

# Oxford University Society of Change Ringers

## Annual Newsletter - January 2013

### New Officers

The following Society officers were elected at the AGM held on Monday 26th October in Exeter College:

President	Jeremy Pratt
Senior Member	Stephen Cameron
General Secretary	Simon Bond
Master	Rosalind Roberts, Wolfson
Treasurer	Courtney Spoerer, St Catherine's
Secretary	Robert Hornby, Corpus Christi
Librarian	Matthew Johnson, Christ Church
Steeplekeepers	Peter Jasper, St Stephen's House & John Camp, Jesus
Webmaster	Edmund Mottershead, St Hilda's
Brookes rep.	(vacant - no ringers this year)
CC rep.	Mark Bell

Vice Presidents: Quentin Armitage, Doug Beaumont, David Brown, John Camp, Ian W Davies, Peter Giles, Paul Mounsey, Donald Niblett, Dermot Roaf, Betty Robbins, Andrew Stubbs, and Lester Yeo were re-elected. Nigel Herriott was elected as an additional Vice President in recognition of his contributions to the Society.

### Bell Restoration Fund

BRF Trustees: Senior Member and Treasurer *ex officio*, Andrew Stubbs and Christopher Poole.

Independent Examiners: Marika Haseldine and Nigel Orchard.

### Life Members

The following have become life members:

Hannah Guggiari (Merton 2009-12)

Sean Whitton (Balliol 2009-12)

Michael Williams (Bodleian Libraries 2009-12)

### Residents' Review

*Stephen Dann, immediate past Master, writes:*

With the recent influx of new students, the Society is looking stronger than it has for the past few years, with a residents' Surprise Major band no longer an unusual occurrence. Tuesday practices at Mary Mag have continued to be well-attended, although the Monday St Thos practices are somewhat less popular, but still useful, as we have helped several ringers to reach Plain Hunt standard. Learners' practices this term went well, with 4 attending by the end and able to ring rounds proficiently; hopefully they will continue to attend next term. Pre-practice quarters at Mary Mag have continued as usual, with a respectable rate of success.

Sadly, due to changed service times, Sunday morning quarters at St Thos have had to be suspended. Instead, we aim to ring for half an hour after the service before going on to Mary Mag. Fortnightly ringing at New College has continued, despite occasional poor attendance, and service ringing at St Ebbe's has restarted in the last term.

The traditional 12-bell practices have continued, with the support of the Oxford Society and other past members. One was at Christ Church and the other at Reading; the third didn't happen due to a lack of enthusiasm around exam time.

As usual, we went on a number of outings this year. The joint outing was organised by the CUG to St Albans; although OUS attendance was rather poor, it was still an enjoyable day. Instead of the traditional summer outing, we went on a short cycle outing to see the bells of SMV in the workshop at Appleton, masterminded by Simon Bond. We were also invited to join the UL on their outing to Reading at the end of the term. The Freshers' Outing was organised by Edmund Mottershead, who took us south-east of Oxford. Although there were some problems with the bus timetable, we were pleased to see freshers attending.

The Society's annual dinner was held at Harris Manchester College and was an excellent occasion, as usual. Unfortunately, the annual tour didn't happen this year, but a one-day event in London was well attended.

At the SUA in Bristol, we entered teams in both competitions and managed to beat the Cambridge scratch band in the 8-bell. Congratulations to everyone who rang.

Finally, I would like to thank the outgoing committee, as well as everyone who organised or attended events over the last year.

## **President's Notes**

2012 was certainly an eventful year, not only at national level with the Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympics and Paralympics, but also on the "domestic" OUS front. The Annual Dinner was yet again a most successful event, with Harris Manchester looking after us exceptionally well despite David Woodfine no longer being present to oversee matters, and we look forward to returning there for the 2013 Dinner. It was sad that organisational difficulties caused the cancellation of the Annual Tour, but I am most grateful to Martin Cansdale for stepping in and organising a splendid day out in London on Easter Monday, which was very well attended and much enjoyed by all.

