



Old North Berks Branch Newsletter

No: 158

December 2021

Branch BBQ — 11th September 2021



Now, which shall I try first? The men trying to decide on which pudding.



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Editorial

Welcome to the Winter 2021 issue of the Branch Newsletter.

It seems that a number Towers in our Branch are returning to 'normal' ringing – let us hope that nothing stops this continuing.

You will find later in the Newsletter, an article by Jenny Dyer, our 'Branch Recovery Champion' about 'Ringing Recovery'.

Congratulations to Alban Walker of Radley on ringing his first quarter at the first attempt.

Sadly the Branch has lost four members since the June Newsletter: Helen Diserens (Wallingford), Roy Thorpe (Brightwell), and Tim Harrison (Mike and Sylvia's son) and John Drewitt (both from Appleton). I am sure they will all be missed in the ringing chambers. Obituaries for Helen and Roy can be found on page 13.

Unfortunately the Barn Dance planned for Saturday 13th November, had to be postponed again and is now booked for Saturday 12th November 2022.

It just remains for me to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Daphne Pollard

Chairman's Report

I hope that this newsletter finds you and your families all well. 2021, for obvious reasons, has been a very challenging year with our eventual slow return to ringing. It was encouraging to see many of you at the recent, very well organised and attended, branch striking competition at Steventon. Well done to all who took part: a fitting tribute to the memory of Claire Ward and all that she did for ringing in our branch and beyond.

I would like to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Hopefully we can look forward to a fuller programme in 2022.

Rob Nickless

Secretary's Report

So far we have not held any branch practices since the start of the pandemic. At the recent autumn Branch Committee meeting it was agreed that in the New Year we will resume evening branch practices, afternoon practices and the alternate months surprise major practices. I have arranged a provisional programme from January to June 2022 and it is included in this Newsletter. These practices will only be advertised within Old North Berks Branch at the moment. Please note that the 2022 AGM will be held by Zoom meeting in the evening of 19th March. The 6-bell striking competition will take place at North Moreton in the morning on the same day.

Recently ten new members have been elected to the Guild: Ball (Childrey), Gill Murray, Rebecca Pocock and Cameron Watt (Cholsey), Gary Sumption (Letcombe Bassett), Katy Taylor (North Moreton), Bob Mannix (Steventon), Andy Bennett and Jenny Bennett (Wantage), Seth Christopher Hutchinson (West Hendred). Since the last Newsletter sadly Helen Diserens of Wallingford and Roy Thorpe of Brightwell have both passed away and they will be greatly missed throughout the Branch.

It was decided to cancel the branch outing this year; however the barbecue took place at the home of Stuart and Naomi Gibson on Saturday, 11th September. Over fifty members attended and it was a great opportunity to catch up with each other for the first time since the pandemic began. As usual the food was excellent and our thanks go to Stuart and Naomi for hosting the event.

The postponed 6-bell striking competition was held on 25th September at Steventon, and it was followed by a service remembering Claire Ward (former tower captain of Steventon) and a traditional ringers' tea outdoors. Six teams entered the striking competition and the results were: 1st Wallingford (73 faults), 2nd Wantage (83 faults), 3rd Steventon (88 faults), 4th Blewbury (90 faults), 5th Abingdon (110 faults), 6th North Moreton (130 faults). Thanks go to Martin Rice of Newbury and Mark Robbins of Hungerford for judging the competition, Jack Jarvis and Rev. Phil Sutton for the service, John H Napper for playing the organ, and the Steventon ringers and friends for providing a superb tea. There was no 6-bell Guild striking competition in October because of the fuel shortage.

The barn dance and supper at Harwell Village Hall, which was postponed from November 2020 to 13th November 2021, has been further postponed. It is now scheduled to take place on Saturday, 12th November 2022. More information will follow when available, but please make a note of this date in next year's diary and let's hope that Covid restrictions don't get in the way yet again – and it's third time lucky!

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).

We are planning 'Ringing with Refreshments' at Steventon on 1st January from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Hopefully this will make a promising start to the New Year and I hope to see many of you there.

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

Gill Loyd

Ringling Masters' Ramblings

It is a great relief to see many bands across the branch cautiously returning to 'normal' ringing, although some towers remain silent or are only ringing in a restricted way because of local concerns, ventilation problems etc. We are hoping that the positive trend will continue, and ringing as we knew it will be restored without further lockdown or other measures during the coming winter. We are most grateful for the work of Jenny Dyer in her Ringing Recovery Champion role, something which potentially will become important to some struggling towers during the coming year.

You will have received Central Council instructions about ringing in the event of the death of our Monarch, Queen Elizabeth. This is codenamed Operation London Bridge and is a sombre reminder that bell ringers will be called upon to respond rapidly and potentially at short notice, for a solemn time of national mourning. The instructions are quite specific and detailed. There is an instruction for fully muffled (apart from the tenor at backstroke) or half muffled ringing for the announcement and for services, and not to hold practices before the funeral. At the time of Proclamation for Prince Charles there is a requirement for open ringing, which might require some complicated logistics with muffles, etc. We encourage all tower captains and correspondents to keep these instructions to hand and to review them with your local bands as well as your clergy, so that there will be no confusion when the time comes. We sincerely hope that this day is still a way off, but it is important to have your plans ready for when it comes.

On a positive note, the long awaited BBQ was very well attended with almost record numbers of members from around the branch enjoying delicious food and convivial company under the canopy of the gala tent in Stuart and Naomi's garden. We really appreciate their hard work and generosity which makes this such an enjoyable social event each time. It was also very pleasing to have six teams competing in the Striking Competition at Steventon, including two novice call change teams who rang extremely well. We hope that this will encourage yet more teams to have a go in future competitions. Our thanks go to all who came or took part, the tower captains who managed to gather a team, and of course the welcome, service and amazing tea provided by Steventon ringers and friends. It was also a wonderful opportunity to share many fond memories of Claire Ward, she would have been very proud. Our branch really enjoys a social, especially when food is involved! Talking of which, don't forget the next food and ringing event on New Year's Day, also at Steventon!

The wedding of Jeanette Davey and Tim Owen in Stratford Upon Avon was a wonderful sunny occasion. There was a lot of ringing, singing, river punting with handbells, speeches worthy of the best comedy, and of course food and wine in a beautiful riverside setting. We wish Jeanette and Tim great happiness for their future in Steventon. Tim has already become embedded in the ringing social world, and we wonder if one day he might venture onto the ropes under Jeanette's watchful eye!

The committee meeting concluded that it was the right time to begin organising some branch practices from the beginning of 2022, and Gill has arranged these for the first six months (see calendar of events in this issue). We appreciate the welcome from the various towers and encourage members to come to these friendly practices.

Following the highly successful Long Wittenham project, no major restorations are currently active within the branch. However, there are some very early indications that the long silent six Whitechapel bells at Culham may become a possible project in the near future. Watch this space, and if it does become a viable project, I am sure that the branch will rally in support as it always does. It would be an ambitious but most worthwhile project.

