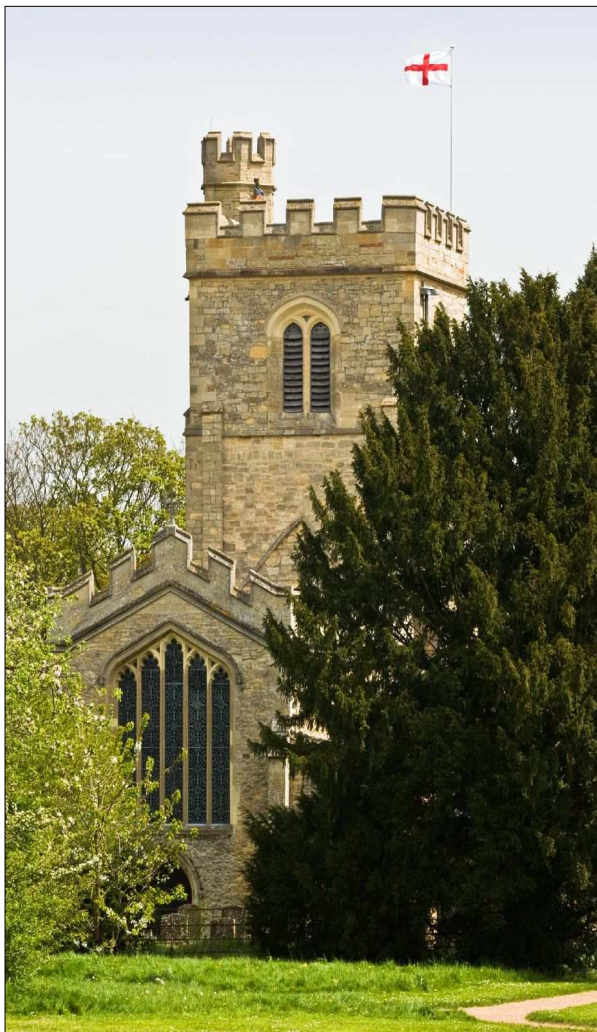




In Touch

November 2010



Taken from: <http://images.google.com/images>

Branch Christmas Celebration

**Saturday 11th December
at St Mary's, Shenley**

5.00 Ringing
5.45 Carol Service
7.00 Fish and Chip Supper and Quiz Evening

The supper will be in the Loughton Memorial Hall, Bradwell Road, Loughton.

There will be a choice of Fish, Chicken, Jumbo Sausage or Vegetarian Roll and Chips: these will need to be ordered and paid for before the start of the service, as they will be collected during the service.

Price: £6.50 per person including tea, coffee and mince pies. These are not licensed premises, so bring your own drinks but no alcohol please.

The quiz will follow after the supper, with prizes for the winning team. Come along as a tower and make a team.

Names and food orders to Helen Stanworth
Tel: 01280-814172 or secretary@northbucks.org.uk

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THE BIG RING-PULL

The Branch Recruitment Project

The project has begun and lots of help is needed to make it a success.

Read page 3 for an update on the project and for information on how to volunteer your help.

Who's Who 2010–2011

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From the Editor . . .

Welcome to the Winter edition of In Touch.

I would like to thank all those of you who have sent in material for this edition. I have received so much that this 'bumper' edition is 18 pages, 4 pages more than normal. Apologies to some of you who sent in pictures with your news, I've had to wield the editorial pencil in some places to make it all fit in and some pictures have been the casualties.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition. If you are stuck for something to do over the festive period there is an In Touch quiz on page 17 to tax those little grey cells !

The deadline for contributions for the next edition of In Touch is **Tuesday 1st February 2011.**

Jonathan

From the Chairman . . .

Dear All

Hello everyone, here we are again with our Christmas social approaching where I hope to see as many of you as possible.

For those who were at the September meeting you will know that it was agreed to support the big recruitment drive. To this end the project has now commenced. There is an update on the project on page 3 with details of how everyone can get involved. Please read it and consider how you can help the project through to a successful outcome.

In the mean time look out for some smaller events to keep things moving.

Brian

The Branch needs your help . . .

THE BIG RING-PULL The Branch Recruitment Project

In the last edition of In Touch a proposal for the Recruitment Project was presented and following a discussion at the quarterly meeting in September it was enthusiastically embraced.