The resident society has been somewhat low in numbers, but has maintained enthusiasm, helped by older members resident in and around Oxford and our friends in the OS. The intake of freshers into the Society in Michaelmas 2012 was better than in the previous couple of years and this bodes well for the coming years. Particular congratulations are due to Matthew Johnson, Robert Hornby and Courtney Spoerer who rang a handbell peal of Plain Bob Minor, being the first peal for each of them, and is believed to be the first peal for the Society rung entirely by freshers.

At the start of 2012, two of the Society's regular Sunday service ringing towers, St Ebbe's and SMV, were out of action. A conversation with the Rector of St Ebbe's at the Dinner led to meetings with the new Church Manager, and, following a further inspection

by Whites, ringing for both the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics and the restoration of regular Sunday Service ringing in Michaelmas Term. Our thanks are due to Simon Bond for rebuilding relationships with the church authorities there and getting the bells ringing again. It is hoped that necessary work on the bells will be carried out in the foreseeable future.

SMV had been out of action for a number of years following the discovery of a cracked gudgeon on the fourth. The major restoration of the Church provided the opportunity to open up the possibility of restoring the bells, and it appeared that only the lack of funding available prevented the necessary work being carried out. As members will be aware, the OUS, jointly with the OS, agreed to raise the necessary funds. The appeal was launched in Michaelmas term 2011, and by the time of the Annual Dinner in February 2012, all the required £30,000 had been raised. This was a magnificent achievement, and is in no small part due to the generosity of members of the OUS, for which I am most grateful. The work on the bells is now complete, and it was splendid to hear those majestic bells ring out again across Radcliffe Square at the "try-out" just before Christmas. There is still work to be done inside the tower, not least the completion of the restoration of the clock and the weight case, and as a result, at present the bells are very loud in the Ringing Room. It is hoped that this work will be completed in early 2013, and in time for the rededication which is scheduled for Sunday February 3rd. The Vicar has agreed to the resumption of regular Sunday Service ringing on alternate Sundays (as in the past). He has also agreed that there can be open ringing on Dinner Day to enable members to have a ring on the restored bells. I look forward to seeing many of you at the 2013 Dinner and on the 2013 Tour which Nigel Herriott is kindly organising in the Romsey area.

*Jeremy Pratt*

## **2012 Peal Ringing**

The Society rang only six peals in 2012, in part through the continued lack of demand for peals from the resident ringers. Those scored started with the dinner day peal, a splendid new Mark Davies method and composition ably conducted by Paul Mounsey. Other peals during the year included first of 8-spliced for Stephen Dann, first as conductor for Nick Hartley and first in more than one method for Alex Dicks. The Society also rang a peal of Stedman Caters in memory of Clive Holloway.

Perhaps the highlight of the OUS peal ringing year came in the last couple of weeks. When the Society gained three capable handbell ringing freshers this year, (none of whom had previously rung a peal) the General Secretary set them the challenge of ringing a peal during their first year. They achieved this at the second attempt and deserve many congratulations. We look forward to many more impressive performances from the trio.

## **Oxford University Society**

**Dunstable**, Bedfordshire

Chew's House, 77 High Street South

Thursday, 13 December 2012 in 1h56m (12F)

### **5040 Plain Bob Minor**

1–2 Matthew R Johnson

3–4 Robert J Hornby

5–6 Courtney J Spoerer (C)

First peal for all.

Thought to be the first peal for the society rung entirely by freshers, and the first entirely by first time peal ringers.

## **2013 Annual Dinner**

The 2013 OUSCR Annual Dinner will take place on Saturday 2nd of February, at 7.00 for 7.30pm. It will once again take place at Harris Manchester College. The guest speaker will be David Pipe, Master of the Society of Cambridge Youths. Alex Byrne will propose the toast to the Guests, and Rosalind Roberts will reply to David's toast to the Society.

Tickets are now on sale for £56 to include a white wine reception, wine and port.