And now for the best bit of Ramblings, the joke from Philip!

Why did the hipster burn his lips?

Answer: Because he didn't wait for his coffee to become 'cool'.

Richard Loyd and Philip Roberts

TOWER TALK

Appleton

As most of you will know, Appleton has 10 bells (on two tiers) in a very small tower and only room for a maximum of 12 people in the ringing room. Following the lifting of restrictions in July, we have taken a cautious approach in returning to ringing because we have an "older band" and still have some members shielding.

With help from ringers from other towers we did ring 8 bells for two weddings in July, and on what was probably the hottest day of the year with no breeze, had some preliminary CO₂ and oxygen measurements taken. Since then we've rung the "odd six" (1, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10) or less bells for the twice monthly Evensong services, but have not been able to ring for morning services due to some ringers being committed elsewhere, only three (or less) ringers are available; we are not practising at the current time.

In October, with help from some ringers from the Oxford Society, we attempted two quarter peals of Grandsire Caters, one (successful) on the evening of Tim Harrison's funeral and the other (unsuccessful) before the memorial service for John Drewitt who died of Covid in April 2020. Simon Bond brought his machine to measure CO₂ levels during these attempts; these readings (again with all the doors and windows open) were much better than those in July and indicate that a return to normal ringing is possible, once tower members are able to stop shielding. We are also approaching the PCC to see if anything can be done about increasing the tower ventilation in general, as it always gets very hot when we are ringing during the summer months.

Michele Winter

Blewbury



Following the relaxation of restrictions in July, we have returned to almost normal ringing and its lovely to see everyone in person again. Most of our band are back, albeit a little rusty to start with, and we have a few new recruits ready to begin, or return to, ringing soon. We are now practising every Friday and ringing for services, weddings and funerals.

And, as towers gradually welcome back visitors, we have ventured out to ring elsewhere too, sometimes making up the numbers for service ringing. It was good to meet up with others from the branch at the striking competition in September, and to actually go on a ringing outing in October. Our duck race, postponed from April last year, finally went ahead in September and was a great success. Things are looking up for the moment and we are looking forward to being able to hold our Christmas dinner again this year.

Christine Kowalczyk

Cholsey

We are jogging along happily at Cholsey.

The ringers from Aston Tirrold still visit on a Wednesday evening, which is lovely.

Good News! We have two new recruits Frances and Anna who can now handle a bell and are advancing towards the complex territory of raising and lowering.

Three new members were elected to the ODG. Opposite are photos of them.

John Money Celebration Day

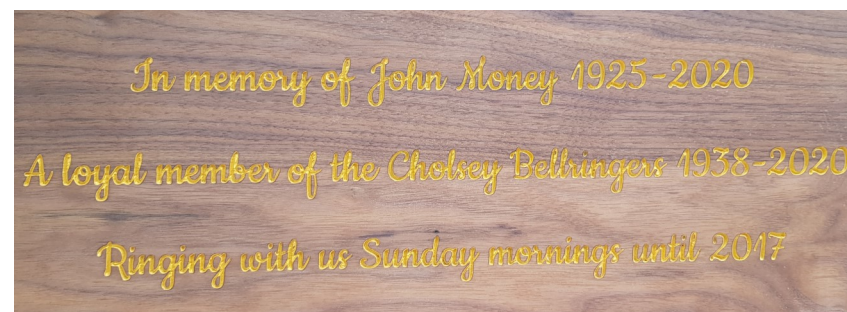
On 14th July (Johns Birthday), we held a Celebration Gathering at the Church to honour his memory. His children Ruth and Richard had gifted a plaque which we have placed in the Belfry beneath a collections of historic Bellringers photos which John put together to mark his 50 years of ringing.

Many old and young friends of John attended the Tea Party and Andrew the Vicar said a few kind words as the plaque was handed over.

A Quarter Peal was rung by Jill Garlick, Gill Loyd, Robert Partridge, Chris Tuckett, Richard Loyd and Geoff Cook (details are on page 20).

Geoff Cook and Richard Partridge rang a Peal of Grandsire with John at St Marys, Cholsey in 1965 (they go back a long way)!

Jenny Jeskins



New members from Cholsey:



Gill Murray and Cameron Watt



Rebecca Pocock

East Hagbourne

The bells have been rung regularly for Evensong on Sundays and up until recently we could just ring four bells. At the end of June we were given permission to ring up to six bells for 45 minutes as long as we wear masks and the tower is well ventilated. The bells were rung for the Confirmation Service on Sunday 13th June in the morning and again for Evensong at 5:30. We hope to ring the bells for the morning service on the fourth Sunday of the month in July, August and September at 10:00. The bells will continue to be rung for Evensong on Sundays.

On Saturday 19th June a small group of us got together to give the tower a good late spring clean. It was nice to get together for a chat and a laugh (in masks) while tidying up the ringing room and cleaning the stairs. A good job done by all!

We are now back ringing the bells on a regular basis. We have been ringing the bells for Evensong for a little while now but we have resumed our practice nights on a Tuesday evening. From September we were given permission to ring all eight bells for our normal practice time from 7:30 until 9:00. The morning service in July also included a wedding which was lovely, the bells were rung before and after the service. There were two morning services a month in September, October and November.

We rang the bells for eight weddings, the ones in May sadly only had four of our bells being rung but we rang all eight bells for the other six weddings.

Our Tuesday night practices are going well with many of our new ringers returning on a regular basis along with our regulars. Our practices are busy but everyone has a good ring and it is nice to see a buzzing tower again.

We held our Quarterly meeting on Tuesday 5th October in the tower which was Chaired by Fr Jason.

Sunday 24th October was “Ringer’s Sunday” and there was a special evensong at 6:00 to celebrate this special day. The service was taken by Andrew Kaye, a licenced Lay Reader who is also a bellringer. This lovely service was followed by refreshments.

On Remembrance Sunday our bells were rung half muffled for evensong at 6:00 and we left the muffles on for the Tuesday night practice to give everyone the experience of ringing bells with the muffles on.

There was a quarter peal attempt by an all Hagbourne band in memory of Cliff Garlick on Wednesday 10th November.

Handbell practices have started ready for the Christmas Tree Festival which is in the church again this year and runs from Friday 10th December, Grand Opening until Saturday 18th December.

Shirley Goss

Milton

Ringling has now almost resumed to pre pandemic levels. We are once again practicing and ringling for services when numbers permit. There has been only one wedding this year and that did not require bells. We are fortunate that we have an external door which when the main church door is also open permits a good through draught. As may be seen elsewhere in the newsletter we have been able to ring a number of peals.

The highlight so far was our outing on 31st August, when five towers in the Newbury branch were visited. Hampstead Norreys was the first port of call, followed by Shaw and Kintbury. We then had alfresco tea and cake in the churchyard before moving on to Chaddleworth and Farnborough. Rather mysteriously the fourth bell at this tower was tied, but after tracking down the keys all was well.

We are pleased that our two young learners have retained their enthusiasm for ringling and have returned. Rather than drop them back in at the deep end Nicola and I held a week of short practice sessions just for them to brush up on their handling before they attended a normal practice night.