Since that meeting much background work by the officers has taken place in order to start the project on the correct footing. First of all, the project needed a leader who could take overall responsibility for its co-ordination and progress. The officers have invited me to undertake this role and I have accepted. I believe this is a wonderful opportunity to bring the branch together with a common aim and which, with everyone's involvement could benefit every tower in the branch. I am very pleased to have been asked and am very much looking forward to getting the project moving.

Since the last meeting we have been talking to other organisations to see if there is any help that they can offer our project. One such group is the Ringing Foundation. This is a group set up by the Central Council to support and develop the skills, practice and art of change ringing. More information can be found on their website: www.ringingfoundation.com. Having discussed our ambitions with them we find that our ideas are not new and we are in a similar situation to many others in the country. However what we did learn is that they consider the main barrier to successful recruitment is not getting people 'through the door' but being able to teach, train and retain them successfully. We had already identified this potential problem. Imagine if we get 50 people interested in learning to ring from the event in Middleton Hall. How do we train them? How many people do we need to teach 50 people rope-handling skills? How do we train them quickly enough so that they maintain their interest? 50 is not an unreasonable number, in fact it could be much higher than that. Even with lower numbers we would still find it difficult as we have relatively few people within the branch with the skills to teach. So this has highlighted that as well as recruiting we need to increase our ability to teach bell handling. So a secondary aim of this project is to improve the number of teachers and the quality of the teaching skills within the branch. Once we know how we are to achieve this we can then set a date for the event in Middleton Hall.

Because the scope of the project is so broad we have decided to break it down into 4 distinct workstreams of activity. These areas are summarised as follows :

1 Display

This concerns all practical aspects of getting the ring of bells into Middleton Hall. The organising and preparation of the ringing demonstrations and the 'have a go' sessions on the day. Co-ordination with the Centre MK, sound management, insurance.

2 Marketing

This workstream is responsible for the promotion and marketing of the event before the day, the stands and

the communication with potential recruits on the day, and co-ordination with other local guilds and media. This includes the design, branding and sourcing of marketing material and the collection of recruit details.

3 Teaching

This is the biggest area of effort. Essentially this needs to workout how to get enough skilled teachers ready in preparation for the event and then produce a training program for the new recruits post the event. The program needs to consider venues, staffing, demonstration ringing, practical sessions, history sessions and general communication on what it means to be a bellringer and what it involves. It is not just about how to pull a rope. We also need to ensure that we cater for the needs of youngsters and older people who come to ringing later in life.

We also need to include the supplying of information to recruits at the event and the provision of books, information and digital media etc. as training aids during the training. It also includes the integration and co-ordination with towers to receive the recruits and the organising of the post course follow on teaching.

4 Finance

This covers all the financial aspects of the project, including budgeting and defining and executing the funding strategy.

The Plan

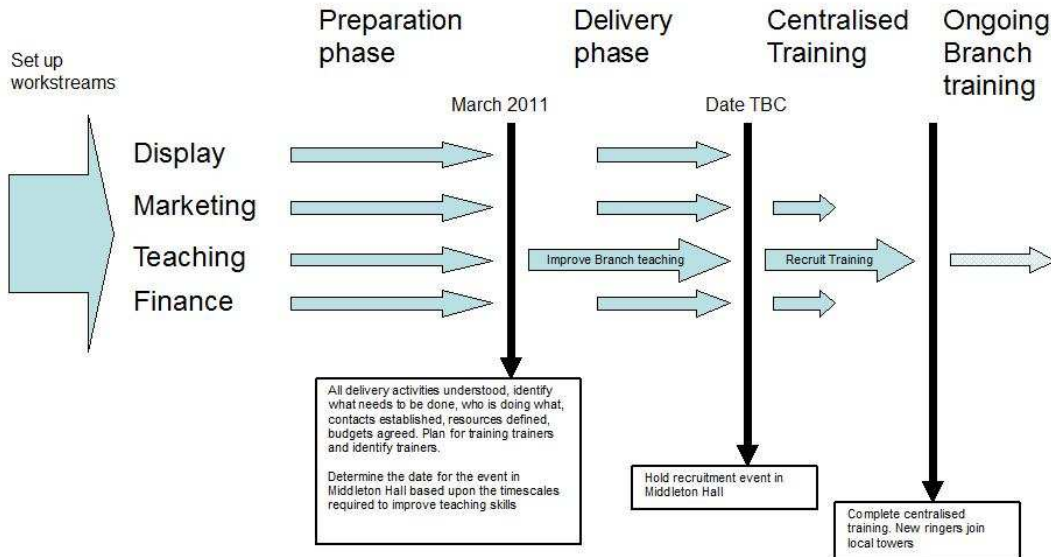
The project will be split into 4 distinct phases as shown in the plan on the following page.

