

Oxford University Society of Change Ringers

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2002

New Officers

This is a complete list of the Officers elected at the AGM:

President	John Camp
Senior Member	Dermot Roaf
General Secretary	Peter Giles
Master	Henry Coggill (St Hugh's)
Resident Secretary	Laura Duncan (Wadham)
Librarian	Marika Pascovitch (St Hilda's)
Treasurer	Jack Gunning (Pembroke)
Steeplekeepers	Matt Yeo (St Catherine's) Martin Cansdale (Christ Church)
Website Maintainer	Oliver Lomax (Lincoln)
Brookes rep.	Naomi Cullan
CC Rep	Peter Niblett
BRF Trustees:	Senior Member and Treasurer ex officio Andrew Stubbs Christopher Poole

This year, the Vice Presidents were elected individually: Quentin Armitage, Doug Beaumont, David Brown, Ian W Davies, Stephen Ivin, Wilfrid Moreton, Paul Mounsey, Donald Niblett, Dermot Roaf, Betty Robbins, John Spice and Andrew Stubbs. Rodney Meadows is Past President.

Bell Restoration Fund

Mark Shepherd and Alex Byrne have been re-elected as 'Independent Examiners'.

Life Members

The following have become Life Members:

Mark A Humphreys	New College
John PW Taylor	St John's
Sarah Butt	St Anne's
Rebecca Glen	Balliol

Peter Giles 6 Pittsfield, Cricklade, Wilts SN6 6AN tel 01793-751690
email pggiles@lineone.net

2002 Annual Dinner

This year's Dinner will again be at Harris Manchester College, on Saturday 2nd February at 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm. Tickets will be £38.00. The speech welcoming the Guests will be given by Jeremy Pratt, and the reply given by Chris Pickford, Master of the College Youths.

Please send an SAE and a cheque payable to OUSCR Dinner Committee to: Henry Coghill, St Hugh's College, St. Margaret's Road, Oxford OX2 6LE, stating any seating plan preferences and dietary requirements. Closing date for tickets is 14th January.

Drinking the night before will be at the Folly Bridge Inn, Abingdon Road.

Meeting Dates in 2002

The Society's business meetings are held on Mondays, and take place in the Quarrell Room in Exeter.

TGM dates - the first Monday in term. Jan 14th, April 22rd and Oct 14th.
AGM date - Monday, Dec 2nd.

Newsletter Account

The cost of printing and posting this Newsletter will be about £130. The Newsletter account will stand at about £720 after this letter has been sent. If you wish to contribute, please make your cheque payable to `Mr P Giles` or `Post Office Counters`.

Peal Records

We are trying to trace the OUS peal books dating from 1978. Please contact Laura Duncan (Wadham College, Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PN laura.duncan@wadham.ox.ac.uk) if you have any information about them.

Society Ties

Twenty-nine still remain, and are on sale for just three pounds each. Every year they get better value for money. I am even willing to consider them as a job lot.

Residents' Review

Mark Bell, the immediate past Master, writes:

2001 was another successful year for the OUS. We have a good number of residents at the moment who attend ringing well; regularly there 15 or 16 at the practice on a Tuesday. Michaelmas Term saw a welcome return to Mary Mag after the 8 were rehung. We practice there on a Tuesday evening after a 1/4 peal, with another practice every other Monday at St Thos. Sunday ringing consists of a 1/4 peal at St Thos, then Mary Mag and St Ebbe's, with SMV and New College every other week in the evening. If people are still hungry for more ringing on a Sunday we practice handbells which occasionally also takes place midweek at lunchtimes. Once a term we hop on the train to Reading to hold a 12 bell practice which gives most residents a relatively rare change to ring on twelve.

The society provides a good platform for ringers to progress rapidly. At practices the ringing ranges from rounds to spliced surprise with everything inbetween, so there is something for everybody. Quarter peals before the Tuesday practices and on Sundays at St Thos are used to help people through methods to quarter peals for the first time and to give the more advanced ringers the chance to ring some more challenging things. Notable quarter peals this year include 8-spliced, Glasgow, January and February Surprise Major, and Cambridge Surprise Minor on handbells. In total 51 quarter-peals have been rung this year.

