

Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter



October 2018, Autumn Issue

New Home, New purpose required. Let us know your views!



In the 1980s and 90s the Branch regularly held an inter-tower skittles match. After the bells at Wokingham St Paul were rehung in 1988, parts of the old installation were made into 'The St Paul's Trophy' and presented to the Branch. Each year a metal plaque was added to record the winning tower - except the last time it was awarded - Sonning's plaque was never added. After more than 20 years the trophy has now been returned to the Branch.

Before deciding what to do with it we would like to hear your views, so please send me any suggestions or ideas for its future. Maybe you'd like to organise a quiz or event or just generally see these kinds of social events revived in the Branch? Do get in touch with me (chairman@sdb.odg.org.uk).

John Harrison

Calendar

Saturday 20th October

Binfield (6)

4.30pm—6 pm Branch Practice

Sunday 11th November

Ringing Remembers—general ringing

Saturday 17th November

Twyford (8)

5pm Branch Business Meeting (tea beforehand from 4.30pm)

Saturday 15th December

Waltham St Lawrence (6)

4.30om—6pm Branch Practice (with mince pies)

Saturday 19th January

Arborfield (6)

10.30am—12 noon Branch Practice

Monthly Tuesday afternoon practices (2-4pm at Binfield) on 6th Nov, 4th Dec & 8th Jan (provisionally).

Surprise Major practices (Wednesday 8pm –9.30pm) at Wokingham All Saints on 14th Nov, 12th Dec & 9th Jan (provisionally).

Young Ringers Practice (2nd Sunday of the month, 2.30 –4pm) 18th Nov, 9th Dec and 13th Jan, various towers (provisionally).

Simon Graves celebrates 40 years as a Ringer

In April we rang a quarter peal at White Waltham to celebrate Simon's 40th Anniversary as a ringer since he first learnt to ring.

He started to learn at the age of 13 after a recruitment campaign run by the then tower captain.

According to records held, Simon had his first lesson in January of 1978 and in the April was elected a member of the Oxford Diocesan Guild for Church Bell Ringers.

Simon chose the 5 other ringers of the band as they were people that he has rung together with since he learnt to ring. But being only 6 ringers needed he would still like to thank all other ringers for their teaching and guidance.

**White Waltham
Saturday, 7 April 2018
1260 Plain Bob Doubles**

- 1 Ruth Groves
- 2 Lesley Graves
- 3 Barbara Wells
- 4 Thomas Helyer
- 5 Stephen Wells (C)
- 6 Simon Graves



The Quarter Peal was also linked to the Centenary of the RAF. Left to right: Ruth Groves, Lesley Graves, Barbara Wells, Thomas Helyer, Stephen Wells, Simon Graves

Lesley Graves, White Waltham

Chairman's welcome



The survey earlier in the year identified the need for a lot of training, and so far four courses have been run (two listening, one ringing with a simulator and one raising & lowering in peal). Two more are in the pipeline (one on bob calling and another raising & lowering in peal) and we will arrange more in due course for those who asked. If you didn't respond to the original survey, and would like us to include your needs, you can still do so on the website, see: odg.org.uk/sdb/training/

In June we demonstrate ringing to the public with the Charmborough Ring at the Hurst Show. All went smoothly despite having to move the bells between Saturday and Sunday to placate a complaining neighbour. We had regular demonstrations so people could see what ringing was

like, interspersed that with letting them have a go and explaining all about ringing. We hoped we might also attract some potential recruits, and we encouraged anyone interested to sign up for taster sessions on full sized bells after the show. But despite taking a lot of names, only a few attended taster sessions, and none decided to take up ringing at this time.

Your officers were split when considering whether to repeat the event in future. Some felt publicising ringing to the wider public was worthwhile in its own right while others felt we should not do it unless it generates direct recruits. That contrasts with the feedback we got from those of you who manned the event in 2016, where public awareness scored slightly higher than recruitment as a motivating factor.

We won't repeat the event in 2019 (the bells aren't available that weekend anyway) and we will have to decide whether to do so in future. I would welcome your views – either way – about whether the Branch should put effort into raising the public awareness of ringing. After all, the perception of ringing by non-ringers is important – they are the source of our recruits and we rely on their tolerance as an involuntary audience for our performance and practices. You can still see the 2016 pictures on the website at: odg.org.uk/sdb/events/2016charmborough.html.

The Branch (and the Guild) exist to provide services to you, the members. When you add them all up there are quite a lot, so you might like to see what's on offer at: odg.org.uk/sdb/services/

One of the most visible things things the Branch does for its members is to provide opportunities to meet and ring with other ringers beyond your home tower, and to advance your ringing in ways that might not be possible otherwise. As well as courses, there are three different practices each month, between them catering for both basic and advanced needs. You can find when and where they are in the diary at: odg.org.uk/sdb/diary/.

