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ODD BOB



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



Ifley and Cowley Young Ringers Outing – Old North Berks branch

How to talk about ringing?

12 Top Tips on how to generate positive interest

1. Use a young ringer to talk to youngsters
2. Create a special ringing event for any new recruits – don't just ask them to join an ordinary practice
3. Work on finding strategic relations such as your vicar, your local council, so others advocate for you.
4. Think about what to wear to impress your audience – look professional
5. Send round special postcards to tell locals about special ringing coming up
6. When presenting to a school, make sure you find a sponsor first, a teacher or ideally, a headteacher – offer to talk to the Governors
7. Invite everyone (including your local contacts) up the tower for new year drinks
8. Get involved with your Diocesan Advisory Council
9. Find out about local societies like the Victorian Society as they may support your cause
10. Use photos of people in your promotions
11. Reframe the words we use to describe ringing for non-ringers
12. Share your own story and passion about ringing, your enthusiasm is infectious!

Words to sell ringing:

- Church bells are the largest, loudest musical instruments
- Form of music, though you don't have to read music
- We are highly skilled performers
- It requires team-work
- Based on a form of maths, based on logic and patterns
- You are part of a community around the world
- It is a part of our heritage, something to be proud of

Media Top Tips

Prepare before being interviewed – get clear what you want to say

Use local radio – contact them a month before your event

Ignore journalists' questions – say what you want to say

Broadcast and share your successes, with photos

When talking on radio:

- Pretend you are talking to one person you know
- Breathe
- Smile
- Slow your talking
- Practise beforehand by talking into your phone and replaying it

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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 November 2018.

Rob Needham

Data Protection Act 1998

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Master's Mutterings

As you read this, the Guild AGM will be over and you will have a new Guild Master. I wish them all the best, and know that they will find the job rewarding. Thank you to everyone who has made me welcome at their tower or branch during my time as Master and as Secretary before that. I do hope to visit from time to time during my "retirement".

I am excited to see the work being done on the new Guild website. This will be a marvellous tool for us all to use, and will make it much easier for people to know what is going on and to communicate. Do look at it – and do keep sending news and other items in.

At the meeting of the Guild's General Committee in March, members split into small groups to talk about priorities for the Guild and the best use of its General Committee. My fellow officers will be following this up over the coming months, so please let people know your ideas when asked.

I hope that all officer posts will be filled at the AGM, but if there are vacancies, please consider whether you are able to help. Or you could mention it to someone in your tower who you think would be good at it – sometimes just the fact that somebody thinks you can do it is enough to make you offer.

Finally, do look out for the many things that the Guild offers, from advice on your bell installation, through courses to help with your ringing and those on other topics, and on to opportunities to come together. Offers of help with these are always welcome, and spreading the load makes it easier.

Hilarie Rogers, Guild Master

The Bells! The Bells!

Actor/writer Geoff Hales visits the tower practice

I have appeared many times in Henry Irving's fine drama of haunting and horror, but these bells are different; Irving's bells were on a horse-drawn sledge and so nearer to "Jingle Bells" than to the peal of St Helen's, Abingdon, where I am going to see/hear a practice on a January night.

The stairs to the bell-chamber are perilously steep and narrow for one who takes size 14 in shoes, and they seem to go on for far too long. I grope ever upwards (“Nearer, my God, to thee”) and find myself at last in a room full of welcoming ringers.

– Do you ring bells? (hopeful enquiry)

– No (apologetic)

I feel I should apologize for this gap in my education. All I know of ringing comes from reading *The Nine Tailors* back in the mists of time. On the walls of the chamber are boards with the names of teams of ringers who have done mighty deeds in years past. Among the reverend gentlemen who took part, I looked in vain for the name of the Rev. Theodore Venables, who led the team in which Lord Peter Wimsey took a rope that winter’s night, in Dorothy L. Sayers’s detective story set in the snowbound fens, where they rang a peal of 15840 Kent Treble Bob Major in 9 hours 15 minutes. Also on the wall is a vertical ladder leading to a hatch, up which I wouldn’t go, not for a cache of stolen jewels. It turns out to lead to the church clock, so I won’t need to.

– Better to keep both feet on the floor, says the gentleman next to me on what I want to call the “subs’ bench”. Cross your legs over and you can get a foot entangled with a rope, not an experience to be recommended. Don’t try it at home.

“What is this jangling in my ears?” demands the tormented Irving in the play. No jangling here: a sweet melodic ringing from above. Practice has begun. Up and down, up and down, catch and half-release, catch again. Faces redden with effort; this looks like serious exercise. “Lincolnshire!” shouts someone – nods from the ringers. The ropes descend again and rise to holes in the ceiling. What must the noise be, up in the belfry? Enough to drive the bound wretch in the book to madness and death, as it nearly drove Lord Peter.

Stop, breathe, announce the next peal [method], call someone off the bench and onto a rope. “Change (but not decay) in all around I see”. And they rise and fall again, breathe, pause, release, catch, release again, till suddenly it is nine o’clock. Get your coats, you’ve pulled.

And go down those stairs again. “Gentle Jesus, day by day, keep me in the narrow way. Let it be the pub for me, not a night in A and E.” And I am spared, for the pub, where the talk is of bells and the beer is excellent.

Geoff Hales

Old North Berks branch – Young Ringers outing

Iffley and Cowley outing, Wednesday 4th April 2018

Iffley must have been surrounded by farmland and the river until relatively recently, but of course was swallowed up within Oxford around a hundred years ago. We drove down the main street, which still feels like a village with many narrow turnings which looked as if they might lead to fields and orchards. At the end it broadened out to frame the attractive honey coloured church. There we happily met up, nearly twenty ringers including seven young ringers under eighteen years old.

[*Photo on the front cover of Odd Bob.*]

Lots of branches were represented among the seven young ringers: Banbury, EBSB, Oxford City, Reading, and Witney & Woodstock branches each were represented, as well as two from our own Old North Berks branch. We have often had more young people but lots were away with their families, making good use of the two week break from school.

We enjoyed the lovely Iffley bells, and especially remember the unusual central pillar in the ringing chamber! Our young ringer from Amersham called some excellent call changes for us. We also rang some Plain Bob, Stedman and Erin doubles. For a game, we threw a dice to decide which named change from a list to pull off in, then rang plain hunt on five from that change! It made our young ringers think, but they rang it successfully.

We were treated to an excellent talk and visit to Iffley church by Elizabeth, a member of the congregation there. It was difficult to believe that the beautiful crisp carving on the outside stonework of the church was nearly 900 years old! And it was fascinating to hear about the anchorite who built a cell against the north wall of the church with a window into the church. She lived there and devoted herself to Christ for ten years, never stepping outside her cell, until she died.

We walked the mile to St James, Cowley along what must have been a farm track between the two villages. There we were treated to scones, biscuits, cake, tea and pop kindly provided by Daphne. And we rang the light bells there, including a requested game of Twister as well as the proper methods.

The next ONB young ringer outing will be in the half term holiday, probably on Wednesday 30th May, (venue yet to be decided). Offers to organise something very gratefully received!

Susan Read, ONB Training Officer

Public Relations report

The refresh of the Guild website is well underway and the new webmaster, Tim Hayward, is getting into the job of managing the new site as it is being developed and is starting to train Officers to amend the site themselves. The intention is that it will be an organic, useful and live site that evolves with us so this will be an ongoing job. Keep the feedback flowing.

The *How to talk about ringing?* special workshop presented by Mark Regan, Master of Worcester Cathedral on April 21st was highly successful with 17 people attending – it got a consistent 5* rating! Notes are available (*see inside of Odd Bob's front cover*).

Two topics of interest:

1. The new shape of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers will soon be visible to us all at the meeting this year at Lancaster University – an interesting meeting is planned for 26th – 28th May with seminars open to all ringers. Do go along – details are on the CCBR website (*and poster on the back of Odd Bob*).

2. There is a campaign to replace the 1400 ringers lost in the first World War which is being acknowledged with ringing on 11th November 2018 – see CCCBR website for details – a useful opportunity for local PR and recruitment.

Elva Ainsworth, Public Relations Officer

The new Guild website

Work on the development of the new website has continued, and members have sent some very useful critiques following an invitation to view the development version (<http://www.odg-dev.timsawers.com/> – correct at time of writing). There has been plenty of feedback on both content and style. Where possible, changes will be made and information updated. Whilst there are aspects of the new site that do need improvement, the response to the site in general has been very positive.

