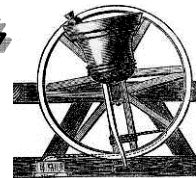




Branching Out

The Oxford City Branch Monthly Newsletter



Monday 10th July 2017

As usual, lots going on over the last few weeks! Please keep your articles coming in for 'Branching Out'. Let us know about anything that's happening in your tower that may be of interest to others.

Email me with your news and photos to: paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk. The next edition will be on 14th August. (Deadline for copy, 12th)

Congratulations to our Ringing Master!

Great news! Congratulations and best wishes go to Andrew Freer and Ali Pickford, who announced their engagement last week. We have seen Ali in the tower just a couple of times, but look forward to seeing her again. I understand that they will be looking for a house in Oxford.

We all celebrated with a small 'drinks party' during the St Giles practice on Thursday 29th June. It goes without saying that we all wish them well for the future!

John Pusey



Ringing Master's Report

Hi everyone. We've had two branch practices this month, with the ringing up and down at Marston, and a general practice at Cowley.

There were only a few at the up and down practice, but we had a good session. Would there be demand for a repeat later in the year when the barbecue and punts are less tempting?

I had a great time at the Cowley practice; it was lovely to see so many people. It was suggested to me that there is demand for a learning to Treble Bob Hunt practice. Shall I try to organise one?

Let me know.

Andrew Freer



Branch Practices coming up in the next few months

These practices are for all Branch members who ring from call changes upwards.

If there is something you would like to practise, you can request it on the day, or email our Ringing Master, Andrew Freer in advance.

Please be assured you will all get a warm welcome. We hope to see lots of you at many of the dates below.

Saturday 12 th August	Yarnton (6) (22cwt)	5.00pm-6.30pm
Saturday 9 th September	St Mary Magdalen, Oxford (10) (7cwt)	5.00pm-6.30pm (t.b.c.)
Saturday 14 th October	Wheatley (6) (9cwt)	5.00pm-6.30pm (t.b.c.)
Saturday 18 th November	A.G.M. at Wolvercote (6) (8cwt)	Afternoon
Saturday 9 th December	Horspath (6) (5cwt)	5.00pm-6.30pm

Other Dates for your Diary

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

Thursday 13th July Advanced Practice at St Giles (8). Grandsire/Stedman Triples, Cambridge Major and beyond. 7.30pm-9.00pm

Monday 24th July **Colin Taylor's Outing to Gloucestershire Towers**
9.45am St Peters, Winchcombe (8) 11cwt; Brunch in Winchcombe; 12noon St Martin of Tours, Woolstone (6) 4cwt;
1.15pm St Nicholas, Ashchurch (8) 11cwt; 2.30pm St Peters, Stanway (5) 11cwt;

Saturday 5th August Witney & Woodstock Branch Practice at South Leigh (8) 10cwt. 10.30am-12noon

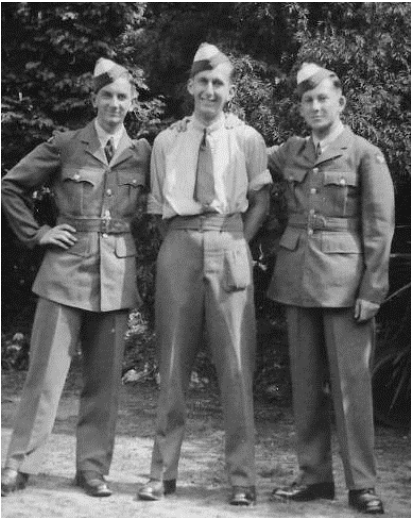
Monday 21st August **Outing to Wiltshire**
10.30am St Peters, Milton Libourne (6) 10cwt; 11.45am Collingbourne Kingston (6) 19cwt;
Lunch at The Tipple Inn, Collingbourne Ducis; 2.15pm Collingbourne Ducis (6) 11cwt

Monday 28th August Bank Holiday Practice at Chilton (6). Open to ringers of all abilities. 10.30am-12noon

For more details about everything else, please 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

Congratulations to Doug Wilks!

Douglas Wilks has been a ringer for 70 years now. At the age of 91 (soon to be 92), Doug is still going strong as a regular ringer at St Lawrence North Hinksey. To commemorate this, the ringers put on a lovely party for him on Sunday 9th July. Following a quarter peal of Mixed Doubles, everyone went out into the church garden to enjoy a fabulous spread of food and drink, put on by Ginger and Janet and the other Hinksey ringers!



Doug with his sister in 1935



Doug was born in Bedford, but learnt to ring at St Leonard's church, Sunningwell in 1932, beginning his Guild membership as a member of Old North Berks branch in 1938.

