

Sonning Deanery Branch

NEWSLETTER

December 2005



Oxford Diocesan Guild
of Church Bell Ringers

Ringling Masters Ramblings

Firstly I wish you all a Happy Christmas and hope you enjoy whatever celebrations you have planned.

The next branch practice is on Saturday 17th December at Hurst. There will be mince pies and refreshments available.

Unfortunately the planned outing on 28th December has now been cancelled. However it is hoped to rearrange it for later in 2006.

For those of you who were not at the Branch Committee Meeting at Waltham St Lawrence, I am standing down as Branch Master at the AGM in February. This is for personal reasons.

I hope to see you all soon at one of the forthcoming events.

Rachel Moss

Correction!

Please note the correction to the location and time of the December BP. This will be at **Hurst on the 17th December at 4:00PM** not as previously quoted. My apologies for this mistake - Ed

Guild Festival

Tuesday 17 January 2006 will be the 125th anniversary of the formation of the ODG. This event is to be celebrated with peals, quarter-peals and other special ringing on the day or during that week. The 125th anniversary Festival will be held at the Cathedral in Oxford on Saturday 8 July. All Guild members of whatever ability are invited to ring at the Cathedral. 8 other church & college towers within walking distance will be open for general ringing - individuals, tower groups or branch groups are welcome to visit them. A service at the Cathedral will be held by the Bishop of Buckingham. Festival lunch will cost £8.50. Cream teas will also be supplied.

Pam & Andrew Elliston

Why don't Branch Practices always start at the same time?

No, this isn't a rant about members not arriving at Branch Practices on time! It is to let you know that Branch Practices are not always in the evening and can start at very different times.

Until about 3 years ago Branch Practices always started at 7.30pm on the third Saturday of the month. Attendance at Branch Practices was getting rather low, so your branch officers decided to try some different start times to see if they would be more popular. Of course, it would be the best part of a year before we would know if the new times were more popular, when we could analyse the attendance figures as recorded in the Branch Practice book.

In the first year (2003/04) we introduced six morning Branch Practices starting at 10am. Aidan Hopkins analysed the figures at the end of the year and found that the figures were inconclusive. One of the morning practices was the best attended Branch Practice that year, but attendance at others was similar to the evening practices.

In the 2004/05 year we arranged only two 10am Branch Practices, but of those the one at Barkham was very well attended in spite of the cold weather and just before Christmas. We think it was the provision of hot drinks and mince pies that did it!

Before this current year (2005/06) started, a 'think-tank' of some of your officers looked at ways of increasing benefit and interest for the branch members, and presented a summary of their ideas at the AGM in February. One of the ideas was to make Branch Practices more interesting for ringers and ringers' families alike, by combining them with events such as Strawberries & Cream or a picnic at a summer Branch Practice and mince pies and hot drinks at a winter one.

This idea has been followed through for 2005/06, and we have had Strawberries & Cream at Binfield in June, a picnic on Sir John Smith's lawn next to Shottesbrooke church in August, and mince pies to come at Hurst this month. These arrangements have meant some different Branch Practice start times, and in addition we have arranged two 4pm starts in the winter so that at least it is still light when members are trying to get to the church.

The lessons from this article are that the branch officers are trying to engage the members in branch activities, and that you shouldn't assume that all Branch Practices are in the evening. The date and time of the forthcoming Branch Practice and other branch events are always published on the last page of the newsletter. If you haven't already done so, [h](#)

Report on the Recent ODG General Committee Meeting

The meeting was held at Purley on Saturday 26 November. The bells were available from 1.45 pm and proved to be a very pleasant ring. The meeting began at 2.30 pm in the church (padded seats, not pews!).

Matters arising from the previous Minutes: **Peal fees** are set at the previous year's March committee meeting; it would be better if the decision were made at the November meeting. Printing costs average £1.35/peal. Fees remain at 35p per participant which is sufficient to cover printing costs in the annual report.

The Guild insurers EIO are changing their style of **insurance**, but we were assured by Treasurer Brian Gatward that similar benefits would apply. There had been only one claim in the past year, with £8090.57 paid out.

The current **Child Protection** policy is explained in a comprehensive book and on the diocesan website. PCCs are getting nervous about **Health & Safety** issues. All churches have a 'duty of care' to take care of visitors. Disclaimers issued to visitors by some towers are not valid. The question of whether visiting bands should be responsible for any damage done was raised but not really answered.