Every other Monday during term, peals are rung at St Thos, by a band of roughly half and half residents and badgers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the badgers who turn out regularly to help us with these peals, we benefit a lot from them. In total 25 OUS peals have been rung this year, which is more than any other year for a long time. This included 2 peals rung entirely by residents on which each occasion had someone in the band ringing their first peal. There were also lots of first in methods, of spliced, on 10 and 12, and as conductor for residents during the year.

Special events during the year started with the annual dinner in February, as usual a magnificent occasion well supported by children and badgers alike. Later in February saw the annual joint outing with the CUG to London where we rang at St Mary-le-Bow; St Laurence, Jewry; St Botolph's, Bishopsgate; St Botolph's, Aldgate and St Giles-in-the-Fields, Holborn. The Easter vacation meant it was time for the tour, in Cricklade, Wiltshire, organised by Peter Giles. Nearly all the residents went for some part of it, making a very cosy church hall floor at night! Trinity term brought the summer outing to Drayton, Abingdon and Radley. In Michaelmas term we took the freshers on an outing to Milton, Steventon and Cumnor, with a very long lunch split between Steventon and Abingdon while waiting for buses. Finally came the SUA competition, held in Bristol. Our 8-bell band won the competition, but the 6-bell band could only manage 5th. Needless to say, the social side of the OUS is as strong as

ever; the termly cheese and wine parties have joined the pancake party as tradition, and the residents have not lost their thirst for beer. This contributes to a great society, and long may it continue.

I would like to end by thanking all the residents, especially the committee for giving me lots of support during the year which has made it very enjoyable to be Master. I hope that Henry and his committee carry on from where we have left off to keep the OUS at the forefront of university ringing.

The Annual Tour

The tour was based on Cricklade in Wiltshire, and organised by Peter Giles. It was especially pleasing to see so many residents this year.

The 2002 Tour will be based in Ipswich. The organiser is Nigel Orchard of Milford Hill Cottage, Milford Hill, Salisbury SP1 2 QZ, tel 01722-335328, email nigel.orchard@btinternet.com. Easter is no so late this year, so the tour can revert to Easter week, which means beginning on Sat March 30th.

Address List

The Address List is available on request electronically, on paper or via diskette. The following 26 members are still lost: Catherine Bannister, Sarah Bates, Rosemary Clark, Frances E Collins, Paul Crane, Robert Galloway, Andre Gren, David Hamlin, Sally Hawksworth, Luke Heaton, Lance Hewson, Anne Lambert, John S Leonard, Bill Lister, Andrew J Loveland, Jeremy McCabe, Melanie Milan, JD Mozley, David Newman, Colin Parker, Julia Sheard, Nigel Sheppard, Richard Tapper, C Turnbull, AJ Vincent, and Gill Wilce.

The Society's History

Sales have now reached 237. In the five years since it was published, there must be many new members and life members who have not yet got around to investing. Please help us to sell just another 30 copies so we can break even and start contributing profits to BRF. Please send your cheque for £30.00 per copy (incl. postage and package), made out to 'OUSCR History', to the general secretary.

Old Newsletters

The Society is trying to improve its library, and would welcome copies of Newsletters before 1980. Please contact the general secretary if you have any to give or copy.

Members' News

We will all be saddened to hear of the deaths of **Marie Cross** and **David Woodward**. Although neither was a member of the OUS, each has been a good friend for many years.

Peter Wright, widower of Kate and brother of Frank, died on November 16th. An appreciation will appear next year.

Alison Moore (nee Foote) says ' I am not ringing any more, but am pleased at one remove that the 6 bells of our 'home' church (St Nicholas, Durham), which had been assumed to be unsafe for years, turn out to be ringable after all. So a home grown band is gradually forming, with the help of other local ringers, in response to the Millennium appeal to keep the bells going. Among the new ringers is my 16 year old son, who is taking to it with enthusiasm, and thereby keeping a family tradition going, as my father has been a ringer for 60 years too. They rang together for the first time before Christmas.'

