Old North Berks Branch Newsletter

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Branch Outing—16th July 2016

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Editorial

Welcome to the Winter 2016 issue of the Branch Newsletter.

One thing I've always tried to avoid is predicting the future. Those of you who remember the editorial from the summer edition will recollect that I predicted that would be my last edition as editor, so I got that one wrong! I am therefore not going to make any more such predictions, save to say that at some point I will be moving on, so once again a big thankyou to all our contributors over the years, please keep the articles coming in.

We've been rather spoilt weather wise this year, especially in the autumn, so hopefully you've all been able to enjoy it in your own way. Let's hope the winter isn't as bleak as they're forecasting.

The reports, articles and calendar in this issue again illustrate what an active branch we have. A theme in quite a few tower articles is that of attracting new recruits. Susan Read's appeal for support for a Branch ringing course next spring offers potential for bringing along new ringers to our towers, so let's all get behind this initiative and support it in whatever way we can.

As our tower benefitted from the hard work of Rob Nickless' bees, I fully support the Ringing Masters call for everyone to support the branch restoration fund by buying jars of 'Save Our Bells' honey. Not only can you indulge your sweet tooth, but help fund raising for these projects.

Congratulations go to Oliver and Edward for scoring their first peal, also to Anna for conducting her first peal and to Nicola for her 4000th peal.

My best wishes to all for the coming season, we're looking forward to viewing the celebrations (antics) in the next edition.

Ian Minns

Finally, a couple of thoughts to leave you with:

Common sense is not so common.

Genius is nothing but a great aptitude for patience.

Chairman's Thoughts, November 2016

I'd like to thank all the people who organise our branch for everything they do for ringing. We are very lucky to have such committed branch officers. Many of them have been in more than one post doing an excellent job for the branch for a long time. It is not surprising that some of them have decided to retire in the last few years and to enjoy ringing without the pressure of having to organise everything. If you feel you could help the branch organisation in any way, please don't be shy about mentioning it to me or any of the other current or former officers.

Would you like to attract some new ringers to your tower? I propose to organise a branch ringing course in May / June / July 2017. An organised six week course in the light summer evenings visiting a variety of churches and bells is a much more appealing option to a potential new ringer than an open ended commitment to one tower every week. Hopefully those on the course will want to continue and will gravitate to one of the groups of ringers they meet whilst on the course. Please let me know if you would like me to arrange to bring the course to your tower one evening so the new learners can meet your band.

Do we have anyone in the branch who knows anything about marketing? We need to work out the best way to advertise our 2017 ringing course. Most towers seem to be able to find potential learners who are already retired. It would be good to find a way to target a younger age group!

et's see if we can make a difference together and reverse the trend of dwindling numbers of ringers in so many of our towers!

Susan Read

Secretary's Report

The trend of variable attendance at evening branch practices, which we have seen in recent years during the summer months, continues. It is impossible to predict whether or not practices will be well supported. In June the practice at Appleton had to be cancelled through lack of support, whereas in August the practice at Childrey was very well attended, with ringers spilling into the churchyard to enjoy the warm summer evening. Afternoon practices fare better and these were held at Childrey, Harwell, West Hanney, Sutton Courtenay, Milton and Cholsey. Surprise major/ royal practices were held at Drayton, Goring and Appleton.

Susan Read continues to arrange events for the younger ringers in our branch during the school holidays. The Oxford Diocesan Guild band came equal second in the methods section of The Ringing World National Youth competition. I am very pleased to report that half of the team came from ONB Branch. Unfortunately ONB were not represented this year in the Guild's six bell striking competition because the Abingdon ringers (winners of our own competition) were not able to enter.

At our recent Branch Committee meeting, the treasurer reported that to date 250 members have paid full subscriptions, making branch membership 264, with 7 Honorary, 2 Life and 5 members who pay their subscription via another branch (4 more than last year). The Branch has funds totalling £3,174 of which £1,097 is held in the Central Board of Finance and £2,077 at Lloyds Bank.

The branch outing on 16th July was organised once more for us by Philip Roberts of Harwell. This year we went south into Berkshire and Hampshire, ringing at Goodworth Clatford, Hurstbourne Priors, Whitchurch, Longparish and Highclere. Everyone enjoyed the day, not only because of the pub lunch in Whitchurch and afternoon tea in Longparish Village Hall, but also because the ringing was to a good standard. Our annual barbecue followed on from the outing and was held once again in Stuart and Naomi Gibson's beautiful garden. This year over fifty members and friends attended, which is the most we have had for several years. Thanks go to Philip, Janette, Stuart and Naomi for arranging yet another excellent day for the Branch. The day raised £260 for branch funds.

During July and August, Susan Read ran a pilot course for new learners, using the Association of Ringing Teachers 'Learning the Ropes' scheme. Ten towers surrounding Abingdon were selected to hold teaching sessions, which were held twice per week over six weeks. Initially nine learners joined the course and four are still ringing. Susan would like to repeat the course in the spring/ summer of 2017, but thinks that it will need to be organised and advertised early, and be preceded by one or two 'taster' sessions. If anyone is interested in helping with the organisation or has any good ideas about how we can find new learners to attend, please contact Susan (email: read@tesco.net).

Our next social event will have taken place by the time this article goes to press. Our November social evening this year is a quiz evening and supper at Brightwell Village Hall. Thanks go to Roy Thorpe and his ringers for organising this for the Branch. Quiz evenings in the past have always proved to be entertaining and enlightening. I just hope that there aren't any 'recognise the Cathedral' questions this year. Last time I was embarrassed not to recognise several cathedrals where I have rung (some on more than once occasion!). Advance notice for next November: Please hold

the date of 11th November in your diaries for a barn dance. It would be good not to have to cancel it through lack of support and you have a year to brush up on your dancing skills.

Ringing to celebrate New Year will be held at Abingdon, St Helen, on 2nd January 2017 from 10.30am to 12.30pm. In the usual ONB tradition, light refreshments will be available.

Gill Loyd

Ringing Masters' Ramblings

There has been a great deal of activity in recent months and years to preserve and maintain the many rings of bells within our Branch. We can be justifiably proud of our achievements with Radley and Brightwell being the latest success stories. I am sure some of you will have already rung at both of these towers and will have noticed the huge improvements made by rehanging with modern fittings etc. If you haven't then we are sure that Daphne and Roy will make you very welcome at their practice nights. Of course these achievements don't come easily, and require much hard work, determination, and fundraising to succeed, and it is thanks to those within our branch that we can enjoy the fruits of their labours for years to come. Well done to everyone involved with these projects. There are currently no active major bell restoration projects within the Branch, but there may be several 'in the pipeline' given the right circumstances. Our small individual additional contribution to ONB with our Guild annual subscriptions makes a very significant difference to the branch's ability to support future projects financially. Thank you.

