

Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter



March 2017, Spring Issue



Ringling Master's message

On April 22nd, our 6-Bell striking Competition is being held on the back six bells at Warfield, 4 - 6 p.m. It is the annual opportunity to focus on striking. I hope as many towers as possible will enter. Three years ago, a rounds and call change band won so you don't have to be expert method ringers! The judges make a big effort to come and it would be good to have as many bands as possible.

The competition is also a social occasion where we can meet the ringers from other towers and forge tower relationships. Many towers now are benefiting from regular help from their neighbouring towers to strengthen their bands and advance their ringers. If your tower could benefit from regular help, please use this opportunity to make contacts. But don't forget to go out and visit other towers yourselves? You will find their practice nights on our website and the officers can recommend suitable towers for you. You will always be made welcome, will get valuable experience and help the other towers out as well.

Steve Wells

Is your email address up to date?

Many of our communications are sent by email, including reminders about forthcoming practices and this newsletter so please remember to update us with your current email address. At present we are missing many of our members email addresses so if you wish to stay fully informed about events happening in the Branch do email your address to postmaster@sdb.odg.org.uk.

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 22nd April

Warfield (10)
6 bell Striking Competition
4pm—6pm

Saturday 20th May

Binfield (6)
10.30am—12 noon Branch Practice

Saturday 17th June

Shottesbrooke (6)
4.30pm—6pm Branch Practice

Young Ringers Practice (2nd Sunday of the month, 2.30 –4pm) 9th April, 14th May, 11th June.

Monthly Tuesday afternoon practices (2-4pm at Binfield) on 4th Apr, 2nd May, 6th June (provisionally).

Surprise Major practices (Wednesday 8pm –9.30pm) at Workingham All Saints on 5th Apr, 10th May & 14th June (provisionally).

Some bells are well known for being commemorated in verse and song, for example the various bells of London mentioned in the nursery rhyme *Oranges and Lemons*. There are many poems about bells, and even one about a Devon striking competition! Sonning's bells have been the subject of a poem, which was published in the Sonning Parish Magazine of October 1951.

THE BELLS OF SONNING

*The old bells of Sonning
Ring over river and lea
The kind bells of Sonning
Scatter their melody
Lavishly as a giver
Open of heart and hand
And it is to the soul forever
As rain to a thirsty land*

*The sweet bells of Sonning
Up in their ancient tower
Sing of the spotless lily
The rose and the passion flower
And I think of the bells of Sonning
That sang to an evening sky
When summer was June and heaven
Grew suddenly strangely nigh*

*The glad bells of Sonning
Are singing again today
And the river that runs through Sonning
Is bearing their song away
Through league and league of homeland
Down to the waiting sea
Till the winds and the quiet waters
Are frightened by melody*

*The clear bells of Sonning
They challenge the heart of youth
They speak to the old of blessing
Of peace and the path of truth
And many there be that sorrow
And many there be that roam
Who dream that the bells of Sonning
Are calling the weary home*

Ernest H. A. Home, Komoka, Ontario, Canada

Young Ringer (YR) practices

At our AGM a branch Youth Officer was elected; this is Josh Slade (Hurst) and he has already run a successful Young Ringer practice at Wargrave. Five young ringers attended: two from Arborfield, two from Wargrave and one from Hurst. The appointment of a Youth Officer and having YR practices will make it more interesting for youngsters and enable them to mix with their peers.

With the pressures of homework on weekdays, and clashes with weddings and young ringers' sporting activities on Saturdays, our branch (and 2 other neighbouring branches) decided that Sunday afternoons offer the best chance of getting YRs together. To avoid clashes with other branches and the Guild our branch has opted for the second Sunday afternoon in the month.

We felt that young ringers would benefit from experiencing a variety of towers, and we didn't want to restrict them to only the towers that currently have young ringers. We hope that most towers in the branch will support the training, even if they don't directly benefit at the time. So the Young Ringers schedule covers most towers in the branch; some towers that are rather difficult for young ringers, or are too small, have been left out of the schedule.

If your tower has young ringers who would be interested in what is available then (with agreement from their parents) give Josh Slade (youth@sdb.odg.org.uk) an email contact address, the youngster's age, and an idea of his/her current ringing ability. (The email addresses are held in a distribution list that only the webmaster (John Harrison) and Josh can see and edit, so email addresses for YRs don't get seen by others.)

Rob Needham, Secretary



Bell-ringing in South Africa

Whilst on holiday in October in South Africa I stayed in Scottburgh, which is about an hour's drive south of Durban. I was keen to ring in both towers in Durban and the Hotel where I stayed arranged transport for me on Sunday morning.

I was given a warm welcome by Simon Milliken and the ringers. I rang at St. Mary Greyville first which is a ring of 10 with a tenor of 18cwt. and cast by Taylors in 1920. With only six ringers we rang the front 6 at first and then the back six so I had the opportunity to hear all the bells. When we arrived at the church I did not think that the tower housed a ring of 10 but I was wrong!