### **Menu**

Roulade of Salmon and Smoked Salmon with Chive Butter Sauce

(V) Spinach and Ricotta Roulade with Tomato and Basil

-/-/-/-/-/-/-

Supreme of Guinea Fowl with Sage, Parma Ham and Marsala Wine Sauce

(V) Celeriac and Fennel Tart with Cep Cream

-/-/-/-/-/-/-

Grilled Fruit with Passion Fruit Sabayon and Almond Wafers

-/-/-/-/-/-/-

Cheeseboard with Port

-/-/-/-/-/-/-

Coffee and Chocolates

Pre-dinner drinking on Friday evening will return to the Cape of Good Hope on the Plain. General ringing and peal attempts will take place during the day on Saturday and coffee will be available at the Royal Blenheim on Sunday morning. To book tickets, please send a cheque payable to "OUSCR Dinner Committee" to: Rosalind Roberts, Wolfson College, Linton Road, Oxford, OX2 6UD enclosing a SAE, details of any dietary requirements, and seating preferences. The closing date for tickets is 19th January.

## **2013 Tour - April 1st 2013 to April 4th 2013**

The 2013 Tour will be based in Romsey in Hampshire which is a pleasant market town with a good selection of pubs and restaurants, including three good curry shops. There is a variety of other eating establishments including pizza places, Italian, French, Chinese, Thai and an excellent fish and chip shop. I hope that it will prove to be a good base for a tour.

I am planning visits to the 12s at Hursley, Portsmouth Cathedral and Bitterne Park; 10s at Bishopstoke, Southampton, East Meon and the private ring at Awbridge. I am also hoping that we will be able to ring at some fine 8s including the excellent Taylor 8s at Portsea, Curdrige and Sherfield English. We will, of course, also ring at Romsey's fine Abbey which dominates the town. The programme is still under development and I hope to be able to announce details before the Dinner in February.

For those who have not been on a tour before, it is held during the week after Easter. We travel between towers by coach which allows us to enjoy a few beers at lunchtime (and at other times too, for those that are so inclined). The coach outings are on the four days, Monday to Thursday but you can come for as much or as little as you wish. Hardened tourists arrive on Easter Sunday and depart on Friday morning, but others will come for a couple of nights.

Romsey does not have a single reasonably priced hotel that can take everyone so the accommodation is split over several establishments but all are on, or are just off, the town square. No-one will need to walk for more than 5 minutes to travel between hotel, pub and curry shop. Here are the details of the accommodation:

<b>Hotel</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>Twin/ Double</b>	<b>Herriott Rating</b>	<b>Other Comments</b>
Berties	£55	£75	Pleasant small hotel and restaurant with simple, clean decoration. All en-suite.  Herriott recommended.	2 of the rooms (1 single, 1 double) are behind a single outer door and share a bathroom. The pair is priced at £100.  Some car parking available.
White Horse	£85	£115	Romsey's premier hotel. An excellent 4 star hotel with bar that sells (pricey) real ale (Flack's Double Drop). Some parking.  For the discerning OUS member.	Some car parking available.
Abbey Hotel	£45	£80	Slightly dated, but reasonable accommodation in a pub with reasonable real ale. All en-suite.  Not as clean and comfortable as Berties. OK for those that prefer to stay in a pub.	Some car parking available.

Hotel	Single	Twin/ Double	Herriott Rating	Other Comments
The Star Inn	£45	£60	Rooms are a little more downmarket than the Abbey but the beer is good! Doubles are not en-suite.	
Dr Peter Scouting Centre	£15 (hall floor)		New scout centre opened in 2011. Good facilities including showers and a kitchen with kettle, toaster and microwave.  Accommodation consists of a large hall (bring your own sleeping bag).	Less than 10 minutes walk from the centre of Romsey.  No alcohol is allowed at the Centre!!!

Most of the hotels have car parking, but it is generally limited. Otherwise you will have to park in a public car park at £4.10 a day at the two Long Stay car parks close to the town centre (free on Sundays and Bank Holidays). You can also travel by rail as Romsey has a railway station which is less than 10 minutes walk from the town centre.

If you live within reasonable distance of Hampshire, you don't have to come on the tour and stay in a hotel. You would be most welcome just to come for the day (or for more than one, if you wish). You can either do this with your own transport or it may be possible to pick you up at a railway station along the route on the day – please contact me if you are interested in doing this and we will see what we can work out.