John Wardle has died. *Jean Paling writes:*

Those members of the OUS who were up in the years 1958-61 will be sad to hear of the sudden and untimely death of John Wardle. Nick Martin, in his contribution to the History, spoke of John's 'particular brand of pipemanship and measured speech' which phrases admirably sum up the John of that time. At some stage the pipe was abandoned, but John's stimulating conversation and his way with a good story never left him. There is much talk of the importance of 'timing', and John was the arch-exponent. We are fortunate to have lived within dinner distance of John and Marianne for the last thirty or so years and have reason to be grateful for many memorable evenings of hospitality.

Yes, John was indeed good company and for that quality and his generosity he will be sorely missed by us and many others. But he will also be missed in the ringing team at Westerham where he has been a loyal and reliable member since he and Marianne went there in 1966. John was one of those few ringers who actually learned as an undergraduate at oxford. He was inspired to start ringing after a talk to the Teddy Hall History Society by Bob Winstanley.

Roger Heyworth

Roger died at the end of last year just too late for any tributes to be included in the Newsletter. At his funeral, Nigel Orchard gave this eulogy, which encapsulates Ogowash so well I include it in full:

We now have a few minutes to dwell on the life of our friend Roger, Dear Old Ogowash. So let me invite each of you to focus on a favourite memory you have of being with him. It may have been in a pub, at work, on a canal boat, playing cricket, ringing bells, playing card games, bridge, darts, whatever – Roger had a wide range of interests into which he threw himself with enthusiasm. And because of the sort of person he was – friendly, humorous, enthusiastic, encouraging and entirely lacking in malice – I'm sure that most of you will be smiling and feeling warm at the memory, despite the underlying sadness of this occasion. And if one happy memory leads to another and you miss my remaining words, that will be a wholly appropriate tribute to Roger and probably more fun for you.

He was born in Rochdale on 11th April 1946 to parents Fred and Joy and acquired his beloved sister Sue 3 years later. Fred moved the family into the School House at Brightwell cum Sotwell in 1949 when he became headmaster of the village primary school. Many of you will remember the warm hospitality there after peals or ringing outings to Brightwell. This was a tradition later carried on by Roger and Adie and Roger and Jenny in inviting people to stay with them and making them very welcome.

As was the wholly appropriate tradition at Brightwell, youngsters progressed from the choir to the ringing, and Roger did so.

At Wallingford Grammar School, Roger fell in with a band of young ringers including Gerald McIlhone who also later went to Oxford. This band rang a number of peals including Roger's first, tenor behind to multi doubles at Brightwell Baldwin in 14th Sept 1962. He also fell in with the back of a chair, dislodging a front tooth and creating a memorable component – or lack of it – in the famous Roger 100 watt wonky grin.

A great interest Roger developed at school and maintained throughout his life was Mediaeval History, but he read Law when he went up to University College Oxford in 1964, a choice of subject he later regretted, though Law didn't interfere excessively with his other activities and gave him a not untypical class of ringing degree.

He threw himself into the Oxford University Society of Change Ringers – the OUS – ringing scene with his usual enthusiasm as did his dear sister Sue who also became an OUS institution. His first peal for the OUS was in October '64 at Stanton Harcourt – various minor methods.

He was elected Master in 1966. A contemporary describes him as “vigorous” in a succession of masters described as quiet, vigorous, affable and laid-back. There were at this time in the OUS two main subdivisions – between the heavy drinking, somewhat stropy (but delightful when you got to know them) group and those keen to drink less heavily. Roger thoroughly enjoyed his membership of the former group, but also went out of his way to make members of the other group feel welcome and to develop their ringing. This inclusiveness continued throughout his life. A resident and able ringer described to me coming on his first tour – the Rhyl tour organised by Roger – with some trepidation because of the reputation of the non-residents, but was met with kindness and made to feel very welcome by Roger.

On one occasion, Roger rose to make a speech, said “Ladies and Gentlemen, I am very drunk” and slid gracefully under the table. It was a popular speech.

On leaving Oxford, Roger entered graduate training with Debenhams.

He married Adrienne Gibson in 1969 and there followed 20 happy and fulfilled years for this well-matched couple. It is rumoured that they tripped over a stile together on a canal holiday and the romance blossomed from there. Together they contributed a great deal to the local ringing wherever they lived. Staying at their house, one enjoyed the generous hospitality of a relaxed, friendly and welcoming couple, though Adie was quite capable of delivering strong words of admonition to Roger when the need arose, often late in the evening or the morning after. Roger always reckoned that digging the garden was a good hangover cure, but these activities were curtailed after he had dug up a large patch of Adie’s hollyhocks. His second wife, Jenny, wisely kept him out of the gardening.

