peal of Plain Bob Triples to celebrate the wedding of Robert and Ali O’Hagan, and the christening of Madeline, daughter of Isabelle (née O’Hagan) and Danny Taylor. The quarter was conducted by Anne’s son-in-law Tony Pullan, and the band was completed by daughters Jackie O’Hagan and Nicola Pullan, and grandchildren Robert, Isabelle, Donna and Katie.

Another ringing family, Steve and Sandra Munday and children Victoria, Sebastian and Harriet, have moved away after almost a quarter of a century in Stanford in the Vale. Steve and Harriet had each served as Tower Captain over the years and their expertise will be sorely missed. We wish them well in their new venture, running a B&B in Devon.

Lucy Laird

Witney and Woodstock

The branch update starts on a sombre tone with the sad news of the passing of two of our ringers.

Derek West - Obituary 1938 – 2016

Derek West, a Witney ringer, passed away in tragic circumstances on 21st November 2016.

Always willing to help others, and generous to a fault, he cheerfully kept the Witney tower well supplied with chocolate and biscuits. He supported Ducklington Ringing Society as well as Witney, and had recently befriended a Syrian family in Witney. When one of the Witney ringers mentioned in passing a fondness for olives, Derek promptly bought her a large jar of olives simply out of generosity.

As a token of affection and in remembrance of our friend, three associated quarter peals were rung at North Leigh, Witney and Woodstock.

Derek is survived by his wife Hilary, to whom he was married for 45 years.

Mary Douglas - Obituary

28th September 1941 – 2nd April 2017

Mary Douglas, a dedicated and accomplished Bladon bell ringer, died on April 2nd after a short illness. Mary was born and bred in Bladon and learned to ring at the age of 12. Like her brother before her, she captained the tower at Bladon for many years until shoulder problems prevented her from ringing. Mary was also a devoted member of the church choir and took part in many choral activities including at the Albert Hall. Mary was one of the kindest, most good hearted-people you could meet, and she will be much missed in the village. Her legendary chocolate cakes will be remembered by the hundreds of people who have attended the community lunches at Bladon over the years.

The funeral service at Bladon was preceded by half muffled ringing as a token of respect. She is survived by her husband Michael and son Paul, both bell ringers, and her daughter Dawn in Australia.

On a lighter note, after attending the 2016 Michaelmas training course, Julie Minch acquitted herself well by following her first QP of Cambridge Surprise Minor with a second on the same day while celebrating a significant birthday.

Another North Leigh ringer, Alison Merryweather-Clarke, was very happy to achieve her first QP on 10 bells with Grandsire Caters and to continue her amble through the standard eight with a QP of Rutland Surprise Major.

Fiona Methley completed the North Leigh hat trick by earning her Association of Ringing Teachers LtR Level 5 certificate, 52 weeks to the day after ringing her first QP.

Toby Goss of Eynsham is also to be congratulated on ringing his first bob major QP, with his only previous experience on 8 bells being covering to one Triples QP.

Andrew Goldthorpe of Witney rang his 1st QP away from cover in October and 1st on 8, tenoring in memory of Derek West.

Hazel Howarth of Ducklington rang her 1st QP covering for Plain Bob Doubles in March, earning her Association of Ringing Teachers LtR Level 3 certificate along with Andrew Goldthorpe. Dave Duthie of Ducklington rang his first Grandsire QP.

Congratulations are due to Zoe Monkley (Freeland) who scored her first quarter peal when ringing on half muffled bells for Remembrance Sunday. Further congratulations to Andrew Smith (Freeland) who rang his first quarter peal on the treble to a minor method (St Clement's College Bob Minor) in March. Anne Taylor (Freeland) is a new ringer and has made excellent progress resulting in her now being able to ring unaided.

We are all grateful to the invaluable support of ringers from other areas in providing sound advice, extra ringing opportunities and conducting, highlights being the 10 bells of St Laurence in Ludlow, and Christ Church Swindon.

Andrew Goldthorpe, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke, Gillian Forrest, Michael Probert

Points from Peals

The total number of peals recorded to date this year is 86 compared with 92 in the same period last year.

Firsts: A number of firsts have been recorded. Congratulations to all concerned.