The Branch is not just about bell restoration, and without ringers all is lost! Several towers are working hard to recruit new ringers into their bands, but this is a very difficult task as we will all agree. The branch practices are a great opportunity to introduce new faces, and also demonstrate the wider opportunities to ring on different nights of the week and meet new people. Please encourage both your new and existing members to come along, even if they are quite new to ringing. Branch practice attendance this year has been very variable, and we encourage tower captains to announce practice notices and encourage ringers to attend if they can. Perhaps asking who is able to go or maybe offering to give members a lift to the practices might help? Please try to encourage in whatever way you can with your individual teams.

We know that there are many 'lapsed ringers' out there, and some notable branch members have returned to ringing after several silent decades! If you have a village newsletter this may be a potential forum for encouraging lapsed ringers back to your tower. Often people are put off by their perception of the commitment that was expected in past times. I think we have to be realistic in the modern world and adopt a more flexible approach to allow ringing to be dovetailed into busy lives.

Lots of fun has been had during and after branch practices, and another well attended superb summer outing and BBQ, always a high point in the branch calendar. All of this is reported elsewhere in this newsletter, but we would like to thank everyone who makes these events possible and so enjoyable. There is talk of Ian Minns moving from Radley, and I am sure that if this really is his last newsletter as editor, we should thank him for so many outstanding newsletters for the Branch. Well done Ian and thank you (and Daphne) for providing such a brilliant newsletter! We shall miss your words of wisdom.

We look forward to seeing you at a practice near you very soon!

Philip just wants to add…..

I rang a local builder and said I wanted a skip outside my house, he said ‘ I’m not stopping you’

I met the chap who invented crosswords, I can’t remember his name its P something T something R

Richard Loyd and Philip Roberts

TOWER TALK

Abingdon

The tower outing in October took us to some mostly heavy and occasionally challenging bells in the Cirencester area. Fairford was first on the list where the bells are rung from the chancel. The combination of long draft and having to stand amongst the pews took some getting used to but everyone managed to ring all right although where to stand to ring the 3rd proved a puzzle for some. The 6 at Siddington were the lightest of the day and some good ringing was achieved here. These were followed by the two Cirencester towers with lunch in between. The heavy 8 at Watermoor were rung well but changes on the 12 proved a step too far. Nevertheless some good rounds and call changes were rung and Phoebe rang the 27 cwt tenor very competently, by far the heaviest bell she had rung. The day was rounded off at Northleach and thanks were expressed to Becci for her very thorough and efficient organisation.

Tim Pett

Appleton

We welcomed a band of visitors from Devonshire in August who rang a peal of Imperial Surprise Royal.

On 3rd September Vivian and Mary White celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. They were married at St Laurence and, apart from a few months, have lived in the village ever since. Brian White also celebrated his birthday on the same day and a peal of Grandsire Caters was rung as a compliment to him the following Saturday.

Following a relatively short interregnum, the Rev'd Ken Cambell was licensed as our new Priest in Charge on 6th October. We were grateful for the help of Branch Members who enabled us to ring a Quarter Peal of Grandsire Caters for the service and to welcome him and his family to Appleton.

Sylvia Harrison

Blewbury

This has been quite a busy summer in Blewbury. In addition to our regular practices and ringing for services on Sundays, we have been involved in other activities.

We have had three sets of visitors. Those from Stroud, Glos. and Fulham were on outings, and we also welcomed an itinerant band of retirees from the local area who enjoy meeting up for quarter peals, in this case Spliced Surprise Major.

We have rung for six weddings and have two more booked. For one wedding a quarter peal of Plain Bob Triples was rung by four of the bride's guests and four local ringers. It is always a pleasure to contribute to a couples' happy days.

A peal of Lincolnshire Surprise Major, conducted by Stuart Gibson was rung for the Queen's 90th birthday. This was the first peal for Matt Napper on the treble so congratulations to him. Richard Loyd rang the tenor, thereby shredding his hands and excusing him from all sorts of activities that he didn't want to do for the following couple of weeks!

We also rang for the swearing in of the Church wardens from the Wantage Deanery. Fortunately no Blewbury ringer was injured this time; last time I ended up in A and E, courtesy of a pot hole, which is still there. The council resurfaced the lane; the church resurfaced the car park; who is responsible for the bit in between is a mystery!

Several of our band went to the Branch summer outing to Hampshire and the barbeque in the evening and enjoyed both.

Ringers from Blewbury regularly attend practices at other towers and are grateful for the warm welcome they receive and for the learning that takes place, which benefits ringing at our home tower. Blewbury ringers also try to attend Chilton to help with Sunday ringing, and support North Moreton on their practice night. The mutual benefits and friendship links are greatly valued.

There was a family fun day on Tickers Folly in Blewbury in the summer and we were invited to have a table, which we did. We had a model bell to show the ringing process and some literature about our hobby; this has not yet resulted in new ringers but we live in hope that seeds planted that day will germinate! We did, however, sell some of Rob Nickless' great honey and beeswax candles; 25% of the income from these sales goes to branch restoration projects. The honey is also available in Blewbury Post Office; does anyone out there have a potential outlet in a local shop? Please contact Richard Loyd if so.

Anne Hales

Chilton



The photo shows one of our older ringers, Steve Boddy, at the Chilton Bells rededication service in 2001. He had been a jockey and his knowledge of how to care for leather was very valuable in teaching us how to care for our muffles. He was a reliable Sunday service ringer, but was not interested in peal ringing. He learnt to ring with the band of young people taught to ring in Chilton by Bill Corduroy in the 1960s before the restoration of 2000. At one time he lived in 'West House', part of the Old Rectory adjacent to All Saints church. Later he and his wife moved to Harwell where their house was named 'Sans Souci' after one of the horses on which he won a race. He died on 11 June 2016 aged 86. Stuart Gibson conducted a Quarter peal which was rung prior to the Memorial service on 27th June 2016 in his memory at the request of his widow. He will be missed.

We ran an 'OpenTower' on Saturday Afternoon 10th September from 2 to 4pm in celebration of 'Heritage Days' hoping to attract new ringers; Carina had registered us and received a useful sheet

of badges to give to visitors. We had put notices up around the village, advertised it in our village and church newsletters and put it in our churches database. Unfortunately it poured with rain all day and no visitors came. What else might we do to attract new ringers?

We are very grateful to members of nearby towers who assist our Sunday service ringing, we usually ring with between 4 and 6 people.

We welcome visitors to our Monday evening practices, 7.30 to 9pm, particularly from those towers with several learners who may be reluctant to venture into other towers and can gain confidence by ringing on our easy-going bells with their own tutors.

Please phone beforehand to check we are having an evening practice and remember that we do not ring on the evenings of Bank Holidays.

Kate Crennell

Cholsey

We still have our four new recruits who started in January. They are coming along slowly; Mary and Keith come over from Wallingford on a Wednesday to help out. We have just started Hand Bell Ringing which is proving very popular.

From 14th November we will be hosting Wallingford Ringers for a while as they are having masonary work done on the Tower.

Jenny Jeskins

Didcot

2016 has been quite busy for Didcot Bells as we have helped mark several events in the town and country.

We joined towers nationally to celebrate BBC Music Day in June and the opening of Heritage Open Days in September.