If you would like to come on the tour and to book accommodation, please email me at [nigel@herriott.net](mailto:nigel@herriott.net) with your requirements. I will put details on [www.herriott.net/oustour](http://www.herriott.net/oustour) as the arrangements progress. I look forward to seeing many of you next year.

*Nigel Herriott*

### **Members' News**

Only one item of news was sent to me for the newsletter.

**Nigel Orchard** married Alison Yearsley on 4th August at St Thomas's, Salisbury. She is a bellringer and shares his interests in motorcycles and old vehicles. She attended part of the 2011 OUS tour. They were delighted to welcome many ringing friends to the wedding and reception.

### **Obituaries**

**Margaret (Robin) Woolley** died on 5th February 2012, aged 88, after a short illness.

Known to most ringers as Robin, she was born Margaret Telford in St Helen's in Lancashire. Her early years were spent in Widnes, and when she was six her father

retired and the family moved to Keswick in the Lake District. She developed early a great love of books, and enjoyed hill and mountain walking and cycling immense distances.

There were no ringers in the family, but as a schoolgirl she was enthralled by Dorothy Sayers's detective story about bells, *The Nine Tailors*. She sought out the ringers at Crosthwaite Church and asked to learn bellringing and was taught to ring by Tyson Hogarth.

She went to Oxford where she read Classics and rang handbells until the ban on church bells was lifted in 1943, and then rang those too. There were so many Margarets in her college that she needed a nickname and so came to be known as Robin. She took a teaching post in Spalding, and in 1945 she went on a combined Oxford and Cambridge ringing tour based in Canterbury. There she met Chris Woolley who was some years older than her and a ringer of distinction. They were married at Crosthwaite in 1948 when Robin, rather unusually for a bride, made a speech at the reception. They moved to Bushey where Chris already taught at the Royal Masonic Junior School.

When her daughters Sara and Amanda were at primary school she went back to teaching, but when her husband retired in 1970 she retired too, and that was the start of what she said recently were twenty really happy years. Chris and Robin went to Australia and New Zealand made many lasting friends through ringing there, as well as travelling and ringing throughout this country. It was a pleasure to them that Sara and her husband Russ and grandsons Peter and Matthew lived near them.

After Robin was widowed in 1991, she kept up with family and friends, travelling alone to Australia and New Zealand, returning to Keswick frequently and staying often with Amanda in London, where she continued for several years, as she had done with Chris, to ring at St Clement Danes in the Strand each month.

She was an active member of St Peter's, Bushey Heath and St James, Bushey. From the time she was widowed she became involved with the 43ers association and attended most of their annual outings for the last twenty years.

Robin rang 84 peals, 52 on handbells. Her first peal was Plain Bob Major on handbells on 27th November 1942 for the Oxford University Society. John Spice had taught her to ring handbells 'by the places', first learning the cross section places, and then the places in each section in turn. She rang 21 peals for the OUS. Her first tower bell peal was her twelfth peal, the first of Major for the OUS on tower bells.

Robin was primarily a handbell ringer, although she rang up to Stedman Cinques on tower bells. Perhaps the peak of her achievements was with the top handbell band of the time, led by Harold Cashmore, with whom she rang up to 8-Spliced Surprise Major, and peals of London and Bristol Major. They were the only band in the country at the time ringing peals at this level. She was the first woman to ring a peal of Bristol on handbells.

Rigorously honest and decent, kind, thoughtful and unshowy, she was surrounded all her life by books and newspapers. With her immense knowledge and wit, she was a lovely companion, right up until the end.

*Adapted from the Ringing World obituary by Amanda Woolley and Sara Coward*

## **G. Robert Mordaunt (Bob) 4th June 1943 – 23rd April 2012**

Bob was born in June 1943 in Liverpool. He attended the Liverpool Institute (with George Harrison). He came to Oriel, as a scholar, in 1961 and remained for a DPhil.. His mathematical research involved the use of computers, at a time when computer science was still in its early stages.

Bob learned to ring with the OUS. He was taught to handle a bell at New College by John Camp and thereafter made rapid progress. He met his future wife, Elaine, who was training as an occupational therapist at what was then Dorset House, and who rang regularly with the OUS. They were married in August 1966 at St Helen's, Abingdon by the vicar, who was Elaine's father. Bob and Elaine subsequently had three daughters.

