



Newbury Branch Newsletter

Summer 2020

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I will aim to put out another newsletter sometime around Christmas, if I have enough material. So I won't establish a deadline, but please continue to send in anything you have and I'll call for contributions once I have enough to put a newsletter together. Please send items by email as attachments, or on hard copy by post to the Editor.

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From the Chair (written in April)

Well, these are different times!

I am very impressed that Mark has managed to put a newsletter together – thank you Mark, and thank you to everyone who has contributed. I look forward to reading about what you are all doing.

Like everyone else, I have been isolating myself in physical terms, but keeping in touch with family and friends. I have been getting out, with Eleanor, on daily bike rides, although it's not so attractive now that the weather has turned. Our garden is the best kept it has ever been...

Branch matters are pretty much on hold. It is difficult to see how we can get back to ringing real bells in real towers until social distancing is relaxed, and I'm afraid I can't see that happening soon. The Guild are hopeful of running the 6-bell striking competition, so we as a Branch will need to think about our own precursor event if that does go ahead. The usual diary entry for this is the Branch Practice in June but, like all the other practices, this will not take place under the current lock down.

When there is any possibility of ringing resuming we will make plans for celebrating!

Meanwhile, keep in touch with each other, keep safe and try to keep sane.

From the Chair (August update).

Well, three months on and still not much bell-ringing...come on, vaccine developers!

Some important non-ringing but bell-related work is on-going, however, and you can read about it elsewhere in this newsletter.

At St Nic's in Newbury we have resumed a little bit of Sunday service ringing. We can manage the 2m distancing rule by ringing bells 1, 3, 6, 8 and 10, provided a household couple ring bells 10 and 1. This provides a reasonably musical sound. We sort out who is going to ring beforehand, using email. We use hand sanitiser to clean our hands when we get up to the ringing room to reduce virus transmission from hands to ropes, and we clean our hands again when we leave the tower, using hand sanitiser provided at the bottom of the stairs. We ring for just 15 minutes, and ring the clock bells down just before the service starts. (Someone rings them up the day before.) We are getting quite good at Plain Bob Minimus, but I do miss our Grandsire Triples.

Keep safe, keep sane.

Martin

Di Bridle 1943-2020

It was a great shock to hear that Di had taken ill early on August 4th, and died at the Royal Berkshire Hospital later that morning. It is difficult to believe that we shall not ring with her again.

Di learnt to ring at Twerton on Avon (Bath) in the 1960's, met Peter in Bristol in 1963, and they moved to Thatcham in 1986. Peter reveals she was something of a tower grabber, with 2378 towers grabbed, and also that she rang 1472 peals and 681 quarters.

She set up a band at Midgham in 1988 with the help of Mike Till, was a regular Sunday service ringer at Thatcham and was a long-standing representative of the Newbury Branch at ODG meetings, and was Ringing Master of the Branch from 2016 until 2019. It says something of her leadership abilities that what she had built up for the Branch with little fuss or fanfare was then split into three separate roles when she stepped down: that of running the traditional Branch practices, running the Surprise practices, and running the mid-week mini-outing-with-lunch events.

She was always reliable, never 'pushy', had a depth of experience, appreciated the efforts of others, was encouraging, somewhat self-effacing, and always had something positive and sensible to say about Branch activities. As a ringer she was one of those people who rarely made a mistake, but was not afraid to 'own up' if she had.

She will be missed in many ways, and our thoughts are for Peter and the rest of Di's family.

Martin Rice



News snippets and updates from around the Branch

At Great Shefford, all being well, we are planning on ringing three bells at 11am on the 15th for the VJ Day anniversary.

Peter Birtwhistle

East Garston will toll their Tenor at 11am on Saturday, 15th August.

Maureen Velvick

Aldermaston is not opening its bell tower at present and will review the situation in six months time.

Also we are still without a Tower Captain and have been for the last six years or so - I know this causes confusion. I am just the senior churchwarden who has filled a gap because I am interested in the bells being rung for services. We need someone who truly wants to lead. We would be delighted to welcome someone who might be interested.

Chris Newman

Branch Quarter Peal Week—22nd February to 1st March

The 11th annual quarter peal week was held in the last week of February. Less quarters were planned and attempted than in recent years, but valuable experience was gained by the learners involved. The following link takes you to the Belboard entry for the event, where quarters may be viewed:

<http://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/event.php?id=12830>

Mark Robins

Hampstead Norreys restoration project

The 'Silent Knights' project at Hampstead Norreys has moved on well, despite Lockdown. The bells have been removed from the tower and are now at Taylors in Loughborough, and a very well-attended open weekend saw a steady stream of some 140 people from Hampstead Norreys and further afield view the bells on the floor in the church.

Before the bells were removed, a great deal of work had to be done to prepare them and save costs. I volunteered to do this, but needed a co-worker. As this was in the strictest Lockdown period, the only person who could fulfil this role was my wife Tessa, who braved her vertigo to join me in the tower.

*Work starts by removing the clappers
(the bell was properly tied).*



We removed all the clappers, stays, sliders, wheels and ground pulleys. Amazingly, a century after their last renovation, all the nuts came off easily, only a few woodscrews were stubborn. Work was made a little harder by the previous bellhangers nailing the wheelboxes to the frame with enormous nails, but with a large hammer and much persuasion, they were eventually removed.

