

# Sonning Deanery Branch Newsletter



March 2012, Spring Issue



St Nicholas, Hurst

## Ringling now back in full swing at Hurst

For the past 3 or 4 years up until September 2011 there has been no regular ringing at Hurst. The local band has regrettably lapsed as existing ringers moved away for various reasons and no recruitment has taken place.

In the summer of 2011 after liaison with the Church Wardens, I arranged an open afternoon on the day of the Hurst Horse Show with the aim of trying to raise awareness about the lack of local ringers and to try to recruit some new learners. Although there were no direct recruits as a result of the Open Tower, awareness was raised and a number of new recruits came forward over the following couple of months. I then undertook training sessions, with valuable assistance from Simon Farrer (Tower Captain, St Mary Twyford) and four novices were brought to the stage of being able to handle a bell. In addition two former ringers (Pat Tidy and Alison Murray) also returned to regular ringing and joined the band.

Ringling on Sundays was restarted in September, initially on the first

## Diary of Events

### Saturday 21 April

Finchampstead  
4.30pm - 6.30pm  
Branch 6 Bell striking competition  
6.30pm onwards Branch Practice

### Saturday 5 May

Branch Outing (see page 2)

### Saturday 19 May

Guild AGM & Ringling throughout Branch  
1pm - 1.45pm Ringling at Wargrave & Warfield  
1.30pm-2.15pm Twyford & Easthampstead  
2pm - 2.45pm Hurst & Wokingham St Paul  
3pm onwards Ringling, service, tea, AGM, ringling at Wokingham St Paul

### Saturday 16 June

Shottesbrooke  
4.30pm - 6pm  
Branch Practice

Monthly Tuesday afternoon practices at All Saints, Wokingham/ Binfield on 3 April, 1 May and 5 June (provisionally).

*Thanks to Andrew Dugdale from Aborfield who has kindly offered to print the newsletter for us free of charge.*

Sunday of the month, and with assistance from regular ringers of Twyford. Traditional Monday evening practices have become re-established, typically with around 8-10 attendees including visitors.

By the end of December, the progress of the learners and the enthusiasm to hear the bells meant that ringing was happening most Sunday mornings, with or without help from Twyford. The local band was beginning to ring reasonable rounds and some learners were starting to ring call-changes. At the AGM of the Sonning Deanery Branch on 19th Feb 2012, 5 new members were elected for Hurst; Alison Murray, Wendy Pinches, Chantal Roberts, Simon Roberts and Pat Tidy. Another learner, David Boyd decided not to join at this time.

Hurst ringers held an Annual Meeting on 21st Feb at The Castle (public house) with Sue Payne (Churchwarden) in the chair. We believe this was the first Annual Meeting for some 30 years. We have hopes to engage further recruits this summer.

We are grateful for the support of visitors from Twyford, Sonning and Binfield as well as from the Branch Ringing Master. Visitors are welcome to join us at the tower 7:30-9:00 pm on Mondays and afterwards at The Castle, which boasts regularly changing local beers on tap.

***Graham Slade (Tower Captain)***



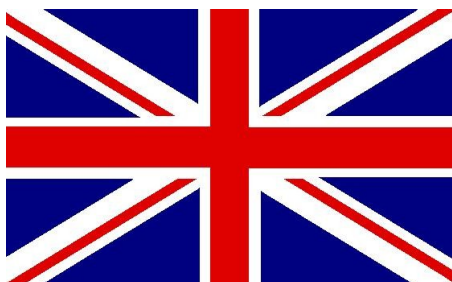
## Forthcoming events

### The Not-Very-Big Ring Pull

To mark the opening of the London 2012 Olympic Games it has been suggested that all the bells in the UK (tower bells, hand-bells, bicycle bells, school bells, ....) be rung together as quickly and loudly as possible for 3 minutes starting at 8a.m. on the Friday morning of the Olympic opening ceremony (27 July). This probably sounds to you like a quirky stunt proposed by a non-ringer, and Sonning knows that many tower ringing purists are against this proposed way of ringing. Ringers say, 'This is not what bell ringers do', but Sonning has turned it round and said, 'But it is something that non-ringers can do'.

We feel that we might be missing a good recruiting opportunity, because it may spark the interest of some local non-ringers. Once they are up the tower and have made a lovely cacophony – who knows – one or two may be interested in learning to ring properly. We would have some of the Sonning Bell Ringing recruitment leaflets in the tower on the day.

So Sonning's plan is to produce plenty of local advertising of the event. We will ring the tower bells down on Thursday 26 July after our practice. Then, at 8am the next morning, the local public/anyone interested in taking part will chime all the bells together as quickly and loudly as possible. It is a safe way of ringing for all involved; two or three to a rope would be OK for the big bells.



If there are a large number of 'chimers' it won't matter if the ringing goes on for longer than the suggested 3 minutes. All the bells going at once – a real social effort! It might make locals feel that the Sonning bells are 'their' bells and increase the chance of some recruits.

