

# Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter

April 2009, Spring Issue

## Stirring the grey matter

Sonning Deanery Branch held a team quiz night at St. Paul's Church Hall, Wokingham on Saturday 14th March 2009. Our thanks to Sue & Ken Davenport for arranging the use of the hall free of charge, for opening up the hall for us and for clearing up afterwards. The quiz was organised by the St. Andrew's Sonning bell ringers, who are most grateful for the generous support of the event by towers in the Branch, plus a National Womens' Register team, a team from Reading branch, and a team from the Royal Berks hospital.

The quiz was divided into eight rounds, four before the supper and four after, plus a picture round of vehicles that starred in a film or TV series, which one had to name. There was also a brain teaser in which teams had to name as many countries as possible that started with each of the letters in the word Grandsire; apparently there are 25 countries whose names start with S! These last two brain teasers could be answered at a more leisurely pace over the whole evening. Competitors felt that the questions were about the right level of difficulty; most teams could answer at least half and the winning team answered over three-quarters of the questions correctly. Many thanks to Peter and Helen Kemm who chose the questions and were quiz master and scorer for the evening. One round of questions about music was kindly provided by Aidan and Liz Hopkins.

The raffle was well supported and our Chairman, Rachel Moss,

## Dates for your diary:

### April

Skittles Evening Saturday 18th at 7.30pm at Jack O' Newbury, Binfield

### June

Branch Practice Saturday 20th 4-6pm at Shottesbrooke with Strawberries and Cream

### July

Branch Practice Saturday 18th July  
Time and venue to be confirmed

### August

Branch Practice Saturday 15th  
11.30am – 2.30pm with picnic at Waltham St Lawrence

St James' church, Barkham

made the draw at the end of the ploughman's supper break. There were plenty of prizes available and many of the contestants went home with something. Our thanks are due to the many members who kindly donated the prizes for our raffle. An amazing example of chance at the raffle was that the very first ticket drawn for the first prize was ticket number 1!!

At the end of the quiz the first prizes (wine and chocolates) were awarded to the "Credit Crunchers", which was the team of NWR members and their spouses. There were also booby prizes for the team that came last.

Thanks are due to Pauline Needham and Pam Elliston for doing all the work to plan, purchase and serve the supper, for washing up afterwards, and for selling raffle tickets. Several other members also helped with setting out tables, connecting up the sound systems, and so on.

Finally a big thank you to all those who came and supported the quiz. The quiz made a profit of £254 and the raffle raised £69, so a total of £323 has been added to the SDB bell fund.

Rob Needham

## Branch AGM

The Sonning Deanery Branch AGM was on Saturday 21st February at All Saints, Wokingham and here are some of the mainpoints from the meeting:

The following people were elected as members of the Guild:

Martin Wheatley	Barkham
June Foskett	Barkham
Richard Bennett	Wargrave
Emma Tilston	Arborfield
Ray Clarke	Finchampstead
Jacque Howson	Easthampstead
Lynne Crawford	Binfield
Thomas Crawford	Binfield
Steve Rowson	Binfield

The following officers were elected:

Chairman	Rachel Moss
Ringing Master	Ken Davenport
Deputy Ringing Master	John Manley
Secretary	Andrew Moss
Treasurer	Eric Bowes
Training Officer	John Harrison
Newsletter Editor	Sarah Boys
Webmaster	Aidan Hopkins
Independent Assessor	Steve Wells

## Skittles Evening

Saturday April 18th 2009

7.30pm onwards

Jack O' Newbury, Binfield

Come and enjoy the challenge of knocking over the skittles at a traditional pub skittle alley while enjoying a pint.

Tickets cost £13 each and include food.

For more details or to book tickets please contact Andrew Moss

secretary@sdb.odg.org.uk 01344 459978

## Sonning Deanery Branch Outing February 28th, 2009



Snowdrops at Micheldever

From left to right:

Steve Wells, Pam Elliston, Louise Marshall, Andrew Moss, Simon Feather, John Harrison, Alan Barsby, Judith Atkinson, John Manley, Barbara Wells, Chris Brown, Mike Boys

On Saturday February 28th 2009 a band of ringers took part in Sonning Deanery branch outing in the Winchester area. The following towers were rung at:

Kings Worthy, St Mary, 5 (9)	Wonston, St Trinity, 6 (8)
Micheldever, St Mary the Virgin, 6 (8)	Whitchurch, All Hallows, 10 (26)
Laverstoke, St Mary the Virgin, 6 (11)	Overton, St Mary, 8 (10)

## I'd like a course on ...

Have you ever thought there was some aspect of ringing where you could do with a bit of help, and the opportunity to spend some time focusing on it? That's what training courses are for.

Of course (most of) you know that already, and (most) of you know that in Sonning Deanery we try to fit the courses to people's needs, rather than the other way round. But in case you don't know (or had forgotten) let me remind you.

