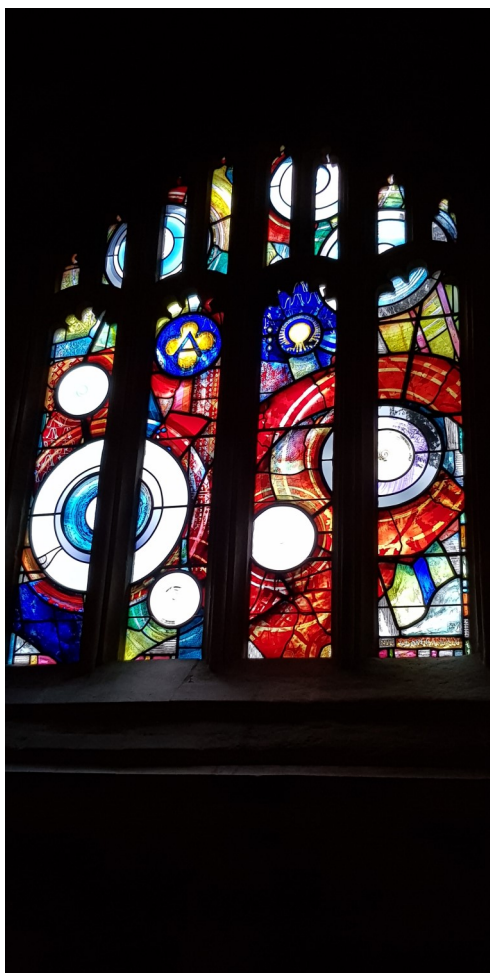




Old North Berks Branch Newsletter

No: 156

December 2020



Blewbury Resound window at night (see page 16)

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Editorial

Welcome to the Winter 2020 edition of the Branch Newsletter. The Summer edition was not produced because of the Covid-19 pandemic, and as ringing was not allowed to take place during the lockdown which lasted from the 23rd March to the end of July, there was potentially nothing to report. And now, having come out of the second lockdown, we are in Tier 2 and cannot even ring 'socially distanced' bells! Let's hope that we are able to ring at Christmas.

There were a few articles that had been sent in ready for the Summer issue, and these are now able to be included in this edition.

Congratulations are due to Blewbury on the completion of their 'Project Resound' – a bell themed stained glass window. The photo on the front cover shows the window lit up at night.

Congratulations to Helen Aitkins of North Moreton on ringing her first quarter at the first attempt, and to Jill Last of Cumnor on also ringing her first quarter.

Congratulations are also due to Mary and Bobbi of Steventon on gaining their LTR2 Certificates.

Among the footnotes are congratulations on the occasions of significant Wedding Anniversaries:

Golden (50 years) – Susan and Brian Read of Abingdon
Golden (50 years) – Brenda and Brian Thomas of Sunningwell
Ruby (40 years) – Chris and Paul de Cordova
Silver (25 years) – Jeanette and Steve Thomas of Abingdon

Congratulations are also due, on the occasion of their marriage, to Catriona Shearer (formerly of Abingdon) and Jonathan Agg.

A Peal at Milton was rung as a compliment to Ian and Margaret Crichton (Nicola Turner's parents) on moving to Sutton Courtenay from Easton-in-Gordano after 50 years in residence there.

Congratulations also to Becci and Rebecca, both of Abingdon, on the births of baby boys. Two potential ringers?

After all the above congratulations, sadly there are four people who have passed away: Elizabeth Gill (Harwell), Denis Parfoot (West Hanney), Brian Hunnisett (Blewbury) and John Drewitt (Appleton).

It was suggested that this be a 'short' Newsletter to let others know how we have all been coping during the pandemic, but it seems that it will not be much shorter than usual, thanks to all the contributions. Please keep sending reports etc in for inclusion in the next edition.

When Ian wrote the editorial for the last Newsletter a year ago, he had expected that he would have moved to Somerset by the time that the Newsletter had been distributed. However, this was not to be, as after unforeseen holdups with the sale of his house, he eventually moved in early March, and of course, he hasn't been able to join the local ringers there yet.

It just remains for me to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a better New Year, and look forward to the day when ringing can return to 'normal'.

Daphne Pollard

Chairman's Report

I hope that this newsletter finds you and your families all well. 2020, for obvious reasons, has been a very challenging year and I know we are all missing our ringing, but I have heard of many towers reaching out to their ringers with virtual meetings, online ringing rooms, socially distanced meetings and some limited ringing (as and when the restrictions allowed) and I would encourage you all to do this, as and when possible, so that we keep up the social side of ringing. It was encouraging to see many of you, albeit virtually, at the Branch AGM and I look forward to when we can all meet in person.

I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Rob Nickless

Secretary's Report

New Year's Day 2020 ringing with refreshments was held at Wantage and there were over thirty attendees. Thanks go to Celia Leeson Cox and all the Wantage ringers for the excellent refreshments. This was once again a very happy occasion for the Branch and a promising start to the New Year.

Unfortunately due to Covid-19 restrictions, all other scheduled branch events from March onwards were cancelled, including the April mini outing, the branch outing and barbecue, and also the Guild AGM and 8-bell striking competition. The autumn social, which was to have been a barn dance in Harwell Village Hall, has been rescheduled for Saturday, 13th November 2021. Please mark this in your diaries!

Our 2020 AGM was postponed until 14th November and was held successfully by Zoom meeting. It was ably hosted by our Chairman, Rob Nickless and was attended by twenty-four members, including the Guild Master, Katie Lane, and our Guild Branch Steward, Patricia Newton. It is hoped that next year's AGM and striking competition will be held in Steventon. However, if Covid-19 restrictions still apply, the AGM will be held in March by Zoom meeting and the competition will be delayed until later in the year.

Our Treasurer, Stuart Gibson, has advised that so far in 2020, three towers have not paid their subscriptions to date. Of those that have paid subscriptions, all but three towers did so by the due date of the 31st March. All subscriptions paid so far this year have included the voluntary £2 restoration fund contribution. Income for 2020 has only been subscriptions and one young ringers' event. Expenses have been mainly subscriptions to the Guild, with a grant to Letcombe Bassett (£500) being paid at the end of March and a deposit for a Barn Dance in November 2021 (£50). The branch currently has funds totalling £7,013 of which £5,894 is held at Lloyds and £1,118 at the CCLA.

I am very sorry to have to report the deaths this year of Brian Hunnisett of Blewbury and Denis Parfoot, formerly of West Hanney. They are both sadly missed.

Branch 'Save our Bells' honey, both runny and set, is still available at £4.70 per jar, £1 of which is kindly donated towards branch bell restoration projects. If you want jars for Christmas presents or just need some for yourself for the cold winter days, please let me know and I will get some to you (please email gillianloyd@gmail.com).

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happier New Year!

Gill Loyd

Ringling Masters' Ramblings

Before writing this article we looked at our last 'Rambling' contribution, now a full year ago. At that time we were fairly positive about many things, but expressing concern about poor attendance at Branch practices. A year later, the world has completely changed and our ringing world has been turned upside down. Our bells have been silent for a large part of this year as the Covid virus brought about ever increasing restrictions. As we write we are halfway through the second full lockdown, with all ringing stopped once again. During the summer some of our towers did manage to get limited ringing going whilst following safety guidelines. This in itself was an important first step, reminding everyone that our church bells still exist and providing a sound of hope during these hard days. At the moment it is unclear if limited ringing will be permitted over the festive period of Christmas, which is usually a very busy time for us all with additional services, etc. Please check with national advice and discuss any plans for ringing with your incumbent to ensure that you comply with all Central Council and local safety advice before ringing resumes. Sadly our very popular New Year's Day ringing and social event will not be possible.

On the horizon is the prospect of vaccines, and this spells (hopefully) a return to normality at some point during next year. The long hibernation from our regular ringing activities means that practices and service ringing, training and recruiting new ringers, and generally enjoying what we do, as well as socialising will seem like a new world again for all of us! Many, including ourselves, will be 'rusty' and we will need to be supportive and patient with each other as we get back to it. We should also be mindful that we will have to put in some extra effort to make sure that ringing can bounce back quickly. We urge you all to help not only your local band, but also any struggling towers who may need your support to maintain a viable practice and service ringing. As soon as it is safe to do so, we will have a branch event calendar reinstated which will help us all to meet, chat and ring together.

Following on from the very successful Steventon rehang last year, it now looks likely that Long Wittenham bells will be rehung and tuned by Whites early in 2021. This is likely to be one of the most transformative rehanges in our branch, and we look forward to listening and ringing at both of these 'new' towers next year. Congratulations to everyone involved in making these ambitious and much needed projects happen.

