



# *Newbury Branch Newsletter*

## *Christmas 2016*



### Some Diary Dates

#### January

6th BP Great Shefford

#### February

3rd Feb BP Thatcham

18th to 26th Quarter Peal Week

25th Branch Dinner

#### March

4th AGM at Speen  
(includes BP)

#### April

22nd Committee Meeting at  
Chieveley

#### May

13th Branch Outing

<i>From the Chair</i>	2
<i>Notices and Officers details</i>	3
<i>Steve Lowman – Obituary</i>	4
<i>Speen &amp; Young Ringers Award Scheme</i>	5
<i>Rod &amp; Pat Brown's Golden Wedding and Molly's first Quarter Peal</i>	6
<i>Bill Butler's books</i>	7
<i>From the Ringing Master</i>	8
<i>Thatcham</i>	9 & 10
<i>Branch Practices</i>	11
<i>ODG 10 Bell Striking Competition</i>	12
<i>ODG 6 Bell Striking Competition</i>	13
<i>Bens 10 for SBABC</i>	14 & 15
<i>Inkpen and Hampstead Norreys</i>	16
<i>ODG &amp; The Guild Festival</i>	17
<i>Hungerford</i>	18 & 19
<i>Word search</i>	20
<i>Letters</i>	21

The copy deadline for the Summer 2017 issue is 30th June. Please send contributions by email as attachments, or on hard copy by post to the Editor

[mdrobins@hotmail.com](mailto:mdrobins@hotmail.com)



---

## From the Chair

I can hardly believe that another year has nearly passed. It seems just a short time ago that I was writing for the Christmas Newsletter 2015. Ringing in the Branch is in good heart with most towers able to ring for services. Branch practices are well-supported. Ringing Master (should that be 'Mistress'?) Di Bridle is to be congratulated to the new vigour that she's brought to these. The high standard of our ringing is evident in the results of the Guild bell striking contests, where Hungerford came fourth in the 6-bell contest and the Branch team came second in the 10-bell contest.

It was a shock to learn of the sudden death of Steve Lowman of Lambourn on 30<sup>th</sup> November. He had done so much to advance the ringing in Lambourn. Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this time, see separate obituary in this newsletter.

Back in October, we had a meeting of Tower Captains or their representatives. Our annual Quarter Peal week takes place from 18<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> February next year (yes, that's a long week of 9 days), with the Branch Dinner on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>, venue to be confirmed. Please put a note in your diary to come to the dinner. The date of next year's Branch Outing was changed to Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May and will be to the Banbury or Bletchley area. Further details will follow.

The monthly Branch practices have been well-supported but we're always pleased to see more members coming along and everyone, at any standard of ability is very welcome. They are held on the first Friday of every month at a different tower each time. Di makes sure that everyone gets to ring. For example, the first half of the evening could be for learners/novices and the second half for general

### **Officers 2014/2015**

Chairman: Richard Marshall 01635 200907  
marshalr@btinternet.com

Vice Chair: Marcus Allum 01635 204044  
marcusallum@aol.com

Ringling Master: Di Bridle 01635 868370  
dibridle@aol.com

Secretary: vacant post  
(email being handled by  
mdrobins@hotmail.com)

Treasurer: Rebecca Browning  
01635 31983 rebeccabrowning@hotmail.co.uk

Newsletter Editor: Mark Robins 01488 644616  
mdrobins@hotmail.com

200 Club: Cath Fittsell 01488 682378  
Cfittsell@hotmail.com

Training: Lucy Hopkins Till  
01256 350718/0766 833004

Guild Reps: Lucy Hopkins Till (see Training)  
and Rosemary Evans 01635 40952  
evans2@dsl.pipex.com

Webmaster: Julia Deady  
01635 528482/07788 447940  
Julia.deady@gmail.com

## **Chairman continued**

ringing. We may arrange extra practices on other evenings targeting specific levels of competence i.e. Grandsire/Plain Bob Doubles or Plain Minor. If you have any thoughts or requests please let Di Bridle know. But if you'd like a specific learning session, do contact Lucy Hopkins-Till. She is our Training Officer and arranges short courses for the Branch.