One thing that has changed is that we no longer go to the pub after practice. We have been having tea and cake in church instead and this seems to have been universally appreciated. Thanks are due to Daphne for a seemingly never ending supply of cake!



We were delighted to learn that Bob Mannix had taken the plunge and decided to learn to ring. He started at Drayton, but following resumption of Scouting commitments on Monday evenings, has been continuing his training at Milton. Another regular visitor to practice is Carrie Bardsley, who now she is able to sit up in her pram is much happier as she can see what is going on!

Colin Turner

North Moreton

Bell ringers have met on Mondays for practice, since the easing of 'lockdown', but had one evening with a difference in October. It was the culmination of our horticultural efforts during the summer.

Supplied by the Nickless family, every ringer grew (or attempted to) a very large pumpkin and a very tall/big sunflower. Competition was fierce. Methods varied. Some ringers were very open about their growing tips and ideas and others deeply secretive. As both my plants were in the front of my house (no sun at the back) I could have no secrets at all, but this was no worry until my one and only, beautiful pumpkin, went completely mouldy and it and I, were forced to withdraw. Fortunately others were successful and there was a brilliant pumpkin display.

Congratulations go to Helen from Blewbury, whose magnificent specimen measured 80cm circumference and weighed 5.3Kg. Even more impressive was that this was one of 16 that Helen had successfully grown – that's just showing off Helen! We do know her secret of success was horse manure and who can complete with that! We have since tasted Helen's pumpkin cake, which was beautifully moist and very tasty.

I did win the prize for the sunflower. It was not the biggest flower, but at the height of 150cm it was the tallest and it had eight flowers. The seeds have been feeding the birds since.

Great fun and thank you Rob, Jo and family for inspiring us to do something, we have not attempted before.

Beryl Jones



Pumpkin judging.



Radley

There is little to report this time other than that we have virtually returned to ringing 'normally'. We ring for the 11am Service on a Sunday and also hold our usual Thursday evening practices. We also rang for four weddings during the summer.

We are lucky in that we have only lost one ringer – Audrey's fingers have got worse and, although she was eager to try ringing, found that she was not able to grip the rope sufficiently and had to reluctantly decide that she would no longer be able to ring. All of our other ringers have returned and are gradually getting back to ringing the methods which we were able to ring before 'lockdown'. Also, we have a new recruit, Fiona, who came in to the Church one Sunday morning and said she was interested to learn.

Alban, having grown a lot and is much stronger, is now making great strides – he will 'hunt' the Treble to whatever plain doubles methods we ring, and is also able to ring Pl. Bob Doubles 'inside' and at present is learning the 'bobs'. We rang a half-muffled Quarter Peal on Remembrance Sunday, with Alban ringing the Treble faultlessly. We always have the muffles on for the Thursdays before and after Remembrance Sunday so that we can get some practice and enjoy the sound of half-muffled ringing.

We are all looking forward to our Tower Christmas Meal at the local pub on 3rd December.

Daphne Pollard

Wallingford

Having "met" (virtually) all through the various lockdowns and become increasingly adventurous at Ringing Room (and some using it to learn new methods), we finally resumed ringing in the tower at Wallingford with "Freedom Day" in June. Our Risk Assessment initially required us to wear masks all the time we were in the ringing chamber; and the acquisition of a suction fan (with a long "tail" to the staircase outside and the door open) has hopefully increased the ventilation in the ringing chamber. (We have since relaxed the masks rule to allow people to unmask when actually ringing, on the basis that we are not then "face to face" with each other.) We have thus been able to resume ringing for Sunday services and for our Thursday practices. The Risk Assessment has stated that we will try to limit overall numbers in the room at any one time to a maximum of "12-13", but this has not been a constraint so far. We have also asked if visitors could enquire before coming: this has worked very well, and everyone who wishes has been able to come and ring. We are all still slightly "rusty", and change ringing is still a challenge, even for some of the "easier" methods. Nevertheless, it has been great to get back to ring again. It is very nice too to have had more than one positive response from people in the town, saying how good it is to hear the bells again!

Sadly, in July Helen Diserens died. She had a massive stroke from which she never regained consciousness and died peacefully in the JR. A fuller tribute is on page 13. Helen had been our Ringing Master and Tower Captain for some years in the past, and she remained a wonderfully committed and faithful member of the band for as long as all of us in Wallingford can remember. She is sorely missed. We were able to ring a quarter peal the day after she died; and we were able to ring before and after her memorial service in Wallingford. On a more positive note, Wendy Simon has recently moved to live in Wallingford and has joined us to ring regularly. We are delighted to have her as a member of our band.

We have rung three quarter peals since resuming ringing (details elsewhere). We were also able to ring as part of the national initiative just before the start of the COP 26 meeting in Glasgow. In addition we were able to field a team for the Branch striking competition at Steventon in October.

Chris Tuckett

West Hanney

Like many other Towers we have been struggling to recruit new Ringers in an attempt to maintain our dwindling band. Sometimes on a Sunday we have only been able to ring three bells before the service, but the Church have still expressed their gratitude for our efforts.

We lost our Tower Captain several months ago when Rosi Rollings left the area and moved to Wales. Jean Hazard has had to stop ringing due to wrist and hand problems and consequently decided it was logical to resign as our tower secretary. We wish her well and thank her for her many years of service to St. James Ringers. Sadly Sonia Wall also had to give up for similar reasons.

We are now operating as a sort of committee with myself acting as the contact point. Not exactly traditional but at least we are keeping the bells ringing! We are very grateful to Marcham Ringers, especially Berice Large, for helping us out at Wedding rings, of which we have had three in the past three months.

We are soon losing another valuable ringer, Rob Haisman-Smith, our current steeple keeper, who is moving from the village shortly and we wish him, Nick and Penny every happiness in their new home.

We put a short 'appeal for new Ringers' in our local publication, Hanney News in September, but had very little interest shown.

Colin Turner brought a peal team to St. James the Great on November 5th, the first full peal to be rung in Hanney for some time. We have subsequently had many compliments from villagers who enjoyed the extended ringing of the bells.

At the time of writing we are planning to ring before the Hanney Royal British Legion parade to the Sunday Remembrance Service on November 14th, and of course again for the Christmas services, albeit on a reduced number of bells.

From the remaining Hanney Ringers, a happy and joyful Christmas and New Year to all.

Chris Surman

Badgers Handbell Group

During the spring and summer, we continued with our online practices and, when the weather improved began to ring outside in the open air. In July, we visited Stanford-in-the-Vale to ring with Zoë Williams (who is only able to ring electronically using her computer), it was nice to meet her face-to-face and to ring with her; we were also invited to ring for the celebrations of the 400th Anniversary of the Oxford Botanic Gardens. Although the virtual quarter peals and quarter peals rung in the City and Vale of the White Horse Branches are not reported in this newsletter, they can be found at <https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/event.php?id=13413>.

