



Oxford City Branch Hugh's News



Produced fortnightly by Paul and Hugh, with a few contributions from other ringers

Monday 7th July 2014

A Visit to Garsington on 23rd June



It was just another perfect summer evening. Based on my recent visits, I am beginning to wonder whether Oxford has any other kind. It is hard to imagine a better site from which to enjoy the weather than this hilltop church with its sweeping views of the surrounding countryside. All the more impressive so near to the summer solstice to an Antipodean coming from short days and dark evenings Down Under! Because of the scheduling of various meetings, this was to be my only chance to ring in Oxford this summer. Hugh had kindly arranged transport and recruited a number of City Branch members to join the **Garsington** band for a pleasant and productive practice. I had rung these bells last year just after they were re-hung, and they went every bit as well as I remembered, with a really pleasant sound in the ringing chamber. The augmented band allowed several local ringers to succeed in trebling to, covering or participating in methods which might not otherwise have been possible – always a satisfying experience. However brief, my summer 2014 visit to Oxford will join a long list of pleasant memories of the city and its ringers. **Alan Coates**

A Ringing Picnic at Swalcliffe (6) on 29th June



Although we have only had one actual washout (April 2012 at Lower Heyford) since the first of these picnic/ringing combos back on a clear September evening in 2006 at Middleton Stoney we have somewhat flown by the seat of our pants, managing to slot in just after showery weather (Berrick Salome July 2009, Aston Abbots August 2010), just before impending showers (Mapledurham July 2011) or both (West Wycombe April 2008 and Northmoor July 2008). So it's good to report that after enjoying the bells and picnicking on an unfeasibly warm October afternoon at Chastleton last year we have now managed two years on the trot after a classic summer Sunday in **Swalcliffe**, which offered up a fine set



of bells, a distinguished parish church of Saxon origin, and a mighty 15th century tithe barn containing numerous traditional agricultural and trade vehicles. For events such as this it always helps if the churchyard possesses a handily situated bench or seating, and fortunately the churchyard here fitted the bill for us to gather around and lay out the array of victuals after working up a healthy appetite on the weighty bells. Just for good measure, Swalcliffe more than held its own against some illustrious antecedent locations in regard of photo opportunities. **Hugh Deam**

Basic Skills Ringing Practice at Tackley (6) on 28th June



By way of keeping things in proportion as the rain hammered down outside, it

should be remembered that a lightning storm in 1862 severely damaged part of this impressive cruciform church and that we were well off by comparison. More fortunate still we were ensconced inside during the worst of the deluge and afforded such wonderful bells to ring meteorological conditions could be put to one side, with all those assembled agreeing at how lucky the village is to possess one of the finest sets of bells in the county. In the midst of the fete and wedding season, plus the gewgaw of the 12-Bell Striking Competition in Oxford we were still able to make good use of the bells, allowing the four ringers from Cowley the opportunity to demonstrate just what strong progress the tower is making with its ringing. **Hugh Deam**



Stanton St John (5) on Thursday 19th June



On a lovely summer's evening, ringing took place in St John the Baptist parish church in the beautiful village of **Stanton St. John**. Ringing their bells was an experience! The tower space was very small - ringing bells 4 and 5 involved standing in a line similar to waiting for a bus, to make use of the space. The bells themselves were a challenge and the ropes kept you on your toes with their springiness - a crash helmet recommended! Call changes and Plain Hunt were rung. Afterwards we had a well-earned drink in The Talk House pub! **Charlotte Furneaux**

Dates for your Diary

Full details from Hugh Deam at: [hugh.deam at btinternet.com](http://hugh.deam.btinternet.com) or phone: 07899-871079.

- Monday 7th July
- Friday 11th July
- Saturday 12th July
- Saturday 12th July
- Saturday 26th July

- Thame (8). General Ringing with the Thame Ringers. **7.30pm-9.00pm**
- Aunt Sally at the Red Lion, Old Marston at 8.30pm, preceded by ringing from 7.15pm
- Practice at Kidlington (8), hosted by the Kidlington Ringers **10.30am-12noon**
- Branch Practice at Wolvercote (6) **6.30pm-8.00pm**
- Eynsham (6). Specific Doubles Methods Practice **10.30am-12noon**

Local Practice Nights

- Mondays: St Aldates (6), Garsington (6)
- Tuesdays: Kidlington (8), Horspath (6).
- Wednesdays: Headington (8), Iffley (6).
- Thursdays: St Giles (8), Wolvercote (6), Stanton St John (5), Cowley (6).
- Fridays: Old Marston (6), Wheatley (6), North Hinksey (6) (6.30pm-7.30pm).

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

Any information or photographs for inclusion in **Hugh's News** please email me: [paulclucas at hotmail.co.uk](mailto:paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk)