

Sonning Deanery Branch
NEWSLETTER
November 2005

**Oxford Diocesan Guild
of Church Bell Ringers**

Fund Raising in Sonning Deanery Branch

As the branch has been financially supporting the work on the bells of three towers in the branch, funds at the beginning of the year were rather low. The branch officers discussed ways of fund-raising and several events have taken place during the year.

The most recent two events have been the Grand Autumn Draw and the Quiz Night, both organised by the St. Andrews Sonning band. These two events merged together at the Quiz Night, because more draw tickets were purchased on the night and the draw was made in the interval.

In the Grand Autumn Draw, the first prize, which was very kindly donated by Lavinia Sullivan (Wargrave), was a free flight in a light aircraft from White Waltham airfield. There were a number of other prizes, some of which were raised by Clare Wright who canvassed local firms, and some were donated by Pam Elliston and Pauline Needham.

The winners of the prizes were:

- 1st prize Flight in light aircraft - Stephen Smith, All Saints, Wokingham
- 2nd prize Two first class return tickets on SW trains - Pat Webb
(Pat's was the first ticket drawn but she declined the flight)
- 3rd prize Tesco voucher - Pat Adams, Oxford
- 4th prize Waitrose voucher - G. Tarrant from Swallowfield
- 5th prize 5 ice-skating sessions - Mrs. Cole from Wokingham
- 6th prize Disposable camera - Martin Foakes, Tilehurst ringer
- 7th prize Bionic pen - Unfortunately his name was not recorded

In total 948 tickets were sold at 50p each, and when all expenses were deducted the Draw raised £384.90 for branch funds. The branch wishes to thank all those who provided prizes, and also thank you to all the members who supported the Draw by buying or selling tickets.

The Team Quiz Night was held at St. Paul's church hall on October 8th. Our thanks to Sue Davenport who arranged for the use of the hall for this "church-related" event free of charge.

The Quiz exercised the general knowledge of teams of up to 6 people; some people said the exercise was too strenuous!

The price of £7 each included a ploughman's meal and choc-ice or swiss roll. A week before the Quiz we thought we might have to cancel it for lack of support, but we finished on the night with 9 teams - 55 tickets sold.

The winning team with 46.5 points out of 70 were the "Woollies" - an NWR team from Woodley plus Peter & Helen Kemm. Each member of the team was awarded a tin of assorted biscuits. The team called "Flower Power" came second with 38 points. There was also a list of cryptic clues of names of London Underground stations to keep people amused while waiting for the main Quiz to start, and the St. Paul's team answered all but one.

Rob Needham was the Quiz Master, Andrew Elliston marked all the answer sheets and kept the scores, Pauline Needham, Pam Elliston and Marcia Paine worked in the kitchen on the meals, and Chris Brown sold more Draw tickets. The draw tickets were pulled out of the drum by Sue Davenport. The branch thanks all these people and others who helped clear up at the end of the evening.

The sale of tickets for the Quiz raised £385, and when all expenses were deducted it raised £298.24 for branch funds.

Rob Needham

[Editor comments - Appears that Rob must have got the questions from the advanced book of quiz questions, while some of us are still struggling to answer the questions from the basic book.... so the winning team must be very smart people (or they don't get out enough). Anyway we had a great fun evening, thanks to Rob and the Sonning band...]

I would like to record my thanks to Rob Needham and the Sonning ringers for the quiz night which they organised on behalf on the Branch. 9 teams took part in this challenging but very enjoyable evening. During the interval the draw took place for the aircraft flight donated by Vinnie Sullivan. We look forward to hearing from Steve Smith on his journey. As well as a very successful social event, the Branch Restoration Funds benefited by a very substantial amount.

Sue Davenport

Below is the Agenda for the Committee Meeting.on the 19th November.

----- AGENDA

Apologies Minutes of last meeting
Matters arising
Striking competitions
Practices for next year
Fund raising
Officers not wishing to stand next year
Branch Rules
A.O.B.

