

## 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2022 Committee Meeting

### Secretary's report

**Branch AGM 2022:** The AGM was held by Zoom meeting on Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022. 29 members attended, including June Wells (Guild Safeguarding Officer) and Patricia Newton (Guild Steward).

It was agreed at the AGM that ONB Branch will donate £500 to the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund.

**Branch membership:** There have been four new members elected to the Guild since the AGM: Andrew Lay (Abingdon), Bethany Williams (Harwell), Thomas Palmer and Mary-Clare Palmer (Drayton).

**Practices:** Branch evening practices have been held at Radley, Blewbury, Cholsey and Brightwell. The practice at Cumnor was cancelled following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II. Branch afternoon practices have been held at Steventon, Cumnor, Marcham, Radley, Blewbury and Long Wittenham. Surprise Major practices have been held at Milton, Drayton and Goring.

**6-bell striking competition:** This was held during the morning of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at North Moreton and the ringing was excellent. Six teams entered the striking competition and the results were: 1<sup>st</sup> Wantage (34 faults), 2<sup>nd</sup> Abingdon A (35 faults), 3<sup>rd</sup> Blewbury (45 faults), 4<sup>th</sup> Wallingford (56 faults), 5<sup>th</sup> Abingdon B (58 faults), 6<sup>th</sup> Radley and Steventon (71 faults). Thanks go to Keith Osborne from Kent and William Stungo from Berkshire for judging the competition, and to the North Moreton ringers and friends for providing a superb breakfast.

**Events:** There was a well-attended mini outing on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April, to Lambourn, Brightwalton and East Ilsley, with lunch at the Crown and Horns, East Ilsley.

The branch outing took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> July to Weston on the Green, Aynho, Adderbury, Sandford St. Martin and Stonesfield, with lunch at the Red Lion, Adderbury and tea at Sandford St. Martin. Thanks go to Philip and Janette Roberts for organising the outing. It was followed by a barbecue at the home of Stuart and Naomi Gibson, attended by almost sixty members, partners and friends. As ever the food was excellent and thanks go to Stuart and Naomi for hosting the event. The day and a raffle raised £462.81 for branch funds.

The barn dance and supper at Harwell Village Hall, which was postponed from Novembers 2020 and 2021, is now scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022. We need to decide whether we still wish to go ahead with the event or whether we would prefer to postpone it to another date.

**Gillian Loyd**  
**Secretary**

### Joint Ringing Masters' report

The sad news of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and the immediate implementation of 'Operation London Bridge' dominated the news. The response of bellringers around the United Kingdom and Commonwealth was immediate and it was definitely 'all hands to the pump'! In spite of the detailed and much publicised plans, there was still some confusion about when muffles should be applied and when removed for the proclamation. However, from all accounts, our branch responded magnificently with towers helping their neighbours with ringers and fitting muffles when resources were short. For instance, a plea for four muffles to allow the infrequently rung bells of Sparsholt to be rung muffled was very quickly fulfilled. Well done to everyone!

Around the branch there have been a number of new members elected to the Guild, some successful teaching advances, and national training courses being attended. This is all good news and quite a healthy sign that the branch is recovering well. However, we all still need to focus on recruiting new ringers to sustain the branch and ringing for the longer term. Maybe the prospect of learning the basic skills in time to ring for the Coronation of King Charles III might be an incentive for some?

Although no bell restorations are officially active within the branch, there are some exciting prospects for Sparsholt and North Moreton. Disappointingly, the possible restoration of the long derelict bells at Culham does

not appear to have the support of the local PCC. More information on all three of these will be discussed at the meeting.

Finally, we have both been Ringing Masters for several years and have stayed on to maintain continuity in the post Covid period. However, it is definitely high time for some 'new blood' with new ideas and energy. We would both be happy to continue to support and help new JRMs during their first year if needed.

Thanks to all for your continued support.

**Richard Loyd and Philip Roberts**  
**Joint Ringing Masters**

### **Ringing Recovery Champion's report**

#### **Survival and recovery of ringing (national initiative)**

Firstly, I would like to thank Tower Captains and their representatives for all their dedication in supporting this initiative. Overall, following the pandemic, there has been a positive return to ringing within the Branch, with many new recruits, and this is extremely encouraging.

