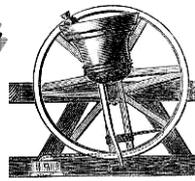




Branching Out

The Oxford City Branch Monthly Newsletter



Monday 16th January 2017

Happy New Year to everyone! We've had a good positive response to the 'new look' newsletter, so please keep your articles coming in! Email me with your news and photos to: paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk. The next edition will be on 20th February. (Deadline for copy, 18th)

My sincere apologies to Adrian Gray in Wolvercote! In the last edition I incorrectly stated that he had rung his first quarter peal on 8th December. It should have said that it was his first quarter 'inside'. Apparently he rang his first quarter peal in 2002! Sorry Adrian!

The Ringing Master's Report

Happy New Year everyone! It's been a good start, with a great turnout for the first Branch Practice of the year last Saturday 14th January.

Thank you to the Garsington ringers for hosting the practice.

We had a good range of ringing, from Plain Hunt to Surprise Minor, and I think most people had a chance to practise something they're working on. Thank you also to Rosie Cretney for bringing the hand bells to keep people busy (and warm on a very cold night!). I hope this is a good sign for the year's practices.

Don't forget it's Headington's 'Simulator' Advanced Practice next Sunday 22nd January at 3.30 in the afternoon.

All ringers of all abilities are welcome to try ringing Triples to Surprise Major...

Andrew Freer

Advanced Practices coming up very soon

Sunday 22 nd January	Advanced 'Simulator' Practice at Headington (8)	3.30pm – 5.00pm
Thursday 9 th February	Advanced Practice at St Giles (8)	7.30pm – 9.00pm

(These include everything from Triples to Surprise Major. Can all our experienced ringers support these practices please!)

The Radley Course 2017

You still have time to apply for the Radley Course. Closing date for applications is 1st February 2017. It's open to all Branch members.

The course is on Saturday 8th April, and has groups for Plain Hunting on 5,6,7, and 8, Plain Bob Doubles, Minor, Triples and Major. Also, Grandsire Doubles and Triples. The cost is £25 including an evening meal, and the Branch may be able to help with the cost.

(Please see the poster attached at the bottom of this newsletter for details of how to apply, or contact me for more information)

Lindsay Powell lsteff@talktalk.net

The following City Branch Practices are now confirmed:

Kidlington.	11 th February	10.30am-12.00pm
St Aldates.	11 th March	5.00pm-6.30pm
Wheatley.	8 th April	5.00pm-6.30pm <i>(still to be confirmed)</i>
Headington.	10 th June	5.00pm-6.30pm <i>(please note the change of date)</i>
Cowley.	8 th July	5.00pm-6.30pm
Horspath.	9 th December	5.00pm-6.30pm

A Very Successful Ringing Practice at Wheatley (6)

The first ringer's Practice of 2017 was held at Wheatley on 2nd January, with a large contingent from the Wheatley home tower. The mostly inexperienced Wheatley ringers were able to take advantage of the stronger bands to improve much of their basic skills – rounds and called changes – under the supervision and guidance of ringers of long standing, and were very positive about the results. There was still time for some advanced ringing to take place, which hopefully meant all who attended had an enjoyable morning. Peter Bayliss

Ringing Returns to Kirtlington (8) - helped by Facebook!

Mike and Eleanor Shakespeare, together with Mick Journeaux and Simon Cole, helped teach a group of ringers at Kirtlington in April 1999 ready for the Millennium

which included Sue MacCreedy and Jane Carlo (who later became Tower Captains at Bletchington and Yarnton respectively). In 2005, Mike and Eleanor moved to pastures new in Derbyshire and Simon Cole took over, after which Willie Haynes organised bands for weddings, and Kathryn Grant took over when Willie became unwell.

After a long period without any regular ringing - other than for weddings and 'Lamb Ale' - the traditional 17th century annual village festival held on the Holy Trinity weekend - ringing resumed on Monday practice nights for the first time since September 2015. This was all due to the power of Facebook, with Kirtlington Village having its own group! It all started when I contacted Katherine Grant and PCC members Ann Mowat and Gill Sommerfield, who put a request on the Village Facebook page for new recruits to make up a band of new ringers for Kirtlington. Amazingly, Facebook came to the rescue when we heard from no less than 17 people who were interested in learning to ring! On the first Monday practice night at the end of 2015, around 12 potential ringers turned up, including Steve and Judith Vickers.

Willie Haynes, Katherine Grant and I started teaching bell handling, with the help of some ringers from other Branches.

Very soon afterwards, the students could handle their hand and back strokes well. Steve and Judith can now ring Bob Doubles, helped along by the fact that both of them regularly attend Bletchington and Islip practice nights and have been on a Guild Training Day course.



Steve has become Tower Captain for Kirtlington and is now teaching a new recruit, having attended an ART course in Abingdon (where I mentored him), and the other ringers are learning Plain Hunt and 'Mexican Wave'. Five of the original twelve who came to learn at Kirtlington regularly come to ring on a Monday night and they hope to start ringing for Sunday Services when a new Vicar takes up the position.

Although this is a Bicester Branch story, I think it would benefit other Branches who may like to try recruiting via Facebook!

Ron Burgess

Headington Ringers Latest Young Recruit !