Of course, if you want to really progress your ringing skills, then you should be going out to towers in the Branch or elsewhere. You'll be welcome at any of the weekly tower practices, make new friends and get experience on different bells. St Mary's, Kintbury, ringers would especially appreciate visitors at any Thursday evening practice as they tend to be short of numbers. You can check out tower practice nights and times on the Branch web pages.

We do have a great web site and an active Facebook page, thanks to Julia Deady. I hope that you look at these regularly because that's where we put the latest news, and if you have Facebook, you can subscribe to our Facebook page.

Branch Website:    [www.bellsnearnewbury.org.uk](http://www.bellsnearnewbury.org.uk)

Facebook Page:    [www.facebook.com/groups/1632622187007501](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1632622187007501)

The Branch AGM takes place on 4<sup>th</sup> March next year at Speen. I will be standing down from the Chair and from the Officers' committee at that meeting. We still don't have a Secretary in the Branch. So we NEED TWO VOLUNTEERS to step forward and join the Officers. It's not a great commitment as there are only a few meetings over the year but these are both important roles that must be filled. Please let me or any other Branch Officer know if you can help.

Finally, it remains for me to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

***Richard Marshall***  
***Chairman***



## **Obituary to Stephen Lowman**

Many people will not have known Steve but almost everybody in the village will have heard him. The Bell Ringers of Lambourn are deeply saddened by his sudden death on Wednesday 30 November of our Ringing Master. He had a heart attack trying to fight the fire in a neighbouring garage.

Always with a smile and a stickler for high standards he made a huge contribution to ringing in our village and the area. He gave much time and energy and with endless patience teaching us how to ring and will be greatly missed by every one of us. He was also very active both in the Newbury and the Vale of the White Horse Districts. Our thoughts are with Pat his wife and his family and friends.

Brought up in Brightwell in a bakery, he learned to ring at the age of 16. He then went into the navy for 25 years serving mainly in the Far East becoming a communications specialist and met Pat his wife also a WREN on HMS President in London. They had three children Andrew, Daren and Christopher who now lives in Great Shefford.

On leaving the forces he worked in a senior role in Cable and Wireless being a commuter from Didcot to London. On retiring they moved to near Yeovil but Steve wanted to be nearer the family in this area and was very close to his children. They came to Lambourn and were very happy here.

Steve took up golf and squash quickly tiring of the former. He tentatively resumed bell ringing which he had not done since a teenager and threw himself into knocking Lambourn into shape.

The funeral on 15 December was marked by half muffled ringing by local ringers and the area. Several quarter peals have been rung in his memory. He will be sadly missed in the tower, the Sports Club and about the village.

***Bruce Laurie and Amada Marchant***

### ***Personal Footnote to Steve's Obituary:***

*About four years ago, Steve walked into Hungerford Tower on practice night and declared that he was just resuming ringing after 30 years off and could he join us. It quickly became apparent that Steve was Ex-RN, like me, Ex-Radio Operator, like me, and we instantly struck up a rapport with a language and humour unique to the Naval Service. Steve and I were soon friends and, after a very brief spell getting back up to speed, he was soon ringing quarters all over the place. If I was being lazy, he'd call me and ask "are we doing anything this Sunday Evening Mark?". Such was Steve's infectious enthusiasm for bellringing and quarter peals in particular. I feel fortunate to have known Steve, albeit for a short while, and was shocked and saddened by his passing. I will sorely miss his humour, enthusiasm and friendly wit. RIP.*

***Mark Robins***

## Speen

Speen held their tower AGM on 8 December when we re-elected all the usual suspects:

Tower Captain :	Carrie Jones
Ringing Master :	Graham Green
Asst Ringing Master :	Ros Brandwood
Steeplekeeper :	Dave Thorpe
Treasurer :	Mary Hills

Otherwise, we are ringing regularly and looking forward to Christmas and to 2017, when we are hosting the branch AGM on 4 March.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

***Mary Hills***



## Young Ringers Award Scheme

Are you an ODG member who is under 18 on 1st April 2017? If so, you can enter the award scheme, which is designed to encourage and recognise young ringers' achievements. The scheme runs for a year (April to March) with the awards based on each participant's achievement and progress throughout the year, and they will be presented at the Guild AGM in May 2018.

