

Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter



December 2013, Winter Issue

One hundred years of ringing at Warfield

The centenary of ringing at Warfield coincided with the 300th anniversary of the burial of Fabian Stedman. The first peal in the tower was Stedman Triples on 10th November 1913. The ringer of the third in the original peal was John Rance, Grandfather of Sue Davenport (nee Rance).

The family decided they would like to mark the occasion with a quarter peal of Stedman Triples which was arranged for 7th December. A further generation of this ringing family was represented by Elizabeth O'Brien, she rang the bell her Great Grandfather rang in the first peal.

The following week a peal of Stedman Caters was rung to celebrate the occasion (details on back page). We would like to thank the Clergy and ringers at Warfield for their assistance in making this possible.

- 1260 Stedman Triples
- 1 Susan E Davenport
 - 2 Pam Elliston
 - 3 Elizabeth J O'Brien
 - 4 Graham E Slade
 - 5 John A Harrison
 - 6 Alan K Barsby
 - 7 Kenneth R Davenport (C)
 - 8 Andrew Elliston

Sue Davenport, St Paul's Wokingham



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Diary of Events

Saturday 18th January

Finchampstead
3-5pm Branch Practice

Saturday 15th February—AGM

Binfield (TBC)
Pre service ringing 3-4pm
Service 4pm, tea 4.45pm, AGM 4.45pm
7 - 9pm Branch Practice

Saturday 16th March

TBC

Monthly Tuesday afternoon practices (2-4pm)
at Binfield on 8 Jan, 5 Feb & 5 March
(provisionally).

If you think your band might benefit from hosting the monthly daytime practice why not contact John Harrison and suggest this? There are usually between 10-15 ringers present and all abilities are catered for.

Eddie Martin



The death of Eddie Martin, 75, was announced on Nov 18th. He died whilst undergoing surgery. Ann and Eddie returned to Washington DC in July having spent five years in the UK. Eddie was a regular ringer at Easthampstead.

He was well known for his compositions and books on ringing, especially his favourite method, Stedman.

He was a keen ringing teacher, especially of youngsters, and was the conductor for a surprise major hand bell band.

Originally from the Market Harborough area, he spent many years as a ringer at Washington Cathedral. An obituary will be published in the Ringing World soon.

Steve Wells, Easthampstead

Publicity for Ringing

It's always good to see ringing in the news. So much of what we do is hidden from the public that it can get eclipsed by stories about complaints and adverts with monks swinging on bell ropes.

In the last newsletter I encouraged people to ring for the tercentenary of Stedman's death and use it to generate some publicity. There were several performances around the Branch, which I hope were mentioned in the relevant Parish Magazines or Newsletters.

Two performances made it into the local press. Rob Needham was most successful. The quarter peal at Sonning featured in the Reading Chronicle, together with an attractive picture of the church. (Pity they spelt peel as if it came off an orange).

I had an article lined up for the Wokingham Times, and was expecting a photographer to take a picture before we started. The photographer didn't turn up and the article didn't appear the following week, so I thought we had missed out. Maybe the reporter was unimpressed that we went for a 1713 date touch, failed to ring it and then rang a 300 (for the 300th anniversary). To my surprise though, the article appeared three weeks later, together with the picture of the band that I had sent. What's a three week delay when you are commemorating an event three hundred years ago?

John Harrison, All Saints Wokingham

Democracy Rules – OK

Like most societies, the Branch is democratic. You, the members, elect the officers who you want for the coming year and when you see how good a job they have (or haven't) done at the end of the year you either re-elect them or you elect someone else who you think will do a better job.

But for democracy to work (and for the Branch to function effectively) some of you/us have to come forward and stand for office. Different jobs need different skills and suit different temperaments, and to help you understand who does what there are descriptions of all the officers' jobs on the website see: odg.org.uk/sdb/docs.

For some years there have been volunteers and the same people have been re-elected to the same offices on the nod. This year some don't wish to continue so we need some new blood. At the same time it might be beneficial to move around some of the jobs, in order to get the best overall team to run the Branch.

How does this affect you?

First, think about what the Branch should be doing for its members (you and me) and the sort of people who we ought to elect to make it happen.

Second, find out about the jobs that the Branch officers do.

Thirdly, think who you know (including yourself) who would be suitable for one or more of the jobs.

Finally, discuss it with the person you would like to propose, or who you would like to propose you.

Then come to the AGM and watch democracy in action, so we can all look forward to an active Branch that supports and helps to develop all its members.

Posts where the current officer either wishes to stand down or is due for a change are: Chairman, Ringing Master, and Training Officer, but if you could contribute in another role, maybe the current holder would be happy for an opportunity to move to a different seat, so why not discuss it with him/her. For descriptions of all officers' jobs see: odg.org.uk/sdb/docs

**Use your Voice at the AGM on 15th February!
See you there.**

Brrr! Fancy ringing here?



I wonder how many towers there are where the poor old ringers fulfil their duties in a space open to the elements? The congregation is warmer than most as there is no internal tower arch to funnel their warmth away. What is more there is no west door. To be fair, there is a grille beneath the west window in this rather surprising non-porch - a token gesture to keep the ringers warm, but effective? To add to the ringers' woes, there is a very steep wooden ladder-staircase leading to the silence chamber, and further stout ladders in and around the bell chamber and up to the tower roof. When my dear friend Tony dropped his screwdriver, it was I who grovelled around beneath the bells to retrieve it. Alas I didn't have the camera with me for this part of the adventure, as I couldn't have managed it safely.