- First Surprise inside: Isaac J O'Shea
- First Oxford TB Royal (on handbells): Colin G Newman.
- First Swindon Surprise Royal in hand: Colin G Newman
- First Yorkshire Surprise Royal in hand: Colin G Newman
- First Swindon Surprise Royal: Joanne P Druce, Josie S Irving, Anna E Sherwood, Joanna E Knight, D Giles Winter
- First Spliced Surprise Royal in hand: Janet E John
- First Maximus: Jenny M Page.

Personal Milestones: significant milestones recorded since the last report include:

Anna E Sherwood (25), Timothy G Pett (100 on handbells), W John Couperthwaite (700 tower bell peals as conductor), June D Wells (700 in hand), Katharine J Firman (1,000 in hand), Lesley A Knipe (1,800), J Alan Ainsworth (4,700), Peter Bridle (5,000).

Most methods (Surprise Major 23): Andrea N Gilbert.

Completes the Delight Major Alphabet: Beryl R Norris.

Oxford, St Giles Circled the tower John G Pusey.

Events:

Peals were rung as a compliment to Dame Vera Lynn on her 100th birthday, and at Wokingham, St Paul, for the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul.

Handbell peals were rung of to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1st peal of Newgate (Newgate Surprise Maximus) and for the 70th anniversary of the 1st peal of Surprise Royal on handbells (Cambridge Surprise Royal using the same composition).

Personal events: Peals were rung for the birth of James Brice, first great grandson of Edgar Skipsey, to celebrate the birthday of Josie S Irving, as a wedding compliment to Andrew Rossiter and Karissa Dainton and to Daniel and Elise Sandham.

In memoriam: A peal was rung remembering Margaret Joan Brown.

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

Guild Officers for 2017/18

Master	Hilarie Rogers <i>master@odg.org.uk</i> 4 High Street, Drayton St Leonard, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 7BA (01865 890163)
Deputy Master	Alan Marchbank <i>depmaster@odg.org.uk</i> 6, Broadway Ave, Giffard Park, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK14 5QF (01908 611434)
General Secretary	Angela 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	Bobbie May <i>pro@odg.org.uk</i> 4 Halfacre Close, Spencers Wood, Reading, RG7 1DZ (0118 988 4172)
Membership Secretary	John F Payne <i>membership@odg.org.uk</i> 53 Walker Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2QU (01628 624490)
Minutes Secretary	Joyce Vernon <i>minsec@odg.org.uk</i> 121 Mayfield Drive, Caversham, Reading, RG4 5JR (0118 9474281)
Webmaster	Alan Bain <i>webmaster@odg.org.uk</i> 5 Norgrove Park, Gerrards Cross, SL9 8QT (01753 880249) <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	Ken Darvill <i>serveradmin@odg.org.uk</i> 3 Copners Way, Holmer Green, High Wycombe, HP15 6SQ (01494 713217)
Safeguarding Officer	Katie Lane <i>safeguarding@odg.org.uk</i> Catchmole Cottage, 12 High Street, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1XX (01865 874026)
Guild Stewards	Mary Friskney (<i>Newbury, Old North Berks, Sonning Deanery</i>) <i>steward@newbury.odg.org.uk</i> Mary Friskney, 10, Church Lane, Wallingford, OX10 0DX (01491 200743) 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, Reading, 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

Heather Bletchly
Mike Hopkins Till

Kathy Bossom
Jenny Page

Wenda Fowles
Ken Wakefield

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

L. P. A. Hopkins Till

Alan Marchbank

John A Harrison

Timothy G Pett

Bobbie May

Ken R Davenport

Towers and Belfries Sub-committee

Chairman

John Davidge *tbchairman@odg.org.uk*

Rowallan, Back Lane, Chalfont St Giles, HP8 4PD. (01494 873325)

Secretary

Anthony Williamson *tbsecretary@odg.org.uk*

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

Education Sub-committee

Chairman

TBA

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

Heather Bletchly *secretary@banbury.odg.org.uk*

4 Gauntlets Close, Bloxham, Banbury, OX15 4NY (01295 720918)

Bicester

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

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

Central Bucks

Rachel Sheppard *secretary@cbucks.odg.org.uk*

5 Barrie Close, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 8JF

Chiltern

Clare Carpenter *secretary@chiltern.odg.org.uk*

8 Coppice Way, Hedgerley, Slough SL2 3YL (01753 643887)

Chipping

Christine Harris *secretary@chippy.odg.org.uk*

Norton

Beechwood, 4, Banbury Road Crossing, Chipping Norton, OX7 5AP
(01608 641809))