As part of the project plan which has received Heritage Lottery funding, we also installed a wide-angled camera high in the belfry, so the removal of the bells was filmed, and in the future those on the ground floor will be able to see the bells in motion.

Tessa getting to grips with the No4 clapper

Taylors arrived on Monday 1st June, and by the Thursday afternoon all the bells had been safely lowered to the ground floor for the first time in 400 years. There was a lot of head-scratching to work out the optimum route for the 11cwt (to be confirmed) tenor. There was considerable doubt as to whether it could be removed at all, as two foundation beams had been installed since its original hanging. However, Taylor's skill and judgement safely found a way down, with less than a few millimetres to spare.

Continued overleaf.

Hampstead Norreys continued



By special permission, the church was open for two days the following weekend so that the village had the unique opportunity to view the bells before they were transported to Loughborough. Within government guidelines and with strict visiting protocol in pre-booked timeslots, about 140 adults & children enjoyed seeing all six bells standing together on the church floor for the first time in 400 years. We were struck that all visitors really appreciated this historic experience. They were fascinated to see the bells, the oldest of which (the 2nd) was cast in 1619, and were very engaged with the bells and the project. Suitably masked and distanced, I used the Branch bell model to demonstrate how bells swing, and a short video at the end of the tour showed the lowering of the tenor.

St Mary's bells lined up

ready for the open day

Two days later all six bells left on their journey to Loughborough. On examination of the frame, evidence of death watch beetle was discovered, and this was confirmed when Taylors found a live larva. This has now been treated, the badly infected wood has been cut out and is in the process of being infilled by resin.

We are hoping to make a date to see the Hampstead Norreys bells at the foundry. Originally planned for a coachload, it is now limited to just two people, but we're sure that any photos or videos from the trip will be viewed with interest.

We still hope that the bells will be rehung and ringable by Christmas 2020, but of course this is subject to potential restrictions at the time.

Thanks again are due to John Craig, who is project managing. He's had to battle with mountains of paperwork and work his way through all the Lockdown restrictions to enable a very successful open weekend.

Marcus Allum



*Bell, wheel and rope,
showing how they work together*

St Mary, Speen

This year's AGM at the Red House, Hampstead Marshall, in January was rather special as we celebrated 10 years since our re-formed band started ringing at Sunday services. To mark the occasion, we were joined for the meal by some of our original trainers, notably Mark Robins and Dave Thorpe, although Rebecca Browning unfortunately could not be there. Apart from the current band, including our stalwart supporters from Kintbury, several past ringers joined in – Mavis Hughesdon, Andrew Wright, Jane Booth and Moses Dhas.

That all seems a lifetime ago and the AGM plans for VE Day ringing and summer outings inevitably bit the dust. But we have been using WhatsApp to discuss new plans to resume ringing as soon as we can do so safely. We are lucky to have a fairly roomy ringing chamber, plus the advantage of two ringers from the same household, to relieve some of the problems of social distancing. Risk assessments have been produced both for checking that the tower and bells are all in order and for starting to ring again. Once these have been accepted by the church (and assuming no significant change in government or CCCBR guidance), we would hope to get going again fairly quickly, although initially we will probably have to stick to rounds and may only ring 5 of the 6 bells. Of course, the first job will probably be to clear away the cobwebs and replace the out of date sweets!



Tenth anniversary dinner at the Red House

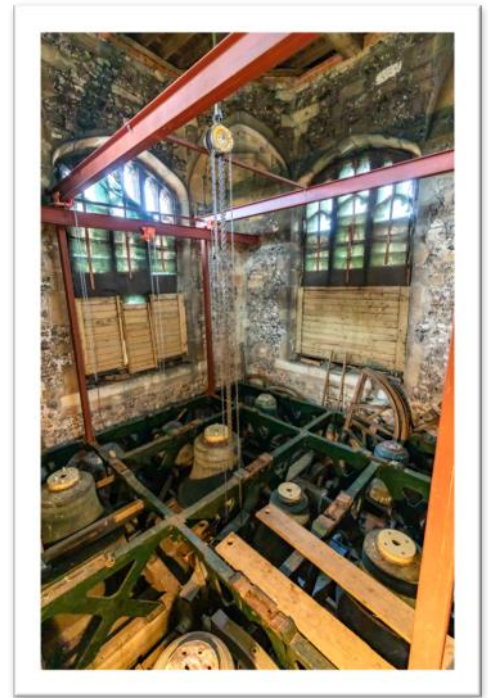
Mary Hills

Lambourn Bell Project

You may remember from the last newsletter, that the planned removal of the four cracked bells was aborted when it was found that the steel lifting frame, installed to allow safe removal, needed modification. The frame had to be better anchored into the tower walls to prevent any lateral movement and also needed stronger fixing to the bell frame to be safe to use. Of Course lockdown delayed things even further, but meanwhile, the extra funding required was found and Nicholson's was duly booked to recommence work on 18th June. With suitable volunteer help, equipment was raised to the belfry, bells lifted, lowered and loaded, and equipment dismantled and removed, all in a single day. Please see pictures for full story!

Personal note: It sounds simple, but I can't think of a more physically demanding and resource-intensive way to spend a day. Also requiring quite a head for heights. I think we all did well to achieve this in one day.