There are three levels of award: Gold, Silver and Bronze, based on a combination of factors:

- Ringing skill and personal development
- Contribution to the wider community
- Breadth of interest and knowledge
- Depth of knowledge and/or expertise



For further details, visit: <http://odg.org.uk/education/YRA>



## Rod and Pat Brown's Golden Wedding Anniversary and Molly's first Quarter Peal

My daughter Molly and her friend Emma have been learning to ring at Bucklebury for a couple of years. I thought several months ago that with Molly's grandparents 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary in August this was an ideal opportunity to get Molly to ring her first quarter peal. It was quite a warm morning when 6 of us arrived at Chieveley to attempt a Quarter Peal of Grandsire Doubles. As I was keen to get a quarter for this occasion with Dad, Molly and myself ringing I had plan A and B. Plan A was Grandsire Doubles on the back 6 with Molly ringing the treble. If that failed plan B was to move to the front 6 with Molly on the tenor – fortunately we didn't need plan B. Although we had some "interesting" moments we did complete the quarter peal at the first attempt.

Well done to Molly for ringing her first quarter and congratulations to Mum and Dad on 50 Years of marriage. I now need to organise a quarter for Emma, assuming Molly hasn't put her off the idea. Also, thanks to John, Ros and Sue for being the other half of the band.



Oxford Diocesan Guild  
On Saturday, 13 August 2016 in 46 min  
Chieveley, Berkshire  
St Mary the Virgin

**1260 Grandsire Doubles**

- 1 Molly A Brown
- 2 Rosamund M Durham
- 3 John J Durham
- 4 Rod Brown
- 5 Graham M Brown (C)
- 6 Sue Foote

To celebrate Pat & Rod Brown's Golden Wedding Anniversary on 20th August 2016. First quarter for treble (daughter of 5th and granddaughter of 4th.)



**Graham Brown**

## **Bill Butler's Books**

Are you looking for a Christmas present? Have you thought of one of Bill Butler's books? He has just published two new ones, and I'll just briefly describe one of them for you. This is ***Thatcham Clergy over the Centuries***, a very dull sounding title for what is really a very good read! Basically, the book deals with all the clergy since the first vicar was installed in 1317. (Confirms your opinion of it sounding dull!) However, to quote from the book: *"The fortunes of any business can be directly attributed to those in charge and it's the same in the church: a strong and forceful vicar can fill the church, a weak one may empty it!"*

The book, based on one of the oldest continually inhabited places in England is full of colourful people and events. You will be shocked to find out how mercenary some of the leading figures in the church were all those years ago and, on the other side of the coin, how others contributed to the care and well-being of the local community! Did you know St Mary's was The Minster for western Berkshire at the time of the Domesday Book? Read how in 1450 John Pury, the owner of Chamberhouse Manor and a favourite of Henry VI, irrevocably signed over all his goods, estate and chattels to the vicar who hid the deed in the parish chest and never presented it when John died! Also about the Norfolk vicar in 1648 who arrived a couple of weeks too late to take up his appointment as vicar and found his vicarage had been stolen! Why Thatcham had to elect three churchwardens in 1446, a number kept to this day?

There are stories about the bells and ringers too. Did you know that Thatcham was the 148<sup>th</sup> tower in England to have as many as six bells in 1624? How the Kennet and Avon Canal kept the bells ringing in the early nineteenth century? That Thatcham was the fifth tower in the world to achieve more than one thousand peals.

Enjoy the read!

**Thatcham Clergy over the Centuries**, 2016, 122pp, £6

**The Barfield Hand Bell Ringers, the first 50 Years**, 2016, 70pp, £5

***Bill Butler***

## **From the Branch Ringing Master**

It is 9 months since I was elected Ringing Master and in that time as a Branch I think we have accomplished rather a lot. We've hosted the Ringing Day, Guild 8 bell Striking Competition, had a Branch Outing, held a Branch Striking Competition, sent a team to the Guild 10 bell Striking Competition and also had seven monthly practices all of which shows we're a very active Branch.

Incidentally the winner for attending most Branch practices is Rebecca (Browning) with six attendances followed by Mike (Head) with five.

I have only managed to join a few towers on their practice night but the ones I have visited have made me very welcome. It is good to put faces to names and I hope to visit a few more in the New Year.

