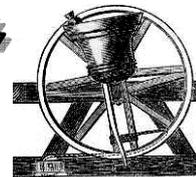




Branching Out

The Oxford City Branch Monthly Newsletter



Monday 15th May 2017

There has been a load of things going on over the last few weeks! Please keep your articles coming in for our newsletter. Let us know about anything that's happening in your tower.

Email me with your news and photos to: paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk. The next edition will be on 12th June (Deadline for copy, 11th)

A Message from the Ringing Master, Andrew Freer

It's striking competition season in Oxford. The City Branch team came a close third in the Guild 8-bell competition at Islip; we were only 3½ faults behind the winners.

Congratulations too, to St Aldates on their victory in the Branch competition held last Saturday at St Thomas's. Thank you to everyone who helped organise it.

I also enjoyed the open ringing after the Half Yearly Meeting. It was good to see the improvement in the plain hunt on 9, and I think even the Stedman Caters would have been successful if we'd had more time.

As mentioned at the meeting, there is a Google Calendar of branch practices and events. The quickest way to subscribe is to click the Google Calendar link on the Events page of the OCB website.

Half Yearly Meeting and Striking Competition details

Saturday 13th May at St Thomas the Martyr (10)

We were so pleased with the turnout at this year's half yearly meeting. The set up for the day, which we trialed last year at Marston translated very well to St Thomas this year.



The 'Boy Band'

Luke, Toby, Alfie, Arthur, Henry



Striking Competition Results!

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| 1. St Aldate's. | 20 faults |
| 2. St Giles. | 28½ faults |
| 3. O.U.S. Band. | 32 faults |
| 4. The Scratch band. | 45 faults |
| 5. Headington - Methods Band | 50½ faults |
| 6. The Boy Band. | 54 faults |
| 7. Headington - Call Changes. | 87 faults |

Yet again, the mini ring proved popular, although we had to pick our moments to ring it between the competition ringing in the tower. We did attempt a quarter peal on it, but this failed due to a fit of laughter after an incident with a hat! A total of seven bands entered the striking competition, two of which were scratch bands. Congratulations to **St Aldates** on their win, and **Headington** should get a special mention for managing to field two bands. I would also like to say thank you to **Tony Crabtree** for bringing the **Stallpits** mini-ring again, and judging the competition so ably. Finally thank you to all those who responded to my call for cake, by providing a very good spread indeed!

Lindsay Powell – Branch Secretary

Branch Practices coming up in the next few months

These practices are for all Branch members who ring from call changes upwards.

If there is something you would like to practise, you can request it on the day, or email our Ringing Master, Andrew Freer in advance.

Please be assured you will all get a warm welcome. We hope to see lots of you at some of the dates below.

Saturday 10 th June	Headington (8)	5.00pm-6.30pm
Saturday 8 th July	Cowley (6)	5.00pm-6.30pm
Saturday 12 th August	Yarnton (6)	5.00pm-6.30pm
Saturday 9 th September	St Mary Magdalen, Oxford (10)	5.00pm-6.30pm (t.b.c.)
Saturday 14 th October	Wheatley (6)	5.00pm-6.30pm (t.b.c.)
Saturday 18 th November	A.G.M. at Wolvercote (6)	Afternoon
Saturday 9 th December	Horspath (6)	5.00pm-6.30pm

Headington Ringers Trip to Nottingham on Saturday 22nd April

Last year, two Headington ringers, Ed Nicholson and Matt Beardsall both moved back to their native city of Nottingham after spending a couple of

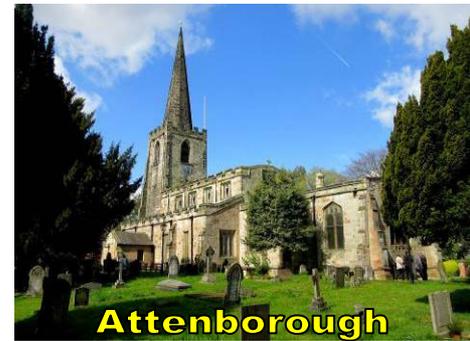
years working and living in Oxford. During that time, they both became active members of the St Andrew's band in Headington, as well as taking part in ringing around the city. After they left, we had always planned to take a trip to Nottingham for a ringing reunion! And so it came to pass that on 22nd April, on a beautiful spring day, 14 ringers – 7 from Headington, along with a mix of other ringers from St Giles, Kidlington, Woodstock, Marston and Aylesbury, plus some local Nottingham ringers, all met up at the first of the churches – **Attenborough (8) (11cwt)**, just outside the city. This was Matt's home tower where he learnt to ring, and was the start of our reunion, where we caught up with each other's news!

After Attenborough, we boarded one of the excellent new trams into the city centre to ring on the beautiful 12 bells at **St Peter's Church (22cwt)**. Just before 12noon, we all stopped ringing, so that we could go out on to the roof to listen to the majestic sound of 'Little John' – the 10 ton bell at Nottingham Town Hall (left), better known as 'The Council House', striking midday! This magnificent bell is reputed to be the deepest toned bell in the world! Well worth listening to!

