



Branching Out

The Oxford City Branch Monthly Newsletter

Monday 25th June 2018

Please keep your articles coming in for 'Branching Out'.

Email me with your news and photos to: paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk.

The next edition will be out on Monday 23rd July (Deadline for copy, 21st July)



Ringling Master's Report

Congratulations to the Marston team (with Paul, borrowed from Headington!) on their victory in the Branch Striking competition! There were seven teams that took part altogether – 2 bands from Headington, 1 each from Marston, Kidlington, Wheatley, a 'scratch' band, and a 'boy band'! It was a very enjoyable day, from the well attended morning practice onwards. I think the practice was a useful chance for people to stretch their abilities. I don't think we'll try ringing down in Queen's again any time soon though!

It was good to see so many people trying hand bell ringing too.

This coming Saturday is the Branch outing to Old North Berks. We'll start at Harwell at 10.00am, then work our way towards Abingdon, stopping for lunch in Sutton Courtenay.

Please let me know if you're coming so I can book a table at the George & Dragon. **Andrew Freer**

Harwell (8) 16cwt. 10.00am; Milton (8) 6cwt. 11.00am; Sutton Courtenay (8) 12cwt. 11.30am; Lunch at The George and Dragon; Drayton (8) 9cwt. 2.00pm; Marcham (6) 8cwt. 3.00pm; Abingdon St Helen's (10) 16cwt. 4.00pm, then St Nicolas (6) 7cwt. 5.00pm.

Branch Secretary's Report

A big thank you to all the Headington ringers who put in so much work to make the Half Yearly Meeting and Striking Competition such a success. They laid on a wonderful tea and it seemed as if everyone had a really good time. Our next meeting is the AGM in November at Wheatley - details will follow of the times soon. Please do try and come and support these Branch events - they are for the benefit of all Branch members and it would be lovely to see some new faces. Also, please don't forget to let us know of any firsts or special ringing your tower is undertaking. Paul Lucas is always on the lookout for stories for this newsletter, and I collate our news for the Guild Newsletter twice a year, so it is nice to hear stories from around our Branch towers. **Lindsay Powell**



Dates for your Diary

Monday 20th August Branch Outing to Worcestershire

St Nicholas, Kemerton (6) 12cwt. 10.15am; St Faith, Overbury (6) 9cwt. 11.30am; Lunch at The Star Inn, Ashton under Hill. 12.30pm
St Barbara, Ashton under Hill (6) 7cwt. 1.45pm; St John the Baptist, Beckford (6) 13cwt. 2.45pm.

For more details about everything else, please go to the Oxford City Branch website: www.oxfordcitybranch.org.uk
Any articles or photographs for inclusion in 'Branching Out' please email me: paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk

A list of Branch Practices coming up

Saturday 30th June: Branch Outing organised by Andrew Freer - all day. To Old North Berks Branch towers. (full details above)

Saturday 14th July: Cowley (6) Branch Practice 5.00pm - 6.30pm

Saturday 11th August: Yarnton (6) Branch Practice 5.00pm - 6.30pm

Saturday 8th September: Marston (6) Branch Practice 5.00pm - 6.30pm

Saturday 13th October: Wolvercote (6) Branch Practice 10.30am - 12 noon

Saturday 17th November: Wheatley holding the AGM in the afternoon – actual time still to be confirmed

Saturday 8th December: Iffley (6) Branch Practice 10.30am-12 noon (tbc)

Please remember that all these Branch Practices are open to people of all abilities. Everyone is welcome.

Bernard Masterman

Quite a number of people have been to see Bernard at his new home in Cumnor Hill House, and everyone has said what wonderful progress he is making now. About a week ago, I went to see him myself, and spent a very pleasant time talking with him while he sat in their garden, looking very relaxed and with a drink in his hand! He can walk well now, and has full mobility. He doesn't seem to remember the terrible accident he had – which has got to be a good thing – and he talks about bell ringing and the churches he has rung in. I mentioned people's names, and he said he could remember them all. As his condition has improved so much, I'm really hoping that in the next week or so we could try and arrange for him to attend a practice – possibly at Marston, just to hear the sound of the bells again, and possibly have a go, under careful supervision.

What is so good is that the staff at Cumnor Hill House actively encourage their residents to try and carry on doing things that they would have done before they moved into the home.

We'll see how Bernard is in the next couple of weeks, and then decide if it can be done.

Paul Lucas



A Father's Day Quarter Peal at Wheatley (6)

For the first time in 8 years a (mostly) Wheatley band rang a quarter peal on Sunday 17th June. Wheatley residents Celia Pagel, Jenny Stonard,

Kevin Harris and Peter Bayliss were joined by Lynn Wilson and Steve Everett ringing Plain Bob Doubles as a Father's Day present to Lynn from his daughter Jenny, and to celebrate Lynn's 70th birthday. Both Lynn and Steve have given the growing group of developing ringers in Wheatley significant encouragement and support, as have many other regular visitors including

Katie Lane and Paul Lucas.

