

Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter



April 2014, Spring Issue



Thank you for electing me your Branch Ringing Master at the AGM. (See the back page for full details of all the current Officers). It has been over thirty years since I last did the job, joint with David Willis, if you remember him! I have been a ringer at Easthampstead for over 40 years!

Over the next few months I hope to visit each tower to introduce myself and to learn about your tower, your ideas for the Branch and if you require any help.

I'm looking forward to meeting you. You are welcome at Easthampstead at any time.

Steve Wells, Easthampstead

Ringing Events & Training

Open ringing courses

You should all be aware of the courses run by the Guild, which are advertised in your tower (basic courses at Radley in the spring and Steeple Aston in the autumn, a more advanced course around Michaelmas, and a 10-bell course in November).

But you might not be aware that there are other courses as well. The nearest is at Bradfield, Berks and there are others in Hereford, Essex and Yorkshire. The [Bradfield course](#) is the weekend of 14-17 August and applications have to be in before **25th April**. Click on the text above or visit [Bradfield-ringing-course.org.uk](#)



NEWBURY
2014

This year's Ringing Roadshow is on 6th September at Newbury – we are lucky that it is being held so near to us. If you have been to a previous Roadshow you will know that there is something of interest for everyone, whether you ring bells, like books about ringing or mats with methods on them. All three floors of the exhibition space in the Racecourse stadium will be full of stands, not just

selling things, but where you can see, discuss and ask advice about pretty much anything to do with ringing. There will also be outdoor exhibits like mini-rings for you to try your hand. Throughout the day there will be seminars, talks and demonstrations in separate halls.

The [Roadshow website](#) is: [ringingroadshow.co.uk](#). More information will be appearing over the next few weeks. You will be able to buy tickets from the website, and there is a poster that you can download to put in your tower.

John Harrison, All Saints Wokingham

Diary of Events

Saturday 26th April

Arborfield
4-6pm Branch 6 Bell Striking
Competition followed by Branch Practice

Saturday 17th May

Warfield
10.30am—12 Branch Practice

Saturday 21st June

Wokingham St Paul
10.30am—12 Branch Practice

Monthly Tuesday afternoon practices (2-4pm) at Binfield on 6th May, 3rd June & 1st July (provisionally).

NEW!

Monthly Surprise Major practice at All Saints Wokingham. 2nd Wednesdays: 9th April, 14th May & 11th June.

ITTS Module 1 – Teaching Bell Handling course

Six other members of Sonning Deanery Branch and myself attended an Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS) one-day course at St Helen's Abingdon on Saturday 18th January. The course was aimed at teaching new learners, so it was all about ways of teaching good bell handling.

I'm sure I speak for others on the course when I say I was impressed with how professional the course was and well organised. The instruction was excellent from an experienced lecturer and teacher, Graham Nabb from Kineton, Warwickshire. The format of the course was also good – short theory sessions followed by longer practical sessions for demonstration and trying out the techniques. The training pack and handouts we were given were most useful; as well as some sheets of information there were: Teacher Training Logbook, Teaching Tips (well illustrated), and the learner's personal progress booklet called Learning the Ropes.

Key points for me from the course were:

People learn in different ways and at different speeds – the course shows many bell handling training techniques which can be mixed to suit the learner;

Each main part of bell handling, such as handstroke and ringing up, are broken down into smaller physical movements that can be practised separately and then put together;

Some things can be practised at home on a length of rope, such as how to make coils and how to release the last coil

Basic handling technique is all important – don't go on until the correct style is ingrained in the learner's muscle memory (2000+ repetitions);

Careful observation is all important – don't let a learner continue with a poor handling style without correction because it will soon become a habit that is impossible to change;

Try to soften any criticism needed; try to find positives before talking about things that need more attention;

Try to finish each learner's training session on a high note – something he/she can do well (the repetition is not wasted);

An intensive training regime is much more successful, for example two 1-on-1 sessions a week, each at least an hour long;

Most trainers do not return to basic handling practice once the learner can ring rounds. This is a mistake if the learner drifts into poor handling caused by their concentration on other aspects of ringing.

I believe that any ringing instructor, no matter how experienced they are, will go away from the course with some new ideas and insight into teaching bell handling.

Rob Needham, Sonning

To belong or not to belong?

There seems to be a tradition in our local towers that a ringer can only 'belong' to one band of ringers. If you attend another tower, however regularly, you are forever 'a visitor'.