We keep a list of who would like which course. When we have enough people wanting it to run a particular course, we allocate a tutor (with or without a bit of arm twisting) and give him or her a list of the names and contact details of potential students. The tutor then contacts each potential student sooner (if really arm twisted) or later (if really busy) to agree on a mutually convenient date, and the course happens

There is a bit more to it of course. They need to find a suitable venue, and quite possibly some helpers. And there might be one or two who have changed their minds.

Over the last few years, we have run two or three courses per year, on several different topics, and a couple more are waiting to be organised. (I need to do a bit more arm twisting.) Some courses have one or two people on the waiting list, but not enough to run the course.

The courses we currently offer are:

Elementary bob calling, See yourself bell-handling on video,  
Bell handling, Leading up and down in peal,  
Raising and lowering techniques, Raising and lowering in peal,  
Listening skills, Rope splicing, Heavy bell handling, Ring with a simulator  
Bell maintenance, Change ringing on handbells, How to learn a method ,  
Teaching bell handling

If there is a course you would like, which isn't listed here. If so, let me know, and we will see if it can be provided. Some people ask for courses on ringing specific methods. In principle we can run them, but in recent years we have only had odd isolated requests – not enough to run a course. If this is what you want, then you should consider applying for a place on one of the Guild training days. (Your tower receives notices about them, so keep a lookout). If you would like to develop your conducting skills, the Central Council runs a scheme where you are allocated to an experienced conductor who will act as a (remote) mentor for you. Ask me for details if you are interested.

The handbell course listed above is an introductory session. If you would like to develop your handbell ringing further, there is a group that meets regularly (like a tower practice night). Ask me for details if you are interested.

For full details of what each course offers, look on the training page of the Branch website at:

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<http://www.odg.org.uk/sdb/training/> There is also a form you can fill in to request a place on a course.

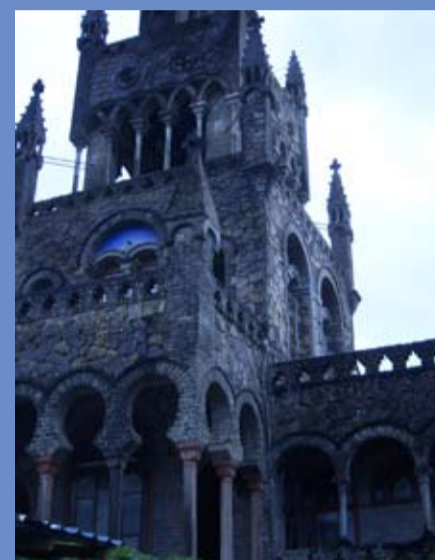
Alternatively, just send me an e-mail saying what you would like, with your phone number, or call me.

John Harrison, Training Co-ordinator

0118 978 5520 [training@sdb.odg.org.uk](mailto:training@sdb.odg.org.uk)

## Bells of St. George's Cathedral, St. Vincent

While we were on a cruise holiday in the Caribbean we visited the island of St. Vincent. The capital, Kingstown, has two cathedrals: the old Anglican St. George's Cathedral and the Roman Catholic St. Mary's Cathedral. The two cathedrals face each other across a main road in Kingstown, and we visited them in pouring rain with our umbrellas up.



St. Mary's is a fascinating and bizarre mix of architectural styles: Romanesque, Moorish, Byzantine and Flemish! Open windows in the side wall of the cathedral looked onto the playground of

the church primary school next door. It was playtime and the din was terrific! Hopefully they don't have services during school time.

In St. George's Anglican cathedral there were many plaques on the walls eulogising most fulsomely British men who had been in positions of control or governorship of the island in days gone by. There was also a stained-glass window showing an angel wearing a bright red gown. Apparently this stained glass was originally intended for a church in London, but Queen Victoria said, "No way do angels wear red, always white," or words to that effect, and it finished up in a window in St. Vincent!

We asked a local in the church, who perhaps was a church warden, whether the church had bells, and he proudly took us up three flights of very steep wooden ladders to the belfry. There were three bells hanging there with wheels and ropes for full-circle ringing, but in Dove they are described as unringable. When we asked how many ringers they had he said, "One!" Apparently the bells are only rung by swinging them in the down position, and the one ringer can keep all three bells chiming (a bit like keeping plates spinning on sticks!).

The ringer needs to be dedicated; the first service on a Sunday started at 5.30a.m. so he was ringing from about 5a.m.