Whilst nationally, the Ringing Recovery Steering Group has now run its course and closed in the summer, there is still some follow-up from the Branch Survey to address. Where towers identified the need for extra ringers on Sundays, support at practices and/or help with recruitment, a meeting is to take place with the Branch Ringing Masters, to discuss how the Branch and its members can support, with follow-up to those towers individually.

**Jenny Dyer**

**Ringing Recovery Champion**

### **Training Officer's report**

#### **ONB / VOWH ART "Teaching from Rounds to Plain Hunt" day course, Longcot, 23 Apr 2022**

Tony Crabtree and I organised this course to provide skills and techniques necessary to build really good foundation ringing skills in one's ringers. Designed for anyone involved in teaching a new band where the teacher can personally ring at least plain hunt, five ringers from ONB Branch attended (three from Abingdon, one from Harwell and one from Aston Tirrold) together with seven others. Four ringers have been assessed and three accredited so far. I expect that further ringers will be accredited with ART within the next six months.

#### **ONB Branch (Summer) Ringing School, 18 Apr – 29 Sep 22**

Twelve learners and eight trainee teachers participated. The Branch Ringing School took up to five learners and three trainee teachers to a different practice night each week throughout the summer. They were allocated to either the Northern Group or the Southern Group, alternating between twenty towers in the north and south. In most of the towers, the trainee teachers took turns with the Tower Captain to run pieces of ringing. We were generally made very welcome. Both the learners and the trainee teachers increased their confidence and ability to ring / run practices.

#### **ONB / Bicester Branch ART "Teaching Bell Handling" Day Course, Kirtlington, 22 Oct 2022**

Steve Vickars and I are collaborating to organise an ART course to teach twelve new teachers of bell handling for our branches. There are twelve places on the course of which six are filled so far. We will be inviting all those on the course to help teach learners at the ONB Branch Ringing School on Saturday mornings until March 2023.

#### **ONB and Bicester Branch (Winter) Ringing School, 1 Oct 2022 – 31 March 2023**

This winter Steve Vickars and I are running bell handling sessions alternately in Abingdon and Kirtlington, both of which towers have simulators, enabling us to teach ringing without bothering the neighbours. The hope is that the Bicester Branch will also gain some new enthusiastic teachers and recruit more learners in the future, and be able to run its own Ringing School in the future.

### **Young Ringers**

We have changed the young ringer offering from six outings a year to monthly Sunday afternoon practices. Since February, we have practised at Brightwell (13 March), Childrey (10 April), Stanford-in-the-Vale (15 May), Clanfield (10 July) and Cumnor (14 August). Daphne has provided her sumptuous cakes, scones and biscuits for us on each occasion. Numbers have varied between 2 and 10 young people plus parents and tower captains, who enjoy joining in with the refreshments on offer and occasionally making up the numbers necessary for some of the more advanced methods rung.

The Abingdon School Bell Club has continued to meet weekly during term time at St Helen's Church, Abingdon. The teachers, Adam Jenkins and Ollie Lomax, have continued to come, bringing four more new learners this calendar year so far. We are glad that Dan and Joe Gillett, two of our younger fully-qualified ART teachers help by teaching the boys to handle their bells week by week. One of the older boys from the school has started attending the Young Ringer practices. It would be good to persuade more of them to join bands at towers near their homes.

### **Ringling World National Youth Competition (RWNYC), ODG team**

I have been providing transport for our young ringers to the monthly practices held for the ODG squad for many years and continue to do so. The team which rings in the competition is drawn from the larger squad who meet to practise monthly. The National Competition was held in Exeter in July, and the ODG squad included Joe from Abingdon, Amelie from Brightwell and Isaac from Marcham. On the day, Joe conducted, but one of our team was unable to come, being ill with Covid. Simon, aged 9, rang instead, one handed, having broken his arm a few weeks earlier. Sadly, Amelie was unable to go because it was her school sports day. There were eight teams in the method ringing category and the ODG team came joint fourth. I am continuing to help with the ODG team for the 2023 competition which will be held in York. Hopefully the young ringer practices I am organising in the branch will help more to reach the Plain Hunt on Seven standard needed before joining the ODG squad.

**Susan Read**

**Training Officer**