This seems strange to me. Martha (daughter) and I 'belong' to two towers in our branch - Shottesbrooke and Waltham St Lawrence. The accepted way to 'belong' to a band is to pay subs there, so that is what we do.

At both towers we ring for Sunday service and on practice nights; in fact, we ring more often at each tower than any other ringer in either band. I feel an equally strong allegiance to each tower, and have been ringing at both for nearly twenty years. It would be impossible for me to choose between them - I would hate to feel 'just a visitor' at either. And of course, if you are only a visitor, you have no say in decision-making, either formally (at the AGM) or informally.

If one's hobby was singing, I know it would not be peculiar to belong to more than one choir; similarly with sports clubs, craft clubs and social organisations.

Fortunately there is a precedent we can follow; the Guild Master himself (Robert Newton) belongs to two towers, and so does John Harrison. So it must be alright then.

But locally 'belonging' at two towers is still regarded with great suspicion, as though it is somehow traitorous to join another band. I'm puzzled by this! What do you think?

Jacquie Hazell

From the archives.....

Recently I was looking through an old record of peals and quarters rung in our branch, which was produced by reading through past Ringing World magazines. It covers the period from 1978 to 1982. There are many interesting entries in the list; one is a quarter peal of Original Singles at Barkham on 30th April 1978.

Another entry is for a quarter of 1320 Plain Bob Doubles at Warfield on 3rd May 1982. There were three Carpenters in the band, the treble being rung by J P Carpenter aged seven! I wonder if this is the record for the youngest quarter peal ringer? Then six weeks later, on 19th June at Warfield, while still aged seven, Jonathan P Carpenter rang the treble to a peal of Plain Bob Minor. Surely that must be a record -- unless you know better!

Rob Needham, Sonning

Edward W. Martin 1938 - 2013



Eddie was a Leicestershire lad born and bred and learnt to ring at Great Bowden in the early 1950s. His first peal was for the Coronation in 1953 when he was just 15. He went on to ring many more peals in the Market Harborough area, one of which was conducted by Ernest Morris, the first ringer to achieve 2,000 peals.

Eddie first visited the Washington DC area in 1968 and moved here in 1971, an exciting time for ringing in North America. The installation of the bells at the National Cathedral in 1963 had energized the few ringers here and in 1972 the North American Guild was founded with Eddie as one of the original 141 members. Eddie's peals in the early 70s consisted of many 'firsts' in North America: first of Stedman Triples, London Surprise Major, Bristol Surprise Major, Spliced Surprise Major, Erin Caters and Erin Cinques most of which were rung in hand and conducted by Eddie. Eddie held several offices in the Guild over the years and was an Honorary Member of the North American Guild, as well as a member of the Ancient Society of College Youths.

Like so many ringers Eddie met his future wife through ringing, and through *The Ringing World* in particular. Ann was one of the early ringers at the National Cathedral and wrote a school essay on bell ringing that was later published in the journal. After the article was published, Eddie wrote a letter to Ann. They corresponded for several years, developing a relationship which grew stronger while Ann studied at Oxford. They were married at the National Cathedral in 1971, a place their daughter Lucy referred to as Eddie's spiritual home.

Eddie had a lifelong fascination with composition, especially the rarified world of Triples, with its difficult puzzles of fitting together all 5,040 possible rows. Several of his peal compositions featured unusual callings, such as a peal of Erin Triples with no consecutive calls, and a peal of Stedman Triples with only singles. Eddie also came up with the first peal composition of Titanic Triples. He assembled a variety of new and interesting Triples methods, including the Triples principles Artistic and Martin's; the latter a method so challenging that it has been pealed only twice; in Birmingham in 1999 and 2001. Eddie authored two books on twin hunting Triples methods, a category he thought unjustly neglected; and at the time of his death, he was writing a book on the life and work of Fabian Stedman.

Over the years Eddie and Ann moved to various parts of the USA and UK, and wherever they moved they made an indelible impression on ringing. In June of this year Ann and Eddie returned to Washington DC. His last tower bell quarter was on October 13th, and fittingly marked the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Cathedral Ringing Society. His last quarter with the Monday night handbell band was of Erin Caters.

Eddie was the backbone of the Washington Ringing Society, never happier than when he was calling a touch of Stedman, showing visitors around the tower or, along with Ann, teaching learners. His presence lit up a room and he always had a funny ringing story to share. Eddie, we miss you. Our thoughts and prayers are with Eddie's wife, Ann, his children Tim and Lucy, and son-in-law Max.