The restrictions on ringing tower bells have been gradually lifted over the summer and we have been able to ring tower bells once more and so our "in person" practices have reduced to once a week and we have now moved these indoors now the weather has got colder. This has meant that we have restricted the numbers inside to no more than 6 at any time – David and Lindsay have become very good at juggling people and bands to achieve this.

Lindsay, Lisa, and I have now started conducting quarter peals "in hand" and are still panicking(!) but are now learning different compositions – thanks are due to David and Joe, who "keep an eye on us!" It will also be evident from the quarter peals that the group have also been extending our method repertoire and also ringing quarters of spliced plain methods; the "clever ones" have progressed to spliced surprise minor!

Michele Winter

USEFUL WEBLINKS & CONTACTS

Oxford Diocesan Guild—Old North Berks Branch

<http://onb.odg.org.uk/live/>

Branch Ringing School

<https://ringingteachers.org/about/art-hubs/branch-ringing-school>

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

<https://cccbr.org.uk/>

Association of Ringing Teachers

<https://ringingteachers.org/>

Tower Talk 21—the newsletter by ringers, for ringers

<https://ringingteachers.org/news/articles/tower-talk-21-newsletter-ringers-ringers>

Survival and Recovery Toolbox

<https://ringingteachers.org/survival-and-recovery-toolbox/Help>

Branch Recovery Champion:

Jenny Dyer

Email: jadyr55@hotmail.com

RINGING RECOVERY

Since the last newsletter, the Central Council for Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR), in conjunction with the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART), held a Recovery Convention from 8th–13th May 2021, with presentations focussing on ringing recovery, to which you may have attended. In addition, several online Recovery Champion National Network Meetings have taken place, and most recently with recommendations to be reviewed by the Joint Steering Committee, including:

- ◆ Recruitment and retention — to discuss a possible national recruitment campaign in 2022 and specific resources that might be required of the CCCBR and ART.
- ◆ Publicity — In addition to the national recruitment campaign, to refresh publicity and education materials, and provide information for joint working.
- ◆ Training — Not only the training of new ringers, but also ringing teachers, with courses provided by the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART).
- ◆ General — To look at partnership with Guilds and Associations, to support with publicity and recruitment.

Returning to Branch level, the outcome of the Guild Survey, carried out in April 2021, revealed the following data from the 20 towers responding:

- ◆ 5 towers identified new recruits post-lockdown, giving potentially 8 new ringers;
- ◆ 13 towers would be short of a full complement of ringers post lockdown;
- ◆ 8 towers had concerns about the ageing profile of their bands;
- ◆ 70% were concerned that one or more members of their band might not return to ringing, equating to 23 ringers.

Whilst this is now historical data, the survey results provide an indication of the support towers may need in the future, to ensure ringing thrives in our local communities. A follow-up 'Zoom' meeting to 'Tales of Lockdown and Beyond' for Tower Captains/Tower Representatives and Branch Officers, will therefore take place **on Sunday, 21st November at 7pm**, entitled 'Pathways to Recovery', with the core aim to share current challenges and then working collaboratively to resolve these difficulties, and agree a plan to take forward.

Jenny Dyer, Branch Recovery Champion

Helen Diserens

The Wallingford ringers miss Helen.

Helen was associated with Wallingford since the family first moved here in 1973, when they rang at Brightwell, Reading and Wallingford. It was only after Jim retired in 1997 that they turned their focus to Wallingford. Indeed Helen took a turn at being ringing master at one stage.

Helen had a very long and broad experience of ringing – she was first elected to the ODG in 1955 – and she would encourage us, from novice ringers to the more experienced, at all stages, passing on useful tips she had gathered over time. She attended branch events whenever she could and enjoyed going on ringing outings.

But it isn't just for her ringing skills we shall miss Helen. She would often come up the tower with bags of apples, beans or rhubarb from her garden. And many of us have enjoyed her hospitality at the family home.

Helen continued faithfully coming to service ringing (twice on Sundays) and practices at Wallingford until the last practice in March 2020 just before lockdown, despite it becoming difficult for her to negotiate the awkward turn on the stairs into the ringing room here. She remained independent in her own home during lockdown, but sadly died after a short illness in July 2021.

The ringing room at Wallingford is not the same without her. Sometimes, when we achieve something with decent striking, someone will say "Helen would have enjoyed that" as good striking was her top priority.

An obituary written by her son, Brian, was published in The Ringing World dated 27 August 2021.

Mary Friskney

Roy Thorpe RIP

Roy died peacefully, at home, with his family around him, in July this year (2021). As many people have said, he was a true gentleman, and a truly gentle man.

I only knew Roy for about 20 months. Much of this time was dominated / disrupted by the pandemic. So it was perhaps only half-a-dozen occasions on which we were able to share a pint at the pub after ringing. Time though to establish that, save for the Raffles Hotel, the Singapore I have visited in recent years bears no resemblance to that which he knew through his National Service.

Nor was there much time for me to learn of his ringing history. I know that he was a lifelong ringer, probably about 70 years in all! With maybe the last 25 years or so, here at Brightwell, most of which as tower captain. I know that many of you (reading this) will have rung peals with him, many more will have rung quarters, as well as ringing with him at practices around the branch. He was also a great supporter of ringing social events, showing kindness and generosity to everyone – and many will remember him as the "Dam Buster" (from skittles nights – I can but guess why!)

In addition, Roy encouraged and taught many new ringers, young and old, for the millennium and beyond. (Perhaps exemplified by a number of our current ringers here at St Agatha's, as well as Amelie, our youngest ringer, now a member of the ODG Young Ringers group). He was also very active in our bell restoration some years ago, as a result of which our 7th bell is named 'Roy'.

As well as his ringing, I think that Roy will be remembered not only for his support of the church, in many ways (such as reserve organist, chorister, churchwarden, vergers, grounds maintenance, etc, etc); but also for his golf, and his other volunteering around the village. Plus, of course, his cake-making prowess and his love of 'the Clumps' – typified by tales he told me of him encouraging/leading previous New Year ringing celebrations to finish with champagne and his home-made mince pies, at the Brightwell Barrow (oh, if only I'd been here then, pre-pandemic!).

A true gentleman, he will be sadly missed and fondly remembered.

John Dowling

Young Ringer's Half Term Outing (Wednesday 2nd June 2021)

It was a brilliantly warm sunny day when we met at Long Wittenham for the young ringers outing. After a lot of wet weather, the grass was long and soft to walk on and it was tempting to ignore the pretty church where the six ancient bells were waiting for us. A Dad and his 15 year old daughter had cycled there from Oxford and were sitting eating a picnic under a tree in the churchyard. We met up with friends, as we had in the past, and it was a great pleasure to chat with each other again at last. One could almost forget that we hadn't met like this or rung together for the 15 months of the pandemic.

We were twelve young ringers (between 8 and 16 years old) from five branches of the ODG. Fourteen adults were there to provide the transport (and to have a brief ring ourselves if there was time).