If you haven't been to a Branch practice for a while, why not make a note to do so. It would be good to see you.

Finally, I hope you all have plans in place for contributing to the ringing on 11 November, the centenary of the Armistice. There are several national initiatives for ringing at different times of day – as well as fitting in with local commemoration. That has caused some confusion but on the positive side it offers more opportunities for ringing. For background, see:

<https://cccbr.org.uk/2018/08/07/clarification-of-armistice-ringing/>

Ringing for Peace
Armistice 100 

<https://cccbr.org.uk/2018/09/01/ringing-remembers-august-2018-update/>

<https://cccbr.org.uk/2017/11/11/ringing-for-peace-armistice100-in-2018-what-you-need-to-know/>

John Harrison



Update on Sandhurst bells



On the 11th and 12th September we had the repair and maintenance of the bells at St. Michael's carried out by Ian Hasman, a bell hanger from Nicholson Engineering, and David Bradshaw, a volunteer from the Oxford Diocesan Guild, with Cliff Hales and Derek Palmer from St. Michael's in attendance lending a hand.

We are now able to ring all six bells again for the first time in six months and did so for the wedding on 15th September. The work has been paid for out of St. Michael's bell ringers' own fund together with a grant from the Sonning Deanery Branch of the Guild for which we are most grateful. We were impressed by the expertise and dedication shown by Ian, which included him getting into some very awkward places. It was an enlightening experience working with him.

It is stressed that this is very much an interim maintenance and a full restoration is overdue. We are working towards planning for this to happen in three years time. The bells will have to be removed, taken to the works for turning through 90 degrees, tuning, the fitting of new clappers, new headstocks, and new wheels, and then refitting in the tower. The cost of this will be in the region of £40,000 and we shall be actively pursuing all sources of fundraising and grants to meet this objective.

In the meantime we have now reinstated Monday evening practices 7:30pm to 9:00pm and invite new recruits both from within the St. Michael's church and from the wider Sandhurst community to come and learn this 400 year old traditionally English art helping to keep it alive for future generations.

Derek Palmer (Sandhurst)

Peals & Quarter Peals

St Paul's, Wokingham 21 July 5040 Grandsire Triples

- 1 E John Wells
- 2 J Alan Ainsworth
- 3 Catherine M A Lane
- 4 Thomas Blomley
- 5 Christopher P Cole
- 6 Ellis N Thomas
- 7 Kenneth R Davenport (C)
- 8 June D Wells

First on 8 and first since 1981 - 4.

All Saints, Wokingham 18 July 1280 Rutland Surprise Major

- 1 Sue Portsmouth
- 2 Nigel A L Mellor (C)
- 3 John A Harrison
- 4 Tom Blomley
- 5 Stephen R Smith
- 6 Jonathan P Goodchild
- 7 Graham E Slade
- 8 Jon P Tutcher

Sonning 2 September 1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Joyce Vernon
- 2 Geoffrey M Harvey (C)
- 3 Sue Portsmouth
- 4 Matthew W Thewsey
- 5 Pam Elliston
- 6 Robert Partridge
- 7 Lavinia Sullivan
- 8 Keith Vernon

For evensong. First as conductor for 39years aged 81.

Easthampstead 18 August 1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Anna Stowe
 - 2 Elliott W Aldridge
 - 3 Barbara E Wells
 - 4 Stephen C Wells (C)
 - 5 Bradley Herrington
 - 6 Andrew I Mitchell
- Rung for the wedding of Matthew Leech and Zoe Barron. First Quarter 2.

Sonning 7 October 1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Pam Elliston
- 2 Rob Needham
- 3 Sue Portsmouth
- 4 Lavinia Sullivan
- 5 Peter Kemm
- 6 Alan K Barsby (C)
- 7 Adrian Nash
- 8 Keith Vernon

For evensong.

Easthampstead 1 September 1260 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 Andrew I Mitchell
- 2 Barbara E Wells
- 3 Graham N Scott (C)
- 4 Stephen C Wells
- 5 Rachel Moss
- 6 Connor D J Wignall

Rung to celebrate the birth of Edward Albert Warwick, grandson of 3, for the 75th birthday of Alan Baldock, father of 5, and for the wedding of Matthew Dreesden and Caroline Warren today.

Hurst 5 October 1260 Bob Doubles

- 1 Geoffrey M Harvey
- 2 Jacqueline Hazell
- 3 Anthony W Gordon
- 4 Lavinia Sullivan
- 5 David Sullivan (C)
- 6 Lesley S Cross

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