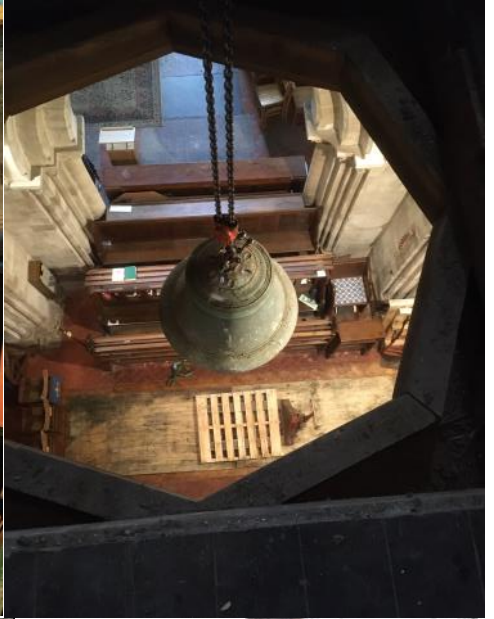
So, the bells were duly removed and despatched, courtesy of local farmer and transport owner Jim Bracey. They were taken to Soundweld, have now been repaired, and are soon to be taken to Nicholson's works at Bridport for refitting of headstocks, bearings etc. They will then be collected and returned to Lambourn for rehanging which is anticipated to be completed by the end of September.



This link takes you to a local pictorial news report and further pictures are overleaf

<https://lambourn.org/church-bells-are-removed-for-their-restoration/>

Mark Robins



Thatcham

As usual, we rang out the Old Year and rang in the New Year. We were joined by some visitors and rang call changes and Grandsire Triples. Following the ringing we enjoyed a glass of Fizz, nibbles and mince pies.

Taylors arrived on 6th January to carry out some planned maintenance works to the bells. The bearings on the back four bells were replaced, together with refurbishment of all pulleys, which were taken to Loughborough and returned within a week, meaning Sunday Service ringing was not interrupted. My thanks to Richard Marshall and Mark Backhouse who assisted Taylors' bell hangers and therefore reduced the cost of the works.

On a personal note, my ringing this year has been very limited as I had a minor operation at the end of January and did not return to ringing until March, just before lockdown. My thanks to Rachel for running the ringing in my absence.

Two quarter peals were rung during quarter peal week in February, one of Grandsire Triples with an all local band and one of Yorkshire Surprise Royal, which included some other branch members.

Early on in lockdown Bill Butler had a fall and broke his hip. Following an operation at the Royal Berkshire Hospital he was transferred to the West Berks Hospital where he was isolated for two weeks. He has returned home and is in good spirits.

Two of our members have had significant birthdays during lockdown. We would normally have rung quarter peals for them, but were able to arrange presents. Details are reported separately.

It seems unlikely that we shall be returning to ringing soon at Thatcham as both our Rector and many of our members are reluctant due to the risk associated with the advanced years of many of our members.

Our Rector has given permission for Mark Backhouse to ring our Tenor 75 times at 11.10 am on Saturday 15 August as part of the Royal British Legion Remembrance Service for VJ Day.

I know that our band have been shocked and saddened to learn of Di Bridle's sudden death. Although Di was not formally a member of our band, as a Thatcham resident she frequently joined us for Sunday Service ringing and our practices. I pay tribute to the valuable contribution she made to our ringing at Thatcham and her willingness to stand in for weddings, striking competitions, quarter peals and providing generous support for our method of the month. I hope we will be able to commemorate her passing with some ringing at a future date.

Tony Smith

Margaret Robinson's 80th Birthday

When a ringer at Thatcham reaches the age of 80 and has given long service to Thatcham tower they are presented with a suitably engraved Whitechapel Table Bell. Margaret has rung at Thatcham for twenty five years, fourteen of which were as Tower Secretary and was eighty on 16 April.

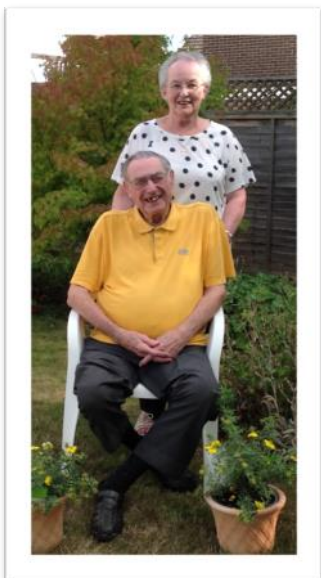
Unfortunately, this was when strict lockdown rules were in place and it was not possible to make a presentation to Margaret personally. The bell was ordered in plenty of time and was posted to Margaret by Special Delivery to arrive before her birthday, sent with the best wishes of Thatcham ringers.



Bill Butler's 90th Birthday

Congratulations to Bill On his 90th Birthday on the 7th August.

He originally intended to have a party on the 4th July as his American relatives would have been able to attend then, as well as his friends and relatives from the UK. Covid-19 put a stop to any arrangements he had planned.



However, Thatcham ringers and friends were not going to let his birthday go unrecognised. Tony & Sue decided to send presents and a card from the Thatcham Ringers and friends and bought two potentillas for the garden and a Waitrose token which was for "wine, cheese and anything which Bill fancied". As it was not possible to have a party because of the self isolating rules, Tony and Sue arranged with Rosemary to go to Bill's house to give him his presents on the day before his birthday.



