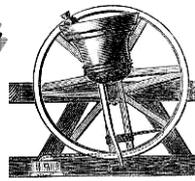




# Branching Out

## The Oxford City Branch Monthly Newsletter



Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Please keep your articles coming in for our newsletter! Anything that is happening in your tower, let us know about it. Email me with your news and photos to: [paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk). The next edition will be on 17<sup>th</sup> April. (Deadline for copy, 15<sup>th</sup>)



### Tony Crabtree's Rope Splicing Course on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March

Learning how to splice a damaged rope is always very useful, so we've invited expert, Tony Crabtree from Shrivenham to run this course at Cowley Vicarage between 2.00pm-4.00pm on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March.

If you're interested in this, please contact our Branch Secretary, Lindsay Powell on: [secretary@oxfordcitybranch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@oxfordcitybranch.org.uk)

You can bring your own ropes along, or they can be provided for you to practise on. Don't miss this opportunity to learn how to splice ropes!

*(This course has proved to be very popular, and as a result unfortunately all the places are now taken.*

*If you would be interested in a rope splicing course in the*

*future, please let me know and once we have enough expressions of interest, I will try and organise another one.)*

*Lindsay Powell – Branch Secretary*



### The Ringing Master's Report

We had a useful practice at St Aldate's this month, with a strong band who were able to support people practising new things. We rang touches of Plain Bob Doubles and courses of Norwich Surprise Minor, which I hear the Marston ringers have been practising. I rang my first ever course of Delight, too. Numbers were a little low, though.

A Branch practice is a good opportunity to share tips and to practise something you don't have a strong band for in your own tower, so I hope you'll take advantage of it.

There won't be a branch practice in April, because of Ed Nicholson's Nottingham outing, which is now on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April, and because we haven't been able to get a venue for a ringing up-and-down practice yet. Next month it's the Striking Competition with the Stallpits mini ring, the AGM and a practice at St Thomas's. The Striking Competition will be on 6 bells but there'll be 10-bell ringing later, where I hope to ring everything from rounds upwards. And if that's not temptation enough, I think I've volunteered to bake a cake!

I can only hope the weather is as fair as it was last year! *Andrew Freer*

### The Half Yearly Meeting and Striking Competition details – Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May at St Thomas (10)

1.00pm - 2.30pm striking competition. 2.30pm - 3.15pm Half Yearly Meeting  
4.00pm – 5.00pm general ringing. 3.15 – 4.00pm tea

If your tower wants to enter a band for the Striking Competition please can you let me know. We also hope that we will be able to put together 'scratch' bands on the day, so even if you don't have enough ringers in your tower to enter, please come along and join in anyway!

The idea is to have fun, and the bands can ring anything from rounds upwards. Once again, we hope to have Tony Crabtree's Stallpit ring this year as it proved such a hit at last year's Half Yearly Meeting at Old Marston. This will however be weather dependent, although Tony is currently working on a mobile 'roof' to put over it, if the weather is a bit adverse!

As there is no resident band at St Thomas to provide tea, I have agreed to co-ordinate this. Facilities are limited, and I would be grateful for a couple of volunteers to help with serving tea, and also for any keen bakers out there who would be willing to provide a cake. Thank you to the cake bakers who have already offered their services.

I will have certificates for new members who were elected at the Annual General Meeting to hand out. Please can you make sure someone from your tower is there to collect them. It's always nice if the new member is there to collect their certificate in person. Also, if you have any new members you wish to elect at the Half Yearly Meeting, please let me have their names in good time, and make sure there are two people present who know them to propose and second their nomination. *Lindsay Powell – Branch Secretary*



### The Bradfield Ringing Course

This is a residential course running from 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> August. There are groups covering everything from bell handling to Surprise Major.

The closing date is 30<sup>th</sup> April. *There is a poster at the end of this newsletter with details of how to apply.* *Lindsay Powell*

## Branch Practices coming up in the next few months

(No Branch Practice in April)

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 some of the dates below.

Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> May	St Thomas, Oxford (10)	Including the Half-Yearly Meeting and the Striking Competition.	1.00pm-5.00pm
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> June	Headington (8)		5.00pm-6.30pm
Saturday 8 <sup>th</sup> July	Cowley (6)		5.00pm-6.30pm
Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> August	Yarnton (6)		5.00pm-6.30pm
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> September	St Mary Magdalen, Oxford (10)		5.00pm-6.30pm (t.b.c.)
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	Wheatley (6)		5.00pm-6.30pm (t.b.c.)
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> November	A.G.M. at Wolvercote (6)		Afternoon
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> December	Horspath (6)		5.00pm-6.30pm



## Congratulations to Tertia!

Headington ringer, Tertia Softley rang her first quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles on the Treble at St Andrews on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March.

1,300 Plain Bob Doubles.

**Treble. Tertia Softley; 2. Lindsay Powell; 3. Katy A Routh; 4. Paul C Lucas; 5. Rosanna Cretney (C); Tenor. James Scott-Brown**

Rung with the band's best wishes to Tower Captain, Clare Fairbairn, who would have called it, had she not broken her hand, following a bike accident.

**Paul Lucas**

## Margaret Marsh's Brief Visit to Oxford

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March, the St Giles' ringers were very pleased to welcome back Margaret Marsh, who was taught to ring at St Giles, but now rings back at her home in Sydney, Australia.

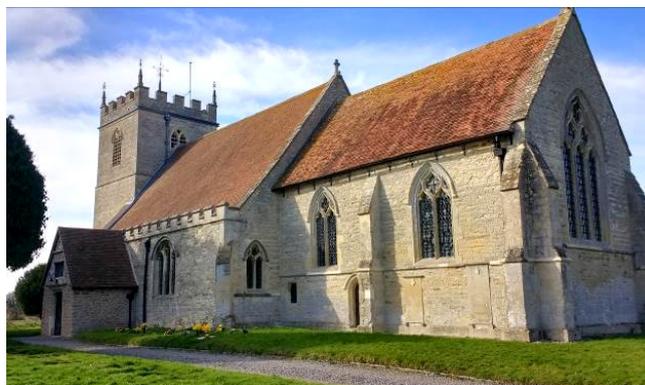
She was over in the UK to visit her daughter in Scotland who is expecting a baby, so she only had time to drop in at our early evening learners' practice, but tells us that she is still ringing regularly at Christ Church St. Laurence in Sydney, a 10-bell tower where Dermot Roaf's niece, Deryn is in charge.

**John Pusey**



## A Practice at Chalgrove (6) 16cwt, on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March

The yellow blossom of daffodil and tender green shoots on the trees accompanied us to Chalgrove. On the way to the church tower, Judy Kirby



kindly drove us to see John Hampden's Monument, a memorial for the English Civil War politician and 'patriot. We were welcomed by the Vicar and Brian Gray, the



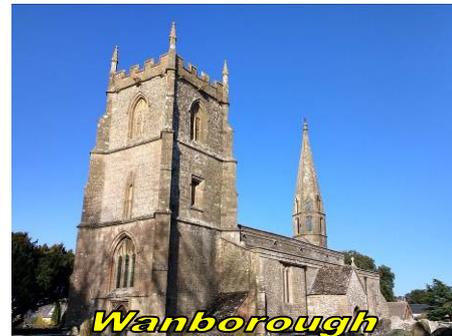
Tower Captain, to the elegant historic church, where we had time to appreciate the rediscovered wall paintings. As usual, we learned a lot from Susan King, the antiquarian, about English architecture and tradition. This included a small hidden window which would allow people who had to stand outside the church, because of their illness, to see what was going on at the altar. Susan explained the relationship between the three figures cast in the floor of the chancel, and even their status and profession, and directed our attention to the exquisite historical font. Also, thanks to Susan, I have learned what a ting tang bell is for! The bright and pleasant new ringing chamber was a delightful place in which to pull the ropes. I took the opportunity to try the tenor, which was much heavier than the one in St Nicholas, Marston - actually 2 1/2 times as heavy. Soon, we were joined by Steve Vickars from Kirtlington. I might have been the one who benefited most from this session, as we rang a lot of Reverse Canterbury, thanks to Steve's conducting. We did plenty of Doubles, ranging from dear old Plain Bob Doubles to the inspiring and much admired Stedman. **Kathy Xu**