Locally, we rang the bells in celebration on 2nd July for Didcot's "Royal Affayre" to mark the Queen's 90th birthday and then as an act of remembrance for a special memorial service held on 17th September to remember the four men who lost their lives in the Didcot Power Station collapse.

After being so familiar with three bells, ringing on six or eight bells (or even more!) can be quite daunting, so we were very grateful to Chilton tower for lending us their bells in July to allow us to hold our practice there. Thank you also to all the helpers who came along and made it such a useful experience for us. We hope to repeat this in the near future.

Our main event this year has been a coffee morning which we held on 13th August. We raised over £230 towards a new set of ropes and repairs to the spire. We received great support from the branch (many thanks to those who attended) and were able to introduce people to ringing as well as welcome back some old ringers (who were happy to find that they remembered a lot more than they thought they would!) Due to the success of this event we are hoping to repeat it next year, giving people local to Didcot a chance to have a go on tower bells as well as helping raise funds for the bells and All Saints' church (as there is plenty more fundraising needed for the spire repairs!)

Kathryn Roberts-Lock

East Hagbourne

Ringing has been constant and good over the last few months, the two specialised practices a month in Plain Bob and Cambridge have been going spendidly and have been very well attended which helps enormously for those who have been ringing a short time and those who are slightly longer in the tooth and need help with their Cambridge (!). A big thank you to all those who make the effort to come across, it's always lovely to see visitors no matter where you come from, what you can ring or how long you can stay.

Jill Garlick has been doing some very interesting and moving research lately and we've decided to mark the 100th anniversary for those who came from the village who died in World War I. There are a few who gave their lives from the village and it seems a very small in comparison but appropriate way of remembering what they did for us.

Practices are now well under way for our annual Ring and Sing concert just before Christmas, this year it falls on Tuesday 13th December 7.30pm – 9.00pm. We ring carols and folk tunes on the handbells (four in hand) which is both lively, jolly, festive and completely free! Please come along if you can, there is no collection either – all just simply done in the spirit of Christmas. Please arrive early though as (amazingly) the pews soon fill up.

More next time

Laura Makin

Letcombe Regis

Good news! We have three new learners! In July we placed an advert in our Village Newsletter appealing for new recruits and in response Toni and her daughter Lily (11) came forward and also George (11). Lessons commenced on and off on some Friday evenings during the summer (depending on availability of both the tutor and the recruits – they often did not coincide!) but all three are making good progress. Our youngsters Henry, Sophie and Tallulah have all separately been involved as helpers, either demonstrating strokes, ringing a bell to be followed by the learner and showing how the tail end of a stationary bell rope should be tied. Toni attended the Countryfile Live event at Blenheim in August and was thrilled to have a go on the Lichfield Diocesan Mobile Belfry.

Congratulations are due to Henry's younger brother Arthur who is now swimming at County level, but this means his availability on Sundays is reduced and since his Dad Mark (also one of our ringers) has to transport him, we often lose both of them. Nevertheless, with Christine, Rob and Anne (who all have various other commitments) we do our best to keep our bells ringing for most Sunday Services.

Anne Williams

Long and Little Wittenham

Good news, the bells at St Peters in Little Wittenham are ringing again!

Once the work required to refurbish the bells and replace the tenor headstock had started, it was discovered that more work than originally thought necessary would have to be done. The tenor required a completely new wheel, whilst the other bells needed new wheel rims, the spokes being in good enough condition to reuse. The bells were also turned, which must surely make a

difference and improve the ring. The men also spent half a day tightening everything up! The completed work looks amazing, demonstrating the skill of the Appleton team who had to work in an extremely small and cramped space, a real work of art.

The bells were rung for the first time since the refurbishment for a marriage blessing on October 15th, they were so much easier to ring and certainly sounded better, except when I made mistakes! Several villagers commented on how lovely it was to hear the bells ring out across the meadows again.

Hopefully more teams will come to ring in this tower now, there are lights up the staircase which makes it easier and safer to go up and down.

Monday ringing practice continues at St Mary's in Long Wittenham, but there has not been any response to the pleas for more ringers.

We have been ringing 'Nervous Breakdown' as a method recently, I'm hoping this is not a reaction by the rest of the team to my inability to master Plain Bob Doubles?

I have just read the last chapter of Steve Colman's book which starts "I have fantasies, ringing fantasies,.....
I have them too, mine is just to ring Plain Bob once without a mistake. Time will tell.

Julia Sargent

Milton

The last six months have been fairly busy at Milton. Our practice repertoire has been extended and we now frequently ring Grandsire and Stedman Triples, Plain Bob Major and have even on one occasion been able to ring Cambridge Surprise Major. Six bell methods now include Double Court Bob Minor, Double Oxford Bob Minor and St Clement's College Bob Minor, and the last three weeks have seen Annable's London Surprise Minor successfully rung. I can't put my finger on the reason why but the ringing always seems better after the frequent half-time cake break, strange isn't it?

We have had two weddings this year, something of a record for recent years at Milton. We are still without a vicar here but things seem to be running along smoothly, it's very useful having a ringer as one of the Churchwardens!

We are grateful to our regular visitors who support our practices and will miss Oliver from Radley who has left to study at Portsmouth University. We wish him well, however it was very pleasing that Nicola and I were able to ring in his (and Edward's) first peal at Radley before he went. Details of this will be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

The usual crop of peals have been rung here, including Nicola's 4000th peal in June. Also noteworthy is a peal rung in October by a band all of whom had rung, and the conductor had called, at least 100 peals on the new bells.

It is hoped that work will commence, early in the New Year, to install a kitchen and toilet in the church. At the same time the opportunity is being taken to remove some the pews, with the remaining pews to be moveable, thus creating a community space. Since a new floor will be required the opportunity is being taken to install some under-floor heating. Whilst the church will need to be closed for a period, at this stage we do not anticipate that ringing will be affected, although we will be confined to the tower on occasions. Entry will be via the tower west door whilst the church is closed.

Colin Turner

Radley

We continue to ring regularly on Sunday mornings and Thursday evenings, although attendance has been a little sparse at times lately due to various things like holidays and illness.

A few special things have taken place since the last Newsletter: Quarters were rung on 11 June in honour of the 90th birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth II; and on 31 July to mark the centenary of the death of Pte Edwin Mattingley who died on 27 July 1916, and also as an 18th birthday compliment to Oliver Hyde. Peals have been rung on 21 August – the first peal at the first attempt for both Edward Walker and Oliver Hyde, also the first peal on the bells since rehanging; and on Sunday 9 October as a retirement compliment to the Revd Pam McKellen, Rector of Radley, Sunningwell and Kennington. Pam has been in Radley for the last 12 years and although we are very sorry to see her go, we wish her a long and happy retirement.

The Radley History Club held an exhibition in Church over the weekend of 1st/2nd October, to launch the new book which they have written about the Church, and we were asked to ring prior to the opening on both days.

Oliver Hyde has now gone off to Portsmouth University and we miss his help greatly, although our loss is Portsmouth's gain as he rings with other members of the University Society. He came back for a weekend and was able to ring for a wedding on 29th October.