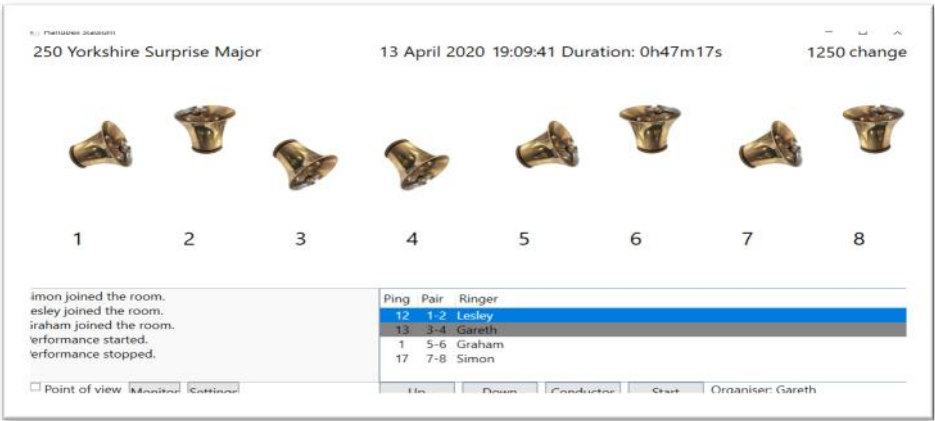
Bill, Rosemary, Tony and Sue sat, socially distanced in Bill's garden. Bill looked very well and was looking forward to a small lunch party on his birthday and a family tea party the following afternoon.

We look forward to meeting together again, after a vaccine becomes available.

Sue Smith

Handbell Stadium - A new simulator for change ringing on handbells

The prospect of not being able to ring towerbells or handbells for a while led Graham John with huge assistance from his non-ringing son, Ted, to start a project to create a simulator dedicated to change ringing on handbells that would allow ringing over the internet, and meet the performance norms set out by the Central Council in its Framework for Method Ringing. In other words, any peal length performances rung on it would be counted in the Council's Annual statistics as Peals on Simulators (something the Council voted to include in 2017). For Handbells, this means that all bells must be controlled by Human Ringers ringing up and down strokes, and performances are not included where any of the bells are controlled by the computer, or the ringers press computer keys to ring the bells.



10 years ago, Graham and Ted developed Handbell Manager, an interface to simulators such as Abel and BelTower, that allowed connected motion controllers to sound the bells when they are swung up and down. Graham also arranged to import suitable controllers, manufactured by a US Company, ActionXL, and sell them on at cost to UK ringers. Since then over 450 pairs of controllers have been acquired by ringers for use with Handbell Manager.

The new simulator is called Handbell Stadium, and one of its principle requirements is to overcome the lag experienced when trying to use video conferencing to ring over the internet. While Skype, Zoom, Teams etc are very good for their intended purpose, they prevent feedback from speaker to microphone by automatically muting the person talking. Of course, this is not at all useful when you need to hear all of the bells at the same time, or when a bob is inadvertently silenced by the technology. The way of overcoming the internet latency experienced in video conferencing is by getting each ringer's computer to send swing and strike signals from motion controllers to a server using a one way messaging protocol called UDP.

Continued overleaf.

Handbell Stadium continued:

The server then forwards that information to the other ringers' computers, which converts the signals back to visuals and recorded handbell sounds. Provided that the ringers have good internet connections, the signals can be transmitted in less than 30 milliseconds which is not audibly significant.

In order to hear the conductor and other ringers, a standard voice channel is required. The most suitable platform for this is Discord, a platform specifically created for gamers to communicate in real time. However any communications platform is suitable for this aspect.

The initial version of Handbell Stadium has two dimensional handbell graphics in a line that swing as the ringers move their controllers, and the first quarter peal successfully using this app in three locations: Brimpton Berks, Reach Cambs, and Wetton Staffs, was rung on 13 April 2020 by Lesley Boyle, Gareth Davies, Graham John (C) and Simon Humphrey. Several more have been rung since.

For a handbell quarter, 47 minutes is quite slow. This is probably for a number of reasons: unfamiliarity and caution, insufficient visual cues, motion controller simulation not being sufficiently precise, coupled with end to end latency. A tricky problem, but with further investigation and experimentation, all of these things may be improved.

Of particular interest is the graphics. 2D graphics for ringing handbells has never been very satisfactory. It looks nothing like the equivalent of ropesight on handbells as the perspective is wrong. This led Ted and Graham to develop a prototype using a 3D gaming platform called Unity. In this a full 3D model of swinging bells with swinging clappers was created and placed in a 3D room. Your perspective is a camera view, and the camera can be moved anywhere within the room. The bells can be controlled by the ringers swinging motion controllers to simulate the up/down movement of real handbells in the same way as the 2D model, or in practice mode the computer can ring the remaining bells while you ring a pair.

The "ropesight" effect you get with the 3D model is incredible! Suddenly, it is just like sitting in a room with other handbells, and picking out your place among the other bells is just the same as in reality. A project that started purely because of circumstances has turned into something that could revolutionise handbell practice and performance even when we return to normality. You can see what the 3D graphics prototype looks like from the Youtube link below.

<https://youtu.be/ey4JPX436b4>

Graham John

Sue's Midweek Group



The first Meeting of 2020 was held at Thatcham on the 22 January where there was a good attendance of seventeen people. The venue was chosen because Thatcham is on the main road network which would hopefully enable as many ringers as possible to attend if the roads were icy. Also the tower has a good heating system.