(reproduced in part by kind permission of the Ringing World)

A quarter peal of Grandsire Triples (composed by Eddie) was rung at Easthampstead on 23 November at the same time as his funeral was taking place in Washington DC.

1	Anna Barker	5 Peter Jordan (C)
2	Barbara Wells	6 Anthony Perry
3	Lynne Jordan	7 Stephen Wells
4	Rachel Moss	8 Andrew Moss

Rung to celebrate the life of Eddie Martin by his friends from Easthampstead at the same time as his funeral was taking place in Washington DC. Stan Scott, Judith Bowler and Paul Fox would also like to be associated with this quarter peal.

Steve Wells, Easthampstead

Quarter Peals (and longer touches)

New Year's Day 2014 – Date Touch



The Date Touch at All Saints Wokingham on New Year's Day 2014 was again rung by a 'rainbow band' with ringers from six different towers. The touch was 2014 Cambridge Surprise Major, composed and conducted by Ander Holroyd)

- 1 - Sue Sargeant (Warfield)
- 2 - Barbara Wells (Easthampstead)
- 3 - Janat Menhinick (Sandhurst)
- 4 - Rebecca Woodgate (Seattle)
- 5 - Alan Barsby (Eversley)
- 6 - Steve Wells (Easthampstead)
- 7 - Ander Holroyd (Seattle)
- 8 - John Harrison (Wokingham)

Saturday 9 November 2013

Twyford

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Alistair Vorster
- 2 Rob Needham
- 3 Andrew Elliston
- 4 Josh Slade
- 5 Simon Farrar (C)
- 6 John Rowe

1st quarter: 1, 6.
1st inside: 4.

Saturday 8 February 2014

Twyford

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Julian Pettifer
- 2 Andrew Elliston
- 3 Owen Slade
- 4 Rob Needham
- 5 Simon Farrar (C)
- 6 Richard Hamilton

1st away from cover: 1

Sunday 10 November 2013

Twyford

1269 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 Richard Hamilton
 - 2 Rob Needham
 - 3 Andrew Elliston
 - 4 Simon Farrar (C)
 - 5 Graham Slade
 - 6 Julian Pettifer
- Rung half muffled in memory of the fallen.

Sunday 6 April 2014

Easthampstead

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Connor Bannister
 - 2 Anna Barker
 - 3 Barbara Wells
 - 4 Ali Wood
 - 5 Rachel Moss
 - 6 Stephen Wells (C)
- A farewell to Revd La Stacey, Curate, & best wishes for her appointment as Vicar of Dorney & Eton with Eton Wick & Boveney.

Saturday 25 January 2014

Twyford

1260 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 Richard Hamilton
- 2 Owen Slade
- 3 Joshua Slade
- 4 Graham Slade
- 5 Simon Farrar (C)
- 6 Julian Pettifer

First quarter: 2. First Grandsire: 3.

Sunday 23 March 2014

Sonning

1264 Plain Bob Major

- 1 Pam Elliston
 - 2 Joanna Shepherd
 - 3 Rob Needham
 - 4 Lavinia Sullivan
 - 5 Andrew Elliston
 - 6 Alan K Barsby
 - 7 Charles MS Bottig
 - 8 David C Willis (C)
- For evening service

Chairman	John Harrison	All Saints, Wokingham	0118 978 5520	chairman@sdb.odg.org.uk
Ringing Master	Steve Wells	Easthampstead	01344 452202	dbrm@sdb.odg.org.uk
Deputy Ringing Master	Graham Slade	Hurst	0118 327 2742	dbrm@sdb.odg.org.uk
Treasurer	Sue Davenport	St Paul's, Wokingham	0118 978 6554	treasurer@sdb.odg.org.uk
Secretary	Rob Needham	Sonning	0118 926 7724	secretary@sdb.odg.org.uk
Training Co-ordinator	Jacquie Hazell	S'brooke & Waltham St Lawrence	07905 085815	training@sdb.odg.org.uk
Branch Reps	Sue Davenport & Jacquie Hazell	As above	As above	committee@sdb.odg.org.uk
Bookstall	Pam & Andrew Elliston	Sonning	0118 969 5967	bookstall@sdb.odg.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	Alison Clayton	Sonning	0118 926 6767	editor@sdb.odg.org.uk
Webmaster	John Harrison	All Saints, Wokingham	As above	webmaster@sdb.odg.org.uk