St. Pauls Progress

Things are progressing rapidly towards a conclusion at St Paul's. The stonework repairs to the tower and spire are complete except for an area around the hinges of the doors in the north porch (the main entrance to the church). The cleaning of the stonework is complete and the majority of the scaffolding has been removed. The lightning protection system has been fitted with the exception of one downtape, which will be installed after the scaffolding has been removed. This will entail the workman abseiling down the outside of the tower! The larger windows in the ringing chamber have been reglazed.

Internally the foundation beams and base of the bellframe are installed and the floor directly underneath the frame constructed. The floor of the intermediate chamber has also been fitted. This floor is also the ceiling of the ringing chamber and is lower than the previous one so that no rope guide is necessary. Work has commenced on the electrical installation. The ringing chamber floor beams are being prepared and will be hoisted into position during week beginning 7th November.

We are still on time for installation of the bells in the fortnight beginning 28th November but they will not be handed over until the project completion at the end of January 2006.

Ken Davenport

You may not be aware that Roger Stillman the previous Rector at St.Paul Wokingham, died on 25th October 2005. A Requiem Mass for him will be held at St. Paul's Saturday 12th November 2005 at 1.00 p.m.

Sue Davenport

The Guild 6-bell striking competition

Having won the Branch competition in the Spring, it was our responsibility to represent the Branch in the Guild competition. Fate tried to prevent us doing so, as I discovered that large numbers of the band had managed to commit themselves to other activity on that day. In the end, we (just) managed to get a team together, thanks to the rule that allows one guest member. We were grateful to Ken Davenport, who seems to have become an honorary All Saints member recently, for filling this role.

The competition was in the Bicester branch, with heats at Islip and Charlton on Otmoor, where we were drawn to ring fourth out of six. Some of us arrived early, expecting to hear the previous teams and were surprised to find total silence.

It turned out that Thatcham, drawn first, had had to withdraw, so we were third out of five. Between the rain showers, we heard High Wycombe and Hanslope (last year's winner) ring before us, and the standard was quite high. Only five of our team were present as the previous team finished their test piece, and I was getting worried. Then as they came down the stairs, Ken walked in. He claimed it was just good timing, but I wonder whether he had been waiting down the road just to wind me up.

The bells, which were augmented and rehung not that many years ago, went very well. Our ringing was good, but didn't feel quite up to the standard of what we had heard already, even allowing for the fact that you always hear more faults in your own ringing. With three teams going through to the final, and Aston Clinton, another regular high performer among the teams ringing after us, it looked as if we might not make it.

After ringing, we proceeded to the important part of the proceedings - tea at Kirtlington - e

church proved a little difficult, and finding the hall even more so () Tj

Placings for our heat were:

- 1st - Aston Clinton (18 faults) Straight into a good speed. Lovely ringing
- 2nd - High Wycombe (21.5 faults) Steady pace, got to grips with the bells. Excellent ringing.
- 3rd - Wokingham (27 faults) After a battle to determine the speed in the practice, the test piece matured quickly to give some vibrant ringing.
- 4th - Hanslope (44 faults) Took a while to settle to a steady speed. Tenor pushed a bit too much.
- 5th - Drayton St Leonard (67 faults) Possibly inexperienced band. Tenor too slow for small bells. Lots of dropped leads

So that put us through to the final.

Placings for the other heat were:

- 1st - Reading (17 faults)
- 2nd - Oxford St Aldates (21 faults)
- 3rd - Blewbury (32 faults)
- 4th - Faringdon (38 faults)
- 5th - Bicester (69 faults)
- 6th - Steeple Aston (70 faults)

Kirtlington are another nice ring of bells, about the same weight as ours at All Saints. We were drawn to ring second, after Aston Clinton, who set a high standard.

Our test piece settled down well and we were producing some good ringing when disaster struck. There was a mistake that caught several people off guard, and although it was quickly corrected, in the mix-up two bells swapped. I called the bells round rather than prolong the confusion while trying to sort it out. I didn't want to inflict bad striking on the audience. It was a sad finish for us, to what up to that point had been a good day.