We hope the website will be going live soon, and naturally this may uncover some issues that need resolving, and the improvement process will certainly be ongoing.

Not only has the website been given some attention, The Guild also now has a Facebook page, Twitter account and YouTube channel, for which any material would be most welcome. These can be found at the following locations:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Oxford-Diocesan-Guild-of-Church-Bell-Ringers-2062157157396367/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ODGCBR>

Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoL-6oUPIfXYJzKTEI8_LUw

Over time, these shall be used to supplement existing communication as well as provide a medium through which members can interact with each other.

Work is currently underway on training material to enable committee members and some branch officers to update the website without the need to go through the webmaster. More information shall be sent out when this is ready.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who got in touch with their thoughts on how the new website could be improved. I am very much looking forward to seeing the new site go live, and hope to see it grow in value as we aim to meet the needs of fellow members.

Tim Hayward (Webmaster)

Education Matters – Radley 25

In 1994 the first Radley course took place. At that time the Guild Education Subcommittee organised a weekend residential course (Friday morning to Sunday teatime!) based at Easthampstead Park college. Because it was often over subscribed, an additional course took place in 1993, based at Cuddesdon theological college. This venue was unavailable in 1994, so a one-day 'Cuddesdon' course using Radley church hall as a base was organised instead. That the course is still going strong is testament to the success of this format and the dedication of several individuals.

The Easthampstead course came to an end in 2005, partly owing to declining applications and partly because the venue was becoming popular for weddings and increasingly expensive. In recent years, the Michaelmas (initially Shiplake) one-day course has taken over part of Easthampstead's role, and one at Steeple Aston has run in parallel with Radley since 2007. Alongside these general Guild courses, during the early 1990's, annual ringing weekends for young ringers (initially based at youth

hostels and then the Eton Dorney Centre), and ‘youth days’ from 1997 – 2000 were organised. It is good that, in recent years, young ringers’ practices in various parts of the Guild, not least the dedicated practices leading up to the RWNYC, have helped to renew this tradition.

On Saturday 5th March 1994 the students at Radley were organised into four groups:

- 1 Plain Hunt and Rounds (Tutor – John White) Jill Betts, Pat Chapple, Bruce and Sally Coles, Pauline Needham, Joel Reitz and Tom Wadsworth.
- 2 Plain Bob Doubles (John Martin) Bridget Crabbe, Vicky Elliston, Nita Foulds, Ida Garrud, Jackie Rose, Joyce Shaw and Elizabeth Wells.
- 3 Plain Bob Minor (Andrew Haseldine) Maxine Belfield, Brian Lowe, Alan Masters, John Pearce, Dilys Spurrell and Derrick Stevens.
- 4 Triples and Plain Bob Major (Peter Bruce) Christopher Carter, Peter Clarke, Mike Davies and Rob Needham.

Looking through the course programmes over successive years, it is interesting to see how many students were able to progress their ringing, appearing in more ‘advanced’ groups. A few have gone on to take significant roles in their towers and branches and of course, very sadly, some are no longer with us.

The 2018 Radley students were organised into five groups, which has been the norm since 1997, this year covering plain hunt; plain hunt/Plain Bob Doubles; Plain Bob Minor; Grandsire Doubles; Grandsire Triples. A sixth group, from a tower in Central Bucks and based for the day at the Aston Clinton ringing centre, worked on Plain Bob Doubles with Lesley Belcher as their tutor. This ‘satellite’ group may be the start of a new trend.

It is good to note that John White, having been a tutor again this year, is providing some continuity! The tutors and course organisers hope that this year’s students, like so many cohorts before them, will have plenty of support at tower and branch level to consolidate what was achieved during the day.

Initially, Marie Cross (then chairman of the Education Sub-committee) and Daphne Pollard were key in making the facilities at Radley available and the course organisers have been Peter Starling (4), Barbara Payne and Peter Day (6), Susan and Brian Read (5), Kay and John Chamberlain (4) and Ann Osborne (6). They have been assisted in arranging towers and an army of helpers on various occasions by Katie Lane, Len Cox, Douglas Wilks, Sylvia Harrison, Helen Beaumont, Jonathan Cresshull, Joanna Knight and Joyce and Keith Vernon.

A total of 34 tutors have taken groups at the course, the most frequent of which have included Peter Bruce, Patricia Newton, Alan Griffin, Robert Partridge, John Wells and Chris Bennett.



Daphne Pollard (left) receives a bouquet of flowers from Patricia Newton (photo by Ann Osborne)

Sadly, Ann Osborne has suffered considerable ill health in the last year, not least a stroke that put her in hospital at a key time for contacting students. It was good that she was able to be involved on the day and we thank her for her sterling efforts with this and other courses over the years.

One constant in 25 Radley courses has been Daphne Pollard, who has taken care of church and hall bookings and, with her catering team, has provided a wonderful evening meal, culminating in the legendary sticky toffee pudding! Radley students have much for which to be grateful.

Robert Newton (Education Sub-Committee Secretary)

Guild Steward Report

This year has been interesting in my role as Guild Steward for the Vale of White Horse, Witney & Woodstock and Oxford City Branches – building on the last couple of years. I see the role as at least twofold: assisting or advising the Branches where they need help in organisational matters and helping with more practical ringing or towers & bells matters.

My local Branch is the Vale of White Horse and we have an excellent communications system with all members on an email list hosted by the Guild server and administered by the Branch Secretary. Not all Branches are lucky enough to have such a facility and we are helping with this. We are also adding members of other Branches to our list if they request it. The result is that we all have a better idea of the events happening beyond our own branch. The new Guild Website will hopefully offer similar functionality for those seeking learning and other opportunities.

Elsewhere in this Odd Bob, you will see the VOWH report which largely describes the work of our local “activity centre” at Longcot. We are blessed with several skilled and enthusiastic teachers who are willing to give their time. We are getting increasing numbers of people from neighbouring branches coming to learn at Longcot or attend specific events based on the messages they are getting. We are also pleased to get people travelling some distance to come and help teach. They develop their teaching skills while also helping the learners. It begs the question whether it might be possible for the learners to get the same level of tuition somewhat nearer to home and maybe from within their own branch? Not that we don’t want them coming to Longcot, of course! There are several potential barriers: not knowing what is available, not having the teachers or possibly not having suitable bells. The new website should soon help with communications and we are already helping to train teachers.

I am now working with several towers in other Branches to improve things that otherwise make the towers less attractive for learning or teaching. We are looking at improving things like: poor internal sound, lack of external sound control, poor rope circles, lack of guide frames or badly placed existing guide frames which misguide the ropes.

And there are also more simple things. For example, someone might say, “The 4th has always been impossible to set” or, “The 3rd has always been very slow at handstroke”. Why? These things are so quick & easy to correct!! Very few towers

seem to have simulators and it is worth encouraging more of them. We won't achieve a step change overnight, but hopefully, if the right things all come together, we may start to see more "activity centres" like Longcot emerging in other Branches. If this happens, that Branch and surrounding area should gain strength and be more sustainable as a result.

Tony Crabtree

Safeguarding in Towers – update

Following a meeting with the diocesan safeguarding adviser I can now provide this information:

On every occasion, when there is a child under 16 present, who is not accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult, nominate an adult to be responsible for safeguarding on that occasion. This adult should be aware of the behaviour in the ringing room and be prepared to take action if any inappropriate activity occurs. Ensure that everyone present can identify the nominated person and can approach them if necessary. If this procedure is followed there is no requirement to appoint a Children's Officer for every tower. This adult should be identified on the attendance register for the occasion.

It has also been agreed that:

Children may be permitted amongst the bells for the purposes of learning simple maintenance if they are accompanied by DBS checked adults and are never alone in the belfry.

If you are in any doubt at all with any safeguarding procedure, please discuss it with your parish safeguarding representative.

Always follow the guidance in the Diocese and Guild Policies.

Brief reminder of key points:

- The Diocese encourages bell ringers to affiliate to the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers and to follow their policies. The tower captain and anyone who trains or teaches children under 16 will need DBS checking. (Disclosure and Barring Service)
- Always have two adults present when children under 16 are being taught
- Invite the parents of any trainee to come and watch a training session before allowing their child to start to learn. Require a parent to attend at least the first training session and ensure that the parent fully understands what is involved in learning to ring
- Make sure that a parent is responsible for delivering and collecting the child to and from the tower
- Ask parents to sign a form giving permission for the child to be taught to ring – there is a model Permission to Ring form
- Keep an attendance register
- Be aware of the insurance position for children. Details are in the annual Guild Report
- Never allow children up amongst the bells apart from an initial demonstration visit, but see the additional amendment above.

Catherine Lane, ODG Safeguarding Officer

Tower Maintenance Award Scheme

Since the last report the activity in the Tower Maintenance Award Scheme has declined slightly with the number of current awards falling to seventeen. The number of towers participating or expressing an interest is ninety, which is about twenty per cent of the four hundred and forty towers listed in the annual report last year. There have now been one hundred and forty-nine inspections (of which twenty-six were preliminaries), resulting in one hundred and twenty awards (eighty Gold, twenty-six Silver, and fourteen Bronze).

The number of expired awards has risen again and is now thirty. The T & B committee continues to contact the expired towers with the aim of persuading them to renew their awards. Since the last report Bray and Cropredy have renewed Gold Awards while North Leigh has gained a Silver Award at the first attempt; congratulations to all these towers. Fulmer, Cookham, Berrick Salome and High Wycombe were the towers whose awards have expired since the last report and it is hoped that they will attempt to renew (or improve) the award.

The number of Branches having a tower in the “current awards” list is now nine out of the fifteen Guild Branches, with Reading having regained its predominant position, being just in front of the EBSB Branch. The placings are as follows:

Reading	4	(3 Gold, 1 Silver)
EBSB	3	(3 Gold)
Old North Berks	2	(Gold)
Banbury	2	(Gold)
Witney & Woodstock	2	(1 Gold, 1 Silver)
South Oxon	1	(Gold)
Sonning Deanery	1	(Gold)
Newbury	1	(Gold)
Oxford City	1	(Gold)

The six Branches with currently no awards are Bicester, Central Bucks, Chiltern, Chipping Norton, North Bucks, Vale of White Horse.

Current Tower Maintenance Scheme Awards

Gold Award

Bray (St Michael)	EBSB Branch	Expires 30.04.20
Cropredy (S M V)	Banbury	Expires 31.12.19
Freeland (S.M.V)	Witney & Woodstock	Expires 14.09.19
Horspath	Oxford City	Expires 30.04.19
Harwell (St Matthew)	Old North Berks	Expires 27.04.19
Clewer	EBSB	Expires 31.03.19
Radley	Old North Berks	Expires 01.03.19
Henley-on-Thames	Reading	Expires 01.03.19
Reading (St Giles)	Reading	Expires 01.03.19
Adderbury (St Mary)	Banbury	Expires 31.12.18
Chalfont St Peter	EBSB	Expires 30.11.18
White Waltham	Sonning Deanery	Expires 31.10.18
Stratfield Mortimer (St John)	Reading	Expires 26.10.18
Thame (St Mary)	South Oxon	Expires 30.09.18

Thatcham (St Mary)	Newbury	Expires 31.05.18
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Silver Award

North Leigh	Witney & Woodstock	Expires 30.04.20
Stratfield Mortimer (St Mary)	Reading	Expires 30.04.19

Bronze Award None

Expired Awards

Finchhampstead (St James)	Sonning Deanery Branch	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 Branch	Expired 31.12.08
Winkfield (St Mary)	EBSB Branch	Expired 30.05.09
Purley (St Mary)	Reading Branch	Expired 31.01.10
Benson (St Helen)	South Oxon Branch	Expired 31.10.11
South Stoke (St Andrew)	Reading Branch	Expired 31.03.12
Wokingham (All Saints)	Sonning Deanery Branch	Expired 28.02.13
Wantage (SS Peter & Paul)	Old North Berks Branch	Expired 31.08.13
Letcombe Regis	Old North Berks Branch	Expired 30.09.13
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
Ellesborough (SS Peter & Paul)	Chiltern	Expired 31.03.17
Chalgrove (SMV)	South Oxon	Expired 31.01.17
South Leigh (St James)	Witney & Woodstock	Expired 17.08.17
Dorchester (SS Peter & Paul)	South Oxon	Expired 31.10.17
Sonning (St Andrew)	Sonning Deanery	Expired 30.11.17
Fulmer (St James)	EBSB	Expired 31.11.17
Cookham (Holy Trinity)	EBSB	Expired 31.12.17
Berrick Salome	South Oxon	Expired 31.01.18
High Wycombe(All Saints)	EBSB	Expired 28.02.18

Towers & Belfries Committee

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

Bray (TMA)

Cropredy (TMA)
North Leigh (TMA, grant inspection)
Stoke Poges (release jammed bell)
Watlington (inspection)
Witney (maintenance advice and assistance)
White Waltham (problem with wheel)

A maintenance course is being planned for September or October, probably in one of the Banbury, Bicester or Chipping Norton branches.

The T&B display has been updated and will be on display at the Guild AGM.

Two new committee members, David Bardwell and Andy Slater, have joined the committee.

John Davidge, Chairman T&B Committee

Librarian's Report

There have been 16 library enquiries since Odd Bob issue 97. These have been about:

- Historical information about Broadwell bells
- E Cox, Roll of Honour ringer at Wargrave
- Information about Launton Handbell ringers
- Guild's handbells which are in the library
- Years of membership for various EBSB ringers
- Taylor's bellfoundry's presence in Oxford, 1821-1854
- Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund officers
- ODG peal at Todenham in 1909
- Information about the Guild's electronic archive
- Years of membership for Chiltern branch member
- Roll of Honour entries for Arborfield ringers
- Rev W.J.Grover's years as chairman of EBSB

Boxes of material from the Banbury, Bicester and Central Bucks branches have been deposited in the library during the last two years. Work on sorting through the papers is now nearing an end. It is not practicable to describe each of the documents in the library catalogue, but a summary of each folder's contents will be added to the catalogue before the folders are placed in box files for storage in the bookcases.

If anybody is interested in volunteering to scan or photograph some of the documents in the library for placing on the electronic archive of Guild material archive, please contact me.

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, Guild Librarian

News from the Branches

Banbury

November 2017 was a highlight for our branch with our 10-bell team earning 3rd place out of the six teams that finished in the Guild striking competition. This is the first time in 25 years that Banbury have had a placing and well done to the team. The year was rounded off with a very enjoyable Carol Service held at Bodicote church, the customary branch Boxing Day ringing at Deddington, and New Year's Day ringing at Banbury.

In March our social and quiz evening was once again held at Tadmerton with the customary jacket potato supper followed by quizmaster Malcolm Hensher providing another entertaining quiz.

This year our branch is hosting the Guild AGM at Bodicote with planning and preparations started early on. Unfortunately an unexpected royal wedding was announced for the scheduled date in May and, in consultation with the Guild, the difficult decision was made to move the AGM back a week to the 12th May to avoid any celebration clashes for members and towers.

The general and advanced branch practices that take place each month have been well attended, and two Saturday practices with ringing at two towers and a pub lunch have been popular. A Grandsire Doubles training morning was held at Cropredy attended by ringers from Cropredy, Horley and Wardington, with a follow-up planned later in the year. In April we have another branch quarter peal fortnight planned around the towers for our ringers; Branch Ringing Master Lionel Smith has overseen and organised a great deal of this ringing.

Heather Bletchly

Bicester

At our AGM, held this year on an evening in March at one of our Branch Practices (a change to the previous few years of having a Saturday lunchtime meeting) we elected one new member to double the Bletchingdon band! It was good to have 15 of the 68 members of the branch at the meeting and ringing in Bicester afterwards (14 from 8 towers) and then finishing with rather late pizzas at around 10. Steve Vickars has been elected our website officer but otherwise all officers have stayed (with varying degrees of enthusiasm!) in post.

We had another memorable Christmas get-together in Kirtlington following a Branch Practice there and have regular monthly practices arranged throughout this year, the dates of which are shown on our website www.bicesterbranch.org.uk and on the ODG website too.

Sally Wale was delighted to go on the Oxford City Branch's March outing to South Gloucestershire – it was arranged by Hugh Deam in part because Sally had grown up in the area and was able to ring in the towers for the first time.