After serving in the RAF during the Second World War, Douglas rang in numerous peals, and quarter peals organised by the prolific peal ringer, Alan Pink, and his name can be seen on peal boards in towers across the county - Thame, and



Church Hanborough to name but two. In 1954, he and his wife Evelyn, who he has been married to for 57 years, moved to live in Marston and subsequently became a member of the Oxford City Branch. A loyal member of North Hinksey tower for several decades, Douglas is still ringing quarter peals at the age of 91 on a monthly basis at St Nicholas, Old Marston on the first Sunday evening of the month, as well as Sunday morning services at North Hinksey.

**The Quarter Peal rung was as follows. 1260 Doubles
Reverse Canterbury, Plain Bob, Grandsire.**

Treble. Dawn McInulty; 2. Douglas Wilks; 3. Judy Kirby; 4. Hugh Deam (c); 5. Bernard Masterman; Tenor. Ray Rook.

Congratulations from all of us, Doug!

A Surprise Presentation!

Phil Sampson, our Steeple Keeper at St. Mary's, Kidlington, is well known for his Meccano exhibits at the church's flower festivals as well as building models for his family and the demonstration bell for display in the tower ringing chamber.

What is not so well known is that he has made new keys for old locks in the church without the original to copy. 30 years ago Phil made a very nice brass key in a presentation box and gave it to our previous Secretary, Peter Franklin, who did a stalwart job in organising our fund raising to retune and rehang our Bells in March 1987.

His key is currently held by his widow Joyce Franklin.



During our annual ringers' dinner in March this year, Phil suddenly announced that he had made a new key in a box to present to someone that night for their commitment to the tower's ringing and at the same time started walking towards my end of the table. I was thinking who would be likely candidates when he announced my name. I was very proud to accept this lovely brass key which must have taken him many hours to make. I thanked him and everyone else for supporting me as Tower Captain during the last 13+ years.

Ron Burgess. Tower Captain St. Mary's, Kidlington

Jonathan Jones celebrates his 50th birthday with a Quarter Peal

On Saturday 8th July, Jonathan Jones decided the best way to celebrate his 50th birthday was with a quarter peal. As his father and brother who

are both ringers were visiting, it was the perfect opportunity for the three of them to ring a quarter together.

The quarter peal was followed by a wonderful lunch in Jonathan's garden.

Happy Birthday Jonathan, and a special mention of thanks to Alan Jones, his father, who has only recently taken up ringing again after a 20 year break.



St Mary Magdalen, Oxford (7-1-12 in A) - 1260 Plain Bob Doubles in 42m
Treble. Alan Jones; 2. Keith W Godfrey; 3. Jonathan Jones; 4. David Jones; 5. Rosanna Cretney (c); Tenor. Lindsay Powell.

(Pictured are the band clockwise from front right. The second picture on the right shows the Jones family.)

Lindsay Powell

25 Fabulous Feline years!

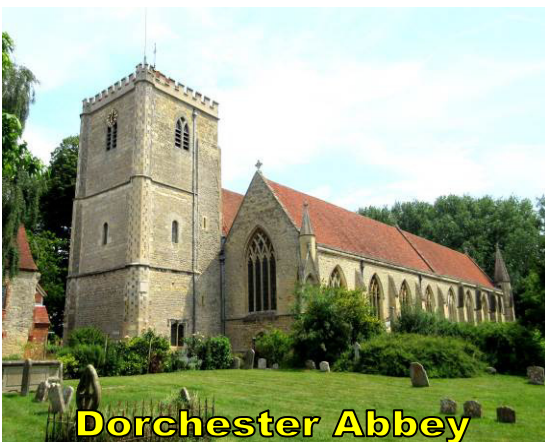
Choosing names for one's new arrivals is often a daunting prospect, and it was no different for Neil and I, 25 years ago

when we were having a veritable feline face-off about what to call two gorgeous kittens, delivered to us by our delectable surrogate mother Jessica (she never did let on who the surrogate father was, although we have our suspicions!).