And to end on a happy theme, Philip has some of his traditional merriment for you!

Our holiday, (like many others) had to be cancelled because of the pandemic. We were going to go to America to see the 'Supremes' but had to make do with four tops from Primark!

A wife gives her husband two ties for Christmas. He comes down Christmas morning wearing one of them, the wife exclaims, darling, didn't you like the other one!

A man decides to spend a lazy week-end reading, goes to a book shop and selects a book entitled "How to Hug". His disappointment can be imagined when he realised, when unwrapping it at home, that it was Volume VI of the Encyclopedia Britannica!

With best wishes for a very Happy Christmas, and a New Year to bring hope and joy to all.

Richard Loyd and Philip Roberts

TOWER TALK

Abingdon

It was a shock last March when the corona virus lockdown meant that churches closed and all ringing had to stop until the restrictions were relaxed in the summer. St Helen's Church restarted Sunday morning services at the end of July and the Rector was very keen that we should ring for them. We carefully measured the rope circle, did a risk assessment with a church warden and set out a detailed protocol for ringers to follow. This allowed us to ring five bells (numbers 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10) wearing face coverings and socially distanced. Only some of our band were willing to ring in the circumstances. For those keen to ring, we had a rota whereby each ringer got to ring every third Sunday. Ringing just five bells has not been ideal, but everyone (ringers and congregation) is pleased we can. Until the present lockdown we've rung every Sunday.

The band is kept in touch with a weekly email containing ringing news, links to relevant items of interest on the Internet and a puzzle to solve. We've had Zoom meetings and some have resorted to Ringing Room. After Sunday ringing, spare ringers listening outside the tower join that week's band at the Crown & Thistle where we meet for coffee, sitting spaced out in the courtyard. Sadly, teaching our young learners has had to stop, though in the summer we managed tune ringing sessions in a garden. Gratifyingly, the weekly practice for boys at Abingdon School went online (like their teaching) and they continue to make progress using Ringing Room.

We have rung a few quarter peals on handbells, often outside. They included quarters arranged to congratulate two of our ringers, Becci and Rebecca, on the births of baby boys. A single bell was tolled for Remembrance and currently for the 6pm lockdown prayers. Indeed we may now be restricted to single household "bands" on Sundays for the next month or so.

Ringing at St Nicolas' Church had to stop a year ago as the tower needed strengthening. Encouragingly, the repair work will start in January and maybe we shall be able to ring again by Easter?

Brian Read

Appleton

Between November and March we practised most Friday evenings, rang for Sunday morning services and the twice monthly Evensongs. In November, we rang a half-muffled peal of Grandsire Caters in memory of the fallen and later in the month we rang a quarter peal as a farewell to our Rector, Rev. Ken Campbell. We visited the Bear and Ragged Staff in Cumnor for our tower Christmas meal on 13th December – a good time was had by all! The Christmas Eve carol service is always well attended and we were able to ring a quarter peal before the service. As we had no Rector this year, there was no Midnight Mass service to ring for. Peals were rung by visiting bands in December and February. We celebrated the 202nd anniversary of our bells being given by Robert Southby on Saturday March 7th. A peal of Cambridge Surprise Royal was successfully rung in the morning – congratulations are due to Jenny Dyer on ringing her first peal of Royal. In the evening 70 people were present at the dinner which was followed by the traditional March 4th Song, solo items from various singers, a course of Stedman Cinques was lapped, there was tune ringing by Four in Hand and the Appleton Handbell ringers; the evening was rounded off with general singing and people departed to various parts of the country. Little did we imagine that 10 days later all ringing would be stopped due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in April we learned that Andrew Stubbs who had been present at the dinner and John Drewitt, a former Appleton ringer and until recently, a regular attender at the dinner, had both died from the disease.

In July, it was announced that the Rev. Philip Parker had been appointed Rector of Appleton with Besselsleigh and would be moving to the village with his wife, Isabel during the summer. Rev. Phil was also appointed as Chaplain of Cothill School and his Institution and Licensing was carried out, via Zoom, on 7th September. Rev. Phil has been very supportive of our wish to start ringing some bells for service and as most of you know Appleton is a very small tower! During October we took various measurements and prepared the necessary Risk Assessments – we found that we could ring two different sets of 4 bells if two of the four ringers were from the same household, otherwise we could ring three bells. We decided to ring for the morning service and Evensong on alternate Sundays so that as many as possible of the villagers could hear the bells again. Four ringers rang for Evensong for the first time in six months on Sunday 18 October and many comments were received that it was lovely to hear the bells again; we were able to ring for the next two Sundays and the current lockdown was announced and we had to stop ringing again. We are hoping that it will not be too long before we can ring again!

Michele Winter

Blewbury

At the end of 2019 a new, bell-themed window was installed in Blewbury Tower. And in January the Westminster Abbey Company of Bellringers rang a peal of Stedman Triples on our bells to celebrate the window. This was followed by a service of Dedication in the church by the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher OBE, Bishop of Dorchester.

Many of you came to this celebration evening to admire the new window, and it has been much admired since. It is lit from inside after dark, and so we have been able to enjoy it from outside during the lockdown.

The first couple of months of 2020 were filled with ringing as usual, with the promise of new recruits for our tower, one of whom had begun her training, and a few dates in the diary for summer outings. However, lockdown brought a fairly abrupt end to this in March.

We have been keeping in touch, like many, with a weekly zoom meeting on practice night, bringing our own refreshments, and a memorable call with one participant in a hot tub! When restrictions have allowed we have had socially distanced meetings in person and in August there was a much welcomed return to ringing for VJ Day. Under the CCCBR guidance we can ring 4, 5 or 6 of the 8 depending on how many ringers from the same household are ringing. I think all who want to ring have taken part and since VJ Day we have rung for two weddings and a funeral along with Harvest festival, several afternoon Eucharist services and our last ringing for All Souls before the second lockdown. The zoom calls and the hope for a return to ringing continue

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Christine Kowalczyk



The Westminster Abbey Company of Bellringers

Cholsey

We have not been ringing for (zoom) services. However we rang for the wedding of the Vicars Daughter in July which was greatly appreciated. All other weddings are postponed.

We tolled the Tenor bell for the V.J. day in September and the vicar came and said a short prayer for peace in the open air attended by the bellringers.

We are keeping in touch with each other by group e-mail. Roll on the return to normal.

Jenny Jeskins

Cumnor

We held our annual Christmas/New Year party on 18th January in Cumnor. It was very successful and most of our ringers with their spouses managed to attend.

Of course, since the middle of March, as with all other towers, our ringing has been disrupted. Our tower captain, Jenny Dyer, has very gallantly managed to keep ringing going on Sundays before the service. Obviously this has not been possible in the periods of lockdown, but for most of the other months there have been three ringers who managed to maintain the recommended social distancing.

But more importantly we have managed to keep ringing on line. It is rather different from real ringing, but very satisfying and very challenging. It involves logging in to your home tower through the ringing room website, <https://www.ringingroom.com/> and then having someone in your tower who has a Zoom account who can log you in so that you can all communicate with each other visually. I do not know how many towers in our area have set up on line ringing, but we can heartily recommend it. We have managed to ring Grandsire triples, Stedman triples, Plain Bob Major as well as several Minor and Doubles methods on many occasions. Of course there is no physical effort involved, so even our youngest or oldest members can ring the tenor, but the intellectual challenge is very rewarding. We ring regularly between 8 and 9 pm on Mondays and Thursdays. Unfortunately the glorious sound of the bells does not ring out across the fields and gardens and houses of Cumnor, but we still feel that we are keeping the traditions of bell ringing alive. If any visitor would like to join us on either of these evenings, please contact our tower captain, Jenny Dyer, jadyr55@hotmail.com.

We are all looking forward to the relaxation of lockdown in the New Year and the hope that we can return to normal life and normal ringing.

Gerard Ledger

East Hagbourne

On Thursday 23rd January we rang a quarter peal, 1260 of Grandsire Triples to celebrate Pat Nap- per's 90th birthday. Details are in the Quarter Peal section. Pat and some of his family sat in the church porch to listen to the quarter peal and told the team afterwards that they had taped it!

On Tuesday 4th February we rang the bells for Jazzy Glover's Great Grandfather's 100th birthday, Cordelia videoed the team ringing with Jazzy ringing the second bell. We all wished her Great Grandfather a very Happy Birthday. The video would be given to him as a special gift on his 100th birthday, what a lovely idea.

The tower AGM took place in the parish room on Tuesday 25th February following a short ringing practice.