Three ringers went on the Steeple Aston course in October – it was especially good since two hadn't previously attended a training day.

Finally the ringing simulator in Kirtlington, funded in part by the Bicester Branch, is having increasing use – do contact Steve Vickars if you would like to arrange a session.

Kathryn Grant

Central Bucks

The branch AGM was held at Quanton on 10th February and saw a changeover of officers. The branch wishes to thank Jan Robinson, standing down after several years as Ringing Master, and Rachel Sheppard standing down after 2 years as Secretary, for all their hard work and enthusiasm from which the branch has benefitted enormously. Darren Washington has bravely taken up the challenge to become our new Ringing Master, supported by Anne Pratt as Secretary. Following a review of branch practices it was decided to introduce a new monthly 8-bell improvers session. This would be at a normal 8-bell tower practice night but with a focus on moving people on to Stedman Triples and simple Surprise Major. These practices will alternate between Stewkley and Haddenham, at either side of the branch and each with a band at this stage. Other ringing plans for the year were circulated.

Saturday 14th April was the date set for the third branch outing to London, again all on foot or using public transport. This year we visited Docklands and Greenwich. Twenty two people from across the branch, including a good number of younger members, caught trains from three stations but all arrived within five minutes of each other at the first tower, Bermondsey. From here we headed on to Rotherhithe, walking along the Thames path with lovely views back to the city. From Rotherhithe it was a walk to the bus for Greenwich where we had a good long lunch time enjoyed variously picnicking in the park, viewing the sights or just supping pints with lunch. We reconvened at the entrance to the foot tunnel and walked under the river to the next tower, on the Isle of Dogs then on by way of the DLR to our one 10-bell tower at Limehouse. Then it was back on the DLR to Shadwell and a short walk to the final tower of the day, St George in the East, before wearily making our way back to the appropriate mainline stations for the journey home. We visited some impressive towers and rang on some very nice bells in a completely different part of London. Although not over complicated the ringing was good, including some very good raises and lowers, Cambridge Major and Grandsire Caters. Many thanks to Jeremy for organising another interesting and enjoyable day out.

Anne Pratt

Chiltern

Monthly branch practices on Saturday mornings continue to be well supported. In defiance of the remains of snow and ice, the December practice held at Little Missenden finished (as usual) with Christmas drinks and a buffet, and the vicar gave us a very interesting insight to the beautiful wall paintings, which have been conserved and their history documented.

Our January practice was held at Monks Risborough, although in the absence of the tower captain, David Argue, who had been knocked down and seriously injured by a car going through a red light just prior to Christmas. Members signed a card for David and sent their best wishes and prayers for his recovery.

In November, the Branch learnt of the death of Mary Richardson (a past ringer at Cheddington and latterly Stoke Mandeville). And in February it was announced that David Argue had unfortunately died of complications following his injuries. Branch members attended both their funerals.

The Branch AGM was held in March and all officers were re-elected. There was wide-ranging debate from many of those present over the compliance with, practicalities and difficulties encountered regarding three items on the agenda: implementing the recent changes to the Guild's safeguarding policy; ringing on 11 November for *Ringing Remembers*; and the forthcoming changes to data protection regulations.

Slapton's restoration and augmentation project finally received their faculty towards the end of March, and the village continues with their fund raising to bring it to a level that will enable them to complete their application to the Heritage Lottery fund. We hope that the Branch practices to be held in May at Aldbury and August at Ivinghoe will encourage the Slapton learners to attend their first Branch practices.

Clare Carpenter

Chipping Norton

The December branch practice was relocated to Chipping Norton as Burford bells were undergoing repairs, which have since been completed. The first two branch practices of 2018 were held at Hook Norton and Fulbrook and followed by pub lunches. The Branch AGM took place at Chadlington on 24th March having been postponed as a result of heavy snow.

All of the Branch officers were re-elected. Karen Roberts and John Taylor, both of Burford tower, were elected to the ODG.

The Claire Tarrant Award for 2018 has been presented to Daniel Glyde, tower captain of Fulbrook. It is very encouraging that several nominations were submitted for consideration for this award.

Special practices have been held for Grandsire Doubles, Plain Hunt & Plain Bob Doubles.

WW1 commemorative half-muffled quarter peals have continued at Hook Norton, and another quarter peal was rung at Church Enstone on Easter Monday for Sergeant Alfred Hawtin, a ringer from that tower, to mark the centenary of his death. A great-niece of his was one of the band.

Taynton's bells restoration work is nearing completion. The work to restore Shipton-u-Wychwood bells is scheduled to begin in September.

We are sorry to report the deaths of two honorary members who died in January, Betty Hawtin of Chipping Norton and Victor Merry of Charlbury. Both had given many years of loyal service to their respective towers.

Our congratulations go to Verity and Bob Calderan who celebrated their Golden Wedding, and Sally and Mick Austin who celebrated their Silver Wedding, both of these anniversaries were in February.

The Branch prepared for the ODG Ringing Day when 21 towers were open to visitors on Monday 7th May.

Christine Harris

East Berks and South Bucks

Exciting news – we have a new ring of six in the Branch. The bells at St Mary the Virgin, Turville (of Vicar of Dibley fame) were augmented from three to five in 1996, and enough space was left for an additional bell. Mike Spracklen, who has returned to ringing having retired from a lifetime dedicated to the coaching of national rowing teams across the world, offered to pay for a bell as a present for his wife, Annie, to thank her for her years of support. The bell, which is inscribed with Annie's name, was cast by Eijsbouts in the Netherlands and tuned by Nigel Taylor at Nicholson Engineering in Dorset. Nicholsons delivered the bell to Turville on 9th April and the local band enjoyed their first practice on six with the new bell as the treble the following Saturday. The bell was dedicated at a special service on Sunday 15th April. While the congregation were merrily singing *Let bells peal forth*, the vicar, Revd Sue Morton, climbed the vertical ladder to the bell chamber to bless the new bell. Thanks were expressed to all involved in the project, particularly to Michael and Annie, and also to Peter Wiltshire who pulled the project together.



Michael and Annie with the new bell on the tuning machine at Nicholsons

Other news – the Branch entered the Guild 10-bell Striking Contest at Olney, coming 2nd behind Old North Berks Branch (congratulations to them on their first win). High Wycombe entered the National 12-bell Striking Contest. In their eliminator at Ossett they were placed 4th behind Ancient Society of College Youths, Exeter and Leeds, beating Chilcompton and Towcester.

The Branch Fund Raising group had another successful year, donating £2100 to the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund, £1500 of which came from sales of sweatshirts, mugs, marmalade, etc, and £600 from the 100 Club (which now has 205 members).

The Cookham ringers organised a very successful Christmas Social with a sit down meal followed by quizzes, bingo, handbell ringing and other seasonal fun.



Our post-Christmas outing was to Basingstoke, Farnborough and Farnham (almost a lockout) but sadly this was not well supported by Branch members.

We were pleased to see the sunshine for our walking outing on 14th April. 15 ringers met at Egham to ring on their lovely Gillett ten, then all but one walked 3 miles along by the river Thames to ring at Old Windsor. Following lunch at the Toby Carvery we walked a further 3.5 miles to Windsor Parish Church, about a mile of the walk being through Windsor Great Park with the statue of George III behind us and the Castle ahead.

Pat Newton

Newbury

As usual, there has been plenty going on in the Newbury Branch. We were pleased and proud to congratulate Thatcham on taking first place at the Guild 6-bell Competition in October. Distance not being an object, we also entered a team in the 10-bell event at Olney, a mere 85 miles away. Lately, we have had no problem raising teams for the 6, 8 and 10 bell competitions at Guild level, but have yet to find the magic formula to getting a good turnout at the Branch 6-bell event.

In February, our now well established Quarter Peal week was a resounding success once again. A variety of standard and non-standard methods were rung, including 32 spliced treble bob minimus and 18 other quarters at all stages up to Royal with call change performances also allowed, involving as many branch ringers as possible. At the end of the week, our Annual Dinner was held at the Five Bells, Wickham and was well attended with a relaxed and friendly evening enjoyed by all.

We now hold two Branch practices per month, organised by our Ringing Master, with one evening set aside for all-comers, and another devoted to Surprise Major at



Daytime outing lunch at The Fox pub, Hermitage

all levels, the latter run jointly with neighbouring Andover District. Our non-standard method of the month was Zebedee Surprise Major which was then quarter pealed successfully at Newbury. Monthly daytime outings continue to be ever popular, with excursions outside our

Branch to neighbouring Burghclere and other towers, always with a pleasant and sociable pub lunch to end with.