We have also developed strong links with the ringers at Headington (8) – and to whom we are very grateful.



Steve, Jenny, Peter, Celia, Kevin and Lynn

The quarter peal was completed successfully, but not without difficulty. The main problem anticipated was counting the correct number of extents. This was ingeniously overcome with a system of 10 pine cones placed on the floor by the tenor, one to be removed by foot at the end of each extent. The system would have worked perfectly but the conductor was uncertain of the timing of removals, and 'to be on the safe side' continued the ringing well into injury time!

Peter Bayliss. Tower Captain, Wheatley

Old North Berks Branch – Young Ringers Club at St Helen's Church, Abingdon. 29th May - 3rd June

Rather than running an outing for young ringers in half term week, we decided to try a Club with ringing (on the simulator) each morning for two

hours and the option of teaching some new ringers. There were four days (we didn't run it on the bank holiday).

We used St Helen's, Abingdon because the simulator allows us to ring as much as we like without our bothering the neighbours.

Up to six young people came during the four days including two who had no experience of ringing, both of whom came close to handling on their own by the end of the week. We had arranged for me and my husband to run the club



but four ringers came at various times during the week and helped, as well as one non-ringing parent.

We were also really pleased that Daphne came and provided a generous amount of cake, cheese scones and pop for our morning breaks.

Apart from teaching the two new ringers, we rang lots of call changes, played ringing games and used the simulator to start to teach the young ringers to hear their bells and to learn to ring a cover bell entirely by listening.

Whilst ringing we were sometimes distracted by a pair of pigeons who had found their way into the ringing chamber. They did a lot of cooing and occasionally fluttered across the room. Amelie decided we should name them Bob and Sally! We were glad when one of our ringers managed to eject them from the tower and closed the window firmly! And after our refreshments each day, we rang handbells, including ringing some simple tunes from music and ringing plain hunt with one bell each.

The week went well with lots of fun. We hope to run a ringing club again at some point.

The next ONB young ringer outing will be on Monday 3rd September, 1.00pm – 4.00pm at St Giles, Oxford during the St Giles Fair.

We will send out further details nearer the date.

Susan Read. ONB Training Officer



Tony Crabtree's Stallpits Ring comes to Cowley!

Two of our young ringers at Headington are brothers, Luke and Adam and they are members of the 28th Oxford Scouts, and their group held their

annual Scout Fete in Cowley on Saturday 23rd June. They were delighted when Tony Crabtree agreed to bring his lovely mini-ring of bells over from Shrivensham to put on display, and use as a recruitment tool for any potential new ringers.

We had decided to attempt a quarter peal on the day, so Lindsay, Rosie, Craig, Paul, Steve and Luke all had a go at Plain Bob Doubles, but sadly it fired out about three quarters of the way through – probably because of the heat causing a lack of concentration – and it certainly was very hot!

Even though we didn't get the quarter, everyone at the fete enjoyed the sound we made, and it created a nice centre piece and attraction for the fete. A lot of young people, and their family members and friends had a go, and who knows if we might have picked up a few potential ringers? A lot of people seemed very interested, but even if we didn't gain any new members, the publicity for church bell ringing is always good when Tony's mini-ring turns up at an event like this.

The Fete organisers wanted to thank Tony Crabtree for taking the time and trouble for coming over, and it also nice to meet up again with Len and Mary Porter who turned up for the occasion!

Paul Lucas



STOP PRESS!

Cuddesdon Bells – nearly there !

The rehanging and restoration work at All Saints, Cuddesdon, is very nearly complete, and a very successful fundraising concert was held in the

Bishop Edward King Chapel on Sunday the 24th. July. The bell frame has been resin-coated, and the final touches for completion should be finished within the next two weeks. These involve installing the clappers, drilling holes for the ropes in the new flooring above the ringing room, and fitting the new ropes, and making the ringing room habitable. The project has been fraught with unexpected problems, necessitating the overall

budget to just over £100,000, but the fundraising committee have got within a very respectable £15,000 of the total figure. So it will be great cause for celebration when those lovely bells call out again ! The newly-trained band have yet to make the conversion from the bells at Horspath and Wheatley to the heavier ring at All Saints, but we are not far away from having a regular band ringing again after many years silence !

Brian Lowe, Cuddesdon.

(The bells just after they came back from Whites back in April)

Many thanks to Brian for keeping us up to date on all the agonising problems that they have had to cope with since the bells were starting to be taken out in October! It's great to know that we will be able to get back to ringing them again very soon. *Paul Lucas*