Our group of new ringers, of which there are now 4, are regulars in the tower on Tuesday practice nights and for Sunday service and are progressing well.

Sadly, like all towers in the country our bells fell silent in March this year due to the coronavirus and all the restrictions that came into place. We would like to thank our Tower Keeper, John Napper, for keeping an eye on our bells while we are unable to ring them and for putting the flag up on the tower for St George's Day. We are all so happy that he has left it flying. John also keeps an eye on the church clock, the mechanism is housed in the ringing chamber.

We had a virtual quarterly meeting of HSCR on Tuesday 29th September when we discussed our future for when church services resume.

The bells at St Andrew's rang out, for the first time since March, on Sunday 11th October, Ringer's Sunday. I am sure it was a strange experience for four ringers to ring every other bell (social distancing) and also to ring them wearing a mask. As one of them said "it was just nice to be back up the tower". About 30 people attended the service at 3:00, I felt sad not to be there but we were on holiday in Cornwall.

The bells were rung again on Sunday 25th October at 10:00, in memory of our dear friend and fellow ringer Cliff Garlick and for the Pet Service in the afternoon which was held at York Farm in West Hagbourne.

We had hoped to ring the bells for Remembrance Sunday at about 11:40 ready for the service and the cross but, due to the second lockdown, this was cancelled.

We had been given permission to ring the bells on Sunday mornings regularly at 10:00 but sadly this has not happened due to the second lockdown when our bells fell silent again. **We will be back!**

Shirley Goss

Harwell

Like most towers, Harwell has been very quiet apart from the odd conversation on our what's app site.

During lockdown one we unfortunately lost one of our most loyal ringers, Elizabeth Gill, who died on June 17th aged 81. Debbie was able to toll a bell for her service on July 8th.

I was able to ring a bell for the 75th anniversary of VJ day and Janette read the citation outside the Church where several people were gathered.

When the fortnightly evening service (in person) started, we were able to ring four bells for 15 minutes prior. Then lockdown two came along and now we are in Tier 2. I wonder how long it will be before we can climb the tower steps again.

At home while in lockdown we have been spending time trying to sort out the many photographs that we have accumulated over the years. (If only we had put a date on them at the time!) How many of you remember the ringers in the photograph shown? It was taken at the "Kicking Donkey" public house after a quarter peal for Bill Corderoy's 80th birthday. Does anyone know the date?

Wishing you all a safe and covid-free Christmas with your families and let's hope 2021 proves better for all of us.

Philip Roberts



Letcombe Regis

Like other towers, the bells have been silent since mid-March 2020 but prior to lockdown regular ringing continued for the morning service each Sunday through autumn 2019 and spring 2020. Though sometimes depleted due to sport and youngsters' other commitments, the band consisted of six members: Sophie, Henry, George, Lily plus adults Toni and Christine. Sadly Anne Williams's illness has been persistent and she has been unable to return to ringing.

Ringling at St Andrew's owes much to Anne Williams who took on the job of Tower Captain in 1982 when she established a new band with the assistance of Wantage ringers to train her own three children and other youngsters from the village. Anne trained at least 17 young people over the years 1982 to 1990 (to replace those moving on to university or leaving the village with their families). By 1990 the band had dwindled to four members and reluctantly disbanded. However, Anne took on the task of training a new band for the Millennium which had their first training session on 7th January 1999. Ever since then the bells have been ringing until lockdown with a succession of new recruits trained by Anne. The current four youngsters have GCSE or A level assessments for grading in summer 2021 which must take priority after such disrupted studies in 2020. So it is with sadness that it seems for that reason, as well as the difficulties created by coronavirus, the bells will be silent at least until autumn 2021. On a brighter note the Ellacombe apparatus may chime again before then.

Christine Birch

Milton

As I imagine will be the case with most towers there is little to report. Ringing came to an abrupt halt in mid-March. A subsequent risk assessment confirmed that due to the tight nature of the circle, where no two ropes are 2m apart, resumption of ringing has not been possible. We continue to monitor the advice given but as I write this, it looks extremely unlikely that ringing, as we knew it, will recommence anytime soon.

A half-muffled bell was rung to conclude the two-minute silence on both Remembrance Sunday and November the 11th. A bell has also been rung most evenings during lockdown 2 at 6pm, to announce the Archbishops' Call to Prayer for the Nation. Normally this has been done by Nicola who ties it up with locking and cleaning the church, which has been open every day for private prayer.

We have held a tower chat by "Zoom" most Fridays which has enabled us to keep in touch.

Colin Turner

North Moreton

When the ringers met for practice night on 16 March this year, we knew it would be our last practice for a while. What we didn't know then and don't know now of course, is how long it would be before we could meet regularly for practice nights again.

Thankfully, very quickly Rob began our Monday night Zoom meetings for all tower members and we suddenly, in my case anyway, discovered Zoom, GoToMeeting etc that we hadn't even known about, never mind needed to use. These have had the added bonus of being able to include Alice Auckland, our Bell Captain, who moved to Scotland. How nice to keep in touch and to see her new -build home developing, overlooking the Forth.

In addition to Zoom, we had open air meetings on the recreation ground – bring your own chair, and in one member's case, a box of raisins! There was a very happy occasion one Sunday lunch time in September, when we met and picnicked under the trees. The weather was glorious and we shared the rec with families, cricketers, dog walkers, holiday makers, children (plus a bell ringer or two) on the zip wire, see picture. Maybe Richard will grow up someday soon – who knows?! No one was in a rush to go home and we were all there until late afternoon.

'Isolation' is a word that has taken on a new meaning in our lives, but it is good to know that even when 'isolating' in our own homes there is a bell ringer not that far away!

Bell ringing hasn't been totally forgotten and we are very happy to record that Helen Aitkins rang her first quarter peal on 28th December last year. Helen had been very nervous of the very idea of a QP, but following some connivance between her cousin Keith and Richard, Helen had successfully completed the ring, without really knowing! Well done Helen.

Like other churches, tentative ringing for services did begin at All Saints at the end of the first lockdown. We could just about ring three, but of course this lasted for a very short while.



Richard on the zip wire.



Helen with Rob after her first quarter peal

Beryl Jones

Radley

Up until the 23rd March, when 'lockdown' took place because of Covid-19, we rang as normal on each Sunday morning and Thursday evening.

When Services were able to re-start on 26th July, three bells (because of social distancing) were rung before each Service that took place. The ringers who were able to ring a bell up, ring and ring down (because of having to ring the same bell all the time) took it in turns to ring. On occasions, when Mark and Alban came, we were able to ring four bells as, being from the same household, they were able to ring adjacent bells. This came to an end when the second 'lockdown' started on 4th November but, as the Remembrance Day Service on 8th November was being 'live-streamed' from Radley, the Tenor was tolled before the service started, as would have been done in normal circumstances. Thanks are due to Oliver Hyde for putting the muffle on and tolling the bell.

The Sunday morning service is live-streamed from Radley, and before it starts there is 5 minutes of ringing (taken from a recording made by the Radley History Club in 2005 of a quarter peal rung to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII). During the ringing some photos of the Radley (somewhat younger) ringers are shown. There have been several favourable comments received.

We also rang 3 bells for a wedding on 3rd November which had been hurriedly re-arranged from the end of November to be able to take place before 'lockdown 2' started the next day.

We are all very much looking forward to when ringing, as we knew it, can start again.

Daphne Pollard

Steventon

The year started well with Mary and Bobbi being awarded Learning The Ropes Level 2.

Mary and Bobbi
with their certificates,
presented to them by
Debbie.



.....and my entry for the 'Christmas in a Box' at Sutton Courtenay being voted first place! (see back cover).

Ringling had been going well in Steventon, we had even started to hold our own practices on Wednesday evenings with a supply of freshly baked biscuits each week as encouragement.

We had a fairly busy wedding schedule ahead of us as well as hosting the Six Bell Striking competition and AGM in March which we were all looking forward to, we were even entering a band, the first time in several decades. Then came Covid-19 and a national lockdown.

However, there has been activity in the tower; during the first lockdown some feathered squatters gained entry through some rusted mesh into the bell chamber, unfortunately they were too stupid to find their way out and a couple starved to death (or maybe it was cannibalism).

The pesky pigeons were eventually eradicated; Charles, with his non-ringing assistant, fixed up some Galebreaker Birdnet to the West window which was urgently required, the other three will be done in due course.

The ladder has been blocked off to stop any illegal access to the tower.

The first ringing was for the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, Jeanette and I rang just two bells.

Socially Distanced services resumed between the two lockdowns, and we were able to ring three bells for 15 minutes for every service, all of us wearing face coverings and when warm enough, with the door open. We are lucky in Steventon to have such an airy space to ring in.