The branch practice was held at Radley on 13 October but unfortunately only the Branch Ringing Master plus two others from the branch attended. Anyway, we were able to ring quite a selection of methods.

Daphne Pollard



The band who rang the Peal on 21 August (*l to r*): Nicola Turner, Colin Turner, Oliver Hyde, Darren Ricks, Nick Clarke, Edward Walker.

Wantage

Although we have continued to ring on Sundays our practices have been limited due to ringers work and/or family commitments. September was an extremely difficult month due to the number of ringers taking holidays so our practices have been limited to call changes, grandsire and bob doubles.

We were able to ring for the unveiling of the John Betjeman bust sited outside the museum. As we started to ring the actor, Edward Fox, recited the poem Wantage Bells.

I am hopeful that our practices will improve over the next few months and thanks to the other few experienced ringers for their patience and loyalty during this difficult period.

Peter Rolfe

Branch Outing and BBQ - 16 July 2016

The Old North Berks branch pulled off another towering success this July with our summer outing to the towers of Hampshire (not all of them, of course, but a good handful). Nearly two score attendees made the scenic journey between the 5 towers; most to try out ringing the variety of bells and some, like myself, tagging along for the free (and excellent) cake.

The first tower was at St Peter's Church in the village of Goodworth Clatford which had eight bells and a copy of Slinky Malinki in the Sunday school corner. As for the bells, which I am sure you are all more concerned with than the variety of childrens' literature, I was told the tower was very claustrophobic with access through a trap door which one brave ringer had to stand on to ring their bell, risking life and limb for their art. I'm not an expert but from outside the bells had more of a ding than a dong to their tone; I am told that this is because they were light.

We then moved on to St Andrew's Church (also with 8 bells – but a bit heavier this time) in the village of Hurstbourne Priors, sadly the last village of the day with a double barrelled name. The approach to the church was breath-taking; a long driveway lined with lime trees framed the looming Saxon tower, a missed postcard opportunity if ever I saw one. The tower was accessed from the outside by a very quaint little door (though not my favourite of the day) and some very narrow steps. We were also granted access to the church itself which was unusually carpeted, with lock-in pews. Many ringers said they liked the font but I hardly noticed it.

Next we had lunch in the town of Whitchurch; mine was an excellent sandwich which I am still thinking about to this day. Following this we visited the church which was indeed white as the name of the town suggests. This church boasted a whopping ten bells with a tenor of more than 26 cwt and a ground floor ring and we were treated to the sight of a wedding party complete with horse and carriage leaving the church as we entered it.

The penultimate tower was at the Church of St Nicholas in Longparish, this had only six bells which were springy and light and had nice fluffy sallys! Once the last bell had tolled we gathered for our much deserved tea and aforementioned excellent cake in the village hall before heading onwards to our final tower at St Michael and All Angels in Highclere. This church had 8 bells and by far my favourite tower door of the outing; behind this aesthetically pleasing tower door the stairs, I am told, were very even and safe looking.

The day was rounded off by a barbeque and croquet evening hosted by Stuart and Naomi Gibson in their lovely garden in Steventon. Sadly, I could not attend this, but I hear it was a resounding success with a magnificent spread and a good time was had by all!

I'm sure everyone would join me in thanking Philip for organising such a lovely outing and extending that gratitude to the people who took charge of the ringing at each tower; and of course, the people who supplied the tea and cake. Thanks also to Stuart and Naomi for hosting the BBQ and those who donated prizes for the raffles at lunch, tea and in the evening.

Thank you very much for having me along and I wish you all the best in future ringing endeavours!

Katrina Kowalczuk



Young Ringers Event **(Letcombe Regis to Childrey – 2nd June 2016)**

It was a warm June day when we met to ring at Letcombe Regis. There were fifteen young ringers including ten from the Old North Berks Branch, four from the Reading Branch and one from the Oxford City Branch.

The steep ladder up to the ringing chamber was daunting, but all the young people managed it and it was a bit of a squash in the ringing chamber! The ringing varied between rounds and Plain Bob, and was fun.

Back in the church, we split the youngsters into three teams with adults accompanying them. Each team was given a quiz sheet with directions for the walk to Childrey. The teams were despatched at five minute intervals.

I was glad to find they had all managed to get to Childrey with no mishaps and with most of the questions answered. Bobbie May had arrived at Childrey before us and had prepared the refreshments for us – cake , pork pies and tomatoes. There were soft drinks and tea to drink. Everyone tucked in!

It turned out that some of the young ringers had found things we hadn't expected – like the noisy dog at the equestrian centre and the nest of tiny chicks inside the obsolete water pump. But they did see the deer and the red kites too.

While we rang on these pleasant eight bells, some of the mothers marked the quiz sheets so that at the end of the afternoon, prizes could be awarded – packets of cake mix so the young ringers could treat the other ringers in their towers!

Susan Read

Young Ringers Event (Ringing and Rounders in Harwell - 30 August 2016)

It was the end of the school holidays. The weather was still fine but you couldn't rely on it, so we were a bit worried that it might not stay dry for our Rounders games. We met at Harwell church to ring – ten youngsters between 11 and 16 years old, four from Tilehurst, Reading, four from Abingdon and one each from Radley and Harwell. Plus six invaluable adult ringers!

Ringing ranged from rounds to bob triples and Stedman. Mostly the adult ringers were not needed and the young ringers managed the reasonably heavy bells well. And afterwards we took a photo for the record in the shade in the churchyard before we set off on foot for the sports ground next to the British Legion Village Club.

Luckily, we had equal numbers of boys and girls, and of men and women, so were able to make up male and female teams for the rounders match. And also happily, although the boys won the first match, the girls won the second one. Tea, pop and lovely cakes were kindly served by Daphne Pollard in the interval.

Thank you very much to all the adults who gamely joined in with the rounders match and for Tim who knew what the rules should be!

Susan Read



Young Ringers Event (Falconry, walk, lunch and ringing – 25 October 2016)

We were amazed at how busy Millets Farm was at half term – we had to use the overflow car park! We had dithered over whether to take the youngsters to the Maize Maze Phantom activity, or to the Circus or to the Falconry, but had decided that we might lose some in the Maize Maze and would find it difficult to organise tickets in advance for the Circus because we are never certain who will come. So we met the families and took the youngsters to watch the Falconry display which we'd seen before and knew they'd enjoy.

We were pleased to find we had sixteen youngsters ranging in age between 9 and 16 years. From the Old North Berks Branch there were ten: six from Abingdon, two from Letcombe Regis and one each from Harwell and Radley. From other branches there were six: three from Tilehurst (Reading Branch) and one each from North Leigh (Witney & Woodstock Branch), St Giles and Headington (Oxford City Branch).

In the Falconry Centre we started by admiring all the beautiful birds tethered to their perches. They seemed used to being watched at close quarters by the public. Then we moved on to the outdoor seating area where the expert told us about each bird he was showing us. We were warned to hide Augustine's snack in a substantial rucksack because the first bird was notorious for rummaging through plastic bags and eating the audience's sandwiches! One of the falcons flew so close to us that he parted the hair of one of the boys. It was a good display and we all enjoyed it, some with more nervousness than others!