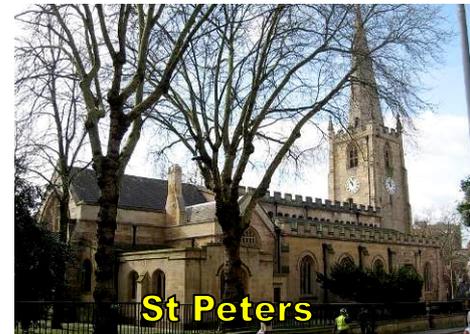
Then it was off to The Roebuck, one of the local Weatherspoons in Nottingham, for an extremely pleasant pub lunch!

After that, it was back on the trams to head off to the University Tower of **All Saints (10) (16cwt)** – yet more excellent bells! And our final destination was **Beeston (10) (17cwt)**, where we rounded off our day.

Our thanks must go to Ed and Matt for organizing such a brilliant tour of the towers of Nottingham, which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who came along! We all hope to return sometime soon to ring on some of the towers we couldn't make this time, but we have also extended an invitation to the Nottingham ringers to come down to Oxford and join us for a tour of the many towers in Oxford! *Paul Lucas*



Attenborough



St Peters



All Saints



Beeston



Sixty Years On!

Exeter College has recently converted the old Ruskin College building in Walton Street into a new Annex. Amongst the members of the College at the celebratory formal opening were two ringers, Ashley Pugh (left) and Dermot Roaf, who first met more than sixty years ago in the Oxford University Society. They are both still ringing - Ashley in Northwich and Dermot at St Giles in Oxford.

They are shown discussing Ashley's recent letters to the Ringing World about the York Minster controversy!

Young Peoples Ringing Outing

Old North Berks Branch - Great Milton & Great Haseley on Wednesday 19th April

It was a beautiful sunny day in the Easter Holidays (as decreed by Oxfordshire County Council). The young ringers were missing some of the usual faces: At least one group couldn't come because their school had become an academy and opted to set their own different holidays. And others were on holiday with their families. But we had eleven school aged ringers including three from the **Reading Branch** and eight from the **Old North Berks Branch**. Ages ranged from 11 to 18 years old. And we were accompanied by seven adult ringers and one little brother.



We met at the church in **Great Milton** and rang on the lovely eight with David Thomas (19) taking charge. We rang lots of rounds and call changes as well as some plain bob triples among other methods. At the end of the ringing we arranged the young ringers into three teams to compete in a treasure hunt on our way by foot to **Great Haseley**, less than two miles away. Each group was accompanied by two adults and Daphne



Pollard went ahead by car to open the Village Hall and arrange the refreshments. One of the questions invited the teams to sketch a prominent local landmark. Luckily they all spotted the nearby windmill and Isaac O'Shea was keen to tell everyone that his granddad had helped to build it! They mostly identified the winter crop near the path as Christmas Trees (but one group guessed it was winter barley!) They must have been hungry that day – all the cakes and scones that Daphne provided were eaten!

And then we walked on to the church at Great Haseley where Hilarie Rogers met us. Half way up the tower there was a small opening between the stones used to build the tower where there must have been a bee's nest as hundreds of small bees were streaming in and out.

We climbed the steps (being careful of the wobbly one) and rang on the lovely six bells. We even rang a couple of tunes – "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" and "Now the day is over".

It was sad to hear that there is no local band of ringers to ring on those bells.

We were told not to open the ringing room window in case the bees came in the ringing chamber. And that was good advice because whilst we rang, an enormous cloud of bees gathered excitedly in the sunshine outside the tower window and then swept away. Perhaps they were swarming on that warm afternoon.

Before we dispersed, the results of the Treasure Hunt were announced. Two teams were joint winners and received a bag of mini Easter Eggs each to share out.

The next outing will be in the May half term holiday. Venue and date is yet to be decided! Susan Read

Outing to Berkshire and Hampshire on Monday 24th April

This was an exercise in dipping our toe in the water to see if Monday may be the new Saturday and in the churchyard at **Eversley** we had the

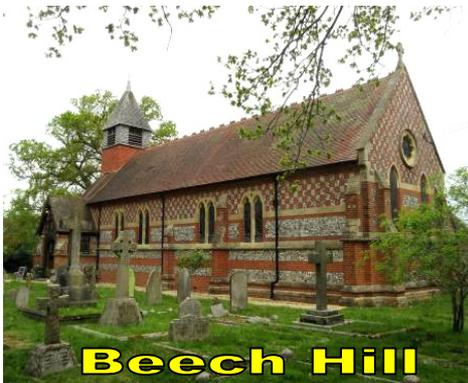
opportunity to see the grave of the author of *The Water Babies*, Charles Kingsley, who served as a rector here for 25 years.