There were several favourable comments from villagers on how lovely it was to hear the bells.

Just before Lockdown 2, our lovely new ropes arrived and were hung (if that is the right word) by Nick and Nicola with Colin orchestrating things below. Whilst they were up with the bells, Nick and Nicola cleared up not only the pigeon poo but several bags of other detritus including the remains of old muffles. I had the job of clearing up the mess below when they had finished.



The pigeons left the bells looking like this!



The blocked off ladder.



The new ropes.

I rang for both Remembrance Sunday and 11th November, just one bell normally for a few minutes before 11am then two minutes silence followed by 40 bongs for the number of fallen. Apparently men digging their allotments heard the bell and stopped their digging for the two minutes, the bell could be heard down as far as the War Memorial.

With Lockdown two, came the Archbishops' request for the 6pm Christian Call to Prayer. A bell has been rung each day (all bar two when I was a bit unwell). Again, several villagers commented favourably.

With the end of Lockdown two comes Tier 2 so no more than one bell can be rung, hopefully this will be reviewed for Christmas.

Looking forward to next year, we hope to be hosting the six-bell striking competition and AGM in March, fingers crossed it will go ahead.

Claire Ward

Wallingford

In the middle of the summer, after the initial lockdown, we started meetings using Ringing Room. These have continued twice weekly ever since. Progress has been good with a number of ringers learning new methods such as Stedman. It has proved to be challenging, but also enjoyable and very good to be able to keep some change ringing going.

Chris Tuckett

Wantage

We hosted the Branch New Year ringing day when over 50 attended. The ringing also attracted a number of visitors to the church and although they asked a number of questions about ringing we were unable to recruit any new ringers!

Practices and Sunday ringing continued until the national lockdown commenced.

A bell was tolled to mark the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day on 15th August 2020. I was delighted that Sarah Macdonell volunteered to ring the 6th bell, 75 times. Prior to tolling the bell there was a short service around the war memorial.

The Vicar, Rev Philip Wells, gave permission for ringing to re-commence on Sunday, 6th September 2020. We can only ring 4 bells, 1,3,5, and 7 and the 15 minutes we are allowed to ring soon goes by! We have been ringing a few methods but it is hard work on the 7th bell!

It is interesting how many people have commented on how nice it is to hear the bells again, but why only 4 bells!

Graham Stoter

West Hanney

Along with all bellringers, we stopped ringing in March, but kept in touch with our team through our WhatsApp group, encouraging and supporting each other and looking forward to happier times.

The Branch emails were always welcome and eventually, following the guidance given, three masked and sanitised members of Hanney ringers met again in the tower for 15 minutes of rounds on the Sundays when services were permitted. There were many kind messages from villagers, happy to hear the bells again, if only to remind them which day of the week it was!

Now the bells are silent again, but hopefully there will be ringing for Christmas and New Year.

Sadly, we lost one of our best and longest serving ringers when Denis Parfoot died in August. Not only was Denis a much-loved member of the village, but he had taught so many of us to ring with great patience and kindness. We stood together on the village green to pay our respects as the funeral cortege drove slowly on its way. Denis's widow was very touched that he was remembered at the recent Branch AGM and sends her thanks.

We send our greetings and best wishes to all fellow campanologists for the Festive Season and we look forward to a happier and brighter New Year for all.

Jean Hazard

Churn Benefice quarter peals to celebrate the life of Cliff Garlick Saturday 14th December 2019

Four quarter peals in the four towers of the Churn Benefice were rung by Cliff Garlick's friends to celebrate his life. These were followed by tea in North Moreton giving us all the chance to remember our dear friend, Cliff.

Aston Tirrold (St Michael)	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
Blewbury (St Michael and All Angels)	1260 Grandsire Triples
East Hagbourne (St Andrew)	1260 Stedman Triples
North Moreton (All Saints)	1260 Grandsire Doubles



Aston Tirrold

(Peter Corderoy and Matthew Phillips had left by the time this photo was taken.)



Blewbury



East Hagbourne



North Moreton



After tea, with Jill Garlick

John Drewitt

John Drewitt was born in Eaton, a small hamlet between Appleton and Cumnor, in 1942 and attended Appleton Primary School. He then moved to Rosehill with his parents and after leaving school trained as a toolmaker at the Pressed Steel factory in Cowley, staying there all his working life.

John's father, Edwin, was a ringer at Appleton, travelling out to ring there from Rosehill and John was taught to handle a bell in his 'teens' by Frank White and made rapid progress competently ringing Grandsire and Stedman Caters; he started ringing with the Oxford Society shortly afterwards and was elected to the College Youths in 1960. Peter Heritage remembers ringing with him as a teenager and going on ringing holidays to the Isle of Wight – the group included Roy Jones, Ted Venn, John Walker as well as Peter, John and Geraldine, John's future wife.

After John and Geraldine were married, they moved to East Hanney and he stopped ringing in the early 1970's as the family came along. They moved back to Appleton in the mid 1980's and he started ringing again for a few years; he rang a total of 31 peals, most of which were at Appleton. John and his wife Geraldine always attended the annual Appleton "March 4th" dinner until Geraldine died a few years ago, after which he no longer attended.

John was one of life's characters, regularly seen in the village walking his two dogs to collect his daily paper and he was always ready to stop for a chat; he will be missed in the village. John always came over to speak with us in the pub on Friday evenings and although we could never entice him back into the tower, he always wanted to know who had been ringing and what we'd rung. I last spoke to him at lunchtime on 7th March, when he came into the 8 Bells in Eaton, to check if we'd got the March 4th peal (which we had) and to check it was Royal (so nothing wrong with his ears!).

John died of Covid-19 in the John Radcliffe Hospital on 11 April aged 77. His funeral was limited to immediate family only and we were unable to ring for it, however Roger Mitty did toll the tenor as the hearse approached the Church. We hope to be able to ring a quarter peal in memory of him sometime next year.

Michele Winter

Project Resound Completed!

Project Resound, the scheme to install a new bell themed stained glass window with reflective banners in St Michael's, Blewbury, is now complete. The project team is enormously relieved that this was achieved well before the pandemic, because the challenge of fund raising through community events during recent times is hard to imagine. It seems a long time since Bishop Colin of Dorchester dedicated the new window at a special service on January 6th. The Westminster Abbey Company of bellringers, who were so supportive of our project, rang a peal prior to the service: <https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1318762>.

Following this we received several requests from interested groups to visit and admire the artistry, but sadly these have been postponed due to the Covid restrictions. Blewbury had hoped to host the Guild AGM and 8 bell striking competition, but of course this was also cancelled. If you have not yet seen the window and reflective banners, please make a note to visit when restrictions are lifted. At the moment the church is only open on Wednesday mornings (from 10.00 am) and Saturday afternoons (from 2.00 pm), and you will be welcome to visit during those times. In more normal times it will be open every day during daylight hours. The window is illuminated from inside during the evening hours, presenting a beautiful image to passers by and those who come to the Friday practices whenever they will resume!

We would like to thank all branch members who supported this exciting and unique project, we hope it will be a lasting tribute to our own art of ringing bells.

Richard Loyd

Young Ringers' New Year Outing (Horspath – 2nd January 2020)

For the Christmas school holiday outing we visited a light six, Horspath, just outside Oxford. And seventeen school-aged ringers came! They represented seven branches of the ODG, mostly fairly local but some coming from as far as Bloxham, Tilehurst, Faringdon and Clanfield. They were aged between ten and eighteen years old. Almost all the ringing was just by the young ringers, with lots of rounds and call changes, but also some Grandsire, Plain Bob, Stedman and Kent.

The young ringers said how much they liked the Christmas Cribs displayed in the church, (and the mince pies left over from Christmas Day).

And to recognise the season we had a party in the nearby Horspath Hub! We started with some party food kindly provided by Daphne, then played party games and rang carols on handbells. It was good to see the young ringers enjoying each others' company.

The next young ringers outing will be at half term, on Wednesday 19th February, in the Newbury Branch. Put the date in your diary!

Susan Read



Young Ringers' Outing (Newbury area – 19th February 2020)

Our latest Young Ringers outing took place in and around Newbury on a chilly February day in half term. It was a really great day and I got to make lots of new friends who were all excellent ringers. The most fun part of the day was getting to try the bells at three different church towers. We started at Speen, walked on to Shaw (in the wind and rain!) and finished at St Nicholas' in Newbury town centre. St Nicholas had really loud bells which apparently my brother could hear from the other side of the town!