We walked the two miles to Marcham in pairs. I warned everyone to remember to watch the route and what we were passing because there would be a competition to draw a sketch map of the route after lunch.

When we arrived at the church, Daphne was setting out an excellent ploughman's lunch with bread, cheese, ham, salad, fruit as well as cake and a choice of drinks. There was plenty to eat and drink with help from the Marcham ringers setting out tables and clearing up afterwards. Afterwards, Brian organised ringing on the light anti-clockwise ring at the West end of the church, whilst there was a lot of drawing going on for the sketch map competition nearby. And when we



collected the sketch maps for marking (by the parents), we organised lapping on the handbells on the sumptuous fitted carpet in front of the altar.

The afternoon finished at 3 pm with thanks to Daphne and Brian and all the entrants in the sketch map competition. We loved the pictures of the Pumpkin Field, etc. There were small prizes for Emma and Michelle, the winners of the sketch map competition, whose map was good enough to give someone to do the walk by!

Susan Read

Brightwell Bells Restoration

Just a few lines to report on another superb rehang and restoration by our local bell hangers Whites of Appleton. The bells having been welded, given new bearings and with all the fittings were returned on the exact day promised.

They were forklifted from the lorry by use of our bell ringing farmer David's tractor fork lift, with much local interest, carried down the drive to be manhandled into the Church for viewing over the weekend prior to re- installation.

The bells were then hauled up into the tower and rehanging commenced with very many thanks to Graham and James (Whites) valuably assisted by Nick Clarke (wonderful homemade pork pies), Daryl Dixon, Philip Roberts, Richard Loyd and members of our Brightwell team. Hauling, positioning, bolting down, fitting all the working gear, a very big task but all the bells were back in the tower in one day, then another week to complete everything ready for ringing.

What a difference the new bearings etc have made, from "Heavy going" to "Plain sailing". It is a pleasure to ring them now, a beautiful In Tune mellow sound – favourable comments from all who have since rung on them.

An evening service of celebration to rededicate the bells was very well attended including Brian White, a video of the whole sequence from removal, welding, tuning, renewal and re-installation was shown by our local film makers Chris and Helen Baines – this and photos taken by local people can be viewed on our Brightwell village website.

All the 'nitty gritty' of rehanging has been already spelled out by other tower reports that have gone before, so will not bore you with that.

All of this could not have taken place without exceptional fund raising, 20% of the cost from the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund – thank you Stuart. Also all who contributed from local and afar towers. We had support from various grant bodies and fantastic support from our local community with fun from our varied activities in the village, all this was pulled together by our church fund raising committee.

The first peal is to be attempted on Boxing Day, organised by Brian Diserens and our vicar Kevin Beer is to ring in it. A further peal attempt has been organised by Colin Turner to take place in February.

Our practice night is on Tuesdays 8.00pm until 9.00pm – you are all welcome.

Roy Thorpe



The workers



The bells on display before rehanging.



One of the bells being tuned.

Save our Bells Honey



Many of you have enjoyed Rob Nickless' wonderful Meadow Farm honey which he began selling as a brilliantly successful fund raiser for the North Moreton project. Since then Rob has continued to provide the branch with honey which has helped to raise lots more for the projects at Radley and Brightwell. 'Save Our Bells' honey continues to support the general branch bell restoration fund, which is earmarked for future projects within the branch. £1 from the sale of each pot goes directly to help with bell restoration. This is a wonderful way to enjoy the best quality honey at a very good price and the bonus that with each delicious mouthful you are helping the branch! We try to bring some honey for sale at most branch practices, it is also always on sale in the Blewbury post office, or we can try to get some to you through a 'ringers relay' if you let me know. With winter around the corner, why not get some in now or maybe buy some for friends and family as a Christmas gift? We have found that visiting ringers will often buy some, so if you would like to purchase a few pots to keep in your tower please let me know. If you want to learn more about Rob's other interest (apart from ringing!) go to www.meadowhoneyfarm.co.uk.

Richard Loyd

Quiz Night in Brightwell

What a wonderful evening fifty-two branch members, their families and friends spent in Brightwell Village Hall for our annual autumn social event on 12th November. (Now, not knowing what you have read so far in this newsletter and if you haven't guessed already, perhaps I should explain that I wrote the secretary's report a couple of weeks before the quiz night took place!)

The evening started with ringing on the newly rehung and almost unrecognisable Brightwell bells. All credit to Roy and his ringers for undertaking such a worthwhile and successful restoration project. It is wonderful to ring the eight bells and not feel as though the back four are part of a separate ring.

All credit also to Roy and his ringers for their magnificent organisation of the evening. Thanks also go to quiz master Robert, who quickly started putting the nine teams through their paces, with rounds that included national anthems, riddles and the intriguingly named 'doctors and nurses'. Most of the teams assumed incognito names to disguise themselves (such as Witan Way Wanderers, Double Wits, Please Leave Quietly and Masterful Maries), but it was easy to locate the Milton Maulers, with chief mauler Colin, and Abingdon + 1, with +1 Bobbie.

At half time we enjoyed delicious chillies, both meat and vegetarian options, followed by apple crumble or a selection of cheeses. Then it was back to the quiz, with more fast and furious rounds, which included 'who's speaking please', first line of books and, finally, 'that name rings a bell'. The picture round 'when they were young' seemed to be far and away the most difficult. I had no idea that George Clooney used to look like a teenaged girl or that Nickolas Sarkozy was the image of Tony Hancock but with curly hair!

The drawing of the raffle took place while the teams eagerly awaited the results. During the evening there had been several changes amongst the leading teams and the competition was wide open. But it was Blewbury's opportunity to shine with their general knowledge (if not their ringing) skills, and their two teams (The Renegades and Don't Ask Us?) came first and second. SRWP (names are withheld to protect the innocent) were a respectable last and had to share the four rolls of toilet tissue between themselves.

In all, the evening raised £410 for branch funds. What a great way to raise money and have lots of fun at the same time.

Gill Loyd



The winners (Renegades) prize being collected by Sue Lay (churchwarden)



Jill Garlick collecting for SRWP



The competitors



The organizers

Sally forth Outing October 2016

So, that's it then. Possibly the last one of 60 trips that we have organised. (that's Cliff and Jill Garlick). It's been a lot of fun, hard work, scary bits and so many wonderful memories.

This year we travelled to the Norfolk/Suffolk border around DISS. As usual we met at the local pub nearest to the first tower of the Friday morning, travelling from all points of the compass. After a healthy lunch at the King's Head, New Buckenham, we started ringing at TIBENHAM (6x18) then on to PULHAM MARKET (8x13) and taking tea at PULHAM ST MARY (8x14). As usual, some of the ringers brought wonderful home made cakes for us to enjoy. Thank you all so much. The ringing chamber was reached by a long staircase which rose with a single rail to a platform at the top of the tower arch. It looks as if it had replaced a ladder. We finished the day at STARSTON (6x8).