Our Training Officer has been busy with sessions in a variety of subjects on offer, ranging from Bristol SM to Tower Maintenance, and Grandsire Doubles to listening skills. Although the take-up rate varies, many of our ringers are benefitting from these. Of course self-help sessions have also been held by towers such as raising and lowering in peal at Hungerford.

Other tower activities are worth a mention such as Lambourn, where to the ringers' credit, a series of fund raising events have been held, including coffee mornings and a metal detecting day, raising money for much-needed belfry work.

With the Centenary of the end of the First World War and a Royal Wedding, to name just two national events coming up this year, we are sure to be busy planning for those along with our own church events, and we look forward to a full ringing programme for 2018.

Mark Robins

North Bucks

The branch practice and Christmas social was held in December at Shenley. There was ringing in the tower and also handbell ringing in the vestry room, followed by tea and a quiz.

As part of the Milton Keynes 50th birthday celebrations a challenge was started to ring a quarter peal in every tower that was within the boundaries of the new town of Milton Keynes in 1967. Eleven successful quarters were rung as part of this event.

The Branch Annual General Meeting that was due to be held on Saturday 3rd March was postponed until Saturday 20th April.

We have also been holding a monthly doubles, plain hunt and call changes practice.

Gary Reading

Old North Berks

Our autumn branch barn dance and supper night was held at Harwell Village Hall. This was very well attended by just over one hundred branch members, their families and friends. The dancing was fast and furious, but a tasty jacket potato and salad supper, followed by some delicious apple pie, gave everyone the chance to refresh themselves midway. Thanks go to Janette and Philip Roberts, Kathryn and Dave Roberts-Locke, the Harwell ringers and the dance band *Jigworks* for their magnificent organisation of the evening. The dance raised £263 and the raffle £190 for branch restoration projects.

New Year's Day 2018 ringing with refreshments was held at Appleton and there were almost thirty attendees. Thanks go to Sylvia Harrison and all the Appleton ringers for the excellent refreshments, which ranged from hearty soups through to delicious cakes. This was once again a very happy occasion for the Branch and a good start to the New Year.

In March we held our six-bell striking competition and AGM at Cholsey. The competition was reasonably supported with four teams entering. Unfortunately some of our usual teams met 'one short' this year. Thanks go to our judges, Robert and Patricia Newton of High Wycombe, who both said that they had enjoyed themselves very much and had heard some good ringing. The team from Wallingford were once again the winners and were awarded our branch striking competition winner's trophy. They will represent ONB at the Guild's six bell competition in October.

At the AGM we had no change of branch officers. This made us wonder who will be our up and coming officers of the future. The age profile of our branch membership is increasing year by year, although this is now somewhat balanced by the brilliant efforts of our Training Officer, Susan Read, and several others, in recruiting young ringers in recent years. However there is still a shortage of people with sufficient youth and energy, combined with suitable leadership experience to be our future Tower Captains or Branch Officers. Some experienced ringers have moved to our area recently, and we know of several lapsed ringers who have returned to ringing after many years, who are making a real difference at their towers. Let's hope this trend continues so as to introduce some new faces to the leadership roles.

Susan has recently set up a Branch Ringing School. This idea came from the Birmingham Ringing School, a very successful venture by the St Martin's Guild. It is based on the *Learning the Ropes* (LTR) syllabus used by the Association of Ringing Teachers. The idea is that learners from our branch should learn together from the best teachers in our branch, providing a steady stream of new ringers to all our towers. From January 2018 we have a second group of four new ringers, the LTR1 (handling) group, who ring on Saturday mornings at a series of different branch towers. They are very keen and learning very quickly. As they improve and can ring reliably on their own, they will be moved to the current LTR2 group (rounds and call changes), who ring at a different tower practice night each week from 7.00 – 8.00 pm.

Our next social event will have taken place by the time you read this. It is to be a 'mini' outing for our afternoon ringers and we will be ringing at three towers, Burghclere, Kintbury and Hungerford, with a pub lunch in Hungerford. In July we will have our full day outing to various towers in north Oxfordshire, 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

There were no changes in the City Branch Committee at our November AGM. We still have a vacancy for one Branch Representative, but all other positions have been filled. Branch practices continue to have varied attendance, but what has been very encouraging is the number of newer ringers who have been coming along. Our Ringing Master Andrew Freer is planning some focused ringing sessions, such as ringing up and down, later this year, but at the moment is in the middle of making plans for his forthcoming wedding in May. We all wish him the very best and no doubt there will be some quarter peals, and maybe even peals to report in the next edition, to mark this special occasion.

There have been four first quarter peals rung since November. Brenda Gratwicke rang the tenor to a quarter of grandsire doubles at Bletchington, Nora Tarczy Novak rang the treble to a quarter of grandsire doubles at Kidlington. Both are Kidlington ringers, and both quarter peals were rung by women only bands, to commemorate the centenary of the first women to get the vote. Jamie Brown rang his first quarter peal on the tenor to Bob Doubles and Reverse Canterbury at Cowley. Luke Diesel

rang his first quarter peal on the tenor at Headington to Reverse Canterbury. Congratulations to all of you, and we hope they will be the first of many.

There continue to be lots of opportunities to ring on tower outings, and there are two monthly practices hosted by Headington and St Giles for those who wish to progress with their Triples and Major method ringing. St Aldates practice nights continue to provide the opportunity for people from several towers to expand their surprise minor method knowledge. There has also been a revival of interest recently in handbell method ringing, with several members starting to ring methods in hand or returning to it after a break.

Lindsay Powell

Reading

Attendance at the general Saturday monthly practices has been good and we have usually been able to cater for all abilities present. The Shiplake practice in November was combined with an open morning and attracted two new adult learners. The mid-week, daytime, monthly practices have seen variable attendance, but have benefitted from ringing a variety of methods rather than purely Surprise.

Following the success of the 6 bell practice at Nettlebed in January 2018, we may introduce some 6 bell venues into the mid-week rota during 2018.

The Shiplake monthly, evening, Surprise Major practices continue to be well attended and achieve a good standard of ringing of the more complex methods, including spliced with Belfast. The bell control mornings run by Colin Newman at Shiplake were very well attended and led to a noticeable improvement in bell control. Colin arranged a number of Quarter Peals to give improvers the benefit of longer ringing in methods.

The Branch entry band for the Guild 10-bell competition at Olney in November 2017 unfortunately suffered a miscall which disqualified them, but the judges were very complimentary about the ringing up to that point.

Several young ringers' practices have been held throughout the year, usually at Shiplake, and have proved very successful, being led very ably by Anna Sherwood and, since the February 2018 AGM, by Daniel Page. We are very fortunate to have so many skilled young ringers and they have all excelled themselves during the past year with some very impressive firsts including (but not limited to): Jennifer Ellis – first on 8 (Plain Bob Triples); Kiran Bahra – first quarter peal (Plain Bob Triples) plus firsts of Stedman Triples and Plain Bob Major; Thomas Sherwood – first peal (Stedman Triples), first peal on 10 (Yorkshire Royal) and first Surprise QP as conductor (Yorkshire Major); Matthew Stone – first peal of Surprise Major (Cambridge); Daniel Page and Anna Sherwood – 5760 Spliced Surprise Minor (41 methods – all the work); Daniel Page – first peal as conductor (Nottingham 8 Spliced). Anna and Daniel were part of the youngest band to ring a peal on 10 bells (Cambridge Royal) as well as the youngest band to ring a peal on 12 bells (Cambridge Maximus).

Following the February 2018 AGM, the Reading Branch Committee comprises:

Chair	Giles Winter
Treasurer	Keith Vernon
Secretary	Pam Williams-Jones
Ringing Masters	Colin Newman / Robert Partridge
Newsletter Editor	Diana McClure
Web Master	Tim Hayward
Youth Officer	Daniel Page
Branch Representatives	James Champion / Keith Vernon

Pam Williams-Jones

Sonning Deanery

The ART *Loddon Hub* has been active throughout the year and Vinni Sullivan has organised a number of quarter peal attempts to help learners progress and achieve new levels with their *Learning the Ropes* scheme.