The final result was:

- 1st - Aston Clinton (68 faults)
- 2nd - Reading (100 faults)
- 3rd - High Wycombe (109 faults)
- 4th - Oxford (117 faults)
- 5th - Blewbury (154 faults)
- Wokingham (Disqualified)

**a Farewell to David and Liz Struckett
St James's Church, Finchampstead**

Bellringers, husbands, wives and friends of David and Liz Struckett

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ACAH adds...

David & Liz Struckett were living and ringing in the parish of St Mary, Upton cum Chalvey, Slough until 1975, when they decided to break with convention, sold their house, and bought a house-boat (actually a specially-converted Humber keel), which served as a home for them and their two young daughters for several years, mostly moored on the Thames near the church of SS Peter and Andrew, Old Windsor (8, tenor 11-2-21). The boat and the Struckett family were featured in an article in the Sunday Telegraph Magazine in 1979. David became active at the local tower and taught a number of new ringers.

Whilst living at Old Windsor, thee

Farewell to David and Liz Struckett

Quarter Peals

Wednesday 3rd August 2005
St. Mary's, Wargrave, Berkshire

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Rob Needham
2. Lavinia Sullivan
3. Roy Russell *
4. Michael Dane
5. David Sullivan (C)

* First quarter inside

This quarter has been reprinted for the second time due another mistake by the Editor - profuse apologies to all concerned - Ed.

Sunday 23 October 2005
St. Michael's Sandhurst

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Fiona Sherren
2. Michael J. Sherren
3. Janet E. Menhinick
4. Derek Palmer
5. Simon Paterson (c) *
6. Michael J. Paterson

* 1st of Doubles as Conductor

Rung to commemorate the Bi-Centenary of the Battle of Trafalgar 1805

Monday 31st October 2005
Hurst, Berkshire. (St Nicholas)

1260 Plain Bob Triples

1. Mary Elliott
2. Sue Davenport
3. Pam Elliston
4. Brian Snell
5. Graham Slade
6. Andrew Elliston
7. Chris. J. Brown (C)
8. Peter Davenport

Rung by members of the practice band as a welcome to the new Priest-in-Charge John Coombs.

Tuesday 1st November 2005
Hurst, Berkshire. (St Nicholas)

1260 Plain Bob Minor:

1. Sue Davenport
2. Andrew Elliston
3. Michael Dane
4. Chris J Brown
5. Graham Slade
6. John Harrison (C)

Rung before the Induction Service of John Coombs, Priest-in-Charge.

Peals and Quarter Peals

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD

Sat 5th November 2005
All Saints, Wokingham

5058 Yorkshire Surprise Major
2hrs 46m (15)
Comp. W J Couperthwaite

1. Stephen R Smith
2. Louise E Marshall
3. Nigel A L Mellor
4. Jonathan P Goodchild
5. Kenneth R Davenport (C)
6. John A Harrison
7. Andrew L Smith
8. Jonathan P Tutchter

Rung for All Saints tide.
First peal on the restored bells.

First peal: 4.

Friday 21 October 2005
St John The Baptist, Shottesbrooke.

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Colin Ede
2. Lesley Graves
3. Jacqueline Hazell
4. Richard Hazell
5. Caroline Andrew (c)
6. Robert Packer

To Commemorate the 200th Anniversary of Nelson's Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar.

First in Tower, Treble.

Wednesday 5th October 2005
St Mary, Wargrave

1260 Grandsire Doubles
10 extents each called differently, plus
BPBPBP

- 1 Rob Needham
- 2 Louise Marshall
- 3 Daniel Chafen
- 4 Lavinia Sullivan
- 5 David Sullivan (C)

1st inside - 3

Rung on the Lydian five.



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Forthcoming Events

Saturday	19th November	Committee Meeting	Waltham St Lawrence	5:00PM
Saturday	17th December	Branch Practice (with mince pies, etc.)	Binfield	10am - 12 noon
Wednesday	28th December	Branch Outing	TBA	TBA