The **restoration fund** stands at £1278 with £112 interest, having paid a grant to All Saints, Wokingham (see Odd Bob for report).

Commenting on the report from the **Towers & Belfries** subcommittee, Len Palfrey stated that as several members of the committee had moved away fo

Following a meeting at Reading in October 1880, the ODG was formed on 17 January 1881. The **125th anniversary** is thus imminent and we are encouraged to celebrate it by ringing peals and quarters, with previous publicity explaining the reason for these attempts. In particular, there will be a peal attempt at Oxford Cathedral on 8 January 2006 (early because term will start before the actual anniversary). Bobbie May will ensure that local newspapers are informed. Special effort should also be made for the Guild Festival at Oxford on 8 July. Poor attendance at recent festivals was partly attributed to their locations in the extreme north and west of the diocese. It was suggested that a coloured leaflet be drafted to every member, including an invitation with RSVP in a name-bearing envelope; 2500 copies might cost £600. Alternatively Guild stewards should communicate with every member and each tower be given 2 or 3 posters. An advert in the RW could invite all ringers from elsewhere. There was discussion about the form of service. Communion was appropriate but might tend to deter some members from attending.

The state of the Guild **Library** was assessed by the librarian, who has held office for 5 years. He receives perhaps one enquiry per month, mostly concerning reference works such as RW or Annual Reports. The collection is housed in one place and there is no pressure on space at present, but might be in 2 years' time. Duplicates of old Annual Reports are taking up space and only 8 of each might be retained. The Minutes collection might be copied onto disk.

The draft of the Guild **Budget** was presented in comparison with previous years. The relatively low total expenses figure of £690 witnesses to the prudent conduct of officers. The desired reserve of £8000 (50% of expenditure) could be maintained without change in subscriptions in 2006. The 30-year-old wooden display boards have given good service but are really too heavy and should be replaced, and the publicity material could be updated. The draft budget was accepted.

AOB: The Gazeteer of ODG towers on CD was on sale. These can be obtained from Bobbie May.

Items for the Annual Report should be submitted electronically by 30 January, in Microsoft Word.

Some members felt that the Guild 10-bell striking competition had been more a test of conductors' ability, and that a simpler touch would have been fairer. The method is traditionally decided at the Branch Secretaries' meeting, predominantly by non-participants. Perhaps this decision should be the responsibility of the Deputy Master in liaison with the Branch Ringing Masters.

The meeting closed at around 4.30 pm.

Pam & Andrew Elliston

ODG DIARY OF EVENTS

125th ANNIVERSARY OF THE GUILD

17 January 2006

SPRING GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

11 March 2006

Central Bucks Branch

RADLEY COURSE

8 April 2006

Radley

GUILD HANDBELL DAY

15 April 2006

Reading Branch

EIGHT BELL STRIKING COMPETITION

1 May 2006

Vale of White Horse Branch

ANNUAL RINGING DAY

1 May 2006

Vale of White Horse Branch

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

20 May 2006

South Oxon Branch

125th ANNIVERSARY GUILD FESTIVAL

8 July 2006

Oxford

EASTHAMPSTEAD COURSE

29 September-1 October 2006

Easthampstead

SIX BELL STRIKING COMPETITION

7 October 2006

Sonning Deanery Branch

TEN BELL STRIKING COMPETITION

25 November 2006

AUTUMN GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

25 November 2006

Banbury Branch

Can you help the branch?

At the recent committee meeting two of our current officers expressed their wish to stand down at the next AGM (February 2006):

The Ringing Master, Rachel Moss

One of the two Joint Secretaries, Clare Wright

These are important posts and essential for the smooth running of the branch. Please consider whether you can help the branch by offering to fill one of these positions, or discuss with someone whom you think is more qualified whether you can propose them.

The Ringing Master needs to be a good organiser more than an expert ringer -- there are always other competent ringers present who can help at Branch Practices. The RM organises the judge and stewards for the two branch striking competitions, and attends branch practices, the branch committee meeting and AGM.

The Joint Secretary (Minutes) job is not onerous and needs someone who can use a word processor. It involves attending 3 meetings in the year and producing the minutes, plus writing a bit about what's been happening in Sonning Deanery Branch for the ODDBOB Guild magazine twice a year. That's it -- all other Secretarial work is done by the other Joint Sec.

All nominations should be sent to our Chairman, Sue Davenport. 1

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Rob Needham, current Joint Secretary

Editors Comment - Having done nearly two years of creating this Newsletter, I would also like to stand down from doing so. This year has been somewhat challenging due to various family issues.