Adie and he started married life in Epsom, but work for Macro took them first to Derby and then back to his birthplace where Nicola and Robin were born. For a time, Roger was master of the Rochdale branch of the Lancashire Association.

A long-standing bellringing friend who knew him at this time recalls – and this will rekindle memories in the many of us who benefited from his ringing instruction – that his great gift was to be ruthlessly critical whilst being devastatingly charming.

Work brought Roger and Adie back down South, first to Aston then to Ashted. In April 1979, Roger joined Adie’s family’s firm, Gibson Games. Here his major contribution was the real enthusiasm and understanding he had for board and card games, having spent hours playing them since he was quite young. Mike Gibson, the head of the firm, recalls that Roger could read the long and complicated rules of new games that were offered to them and immediately understand their dynamics and potential. Mike also appreciated Roger’s vigorous debating of issues where he would often take an extreme contrary view just to ensure a thorough discussion. Roger was

very much respected for his straightforwardness and honesty by the business community in which he worked.

When developing new games, however, which he did by playing them with family and friends, he was not beyond discovering rules that he had “forgotten” to tell the rest of the players, or developing rules as he went along. I recall playing a civil war game in which Adie’s army advanced slowly east out of Devon throw by throw of the dice, only to be repeatedly forced back to Exeter by a series of newly created plagues, taxes, peasants’ revolts or somesuch. She was not best pleased.

Cricket was another passion. Opinions about his ability vary, perhaps affected by which team was involved. Training for the Hogwash Allstars, which played regularly at Aston, involved 2 hours at the Inn on the Green, Datchworth before each match. Roger also played regularly for the Old Freeman’s cricket club second eleven and sometimes for the first. Here he was reckoned a bowler of much skill and intelligence and formed part of a fierce opening bowling attack. He was not renowned for his batting or catching skills. Typically, Roger got involved beyond just the playing, acting as fixtures secretary for several years. In any activity it was rare for Roger just to be a spectator, and, despite his relaxed style, he was a thorough and capable organiser in many fields.

Of Roger’s many canal holidays, his crew members mostly remember his ability to mass produce excellent fried breakfasts. Unlike another artiste of the canal breakfast, he is thought never to have caused any serious conflagrations, though the smoke generated was a sight to behold and the ceiling ended up covered with condensed fat.

Of his bridge, people remember his enthusiasm and honest approach rather than any great skill, but it was something he continued to enjoy right up to the last stages of his illness.

Tragedy struck in March 1989 when his beloved wife Adie died. She had undergone radiotherapy in the early 80’s and had had several years of remission, but the disease struck again in about 1986. Adie fought and belittled it bravely and Roger maintained his usual positive and cheerful attitude for her benefit and the family’s. But close members of the family saw Roger’s mask slip occasionally and the real pain he was suffering showing through.

Through this period, Roger and the family were increasingly supported by Jenny Bridgwater, a local ringer, and they married in this church in October 1991. Jenny was able to help him live with his loss and return to the frantic round of ringing, canals, pubs, curries, cricket, board games, darts etc in which every day of the week had its regular activities.

I have only time to pick out some highspots of his ringing career which was distinguished both in the range of his ringing ability and the immense amount he put back into the exercise through teaching, running towers and holding Association offices. He was a district master for the Guildford Guild and Guild Master 1984-1993. At one stage he was running the ringing at both Epsom Common and Ashted. His first peal as conductor was Yorkshire Major in April 1966. His first peal for the College Youths was Glasgow Major at Putney in September 1968. He rang in 23 spliced Surprise Major silent and non-conducted and scored an OUS peal of Orion at Guildford in July 1992.

His last peal was Rutland Royal at Southampton on 12th October 1996 and 2 days later he had to start on a further course of chemotherapy.