By some quirk this was my third outing in a row to encounter the mediaeval influence of the Mortimer family, from their ancestral home at Wigmore Castle,

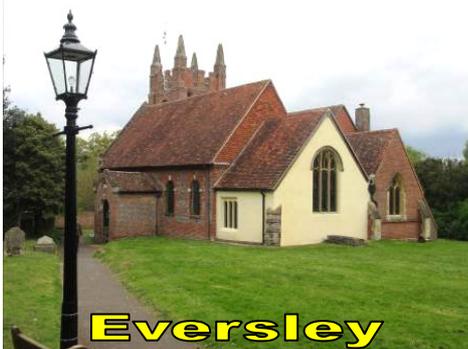


Mortimer

Heckfield



Beech Hill



Eversley

Nottingham Castle where Roger de Mortimer was arrested for the murder of Edward I and now the village which took its name from the family. The day may have been out of the norm, but glitches are



the same any day of the week, with a key holder waiting for us at the wrong church, a rope snapping, and another key holder not turning up, at all this resulting in a church warden having to be summoned!

Our ringing was interspersed with brunch, and a modicum of chiming, in the uniquely modified church at Beech Hill, and later lunch at the 15th century pub in Heckfield - The New Inn.

Two more Monday jaunts are planned for this year, the next being in July, where we should be visiting Winchcombe and surrounding towers.

Hugh Deam

To the Source of the Cherwell in Nine Towers

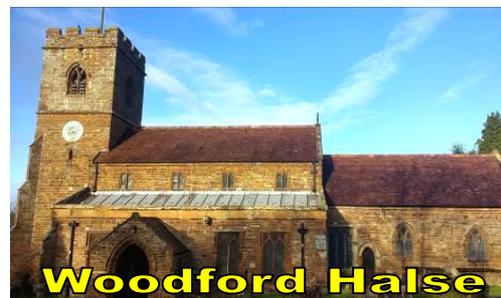
The third and final year of the quest to reach the source of Kidlington's river, took 16 ringers to **Charwelton (5)**, **Woodford Halse (6)** and **Byfield (8)** in



Northamptonshire on 6th May. Reached by crossing the trickle of water, that is the Cherwell at this point, it was Charwelton, standing in splendid isolation on the Jurassic Way, that was the biggest surprise.



Those waiting to ring the pleasant sounding 5 bells were able to admire a huge alabaster tomb monument bearing recumbent effigies of Sir Thomas Andrew (died 1564) and his two wives, a finely carved wall relief commemorating Thomas Andrew (died 1590) and his family and several commemorative brasses from the early 16th century. At Woodford Halse we squeezed into the small mezzanine ringing room to work through several doubles and minor methods and moved on to nearby Byfield where we inserted ear plugs and fastened our seat belts as the loudest of the rings swayed the tower and its proud spire to the rhythm of the triples. Lunch at The Cross Tree in Byfield ended an enjoyable morning. **Peter Trowles**



Another Bank Holiday Practice at Chilton on Monday 1st May

After the excellent turnout for the ringing morning at Kirtlington (8) on Easter Monday, there was an equally enthusiastic response to the May Day morning practice at Chilton (6), and it was especially pleasing to welcome two more ringers, Alan Braithwaite and Paulina Fishman, for their first time on these events. **Hugh Deam**



Dates for your Diary

Full details from Ringing Master, Andrew Freer: andrew.freer@gmail.com or tour organizer, Hugh Deam: deamhugh@gmail.com

Monday 29 th May	Bank Holiday Practice at Islip (8) 8cwt	10.30am-11.45am
Saturday 3 rd June	Adrian Gray's Outing to Essex Towers 11.00am Great Bardfield (8) 15cwt; 12noon Helions Bumpstead (8) 12cwt; Lunch at The Fox & Hounds Steeple Bumpstead; 2.30pm Steeple Bumpstead (6) 14cwt; 3.30pm Ridgewell (6) 8cwt;	
Saturday 10 th June	Practice at Brightwell Baldwin (6) 8cwt	10.30am-12noon
Saturday 24 th June	Ringing up and down Practice at Old Marston (6) 4cwt	4.30pm-6.00pm
Sunday 9 th July	Celebrating Douglas Wilks 70 th year of Guild Membership at North Hinksey (6) – 2.30pm Ringing and afternoon tea followed by a presentation. <i>(Please let Hugh know if you wish to attend as soon as possible so the ringers know how many to cater for)</i>	
Monday 24 th July	Colin Taylor's Outing to Gloucestershire Towers 9.45am Winchcombe (8) 11cwt; Brunch in Winchcombe; 12noon Woolstone (6) 4cwt; 1.15pm Ashchurch (8) 11cwt; 2.30pm Stanway (5) 11cwt;	
Saturday 5 th August	Witney & Woodstock Branch Practice at South Leigh (8) 10cwt.	10.30am-12noon

For more details about everything else, please go to the Oxford City Branch website: www.oxfordcitybranch.org.uk
Any articles or photographs for inclusion in 'Branching Out' please email me: paulclucas@hotmail.co.uk