These bells had previously been very out of tune and difficult to ring, partly because of the long draft. But after a local appeal, the bells had been retuned, rehung and had rope guides installed. We were the first visiting ringers! We rang rounds, plain hunt and grandsire doubles.

Alban, a twelve-year-old ringer, had been asked to record the bells by his father. He, sadly couldn't be there because he would be at work. He works as a bell hanger, and had recently spent many months with a trainer at hand, learning a new skill, that of bell tuner. These bells had been the first project that he had worked on alone. He was keen to hear how they sounded together. He should be proud! These bells were really sweet and mellow to listen to (and easy to ring of course).

At the allotted time, we drove on to Brightwell where the parents of one of our young ringers had invited us to hold our refreshment break in their lovely back garden. They had erected a big gazebo for us and Daphne had once more made a tasty selection of cakes, biscuits and scones and served tea, coffee and soft drinks for us. A very happy time was spent there and it was a wrench to leave. But the eight bells awaited us.

Our young ringers had already regained some of their skill at ringing and the ringing at Brightwell was a definite improvement over the previous tower. A dad supervised a happy football kick-around in the churchyard and we had to call in whichever young ringers we needed for each piece of ringing. We rang rounds on eight, plain bob doubles, grandsire triples and Cambridge Minor (that with some adult help).

We must definitely do this again – in the summer holidays perhaps!

Susan Read



RWNYC ODG team at Worcester – 11 September 2021



Our branch might like to see the ODG young ringers as they emerged from the prize giving at the Ringing World National Youth Contest in Worcester on Saturday. This photo was taken by Cheryl Watson.

The group included four young ringers from the Old North Berks Branch (ONB): Amelie from Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and Joe, Sophie and Willow from Abingdon. Daniel from the Reading Branch, who conducted grandsire doubles for the winning team, is holding the Whitechapel Trophy.

Colin Newman is shown with the group. He expertly coached them for the two most recent competitions, in both of which they won the Method Ringing category. The ODG team has now won the Method Ringing category four times.

All but eight of the group shown will be too old to compete next summer. To be eligible for the competition, young ringers must be under eighteen on the 1st September in the year concerned. The ODG prefers young ringers to be capable of plain hunt on seven before they join the group. Training starts for the 2022 competition in September. The ONB has a good record of representation in the ODG team. Please let me know if your young ringers would like to join the group.

Susan Read

The following is from **Colin Newman**

I am pleased to report that our Youth Team were placed first in the Ringing World National Youth Contest held in Worcester on Saturday 11th September. This makes back to back wins for our youngsters against some stiff competition.

The youth team is made up of young ringers from around the branches and holds monthly practices as preparation for the contest each year.

Many congratulations to this year's team and I hope the team for next year will be able to make it a hattrick.



The Team receives the Whitechapel Trophy for a second year.

Young Ringers Practice (21 November 2021)

It was a cold, bright day when we met at Shiplake for the first ONB Young Ringer monthly practice. There were eight young ringers ranging in age between 10 and 20 years old and eight older ringers including four parents of some of the young ringers.

For our ten year old ringer, we rang rounds and call changes as well as games to test our ability to stand our bells (at backstroke!) and to ring facing outwards. We even rang "Mexican Wave". For our slightly older ringers we rang plain hunt on three, four, five and six bells. And for our even more experienced ringers we rang plain bob triples, grandsire triples and Cambridge minor, with help from some of the adults.

And the best part of the afternoon was Daphne's wonderful refreshments – cheese scones, peanut butter cookies, lemon drizzle cake and chocolate cake.

The intention is that we should meet monthly on the second Sunday of the month. Next month we will be meeting on Sunday 12 December, 2 – 4 pm at Drayton (8). All young ringers who can handle a bell safely are most welcome (and their parents or tower captains). Permission forms for young ringers required.

Susan Read
Old North Berks Branch Training Officer



Jeanette and Tim's Wedding - 3rd September 2021

Tim and I were married on 3rd September 2021 at Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon. We were blessed with beautiful weather for our reception, which was largely outdoors, and with the backdrop of splendid ringing by friends who are members of the ODG ONB branch and the Four Shires Guild. We were also lucky to be able to have a friend of ours as the Minister taking the service.

I walked from our home in Stratford to the church, accompanied by my daughter as bridesmaid and my cousin as 'father of the bride'. The bells could be heard in advance, as we got ready at home and then as we walked, as well as after the service, when we led all of our guests in a crocodile to the reception, via the chain ferry and along the river. I couldn't agree more with Simon Adams from Taylors of Loughborough, who has previously stated to me that Stratford's bells are some of the best in the country, both to ring and to listen to. Being accompanied by their glorious sound, in a QP of Grandsire Caters, was a delight. However, there were times when we lamented not being able to hold the service at Steventon church, where the ringers could have been visible to all. Idle chat by Tim and I included transporting Steventon church to the riverbank in Stratford and augmenting it to ten!

It is fair to say that some were nervous of ringing a QP for the first time in rather a while and others of ringing Grandsire. They needn't have worried because their ringing was beautiful. Doug Bates, former Tower Captain at Stratford, provided reassurance by stating that the bells were weaned on Grandsire from their installation in 1948, so much so that they could almost ring it themselves. And, of course, I couldn't resist having a ring, for a quick session of rounds and call changes after the service, having stress-tested potential wedding dresses for their ability to cope with my arms outstretched above my head. After the QP, the band were treated to a journey to the reception by punt. Some were too nervous of small boats on water to take advantage of it, but those who did rang handbells for us, just rounds and call changes as they travelled, punctuated by, you guessed it, a friend of ours. I have since seen a video taken by one of them where one of the handbell ringers asked whether they were all ready to ring Bristol, two in hand. The answer was a firm 'no'! Tim and I used the same punt and friend to leave our reception.

Two of the FSG ringers were also in a choir of twelve, made up of family and friends, who sang two unaccompanied choral anthems. They brought tears of joy to my eyes when we first heard their singing and they have done so every time since that I've heard it. Most of the choir didn't



know one another, and none knew their conductor and organist (also a friend). They met for the first time the afternoon before the service to rehearse for an hour or so. Accolades came in thick and fast, including from one who stated that she knew that the choir from Holy Trinity must be good, but she never thought that they'd be *that* good. She was amazed when I told her that they weren't the home choir and that they'd not previously met until the afternoon before.

We were blessed with beautiful weather for our reception, which was largely held outdoors on the riverbank in a marquee with two open sides, and we wish to thank those from the ODG who helped to make it a very special day.

Jeanette Owen (formerly Davey)



TOWER BELLS — QUARTER PEALS

Wallingford, 5 July 2021. 1260 Plain Bob Doubles: Jo Gamester 1, Daryl Dixon 2, Katherine Parker 3, Robert Partridge 4, Chris Tuckett (C) 5, Mary Friskney 6. Remembering Helen Diserens who died the previous day. All the Wallingford band wished to be associated with this quarter peal.

Cholsey, 14 July 2021. 1260 Plain Bob Minor: Gill Garlick 1, Gill Loyd 2, Geoff Cook 3, Robert Partridge 4, Richard Loyd 5, Chris Tuckett (C) 6. In celebration of the life of John Monney (1925-2020) on what would have been his 96th birthday. John was a regular and committed member of the Cholsey band for 79 years.