At the beginning of October, St Giles ringers, John Pusey and Andrew Freer, hosted a couple of demonstration sessions to show a group from the 28th Littlemore Oxford Scouts about the gentle art of bell ringing! This included having a go on a tied bell, a chance to ring on hand bells, and being shown round St Giles Church, with them being told about the history of the church by one of the church wardens. One of the Scouts that took part was 13 year old Luke Diesel (pictured left) who lives in Headington, so we suggested he might like to have further ringing lessons on the 8 bells at St Andrews.



He took us up on our offer, and since then, he's been coming along to our Wednesday practices every week, and is still really enthusiastic!

Luke has been making amazing progress just recently, and can now ring rounds and called-changes with the rest of the band, and has now been invited to come along to Sunday morning ringing whenever he can make it.

Since he's started ringing, we've discovered that he's actually the Great Nephew of Old Headington's late Tower Captain, Tom Smith, who I remember well, and who taught me to ring when I was just a little bit older than Luke!

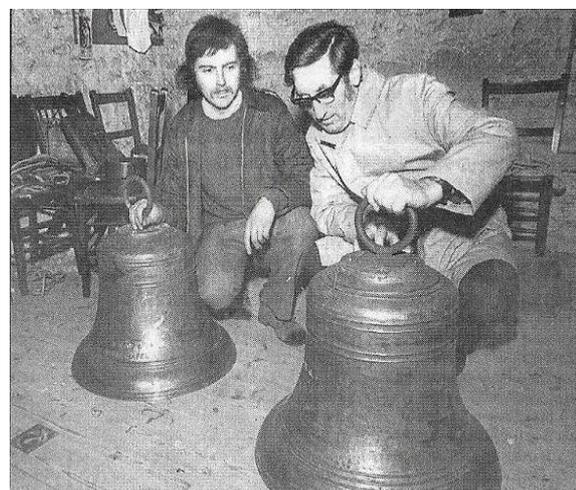
Back in 1974, the Oxford Mail came along and took this picture of me in the ringing chamber with Tom, just before we had our two new Trebles installed, which as many people will know, were not a very good match with the other six bells, so they were re-cast in 2000 when all the other bells were rehung and retuned.

Many residents of Headington will remember Tom as the owner of Smith's Shoe Repair Shop in the London Road, which he ran with his brother Ron for many years which, when they both retired, became 'Brambles' Wool Shop.

Sadly that shop closed in 2013, and has become yet another Headington charity shop!

We're positive that in a very short time, Luke will become a credit to his Great Uncle Tom!

Paul Lucas



Kidlington's 'Bell Wheel' at their Church Festival

Kidlington ringer, Phil Sampson has an amazing talent for building things with Meccano! So for last year's Flower Festival at Kidlington, he built a beautiful Meccano 'Ferris Wheel'! The wheel is similar in design to the London Eye, but with the addition of a silhouette bell and a working clapper (the 'noiseless' type!). The wheel has 16 'pods', skillfully decorated with flowers by Jane Burgess. It has over 3000 parts altogether, and weighs about 1cwt (50kgs). It took around 10 months to construct and was on display for just 2 days.

Phil takes great pleasure in building with Meccano, but within days of finishing one of his 'works of art', he then proceeds to take it all apart and use the same Meccano bits to build yet another object!

So sadly all that remains of Phil's classic Ferris Wheel, is the photograph on the left! **Ron Burgess**



Dates for your Diary

Full details from Ringing Master, Andrew Freer: andrew.freer@gmail.com or Hugh Deam: deamhugh@gmail.com

Sunday 22 nd January	Advanced Simulator Practice at Headington (8)	3.30pm-5.00pm
Saturday 28 th January	Practices at Cassington (6) 10.30am-11.45am, and Eynsham (6) 12noon-1.30pm	
Saturday 4 th February	10 Bell Practice at Bicester (10)	10.30am-12noon
Thursday 9 th February	Advanced 8 Bell Practice at St Giles (8)	7.30pm-9.00pm
Saturday 25 th February	Northleach (8) 10.15am. Brunch at The Black Cat, Northleach.	Great Barrington (6) 12.45pm
Thursday 26 th January	Method Practice on the Wolvercote Dumb Bell with an active screen! (recommended!)	7.00pm-9.00pm

(For more details about the Wolvercote dumb bell, contact its creator, Jonathan Beale: janiceandjonathan1@virginmedia.com)

For more details about everything else, go to the Oxford City Branch website: www.oxfordcitybranch.org.uk

Any articles or photographs for inclusion in 'Branching Out' please email me: paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

RADLEY ONE DAY COURSE

Based at Radley (near Abingdon)

SATURDAY 8th APRIL 2017

Cost £25.00 including evening meal

Methods offered:

**Plain Hunt on 5, 6, 7 and 8; Grandsire Doubles and Triples;
Plain Bob Doubles, Minor and Major**

(All subject to demand)

These courses have been running for a number of years and are designed for learners of all ages and levels of competence. No need to feel nervous about coming, as you will be with others at a similar level.

We aim to improve your confidence as well as your ringing with friendly support and tuition.

Details of ringing criteria and an application form are available

from Ann Osborne, email: [annosborne.1 at btinternet.com](mailto:annosborne.1@btinternet.com)

or phone: 0118 942 5876

Closing date for application is:

1st February 2017

(A maximum of 25 students)