

# Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter



July 2016, Summer Issue

## A weekend celebrating and publicising ringing at Hurst



As I am sure you know, over the last weekend of June the Sonning Deanery Branch hired the Charmborough portable belfry of six bells and used it for the duration of the Hurst Show. We were allocated a good site just inside the entrance to the showground.

The ring proved very popular, and many members of the public had a go at ringing, including a lot of youngsters who were too small to ring real tower bells. Many thanks to all the Branch ringers who helped to run the stall and engage with members of the public, and to our Chairman who organised and publicised the whole thing.



### Forthcoming Events

#### Saturday 20th August

Wokingham All Saints (8)

4.30pm -6pm Branch Practice

#### Saturday 17th September

Finchampstead (6)

4.30pm -6pm Branch Practice

#### Saturday 8th October

Twyford (8)

Joint 8 Bell Striking Competition

With Reading Branch 4pm—6pm

#### Saturday 15th October

Branch Outing

Details TBA but do put the date in your diary. Pam Elliston arranging.

#### Monthly Tuesday afternoon practices

(2-4pm at Binfield) on 6th Sept & 4th Oct (provisionally).

#### Surprise Major practices (Wednesday

8pm -9.30pm) at Wokingham All Saints on 10th Aug, 14th Sept, 12th Oct (provisionally).

Basic & Advanced training practices on alternate first Friday evenings of the month. Contact Jacquie Hazell.

We asked people who rang the bells if they would like to attend a follow-up taster session with real tower bells. If they said 'yes', we got them to record their contact details on a paper form. Over the weekend we collected details of 30 people in total. Three of the people live in other Branches and I have passed their details to the Branch secretaries.

Six said they could definitely do the first taster session at Twyford the following Saturday morning (2nd July), and 6 more said they might be able to but would have to check their diaries. As secretary I contacted these people by email or telephone, and in the end we had five potential ringers who came to the taster session. This session went well, and all the participants said that they would like to continue to learn to ring. Two will be going to Twyford for initial training and three to All Saints Wokingham. Many thanks to the trainers and helpers at this taster session: John Harrison, Graham Slade, Vinni Sullivan, Nigel Mellor, Rob Needham and Pauline Needham.

This leaves about 20 people who may be interested in attending a second taster session at Twyford. So far the most likely date for the second taster session is the morning of Saturday 30th July at Twyford.

Of those who gave information about where they live, we have: Wokingham 8, Twyford 4, Hurst 3, Woodley 3, Winnersh 1, Ruscombe 1, (and 3 for Reading branch).

As part of the recruitment material for the Hurst Show, the Branch now has a smart, vinyl banner that displays all sorts of interesting facts about bell ringing. It is easy to put up and would grace any tower's open day or ringers recruitment exercise. A picture of it is on the branch website; please let me know if and when you want to use it.

More photos and detail about the Show are on the Branch website (<http://odg.org.uk/sdb/events/2016charmborough.html#Top>).

**Rob Needham, Sonning**

## **Andrew Elliston 10.12.1944—24.05.2016**

We were all shocked and saddened by the news that Andrew had died suddenly on 24<sup>th</sup> May. He was buried in Sonning in the sunshine on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June. The service was attended by a large number of friends and family, included many of his friends from the walking group and bellringers from all across the Guild, and beyond.

The family tribute was given by Tom, Andrew's son in law and he painted a very fitting picture of the Andrew we all knew so well. To mention just a few memories:

Andrew's aversion to waste – leading him to eat 7 fried eggs as a boy, to prevent them being thrown out!

Andrew's love of cats – often seen befriending ones on outings to churches

Andrew's love of a quiz and pop music – such a good memory for all those hard to recall facts & figures – as well as many methods and details about the Guild and its towers.

Andrew's kind heart and patience - all of us can recall a time when Andrew has helped out with a wedding, new learners or a quarter peal, even at short notice.

Andrew's dedication and loyalty to his friends and family. Again we as ringers we can recall many a time when Andrew made the difference to a practice night or a Branch Practice.

He touched many lives and will be missed so much. Our thoughts are with Pam and his children, David & Vicky.



## Five to Eight at St Mary's, Wargrave

Recently the local Wargrave band has rung rounds and call changes on eight for Sunday service; this time last year it was the front 5!

We have been using "Learning the Ropes" scheme and now have four level 2, and four level 1 passes. I had set a target of ringing the 8 with our own band and now we have done it!

Just eight months from their first proper handling lesson Kitty and Freddie have completed Level 3, and are just waiting for the school holidays to attempt the quarter peals for the assessment. Berna, our most recent level 1 ringer, has rung some excellent rounds, and was instrumental in encouraging Ruth, who now worships at St Mary's, to return to ringing. I taught Ruth some 30 odd years ago at Hurst, and am so pleased she is back.

Meanwhile the weekday morning tied bell practices are popular and, as at the open practices, supported by Sonning ringers. Apart from Jayne, our newest learner and landlady of the Bull (the nearest pub to the church), others come for extra practice and to visit the Bull afterwards, for coffee, social chat, and dog therapy.

