

Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter



January 2011, Winter Issue



All Saints, Binfield

100 years on

Following some research into my family peals I became aware of the first peals rung by my grandfather John Rance and his involvement in the history of some of the towers in the Branch.

My research was made easier by the recent release of the early Ringing Worlds on DVD together with the Bell News DVD (released a few years ago).

John, often called Jack, learnt to ring at Easthampstead before becoming a ringer at his parish church of Binfield. He became tower foreman there and remained so until his death in 1953, as well as being a member of the choir.

He was also for many years one of the Branch representatives on the Guild Committee.

He rang his first peal at Winkfield in May 1910. His second peal was at Binfield on October 1st 1910 to mark the dedication of the new organ and re-hung bells which included 2 recast bells.

To mark the centenary of the first peal on Binfield bells permission was sought to ring a commemorative peal. Permission was granted and a peal of Plain Bob Minor with

Diary of Events

Saturday 19th February

White Waltham
Branch AGM
3pm Service ringing
4pm Service
4.45pm Tea
5.15pm Meeting
7pm –9pm Ringing practice

Saturday 19th March

Sandhurst St Michael
10.30am – 12 noon
Branch Practice

Saturday 26th March

Ringing World Centenary Day in London
Details and tickets available at
www.ringingworld.co.uk

Saturday 16th April

Waltham St Lawrence
2.30pm—6.30pm
6 bell striking competition
Skittles TBA

Monthly Tuesday afternoon practices at All Saints, Wokingham on 1st February, 1st March and 5th April 2-4pm (provisionally).

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seven different 720s, the same as the first peal, was successfully completed (see below). I rang the same bell (3rd) as my grandfather had rung in the first peal exactly 100 years before.

All Saints, Binfield

Friday, 1 October 2010 in 2 hrs 37 mins (9 cwt)

5040 Plain Bob Minor (7 extents each called differently)

- 1 David J Creasy
- 2 Robert H Newton
- 3 Susan E Davenport
- 4 John A Harrison
- 5 E John Wells
- 6 Kenneth R Davenport (C)

Some other notable dates from his peal records:

27th January 1912 - Hurst. The first peal of Stedman on the bells.

3rd August 1912 - Hurst. First peal of major on the bells.

26th December 1912 - Arborfield. First peal on the bells.

10th November 1913 - Warfield. First peal on the bells.

26th December 1913- Warfield. First peal of major on the bells.

He rang two peals on 3rd August 1914 at Hurst and Sonning, with the same person ringing the tenor to both peals. A footnote to the peal at Sonning says that an effort was made to stop the ringing during the last two courses upon a false rumour that "war was declared" by Great Britain. Another interesting footnote to a peal at All Saint's Wokingham on 1st February 1913 thanks the Rector for the use of the bells and for kindly altering the hour of evensong.

Sue Davenport

Us and Them (3)

In previous Newsletters, I discussed the different ways that we can relate to non-ringers, and make the communities in which we ring much better informed about ringing, since from this higher profile and greater understanding should flow benefits, including easier and more effective recruiting. Nothing is guaranteed of course, and acute shortage of ringers may focus the mind. Even if you do need to focus on recruitment, it still pays to think more broadly, to make a more attractive offering, and to try to foster longer term interest in those you recruit.

So who are you trying to attract? As any advertiser knows—it's important to have a clear view of your target audience. So let's think about the pros and cons of recruiting from different groups within the community.

Parts of the wider community

Parishioners – They form a well defined group that you can

easily target, and you can enlist the church authorities to help you do so. They should be familiar with the routines of church services, and they should feel some sense of commitment to the church. However, they are only a rather small fraction of the local community, and many of them may be past the age when it is easy to learn new skills. Nor can you assume that their commitment to the church will mean that they are more punctual, or more regular in their attendance. You might think it would, but active parishioners who already have other church commitments (choir, sidesmen, church wardens) might put ringing second to these other duties.