Vinni has also been busy with another project, which aims to train a local band on the bells of St George's Memorial Church in Ypres, Belgium. She has already been to Ypres with the first group of ART teachers in February and will be returning in May; the teaching is hard work, mainly because many of the learners have little or no English, but very rewarding.

In December Katie Thomas of Sonning gained her level 1 certificate of the ART *Learning the Ropes* scheme, as did Anne-Marie Adams of Wargrave; in January Anne-Marie then passed Level 2, and Sally Kunzig of Wargrave gained Level 1 as well. Also at Wargrave, Kitty Gingell passed her level 5 of *Learning the Ropes*. Congratulations to them all.

St Michael's, Sandhurst is back to regular practices on a Monday evening and they are supported by four ringers from Yateley for which the tower is most grateful.

Our Youth Officer stood down from the post in autumn 2017 and since then it has been done on an 'acting Youth Officer' basis by the ageing branch secretary. Hopefully this is just coincidence, but some young ringer practices towards the end of 2017 had to be cancelled for lack of numbers.

Preparation for marking the royal wedding in May started early; before the end of 2017 Sonning had arranged a peal to be rung on that day! The vicar is keen on the plan and is suggesting that the church covers the cost of a peal board if the peal is successful.

Sonning has just had work done on its bells by Taylor's of Loughborough, who refurbished and refitted the clappers of all 8 bells, to very good effect.

Sadly, Sonning has recently lost one of its regular ringers; Sue Thomas passed away at the beginning of March following a short illness. Sue had been at Sonning for some years, having originally been taught to ring at Hurst, and it was not unknown for her to appear in the ringing chamber in full choir robes, ready to ring after a wedding for which she had also sung in the church choir. Sue had requested that the tenor bell be tolled for her funeral, and we were honoured to carry out her wish. A quarter peal of Plain Bob Triples was rung in her memory at St Nicholas, Hurst on the morning of her funeral. She is greatly missed.

All Saints Wokingham held their annual dinner at Sandmartins Golf Club on the Finchampstead Road towards the end of January, and Sonning held their dinner at the Shoulder of Mutton, Playhatch in mid- March, slightly later than planned due to the bad weather.

At the AGM on 17th February, 20 new members were elected to the Guild; the Branch also had three returning members. Most of the Branch Officers remained in post; changes were: the Ringing Master and Deputy Ringing Master swapped roles, Sue Portsmouth was elected Secretary, Rob Needham was elected Youth Officer, and the Training Officer position was still unfilled.

Sue Portsmouth

South Oxon

This year's AGM was held at Berrick Salome. Business was preceded by ringing and a service in the beautiful St Helen's Church, with its shingled bell tower, galleried interior and tiny pews. Time appears to have stood still in the South Oxon area. The Reverend Ian Cohen led this year's service, as he had done 25 years earlier. Similarly, John Tchighianoff chaired the meeting, much as he had done in 1993.

Nine new members were elected to the Guild, five from St Mary's Thame. The organ accompaniment for the service was expertly played by Christopher Devonport, a ringer from Chalgrove Tower, who was also elected to the Guild.

All officers remained in place, with the exception of Amy Herlihy who has stood down after several years as secretary. We would like to record our grateful thanks to Amy for all of her hard work on our behalf. We are pleased to report that Amy has now taken on the role of Branch Representative, so there will be no quiet retirement for her! And of course we all enjoyed a wonderful ringers' tea – thank you to all the bakers and helpers.

Regular branch practices continue to take place, with additional well attended monthly sessions concentrating on Grandsire and Bob Doubles. Whilst Quarter Peals are often rung in towers throughout the branch, a notable event was recorded at Great Haseley in February, when Hilarie Rogers chalked up her 500th quarter, on the bell that she learned to ring on.

In a branch that cannot boast a 10-bell tower, never mind a 12 bell, four branch members took part in the National 12-bell competition at the end of March, ringing for High Wycombe and the College Youths.

In this special year of commemoration, we report that Drayton St Leonard rang a quarter just after Christmas to mark the centenary of the death of Sergeant William Eustace, one of the five members of the village who lost their lives in WW1 and who are remembered on the War Memorial. No doubt other towers will be remembering their own lost ringers as we approach the centenary of the armistice.

Jane Willis

Vale of the White Horse

Over the last few years, Longcot tower has evolved into an activity centre where ringers from within the Branch and further afield can develop their skills under the guidance of experienced teachers. The Branch is fortunate to have a pool of ringing

instructors, most of whom are ART accredited mentors or teachers, some locally based and others who kindly travel some distance to help. We run a silent practice every Friday afternoon focussing on bell handling skills largely on a one-to-one basis, and a monthly evening training session covering a specific topic.

Longcot bells are an ideal weight for training, relatively easy and safe to tie, and the sound control means we don't disturb the neighbours. Being a ground floor ring, we can expand into the church with hand bells, white boards, books and phones when there is more activity than will fit in the ringing room. There is always a pot of tea on the go and often homemade cookies too!

The silent afternoon practices are used for teaching absolute beginners as well as existing ringers whose handling technique is hindering their progress. If the learner wishes to spend the entire time ringing a bell down or ringing one up, then a helper will assist by ringing it up or down again for them each time! They can spend time perfecting their hand-transfer from the sally to the tail using the invaluable 'dummy tail end', or practice altering the speed of their bell. Two learners together or one plus a helper can practice dodging or place making. The options are endless and the simulator gets extensive use.

Topics covered in the monthly evening training sessions have included Bob Doubles, Bob Minor, Grandsire Doubles, splicing methods, Plain Hunt, raising & lowering in peal, call changes and the ever popular "listening, place counting & rhythm" workshop which we have also run for other guilds.

We welcome people from other branches of the ODG and other guilds to our practices, and it is both surprising and pleasing to find people who regularly travel quite long distances to attend.

Tony Crabtree and Lucy Laird

Witney and Woodstock

On Saturday 3rd February, Freeland tower and friends held an afternoon outing to North Oxfordshire. We visited three delightful towers at Tadmarton, Horley and Mollington on a cold and wet winter's day. However, the warm welcome we received at each tower and the lovely peals of bells we rang soon took our minds off the weather conditions. It was a new experience for a number in our party to ring from a chancel crossing as was encountered at Horley. We rang a varied and wide-ranging repertoire from call changes to Cambridge, so that everyone in the party had plenty of opportunity to ring. On our return to West Oxfordshire, we enjoyed an excellent meal at *The Oxfordshire Yeoman* to round off the day. This was the first Freeland tower outing for a number of years but will now be a regular event on our ringing calendar.

Significant QPs rung by branch members since the last Odd Bob include:

LV100: 13 members of our branch rang in a total of 11 ladies band QPs with members of six other branches to celebrate the centenary on February 6th of women first getting the vote in the UK. The occasion inspired many relatively inexperienced ringers, resulting in two 1st QPs (Brenda and Nora from Oxford City Branch), one 1st as tenor (Judith from Bicester Branch), one 1st inside (Sue Ross of Wootton), four 2nd QPs, one 3rd QP, one 4th QP and three 7th QPs! Well done to them, they are all a credit to their teachers.

RAF100: Celebrating the occasion of the centenary of the formation of the RAF, another ladies band QP was rung on the branch's newest bells at Black Bourton in celebration of the achievements of women in the RAF, including the mother of one of the ringers and Mary Ellis, who at 101 is the last known surviving ATA pilot, and another fighter delivery pilot Molly Rose, who lived locally in Bampton for much of her life after the war (and also happens to have a bellringing son, Gregory). As the crow flies, Black Bourton bells are the closest ringable bells to RAF Brize Norton, the largest RAF station. Three of us joined two ringers from Chipping Norton Branch and one from EBSB to ring two further QPs on Easter Monday celebrating the RAF Centenary at Kemble and South Cerney, chosen because of their proximity to former RAF airfields in Gloucestershire. Four of us have a connection with the RAF; Mark is currently at RAF Brize Norton of which Dan's dad is a former employee. Alison's parents were both at RAF Henlow where they met, and John is a former RAF employee.

WWI Roll of Honour: We had the privilege of ringing 1260 All Saints Doubles at Yarnton to commemorate the centenary of the death of Private William James Cox 35024, a Yarnton ringer who died aged 28 on 24th March 2018 while on active service with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, 2nd/7th Battalion. He is remembered with honour at Pozieres Memorial, France.