Methods started off with Doubles and went on to Major and Call Changes on the 10. The Call Changes enabled some of the Group to have their first opportunity to ring on 10 bells.

For lunch we went to the White Hart in the High Street. The food was good and very reasonably priced. Sandra the Landlady and her staff did a brilliant job serving us, especially as she was serving a Wake at the other end of the bar.

On 19 February we rang at Shalbourne, Wilts which is south west of Hungerford. Shalbourne has six bells which are rung from the ground floor. One or two found the tenor a bit tricky to ring. This meeting was also very well attended with seventeen ringers.

With the next two meetings arranged, it became apparent that Covid-19 had arrived in the country and the virus was spreading rapidly. After a lot of soul searching I decided to cancel both of those meetings. Most of us are retired and in the vulnerable group, and also sitting opposite each other on a long table would not be a good idea. This was followed by the cancellation of ringing all over the country. Tower bell ringing and self-isolating rules do not go together. When the medical experts find a vaccine for this horrible disease, I hope the Mid-week Group will be able to meet again.



We then went to the Tally Ho, Hungerford Newtown for lunch. This was fine apart from the car park which was on the small side and at least one person had difficulty parking.

Continued overleaf:

Sues midweek group continued:

On Tuesday 14 August the Thatcham ringers received an email from Pete Bridle with the very sad news that Di had died suddenly that morning. Di was the founder member of the Midweek Group which is so successful. She will be greatly missed by the Group, the Branch, the ODG and much further afield. May she rest in peace.

Sue Smith



Hungerford

Well, what can I say...The last time the Hungerford Bellringers were able to ring the bells at St Lawrence Church was on Sunday 22nd March 2020. Four months now since Boris locked us all down in our homes to stop the spread of Covid-19.

What has happened since then now seems like a bad dream, but of course it is not a dream at all, because the church has been closed and we have been barred from ringing the bells in any way shape or form from that date on! There is however much discussion ongoing at the CCCBR (now there's an acronym for you) and I think it stands for Central Council for the Confusion of Bellringers...oops that should read Church Bellringers. It almost competes with the DDCMS which I think is a Government Department for Digital, Cultured Muddlers and Swindlers

So...There are now, or course, copious health and safety guidelines to be followed! These include restricting the number of ringers in a tower to comply with social distancing requirements. Restricting the length of time they can ring and the need to take many other precautions to keep ringers safe from this and any other viral contaminations. There is also (dare I even speak the word!) probably a Risk Assessment to be done. Arghhhhh!

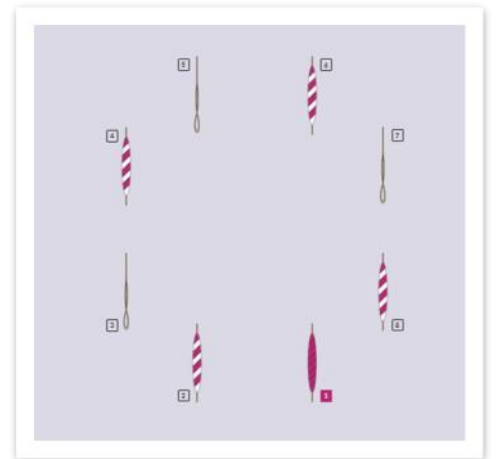


Continued overleaf:

Hungerford continued:

However, in case you weren't aware, ringers are of course energetic, enthusiastic and inventive people, if nothing else, and there has been a veritable plethora, apparently, of remote handbell ringing and online "Ringing Room" activities as some ringers continue to hone their skills and continue to develop this mysterious art! These are the ringers who will return to church bell ringing with energy and probably enhanced skills.

Is this your local band I hear you ask? Well we did indeed meet up for many weeks on our traditional practice night, using "ZOOM", with Andrea and Mark's IT skills, to discuss the issues and complexities of lockdown and even tried our hand in the "Ringing Room" (a computerised interactive program, which allows a group of individuals sitting in their own homes to ring bell methods online) with varying degrees of success! What we could see on the screen is shown opposite and once assigned a bell you simply press that number key to ring your bell at both hand-stroke and backstroke at the correct time. EASY!!



So...we are all looking forward to the day when we can again ring out the bells of St Lawrence on a Sunday morning and charm you all with our sometime indifferent ringing on Wednesday evening as we practice our art. However, there are 8 ropes in our tower ringing circle, and each rope is no more than a metre apart maximum, so no social distancing there then. The ringing chamber is also no more than 4 metres square! So, only God knows how many ringers would be allowed in the tower and, each ringer would only be allowed to ring one rope for the duration. Do we wear masks? Do we wear gloves? As you can imagine this will change the whole aspect of bellringing for the foreseeable future I think. At the time of writing we have been given no date for commencement of ringing although some towers (Speen for example) where the ringing chamber is huge, and there are only six ropes, are preparing to ring very soon, even as I write this.

In the meantime, I have been doing some necessary maintenance work to our own dormant bells, to capitalise on the lack of activity and as a case in point Mark Robins and I spent a day at Lambourn Church assisting the Bell Hanger in lowering four of their very heavy bells, some 70 feet to the floor, to be taken away for repair.

