

"In a galaxy far far away. . . " (not really)

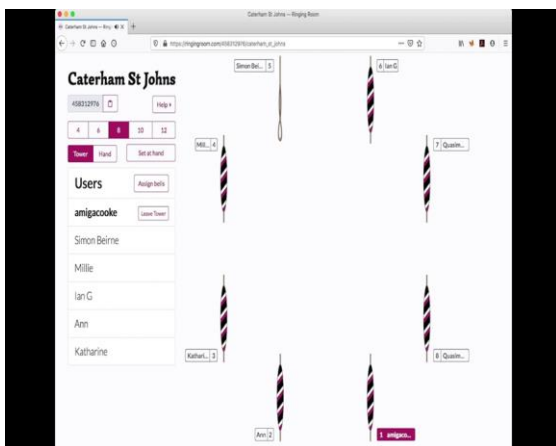
"Huddled in their homes, isolated, due to the vast plague that covers the land. A historic few wandered out on to the internet hills to hold the Oxford City Branchs' very first on-line ringing practice."



*Illustration 1: The title Page - "all who adare enter"*

Seriously though - a total of 22 from our Branch joined (sorry no direct pictures yet, we haven't figured that one out yet) - to ring lots and lots and lots of Grandsire. The "Grand Grandsire Grand" had started.

Commencing with aprox. 30 mins of special help and instruction for those who have never rung a 'button in anger', 4 new faces attended - well done to all there. With plenty of helpers and advisors (esp. Rachel and James) to guide the varying levels of tech awareness or non-awareness, it is not an easy thing - we all learnt a bit I'm sure. Special mentions must go to Charlotte, Deborah and Simon (with Susan) who basically tried things for the very first time, in unfamiliar settings, (with strange people!) & all did well, and got a bit further. Keep going.



*Illustration 2: The inside workings of Ringing Room (not City Branch)*

Then the gathering of everyone at 10.30 - a vast sea of smiling (?) faces, ready to attempt this new historic venture. A bit of chaos ensued, as the new Ringing Master struggled to make the swift decisions needed to get the next stage/rooms set up. Loads of teething problems were expected and a few materialised. Yet again everyone was very patient, to the RM's great relief. (Thank you all).

There was plenty of experience, and patience, to rely on. As many know, when ringing in Ringing Room a lot more patience is required, which of course makes the getting something round that much sweeter.

One of the advantages of on-line 'Ringing Room', is that you can pop in for 20 mins or so, and then step out, without too much bother.



*Illustration 3: 'We all have interesting backgrounds'*

It is good that in the Branch we have at least 4 towers using the

on-line (Ringing Room) facility. With St Aldates and Headington 'leading' the way. Closely followed by St Giles and Marston making a recent start.

Next came the dividing into 2 rooms - a Grandsire doubles and a Grandsire Triples room. With approx 7-8 in the 1st and from 7 -14 in the second.

Special thanks go to Dorothea and Craig in triples & Lyndsay and Claire in doubles rooms for sterling service in keeping things rolling

The aim was not to do too much 'higher' ringing, but to have solid rings increasing in confidence and fluency. So the same plain courses and touches were rung several times to increase those 2 areas.

Also to improve the overall sense of understanding the structure of method. Not just being able to ring your bit, but grasp what is going on around you a touch more.

Then after 45 mins, we regathered all in the same place to hear a few thoughts from the RM, & propose the next Branch Practice. (most likely 10th April)

Finally, with much keenness the 2 rooms (doubles and triples) had another 30 mins or so, and reports say, many touches were gotten round. (& a few laughs on the way)

Finally the 2 rooms came to a natural end point, & most agreed it had been worth it.

2 notes:

a) Provisionally, with much agreement, another similar practice will be on Saturday April 10th, a week after Easter.

b) For those who don't regularly ring in ringing rooms - DO consider joining in with one of the weekly 4 towers that use Ringing Room.

Which would be St Aldates, Headington, St Giles and Marston

- do check with the organisers/facilitators of those sessions that it would be appropriate to join in. 2 of those practices (Thursday/Friday) could be well suited to beginners. They'll be happy to have you. Even if its for 20 minutes or so.

Look forward to 'seeing' and hearing you soon.

Well done to all who joined in, and made it a success, may there be several more.

March 2021