



Oxford City Branch Hugh's News

Produced fortnightly by Paul, Hugh and Katie with a few contributions from other ringers



Sunday 28 February 2015

Profile on St Cross bells



The Church of St Cross in Holywell is one of the oldest buildings in the City of Oxford: the surviving Chancel arch was built about 1180. In 2011 it became the historical collection centre for Balliol College and the bells were no longer accessible for ringing.

Hidden above the archive cabinets the six bells hang still and silent. The oldest, the 5th, is by Henry Knight I. It was cast in 1620.

Around the same time a ringer, Edmund Chilmead, was a supporter of the mayor in a dispute between the City and Merton College. The college lost a law suite:

"And A(nthony) W(ood) doth well remember, that the citizens insulted so much, when they overcame the coll(ege) in their sute, which was tried in Westminster Hall, that in their returne from London...did ride into

Oxon triumphantly thro Halywell. Chilmead, who had been one of the bel-men of the city, but then living as an undertenenant in Halywell, did in their passage present them with wine and ale, whilst the parish bells rang for joy, occasion'd as t'was supposed, by the said Chilmead."

First Quarter Peals

If any of you have recently managed to compete your first quarter peal, or are planning to do so in the near future, can you let me know. A first quarter peal is a real achievement and a milestone for any ringer. To mark this, the Guild issues First Quarter Peal certificates so you have a memento of the occasion. You can email me at: [secretary at oxfordcitybranch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@oxfordcitybranch.org.uk) or ring me on Oxford 777486, and I will order a certificate for you. **Lindsay Powell**



I was drawn to ringing because I loved the sound of bells drifting over the countryside on a summer's evening; walking with my father as a small child we would often hear Rickmansworth bells in the distance. In those days the small village was surrounded by beautiful beech trees, bluebells and hills!

But it was close to three decades later before I eventually found the opportunity to learn. By then it was far too late and I struggled with handling and understanding what was going on. Among the maelstrom of new skills required I cannot recall being told to listen for my own bell and take into account all the striking.

That was a grave error because I still struggle to hear my own bell, especially on higher numbers.

I have sought help from various sources and have found some articles which may help others, who like me, cannot easily hear their own bell or know when they are in the right place.

I hope the following may be useful, I acknowledge the author, but have no name:

To strike well is essential to good ringing.

In order to strike well you must:

Listen to every change;

Hear your own bell in every change;

Be prepared to modify your striking according to what you hear.



Good striking can only occur when every member of the band does this for every change.

First class ringers listen not only to their own bell in every change, but also to everyone else's as well. This should be important to every ringer.

Katie Lane

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 7th March Church Hanborough (6) 13cwt 1030-1200

Saturday 14th March **Branch Practice Garsington (6)1000-1130**

Guild General Committee Meeting Steeple Aston

Saturday 21st March Outing to Hampshire. Towers all confirmed from 1030. Details from Hugh