So finally, we hope you are all keeping safe and well, and as soon as we can safely ring those bells again we will be up there doing it rest assured.

David Thorpe

East Garston

What a year so far! Just as East Garston get the support of the PCC to have work carried out on our bells we go into lockdown and can't really launch ourselves into fundraising with gusto. We are however managing to do a bit. Nigel & Rebecca Gay along with their daughters donated the proceeds of their annual spring plant sale approx. £600. Jean Cox a local resident of East Garston is making facemasks and is now donating the proceeds to the bell fund, towards the end of July she had already made in excess of £700 (she had already donated well over £1000 to charity) & the Bell Brackets are still on sale with the proceeds now going to East Garston unless Lambourn is stipulated by the purchaser.

We have obtained quotes and are looking at around £50k & we have been advised not to ring our treble at all. Our next major step is to obtain a Faculty. There is a bright side, we have already had an offer of help on the transport and I'm sure we will be able to supply some manual labour, which of course reduces the costings a bit.

The bells haven't been completely silent though, the tenor has tolled for 2 local funerals at the request of the families and the church. Nigel rang for the first and the second was a joint effort. Mark Robins very kindly came across early in the morning to muffle the bell and raise the tenor, he also had to wind the clock to make sure the weights were up out of the way (Nigel was unavailable) and then George Rabbits tolled, this was very fitting as the family concerned was connected to the farm. It's all a bit strange wiping door handles etc. afterwards.

Once church services were allowed to restart we made a collective decision not to ring for service at the moment, but we do ring the Sanctus for 5 minutes before the service begins.

Wishing you all well & hoping we get back to ringing soon.

Maureen Velvick

Suitable for 16" – 18" Baskets
Also very nice for hanging outside lanterns or bird feeders

£15.00 each

(P & P £5.00 for quantities 1-3 Brackets, £10.00 for quantities 4-20,
Free delivery for Newbury Branch Members)



To place an order please contact
maureen.velvick@outlook.com or
amanda99cats@hotmail.co.uk

Bell Hangers for sale

Bucklebury

In common with the rest of the country, Bucklebury bells have been silent since March. Keeping in touch with the rest of the world's ringing community via Bell-board and various ringing lists, I saw the emergence of ringing platforms connecting widely scattered ringers via the Internet, and so I floated the idea of a virtual practice using the Ringing room platform. We have now held several of these virtual practices – with mixed results.



First of all I set up a tower in Ringing Room and made sure that all participants had Zoom as a video link. Meeting up at our usual Thursday evening time, our first attempts were a steep learning curve. Initial attempts at rounds took a lot of concentration, and early on we learned to mute the Zoom audio to prevent multiple bell sounds as Zoom picked up the Ringing Room audio. Eventually though we managed rounds and even tried some plain hunting. Since then we have progressed to Bob doubles. Not much of an achievement until you consider that this had our three learners all ringing inside. Molly and Naomi hadn't tried bob doubles inside, though proficient on the treble, and Poppy hadn't even attempted plain hunt before.

Using a virtual belfry also meant that we could try out some things not possible at Bucklebury such as six of us ringing rounds and call changes on 8, 10 and 12 bells – the last involving each person ringing two bells.

However, all has not been plain sailing. Compared to ringing in the tower, Ringing Room requires much more concentration as the usual cues for bell placing, eg ropesight, aren't there. This is compounded by technology problems. It's fairly common for Internet lags to play havoc with the ringing: a key is pressed, nothing happens so it gets pressed again and suddenly the bell sounds twice in quick succession and ends up on the wrong stroke. Very disconcerting for both the ringer and the rest of the band. Talking with an expert ringer who has rung many quarter peals on Ringing Room, it appears that his band have lost many attempts due to just this problem. Also it appeared that turning Zoom video off helped, but he reckoned the best solution seemed to be ringing in the daytime – before the 7pm 'wall of death' when everybody logs on. Overall, in the battle between the ringers and the Internet, I reckon it's been close, but the Internet is winning!

continued overleaf

Bucklebury continued:

Has it been worth it? I think so. It's kept the band together as an entity; many practices have been chat sessions with a bit of ringing thrown in. With any luck, when we get back to real bells and the girls start ringing again, they'll have the basics of the methods down pat – the blue lines, the order of the work, the ability to start the method on any bell – and all they need to do is to get the 'muscle memory' of the pieces of work. They'll also have to unlearn some things: ringing in pyjamas whilst eating cornflakes is not recommended in the tower!