Initially we need to assemble groups of people with the relevant skills to be able to work out exactly what is needed in each of these workstreams. This is the preparation phase. At this stage we are only thinking about each area, working out what needs to be done, identifying people, resources, contacts, costs etc. This work will be undertaken in the first 3 months of 2011. By March next year this work will be complete and we will know exactly what will be involved in taking the project forward. However, it will only be at this stage that we will be able to know the plan for training the teachers and it will be this that dictates the date that the event can be held in Middleton Hall.

Once we know how we are to train the teachers we will move into the delivery phase which will run up to the event in Middleton Hall. Each workstream will be putting into effect what is proposed in the preparation phase so we will be talking to the media, preparing display material, preparing the training material, setting up venues for teaching etc.

Continued overleaf

North Bucks Recruitment Project



Once the event has been held in Middleton Hall then we move into the centralised training program for the new recruits which might be over a 10 week period (to be decided). This will take place in a number of towers and will not only include handling skills but also education and experience in other aspects of ringing.

The last phase will be the migration of recruits out to local towers but with the continued branch level training to ensure that as a group they continue to develop.

What next ?

Initially we need to set up these workstreams. This needs to take place over the next few weeks so that early in 2011 each of these workstreams can meet to decide on the detail of what their area needs to achieve.

So tapping into the enthusiasm displayed at the last meeting I would like to hear from branch members who would like to contribute to the project. Initially we need people who are able to help decide what we need to do. Later on we will need other people to make it happen. So initially we are looking for people who have some of the following attributes:

- 🔔 Some time to give to the project.
- 🔔 Are enthusiastic about the promotion of ringing.
- 🔔 Enjoy working in a team.
- 🔔 Have a skill, knowledge, or some expertise in a particular area.

With respect to the teaching workstream it would be additionally useful to have people who have some general education experience as well as those who have taught people to ring. It would also be beneficial to have the thoughts of those who have learnt to ring as either youngsters or those who have come to ringing later in life as we need to cater for all needs.

Ideally we would like to have representation from as many towers as possible. With the improvement in teaching skills and potential number of new recruits it is expected that every tower in the branch could benefit from this project.

Having looked at the skills we will need, there might be some that we may be lacking as a branch. For instance, I don't know of anybody with any expertise in fund raising, media communications or marketing. If we find that these skills are lacking then we plan to call on the Milton Keynes Volunteer Centre and advertise our need amongst their registered volunteers – see a separate article on page 5 regarding this body.

So this is the rallying call: If you would like to be part of this project and have something to offer then contact me and put your name forward. I will be very pleased to hear from you. You can email me at intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk or call me on 01908 511883 and tell me where you think you can contribute. At this time we are just looking for the people who can help with the preparation phase, many more additional people will be needed later in the project. Please reflect on what you can offer this project. I would like to gather all names by December 11th please.

Along with this edition of In Touch is a poster advertising the project, the skills we need and who to contact. Please display it in your tower. We are also planning on designating an area on the branch website so that we can share information and progress. There will also be regular updates on progress via email, branch meetings and future editions of In Touch.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Thank you

Jonathan Griggs

Branch News



The Volunteer Centre, Milton Keynes provides an essential service to local not for profit organisations in recruiting volunteers.

They are based in Central Milton Keynes and are a charitable organisation funded from central and local resources with a small number of staff. Their objectives are to put organisations who rely upon volunteers in touch with the many people who have skills and time to offer on a voluntary basis.

We have registered the branch as a voluntary organisation looking to recruit new bellringers and those who are returners having had a break from ringing. Initially any interested parties will contact me and I will then introduce them to their nearest tower.

The Volunteer Centre is also set up to match volunteers with specific skills such as project management, financial and fund raising and marketing to specific projects. These are some the skills that the branch might look to engage in the forthcoming recruitment project.

Alan Marchbank

Branch Practice News

A slightly smaller group than has been the norm for recent practices met at Maids Moreton on 16th October. I'm not sure quite why this was. May be it was because one of my fellow RDL's was having a significant birthday... Anyway we put the bells to good use, ringing from Plain Bob for some, up to a number of surprise methods for others. Thank you to those that came. Despite the smaller attendance it proved to be a useful practice.