The hotel at Scone was situated on a road leading from London to Norwich and was a historic coaching Inn. The fish and chips ordered by some for their evening meal, were very large and took a bit of shifting!! The very small bells at SCOLE (6x4) were easy to ring and had the added attraction of an ante room so the spare ringers could relax on sofas and lounge chairs. A good start to the day.

PALGRAVE (8x7) has a ground floor ring, also very easy and pleasant to ring. Lunch was taken at the Cherry Tree, YAXLEY (6x10) before ringing on the, again, ground floor. We travelled on to HORHAM (8x6) known to the local ringers as 'Orrible 'Orham!! We understand why. The access was through a trap door with very little to grab to haul oneself through. Tea was in the old school room, having waited for a violent thunderstorm to finish. WILBY (8x15) had very steep steps that got smaller towards the top (so having rung there in my youth I left it to the more fit). The final tower of the day was OAKLEY (6x10). We were detained for 10 minutes by a road accident on the way so were late arriving. The key holder had removed all the paraphernalia stored in this ground floor room – and then replaced it, thinking we were not coming. So when we arrived 10 mins late she had to grumpily shift it all out again. Obviously she was not a ringer and proved it by not knowing where the treble was! A pleasant ring to finish the day. Back to the hotel and bed with suitable refreshments of course.

It was so unfortunate that the ringing for Sunday morning service was spoiled by a broken rope soon after starting. Which meant some of the band were not able to hear all 8 bells and ring on these wonderful bells at DISS (8X22). The service was a Parish Eucharist. There was a wonderful choir with an outstanding bass section and plenty of congregation to help. We said our goodbyes to all our ringers' and made our way home.

After organising 60 Sally Forth trips, we have decided to hand over the clapper to anyone willing to take up the challenge. Shirley has already agreed to continue, in her usual competent way, to organise the towers whilst Jill has retired gracefully from organising the hotel accommodation. When we started organising these trips back in 1980 we didn't think we would still be doing it in 2016!

Cliff Garlick

QUARTER PEALS

Abingdon, St Helen, 21 May 2016. **1280 Superlative Surprise Major**: Susan Read 1, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke 2, Matthew Franklin 3, Sarah Barnes 4, Brian Read 5, Peter Heritage 6, Ryan Mills 7, David Thomas (C) 8. First quarter peal of Superlative: 2, 4, 8. Rung for the church festival of "The Hope Within Us".

Blewbury, 4 June 2016. **1260 Plain Bob Triples:** Michael Winter 1, Charlotte Colliss 2, John Colliss 3, Mary Friskney 4, Edd Colliss (C) 5, Matt Napper 6, Lizzie Hough 7, Matthew Phillips 8. Rung as a compliment to Cassie Watcyn-Jones and Jon Finnigan, to be married at this church later today.

Radley, 11 June 2016. **1260 Plain Bob Doubles**: Daphne Pollard (C) 1, Oliver Hyde 2, Ann Belcher 3, Audrey Fowlie 4, Edward Walker 5, Maurice Belcher 6. Rung to celebrate the 90th birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Abingdon, St Helen, 12 June 2016. **1260 Grandsire Triples**: Jeanette Thomas 1, Sarah Barnes 2, Margaret Brock 3, Peter Heritage 4, Isaac O'Shea 5, Tim Pett (C) 6, David Thomas 7, Rosanna Cretney 8. For the official 90th birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Chilton, 27 June 2016. **2160 Grandsire Doubles**: S Jane Hibbert 1. John W T Hibbert 2, Janette Roberts 3, Mary C Friskney 4, Stuart F Gibson (C) 5, Philip Roberts 6. In memory of Steve Boddy, a member of this tower, prior to his Thanksgiving Service.

Abingdon, St Helen, 16 July 2016. **1259 Grandsire Caters**: David L Thomas 1, Thomas I Moller 2, Robert C Beavis 3, Aaron L Moulder 4, Lucy Gwynne 5, Isaac O'Shea 6, John Gwynne 7, Simon W Edwards (C) 8, Adrian C Malton 9, Anthony M Bulteel 10. A birthday compliment to Aaron. Circled Tower: 1

Radley, 31 July 2016. **1260 Plain Bob Doubles**: Daphne Pollard (C) 1, Sally Mulholland 2, Ann Belcher 3, Oliver Hyde 4, Edward Walker 5, Maurice Belcher 6. Rung to mark the centenary of the death of Pte Edwin Mattingley of this parish, died 27 July 1916. Also an 18th birthday compliment to Oliver Hyde.

Abingdon, St Helen, 11 September 2016. **1259 Grandsire Caters**: Rebecca Franklin 1, Priscilla Morris 2, Susan Read 3, Sarah Barnes 4, Rosanna Cretney 5, Isaac O'Shea 6, Matthew Franklin 7, David Thomas (C) 8, Tim Pett 9, Brian Read 10. First on 10: 4, 5. First Caters as Conductor. Rung with the best wishes of the band to Alison and Ian Miles of St Helen's for their Silver Wedding Anniversary.

Appleton, 6 October 2016. **1259 Grandsire Caters**: Michele Winter 1, Barbara H Payne 2, Susan E M Read 3, Sylvia M Harrison 4, Jenny A Dyer 5, Brian J Read 6, John H Napper 7, Michael J Harrison (C) 8, Nicholas J Clarke 9, Peter H M Day 10. A welcome to Appleton to Rev Ken Campbell and for his licensing service as Priest in Charge.

Blewbury, 11 October 2016. **1280 Spliced Surprise Major** (C, Y, N, S, R): Susan Read 1, Mary Friskney 2, Brian Read 3, Paul Coad 4, Dave Barrington 5, Alan J Griffin 6, John G Pusey 7, Nick Clarke (C) 8.

Abingdon, St Helen, 6 November 2016. **1280 Plain Bob Major**: Priscilla Morris 1, Susan Read 2, Hugh Bishop 3, Brian Read 4, Sarah Barnes 5, Peter Heritage 6, Tim Pett 7, Isaac O'Shea (C) 8. 1st on 8 as conductor. Rung half-muffled in memory of David Beacham who was a cousin of the conductor's grandmother.

Abingdon, St Helen, 13 November 2016. **1260 Plain Bob Triples**: Becci Franklin 1, Priscilla Morris 2, Margaret Brock 3, Matt Franklin 4, Hugh Bishop 5, Sarah Barnes 6, Isaac O'Shea (C) 7, Josh Ball 8. Rung on the minor 8, half-muffled, for Remembrance Sunday.

East Hagbourne, 13 November 2016. **1260 Grandsire Triples**: Mary Napper 1, Lynn Crawford 2, Shirley Goss 3, Mark Cooke 4, Jeff Powell 5, John W Napper (C) 6, Alan Foster 7, Andrew Kaye 8. Rung half muffled for the Royal British Legion Service of Remembrance.

Radley, 13 November 2016. **1260 Plain Bob Doubles**: Daphne Pollard (C) 1, Edward Walker 2, Ann Belcher 3, Audrey Fowlie 4, M Ian Minns 5, Maurice Belcher 6. Rung half-muffled on Remembrance Sunday.