East Berks &

South Bucks

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

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

Gary Reading *secretary@northbucks.odg.org.uk*

11 Cottage Common, Loughton, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK5 8AE (01908 662483)

Old North Berks

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

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

Oxford City

Lindsay Steff *secretary@city.odg.org.uk* (01865 777486)

Reading

Joanna Knight *secretary@reading.odg.org.uk* (07540 266427)

Sonning Deanery

Rob Needham *secretary@sdb.odg.org.uk*

15 Bodmin Rd., Woodley, Reading, RG5 3RZ. (0118 9267724)

South Oxon

Amy Herlihy *secretary@southoxon.odg.org.uk*

3 Ford Lane, Drayton St Leonard, OX10 7AS. (01865 400 864)

Vale of White Horse

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

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

Witney &

Woodstock

Robert Walton *secretary@witneyandwoodstock.odg.org.uk*

acting secretary (01993 881139)

Diary of Events for 2016/17

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	Ringing Centre Practice	SC	Striking Competition
SM	Surprise Major	SP	Surprise Practice	CM	Committee Meeting

MAY 2017

Sat	20	ODG	Guild AGM	Reading branch	
Sat	20	Guild	AGM	Reading Branch	TBC
Sat	20	Sonning	BP	Binfield (6)	10.30–noon
Wed	24	ONB	BP	Marcham (6) TBC	2–3.30pm
Sat	27	South Oxon	BP	Drayton St.	7pm
				Leonard (6)	

JUNE 2017

Fri	2	Newbury	BP	Yattendon	7.30–9pm
Wed	7	CN	BP	Shipton-u- Wychwood (8)	7.30–9pm
Wed	7	Bicester	BP	Middleton Stoney (6)	7.30–9pm
Mon	12	ONB	BP	Drayton (8)	7.30–9pm
Mon	19	Bicester	SP	Kirtlington (8)	7.30–9pm
Wed	14	ONB	SP	Abingdon (10)	7.30–9pm
Sat	17	Sonning	BP	Shottesbrooke (6)	4.30–6pm
Sat	24	National	12 Bell Final	Southwark Cathedral (12)	
Sat	24	South Oxon	BP	Warborough (8)	7pm
Wed	28	ONB	BP	Childrey (8)	2–3.30pm

JULY 2017

Sat	1	National	Youth SC	Birmingham	
Fri	7	Newbury	SC	Midgham	7pm
Fri	7	CN	BP	Asthall (6)	7.30–9pm
Fri	7	Bicester	BP	Caversfield (5)	7.30–9pm
Sat	15	Sonning	BP	Waltham St. Lawrence (6)	7.30–9pm
Tue	18	Bicester	BP	Islip (8)	7.30–9pm
Sat	22	South Oxon	BP	Marsh Baldon (5)	7pm
Wed	26	ONB	BP	Radley (6)	2–3.30pm

AUGUST 2017

Tue	1	CN	BP	Chipping Norton (8)	7.30–9pm
Wed	2	ONB	SP	Goring (8)	7.45–9.15pm
Fri	4	Newbury	BP	Chieveley (8)	7.30–9pm
Fri	4	Bicester	BP	Ludgershall (5)	7.30–9pm
Mon	14	ONB	BP	Chilton (6)	7.30–9pm
Sat	19	Sonning	BP	White Waltham (6)	4.30–6pm
Wed	23	ONB	BP	Brightwell (8)	2–3.30pm

SEPTEMBER 2017

Fri	1	Newbury	BP	Compton Parva (6) tbc	7.30–9pm
Sat	2	Bicester	SC & BBQ	TBC	6 – 10pm
Tue	5	CN	BP	Enstone (6) tbc	7.30–9pm
Tue	5	Bicester	BP	Launton (6)	7.30–9pm
Mon	11	ONB	BP	Sutton Courtenay (8)	7.30–9pm
Sat	16	Sonning	BP	Sonning (8)	4.30–6pm
Wed	20	Bicester	BP	Bletchington (6)	
Sat	23	South Oxon	BP	Chinnor (6)	7pm
Wed	27	ONB	BP	Sunningwell (6)	2–3.30pm
Sat	30	Guild	Michaelmas Training Day	Various	