As an extreme example, I once trained our curate to ring. He seemed an ideal recruit. He learnt quickly, and was soon confidently ringing good rounds with the simulator. So I invited him to join in the weekly Monday practice, only to discover that he wasn't available on Mondays. He had visited a practice, but didn't realise that we only practised on one evening. Even so, he was already good enough to cover reliably, and he could have made progress just ringing for services, but that didn't work either because when he wasn't taking the service himself, he was fully involved with youth work. So he never made it to Sunday ringing, and we lost a very promising ringer.

Villagers – A village is not just a smaller version of a town. Villages seem to have more of a sense of community. So although you would be fishing in a smaller pool than you would be in a town, you might find that people identify better with the village as an entity, and that even non-churchgoers take a significant interest in things that they see as being linked with the village's heritage or cultural identity. Of course you can't take this for granted, and I don't know how true it is of the villages in our Branch and the effect is likely to be diluted somewhat when a village expands to become a satellite of a nearby town.

School pupils – A school is unlike any other group within the community, and represents a wide social cross section of it. There might not be a suitable school near you, but if there is, then why not consider trying to develop some sort of relationship with the school. Giving a talk, as I mentioned in an earlier article, helps to sow the seeds of goodwill and interest in young minds, but serious recruiting is a much bigger challenge for two reasons. Schools are under a lot of pressure on their time, so fitting in a substantial additional activity is not easy. To be worthwhile to the school, any activity should benefit a substantial number of pupils, not just the odd one. So the resources you need to support it could be substantial. Successful school initiatives have included after school clubs and end of year events. See www.ringingworld.co.uk for past successes—grants from the Ringing Foundation's 'Bells in Schools' initiative may even be available (ringingfoundation.com).

Connections

Anyone in business will tell you that word of mouth is a most effective form of advertising. People tend to believe what their friends tell them more than what salesmen tell them, or what they read in advertisements. Recruiting is a form of selling. You aren't trying to part people from their money, but you are trying to persuade them to invest a huge amount of time, effort and personal commitment. They will only do that if they think it is a fair price for what they get in return. Different people will look for different payoffs of course, from getting a kick out of learning something new to the satisfaction of helping preserve our heritage, with lots of others in between.

Family members – We all know of 'ringing families' where learning to ring is as automatic as inheriting the family heirlooms. Not all ringers' families are like that, but even if there is no expectation of learning to ring, with a ringer in the family, ringing is 'normal' in a way that it probably isn't for many people. That lowers the threshold for giving it a go. It doesn't always work though. For some young people, it's not 'cool' to do the same things as their parents (though that's less true if it is an uncle or aunt who rings) so when you recruit ringers' children, try to offer them 'their own' ringing experience, separate from their parents. Family ties can work the other way too, when parents of ringers decide to learn. They don't worry about being 'cool', but they might be concerned about not being as good as their offspring, so again you need to see give them their own ringing experience, regardless of whether they are likely to catch up with their children.

Friends – Having a friend who is a ringer also helps people to see ringing as a normal activity, in the same way as having a ringing relative.

Ex-ringers – You might be surprised how many ex-ringers there are. Some are the ones who started learning and then decided it wasn't for them, and they probably wouldn't make good recruits, but others were fully fledged ringers who stopped ringing for all sorts of reasons (job, family, geography, ...). Once you get out of the habit of regular ringing, it is easy to carry on like that, even if the original reason for stopping is no longer there. I know because it happened to me. But given the right stimulus, taking it up again may not be a big step, especially since there is no initial learning process to go through, just a few cobwebs to blow away. All it needs is the right encouragement at the right time.

In the next article I will go beyond thinking about broad groups to target for recruiting, and discuss what type of person makes a good recruit. There is also a report on recruitment and retention on the Guild website at: http://odg.org.uk/pdf/recruit_retain.pdf

John Harrison

Remembering the fallen



In the Sonning ringing room are photos of two soldiers who were both members of St. Andrew's, Sonning and who fell in the Great War. As I mentioned in my article in July's newsletter (The missing soldier) I was keen to find out more about them.

