

## Stedman tercentenary ringing – how did we do?

The 300th anniversary of Fabian Stedman's burial on November 16th presented us with two opportunities. One was to do lots of ringing in memory of a key figure in the early development of our art and the other was to use the occasion to make the public more aware of ringing (covered by Giles Blundell's article in the Christmas edition).

Looking at the ringing first, 165 performances were rung to mark the event between 19th and 24th November, the majority on the weekend of 16th-17th. They included 28 peals (7 of 5300), 6 date touches of 1713, 101 quarter peals (13 of 1300) and 22 shorter performances (19 of 300). That's about half the number of performances for the Olympics (excluding 'All the Bells').

There were special performances at Yarkhill and in the City of London. Sadly the hoped for handbell peal at St Andrew Undershaft itself didn't materialise.

Turning to the press, as Giles' article said there was very little national coverage, despite our press release being widely distributed. Prudence Fay's well informed article in the *Church Times* seems to be the only national article in print but *Anglican World* had an entry in its *News Centre* website, with links to the performances at Sonning and Dover, to the Stedman page of the Central Council website, to the Gutenberg Project copy of *Campanologia* and to the Wikipedia entry for St Andrew Undershaft.

At the local level, Giles mentioned Sonning & Dover. I also found before and after coverage in the *Plymouth Herald*. I suspect there may be quite a bit more than we can find via the web. For example only some of the articles in *Wokingham Times* find their way to its website *Get Wokingham*, and the one about our ringing didn't. In fact it didn't appear in print for three weeks. I initially assumed that they had dropped the story because their photographer never turned up. But better late than never, and it included the photo that I sent. Maybe that reflects Giles' point that coming hard on the heels of Remembrance is not good timing.

Whether you consider Dorsetshire local or national I'm not sure, but the Archers Facebook page mentioned the event, along with the helpful information that Stedman's birthplace of Yarkhill is about 20 miles from Ambridge.

I imagine many ringers wrote articles for their Parish Magazines (as I did). I found one such interesting article *Talk of the Tower – A Ringing Anniversary* by Andrew Dennison on St Mary's Goldington parish website.

Several ringing websites contained articles or features. Ones I found were: Ernie de Legh-Runciman on the LACR Noticeboard, Richard Munnings in *Richy's Blog* (Suffolk Guild), Rosalind Martin on the Christchurch and Southampton District (W&P) website, and several references on the Surrey Association website.

The next major anniversary where ringing will be the main story is the 300th anniversary of the first recorded peal at Norwich on 2 May 1715. We hope to get more publicity for ringing then, both national and local. Meanwhile there are many other opportunities to publicise ringing and to help the public learn more about it. The Council provides advice about local ringing publicity, which you should find useful. If you have suggestions for other ways in which the Council can help you, then please contact us.

*John Harrison (Chairman, Central Council PR Committee)*

Advice on working with the media: [cccbr.org.uk/pr/advice/media/](http://cccbr.org.uk/pr/advice/media/)

General advice on ringing PR: [cccbr.org.uk/pr/advice/](http://cccbr.org.uk/pr/advice/)

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