Appleton, 5 October 2021. 1295 Grandsire Caters: Sarah J Ockwell 1, Barbara H Payne 2, Michele Winter 3, Dorothy G Hall 4, Stuart F Gibson 5, Peter H M Day 6, David C Ockwell 7, Simon A Bond (C) 8, Robin O Hall 9, Bernard J Stone 10. Rung in celebration of the life of Tim Harrison, son of Mike and Sylvia and sometime ringer at this church, whose funeral took place here earlier today.

Wallingford, 10 October 2021. 1260 Plain Bob Doubles: Wendy Simon 1, Katherine Parker 2, Karen Walker 3, Mary Friskney 4, Chris Tuckett (C) 5, Philip Mills 6.

Wallingford, 7 November 2021. 1260 Grandsire Triples: Katherine Parker 1, Jo Gamester 2, Nuala Clements 3, Mary Friskney 4, John Dowling 5, Robert Partridge 6, Chris Tuckett (C) 7, Philip Mills 8. For the All Souls Day service and remembering especially Helen Diserens and Roy Thorpe.

East Hagbourne, 10 November 2021. 1260 Grandsire Triples: Mary Napper 1, Jill Garlick 2, Shirley Goss 3, Laura Makin 4, Jeff Powell 5, John W Napper (C) 6, Alan Foster 7, Daniel Dawson 8. In Memoriam Cliff Garlick.

Appleton, 14 November 2021. 1313 Grandsire Caters: Sarah J Ockwell 1, Rosanna Cretney 2, Barbara H Payne 3, Michele Winter 4, Katie Lane 5, Simon L Edwards 6, David L Thomas (C) 7, Bernard J Stone 8, David C Ockwell 9, Peter H M Day 10. Rung half-muffled on Remembrance Sunday.

Radley, 14 November 2021. 1260 Plain Bob Doubles: Alban Walker 1, Sally Mulholland 2, Ann Belcher 3, Oliver Hyde 4, Mark Walker (C) 5, Charlie Milward 6. Rung half-muffled on Remembrance Sunday. 1st Q – 1, at first attempt.



Wantage, 14 November 2021. **1260 Grandsire Doubles**: Liz Woodhouse 1, Teifi Walters 2, Jenny Bennett 3, David A J Endacott MBE 4, Andy Bennett (C) 5, Sara Macdonell 6. Rung half-muffled prior to Remembrance Day Parade and Service.

Wallingford, 28 November 2021. **1260 Plain Bob Triples**: Karen Walker 1, Wendy Simon 2, Nuala Clements 3, Katherine Parker 4, Daryl Dixon 5, Chris Tuckett 6, Mary Friskney (C) 7, Philip Mills 8. For the Advent Carol Service. First of triples - 1.

HANDBELLS — QUARTER PEALS

(* Botley is in the Parish of Cumnor)

Botley* (2 Long Close), 24 April 2021. **1264 Double Bob Major**: Michele Winter 1-2, Lindsay Powell 3-4, David L Thomas 5-6, Joe Norton 7-8 (C). First in method: 1-2. First in method inside: 3-4.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 24 April 2021. **1296 Gainsborough Little Bob Royal**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, David L Thomas 3-4 (C), Joe Norton 5-6, Jonathan C Mills 7-8, Michele Winter 9-10. First blows of Gainsborough Royal: 7-8. First entire quarter of Gainsborough Royal for the rest.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 24 April 2021. **1320 Little Bob Maximus**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Jonathan C Mills 3-4, David L Thomas 5-6 (C), Adam D Rebick 7-8, Joe Norton 9-10, Michele Winter 11-12. First on 12: 9-10. First on 12 real handbells for all. 100th quarter together 1-2 and 11-12. The band would like to thank Bryn and Leland for their hard work on Ringing Room, without which the preparation for this in person quarter wouldn't have been possible.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 26 April 2021. **1328 St Clement's College Bob Major**: David L Thomas 1-2, Lisa Ryan 3-4, Michele Winter 5-6, Joe Norton 7-8 (C).

Botley* (2 Long Close), 26 April 2021. **1308 Gainsborough Little Bob Major**: Lisa Ryan 1-2, David L Thomas 3-4 (C), Michele Winter 5-6, John G Pusey 7-8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 1 May 2021. **1328 St Clement's College Bob Major**: Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 1-2, Lisa Ryan, Michele Winter 5-6, Joe Norton (C) 7-8. 900th quarter: 1-2.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 1 May 2021. **1280 Plain Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Ben White-Horn 3-4, Joe Norton 5-6, Michele Winter (C) 7-8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 1 May 2021. **1344 Little Bob Major**: Ben White-Horn 1-2, Lindsay Powell 3-4, Joe Norton (C) 5-6, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 7-8. First Little Bob on real handbells: 1-2.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 6 May 2021. **1272 Allendale Surprise Minor**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, David L Thomas (C).

Botley* (2 Long Close), 6 May 2021. **1292 Spliced Bob Minor (9m)**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 6 May 2021. **1312 Double Oxford Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, David L Thomas 3-4 (C), Joe Norton 5-6, Michele Winter (C) 7-8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 6 May 2021. **1312 Kent Treble Bob Major**: David L Thomas (C) 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, Lindsay Powell 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 8 May 2021. **1280 Spliced Bob Major (5m)**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. 100th quarter together: 5-6 and 7-8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 8 May 2021. **1344 Plain Bob Major**: Michele Winter 1-2, Lindsay Powell 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Joe Norton 7-8. 350th on real handbells 7-8. First cyclic in hand: 1-2, 3-4 and 7-8. First cyclic on real handbells: 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 8 May 2021. **1312 Double Oxford Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, David L Thomas 3-4 (C), Joe Norton 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 10 May 2021. **1280 Spliced Plain Minor (4m)**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Michele Winter 3-4, Joe Norton (C) 5-6. First spliced on an inside pair: 3-4.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 10 May 2021. **1230 Buxton Bob Minor**: Michele Winter 1-2, Lindsay Powell 3-4, Joe Norton (C) 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 10 May 2021. **1280 Plain Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, John G Pusey 3-4, Joe Norton 5-6, Michele Winter (C) 7-8. Rung as a birthday compliment to Kath White.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 15 May. **1296 Double Norwich Court Bob Major**: Michele Winter 1-2, David L Thomas (C) 3-4, Jonathan C Mills 5-6, Lindsay Powell 7-8. First in method on this pair: 1-2. Rung as an engagement compliment to Joanna Knight and Jonathan Cresshull.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 15 May 2021. **1296 Little Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Michele Winter 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Jonathan C Mills 7-8. Rung to welcome Stanley James Green, born 14/5/21 to Charlotte Hunter and Richard Green (cousin of 7-8).