Oriel in Bob's day was a rowing powerhouse, and he had rowed in one of the college's lesser eights. He came to love the sport and the social atmosphere that went with it. He always felt in his element at Henley. "I can see Bob now" said Elaine's cousin, Richard Thomson, at his funeral, "white-trousers, the gold-buttons on his blazer shining from atop an excellent lunch, and an essential pint of Pimm's in his hand, radiating bonhomie. Later he became a member of Leander, hugely enjoying annual Henley Week".

In 1967, he joined a firm that would become Scicon. In 1979, he moved to Logica. He and Elaine lived and worked in Switzerland for two years in the early 1970s, and then Tehran for a year. At different times Bob worked in Australia, Brussels, Malaysia, Hong Kong and the Netherlands. Bob did not suffer fools gladly; indeed, in certain moods he didn't suffer highly intelligent people gladly either. He was generous. He made donations to help bright students from less privileged backgrounds attend Oriel. He paid for two bells to be re-cast and re-hung at St Helen's, Abingdon, in memory of his father-in-law John and mother-in-law Patricia.

Bob Mordaunt was big: physically imposing, with a notable appetite for the pleasures of the table and the bar; socially assertive; intellectually confident. Parkinson's Disease was diagnosed in the mid-1990s. Typically, Bob met it with practicality and intellectual curiosity. His Parkinson's group became another club for a time. Despite the physical problems that Parkinson's brought, Bob fought hard to keep his brain alert. He spent his last few years in a care home. Latterly, he had to use a wheel-chair. Sadly, the last occasions when he was seen at gatherings which included a large number of OUS members were at other people's funerals or memorial services (Roger Heyworth's, Stephen Ivin's and Frank White's).

Bob was a competent ringer, though he had rung seldom in recent years. He rang 55 peals (20 with the OUS), the last in 1978. He was a member of the ASCY.

*John Camp (with extensive acknowledgements to Richard Thomson's funeral eulogy)*

## **Revd Dr Stephen Nicholson 1965-2012**

Stephen joined the OUS while he was training for Ordination at St Stephen's House in 1998 - 2000. He rang three peals with the Society during this time.

Stephen was from Lanchester, Co Durham. He studied Theology in Cambridge, then a

PGCE in Birmingham before teaching in Manchester. He served his curacy in Middlesborough, and then was a chaplain at York University, until he became ill several years ago.

*Dorothy Hall*

### **Meeting Dates in 2013**

The Society's business meetings are held on Mondays, and customarily take place in Exeter College. Please confirm the venue in advance.

TGM dates - the first Monday in term: Jan 14th, April 22nd and Oct

AGM date – the last Monday in Michaelmas term: Nov 26th.

### **The Society's History**

Copies are available for £30 each (including postage and packing), made out to 'OUSCR History', from the general secretary.

### **Address List and Websites**

The General Secretary maintains the Society's address list, of nearly 330 members. The vast majority are now on e-mail. If you would like a copy of the list, either electronically or on paper, please ask.

Email addresses are held on the website and by the secretary, but the master list is maintained by John Camp for use on the mailing list. This is used for important announcements and the dissemination of this Newsletter, and all members are strongly encouraged to join it. You can do so either by e-mailing [ouscr-admin@bellringers.net](mailto:ouscr-admin@bellringers.net) or by visiting [http://www.bellringers.net/mailman/listinfo/ouscr\\_bellringers.net](http://www.bellringers.net/mailman/listinfo/ouscr_bellringers.net).

The OUS now also has a 'chat' mailing list, also kindly run by John Camp. This is a new list allowing Society members to discuss matters related to the Society and ringing in general. More details on this list, including how to join, can be found by visiting [http://www.bellringers.net/mailman/listinfo/ouschat\\_bellringers.net](http://www.bellringers.net/mailman/listinfo/ouschat_bellringers.net)

### **Contact Details**

You can contact the General Secretary by post at:

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or by telephone on:

01865 249922 or 07722 884389

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