Personal Milestones: Evadne Vallance rang her first QP (just prior to her 2nd which celebrated LV100); Andy Goldthorpe, Sue Ross and Rob Walton rang their first QPs inside; Toby Goss rang his first triples inside; Fiona Methley (aged 15) rang her first blows of St Martin's Doubles in a well-struck QP of the method; and Richard White celebrated his 40th anniversary of election to the Guild by conducting a QP at St Mary Magdalene, Woodstock, which also celebrated the reordering and re-opening of the church.

Several branch members enjoyed a memorable weekend outing in early April to the Isle of Wight, superbly organised by Michael Probert, during which we rang at every ringable tower on the island. The ringing ranged from Original Maximus and Grandsire Cinques at the Minster church of St Thomas of Canterbury & St Thomas the Apostle in Newport, via the lovely Llewellins & James 6 in the quintessential English Village of Godshill, to the quirky and double clapping three at Swanmore. We had a mixed bag of weather for the weekend but enjoyed a great opportunity to spend some quality social and ringing time together.

Alison Merryweather-Clarke and Andrew Goldthorpe

Points from Peals

The total number of peals recorded to date this year is 70 compared with 69 in the same period last year.

Firsts: A number of firsts have been recorded as ringers, particularly younger members, have made progress. Congratulations to all concerned.

- First Peal as conductor: Daniel J Page
- First Stedman Doubles: Alan M Eyles, Isaac J O'Shea, Timothy G Pett, David L Thomas
- First Surprise Minor: Sophie L Martin
- First Surprise Minor as conductor: David L Thomas
- First Cambridge Surprise Major: Isaac J O'Shea
- First on 10; Thomas R Sherwood
- First Surprise Royal in hand: Daniel J Page
- First Cambridge Surprise Major in hand: Christopher M Tuckett
- First Bristol as conductor: David L Thomas
- First London as conductor: Anna E Sherwood
- First Spliced Surprise Maximus: Kenneth J Darvill
- First Zanussi Surprise Maximus: Daniel J Page, Anna E Sherwood, E John Wells, June D Wells
- First Bristol Maximus as conductor: Anna E Sherwood

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

Bernard F L Groves and Martin J Turner (100 together), John S Croft and Bernard F L Groves (200 together), Catherine M A Lane (1,000), E John Wells and June D Wells (1,300 together), June D Wells (1,600), E John Wells (1,800), June D Wells (peals on all 366 dates in the year).

Congratulations to William Butler who has rung a peal for 71 consecutive birthday years.

Most methods (Surprise Minor 14) Sophie L Martin, (Surprise Major 6) Sophie L Martin, (Surprise Major 23) Anna E Sherwood; as conductor (Surprise Minor 14) David L Thomas, (Surprise Minor 41'all the work') Daniel J Page, Jack E Page, Colin G Newman, Anna E Sherwood, E John Wells, June D Wells

Events: Peals were also rung for the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul, to welcome the Revd Miri Keen as Rector of Brightwalton, and to mark the installation of the Rev'd Canon T J L Harper, as a Canon of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

Personal events: Peals were rung for the birthdays of Paul J Bloomfield, Josie S Irving, Lesley A Knipe, Anna E Sherwood, Pete Tombs; for the wedding of Chris May and Fiona Lloyd, Peter & Di Bridle (50 years) and John & Judy Couperthwaite (53 years).

In memoriam: Ringers and friends remembered were: Albert William Gibbens, Geoffrey Ronald Gibbens, and James R Taylor, The death of Stephen Hawking was also marked.

Ken Davenport, Peal Secretary

Paying Peal Fees electronically

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

Stuart Gibson

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General Committee members

Heather Bletchly	Kathy Bossom	Wenda Fowles
Mike Hopkins Till	Jenny Page	Ken Wakefield

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

L. P. A. Hopkins Till

Alan Marchbank

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Timothy G Pett

Bobbie May

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Towers and Belfries Sub-committee

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John Davidge *tbchairman@odg.org.uk*

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Secretary

Anthony Williamson *tbsecretary@odg.org.uk*

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Education Sub-committee

Chairman

TBA

Secretary

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Diary of Events for 2018

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 2018

Wed	2	CN	BP	Charlbury (6)	7.30–9.00pm
Tues	8	ONB	BP	East Hagbourne (8)	7.30–9.00pm
Sat	12	EBSB	Training Practice	Cookham (10)	6.00–8.30pm
Sat	12	CBB	SC	East Claydon (6)	7 – 8.30pm
Fri	18	VOWH	Branch 6-bell Striking Competition	Longcot	7pm
Sat	19	Sonning	BP	St Paul, Wokingham	10.30 – 12pm
Wed	23	ONB	BP	Blewbury (8)	2.00 – 3.30pm
Sat	26	South Oxon	BP	Benson (8)	7pm
Wed	30	Central Bucks	Improvers 8-bell	Haddenham (8)	7.30 – 9pm

JUNE 2018

Fri	1	Newbury	BP	East Garston (6)	7.30 – 9pm
Fri	1	Bicester	BP	Bletchingtondon (6)	7.30 – 9pm
Sat	2	Banbury	SC	Steeple Aston	4.30 TBC
Sat	2	W&W	Striking Competition	Stanton Harcourt (6)	Tbc
Tues	5	CN	BP	Enstone (6)	7.30–9pm
Wed	6	ONB	SM	Brightwell (8)	7.45 – 9.15pm
Thur	7	Banbury	Advanced Practice	Hanwell (6)	7.30 TBC
Sat	9	EBSB	6-bell striking contest	Chalfont St Giles	5 – 7.30pm
Sat	9	Central Bucks	BP	Winslow (8)	2.30–4pm
Sat	9	Oxford	BP	Headington	10.30 – 12 1pm onwards
Sat	9	South Stoke	SC and Half Yearly meeting	St Andrew (6)	10.00 – 11.30
Wed	13	Nettlebed	BP	St Bartholomew (6)	13.30 – 15.00
Thurs	14	ONB	BP	Aston Tirrold (6)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Sat	16	Sonning	BP	TBC	
Sat	16	EBSB	Training Practice	Sandhurst (6)	7 – 8.30pm
Sat	16	Chiltern	BP	Clewer (6)	6 – 8.30pm
				Great Missenden (8)	9.30 – 11.30am
Wed	20	W&W	BP	Stonesfield (6)	7.30pm
Thur	21	VOWH	BP	Shellingford (6)	7.30 – 9pm
Sat	23	EBSB	BP	Wraysbury (8)	7 – 9pm
Wed	27	ONB	BP	Marcham (6)	2.00 – 3.30pm
Wed	27	Central Bucks	Improvers 8-bell	Stewkley (8)	7.30–9pm

JULY 2018

Mon	2	W&W	BP	Bampton (8)	7.30pm
Tues	3	CN	BP	Kingham (8)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Fri	6	Bicester	BP	Caversham (5)	7.30 – 9pm
Fri	6	Newbury	BP (also Branch SC)	Midgham (6)	7.30 – 9pm
Sat	7	Central Bucks	BP	Whitchurch (6)	7.00 – 8.30pm
Wed	11	Reading	Mid-week	Caversham (8)	1.30 – 3pm
Sat	14	EBSB	SP	Beaconsfield (8)	7 – 9pm
Sat	14	Oxford	BP	Cowley	5.00 – 6.30
Sat	14	Reading	BP	St Lawrence (12)	9.45 – 11.15
Tues	17	Bicester	SP	Islip (8)	7.30 – 9pm
Thur	19	VOWH	BP	Hinton Waldrist (6)	7.30 – 9pm
Sat	21	Chiltern	BP	Ellesborough (6)	9.30 – 11.30am
Sat	21	Sonning	BP	Easthampstead (8)	4.30 – 6pm
Wed	25	Central Bucks	Improvers 8-bell	Haddenham (8)	7.30 – 9pm
Wed	25	ONB	BP	Radley (6)	2.00 – 3.30pm
Sat	28	W&W	Branch Social	Black Bourton (6)	Tbc
Sat	28	EBSB	BP	Chesham (6)	5.30 – 7.30pm