PEALS

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Sunningwell**, 27 May 2016, 2h44, **5040 Surprise Minor (35m)**: Robert J Crocker 1, Colin M Turner 2, Nicola J Turner 3, Timothy G Pett 4, Peter G C Ellis (C) 5, Alan Regin 6. Rung in memory of Private Frederick Joseph Champ, Royal Berkshire Regiment, killed in action 27th May 1916. Buried at Philosophe Cemetery, Mazingarbe. Their name liveth forever.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 31 May 2016, 2h38, **5024 Glasgow Surprise Major**: Colin M Turner 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Beryl R Norris 3, Nicola J Turner 4, Kenneth R Davenport 5, John C Sheppard 6, Peter Bridle 7, Bernard F L Groves (C) 8.

WINCHESTER & PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN GUILD, **Milton**, 3 June 2016, 2h36, **5056 Wedding Delight Major**: Elizabeth J Hough 1, John P Colliss 2, Charlotte K Colliss 3, Nicola J Turner 4, Colin M Turner 5, Bernard F L Groves 6, Peter Bridle 7, Edward P D Colliss (C) 8. Rung as a compliment to Cassie Watcyn-Jones and Jon Finnigan, to be married at Blewbury tomorrow.

Blewbury, 11 June 2016, 2h57, **5088 Lincolnshire Surprise Major**: Comp. William Barton: Matthew Napper 1, Mary C Friskney 2, Patricia M Newton 3, Josie S Irving 4, Joanna E Knight 5, Mark Vincent 6, Stuart F Gibson (C) 7, Richard Loyd 8. To celebrate the official 90th Birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth II. First Peal – 1, 50th Peal – 6, First in method – 4 & 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 11 June 2016, 2h35, **5088 Bristol Surprise Major**: Brian Bladon 1, Nicola J Turner (C) 2, Darran Ricks 3, Timothy G Pett 4, David G Salter 5, John C Sheppard 6, Marc Hart 7, Colin M Turner 8. The conductor's 4,000th peal. Rung to celebrate the official 90th birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and the 95th birthday of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 10 July 2016, 2h35, **5152 Baston Fen Alliance Major**: Hilary A Beresford 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Colin M Turner 3, Charlotte A Boyce 4, John C Sheppard 5, Michael J Dew 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Peter Bridle 8.

GLOUCESTER & BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION, **Milton**, 16 July 2016, 2h36, **5152 Yorkshire Surprise Major**: Thomas I Moller 1, Brian Bladon 2, Mark Edwards 3, Simon W Edwards 4, David L Thomas 5, Cameron A Waters 6, Adrian C Malton (C) 7, Peter Bridle 8.

Milton, 14 August 2016, 2h39, **5056 Spliced Surprise Major (6m)**: D Giles Winter 1, Eunice A Wark 2, Stephen R Smith-II 3, Josie S Irving 4, Joanne P Druce 5, Anna E Sherwood 6, Colin R Cairns 7, Colin G Newman (C) 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Drayton**, 18 August 2016, 2h46, **5096 Fluorine Alliance Major**: Nicola J Turner 1, Helen J Piper 2, Colin M Turner 3, Robert J Crocker 4, Peter Bridle 5, Richard L Thumwood 6, Timothy G Pett 7, Bernard F L Groves (C) 8.

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS, **Appleton**, 20 August 2016, 2h45, **5040 Imperial Surprise Royal**: Comp. R D S Brown: Lester J Yeo 1, Alison C Waterson 2, Pauline McKenzie 3, Peter L Bill 4, Ian V J Smith 5, Robert D S Brown 6, John R Martin (C) 7, John A Foster 8, David Hird 9, Michael E C Mears 10.

Radley, 21 August 2016, 2h25, **5040 Plain Bob Minor**: Colin M Turner 1, Oliver J Hyde 2, Darran Ricks 3, Nicholas J Clarke 4, Edward A S Walker, Nicola J Turner (C) 6. First peal at first attempt – 2, 5. The first peal on the bells since rehanging.

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS, **Milton**, 27 August 2016, 2h35, **5056 Oxfordshire Surprise Major**: Colin M Turner 1, Susan D Sparling 2, Ian L C Campbell 3, P Wendy Campbell 4, Charlotte A Boyce 5, Michael E C Mears 6, John R Martin (C) 7, John A Foster 8.

APPLETON SOCIETY, **Appleton**, 10 September 2016, 2h45, **5075 Grandsire Caters**: Comp. Morris J Morris: Patricia M Newton 1, Julie A Haseldine 2, Stephen H Stanford 3, Robert H Newton 4, Jennifer A Dyer 5, Andrew Haseldine (C) 6, John H Napper 7, Stuart F Gibson 8, Richard A Horne 9, James A Haseldine 10. Rung as a 75th birthday compliment to Brian White.

Abingdon, St Helen, 13 September 2016, 3h00, **5040 London No 3 Surprise Royal**: Comp. D F Morrison (no. 189a): E John Wells 1, June D Wells 2, Colin M Turner 3, Beryl R Norris 4, John C Sheppard 5, Peter Bridle 6, W John Couperthwaite 7, Timothy G Pett (C) 8, Kenneth R Davenport 9, Bernard F L Groves 10. 500th peal together - 4, 5.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 15 September 2016, 2h34, **5056 Chetwode Delight Major**: John C Sheppard 1, Helen J Piper 2, Timothy G Pett 3, Colin M Turner 4, Richard L Thumwood 5, Robert J Crocker 6, Bernard F L Groves (C) 7, Peter Bridle 8.

Milton, 20 September 2016, 2h39, **5088 Deva Surprise Major**: W John Couperthwaite (C) 1, June D Wells 2, Beryl R Norris 3, John C Sheppard 4, E John Wells 5, Peter Bridle 6, Colin M Turner 7, Ian G Campbell 8.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 2 October 2016, 2h32, **5065 Superlative Surprise Major**: Cynthia E Howell 1, Colin M Turner 2, John C Sheppard 3, Nicola J Turner 4, Marc Hart 5, Charlotte A Boyce 6, John R Martin (C) 7, Peter G C Ellis 8. To welcome the Right Reverend Stephen Croft as Bishop of Oxford. Also wishing Stuart Talbott a speedy recovery.

Milton, 9 October 2016, 2h50, **5088 Pudsey Surprise Major**: E John Wells 1, Joanne P Druce 2, June D Wells 3, Colin G Newman 4, Josie S Irving 5, D Giles Winter 6, Anna E Sherwood (C) 7, Colin R Cairns 8. First Peal as Conductor (age 16).

