

## **Bicester Branch Training Officer's Report 2024**

2024 has continued on from 2023, with good progress by several of our ringers. Sally Cross achieved her first treble quarter peal and Julie Penny her first quarter peal inside to Plain Bob Doubles, consequently they have passed their ART Learning the Ropes Level 3 and Level 4 respectively. In December Christine Redford and Charlie Bates achieved their first 8-bell quarter peal to Plain Bob Triples at Kirtlington. Congratulations to them both!

In addition to regular branch and ten-bell practices we have continued very successful monthly focused practices at Bletchington, supported by experienced ringers to help improve trebling, covering and ringing inside to doubles methods. Following attendance of these practices, several ringers have achieved their first quarter peals on treble, tenor and inside to doubles.

At least five Bicester Branch members have attended the Oxford Diocesan Guild Radley and Steeple Aston Training courses as students. Again, branch members have also supported these events as helpers and tutors.

Our recent recruits have also been making very good progress, with Jo Strange and Leo Owens passing their Learning the Ropes Level One and Liping Liu passing Learning the Ropes Level Two followed up by her first Quarter Peal on tenor very recently. All the above recruits have benefitted from attending Oxfordshire Ringing School Handling and Foundation sessions, giving them the required skills to participate in team ringing. Altogether, at least seven branch ringers have attended Ringing School sessions this year.

On the teaching front, Andy Dudley has now gained accreditation in teaching ART handling skills with Oxon Ringing School. Many congratulations to him! In the summer, Charlie Bates returned from Manchester University, attended an ART M1 teaching handling course in November and is now making good progress towards gaining accreditation. These achievements provide encouraging signs that teaching of ringing is in good health in our branch.

In September, renowned bell ringing author Steve Coleman delivered two talks at Bletchington concerning "*ropesight and how to achieve it*" and "*how best to learn methods*". Both talks were well attended and Steve's approachable, entertaining and informative talks were really appreciated.

I am most grateful for all the help and support that ringers within and outside the branch have provided to the various practices, training sessions and first Quarter Peals that have been held in the past year. I look forward to continuing these useful events that help our ringers make progress.

I am encouraged that our branch's capability and confidence to teach handling, foundation, hunting and method ringing skills to new and improving ringers, is continuing to grow steadily and look forward to this continuing.

Steve Vickers

January 2025