The next major ringing event in the Branch is the Quarter Peal Week in February and let's see if we can get a quarter in every tower and as many members participating as possible. Even if there aren't quite enough ringers in a tower let me know and I can make up bands and also if there are any special methods you want to ring I will try and find relevant ringers. There is a lot of expertise within the Branch and it should be possible to accommodate most peoples' ringing wishes. A quarter is a very good way to settle down and create a rhythm.

Also, in spring, I would like to organise an occasional midweek day time mini outing comprising a couple of towers and a pub lunch which could be either a quarter or just general ringing. I feel there are a fair number of members who are free during the day and if you would like this please let me know and include which days are best.

Don't forget the Branch isn't a separate entity - it's YOU, all of you and it's just a communication tool that everyone and every tower can utilise to further their ringing. Also it's a very good way of making friends.

I would just like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year with lots of ringing and don't forget to get in touch with me or any Branch Officer with ringing requests.

***Diana Bridle***

**Branch Ringing Master**



## Thatcham

An enjoyable afternoon was spent in the Vale of White Horse for the Thatcham Outing which was ably organised by our Deputy Tower Captain John Kape. We visited Shrivenham, Longcot, Childrey and Uffington with its octagonal tower, and afterwards finished at the Crown and Horn, East Ilsley for a meal.

Bill Butler is continuing to ring and conduct well, but has difficulty in standing for a long time and Ron Christopher has not been feeling well of late but hopes to be ringing again soon. We wish them both well with their future ringing. There are a number of stairs to be climbed at Thatcham and some of the band are finding that they struggle up to the ringing room.

Tony arranged for the Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service to assess their ability to evacuate a medical casualty from the ringing room. The Fire Brigade gave valuable advice. A notice has been posted in the tower which lists the procedure to be followed.

The Hind's Head at Aldermaston was the venue for the tower dinner. This was successfully organised by Janet John and ably assisted by Graham with an interesting competition of photographs of abbeys with the ringers having to name them. Jake and his friend Ashley won the competition and Cyril Lewington came a close second.

We hoped to ring a quarter peal for Amanda's Significant Birthday. Unfortunately this was not completed but none the less we wished Amanda a Happy Birthday!! We also lost another quarter remembering Jennifer Butler which has been successful for a number of years until this year.

Jake Reid is progressing well and is ringing Bob Doubles inside. Last night (8 Dec) he rang the treble to a quarter peal at Hungerford of Grandsire Triples and rang very well. This was rung as a tribute to Steve Lowman of Lambourn. The previous Sunday Jake rang the tenor at Thatcham to a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles. Well done Jake!!

Quarter peals have been rung for Evensong, Harvest Festival, Thatcham Christmas lights being switched on and Revd Alec Gill's last Service at Thatcham. A quarter peal of Swindon Surprise

Royal was rung by regular ringers at Thatcham and was first in the method for Angela, Sue and Martin. Visiting bands have also rung quarter peals.

Many thanks to our regular visitors who attend our practices, service ringing and ring in some of the Quarter Peals, which means we can ring more advanced methods and gives people more opportunities.

The Thatcham Band wishes everyone a Happy Christmas and a Healthy prosperous New Year.

**Some photos taken at Thatcham Tower Dinner**



***Sue Smith***

## What are branch practices for?

I'm sure this question has been asked at numerous branch committees but it has arisen in my mind because of the surprisingly low attendance at the last two practices I've been to. In fact, the events have been quite useful for several individuals who have benefitted from ringing with a band that was perhaps stronger than is normally available to them. But there were only just enough people at these practices to make them viable and there is a danger that if a practice is held where there are just too few people, word will get around that the practices aren't worth going to, even fewer will turn up and perhaps we won't bother with branch practices.



Would this matter? I think so, for two reasons. The first is that the opportunity for people to ring in better than usual bands will be lost, and so ringing standards will not progress as they might. The second and probably more important reason is that the sense of branch community, branch cohesion, will slowly evaporate.

We are lucky to have an excellent Branch Ringing Master, and we should support her, and the whole branch community, by attending the branch practices. Put the first Friday of each month into your diaries and if you can get to the practice, do so, and help maintain a successful organisation.