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Radley**, 9 October 2016, 2h25, **5040 Surprise Minor (7m)**: Nicola J Turner 1, John C Sheppard 2, Cynthia E Howell 3, Michael J Dew 4, Colin M Turner 5, Peter G C Ellis (C) 6. A retirement compliment to the Revd Pam McKellen, Rector of Radley, Sunningwell & Kennington.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 10 October 2016, 2h39, **5088 Bristol Surprise Major**: Cynthia E Howell 1, Nicola J Turner (C) 2, Brian Bladon 3, John C Sheppard 4, Timothy G Pett 5, Colin M Turner 6, Richard L Thumwood 7, Peter Bridle 8. Every member of the band has rung, and the conductor has called, at least 100 peals on these bells.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 16 October 2016, 2h36, **5088 Lessness Surprise Major**: Cynthia E Howell 1, Nicola J Turner (C) 2, John C Sheppard 3, Susan E Marsden 4, Colin M Turner 5, Peter G C Ellis 6, Nicholas A Elks 7, Peter Bridle 8. The 400th peal on the bells. Birthday compliments to Joy Browning (Churchwarden) & Ian Crichton (Conductor's Father).

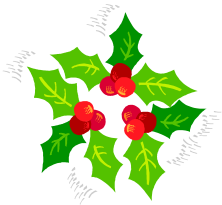
ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Sunningwell**, 26 October 2016, 2h41, **5040 Surprise Minor (7m)** : Brian Bladon 1, Cynthia E Howell 2, Colin M Turner 3, Robert J Crocker 4, Nicola J Turner 5, Peter G C Ellis (C) 6. A retirement compliment to the Revd Pam McKellen, Rector of Radley, Sunningwell & Kennington. A peal attempt on the day of her last service at Sunningwell had to be cancelled due to the indisposition of one of the ringers (who is currently recuperating well under doctors' orders).

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Drayton**, 27 October 2016, 2h41, **5088 Lessness Surprise Major**: Peter Bridle 1, Nicola J Turner (C) 2, Cynthia E Howell 3, Hilda C Ridley 4, Nicholas J Clarke 5, Timothy G Pett 6, Robert J Crocker 7, Colin M Turner 8. Rung as a farewell to Revd Rebecca Peters, Priest in Charge, who is leaving to continue her Ministry at Peachcroft Christian Centre in Abingdon.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS, **Abingdon, St Helen**, 29 October 2016, 2h59, **5040 Spliced Surprise Royal (6m)**: Comp. R LeMarechal: Stephen P Noyes 1, Roy LeMarechal (C) 2, John P Colliss 3, Susan E Marshall 4, Benjamin J Carey 5, Graham A C John 6, Kristian D Scudamore 7, Malcolm S Turner 8, R Mark Esbester 9, Edward P D Colliss 10.

ST BLAISE SOCIETY, **Milton**, 30 October 2016, 2h32, **5024 Bristol Surprise Major**: Cynthia E Howell 1, Nicola J Turner (C) 2, Colin M Turner 3, Beryl R Norris 4, Peter Bridle 5, Richard L Thumwood 6, Timothy G Pett 7, Michael Chester 8.

North Moreton, 15 November 2016, 2h41, **5040 Surprise Minor (7m)**: Richard Loyd 1, Mary C Friskney 2, Robert H Newton 3, Robert A Partridge 4, Nicholas J Clarke 5, Stuart F Gibson (C) 6. 1st Peal on the augmented bells. Rung on the day of celebration for the completion of the bell and church facilities project and by a band that was closely associated with the restoration and augmentation of the bells.





ONBB

New Year's Ringing & Refreshments

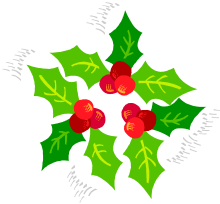
Monday, 2nd January 2017

St Helen, Abingdon

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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NEXT ISSUE

Deadline for copy for the next issue in June 2017 is 2nd May 2017. But please don't wait until then, send your news, pictures, and quarters in as they happen.

Published by the Old North Berks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild

ONB Branch Programme for 2017

Please make note of the varied start and finish times which are designed to mirror local requirements for practices. The Surprise Practices are intended for all levels of Surprise ringing and we particularly welcome branch members who wish to learn Cambridge major from minor standard. Please contact Richard Loyd if you would like to be added to his email reminder list for the Surprise practices.

Monday, 2nd January – Ringing and refreshments – Abingdon St Helen (10) (10.30am–12.30pm)
Wednesday, 25th January – Afternoon Practice – North Moreton (6) (2.00–3.30pm)
Wednesday, 1st February – Surprise Major Practice – Milton (8) / Drayton (8) (7.30–9.00pm)
Tuesday, 14th February – Branch Practice – Brightwell (8) (7.45–9.15pm)
Wednesday, 22nd February – Afternoon Practice – Drayton (8) (2.00–3.30pm)
Saturday, 18th March – Striking Competition and AGM – Cumnor (8) (SC 3.00pm, Service 5.00pm, Tea 5.45pm, AGM 6.30pm)
Wednesday, 22nd March – Afternoon Practice – East Hagbourne (8) (2.00–3.30pm)
Wednesday, 5th April – Surprise Major Practice – Blewbury (8) (8.00–9.30pm)
Thursday, 20th April – Branch Practice – Harwell (8) (7.30–9.00pm)
Wednesday, 26th April – Mini outing and lunch
Wednesday, 10th May – Branch Practice – Sunningwell (6) (7.30–9.00pm)
Wednesday, 24th May – Afternoon Practice – Marcham (6) (TBC) (2.00–3.30pm)
Monday, 12th June – Branch Practice – Drayton (8) (7.30–9.00pm)
Wednesday, 14th June – Surprise Major/Royal Practice – Abingdon St Helen (10) (7.30–9.00pm)
Wednesday, 28th June – Afternoon Practice – Childrey (8) (2.00–3.30pm)
Saturday, 22nd July – Branch Outing and Barbecue
Wednesday, 26th July – Afternoon Practice – Radley (6) (2.00–3.30pm)
Wednesday, 2nd August – Surprise Major Practice – Goring (8) (7.45–9.15pm)
Monday, 14th August – Branch Practice – Chilton (6) (7.30–9.00pm)
Wednesday, 23rd August – Afternoon Practice – Brightwell (8) (2.00–3.30pm)
Monday, 11th September – Branch Practice – Sutton Courtenay (8) (7.30–9.00pm)
Wednesday, 27th September – Afternoon Practice – Sunningwell (6) (2.00–3.30pm)
Wednesday, 4th October – Surprise Major Practice – Harwell (8) (7.30–9.00pm)
Wednesday, 11th October – Branch Practice – Cholsey (8) (8.00–9.30pm)
Wednesday, 25th October – Afternoon Practice – Milton (8) (2.00–3.30pm)
Thursday, 9th November – Branch Practice – Wallingford (10) (8.00–9.30pm)
Saturday, 11th November – Social Evening – Barn Dance (venue TBC)
Wednesday, 22nd November – Afternoon Practice – Chilton (6) (2.00–3.30pm)
Wednesday, 6th December – Surprise Major Practice – Brightwell (8) (7.45–9.15pm)
Monday, 11th December – Branch Practice – North Moreton (6) (7.30–9.00pm)
Wednesday, 13th December – Afternoon Practice – Blewbury (8) (2.00–3.30pm)