AUGUST 2018

Wed	1	ONB	S Mjr	Goring (8)	7.45 – 9.15pm
Fri	3	Bicester	BP	Ludgershall (5)	7.30 – 9pm
Fri	3	Newbury	BP	Bucklebury (8)	7.30 – 9pm
				TBC	
Sat	4	W&W	BP	Woodstock (8)	10:30
Tues	7	CN	BP	Chastleton (6)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Wed	8	ONB	BP	Childrey (8)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Sat	11	EBSB	BP	Denham (8)	7 – 9pm
Sat	11	Central Bucks	BP	Gt Horwood (6)	7.00 – 8.30pm
Sat	11	Oxford	BP	Yarnton	5.00 – 6.30
Thurs	16	VOWH	BP	Ashbury (6)	7.30 – 9pm
Fri	17	W&W	BP	North Leigh (6)	7.30pm
Sat	18	Sonning	BP	Hurst (8)	10.30 – noon
Sat	18	Chiltern	BP	Ivinghoe (6)	9.30 – 11.30am
Sat	18	EBSB	BP	High Wycombe (12)	7 – 9pm
Wed	22	ONB	BP	Cumnor (8)	2.00 – 3.30pm
Wed	29	Central Bucks	Improvers 8-bell	Stewkley (8)	7.30 – 9pm

SEPTEMBER 2018

Tues	4	Bicester	BP	Launton	7.30 – 9pm
Wed	5	W&W	BP	Ducklington (6)	7.30pm
Fri	7	CN	BP	Taynton (6)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Fri	7	Newbury	BP	Brightwalton (6)	7.30 – 9pm
Sat	8	EBSB	BP	Lane End (6)	7 – 9pm
Sat	8	Central Bucks	BP	Dinton (6)	7.00 – 8.30pm
Sat	8	Oxford	BP	Marston	5.00 – 6.30pm
Wed	12	ONB	BP	West Hanney (6)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Thur	13	VOWH	BP	Buscot (4) & Highworth (8)	7pm – 9pm
Sat	15	Sonning	BP	Sonning (8)	7 – 8.30pm
Sat	15	Chiltern	BP/HY	Weston Turville (6)	9.30am – 12.30pm
Wed	19	Bicester	SP	Bletchington	7.30 – 9pm
Sat	22	EBSB	SP	Stoke Poges (8)	7 – 9pm
Tue	25	W&W	BP	Combe (6)	7.30pm
Wed	26	ONB	BP	Drayton (8)	2.00 – 3.30pm
Wed	26	Central Bucks	Improvers 8-bell	Haddenham (8)	7.30 – 9pm

OCTOBER 2018

Mon	1	Bicester	BP	Kirtlington	7.30–9pm
Tues	2	CN	BP	Churchill (8)	7.00 – 8.30pm
Wed	3	ONB	S Mjr	Milton (8)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Fri	5	Newbury	BP	East Ilsley (8)	7.30-9pm
				TBC	
Fri	12	ONB	BP	Blewbury (8)	8.00 – 9.30pm
Sat	13	EBSB	Lorna Newton Contest final and Half Yearly meeting	Burham (8)	6 – 8pm
Sat	13 th	Oxford	BP	Wolvercote	10.30 – 12.00
Sat	13	W&W	Branch Outing	Tbc	Tbc
Mon	15	VOWH	BP	Shrivenham (10)	7.30 – 9pm
Tues	16	Bicester	SP	Islip	7.30–9pm
Sat	20	Central Bucks/Chiltern	Orchard Cup SC	Marsworth (6)	2.30 draw
Sat	20	Sonning	BP	Binfield (6)	4.30 – 6pm
Sat	20	Chiltern	SC	Marsworth (6)	2.00pm
Wed	24	W&W	BP	Standlake (6)	7.30pm
Wed	24	ONB	BP	Cholsey (8)	2.00 – 3.30pm
Fri	26	EBSB	BP	Hughenden (8)	2 – 4pm
Wed	31	Central Bucks	Improvers 8-bell	Stewkley (8)	7.30–9pm

NOVEMBER 2018

Fri	2	Newbury	BP	Hungerford (8)	7.30-9pm
				TBC	
Tues	6	CN	BP	Spelsbury (6)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Wed	7	Bicester	BP	Bletchington	7.30–9pm
Thur	8	W&W	BP	Cassington (6)	19:30
Sat	10	EBSB	Training Practice	Chalfont St Peter (6)	4 – 6.30pm
Mon	12	ONB	BP	Didcot (3)	6.00 – 7.00pm
				Little Wittenham (5)	7.30 – 8.30pm
Sat	10	Central Bucks	BP	Wing (6)	7–8.30pm
Sat	17	EBSB	BP	Slough (10)	7 – 9pm
Sat	17	Sonning	Business Meeting	Twyford (8)	Tea 4.30pm 5pm meeting
Sat	17	Oxford	AGM	Wheatley	Afternoon, times tbc
Mon	19	VOWH	BP	Faringdon (8)	7.30 – 9pm
Mon	19	Bicester	SP	Bicester	7.30–9pm
Wed	21	W&W	BP	South Leigh (8)	19:30
Wed	28	ONB	BP	Chilton (6)	2.00 – 3.30pm
Wed	28	Central Bucks	Improvers 8-bell	Haddenham	7–8.30pm

DECEMBER 2018

Sat	1	W&W	BP	Tackley (6)	10:30
Wed	5	ONB	S Mjr	Drayton (8)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Thur	6	ONB	BP	Radley (6)	7.30 – 9.00pm
Thur	6	Bicester	BP	Charlton-on- Otmoor	7.30–9pm
Fri	7	CN	BP	Burford(8)	7.00–8.30pm
Fri	7	Newbury	BP	Compton (6)	7.30–9pm
Sat	8	EBSB	BP and social	Amersham (12)	6pm onwards
Sat	8	Oxford	BP	Iffley	10.30 – 12.00
Wed	12	ONB	BP	Harwell (8)	2.00 – 3.30pm
Sat	15	Sonning	BP	Waltham St Lawrence (6)	4.30 – 6pm
Sat	15	Chiltern	BP	Halton (4) & Wendover (8)	9.30 – 11.30am
Mon	17	Bicester	SP	Kirtlington	7.30–9pm

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Education Committee



STEEPLE ASTON ONE-DAY COURSE

Saturday 27th October 2018

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: £30

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

Closing Date For applications is 14th September 2018



Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

Michaelmas Course

Saturday, September 29th 2018
10.00 – 18.00

Cost £20

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 course on conducting Stedman.

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 2018

- Conducting Stedman Triples

Applicants for the conducting course should be able to ring a touch of Stedman Triples competently.

Further details and application forms can be obtained by sending an SAE to the secretary of the Education Committee:

Robert Newton – 11 Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Watlington, Oxon OX49 5SX

E-mail: rhnewton@btinternet.com by 24th August 2018

Events for **all** Ringers

at Lancaster University LA1 4YW



THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH

BELL RINGERS

Lancaster 2018

CCCBR.org.uk

Weekend Attractions

- The Lichfield Diocesan Mobile Belfry
- The Carter Ringing Machine
- The Woodhouse Ringing Machine
- The CCCBR Roll of Honour
- Bookstalls – ART and CCCBR

Saturday 26th May 2018

Seminars

- Positive Public Relations
- Are you Safe and Safeguarded?
- Biographies: The Key to Ringing History
- Kick start your Bell Restoration Project
- Practical Belfry Maintenance
- Youth Leadership Forum: Led by prominent Young Ringers

Evening Social With local entertainment

Sunday 27th May

Sunday morning service ringing – 'adopt a tower' in the Lancaster Area

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 2:15pm | AGM of The Ringing World Ltd |
| 4:00pm | Church & Bells: Is there a Future together? – seminar by The Guild of Clerical Ringers |
| 4:00pm | CCCBR Constitutional Reform – open meeting |
| 5:30pm | Formal Opening and 1 st Session of the Council: Welcome, Obituaries, Election of Life/Additional Members, Reports of various stewards |
| 7:30pm | Annual Dinner in the University Great Hall
Guest Speaker - Canon Chris Pullin, Canon Chancellor of Hereford Cathedral |

Monday 28th May

2nd Session of The Council

Non members are encouraged to watch the Council in action but only CCCBR members may speak and vote at formal sessions of the Council



LACR.uk The Lancashire Association of Change Ringers

Prices and further details overleaf

Bookings and further information

cccb.org.uk/about/meetings/2018-meeting



This programme may be subject to change