**Martin Rice**

### ***Response from the Ringing Master,***

"I agree with Martin's sentiments; the attendance at Branch Practices is variable, ranging from 10 to 20, with more people attending the six bell towers. Could this be because they were held in the summer or because people prefer six bell ringing? It would be useful to receive some views on this from the membership"

***Di Bridle,***

## ODG 10 Bell Striking Competition held at Banbury - 26th November

With a band recruited by the Ringing Master from all over the Branch, it seemed a tall order to get us all together to practice the test piece prior to the event. We did our best though, and had a run through at the Branch Practice at Newbury one Friday and again with most of the band present at Thatcham, a few times. The test piece was:

**287 Grandsire Caters.**

23456789

65324978      2s 4s

42563879      2s 3

34265879      1 2 3s



On the day, we all travelled separately to Banbury, a good 50 plus miles away, and arrived in time to wander about the town, buy coffee and listen to some of the competition. St Mary's, Banbury is an unusual looking church, grand and ornate and in similar style to some London Churches. The tower houses a 17 cwt Taylor's 10 with a majestic tone and quite easy go (personal opinion). Some of the opposition sounded formidable so the general feeling was that we would do well if we didn't come last! Our test piece was free of trips and not bad if not perfect either. So, as we listened to the results, it was quite a shock to hear that we had been judged second, with Reading winning and ONB and EBSB joint third, just one point behind us. Well done to all!



Reading	88%
Newbury	77.5%
EBSB and ONB	76.5%

***Mark Robins***



## **ODG 6 Bell Striking Competition**

After being narrowly placed first at the Branch Competition back in the Summer, Hungerford went on to represent the Branch at the Guild event, held at Penn, Bucks, on 1st October. After a good practice at Beenham on the way there, the band arrived quite early and in buoyant mood and, although drawn to ring second, went first because of the lead team's late arrival. The tea was up to the usual high standard for ringers teas and the team felt it had rung the 240 of April Day Doubles very well.



The results were as follows:

1st Drayton St Leonard 17 faults

2nd High Wycombe 22 Faults

3rd Tilehurst 35 Faults

4th Hungerford 41 Faults

5th Wokingham All Saints 85 Faults

6th Bloxham 98 faults

Did not finish Aylesbury - they did not ring 240, only 120

***Mark Robins***



---

## **Ben's 10 for SBABC**

On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December nine ringers from ODG Newbury Branch and W&P Guild Andover District took part in ten quarter peals as part of the '**Bellringers Strike Back Against Blood Cancer**' (SBABC) campaign, for sponsorship of **£30,000**. All of the quarter peals were of the various methods named after Julie McDonnell, herself a ringer and blood cancer sufferer, who began the SBABC campaign.

Four of the ringers, Ben Waller, Joanne A Waller, Jonathan Waller and Tim Pink rang in all ten quarter peals; Ken Waller, Carol Waller, Joanne Waller, Mike Hurst and Mark Robins completed the line-up where required. The bands were arranged such that they were unique throughout the day.

The day began at 8.30 am at Tangle, the remote location being ideal at the time of day, where a good quarter of the Doubles variation was scored. A quarter of the Slow Course Minor was rung at St. Mary Bourne, which was also counted as the Hampshire quarter for the Julie McDonnell counties challenge which it coincided with at 10 am – the aim being to ring as many quarter peals of 'Julie McDonnell' in different counties simultaneously. Treble Place Major (the conductor's fears of this method proving to be unfounded!) and another quarter of the Doubles followed at Hurstbourne Priors and Longparish respectively.

After a quick lunch, we continued our day with Doubles again at Burghclere, followed by a rapid performance of the Minor at Woolton Hill, and two more of the Doubles at Speen and Shaw, the latter being jointly conducted by the day's full-time participants. A particularly good quarter of the Triples method was scored at Bucklebury, which left the four all-day ringers to ring a quarter of Treble Bob Minimus at Stanford Dingley, rounding off the day nicely just before 8 pm. It was at this point the fatigue became apparent, and the relief of the end of the day was palpable!

We are very grateful to Julie McDonnell for assisting us in finding sponsorship to complete our ten-in-a-day challenge. We would also like to thank the towers for use of their bells, and those that assisted by ringing the bells up ready for us. A further £155 was donated by the ten-in-a-day participants, and donated to Julie's fund to raise awareness of blood cancer. If you wish to donate yourself the website is:

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/SBABC>.