The next branch practice will be on the newly rehung 8 at Great Brickhill on Saturday November 20th at 7.30. Please note the later than usual time. This will also be a joint practice with the Towcester Branch. So please come along if you would like to try out the new bells.

Richard Stanworth

New Website for Newport Pagnell Bells

Newport Pagnell has a new bellringing website. It contains details on the history of the bells, pictures, performances and up-to-date information on the ringing at the church. Well done to Simon Read who put it together. It can be viewed online at www.newportpagnellbells.co.uk

Ringling at Lillingstone Dayrell

Back in August I was approached by the churchwarden of Lillingstone Dayrell asking if I could supply some ringers to ring the three bells for a wedding on the Friday before the August bank holiday. I visited the tower a few weeks beforehand to make sure everything was okay and found the bells to be in reasonable condition, considering that they are rarely rung. Thank you to Nick Read and Helen Stanworth for ringing at the wedding. It was much appreciated by the wedding party. There were also some firsts for all of us – first ringing in a three bell tower and first attempt at Stedman singles.

Richard Stanworth

Downs Barn Ringing

Downs Barn is now regularly ringing again.

Practice night

3rd Tuesday of the month
7:30 - 9pm

Sunday Service

1st & 3rd Sunday of the month
10:25 - 10:55

All who would like to come and support the ringing of these delightful bells please just turn up - you will be made very welcome.

Alan Marchbank

North Bucks Young Ringers Outing 2010

On Monday 8th August Alex Marchbank skilfully arranged an outing aimed at young ringers to ring at four local towers in the branch. The towers were Emberton, Lavendon, Clifton Reynes and Olney. Some of the participants cycled the route and all enjoyed a picnic lunch in the churchyard at Olney. A most enjoyable day was had, helped by good weather, which encouraged all the ringers to forgo all wheeled form of transport, walking from Olney to Clifton Reynes, across Clifton Pastures and back. (including Polly The Dog! – i.e. PTD).

The tour concluded with a most welcome barbecue provided by the Revd. Claire Wood at the Rectory in Olney. Those who were up for further ringing were warmly welcomed at the regular practice at Olney Parish Church in the evening.

Nick Read

Christmas Bells in Middleton Hall

The sound of bells is often associated with Christmas so this year we would like to take the sound of bells into this year's Christmas display in Middleton Hall and add to the festive ambience. We have booked two one-hour slots to ring in the area set aside for choirs and bands. We will not be able to take in tower bells but we will be able to ring handbells.

The two sessions booked are:

Sunday 12th December 3pm – 4pm

Sunday 19th December 2pm – 3pm

Not only do we hope to entertain the shoppers with some change ringing and tune ringing, we also hope to try out our PR skills, raise the profile of ringing in North Bucks, and recruit some new ringers. We will be handing out leaflets about ringing with contact details for anyone interested in taking up the art.

Following the enthusiasm at the autumn meeting to go

out and promote ringing, I hope we can find people to help with this 'taster' for the big project to come. We need people to ring handbells – you don't need to be a two-in-hand expert. Change ringing and tune ringing on handbells can be performed just as well with each person ringing a single bell, the same as you would on tower bells. There will be some practice beforehand. We also need people to talk to the passers by and hand out leaflets.

If you can help at either or both sessions then please contact Richard Stanworth as soon as possible on 01280 814172 or by email to rdl_bh@northbucks.org.uk

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

North Books Stall

I am pleased to offer the following ringing related books and goods for sale. Let's be clear straight away, this is not a Branch or Guild enterprise.

The Stall will be at branch meetings and events but if you want anything at other times please e-mail northbooksstall@btinternet.com and tell me what you want and I will do my best to get it to you. By prior arrangement I can have the stall at Olney (Monday) or Great Linford (Tuesday) practices.

Initially the profit will be re-invested to build up the stock a bit, but I plan to donate a proportion of the profit to the ODG Bell Fund.