Trying out bells at different towers gave me a bit more confidence when facing new bells. It was really a great day and I am looking forward to future outings.

Bobbi Cookson



What I did in Lockdown.... by Colin Turner (aged 13¾!)

For some years I have been doing some data cleaning on the Pealbase website (Pealbase.co.uk). This site holds full details of all peals rung back to 1933. Initially peals were being entered by scanning old copies of the "Ringing World", however the quality of copies in the immediate post WW2 era was so poor it was not practical to continue this. I started off manually entering some tower bell peals and slowly the records crept back to 1939. Handbell peals were a different matter though, as it required a completely different program to facilitate this as each ringer has two bells. There was a missing period of about six years of handbell peals, which I had been encouraging Andrew Craddock, who develops and maintains the site, to do something about. In March with a long period of no ringing looking likely, Andrew wrote the necessary software and over the course of a few weeks, he and I caught up with the backlog.

Since then, my involvement has changed somewhat. Other volunteers have come forward and are entering peals, to date a further six years of peals have now been entered. I am now undertaking the task of looking at any anomalies that arise. This can be in several ways. For example, a ringer may have claimed their first peal twice. Quite often this highlights the fact that there are two ringers with the same name and all those peals need examining and splitting up. Sometimes this is easy, some Guilds have particularly good records, other times it is not. I am a frequent visitor to the Central Council Library website and the online obituaries resource <https://cccbr.org.uk/resources/library/obit-index/>. A complete DVD collection of back issues of the Ringing World is also a must. The CC Librarian and I and several Association librarians have become regular correspondents.

Sometime the work is very mundane, for example trying to work out if C Smith is the same person as Charles Smith or Charles H Smith. However there have been some interesting “finds” for me. I thought that my knowledge of “famous” ringers was fairly good, but I have encountered some who were amongst the leading ringers of their age, of whom I knew nothing.

One of these was called Arthur E Pegler. My attention was drawn to him as I noticed that there was also an Arthur E Peglar (sic) listed and assumed that they were probably the same person. On closer inspection there were suffixes of Sen and Jun in some peals and I was thus able to determine that a father and son were involved here. The further I dug, the more I discovered. The father’s obituary in the RW was a very low-key affair. It appeared that his only ringing was of a local nature at Bangor in North Wales. It was only hinted at that he once was one of the most accomplished ringers of his time. He learnt to ring in Gloucester and rang in, what was at the time, only the third ever peal of Surprise Royal. He moved to Birmingham and took part in the then record peal of 11,111 Stedman Cinques at St Martin’s. He was a well-known heavy bell ringer and was the first person to attempt to “turn in” Exeter Cathedral tenor to a peal. It must be remembered that at that time the 72 cwt bell would have been on plain bearings and had a massive, fabricated headstock which would have made it much harder going than it is today. I quote from the obituary of Thomas Miller, another Birmingham character of that era:

In about 1904 a Birmingham band went for a peal of Bob Royal at Exeter Cathedral with A. E. Peglar (sic) on the tenor. After about 2½ hours Peglar (sic) was in distress and called on Tom to take the tenor off him while he cooled down a bit. Tom, who was sitting in the tower, stripped down and got on the box while the tenor was at the back. He only rang it for a minute or so. He said afterwards that “he free-wheeled her down to lead, but then the prisoner lay down in the gutter and kicked; he could not get her to the station.”

Married ladies have also been the cause of many duplicate entries. Few have had the footnote to their first post-nuptial peal “first peal since being Miss X”. I have found a ringing friend who is very keen on genealogy and between us we have been able to work out who almost all these newly-weds were since 1967. Often this is easy, as in the case of people with slightly unusual surnames and middle initials, however more common names take a little more investigating. Often footnotes in later peals give clues, e.g. Christening compliment to X, a daughter. There is in fact only one that we have failed to work out their previous identity. If anyone out there can tell me what Shelagh Brown’s maiden name was (her only peal under that name was at Grundisburgh, Suffolk, 16/12/1986) I’d be delighted to hear from you!

The task does get harder the further back in time we go. Levels of literacy were much lower then and, say, William Jones from Sheffield, would have no idea that there were other ringers with the same name in other parts of the Country. A whole host of ringers published as “Chum Mate” await me. There really was a ringer called Mate, C listed as a member of the G&B at Lechlade. I guess that “Chum” was his nickname and he was most likely Charles or similar.

It is all good fun!

Badgers Handbell Group

The Badgers Handbell group is a group of 8-10 ringers from the Old North Berks Branch, Oxford City Branch and Vale of the White Horse Branch who before the Covid-19 pandemic used to meet on Tuesday evenings to learn / practise method ringing on handbells. Progress was steady, if a little slow and we settled into a routine of a quarter peal attempt followed by a general practice each week with occasional extra quarter peal attempts at weekends.

After the national lockdown was announced in March, we were unable to meet in person, two towers were set up on ringing room and the practices moved on line. Initially, the group divided into two and started by ringing basic Minor and Major methods on Tuesday and Friday evenings. As lockdown continued, we started attempting online quarter peals on Monday evenings – at the beginning these were very dependent on internet speeds and it was not unknown for ringers to be removed from the ringing room, or for the lag speeds of internet connections to cause everything to stop. Various upgrades of ringing room have taken place and as the group have advanced more quarter peals have been rung. We have also been joined by other ringers e.g. OUS members and the online group now has 25 members.

After the first lockdown was lifted in early summer, we started meeting face-to-face in small groups in the Grandpont Nature Park, in people's gardens and a small group of 3 on Joe Norton's canal boat. In September, the darker nights meant a rethink of the Monday night quarter peal venue and we started using my large conservatory, which meant that we could socially distance and ring with the windows open. However, this came to a halt when Oxford City moved into Tier 2, although my house is in Cumnor Parish and remained in Tier 1, it was not possible for the people in Tier 2 to meet up with others inside. We are now in the second lockdown and some members of the group are ringing together online most days!

Thanks are due to David Thomas for running most of our practices (and keeping the spreadsheet showing which method(s) everyone is working on at the moment), David and Lindsay Powell for organising the quarter peal and peal attempts and David and Joe Norton for their conducting skills.

All the performances and fantastic achievements the group have done since lockdown began on 23rd March are linked together on Bellboard and can be found at <https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/event.php?id=13204>.

Michele Winter

Blewbury Tenor Bell

The tenor bell at Blewbury was cast in 1825 by John Hunt. Very little is known regarding Blewbury having a previous tenor bell, as relevant church records have been destroyed. We also do not know who paid for the new bell or how otherwise the new bell was funded. There was much celebration in the village including filling the upturned bell with beer for the village to enjoy as it hung from the yew tree in the churchyard. This was a repeat of the alcohol fuelled celebration recorded at the time of the casting of the current 7th bell 73 years earlier. The tradition for pouring beer into new bells does not seem to have been continued for the two Taylor trebles that were added in 1906. I wonder why?

John Hunt was an established blacksmith from Honey Lane in Cholsey. He was clearly an ambitious man as he fancied extending his skills to having a crack (!) at casting church bells. His ambitions were frustrated by his first two attempts at casting a very large bell (19cwt) in Blewbury churchyard. Each were a big disappointment and of unacceptable quality. Being a determined man (or possibly under the cosh from the Blewbury church authorities), he then decided to seek

expert advice from Whites of Appleton for things he should do better for his third attempt. The advice given is not recorded but it must have been very sound, as the Whites expertise remains to this day! Hunt decided that he would include an inscription of 'Nil Despirandum' (Never Despair) in his third and final casting to record his personal feelings about this significant new venture of his. We believe Hunt's mark in history is unique and we know of no other bell with such an inscription. This inscription has recently been incorporated into Rachel Phillips' design for the new stained glass window, along with two deliberate artistic 'faults' in the glass roundel representing the tenor bell.

Obviously John was not put off by his experiences in casting Blewbury tenor, and he lived up to his Nil Despirandum motto by casting two new smaller bells for his own parish church of Cholsey during the following year 1826. There is still much more to uncover about the colourful history of Blewbury bells and their founders but this illustrates the effort put in to making the bell which has given 195 years of loyal service to the village through its weekly call to worship and clock chimes.

Richard Loyd
March 2020

66 Years ringing at Radley

Daphne Pollard started ringing at Radley in 1953, taught by the redoubtable Marie Cross. Sixty six years later she is still ringing at Radley, now as tower captain. In recognition of her continuous devoted service, Radley ringers and PCC created a commemorative plate, and presented it to her at the Christmas dinner. She is seen here with some of the band: from left to right, Charlie Milward, Oliver Hyde, Sally Mulholland, Ann Belcher, Emily Walker, Claire Ward, Daphne Pollard, Lisa Astbury, Maurice Belcher, Audrey Fowlie, Martha Young.