OCTOBER 2017

Mon	2	Bicester	BP	Kirtlington (8)	7.30–9pm
Tue	3	CN	BP & business meeting	Kingham (8)	7–8.30pm
Wed	4	ONB	SP	Harwell (8)	7.30–9pm
Fri	6	Newbury	BP	Beenham (6)	7.30–9pm
Sat	7	Guild	SC 6	Witney & Woodstock Branch	
Wed	11	ONB	BP	Cholsey (8)	8–9.30pm
Sat	14	Reading	8-bell SC, joint Reading & SDB	TBD	
Tue	17	Bicester	BP	Islip (8)	7.30–9pm
Sat	21	Sonning	Branch Outing to Windsor area	TBD	
Wed	25	ONB	BP	Milton (8)	2–3.30pm
Sat	28	Guild	Steeple Aston Course	Steeple Aston	
Sat	28	South Oxon	BP	Aston Rowant (6)	4pm

NOVEMBER 2017

Wed	1	Bicester	BP	Bletchington (6)	7.30–9pm
Fri	3	Newbury	BP	Bucklebury (8)	7.30–9pm (TBC)
Sat	4	Guild	10 Bell Training Day	Aston Clinton (10)	
Tue	7	CN	BP	Swerford (6)	7.30–9pm
Thu	9	ONB	BP	Wallingford (10)	8–9.30pm
Sat	18	Sonning	Tea, Business Meeting	Wokingham All Saints	4.30pm tea, 5pm meeting
Mon	20	Bicester	BP	Bicester (10)	7.30–9pm
Wed	22	ONB	BP	Chilton (6)	2–3.30pm
Sat	25	Guild	Autumn General Committee	North Bucks Branch	
Sat	25	Guild	10 Bell SC	North Bucks Branch	

DECEMBER 2017

Fri	1	Newbury	BP	Hungerford (8)	7.30–9pm
Fri	1	CN	BP	Burford (8)	7–8.30pm
Sat	2	South Oxon	BP	Great Haseley (6)	4pm
Wed	6	ONB	SP	Brightwell (8)	7.45–9.15pm
Wed	6	Bicester	BP	Charlton-on-Otmoor (6)	7.30–9pm
Mon	11	ONB	BP	North Moreton (6)	7.30–9pm
Wed	13	ONB	BP	Blewbury (8)	2–3.30pm
Sat	16	Sonning	BP	Twyford (8)	4.30–6pm
Mon	18	Bicester	BP	Bicester (10)	7.30 – 10pm

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD

TEN BELL TRAINING DAY

A One Day Course organised by the
Guild Education Committee

Saturday 4th November, 2017, 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

at

St Michael and All Angels, Aston Clinton

A course on

Grandsire Caters

for Guild Members who would like to develop their 10 bell ringing.

There will be a charge of £12.00 to cover a tower donation
and refreshments. Own arrangements for lunch.
(Pub/restaurant facilities available quite close to the Church)

**NUMBERS WILL BE LIMITED SO BOOK EARLY
TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT**

The closing date for applications will be 7th October.

Preference will be given to ringers who have not attended previous
ten bell courses.

To apply for this course please contact Patricia Newton
Tel: 01844 352926 email: steward@southoxon.odg.org.uk



Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

Michaelmas Training Day

Saturday, September 30th 2017

10.00 – 18.00

Cost £15

The aim of the day is to provide the opportunity for students to learn more advanced methods than those offered on the Radley and Steeple Aston courses. This year we are also offering a conducting option.

The day will start with tutorials in the first tower followed by practical ringing in other nearby towers.

Groups will be formed to cover the following:

- Stedman Triples
- Basic Surprise Minor and Major (to include Cambridge and up to Yorkshire and Lincolnshire)
- Advanced Surprise Major (to include up to London, Bristol and Spliced)

New for 2017

- Conducting (from Plain Bob Minor to Surprise Major)

Applicants for the conducting course should be able to call 120 of Plain Bob Doubles and must be able to ring reliably any method that they wish to conduct.

Further details and application forms can be obtained by sending an SAE to Ann Osborne, 10 St. Michaels Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4RP or E-mail annosborne.1@btinternet.com by 15th August 2017



Sonning Deanery Branch 6-bell striking competition winners – Sonning



EBSB Branch Walking & Ringing Outing – at Caversham