John Durham



Newbury

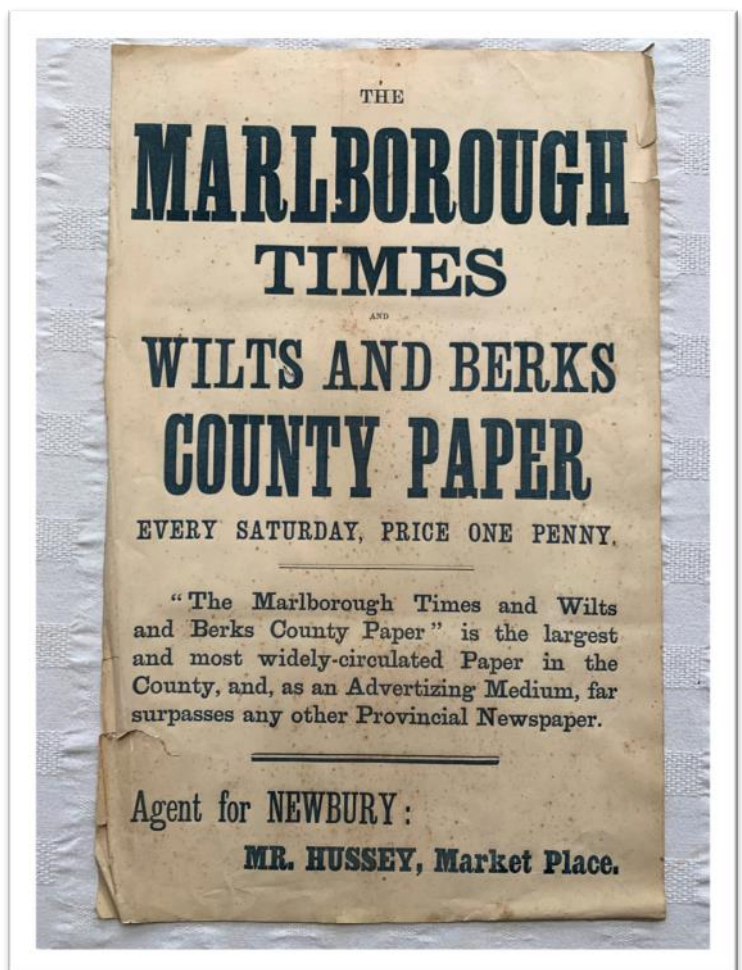
The photos in this article are of posters recently discovered in the frame behind the 'Rules For Ringers' in the Ringing Room cupboard at St Nic's, Newbury.

The rediscovery of the rather ancient looking 'Rules For Ringers' for S. Nicolas, Newbury proved to be a history treasure trove. Underneath the top sheet were other interesting posters.

The crossing out of Her Majesty with His Majesty, on two sets of rules, indicates the material is from the turn of the 19th Century, as Victoria died on 22 Jan 1901 and Edward VII came to the throne. A third set of rules has no crossing out and is indeed dated as June 1892. The list of ringers on each set of rules are faded, but mostly readable, and each has several amendments/additions with one having had a updated list stuck over an earlier list. Another poster advertises Newbury Parish Council Dedication Festival of Sunday 4th November 1888. Interestingly, the reverse of this poster was used by the Ringers to advertise the Annual meeting of the branch on Monday 10th December (also confirmed as 1888, as 10th Dec fell on a Monday in 1888). The final poster advertises the Marlborough Times (available for one penny) and its Newbury agent.

David Bebbington

Editors note: On both sets of tower rules, one of the undersigned is Samuel Quintin, father of Private William Quintin, also a Newbury ringer, who was killed in action in 1917 and was commemorated in a past issue of this newsletter.



RULES FOR RINGERS.

S. Nicolas, Newbury.

1. There shall be not less than eight appointed Ringers :—

- (a) Members of the O.D.G.C.B.R.
- (b) Sanctioned by the Rector.
- (c) Each member on joining shall receive from the Rector a Copy of the Rules, and his name shall be entered in a book provided for the purpose.

2. Anyone leaving the town, or being unable to attend on four successive Sundays, or practice nights, shall give notice of absence to the Captain, and his place shall be filled up by a substitute, either temporary or permanent.

3. Any Ringer who shall be guilty of drunkenness, swearing, habitual neglect of public worship in Church, or any immoral conduct, is liable to dismissal.

4. The Captain shall keep a register of attendance on Sundays and on other ringing days, and on practice nights, and present an abstract of the same, once a quarter, to the Rector.

5. The Ringers shall form such bye-laws as they think fit, to ensure punctuality and order.

6. A band of probationers shall be formed ^{by preference} from the junior members of the O.D.G., and the Ringers shall assist them as far as possible in the theory and practice of change-ringing.

7. The bells shall be rung—

On SUNDAYS from 10 to 10-45 a.m., and from 5-30 to 6-15 p.m.

On Easter Day (additional) from 5-30 to 6 a.m., and from 8-15 to 9 p.m.

On Whitsun Day (additional) 8-15 to 9 p.m.

[night.

On Christmas Eve from 6-30 to 7-25 p.m., and from 11-30 to 12-30 mid-

On Christmas Day from 10 to 10-45 a.m., and from 6-30 to 7-30 p.m.

On New Year's Eve, 6-30 to 7-25 p.m., & from 11-30 to 12-30 midnight.

On Ascension Day from 7 to 7-30 p.m., and from 8-15 to 9-15 p.m.

On Her Majesty's Birthday.

On Her Majesty's Coronation.

On the Harvest Festival. ^{Thanksgiving Day}

On the Dedication Festival.

At Confirmations. ^{by request} ~~and visitations~~ ^{of the Bishop}

On Good Friday the bells to be CHIMED half-an-hour before Matins and Evensong.

[NOTE.—The bells should be pulled up so as to start ringing at the time specified.]

On Sundays, when from accident it is impossible to ring, chiming may be substituted, but not less than eight bells should be chimed.