Botley* (2 Long Close), 15 May 2021. **1260 Plain Bob Royal**: David L Thomas (C) 1-2, Jonathan C Mills 3-4, Lindsay Powell 5-6, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 7-8, Michele Winter 9-10. First in method in hand: 7-8. First in method on this pair: 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 10 June 2021. **1360 Spliced Plain Minor (3m)**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Michele Winter 3-4, Joe Norton (C) 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 10 June 2021. **1260 Childwall Bob Minor**: Michele Winter 1-2, Lindsay Powell 3-4, Joe Norton (C) 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 June 2021. **1312 Kent Treble Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. Completes the pairs to Kent Major in "hand": 3-4. Rung to celebrate the official birthday of Her Majesty the Queen.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 June 2021. **1332 Spliced Bob Major (4m)**: Michele Winter 1-2, David L Thomas (C) 3-4, Lindsay Powell 5-6, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 7-8. Rung to celebrate the official birthday of Her Majesty the Queen.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 10 July 2021. **1322 Spliced Bob Royal (6m)**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Craig M Robertson 7-8, Michele Winter 9-10. Most spliced royal "in hand" for all. Birthday compliments to Susan Beardmore and Rosie Finnon.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 10 July 2021. **1400 Kent Treble Bob Royal**: Craig M Robertson 1-2, Joe Norton 3-4, Lindsay Powell 5-6, David L Thomas (C) 7-8, Michele Winter 9-10. Completes the pairs to Kent Royal: 5-6.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 15 July 2021. **1312 Kent Treble Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1-2, Michele Winter 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Jonathan C Mills 7-8. 150th quarter peal in 2021: 5-6.

Appleton, Oxon, (St Laurence Churchyard), 22 July 2021. **1260 Spliced Plain Minor (3m)**: Michele Winter 1-2, Lindsay Powell 3-4, Joe Norton (C) 5-6. Rung during the wedding of Samuel Joseph Roberts and Cordelia Rose Parker. With tower bells rung before and after the wedding.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 5 August 2021. **1296 Annable's London Surprise Minor:** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Joe Norton 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6. First in method in hand for all.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 5 August 2021. **1288 Spliced Bob Major (6m):** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Joe Norton 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6, Michele Winter 7–8. Most major methods in spliced in hand for all.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 August 2021. **1288 Spliced Bob Major (6m):** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Joe Norton 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6, Michele Winter 7–8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 August 2021. **1344 St Clement's College Bob Major:** David L Thomas 1–2, Joe Norton 3–4, Michele Winter 5–6, Lindsay Powell (C) 7–8. First in method as Conductor.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 26 August 2021. **1272 Spliced Surprise Minor (6m):** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6. First spliced surprise minor in hand: 3–4.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 28 August 2021. **1344 St Clement's College Bob Major:** Lindsay Powell 1–2, David L Thomas 3–4, Lisa Ryan 5–6, Michele Winter (C) 7–8. First in method as Conductor: 7–8. Rung as a wedding compliment to Hayley Walsh and Dean Cox.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 28 August 2021. **1288 Plain and Little Bob Major:** Lisa Ryan 1–2, David L Thomas 3–4, Michele Winter 5–6, Lindsay Powell (C) 7–8. First Little Bob as Conductor.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 9 September 2021. **1296 Beverley Surprise Minor:** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6. First in method: 1–2. First in method in hand 3–4 and 5–6. Rung as a birthday compliment to Jeanette Thomas, Mum of the conductor.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 9 September 2021. **1296 Little Bob Royal:** Michele Winter 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 3–4, Lindsay Powell 7–8, Lisa Ryan 9–10. First Royal on this pair on real handbells: 1–2. Rung in memory of Lesley Prosser, who died yesterday.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 23 September 2021. **1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major:** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6, Michele Winter 7–8. Rung in memory of Lesley Prosser, on the day of her funeral.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 24 September 2021. **1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major:** Lindsay Powell 1–2, David L Thomas (C) 3–4, Craig M Robertson 5–6, Michele Winter 7–8. First in method on this pair on real handbells: 3–4 and 5–6.

Abingdon (26 St Amand Drive), 27 September 2021. **1272 Spliced Surprise Minor (10m):** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6. Most surprise minor methods spliced in hand for all. First at the address. This performance is linked to the event Badgers Handbell Ringers 2021.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 9 September 2021. **1270 Durham Surprise Minor:** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6. First in method in hand for all.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 12 August 2021. **1328 Spliced Bob Major (6m):** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Joe Norton 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6, Michele Winter 7–8. Rung in memory of William Butler.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 26 October 2021. **1344 St Clement's College Bob Major:** Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 1–2, Michele Winter 3–4, Joe Norton 5–6, Lindsay Powell (C) 7–8.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 26 October 2021. **1260 St Clement's College Bob Minor:** Lindsay Powell 1–2, Michele Winter 3–4, Joe Norton (C) 5–6. Rung in loving memory of Ali Webb who left us on the 16th. She was the best! XX.

Botley* (2 Long Close), 28 October 2021. **1296 Double Norwich Court Bob Major:** Lindsay Powell 1–2, David L Thomas (C) 3–4, Jonathan C Mills 5–6, Michele Winter 7–8.

TOWER BELLS — PEALS

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 25 July 2021, 2h35, **5120 Cambridge Surprise Major:** Charlotte A Boyce 1, Nicola J Turner 2, Colin M Turner 3, Richard L Thumwood 4, Peter G C Ellis 5, Claire F Roulstone 6, Ian Roulstone 7, John R Martin (C) 8. Rung to celebrate the lives of Helen Diserens and Roy Thorpe.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 8 August 2021, 2h37, **5152 Turramurra Surprise Major:** Colin M Turner 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Robert J Crocker 3, Nicola J Turner 4, Ian Roulstone 5, Richard L Thumwood 6, Peter G C Ellis (C) 7, Claire F Roulstone 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 29 August 2021, 2h37, **5160 Marple Alliance Major:** Nicola J Turner 1, Robert J Crocker 2, Alan M Eyles 3, Charlotte A Boyce 4, Colin M Turner 5, Richard L Thumwood 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Peter G C Ellis 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 12 September 2021, 2h30, **5024 Bristol Surprise Major:** Colin M Turner 1, Simon W Edwards 2, Nicola J Turner 3, Claire F Roulstone 4, Richard L Thumwood 5, Alan M Eyles 6, Ian Roulstone 7, Peter G C Ellis (C) 8. Rung in memory of David G Salter of Ipswich who rang 55 peals on these bells.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 26 September 2021, 2h36, **5160 Semiquincentenary Alliance Major:** Simon W Edwards 1, Lucy J T Gwynne 2, Charlotte A Boyce 3, Alan M Eyles 4, John W G Gwynne 5, Colin M Turner 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Richard L Thumwood 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 10 October 2021, 2h37, **5096 Oxfordshire Alliance Major:** Timothy G Pett 1, Colin M Turner 2, Michele Winter 3, Nicola J Turner 4, Claire F Roulstone 5, Simon L Edwards 6, Richard L Thumwood 7, Ian Roulstone (C) 8. The first peal in the method.