Alan Marchbank

Beginners Handbook	£1.50	Teaching Unravelled	£3.00
Beginners Grandsire	£1.00	One way to Teach Bell Handling	£2.00
Beginners Plain Bob	£1.00	Teaching Beyond bell Handling	£2.00
Diagrams	£4.50	Teaching from Rounds to Bob Doubles	£1.50
Doubles & Minor for Beginners	£2.50	Teaching Tips	£3.50
Kaleidoscope Ringing	£2.00	Starting a New Band	£2.00
Learning Methods	£3.50	Organising an outing	£1.50
Service Touches	£1.00	Schedule of Regular maintenance	£2.50
Will you call a touch please, Bob?	£2.50	DIY Guidelines	£1.50
Towards better striking	£1.50	Splicing Bell Ropes	£3.50
Raising and Lowering in Peal	£2.00	Warning Notices	£0.60
Ringling Jargon made easy	£0.30	One per Learner	£0.72
Triples and Major for beginners	£2.50	Follow on Book	£0.72
Ringling Circles - a guide to basic methods	£2.50	Ringers Exercise book	£0.62
Ringling Skills	£4.00	Easy Stages Grandsire	£0.20
Learning Curve vol 1	£3.00	Easy Stages Plain Bob	£0.20
Learning Curve vol 2	£3.00	20 Questions	£0.10
Learning Curve vol 3	£3.00	Standard 8 Surprise Major	£5.00
Learning Curve vol 4	£3.00	Collection of Principles	£3.00
Ringling Basics for Beginners	£2.50	Collection of Minor Methods	£2.00
A Tutors Handbook	£4.00	Plain Minor Methods	£4.00
Tower Captains Handbook	£2.00	Treble Dodging Minor Methods	£4.00
Ringling World mug	£6.50	Marlin spike	£5.99
Ringling World Pen	£1.25	Minchin Light Pull Red white & blue sally	£27.00
Ringling World Christmas Cards (10)	£4.95	ODG Badges	£1.70



Quarter Peals



Cross and Stable, Downs Barn

Thursday, 2nd September 2010 in 40 mins

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Christine E Marchbank
- 2 John B Marchbank
- 3 Simon Read
- 4 Nick Read
- 5 Alan J Marchbank (C)
- 6 Alexandra J Marchbank

First in method: 2

St Mary's, Whaddon

Friday, 24th September 2010

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Malcolm Hooten
- 2 Ray Watkin
- 3 Terry Page
- 4 Derek Stainsby
- 5 Ted Fawcett (C)
- 6 Hugh Butler

To celebrate the Golden Wedding of Hugh and Enid Butler

St Mary the Virgin, Thornborough

Sunday 3rd October 2010 in 48 mins.

1320 Southrepps Doubles

- 1 Michael J.O. Gray
- 2 John E. Hearn
- 3 Charles J. Knight
- 4 Michael A Haynes
- 5 William J. Stungo (C)

For Evensong

SS Peter and Paul, Olney

Sunday, 24th October 2010 in about 50 mins

1282 Yorkshire Surprise Royal

- 1 Simon Read
- 2 B Douglas Hird
- 3 Ruth Stokes
- 4 Andrew Spencer
- 5 Stuart Grout
- 6 Tony Gray
- 7 Richard Haseldine (C)
- 8 Jonathan Griggs
- 9 Alan Marchbank
- 10 Chris Stokes

For evensong

1st Quarter on 10 : 1

1st Quarter of Surprise Royal : 5 & 6

St John the Evangelist, Wicken

Tuesday, 21st September 2010

1440 London and Norwich Surprise Minor

- 1 Ann Fletcher
- 2 Ruth Stokes
- 3 Jonathan Spencer
- 4 Richard Haseldine
- 5 Andrew Spencer
- 6 Christopher Stokes (C)

With best wishes from the band to Jonathan Spencer who is starting his university studies at Cambridge.

The Broadway Campanile, Giffard Park

Saturday, 16th October 2010 in 33 mins

1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Benjamin J Carey
- 2 Ben Hockenull
- 3 Alexandra J Marchbank
- 4 James C Marchbank
- 5 Trevor W Marchbank
- 6 Edward O Marchbank
- 7 Alan J Marchbank (C)
- 8 John B Marchbank

First Quarter on the bells.

Birthday compliment to Trevor and Alan for today and to John for October 25th.