Charlie Milward



QUARTER PEALS

(* Botley is in the Parish of Cumnor)

Cumnor, 17 July 2016. **1260 Grandsire Doubles**: Janette Swaine 1, Jenny A Dyer 2, Andrew J Dyer (C) 3, Guy Matthews 4, Matthew Hall 5, Mark Benstead 6. Farewell to Canon Geoffrey Maughan, Vicar of Cumnor for 9 years - wishing him a long and happy retirement.

Cumnor, 8 March 2017. **1273 Grandsire Triples**: Jenny A Dyer 1, Clare E F Dyer 2, Michele Winter 3, Sylvia M Harrison 4, James W A Dyer 5, Michael J Harrison (C) 6, Andrew J Dyer 7, Matthew Hall 8. Rung in fond and affectionate memory of Barry John Blake long time member of the Cumnor Band, by his friends and fellow ringers on the day of his funeral.

Cumnor, 9 May 2017. **1312 Pudsey Surprise Major**: Mary C Friskney 1, Paul Coad 2, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 3, Susan E M Read 4, Brian J Read 5, Richard H Youdale 6, John G Pusey 7, Nick Clarke (C) 8. First in method and 400th quarter: 3

Cumnor, 1 November 2017. **1260 Grandsire Doubles**: Jill Last 1, Jenny A Dyer 2, Christopher Brown 3, Andrew J Dyer (C) 4, Guy Matthews 5, Matthew Hall 6. First Q: 1. First Q inside: 3.

Cumnor, 8 December 2018. **1312 Double Norwich Court Bob Major**: Celia Stanworth 1, Bjørn E Bradstock 2, Pat Halls 3, Matthew B Johnson 4, Claire C Nicholson 5, Phill A Butler 6, Andrew R Aspland 7, Roy Williams (C) 8.

Appleton, 24 November 2019. **1259 Grandsire Caters**: Sarah J Ockwell 1, Michele Winter 2, Barbara H Payne 3, Sylvia M Harrison 4, Jenny A Dyer 5, Andrew J Dyer 6, Peter H M Day 7, Michael J Harrison (C) 8, Bernard J Stone 9, David C Ockwell 10. By Appleton Sunday Service Band as a very reluctant farewell to our Rector, Rev'd Ken Campbell

Wallingford, 1 December 2019. **1259 Grandsire Triples**: Hayley Fisher 1, Jo Gamester 2, Nuala Clements 3, Katherine Parker 4, Josie Irving 5, Mary Friskney 6, Chris Tuckett (C) 7, Philip Mills 8. For the Advent Carol Service. First of Triples: 1.

Blewbury, 9 December 2019. **1260 Grandsire Triples**: Matthew Phillips 1, David Endacott 2, Graham Stotor 3, Stuart Gibson (C) 4, Josie Irving 5, Gillian Loyd 6, Richard Loyd 7, Peter Cordero 8. Rung on the day to celebrate Cilla Maguire's 85th birthday.

Blewbury, 14 December 2019. **1260 Grandsire Triples**: Malcolm Fairbairn 1, Debbie Greenfield 2, Ellen Bramhill 3, Josie Irving 4, Nick Clarke 5, Mark Vincent (C) 6, Richard Loyd 7, Daniel Dawson 8. Celebrating the life of Cliff Garlick.

Abingdon, St Helen, 15 December 2019. **1272 Plain Bob Minor**: Margaret Brock 1, Susan Read 2, Priscilla Morris 3, Joe Gillett 4, Brian Read 5, David Thomas (C) 6. First of minor: 4. Rung for the carol service at St Nicolas Church.

Abingdon (Ypres Way), 20 December 2019. **1260 Plain Bob Minor**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Zoë Williams 3-4, Joe Norton (C) 5-6. In loving memory of Omer Roucoux, 90, whose funeral was yesterday.

Wallingford, 22 December 2019. **1260 Plain Bob Minor**: Karen Walker 1, Nuala Clements 2, Jo Gamester 3, Mary Friskney 4, Katherine Parker 5, Chris Tuckett (C) 6.

Appleton, 24 December 2019. **1295 Grandsire Caters**: Sarah J Ockwell 1, Barbara H Payne 2, Michele Winter 3, Sylvia M Harrison 4, James W A Dyer 5, Peter J Heritage 6, Peter H M Day 7, Michael J Harrison (C) 8, David C Ockwell 9, Bernard J Stone 10. For Christmas. Rung before the Carol Service

Blewbury, 26 December 2019. **1260 Stedman Triples**: Ellen Bramhill 1, Gillian Loyd 2, Josie Irving 3, Mary Friskney 4, Richard Loyd 5, Mark Vincent 6, Stuart Gibson (C) 7, Matthew Phillips 8. Rung during the Boxing Day walk in celebration of the completion of Project Resound, the installation of a contemporary stained glass window dedicated to bells and bell ringing.

Abingdon (50 Ypres Way), 27 December 2019. **1280 Plain Bob Major**: David L Thomas (C) 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, Zoë Williams 5-6, Lindsay Powell 7-8.

North Moreton, 28 December 2019. **1260 Plain Bob Doubles**: Helen Aitkins 1, Gillian Loyd 2, Christine Kowalczyk 3, Richard Loyd 4, Keith Osborne (C) 5, Rob Nickless 6. Rung to remember family past. 1st quarter at first attempt: 1.

East Hagbourne, 23 January 2020. **1260 Grandsire Triples**: Jill Garlick 1, John H Napper 2, Shirley Goss 3, Laura Makin 4, Jeff Powell 5, John W Napper 6, Alan Foster (C) 7, Daniel Dawson 8. Rung as a compliment to Pat Napper on his 90th birthday.



Wallingford, 26 January 2020. **1259 Grandsire Caters**: Josie Irving 1, Jo Gamester 2, Katherine Parker 3, Mary Friskney 4, Nuala Clements 5, Roy Thorpe 6, Robert Partridge 7, Kevin Beer 8, Chris Tuckett (C) 9, Philip Mills 10. With the best wishes of the rest of the band to Jo on the occasion of her retirement and her 70th birthday.

Abingdon (20 St Amand Drive), 8 May 2020. **1260 Plain Bob Minor**: Susan Read 1-2, Tim Pett 3-4, David Thomas (C) 5-6. Rung at 7pm to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Rung on Tim's front lawn socially distanced by a band of ringers who live on the same road. This performance is linked to the event Central Council of Church Bell Ringers — Ringing Out for Peace VE Day 75th Anniversary.

Abingdon (20 St Amand Drive), 16 June 2020. **1272 Kent Treble Bob Minor**: Susan Read 1-2, Tim Pett 3-4, David Thomas (C) 5-6. Rung to welcome Arthur Frederick Franklin, son of Matt and Becci Franklin born last Saturday.

Cholsey (1 Wallingford Road), 23 June 2020. **1260 Plain Bob Minor**: Mary Friskney 1-2, Chris Tuckett 3-4, Robert Partridge (C) 5-6. First Minor in hand 1-2, first in hand for 33 years 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 4 July 2020. **1376 Spliced Bob Major** (2m): Lindsay Powell 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. Rung after the 7th clapper of the bigger set fell out during a peal attempt. First on the bells and at the address. Rung as a birthday compliment to Mark Curnow.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 4 July 2020. **1312 Plain Bob Major**: Joe Norton 1-2, David L Thomas (C) 3-4, Lindsay Powell 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. First Major on an inside pair: 5-6. 50th together: 1-2 and 3-4.

Abingdon (Abbey Meadows), 6 August 2020, **1260 Spliced Plain Minor (4m)**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, David L Thomas 3-4, Joe Norton (C) 5-6.

Abingdon (Abbey Meadows), 6 August 2020. **1256 Little Bob Royal**: Susan Read 1-2, Tim Pett 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Joe Norton 7-8, Lindsay Powell 9-10. Birthday compliments to Lindsay Powell, Bill Butler and Charlotte Everett for tomorrow.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 29 August 2020. **1488 St Clement's College Bob Major**: Lisa Ryan 1-2, David L Thomas (C) 3-4, Lindsay Powell 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. First in method in hand for all. Rung as a golden wedding anniversary compliment to Susan and Brian Read.