In May 1994 he had been told that a bowel condition for which he had been receiving treatment had turned cancerous. An operation followed and major surgery within a year. From then on until his death on 13th December last, Roger was rarely free from chemotherapy, serious physical inconvenience and, increasingly, pain, though the skilled treatment by the Royal Marsden gave periods when he could enjoy most of his usual activities and prolonged his life beyond many peoples' expectations. An increasing burden was lovingly borne by his wife Jenny, as Roger needed a lot of physical support latterly.

It was during the years of his illness that his friends and family came to realise the real strength of character and courage behind the laughing cavalier surface. He bore serious pain and increasing restrictions with little complaint and maintained his positive attitude. He continued to be excellent and rewarding company and his love of cricket, though now only as a television spectator served him well. One of the team clergy from here was on one of his visits and asked Roger what he would like him to pray for; "For rain" said Roger, "or we'll lose this Test." Fittingly, Roger rang here for the last time for Evensong in September.

In putting together these words, I have been greatly impressed and touched by the large number of people who have expressed their great friendship and admiration for Roger, pleasure from his company and gratitude for his help and support.

So let me end this all too sketchy tribute where we began, recalling his magnetic personality, his shouts of laughter and his ability to turn everything into great fun. The memories of these will live with us over the years and continue to make us smile and feel good.

Mary Magdalen Appeal

The rehung eight, including the recast trebles, were opened and pealed in June. The two new trebles to make a ring of ten in memory of Peter Border have now been cast and await hanging, at which point the final adjustments to the internal acoustics can be made. If anyone would still like to make a donation, please contact the General Secretary. Meanwhile, the Society thanks all those who have contributed so generously to this appeal, and especially Stephen Ivin who has once again led the effort to give Oxford another truly first class ring of bells and done all the hard work..

OUS Peals

These may now be viewed on the website. In 2001, the Society has rung 25 peals, the most for a long while. They are Bristol Max, Stedman Cinques (2), 4 Spliced Surprise Royal, London Royal, Cambridge Royal, Yorkshire Royal (2), Stedman Caters (2), 9 Spliced S Major, 8 Spliced, 6 Spliced, Bristol (2), Superlative, Yorkshire (4), Cambridge (2), Lessness, Lincolnshire and Stedman Triples.

A peal day was organised in Oxford on August bank holiday Monday in memory of Peter Border, and Cambridge Royal was rung at St Thomas and Stedman Cinques at Christ Church.

Dorothy L Sayers Society

Jean Pailing writes:

Those who missed it in the Church Times at the end of September may like to read this item about the DLSS. The OUS will not need to be reminded that the OUS was made an Honorary member of the DLSS.

The DLSS still thrives, absorbed by the minutiae of her books, their allusions, her life and her theology. The crime writer PD James has succeeded the late Lord Runcie as its patron, and the society, at its annual convention, gave her a unique birthday present: DLS's own Book of Common Prayer which had been given by her grandfather to her grandmother in 1845, and had come down via her mother to Dorothy. 'Nothing could have given me greater pleasure' said Baroness James. The book had been bought at auction, along with Miss Sayers' copy of Charles Troyte's *Change Ringing*, which gave the technical information she used in *The Nine Taylors*, probably her best detective novel and the book form which we non bellringers have learned all we know about campanology. The convention was held at Writtle, Chelmsford Diocese, close to DLS' home in Witham; and among the lectures were ones given on Charles Williams, on the council of Nicaea and the Creed, and on all the gardens, real and fictional, associated with DLS.

The OUS online.

1. The OUS has an active website at www.users.ox.ac.uk/~ouscr. This now holds the latest Newsletter, and details of all peals and quarter peals rung since January 1999. This newsletter is posted there every January.
2. John Camp has set up an OUS mailing list at ouscr@bellringers.net which is meant as a bulletin board rather than a chat-list.
3. The General Secretary may be contacted at pggiles@lineone.net or (if this fails) oldgrimes@hotmail.com.

Fifty eight members have so far agreed to take this Newsletter electronically. If you would like to help the Society by doing so, please ask me.

Please ensure the society has your latest email address.

WE ARE NOW LOSING EMAIL ADDRESSES:

Would the following please supply me with up-to-date email addresses:

P J Thompson
John Thorp
Mike and Cathy Ovenden
Hilary Beck