St James the Great, Hanslope

Thursday, 15th July 2010

1260 Doubles (3 methods – Grandsire, St Simons, Plain Bob)

- 1 Carol Owen
- 2 Brian Berry
- 3 Tony Gray
- 4 Roy Keeves
- 5 Jonathan Griggs (C)

St James the Great, Hanslope

Saturday, 4th September 2010

1278 Yorkshire Surprise Major

- 1 Roy Keeves
- 2 Phil Haslam
- 3 Stuart Grout
- 4 Alexandra Marchbank
- 5 Ian Thompson
- 6 Benjamin Carey
- 7 Tony Gray
- 8 Richard Haseldine (C)

Rung for Hanslope Street Fayre



Quarter Peals



SS Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell

Sunday, 10th October 2010

1264 Plain Bob Major

- 1 John Marchbank
- 2 Nicki King
- 3 Tine Marchbank
- 4 Charles J Knight
- 5 Alan Marchbank
- 6 Nick Read
- 7 Simon Read
- 8 B Douglas Hird (C)

Rung before Evensong to commemorate the emerald wedding anniversary of Brian and Sheila Riddy.

St Peter, Stoke Goldington

Thursday 28th October 2010

1320 Beverley Surprise Minor

- 1 John Marchbank
- 2 Nick Read
- 3 Alan Marchbank
- 4 B Doug Hird
- 5 John Stanworth
- 6 Simon Read (C)

First surprise as conductor

The Broadway Campanile, Giffard Park

Saturday, 6th November 2010 in 33 minutes

1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 John B Marchbank
- 2 Nick Read
- 3 Alexandra J Marchbank
- 4 Alan J Marchbank
- 5 Simon Read
- 6 Benjamin J Carey (C)

First of surprise on the bells

First on mini bells: 2 and 5

Birthday Compliment to Eileen Everett, mother-in law of 4 and grandmother of 1 and 3.

St Mary Virgin, Stowe

Tuesday, 10th August

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Anne Mercer
- 2 Shirley Webb
- 3 Ann Fletcher
- 4 James Linnell
- 5 Laurence Gibson
- 6 Jonathan Spencer (C)

Rung to mark the 90th anniversary of the Buckinghamshire Federation of Women's Institutes First quarter peal as conductor

All Saints, Calverton

Thursday, 26th August 2010 in 46 mins

1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 John B Marchbank
- 2 Edward L Fawcett
- 3 Alexandra J Marchbank
- 4 Simon Read
- 5 Nick Read
- 6 Alan J Marchbank (C)

In celebration of the life of Phyllis Hodges, mother-in-law of Nick and grandmother of Simon.

First Cambridge: 4 and 5

First treble-bob: 1

S Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell

Sunday, 12th September 2010 in 44m

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 John B Marchbank
- 2 Tine Marchbank
- 3 Nick Read
- 4 Simon Read
- 5 John Stanworth
- 6 B Douglas Hird (C)

For evensong

All Saints, Loughton

Tuesday, 19th October 2010

1272 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Becky Fawcett
- 2 Ann Birch
- 3 Anne McIntyre
- 4 Derek Stainsby
- 5 Ted Fawcett
- 6 Terry Page (C)

Rung to mark the centenary of Girlguiding UK, to congratulate Stella and Frank Daniels on their Diamond wedding anniversary, and as a birthday compliment to Hilary Reading.





All around the Belfries

Loughton

The major re-ordering at All Saints, involving the conversion of the floor to a stone surface with under-floor heating and the replacement of the pews with chairs, has received a good portion of local publicity. The church was out of use for nearly six months while the floor was excavated to half a meter and unexpected finds including one major tomb and several other burials were dealt with. What received less publicity was an enhancement to the tower which we were able to achieve after many years' delay.

The back four bells are hung in a line in an elaborate wooden frame which was declared in the 1890s to be "... of an unusual design, and will never be a success". The front two are hung below two RSJs and can be reached with some difficulty by standing on the edge of the wooden frame. Doing any work on the bells involved standing with legs akimbo over a twelve foot drop onto the only floor between the bells and the ground floor ringing room. After a project some twenty years ago involving internal pointing of the tower walls, the dust of ages was removed from this floor, with the result that the bells became louder in the ringing room. Conductors had difficulty in sorting out trips, even if they were capable of an undignified yell.

The re-ordering project presented an opportunity to remove the health and safety hazard and to quieten the bells in the ringing room, by building a second floor in the tower, below the main beams on which the wooden frame rests. Floorboards became available from those made redundant when the pews were removed from the church. Our senior Churchwarden, David Thom, who is a very experienced architect and was acting as project manager, took the necessary measurements, after which the church was declared out of bounds except for those working on the main project.