The church is Cotton, St Andrew in Suffolk (north of Stowmarket), and you may be relieved to know that according to the Diocesan Guild, the bells are not to be rung. There are eight bells, six in their medieval frame and two additional bells in a steel frame attached above the old timber one. Tony is an inspecting surveyor of churches and for my own personal CPD I accompanied him on his quinquennial inspection of this fabulous East Anglian church, where a key concern of the bell ringers is the stability of the medieval frame - hence the screwdriver.

Tony's advice to the parish was to obtain a structural engineer's survey in order to establish what might need to be done.

The church appears to have been built all of a piece in the 14th century apart from the Perpendicular clerestory added in the late 15th century, perhaps at the expense of the de la Pole family (you may recall them from the 2011 outing to Ewelme). Between the upper level windows are heraldic devices including the cross of St. John in fine flush work, while the earlier work has many rich decorative details, including niches for statues on both the tower and the chancel. Internally the church is fairly plain with only a little medieval glass left and almost no monuments. However it does have a spectacular pseudo-hammerbeam roof. Well worth a detour if you are in the vicinity.

Diana Coulter, Sonning



Peals & Quarter Peals

**Saturday 7 December 2013 in
2 hours 55 minutes
St Paul's Wokingham
5056 Lincolnshire Surprise Major**

- 1 Simon L Edwards
- 2 Geoffrey K Cook
- 3 Catherine M A Lane
- 4 John A Harrison
- 5 Alan K Barsby
- 6 Kenneth R Davenport (C)
- 7 Jon P Tutcher
- 8 Stephen R Smith II

For the Feast of St. Nicholas

**Saturday 14 December 2013
3 hours 3 mins
Warfield
5055 Stedman Caters**

- 1 David Sullivan
 - 2 June D Wells
 - 3 Stephen R Smith II
 - 4 Stuart F Gibson
 - 5 E Jane Sibson
 - 6 Catherine M A Lane
 - 7 Kenneth R Davenport (C)
 - 8 Derek E Sibson
 - 9 John H Napper
 - 10 E John Wells
- 175th peal 3.

Why not make it your New Year resolution to visit another tower in the Branch on their practice night?

Full listings are available on the [Branch website](#).

**Friday 4 October 2013
Shottesbrooke
1260 Grandsire Doubles**

- 1 Martha Hazell
- 2 Jacqueline Hazell
- 3 Richard Hazell
- 4 John Payne
- 5 Caroline Andrew (C)
- 6 Robert Packer

A 60th Birthday compliment to Derek Smith, a staunch supporter of ringing at Shottesbrooke and long-time former tower captain of White Waltham.

**Saturday 3 November 2013
Shottesbrooke
1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

- 1 Martha Hazell
- 2 Jacqueline Hazell
- 3 Richard Hazell
- 4 Lesley Graves
- 5 Caroline Andrew (C)
- 6 Derek Brayne

A 60th Birthday compliment to Jacqueline Hazell

**Sunday 10 November 2013
Wokingham, All Saints
1260 Grandsire Triples**

- 1 Jon P Tutcher
- 2 Barbara G Smith
- 3 Mary Spence
- 4 Jane A Mellor
- 5 Nigel AL Mellor
- 6 Jonathan P Goodchild (C)
- 7 John A Harrison
- 8 Stephen R Smith

Half muffled for Remembrance Service.

**Sunday 6 October 2013
White Waltham
1260 Mixed Doubles (480 Reverse
Canterbury, 780 Plain Bob)**

- 1 Simon Graves
- 2 Lesley Graves
- 3 Caroline Andrew
- 4 Vikki Bulbeck
- 5 Philip Saddleton (c)
- 6 Derek Brayne

For Harvest Festival. A 60th birthday compliment, on this day, for Derek Smith. A loyal and fellow ringer.

**Sunday 10 November 2013
Wokingham St Paul
1260 Grandsire Triples**

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

Half muffled for Remembrance Service.

**Sunday 1 December 2013
Wokingham St. Paul
1260 Grandsire Triples**

- 1 Susan E Davenport
- 2 Dave Creasy
- 3 Mary Spence
- 4 Stephen R Smith
- 5 Jon P Tutcher
- 6 Kenneth R Davenport (C)
- 7 Alan K Barsby
- 8 Elizabeth J O'Brien

For Advent lessons and carols service.

Chairman	Simon Milford	45 School Drive, Woodley, RG5 3PZ	0118 969 2949	chairman@sdb.odg.org.uk
Joint Ringing Master	Simon Farrar		07764191556	dbrm@sdb.odg.org.uk
Joint Ringing Master	Graham Slade	5 Tiger Close, Woodley, RG5 4UY	0118 969 8723	dbrm@sdb.odg.org.uk
Treasurer	Sue Davenport	47 Brookside, Wokingham, RG41 2ST	0118 978 6554	treasurer@sdb.odg.org.uk
Secretary	Rob Needham	15 Bodmin Road, Woodley, RG5 3RZ	0118 926 7724	secretary@sdb.odg.org.uk
Training Co-ordinator	John Harrison	2 Murdoch Road, Wokingham, RG40 2DA	0118 978 5520	training@sdb.odg.org.uk
Branch Reps	Sue Davenport & Andrew Elliston	See above for respective addresses		committee@sdb.odg.org.uk
Bookstall	Pam & Andrew Elliston	142 Butts Hill Road, Woodley, RG5 4NS	0118 969 5967	bookstall@sdb.odg.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	Alison Clayton	7 Rosedale Crescent, Earley, RG6 1AS	0118 926 6767	editor@sdb.odg.org.uk
Webmaster	John Harrison	2 Murdoch Road, Wokingham, RG40 2DA	0118 978 5520	webmaster@sdb.odg.org.uk