***Rob Needham***

## Forthcoming events

### Branch Outing - Saturday 5 May 2012

An update on the plans for the Branch Outing. The proposed schedule is –

#### Old Windsor

SS Peter & Andrew  
8, 11-1/2cwt 09:30

#### Egham

St John the Baptist  
10, 16-3/4 cwt 10:45

#### Staines

St Marys  
8, 16-3/4 cwt 12:15

#### Staines

St Peters  
8, 15-1/2 cwt 2:15

#### Stanwell

S Mary BV  
6, 13 cwt 3:20

#### Horton

S Michael & All Angels  
6, 12-1/2cwt 4:15

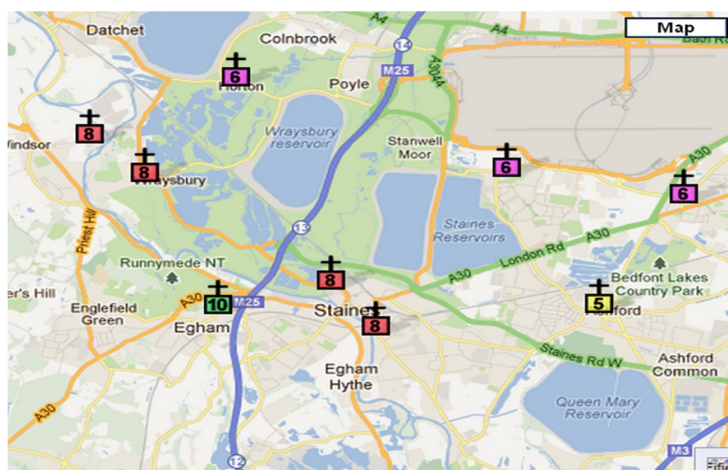
At the current time, Egham and the two Staines towers are booked with responses awaited from others.

If you plan to come, please can you let me know so that I can gauge numbers.

Thanks

**Graham Slade (Deputy Branch Ringing Master)**

[dbrm@sdb.odg.org.uk](mailto:dbrm@sdb.odg.org.uk)



## What you thought about Branch practices

The survey to find out what members thought about Branch practices was a first for the Branch, made possibly by using the website and e-mail. The full results were provided with the AGM papers (still on the website) so I will just pick out some of highlights. 30% of members on the e-mail list responded, which is pretty good for a survey. Calculating that threw up the fact that the names on the list only account for 70% of our members. Obviously some don't have e-mail, but it seems likely that some of the missing 30% may have e-mail but haven't been added to the list. If you don't receive a couple of e-mails a month about Branch events, please send your e-mail address to [postmaster@sdb.odg.org.uk](mailto:postmaster@sdb.odg.org.uk) and ask to be included.

Many responses were predictable, but some surprised us. Some people didn't know what a Branch practice was. That led to two actions: The 'Services' page of the website was augmented to make sure it explains anything that a new member might not know. Also, a welcome sheet, with a summary of the Branch and its services (with the website address for more details), a map of the Branch and contact details for the main officers, will now be included with new members' membership certificates.

Some members were unsure how to find Branch towers. That information has been on the website for several years, but to remind people where to look, we will try to include a link to the Towers page with notices of events.

The main motivation for the survey was to find out whether some times of day suit members better than others for the monthly practices. We already held events at different times, but there was no clear pattern of preference between them. The results showed that the most popular time (late afternoon) was when we never held events, and that of the two times when most current events occur, one was the least popular. As a result, four practices in this year's calendar have been moved from the least popular to the most popular time. Full details are on the website at: <http://odg.org.uk/sdb/diary/> Your tower correspondent should also have given you a green diary card.

If you have other suggestions for how the Branch could improve the services to its members, please contact one of the officers, see: <http://odg.org.uk/sdb/officers/>

**John Harrison,**

[webmaster@sdb.odg.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@sdb.odg.org.uk)

## Peals & Quarter Peals (tower and in hand)

**Sunday 5 February 2012**

**St Paul's Wokingham**

**1260 Grandsire Triples**

- 1 Geoffrey K Cook
- 2 Susan E Davenport
- 3 Andrew Elliston
- 4 Elizabeth J Davenport
- 5 Roger Lewiston
- 6 Alan K Barsby
- 7 Kenneth R Davenport (C)
- 8 Peter J Davenport

**Sunday 4 March 2012**

**St Andrew's Sonning**

**1260 Plain Bob Minor**

- 1 Keith Vernon
- 2 Joyce Vernon
- 3 Rob Needham
- 4 Peter Kemm
- 5 Andrew Elliston
- 6 Alan K Barsby\* (C)

\* First quarter peal of Minor as conductor

**Sunday 11 March 2012**

**St Andrew's Sonning**

**1260 Plain Bob Triples**

- 1 Ken Baker
- 2 Joyce Vernon
- 3 Rob Needham
- 4 Andrew Elliston
- 5 Alan K Barsby
- 6 John Hearn
- 7 Peter Kemm (C)
- 8 Keith Vernon

Rung for the Diamond Jubilee of the accession to the throne of HM Queen Elizabeth II

**Sunday 25 March 2012**

**St Andrew's Sonning**

**1299 Grandsire Doubles**

- 1 Alison Clayton
- 2 Rob Needham
- 3 David Willis
- 4 Andrew Elliston
- 5 Charles M S Botting (C)
- 6 Keith Vernon

Rung to celebrate the life of Mrs. Nita Needham, mother of No. 2, 26/4/1919 - 24/3/2012.

## In hand

**Wokingham, Berks**

**47 Brookside**

**Sunday 29 January 2012 in 45 mins**

1260 Plain Bob Royal

1-2 Elizabeth J Davenport (C)

3-4 Christopher P Cole

5-6 Kenneth R Davenport

7-8 John A Harrison

9-10 Neil G Curnow

1-2 : First as conductor. Birthday compliment to treble ringer.

## Email address

Many of our communications are sent by email , including reminders about forthcoming practices and this newsletter so please remember to update us with your current email address. At present we are missing about a third of our members email addresses so if you wish to stay fully informed about events happening in the Branch do email your address to **postmaster@sdb.odg.org.uk** .

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