An unrelated surprise, when the wooden ground floor in the ringing room was removed, was the discovery of a mediaeval stone floor in the tower. It was of "crazy

paving" style and of hard, dark stone. However in order to extend the stone floor in the body of the church into the ringing room, the floor had to be recorded by the project archaeologist and then covered up.

When most of the stone floor had been laid we were able to go up the tower for the first time and were suitably impressed to find the new floor virtually completed, including a layer of insulating material under the boards. The questions remained - had the rope-holes been cut accurately, and how loud would the bells now be in the ringing room? After ringing up each bell all seemed well, and after trial ringing on the six the level of sound is what we hoped to achieve. We now have to get used to the somewhat severe appearance of the ringing room, as the sort of junk, nothing to do with ringing, which had accumulated over the years, had been cleared out as the main project started and has not yet found its way back. The lighting has been improved, and includes a safety light for the first time.

There is one puzzling feature about which we hope that our branch bell adviser may be able to identify the cause and suggest a cure. The fourth and fifth bells swing and strike without any problem but are afflicted with a rumbling sound. This is not that severe in the ringing room (or are we just getting used to it already?) but can be detected in the body of the church. It is the sort of sound that we have come across in a number of other towers, but we would like to get rid of it!


Alan Marchbank has now visited and diagnosed the rumbling problem. It is nothing to do with the new floor, but is another case of the bearing plates moving along the top of the frame. We have arranged to borrow a big spanner and hope that tightening the coach bolts will do the trick.

If you would like to try out the ring under the new conditions, Loughton practice night is on Monday (except for Bank Holiday Mondays), alternating with Shenley.

Bob Winstanley

Bradwell

The Bradwell bellringers have written an article for our Parish Newsletter which was published in the last quarter to try to encourage new recruits. But despite people around the village commenting on our claim to fame (we had photographs as well!) it has not brought anyone out to want to learn to ring. We have been glad to have visiting ringers from the adjacent Youth Hostel and also family and friends visiting our own ringers to swell the ranks on some Sunday mornings. On 20th



October we rang for the Girl Guides Centenary at 20.10 on 20.10 as they had emailed us with a request. Jill managed to polish her brownie badge up to wear but sadly my guide uniform did not fit me any more so I could not dress for the occasion!! We are sad to hear that Chrissie Cable will be leaving us as she moves to Towcester soon, we wish her much happiness in her new home but we welcome back Dean Meakins as he has returned from Newcastle.

Jenny Brookman

Padbury and Hillesden

Padbury and Hillesden ringers have been busy ringing, cleaning and socialising. We have had our annual ringers dinner in The Folly at Adstock, which was well attended and enjoyed by both Padbury and Hillesden ringers and the Clergy from both churches.

At Hillesden there has been a hive of activity starting with a clean of the tower and inspection of the bells by some of the Padbury ringers. The team working on the bells found the answers to some of the problems we had been experiencing during service ringing and practices. They also removed some of the rubbish that had collected over the years from the birds coming in, but there is still more to do when the weather gets better.

The team working in the ringing room cleaned it and removed some of the dirt that had collected in the carpet over the years in an attempt to return it to its original colour, which can be seen on the trap door. During this working party we had the chance to look in the old ringing room to find some old ropes, spare sliders and some muffles as well.

During the summer we have continued to have our practices at Padbury and integrated a monthly practice at Hillesden until the clocks went back. We have managed to ring for all the services including the extra ones like Harvest and hope to ring for all the extra ones coming up over the Christmas period. We would like to thank the ringers who regularly come over to support our practices and have helped us to develop the band over the year.

Catherine Stanworth



Emberton

We were delighted to be asked to ring the church bells to 'fanfare' the launch of the FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS on Saturday 25th September.

Whilst the FRIENDS has the full support of the church, it is not intended to be a religious organisation. All the efforts of the FRIENDS will be focused on the fabric of the building and churchyard with a view to adding facilities to expand the possible uses of the church. The aim is "to bring together the many people who love and value All Saints and to ensure it flourishes for future generations".

Several of the Emberton ringers were engaged elsewhere so it was good to have support from Olney tower from Liz, Ella and Matt Sheaf and Charles Knight. Our own ringers were Sam Haslam and Sheila Ware.

The evening included a party, barbecue, planting of a rose, and the launch of six fire balloons from the church tower, one for every century of the building's existence.