EAST MEETS WEST, **Abingdon**, St Helen, 16 October 2021, 3h7, **5000 London No 3 Surprise Royal** (Comp: Robert W Lee): Ian G Campbell 1, Margaret Whiteley 2, Linda M Garton 3, David P Hilling 4, Anthony J Cox 5, John P Loveless 6, Rebecca J Cox 7, Martin J Whiteley 8, George H Campling 9, Matthew J Hilling (C) 10. Rung on the East Meets West reunion weekend. This performance is linked to the event East meets West - Peal Weekend 2021.

EAST MEETS WEST, **Milton**, 16 October 2021, 2h42, **5054 Superlative Surprise Major:** John P Loveless 1, Claire F Roulstone 2, Yvonne A Towler 3, Ian Roulstone 4, James L Towler 5, Martin J Whiteley 6, Joseph St J Beaumont 7, Peter J Sanderson (C) 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 24 October 2021, 2h30, **5088 Lessness Surprise Major:** Nicola J Turner 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Colin M Turner 3, Charlotte A Boyce 4, Michael J Dew 5, Richard L Thumwood 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Peter G C Ellis 8. Rung in celebration of the lives of Anthony R Peake and William Butler.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 31 October 2021, 2h27, **5024 Wye Valley Delight Major:** Nicola J Turner 1, Timothy G Pett 2, Adam R Crocker 3, Simon W Edwards 4, Richard L Thumwood 5, Claire F Roulstone 6, Darran Ricks (C) 7, Colin M Turner 8. The first peal in the method.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **West Hanney**, 5 November 2021, 3h7, **5040 Surprise Minor (7m):** Colin M Turner 1, Richard L Thumwood 2, Nicola J Turner 3, Adam R Crocker 4, Robert J Crocker 5, Peter G C Ellis (C) 6. In thanksgiving for the life of Anthony R Peake, on the day of his funeral. Also remembering C Merrik Wheatley, a former ringer at this tower. Circled the tower – 1.

OXFORD SOCIETY, **Appleton**, 13 November 2021, 2h52, **5021 Grandsire Caters:** Michele Winter 1, Alan M Eyles 2, David L Thomas 3, Simon L Edwards 4, Stuart F Gibson 5, Simon A Bond (Composed and C) 6, Robin O Hall 7, David C Ockwell 8, Stephen H Stanford 9, Bernard J Stone. Half-muffled in memory of the Fallen. 750th peal and 500th for the Society: 1.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 14 November 2021, 2h36, **5130 Armistice Alliance Major**: Nicola J Turner 1, Charlotte A Boyce 2, Alan M Eyles 3, Richard L Thumwood 4, Michael J Dew 5, Peter L Bill 6, Colin M Turner 7, John R Martin (C) 8. First peal in the method.

HANDBELLS — PEALS

(* Botley is in the Parish of Cumnor)

NON-ASSOCIATION, **Botley*** (2 Long Close), 22 May 2021, 2h26, **5032 Spliced Bob Major (4m)**: Samuel M Senior 1–2, David L Thomas (C) 3–4, Lindsay Powell 5–6, Michele Winter 7–8. First peal of major in hand: 1-2. First peal on a middle pair: 5-6. Most major methods spliced in hand for all. Rung to celebrate the marriage of Bethan Senior and Benjamin Maskell. Birthday compliments of Becky Vardy.

OXFORD SOCIETY, **Botley*** (2 Long Close), 29 May 2021, 1h56, **5040 Minor (6m)**: Michele Winter 1–2, Lindsay Powell 3–4, David L Thomas (C) 5–6. First handbell peal of minor and first handbell peal away from tenors: 1-2. First handbell peal of minor on an inside pair: 3-4.

OXFORD SOCIETY, **Botley*** (2 Long Close), 22 August 2021, 2h23, **5088 Kent Treble Bob Major**: David L Thomas (C) 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3-4, Lindsay Powell 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. First peal on the trebles: 1-2. First peal in the method: 3-4. First peal in the method on a middle pair: 5-6.

OXFORD SOCIETY, **Botley*** (2 Long Close), 30 August 2021, 2h23, **5088 Double Norwich Court Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. First in method: 1-2 and as conductor. First in method in hand 3-4, 5-6, 7-8.

OXFORD SOCIETY, **Botley*** (2 Long Close), 7 November 2021, 2h22, **5088 Double Norwich Court Bob Major**: Lindsay Powell 1–2, Craig M Robertson 3-4, David L Thomas (C) 5-6, Michele Winter 7-8. Rung as a birthday compliment to Michele Winter.

10-bell Striking Competition — Amersham, Saturday 27th November 2021



The results were;

EBSB	81%
Reading	75%
Newbury	72%
ONB	66%
Banbury	65%
VOWH	63%

Left: The ONB Team



ONBB New Year's Day Ringing & Refreshments



Saturday, 1st January 2022

**Saint Michael and All Angels,
Steventon**

10.30am – 12.30pm

Everybody welcome



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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ONB Website:	✉ www.onb.odg.org.uk	

NEXT ISSUE

Deadline for copy for the next issue in June 2022 is 19th April 2022. But please don't wait until then, send your news, pictures, and quarters in as they happen.

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Programme for 2022

Saturday, 1st January – Ringing and refreshments – Steventon (6) (10.30am–12.30pm)

Wednesday, 26th January – Branch Practice – Milton (8) (2.00–3.30pm)

Wednesday, 2nd February – Surprise Major Practice – Brightwell (8) (7.30–9.00pm)

Tuesday, 8th February – Branch Practice – East Hagbourne (8) (7.30–9.00pm)

Wednesday, 23rd February – Branch Practice – Drayton (8) (2.00–3.30pm)

Saturday, 19th March – 6-bell Striking Competition – North Moreton (6) (Morning [time to be confirmed])

Saturday, 19th March – AGM – Zoom Meeting – (7.00pm)

Wednesday, 23rd March – Branch Practice – Steventon (6) (2.00 – 3.30pm)

Wednesday, 6th April – Surprise Major Practice – Milton (8) (7.30–9.00pm)

Thursday, 21st April – Branch Practice – Radley (6) (7.30–9.00pm)

Wednesday, 27th April – Mini outing and lunch

Friday, 13th May – Branch Practice – Blewbury (8) (8.00–9.30pm)

Friday, 27th May – Branch Practice – Cumnor (8) (2.00–3.30pm)

Wednesday, 1st June (TBC) – Surprise Major Practice – Drayton (8) (7.30–9.00pm)

Wednesday, 8th June – Branch Practice – Cholsey (8) (8.00–9.30pm)

Wednesday, 22nd June – Branch Practice – TBA – (2.00–3.30pm)

Please note that these practices are provisional and whether or not they take place will be determined by any Covid-19 regulations in place at the time of the proposed practice. Any guidelines/regulations imposed by individual towers will be advised at the time that the practice is advertised.

Please also note that these practices are only being advertised in the Old North Berks Branch for the time being.

Branch 6-bell Striking Competition



Rob Nickless presenting the Trophy to Chris Tuckett of Wallingford