Alan Regin, who is the Steward of the Rolls of Honour, CCCBR, has given me a lot of help with details of the two soldiers. He, and others from the UK, visit the war graves from time to time, and they did so over the Christmas period 2010. This photograph was recently provided by Alan Regin, and shows the grave of one of the St. Andrew's, Sonning ringers.

Both soldiers have entries in the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers *Roll of Honour* list. The *Roll of Honour for World War I* is kept in the library of St Paul's Cathedral, London, along with the *Roll of Honour for World War II*. Details, photographs of the Rolls and other information can be found at: www.cccbr.org.uk/rolls

Rob Needham

Peals

**6th November 2010 in 2 hrs 50 mins (15 cwt)
St Paul, Wokingham**

5024 Rutland Surprise Major (Composed: David W Beard)

- 1 June D Wells
- 2 Geoffrey K Cook
- 3 Michael K Till
- 4 E John Wells
- 5 Richard H Johnston
- 6 Alan K Barsby*
- 7 Christopher P Cole
- 8 Kenneth R Davenport ©

* First in method

Quarter Peals

3rd October 2010

Sonning

1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 Andrew Elliston
- 2 Pam Elliston
- 3 Rob Needham
- 4 Alison Clayton
- 5 Simon Milford
- 6 Robert Partridge (C)

2nd November 2010

All Saints, Wokingham

1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 John A Harrison
- 2 Judith M Atkinson
- 3 Edward JW Manley (C)
- 4 Mary Spence
- 5 Stephen C Wells
- 6 Alan K Barsby
- 7 Jon P Tutcher
- 8 John S Hares

For Branch Quarter Peal Week

21st November 2010

Sonning

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Rob Needham
- 2 Andrew Elliston
- 3 Alison Clayton
- 4 Brian Snell
- 5 Pam Elliston (C)
- 6 Peter Kemm

12th December 2010

Sonning

1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Alison Clayton
- 2 Lavinia M Sullivan
- 3 Pam Elliston
- 4 Brian Snell
- 5 Rob Needham
- 6 Alan K Barsby
- 7 Robert Partridge (C)
- 8 Andrew Elliston

3rd October 2010

White Waltham

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Lesley A Graves
- 2 Naomi G Andrew*
- 3 Simon D Smith
- 4 Derek R Smith
- 5 Caroline S Andrew (C)
- 6 Roger C Martin

For Harvest Festival and to celebrate the first ringing of the bells 21 years ago.

* 1st inside

14th November 2010

St Paul, Wokingham

1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Pam Elliston
- 2 Susan E Davenport
- 3 Geoffrey K Cook
- 4 Dave Creasy
- 5 Alan K Barsby
- 6 Kenneth R Davenport (C)
- 7 Christopher P Cole
- 8 Elizabeth J Davenport

For Remembrance Sunday

28th November 2010

All Saints, Wokingham

1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Mary Spence
- 2 Mhairi C Miller
- 3 Katie J Tutcher
- 4 Richard J Woodward
- 5 Nigel AL Mellor
- 6 Jon P Tutcher
- 7 John A Harrison (C)
- 8 Jonathan P Goodchild

For Advent carol service

31st October 2010

All Saints, Wokingham

1260 Plain Bob Triples

- 1 Julie B Goodchild
 - 2 Mhairi Miller
 - 3 Mary Spence
 - 4 Richard J Woodward
 - 5 Stephen R Smith
 - 6 Alan Barsby
 - 7 Jon P Tutcher (C)
 - 8 Jonathan P Goodchild
- For All Saints Sunday

14th November 2010

All Saints, Wokingham

1288 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Nigel A L Mellor
- 2 Mhairi C Miller
- 3 Barbara G Smith
- 4 Ian F Taylor
- 5 Jonathan P Goodchild
- 6 Jon P Tutcher
- 7 Graham E Slade (C)
- 8 Evan Kozakiewicz

For Remembrance Sunday

5th December 2010

Sonning

1260 Plain Bob Minor with tenor

- 1 Joyce Vernon
- 2 Lavinia M Sullivan
- 3 Peter Kemm
- 4 Rob Needham
- 5 Pam Elliston (C)
- 6 Andrew Elliston
- 7 Keith Vernon

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