Rob Needham

## Quarter Peals

**18th January 2009**

**St. Andrew's, Sonning, Berkshire**

**1260 Plain Bob Triples**

- 1 Judith Bowler
- 2 Pam Elliston
- 3 Chris J Brown
- 4 Rob Needham
- 5 Andrew Elliston
- 6 Richard Bennett
- 7\* Simon Milford (C)
- 8 Peter Kemm

\* First triples quarter as conductor

**1st February 2009**

**St. Andrew's, Sonning, Berkshire**

**1260 Grandsire Triples**

- 1 Joyce Vernon
- 2 Alison Clayton
- 3 Rob Needham
- 4 Alan K Barsby
- 5 Pam Elliston (C)
- 6 Peter Kemm
- 7 Simon Milford
- 8 Keith Vernon

**8th February 2009**

**St. Andrew's, Sonning, Berkshire**

**1288 Grandsire Triples**

- 1 Rob Needham
- 2 Pam Elliston
- 3 Alison Clayton
- 4 Robert Partridge
- 5 Alan K Barsby
- 6 Kelvin R Britton
- 7 Simon Milford (C)
- 8 Keith Vernon

Birthday compliment to 3.  
50th birthday compliment, and  
first Grandsire Triples quarter as  
conductor, ringer 7

**1st March 2009**

**St. Andrew's, Sonning, Berkshire**

**1260 St. Martin's Triples**

- 1 Joyce Vernon
- 2 Judith Bowler
- 3 Rob Needham
- 4 Pam Elliston
- 5 Peter Kemm
- 6 Alan K Barsby
- 7 Robert Partridge (C)
- 8 Keith Vernon

**8th March 2009**

**St. Andrew's, Sonning, Berkshire**

**1260 Grandsire Triples**

- 1 Rob Needham
- 2 Pam Elliston
- 3 Joyce Vernon
- 4 Stephen R Smith
- 5 Andrew Elliston
- 6 Alan K Barsby
- 7 Chris J Brown (C)
- 8 Keith Vernon

**10 March 2009**

**St Paul's, Wokingham, Berkshire**

**Oxford Diocesan Guild**

**1250 Yorkshire Surprise Major**

**44min (15cwt)**

- 1 Sue Sargeant
- 2 Bobbie May
- 3 Barbara Wells
- 4 Judith Bowler
- 5 Louise Marshall
- 6 John Harrison
- 7 John Manley
- 8 Simon Feather (C)

In memoriam David Carpenter, for  
many years treasurer of St Paul's.

Rung during his funeral service,  
held at Bovey Tracey, Devon. The  
tenor wastolled afterwards.

**22nd March 2009**

**All Saints, Wokingham, Berkshire**

**1280 Cambridge S Major:**

- 1 Mary Spence
- 2 Elizabeth J Davenport
- 3 Susan E Davenport
- 4 Katie J Tutcher
- 5 Nigel AL Mellor
- 6 Kenneth R Davenport
- 7 John A Harrison
- 8 Jon P Tutcher (C)

For evensong on Mothering Sun-  
day. First of Surprise - 2.

**22nd March 2009**

**St. Andrew's, Sonning, Berkshire**

**1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor**

- 1 Andrew Elliston
- 2 Pam Elliston
- 3 Brian Snell
- 4 Rob Needham
- 5 Alan K Barsby
- 6 Robert Partridge (C)

**27th March 2009**

**St. Mary's, Eversley, Hampshire**

**1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

- 1 Barbara Wells
- 2 Alan K Barsby
- 3 Pam Elliston (C)
- 4 Rob Needham
- 5 Chris J Brown
- 6 Keith Vernon

Rung to celebrate the life of Hugo  
Eastwood,  
an Eversley District councillor for  
many years.

**27th March 2009**

**St. Peter's, Yateley, Hampshire**

**1260 Grandsire Triples**

- 1 E John Manley
- 2 Peter Munday (C)
- 3 Pam Elliston
- 4 Rob Needham
- 5 Alan K Barsby
- 6 Chris J Brown
- 7 Richard H Johnston
- 8 Keith Vernon

This was part of a quarter peal  
day organised by Pam Elliston.

### Cross border quarter peals (abridged)

On Friday 27th March we had a very enjoyable quarter peal day, organised by Pam Elliston (Sonning) and Alan Barsby (Eversley). We attempted quarters at four towers during the day and achieved three of them. The only tower that we rang at that is in the ODG was St. Michael's, Sandhurst where the band rang Cambridge Surprise Minor and Plain Bob Minor.

The other three towers are not in the ODG although all four towers are quite close together. The first tower of the day was St. Mary's, Eversley, which is in the Winchester & Portsmouth Guild. The second tower was Holy Trinity, Hawley, which is in the Guildford Diocesan Guild. Here we were joined by more ringers and we tried Plain Bob Major but were unsuccessful. After lunch it was across the road to St. Peter's, Yateley, which is back in the Winchester & Portsmouth Guild. The last tower was St. Michael's, Sandhurst where the band was yet another combination of ringers. **Rob Needham**

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