**Ben Waller**

*Merry Christmas*





## A selection of the 10 quarters rung for Ben's10 SBABC Day

### Hurstbourne Priors

#### 1280 Julie McDonnell Treble Place Major

- 1 Jonathan Waller
- 2 Carol Waller
- 3 Ken Waller
- 4 Tim Pink
- 5 Michael Hurst
- 6 Joanne A Waller
- 7 Joanne Waller
- 8 Ben Waller (C)

**Ben's 10 for SBABC - 3/10.**



### Burghclere

#### 1260 Julie McDonnell Bob Doubles

- 1 Ken Waller
- 2 Ben Waller
- 3 Joanne A Waller (C)
- 4 Mark Robins
- 5 Jonathan Waller
- 6 Tim Pink

**Ben's 10 for SBABC - 5/10**



### Stanford Dingley

#### 1296 Julie McDonnell Treble Bob Minimus

- 1 Jonathan Waller (C)
- 2 Tim Pink
- 3 Ben Waller
- 4 Joanne A Waller

**First of Minimus as conductor.**

**Ben's 10 for SBABC - 10/10**

**A total of 12,656 changes in 6 hours and 44 minutes**

**With thanks to Julie for securing £30,000 of sponsorship for this ten-in-a-day quarter peal challenge.**



---

## **A visit to Inkpen**



Does anyone know about bellringing at St Michaels Church, Inkpen? Despite being almost on our doorstep, I had no idea until recently. In fact, there is a ring of 6 hung for chiming and a full band who ring regularly for services. The way it is done at Inkpen is however, unorthodox to our way of doing things, and probably unique in terms of how the bells are actually rung. There is a rope circle but with short tail-less ropes and miniature sallies. The band do ring methods that way, following number sequences on music sheets. Ben Waller arranged for a visit on their practice night, to see how it was done and have a go. The local band made it look quite straightforward, but we did find it challenging and

managed little more than a plain course of Bob Doubles. Tricky stuff and good to see this innovative way of ringing methods on bells hung for chiming. Thank you to the Inkpen ringers for making us welcome and showing us how it is done.

***Mark Robins***

## **Condition of Hampstead Norreys' Bells**

We were very pleased, despite the condition of the bells, to ring for the wedding of the Rev'd Luci Heyn to Alistair Morriss. Luci is a team minister within the benefice.

Sadly, due to severe deterioration of the condition of the headstocks, particularly the treble which is very loose on its mounting, the bells are now deemed to be unringable and this was probably the last time they will be rung until funds can be raised for a re-hang.

***Marcus Allum***

---

## The ODG and the Oxford Guild Festival

Have you taken part in the Oxford Festival, which takes place once every five years? In the old days this was held every year on the second Saturday in July, with a lunch in the magnificent hall in Christchurch College following a service in the Cathedral. You could ring on the twelve at the Cathedral – a large ringing chamber with a fairly low ceiling! – and then wander off around Oxford ringing at all the other towers.



There are quite a lot of them, nineteen in all. You'd have a job to get them all! Some are fun to ring at; others are harder work, but I'll let you make your own decisions on that!

Some members of the Guild ask why we need a Festival: their branch provides all that they want from the Guild. That, of course, isn't really true; it only provides what you need at the present time and, what is more obvious, what you think you want at the present time.

Let's have a look at the Guild. The Oxford Diocesan Guild has the largest number of ringers in the country, ringing in 442 towers. In the 1970's it opened a Bell Fund which now has a capital sum of nearly half a million pounds which pay out substantial grants to churches in the diocese restoring their bells; there is also an additional older and much smaller Bell Restoration Fund which pays out grants.

We have a Towers and Belfries Committee which will inspect your tower if you have any odd clangs (they do a really good job!); an Education Committee who will run courses to improve your ringing; competitions to improve your striking; meetings to improve your public relations and to get to know other members of the guild.

I could go on and on. The Guild is an excellent resource that is used by those who have used it before and realise how excellent it is. Why don't you have a go yourself?