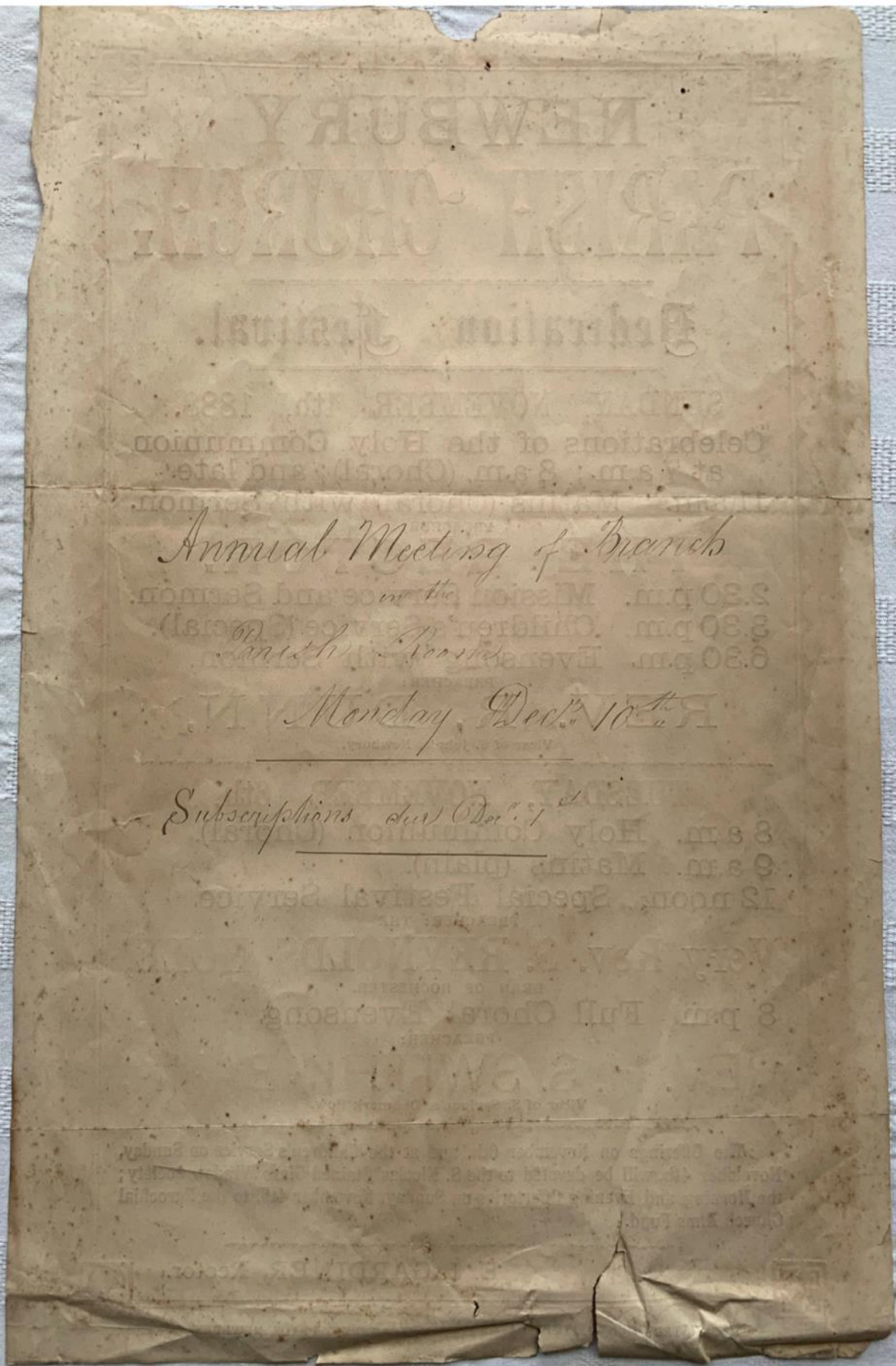
8. On Thursdays (or such other days in the week as may be chosen by the Captain) the bells shall be rung for the practice of change-ringing, from 8-15 to 9-15 p.m., or if Evensong is prolonged, from 8-30 to 9-30 p.m.

Captain ~~John Smith~~
~~Edmund Chinn~~
~~John Targett~~
~~John Wills~~
~~George Bratt~~
~~Samuel Linton~~

J. Crocker
L. Burton
J. Brooks

Edw. Gardner
Rector.

June, 1892.



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John Targett Capt

Samuel Quintin

Thomas Laidler

William Lipscombe

Albert Laidler

Edward Crocher

Thomas Prout

Walter Mundy

John Zales



John Hibbert's Parachute Jump

08/09/2020

For East Ilsley Church

Donate online via The Good Exchange

On 8th September, John Hibbert, Tower Captain and Church Warden at St Mary's East Ilsley, will be jumping out of an aeroplane with the Red Devils to raise money for the Restoration and Reordering of St Mary's Church. Like so many villages, East Ilsley is gradually losing the use of key buildings as they are redeveloped as private housing. The village needs a community room and St. Mary's will be ideal for that purpose once it has the basic facilities.

Please support John by sponsoring him via the link below and help raise vital funds.

<https://app.thegoodexchange.com/fundraising-profile/396/john-hibbert/12130/st-marys-in-the-community>

All donations made through this website will be match funded by the Good Exchange and will go directly to the Restoration and Reordering of The Church.

The parachute jump will be self-funded.

Thank You

Thank you to all who have contributed to this newsletter.

After a prolonged period of enforced non-ringing, it is amazing how much has been happening and has been reported on. Please stay safe and in touch.

Mark Robins—Editor