## David Park's Trip to Wiltshire on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March

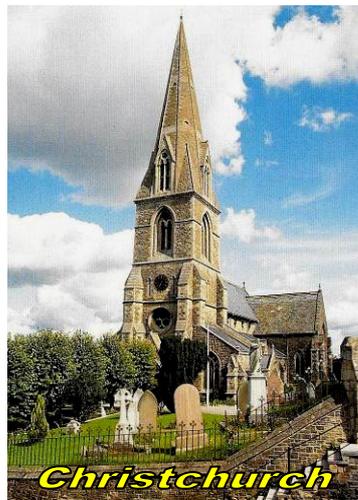
Swindon may well be a paean to post Industrial zeal and distention, and indeed we passed through one of the famous urban landmarks on the way to our final tower of Christchurch, namely the myriad that is the Magic Roundabout, yet it is nonetheless still engirded by an irrefutable quintessence of irrality. On this occasion we were on the eastern and southern flanks of the town where one is never more than ten minutes' drive between idyllically situated churches that possess bells. The idiom 'like chalk and cheese' is said to have derived from this area due to distinct juxtaposition of the chalky uplands and low lying dairy land.



We started our day at **Bishopstone (8)**, with its church set amidst a glade surrounded by a network of brooks and small streams. Our second stop was **Wanborough (8)**, with its spectacular church that has a tower at one end and a spire at the other, highly reminiscent of Purton, on the other side of Swindon, which we visited a couple of years ago. For our third tower we were privileged to be the first visiting band to ring on the brand new set of bells at **Liddington (6)**. Readers of the Ringing World would have seen a front page story this February regarding this restoration project which saw the original set of five bells and frame retained with a new set of six cast and installed below.



After lunch we rang at **Chiseldon (6)** which kept up the standard of excellent sets of bells that we had encountered to this point. So to our final tower and no slackening in the quality of bells as **Christchurch, Swindon (10)**, proved to be a sublime ring of ten that had everyone, without exception, singing their praises.



**A big thank you to David Parks for booking the towers, and to all those who attended this excellent trip. Hugh Deam**

### Dates for your Diary

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

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March** Practices at Childrey (8) 12cwt – 10.00am; Longcot (8) 8cwt – 11.30am. **Lunch.** Faringdon (8) 17cwt – 2.30pm  
Lunch at the King & Queen, Longcot; Click for Lunch Menu: <http://www.longcotkingandqueen.com/dining/lunch-menu/>  
(\*\*lunch orders to Donna Bennett as soon as possible please: [dcmurphy2@btinternet.com](mailto:dcmurphy2@btinternet.com))

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April** There is no ringing practice at Headington that evening, because the ringers are holding their AGM.

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April** Trip to Nottingham to ring at local towers with former Headington ringers, Matt Beardsall and Ed Nicholson.  
All ringers are welcome to come along and join us! **Please note the change of date.** Full details in the next newsletter.

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April** Bank Holiday Trip to Berkshire. Mortimer (6) 7cwt – 10.00am; **Brunch at Beech Hill Church – 12.15pm;** Heckfield (5) – 15cwt; **Lunch at The New Inn, Heckfield;** Eversley (6) 5cwt – 2.30pm.  
Names for lunch to Hugh: [deamhugh@gmail.com](mailto:deamhugh@gmail.com)

For more details about everything else, please go to the Oxford City Branch website: [www.oxfordcitybranch.org.uk](http://www.oxfordcitybranch.org.uk)  
Any articles or photographs for inclusion in 'Branching Out' please email me: [paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk)

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