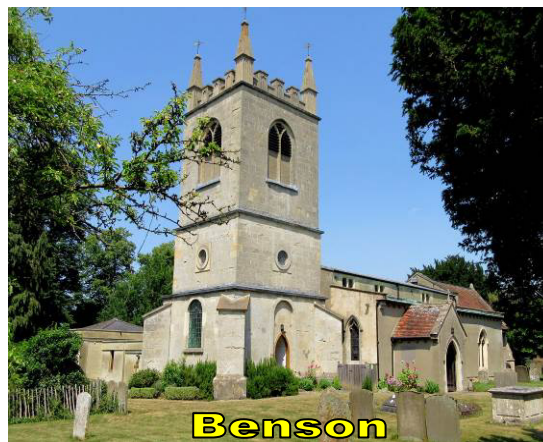
The main apple of discord was that our furry little bundles of



joy were two brothers, and Neil roundly rejected any boy's name I came up with, insisting that he was going to flout convention and use girl's names such as Abigail, Fenella or Elspeth, names which I was sure would cause our little darlings untold stress and disorientation even without their impending castration. Our apparent trajectory towards professional dispute resolution was



Dorchester Abbey



Benson

arrested by divine intervention; the list of Bishops displayed at Dorchester Abbey was a revelation to us as we both gazed in recognition at the two best names any boy cat could hope for.

On finding himself alone in the Vestry with not one, but two Bishops of Dorchester after assisting at the Eucharist, Neil took full advantage of opportunities to share this story with them. One can only imagine the relief felt by Bishops Colin and Anthony on realising that the subject of his confession was no less burdensome than that we had bestowed the greatest honour upon their predecessors Bishops Oscytel and Wulfwig by taking their names for our cats.

The cats, like the eponymous Bishops, are of course no longer with us, but it was fantastic to be able to ring a frivolous feline-related QP at Dorchester last Thursday celebrating Oscytel and Wulfwig's long contented lives, and I'm very grateful to Lindsey, Sue, Brian, Ruth, Simon, Mike and Paul for indulging me.

The day was rounded off nicely by a QP of Plain Bob Major at Benson, conducted by Simon and consisting entirely of singles, which kept us all on our toes!

Oxford Diocesan Guild - Dorchester, Oxfordshire. The Abbey Church of St Peter and St Paul
Thursday, 6 July 2017 in 48m (16-2-11 in E)
1260 Plain Bob Triples

Treble. Lindsey Thornton; 2. Alison T Merryweather-Clarke (C); 3. Susan E M Read; 4. Paul C Lucas;
5. Ruth Plumridge; 6. Brian Read; 7. Simon D G Webb; Tenor. Michael Probert.

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the birth of Oscytel and Wulfwig, two cats named after Bishops of Dorchester.

Alison Merryweather-Clarke

Wheatley's Reunion in Brackley

On 17th June the Wheatley bell ringers enjoyed a day out in South Northamptonshire. We were invited by former Wheatley ringer, James



MacDonald who is now assistant curate at St Peter in Brackley, and his wife Rachel.

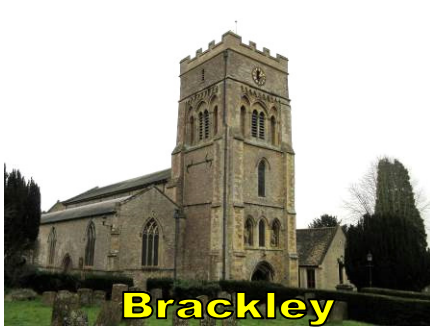
Bolstered by local ringers we took on the 8 in **Brackley**, followed by **St Peter in Greatworth**, and **Sts Peter and Paul in Chacombe**.

(photo left).

After lunch at the Red Lion in Culworth we rang at **Sulgrave** and **Whitfield**, ending the afternoon at **Sts Peter and Paul in King's Sutton**.



were very grateful for the support given by the local ringers. For many of us it



was the first ringing away from Wheatley, and the perfect weather, the beautiful churches and the excellent company made it a great day out for all of us. The sheer variety of access to the bells through trapdoors, up ladders or via dark uneven spiral staircases meant that we will never complain about the steps



in Wheatley again! We would like to thank all the local ringers who joined us and made the day so special for us. And special thanks to James and Rachel, and we wish them the best of luck as they move up to York next month. **Peter Bayliss**

Wedding Bells at Cuddesdon!

On an extremely hot day, in the middle of our current heatwave, five hardy ringers went along to ring for a wedding on the 'challenging' but lovely sounding bells at Cuddesdon (6).



As you will see from previous newsletters, the bells are due to come out for a re-hang very soon.

Currently the Treble is out of action, so only five ringers were needed. Paul Lucas, Malcolm Fairbairn, Simon Edwards, Maarit Kivilo and Andrew Freer.



the church was really pleased that we had managed to get a band of our own ringers together following a request from Brian Lowe, who is currently underway training a new band of Cuddesdon ringers.

As a result, each of us was rewarded with a bottle of Italian Sparkling Wine! And we got paid too!

It was also a good chance to take a nice new picture of the church under perfect conditions... **Paul Lucas**