Abingdon (30 St Amand Drive), 30 August 2020. **1260 St Clement's College Bob Minor:** Susan Read 1-2, Tim Pett 3-4, David Thomas (C) 5-6. Rung as a wedding compliment of Jonathan Agg and Catriona Shearer.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 September 2020. **1256 Spliced Bob Royal** (2m): Lindsay Powell 1-2, David L Thomas (C) 3-4, Joe Norton 5-6, Adam D Rebick 7-8, Michele Winter 9-10. 300th together: 1-2 and 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 September 2020. **1280 Kent Treble Bob Royal:** Lindsay Powell 1-2, Adam D Rebick 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Joe Norton 7-8, Michele Winter 9-10. First Kent Royal: 9-10. First Kent Royal on the trebles: 1-2.

Abingdon (30 St Amand Drive), 27 September 2020. **1260 Plain Bob Minor:** Susan Read 1-2, Tim Pett 3-4, David Thomas (C) 5-6. Rung to welcome Ernest Sheldon Paul Atkinson, born on 16th September.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 28 September 2020. **1280 Kent Treble Bob Royal:** Joe Norton 1-2, Lindsay Powell 3-4, Adam D Rebick 5-6, David L Thomas (C) 7-8, Michele Winter 9-10.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 5 October 2020. **1288 Little Bob Major:** Adam D Rebick 1-2, David L Thomas (C) 3-4, John G Pusey 5-6, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 7-8. First Little Bob Major in hand: 7-8. 500th different person to ring a face to face quarter peal with 7-8: 1-2. 150th quarter peal as conductor in 2020.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 5 October 2020. **1312 Kent Treble Bob Major:** David L Thomas (C) 1-2, John G Pusey 3-4, Adam D Rebick 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 October 2020. **1264 Spliced Bob Major** (4m): Lisa Ryan 1-2, Adam D Rebick 3-4, Joe Norton 5-6, David L Thomas (C) 7-8. First in these methods for all.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 October 2020. **1344 Plain Bob Major:** Joe Norton 1-2, Adam D Rebick 3-4, Michele Winter 5-6, David L Thomas (C) 7-8. 50th in 'hand': 3-4. First on 5-6 to major: 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 October 2020. **1272 Oxford Treble Bob Minor:** Lisa Ryan 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6. First in method: 1-2. First on these 6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 19 October 2020. **1280 Kent Treble Bob Royal:** David L Thomas (C) 1-2, Lindsay Powell 3-4, Jonathan C Mills 5-6, Joe Norton 7-8, Michele Winter 9-10.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 19 October 2020. **1325 Spliced Bob Major** (4m): Lindsay Powell 1-2, David L Thomas (C) 3-4, Joe Norton 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. First in these methods: 1-2 and 7-8. Rung as a 25th wedding anniversary compliment to Jeanette and Steve Thomas, parents of the conductor.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 26 October 2020. **1344 Plain Bob Major:** Lindsay Powell 1-2, David L Thomas 3-4, Joe Norton 3-4, Alison T 5-6 Merryweather-Clarke (C) 7-8. First in hand as conductor: 7-8. 800th quarter peal: 7-8. Rung to celebrate the Ruby Wedding Anniversary of Chris & Phil de Cordova.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 26 October 2020. **1264 St Clement's College Bob Major:** Joe Norton 1-2, David L Thomas (C) 3-4, Michele Winter 5-6, Lisa Ryan 7-8. First in method on 5-6: 5-6.

Miscellaneous performance

Blewbury, 15 August 2020. **Rounds and Call Changes:** Gillian Loyd 1, Chris Cook 2, Christine Kowalczyk 3, Michael Winter 4, Richard Loyd 5. Bells 1, 3, 4, 6 and 8 rung after 2 minutes' silence at 11.00am to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VJ Day. First time the bells have been rung since lock down. Also in memory of Christine's aunt, May Coates aged 91 years, who passed away around the time of this performance.

PEALS

(* Botley is in the Parish of Cumnor)

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS, **Cumnor**, 20 August 2016, 2h58, **5056 Ian's Delight Major:** Pauline McKenzie 1, Alison C Waterson 2, John R Martin 3, Charlotte A Boyce 4, John A Foster 5, David Hird 6, Michael E C Mears 7, Ian V J Smith (C) 8.

Cumnor, 4 November 2017, 2h54, **5024 Bristol Surprise Major:** Simon L Edwards 1, Alan M Eyles 2, Beryl R Norris 3, Darran Ricks 4, Peter Bridle 5, John R Ridley 6, Peter G C Ellis (C) 7, Richard L Thumwood 8. First of Bristol: 2.

Cumnor, 3 March 2018, 3h2, **5056 Cambridge Surprise Major:** Jennifer A Dyer 1, Craig M Robertson 2, Andrew J Dyer 3, Cameron A Waters 4, Gwen Rogers 5, Isaac J O'Shea 6, John G Pusey 7, Philip Rogers (C) 8. Rung to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the installation of the original ring of 6 bells, given by Squire Southby, at St Laurence Appleton.

APPLETON SOCIETY, **Appleton**, 9 November 2019, 2h54, **5040 Grandsire Caters:** Michele Winter 1, Christine C Darby 2, Richard L Thumwood 3, Andrew J Dyer 4, Stephen H Stanford (C) 5, Alan M Eyles 6, John H Napper 7, Stuart F Gibson 8, Robin O Hall 9, Simon J Ridley 10. Rung half-muffled in memory of the fallen and to mark the 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 13 November 2019, 2h37, **5152 Kiriath Delight Major:** Timothy G Pett 1, Beryl R Norris 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Robert J Crocker 4, Cynthia E Howell 5, Colin M Turner 6, John C Sheppard 7, Alan M Eyles 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Sunningwell**, 15 November 2019, 2h41, **5040 Surprise Minor (14m):** Nicola J Turner 1, Robert J Crocker 2, Timothy G Pett 3, Richard L Thumwood 4, Colin M Turner 5, Peter G C Ellis (C) 6. A Golden wedding Anniversary compliment today to Brenda and Brian Thomas, both ringers at this tower. 500th peal together 1, 2, 5 & 6.

SOUTH NORTHANTS SOCIETY, **Abingdon**, 16 November 2019, 3h5, **5080 Bristol Surprise Royal:** Julie A Haseldine 1, Nicola J Turner 2, Stephen H Stanford 3, Alan M Eyles 4, Colin M Turner 5, Michael J Dew 6, Andrew Haseldine (C) 7, Christopher C Stokes 8, Richard L Thumwood 9, Richard A Horne 10. In memory of Cliff Garlick. Circled the tower on the new bells – 5.

Chilton, 17 November 2019, 2h28, **5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (41m):** Jonathan C Mills 1, Hazel M Rothera 2, Rachel Croft 3, Craig M Robertson 4, David L Thomas (C) 5, Emma Stanford 6. First of the 41 inside: 5. First of spliced as conductor. Rung by a St Aldate's practice night band. Rung in memory of Rosemary Rolls.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 24 November 2019, 2h34, **5024 Easton-in-Gordano Delight Major**: Robert J Crocker 1, Nicola J Turner 2, Charlotte A Boyce 3, Alan M Eyles 4, Colin M Turner 5, Richard L Thumwood 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Claire F Roulstone 8. Rung as a compliment to Ian and Margaret Ann Crichton moving from Easton-in-Gordano after 50 years in residence. 500th peal in the tower.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 27 November 2019, 2h38, **5124 India Alliance Major**: Nicola J Turner 1, Alan M Eyles 2, Beryl R Norris 3, Richard L Thumwood 4, Claire F Roulstone 5, Robert J Crocker 6, Peter G C Ellis (C) 7, Colin M Turner 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 30 November 2019, 2h35, **5130 Clifford Alliance Major**: Cynthia E Howell 1, Claire F Roulstone 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Colin M Turner 4, Richard L Thumwood 5, John C Sheppard 6, Robert J Crocker 7, Ian Roulstone 8. The first peal in the method. Rung on the morning of the service to celebrate the life of Cliff Garlick of East Hagbourne.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 10 December 2019, 2h35, **5040 Pinvin Alliance Major**: Nicola J Turner 1, Colin M Turner 2, Robert J Crocker 3, Cynthia E Howell 4, Simon L Edwards 5, Richard L Thumwood 6, Alan M Eyles 7, Simon P Rogers (C) 8.

NON-ASSOCIATION, **Appleton**, 14 December 2019, 2h55, **5040 London No 3 Surprise Royal**: Sally A Brown 1, Jack E Page (C) 2, Margaret H Ross 3, David C Bath 4, Alan M Eyles 5, Ian Roulstone 6, Peter G C Ellis 7, Adam S Greenley 8, Benjamin D Constant 9, Claire F Roulstone 10. 200th peal: 3. 100th peal this year: 5. With thanks to Maggie for standing in at very short notice.

NON-ASSOCIATION, **Drayton**, 14 December 2019, 2h40, **5024 Spliced Surprise Major (6m)**: Nicola J Turner 1, Adam S Greenley 2, Daniel J Page 3, Claire F Roulstone 4, Colin M Turner 5, Peter G C Ellis 6, Jack E Page (C) 7, Benjamin D Constant 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 15 December 2019, 2h36, **5152 Gainsborough Surprise Major**: Colin M Turner 1, Charles E J Morrish 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Robert J Crocker 4, Timothy G Pett 5, Simon L Edwards 6, Alan M Eyles 7, Claire F Roulstone 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Harwell**, 22 December 2019, 3h03, **5160 Quorn Alliance Major**: Nicola J Turner 1, Beryl R Norris 2, Robert J Crocker 3, Colin M Turner 4, Claire F Roulstone 5, Christopher J Pickford 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Peter G C Ellis 8. Rung prior to the village Carol Service.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **West Hanney**, 28 December 2019, 3h15, **5040 Surprise Minor (7m)**: Alan M Eyles 1, Nicola J Turner 2, Richard L Thumwood 3, Robert J Crocker 4, Colin M Turner 5, Peter G C Ellis (C) 6.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 28 December 2019, 2h42, **5130 Truro Alliance Major**: Timothy G Pett 1, Robert J Crocker 2, Cynthia E Howell 3, Nicola J Turner 4, Alan M Eyles 5, John C Sheppard 6, Peter G C Ellis (C) 7, Colin M Turner 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 29 December 2019, 2h35, **5088 Yorkshire Surprise Major**: Michele Winter 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Debby M Talbott 3, Colin M Turner 4, John C Sheppard 5, Stuart P B Talbott 6, Richard L Thumwood 7, Nicola J Turner (C) 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 2 January 2020, 2h32, **5040 St Blaise Society Alliance Major**: Cynthia E Howell 1, Richard L Thumwood 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Timothy G Pett 4, Robert J Crocker 5, John C Sheppard 6, Colin M Turner 7, Claire F Roulstone 8. The first peal in the method. The 1000th peal for the Society. The Oxford Diocesan Bell fund has benefitted from peal fees in excess of £3400 with an additional £100 being donated to other Association Bell Funds.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY COMPANY OF RINGERS, **Blewbury**, 7 January 2020, 3h, **5040 Stedman Triples**: Nigel Thomson 1, David C Brown (C) 2, David J Dearnley 3, Nigel C Smith 4, Jeremy R Pratt 5, David P Hilling 6, Mark E R Gill 7, John I White 8. Celebrating the completion of a magnificent new bell themed stained glass West Window in this church, and rung prior to the Service of Dedication by Colin, Bishop of Dorchester.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 8 January 2020, 2h31, **5130 Eastwood Alliance Major**: John C Sheppard 1, Beryl R Norris 2, Colin M Turner 3, Cynthia E Howell 4, Nicola J Turner 5, Robert J Crocker 6, Timothy G Pett 7, Peter G C Ellis (C) 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 9 January 2020, 2h27, **5040 Vesta Tilley Alliance Major**: Cynthia E Howell 1, Simon W Edwards 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Beryl R Norris 4, Colin M Turner 5, John C Sheppard 6, Richard L Thumwood 7, Claire F Roulstone 8. 400th peal – 2.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 24 January 2020, 2h29, **5040 Kite Alliance Major**: Simon W Edwards 1, Colin M Turner 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Beryl R Norris 4, Timothy G Pett 5, John C Sheppard 6, Claire F Roulstone 7, Robert J Crocker 8. The first peal in the method, rung previously to a quarter peal on 13/6/2016. Circled the tower – 1.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 26 January 2020, 2h28, **5120 Xiquena Castle Surprise Major**: Timothy G Pett 1, Nicola J Turner 2, Cynthia E Howell 3, Richard L Thumwood 4, Charlotte A Boyce 5, Colin M Turner 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Peter G C Ellis 8.

GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL ASSOCIATION, **Appleton**, 1 February 2020, 2h39, **5057 Grandsire Caters**: Colin M Turner 1, Hilda C Ridley 2, Richard B Pullin 3, John R Ridley 4, Sarah B Ewbank 5, Darran Ricks (C) 6, John H Napper 7, Alison R Williams 8, Christopher J Pickford 9, Richard L Thumwood 10. 50th Grandsire Caters as conductor.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 2 February 2020, 2h33, **5056 Yorkshire Surprise Major**: Colin M Turner 1, Nicola J Turner (C) 2, Beryl R Norris 3, Alan M Eyles 4, John C Sheppard 5, Simon L Edwards 6, Alison R Williams 7, Richard L Thumwood 8. For Patronal Festival. Wishing Peter Sawyer a speedy recovery. The 500th peal on these bells.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 9 February 2020, 2h37, **5152 Kenilworth Castle Surprise Major**: Cynthia E Howell 1, Charlotte A Boyce 2, Richard L Thumwood 3, Nicola J Turner 4, Timothy G Pett 5, John C Sheppard 6, Colin M Turner 7, John R Martin (C) 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 20 February 2020, 2h31, **5040 Faringdon Alliance Major**: Beryl R Norris 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Timothy G Pett 4, Colin M Turner 5, John C Sheppard 6, Richard L Thumwood 7, Claire F Roulstone 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 26 February 2020, 2h33, **5040 Beacham Alliance Major**: Simon L Edwards 1, Colin M Turner 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Beryl R Norris 4, Michael J Dew 5, John C Sheppard 6, Robert J Crocker 7, Claire F Roulstone 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Sunningwell**, 28 February 2020, 2h41, **5040 Surprise Minor (7m)**: Colin M Turner 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Nicola J Turner 3, Adam R Crocker 4, Richard L Thumwood 5, Robert J Crocker (C) 6.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 29 February 2020, 2h27, **5040 Quinten Alliance Major**: Robert J Crocker 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Nicola J Turner (C) 3, Colin M Turner 4, John R Martin 5, Adam R Crocker 6, Alan M Eyles 7, Peter G C Ellis 8. The first peal in the method.

APPLETON SOCIETY, **Appleton**, 7 March 2020, 2h54, **5040 Cambridge Surprise Royal**: Gwen Rogers 1, Michele Winter 2, Julie A Haseldine 3, Andrew Haseldine 4, Jennifer A Dyer 5, David C Ockwell 6, Christine C Darby 7, Stephen H Stanford 8, Bernard G North 9, Philip Rogers (C) 10. First of Royal: 5. On March the 4th Day for the 202nd anniversary of the bells.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 15 March 2020, 2h30, **5040 Xtraction Alliance Major**: Nicola J Turner 1, Peter G C Ellis 2, Charlotte A Boyce 3, Beryl R Norris 4, Richard L Thumwood 5, John C Sheppard 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Colin M Turner 8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 25 July 2020, 2h34, **5096 Spliced Bob Major (2m)**: Lindsay Powell 1–2, Joe D R Norton 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6, Michele Winter 7–8. First of Plain and Little Major for all. First at the address. First on the bells.

OXFORD SOCIETY, **Botley*** (2 Long Close), 26 September 2020, 2h57, **5028 Spliced Bob Royal (2m)**: Lindsay Powell 1–2, Adam D Rebick 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6, Joe D R Norton 7–8, Michele Winter 9–10. First Royal: 1-2 and 7-8. First Royal in hand: 3-4, 5-6 and 9-10.



Photo taken at the Young Ringers Outing on 2 January 2020 (see p.17)



Photo taken at the Young Ringers Outing on 2 January 2020 (see p.17)



Photo taken at the Young Ringers Outing on 2 January 2020 (see p.17)

Old North Berks website

The Old North Berks website can be found at www.onb.odg.org.uk. The website is a valuable tool providing up to date information and a means of contacting the branch officers and the towers within the branch. It should be the first port of call for details about branch events. Why not visit it now and add it to your favourites. If you spot any incorrect or missing information then please contact the webmaster at webmaster@onb.odg.org.uk.

Or would you like to include something on the website. Why wait for the Branch Newsletter to report a special event in your tower. Maybe there has been a special birthday or a first quarter or you have been on a tower outing. Just email the webmaster with the details and maybe a photo. Let's hear about these events as they happen.

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NEXT ISSUE

Deadline for copy for the next issue in June 2021 is 20th April 2021. But please don't wait until then, send your news, pictures, and quarters in as they happen.

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Claire's winning entry (promoting ringing?) for the 'Christmas in a Box' competition, held by the DAMASCUS Group at Sutton Courtenay in December 2019. (See the Steventon Tower Talk report on p.11)