Next I went onto St Paul's. St Paul's bells are a ring of 8 with a tenor of 14cwt. and were also cast by Taylors in 1920.



Our driver was a Zulu and was really impressed watching us ring, something he had not seen before. However, he was none too sure about the movement of the tower at St. Paul's! The band: from left to right are myself, Catherine Alborough, Jeanne Brewis, Adrian Bellengere, Di Baker and Simon Milliken, tower captain.

It was a great opportunity and one I'd thoroughly recommend to others. I have the contact details for Simon Milliken if anyone is planning a trip.

Geoff Harvey (Sonning)

Quarter Peals

All below at Wokingham All Saints

8 January

1260 Stedman Triples

- 1 Mary Spence
- 2 John A Harrison
- 3 Susan E Davenport
- 4 Kenneth R Davenport
- 5 Stephen R Smith
- 6 Jon P Tutcher
- 7 Nigel A L Mellor (C)
- 8 Stephen C Bates

26 March

1280 Spliced Surprise Major (3 methods)

- 1 Nigel A L Mellor (C)
 - 2 Barbara E Wells
 - 3 Jane A Mellor
 - 4 Tom Blomley
 - 5 Alan K Barsby
 - 6 John A Harrison
 - 7 Stephen C Wells
 - 8 Stephen R Smith
- To welcome Penelope Jocelyn Mae.
4—First spliced SM.

22 January

1250 Cambridge Surprise Major

- 1 Nigel A L Mellor (C)
- 2 Barbara E Wells
- 3 Tom Blomley
- 4 Alan K Barsby
- 5 Stephen R Smith
- 6 Jonathan P Goodchild
- 7 Stephen C Wells
- 8 John A Harrison

3—First quarter on 8 and first of Surprise

26 February

1250 Cambridge Surprise Major

- 1 Barbara G Smith
- 2 Mary Spence
- 3 Jane A Mellor
- 4 Tom Blomley
- 5 John A Harrison
- 6 Alan K Barsby
- 7 Nigel A L Mellor (C)
- 8 Jon P Tutcher

2—First Surprise Major

12 March

1250 Yorkshire Surprise Major

- 1 Kristin L Fitch
- 2 Mary Spence
- 3 Jane A Mellor
- 4 Tom Blomley
- 5 Alan K Barsby
- 6 Stephen R Smith
- 7 Nigel A L Mellor (C)
- 8 John A Harrison

2 & 4: First Yorkshire Surprise Major
Engagement compliment to Catie Smith & James Lee.
4: 23rd wedding anniversary compliment.

Quarter Peals (all at Twyford unless otherwise noted)

25 November

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1 Martha Hazell
2 Jacqueline Hazell
3 Sue Portsmouth
4 Lavinia Sullivan
5 Simon Farrar (C)

3: First Grandsire. Completed level 4 of the ART Learning the Ropes scheme

10 December

1288 Grandsire Triples

1 Kitty Gingell
2 Pam Elliston
3 Graham E Slade
4 J Chapman Knott
5 Rebecca Gingell
6 Lavinia Sullivan
7 David Sullivan (C)
8 Freddie Gingell

1 & 8: First blows in Triples

16 December

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1 Pam Elliston
2 Martha Hazell
3 Jacqueline Hazell
4 Lavinia Sullivan
5 Simon Farrar (C)
6 Sue Portsmouth

2: First Grandsire

20 January

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1 Sue Portsmouth
2 Martha Hazell
3 Jacqueline Hazell
4 Pam Elliston
5 Lavinia Sullivan
6 Simon Farrar (C)

1: First Minor
2: First minor inside

17 February

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1 Martha Hazell
2 Pam Elliston
3 Sue Portsmouth
4 Lavinia Sullivan
5 Simon Farrar (C)
6 Jacqueline Hazell

18 March

1260 Grandsire Triples

1 Matthew Cadman
2 Joyce Vernon
3 Rob Needham
4 Pam Elliston
5 David Sullivan
6 Lavinia Sullivan
7 Simon Farrar (C)
8 Clive Cadman

Rung in memory of Laurence Cadman, brother of the tenor ringer.

Wokingham St Paul

28 January

1260 Grandsire Triples

1 Kristin L Fitch
2 Julie B Goodchild
3 Susan E Davenport
4 Jane A Mellor
5 Nigel A L Mellor
6 Jonathan P Goodchild (C)
7 John A Harrison
8 Stephen C Bates

Wokingham St Paul

9 February

1288 Grandsire Triples

1 Susan E Davenport
2 Irene Rich
3 Geoffrey K Cook
4 Marcia Dieppe
5 John A Harrison
6 Alan K Barsby (C)
7 Stephen R Smith
8 Dave Creasy

All Saints Dinner day. Venue moved following clapper failure during morning peal attempt .

Rung for the Bishop of Oxford's visit

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	Nigel Mellor	All Saints, Wokingham	0118 979 2037	dbrm@sdb.odg.org.uk
Treasurer	Sue Davenport	St Paul's, Wokingham	0118 978 6554	treasurer@sdb.odg.org.uk
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