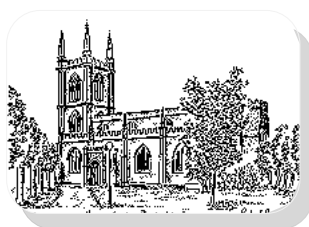
***Rosemary Evans***





A lot has changed at St Lawrence's since Reverend Mike Saunders arrived, back in March. For example, there is a very efficient new administration in place, making things easier for booking bells for peals, weddings and general communication. As far as our ringing performances go, we do alright on Sunday mornings, with enough to ring 6 being the norm and occasionally 8. Practices are, as always lively with methods and levels depending on who attends, which is always unpredictable, but we continue to attract visitors from other towers and I feel we get what we want out of these evenings. Quarter peals continue on a regular and frequent basis, usually for Sunday Even-song, but other times as requested/required. Last year we rang a half muffled quarter of Doubles starting immediately following the 2 minutes silence on Armistice Day. Feedback was such that I arranged the same this year, and this time, with 8 wishing to ring, aimed for Triples. Alas, the 1260 of Stedman wasn't successful, but we weren't too disappointed as the ringing was of a good standard and the feedback, just as positive as last year. We then went on to the John O Gaunt pub for lunch and free beer (compensation for tardy service!).

At Rev'd Saunders' request, and with a set of handbells in the ringing room, a group of us have started to learn how to ring tunes. Rosemary Evans kindly came along to get us started with her expert guidance, and also lent us some music and stands. Under Kathy Bossom's leadership, (and she can read music!) we had aimed to ring something at a carol service this Christmas, but realise that was a tall order, and are now aiming at next years festivities to be let loose on a public performance.





## Hungerford (continued)

Since the last newsletter, we have rung eight quarters and visiting bands have rung three peals. At the end of August, St Lawrence Church celebrated it's 200th birthday. For that we rang a 2016 date touch of Grandsire, using a particularly nice composition that we previously used to ring in the New Year. Here is the composition, which is by Richard Pullin.



234567

s 762453 2

347562 1

253647 1

s 672453 1

s 356247 2

723456 1

357264 3

423657 1

Twelve part, calling single  
for bob half-way and end



Most recently, I was very pleased for St Lawrence's to host the Thatcham Band, so that young ringer Jake Reid could achieve his first quarter on eight bells, and for me to be given the opportunity to call it. A very respectable 1260 of Grandsire Triples was the result.

Our Annual Christmas Outing, arranged by Dave Thorpe, will be in the Westbury area on January 2nd, so a full report in the next edition.

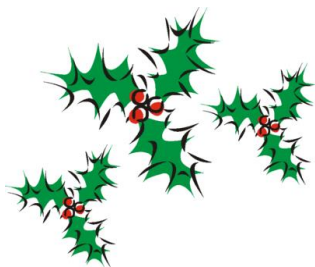
***Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Hungerford Bellringers.***

***Mark Robins***



**Can you find all of the Newbury Branch Towers with 3 or more bells? There are 29 in total.**

S	P	E	E	N	T	R	W
E	Y	R	U	B	E	L	K
A	B	E	E	N	H	A	M
S	R	S	R	D	W	B	R
T	I	Y	W	R	G	E	P
I	G	A	E	O	O	G	B
L	H	G	S	F	K	N	C
S	T	A	N	F	O	R	D
L	W	B	E	E	D	O	N
E	A	S	C	H	A	D	D
Y	L	E	A	S	T	G	A
C	T	H	A	T	C	H	A
N	O	T	S	A	M	R	E
D	N	Y	Y	E	L	E	V
H	G	U	O	R	O	B	N
N	T	U	H	G	T	D	R
D	R	O	F	L	E	W	K





## Letters

*Sir,*

*There are some extremely able ringers in this branch. I wonder if they could be persuaded to explain to the rest of us how they:*

- a) keep right*
- b) manage to put others right*
- c) strike accurately*
- d) compose touches*
- e) do all of the above simultaneously.*

*Any little tips would be useful. Indeed, it might be the case that what they think of as obvious would be a revelation to the rest of us. Perhaps we could have a series of articles in this magazine on these technical aspects of ringing.*

*Yours etc,*

*Martin Rice*

*Merry Christmas*



---

*Wishing you all a  
Merry Christmas  
and a very  
Happy New Year*