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Wokingham St. Pauls

Monday 28th November 2005. The day we have been waiting for. Midday saw the arrival of the lorry from Whitechapel complete with bell wheels, frame and last but by no means least, the Bells! A number of the ringers together with members of the congregation watched the unloading. Each bell being struck, by a member of the Bell Foundry, as it was taken from the lorry. The bells were then lined up on the drive and a short service of blessing took place. The ringers were then given the opportunity to go into the new Ringing Chamber. Great care had to be taken as the trap door was open to allow the bells to be lifted up for hanging.

By the end of the week, all the bells were hung in the frame, the clappers have been fitted but not adjusted. Hopefully by the end of this week (9th December) this will be done and the ropes fitted. No date has yet been given for the resumption of ringing as the building is still classed as a building site.

A dedication, by the Bishop of Oxford, has been arranged for Monday 20th February 2006. No further details are yet available.

The bells being craned over the churchyard wall.

Father John blesses the new
bells after arrival.

Bells being raised into
the belfry

Sonning Deanery Branch Practices and main events, 2006 and 2007- Planned.

Date	Tower	Time
2006		
March 18 th	Warfield	7.30pm
April 22 nd	<u>Finchampstead</u> – 6-bell Striking Competition followed by Branch Practice	4.00 – 6.30pm 6.30 – 8pm
May 20 th	<u>Sandhurst</u> , St. Michael	7.30pm
June 17 th	<u>Barkham</u> (with strawberries & cream)	5.00 – 8pm
July 15 th	White Waltham	7.30pm
August 19 th	<u>Arborfield</u> (and picnic)	11.30 – 12.30pm and 1.30 – 2.30pm
September 16 th	<u>Easthampstead</u> – 8-bell Striking Competition followed by Branch Practice	4.00 – 6pm 6.00 – 7.30pm
October 21 st	<u>St. Pauls, Wokingham</u>	7.30pm
November	Quarter peal week	?? th to ?? th Nov.
November 18 th	All Saints, Wokingham – Committee Meeting followed by Branch Practice	5.00 – 7.30pm 7.30 – 9pm
December 16 th	<u>Binfield</u> (with mince pies, etc.)	10am – 12 noon
December 28 th	Branch Ringing Outing	TBA
2007		
January 20 th	Hurst	10am – 12 noon
February 17 th	<u>Wargrave</u> – Ringing, Service, Tea, AGM followed by Branch Practice	3.00pm to 7.15pm 7.30 – 9pm

Please note these events are yet to be confirmed.

Rob Needham, Joint Branch Secretary

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Quarter Peals

Sunday 11th September 2005
St Michael's Sandhurst

30th October 2005
St. Andrew's, Sonning

1260 All Saints Doubles

1260 Grandsire Triples

1. Fiona Sherren
2. Janet E Menhinick (c)
3. Michael J Sherren
4. Graham C Steele
5. Derek Palmer
6. C Richard Menhinick

1. Diana Kidson
2. Robert Partridge
3. Rob Needham
4. Douglas Boniface
5. Peter Kemm
6. Andrew Elliston
7. Michael Dane (C)
8. Eric Bowes

Farewell compliment to fellow ringer
Jo Harrison as she moves to St Paul's
Wokingham following ordination.

Sunday 13th November 2005
All Saints, Wokingham

Sunday 20th November 2005
St. Andrew's, Sonning

1260 Grandsire Triples

1260 Plain Bob Triples

1. Charlotte Kozakiewicz
2. Sue Davenport
3. Katie Tutcher
4. Evan Kozakiewicz
5. Richard Woodward
6. Jon Tutcher
7. John Harrison (C)
8. Arthur Moss

1. Joyce Vernon
2. Pam Elliston (C)
3. Alison Clayton
4. Diana Kidson
5. Brian Snell
6. Rob Needham
7. Ken G Baker
8. Keith Vernon

Rung half-muffled for Remembrance
Sundav.

Sunday 27th November 2005
Easthampstead

1260 Grandsire Triples

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Paul Fox | 5. Daniel Chafen |
| 2. Louise Marshall | 6. Judith Burbidge |
| 3. Margret Bearne | 7. Stan Scott |
| 4. Steve Wells | 8. Andrew Moss |

First Triples inside - 5
Rung for Advent Carol Service and in memory of Frank C Price.

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