



Oxford City Branch Hugh's News



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

Monday 12th November 2012

(Sorry there was no edition last week. There was not enough news then. Hughs News may be a bit intermittent until ringing picks up in the New Year)

R.I.P. Bob Benstead. 5th June 1918 – November 2012

Bob hailed from Brightwell cum Sotwell and sang in the choir at the church. His father was a policeman and who moved around the Abingdon/North Berkshire area so Bob rang at many of the local towers. Bob came to Oxford to work at Cowley, and it was then he began his ringing association with St. Aldates.

He subsequently became a fixture at North Hinksey and St. Giles. Bob was a Guild ringer for some 70 years and notched up many hundreds of peals and quarter peals. Famously his favourite method was Stedman and he was a loyal supporter of Branch outings. Bob was also a keen gardener. For many years, Summer holidays were spent in the West Country where he visited many of the towers, becoming especially well known around the Barnstaple area. Even though he was latterly constrained by disability, Bob was still enthusiastic about his ringing and continued to make it to several events a year and contributed greatly with his bags of aluminium cans for recycling that brought valuable funds for the Branch. Bob is survived by two sons and a daughter. *Roy Jones*



Antony Ellis Announces his retirement

The Kidlington ringers gathered together in The King's Arms after our Tuesday practice to say a fond 'farewell' to Antony Ellis who will be retiring at the end of November as Vicar of St Mary's and a much valued and experienced bell ringer. Antony has served Kidlington Parish for the last 14 years and will be very much missed, both as vicar and bell ringer. We wish him and his wife Kathryn a very happy retirement and will look forward to visiting him next year in the Hereford area to try out some of his local towers. *Ron Burgess.*



Stedman Triples Practice at Woodstock (8)

A lucky 13 of us assembled at Woodstock last Saturday 3rd November for the last joint Stedman triples practice of 2012. We were not only lucky but also optimistic; as Woodstock's most famous son pointed out, "A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty". Having overcome a difficulty never encountered by Winston – that of parking in Woodstock on Farmer's Market day! We also rose to various challenges afforded by the opportunity of either ringing with experienced Stedman ringers or supporting fledgling Triples ringers. After such good teamwork I am optimistic about the future of Stedman Triples ringing in and around Oxford, Witney and Woodstock. Please join us for our next opportunity on February 2nd at Woodstock. *Alison Merryweather-Clarke.*



Margaret Marsh rings a large bell in China!

At the Wild Goose Pagoda and Buddhist Temple in the city of Xi'an in China, I had the opportunity to ring a huge iron bell! The ancient city of Xi'an, the burial place of the Hidden Warriors was one of my stops on a recent tour of China. The bell dates back to the Jin Dynasty around 1192. The sound of the bell is 'crisp and pleasant' and can be heard from around five miles away. The purpose of the bell is for 'alarming' and for 'timing'. It is obviously not a bell for change ringing, but as you can see is static in a wooden frame and a battering ram is swung against it! For the price of five 'Yuan', I was permitted to strike the bell three times. This is supposed to bring 'happiness and good luck!' It was a very positive and happy experience. In the city of Xi'an there is also a large bell tower 36 metres high. It was built in 1384 in the Ming Dynasty. This bell tower is one of the grandest in China and contains several large bronze cast bells. *Margaret Marsh in Sydney*



Dates for your Diary

Full details from Hugh on: 07899-871079, or email: hugh.deam@btinternet.com

Saturday 17th November - Branch A.G.M. at St Giles (8) 14cwt.

General Ringing - 3.00pm. Service - 4.00pm. Tea - 4.45pm. A.G.M - 5.00pm. All welcome.

Katie Lane will be bringing the book stall to the AGM to raise funds. There will be a raffle. Prizes will include book tokens, and several bottles of wine!

Saturday 24 th November	6 Bell Method Practice at Iffley (6) 10cwt	12.15pm-1.30pm
Thursday 29 th November	Ringers' Quiz Night at Wolvercote Church Hall	8.00pm-10.00pm
Tuesday 4 th December	Advanced Practice at Headington (8) 7½cwt	7.30pm-9.00pm

Local Practice Nights

Mondays:	Garsington (6), (No practices for the time being. Bells due to be rehung), St Aldates (6).
Tuesdays:	Headington (8), Kidlington (8), Horspath (6).
Wednesdays:	Iffley (6).
Thursdays:	Wolvercote (6), St Giles (8), Stanton St John (5), Cowley (6).
Fridays:	Old Marston (6), Wheatley (6), North Hinksey (6) (6.45-7.45).

For full 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@hotmail.co.uk