(Top): Rob Needham, from Sonning, and my ART mentor, teaching Jayne. I had a cold and thought it better to keep my distance!

Sue Portsmouth, (Sonning) (just out of sight on the second), was practicing plain hunt prior to her first quarter on Sunday. Berna was trying following her! Sue rang her first quarter, without a mistake, the following Sunday (1/5– see over), so very well done to her.

*Vinni Sullivan, Wargrave*



## Ready made friends

Non-ringers are often surprised to discover that ringing isn't just a local thing. They are unaware of the almost universal welcome extended by ringers to ringers, so that wherever we go on business or on pleasure, if there is active bellringing then we will have ready-made friends.

On a recent holiday in Northumberland I joined the local ringers for Sunday service ringing and on their practice night. I was made extremely welcome and had the pleasure of taking part in some good ringing as well as socialising afterwards. They in return had the benefit of an extra ringer when some of their own ringers were on holiday.

These days it is easier than ever, thanks to the Web, to find out not just where there are bells but when three will be ringing – far easier than when I began ringing.

So with the holiday season upon us, why not broaden your experience while you are away, and by doing so quite likely help out the band whose tower you are visiting. There are thousands of active towers in this country and dozens in other parts of the English speaking world. (Did you know that ringing is currently growing fastest in Australia and USA?) Of course if you take your holiday on mainland Europe then you are unlikely to find much ringing – unless you happen to be in Dordrecht!

*John Harrison, Chariman*

## Peals & Quarter Peals

**Sunday 12 June 2016 in 2 hrs 57 mins**

**Easthampstead**

**5090 Yorkshire Surprise Major**

- 1 Janet E Menhinick
- 2 Michael H D O'Callaghan
- 3 Beryl R Norris
- 4 Jackie Roberts
- 5 Vernon B Bedford
- 6 Mike Pidd (C)
- 7 Anthony C F Perry
- 8 Kenneth R Davenport

5090 changes rung to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the recasting and augmentation of the bells and the 90th birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

**Saturday 11 June 2016 in 2 hrs 56 mins**

**Wokingham All Saints**

**5090 Yorkshire Surprise Major**

- 1 Edward J W Manley
- 2 Geoffrey K Cook
- 3 Alan K Barsby
- 4 Christopher P Cole
- 5 James M Champion
- 6 John A Harrison
- 7 Nigel A L Mellor (C)
- 8 Graham E Slade

Rung for the 90th birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

**Sunday 1 May 2016**

**Sonning**

**1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

- 1 Sue Portsmouth
- 2 Pam Elliston (C)
- 3 Geoff Harvey
- 4 Andrew Elliston
- 5 Lavinia Sullivan
- 6 Rob Needham

1: First quarter peal at first attempt.  
Rung in thanksgiving for the life of Richard G Wild, brother of 5 and one time ringer.

**Friday 6 May 2016**

**Shottesbrooke**

**1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

- 1 Lesley Graves
- 2 Sue Davenport
- 3 Ken Davenport
- 4 Andrew Elliston
- 5 Stephen Wells(C)
- 6 Simon Graves

Rung in memory of Peter Saddleton on the day of his funeral. Former ringer at Shottesbrooke and White Waltham and former Chairman of the Sonning Deanery Branch of the ODG.

**Sunday 29 May 2016**

**Sonning**

**1264 Plain Bob Major**

- 1 Rob Needham
- 2 Susan E Davenport
- 3 Derek Barrett
- 4 Geoff Harvey
- 5 Lavinia M Sullivan
- 6 Stephen Wells
- 7 Alan Barsby
- 8 Kenneth R Davenport (C)

Rung to celebrate the life of Andrew Elliston, long serving ringer at this Church and in Sonning Deanery Branch. Friend to many.

**Wednesday 18 May 2016**

**Wokingham St Paul**

**1296 Plain Bob Major**

- 1 Dave Creasy
- 2 Susan E Davenport
- 3 Geoff Cook
- 4 Geoff Harvey
- 5 Nigel A L Mellor
- 6 Andrew Elliston
- 7 Chris Cole
- 8 Kenneth R Davenport (C)

**Sunday 12 June 2016**

**Sonning**

**1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

- 1 Martha Hazell
- 2 Jacquie Hazell
- 3 Rob Needham
- 4 David Sullivan
- 5 Lavinia Sullivan (C)
- 6 Sue Portsmouth

Rung to celebrate the official 90th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II.  
Ringer 6 completed Level 3 of Learning the

For the Archdeacon's visitation Ropes.

**Sunday 12 June 2016**

**Wokingham All Saints**

**1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor**

- 1 Sue Davenport
- 2 Mary Spence
- 3 Jane Mellor
- 4 Nigel Mellor
- 5 John Harrison
- 6 Jonathan Goodchild (C)

Rung before evening service as a 90th birthday compliment to HM Queen Elizabeth. First Surprise inside - 2. 700th quarter - 5.

Chairman	John Harrison	All Saints, Wokingham	0118 978 5520	chairman@sdb.odg.org.uk
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