Sheila Watts

Sherington

The new ringers at St Lauds, Sherington, would just like say a big 'Thank You' to Nick and Simon Read and all the others that have and will help in supporting our practice. They have been tirelessly teaching new and not very practiced ringers and their efforts are showing rewards. We are a small group but we do appreciate the efforts of all that help and we felt it should be publicly said.

Mark Vale

Great Linford and Downs Barn

This is the first joint item I have felt justified in submitting. What's the reason for doing it now – you may well ask.

A little while ago I expressed a desire to get the Cross and Stable bells heard again and so we have now moved the Linford Practice to Downs Barn for the 3rd Tuesday of the month and also rung for Sunday service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. Practices have been well attended with great support from the Padbury and Woughton ringers. We have managed courses of Cambridge major, Stedman triples and touches of Bob major and Grandsire triples. There has also been plenty of doubles and minor for those who need it and some good old fashioned call changes to get used to the weight and speed of these relatively small bells.

We have a couple of new recruits – Jamie who's mum rings with us when time allows – she is very busy organising junior church most Sundays, and Ryan who's mum has also tried her hand at ringing and did well, so maybe another 2 ringing families in the making? We are very pleased to be ringing at Downs Barn again – let's see if we can get some "local" learners now.

You will see that we managed to ring the first quarter on the Broadway Campanile recently. The bells are here and are easy to ring - let me know if you would like to come and try them out – no peals until I have rung one though!

Alan Marchbank

Hanslope

Hanslope ringers have had a fairly quiet summer with less than the usual number of weddings to ring for.

We rang a quarter peal rung on the morning of our annual Hanslope Street Fayre at the beginning of September and we had an outing to Wiltshire later that month organised by Richard Haseldine. Centering on Newbury we managed to ring at seven towers, despite one tower not being available.

The Hanslope ringers also had another good day out when most of us joined the Emberton ringers for their annual outing in late October. It all seems such a long time ago now as we organise the tower Christmas dinner . . . !

Sheila Blenkhorn

Olney

Further ringing progress has been made in Olney over the last few months, thanks to the sterling efforts of Alan Marchbank, Ringing Master and Charles Knight, Tower Captain who between them keep us in order and helping us to learn more about ringing methods. We are absolutely delighted to announce that two of our young ringers, Bethany Heron and Sophie Wood, both of whom have been regularly attending practice for a few months and have worked hard at learning to ring, have been able to take their place on Sunday mornings, ringing for the first time before 10am Sunday Service – Bethany on 12th September and Sophie on 17th October. Well done to them both.

At practice on Mondays we generally have very good attendance of our home band but, additionally, always attract a number of very welcome visitors who are invaluable in assisting the newer ringers' efforts to learn ringing methods. At a recent practice night this snap of the "Olney Band" was taken. Pictured (from left to right) are Jill Wiseman, Ella Sheaf, Alison Wiseman (kneeling), Matt Sheaf, Helen Dilley, Sophie Wood, Ruth Plackett, Graham Dilley, Sheila Ware, Rosie Haskell, Gareth Wiseman, Liz Sheaf, Bethany Heron, Charles Knight (Tower Captain) and Alan Marchbank (Ringing Master).



Activity in Olney tower continues unabated. Visiting bands have achieved peals on 21st August and 16th October and other bands visited for social ringing, including a very pleasant quarter peal rung before evensong on Sunday, 24th October. Thanks to the Hanslope ringers for that treat.

We don't let others have all the fun, though. Our home band (augmented from time to time with extras to make up numbers) rang in celebration of a number of weddings during the summer and for two special events – marking the United Nations talks on Biodiversity on 22nd September and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Girl Guide Movement. The

significance of this event was that ringing took place at 20:10 on 20/10/2010.

The Olney band ring 6 or 8 bells for 10 o'clock worship every Sunday and we usually mix call changes and Plain Hunt with some Grandsire doubles. We are thrilled to have such a lovely ring of 10 bells in our tower and are delighted that we are able to ring them better month by month.

At practice several of the band are now able to ring Bob Minor and Bob Major (plain course and touches) on the treble, some can also do these on the 2nd bell and Matt Sheaf has rung Bob Minor on the 3rd bell. Grandsire Triples is also a favourite on treble, 2nd and tenor. Sheila Ware, a more experienced member of our band, recently rang the treble to a course of Stedman Triples for the first time.

The more recent recruits are working up to ringing rounds and are at various stages of developing their ringing skills. Improvers, meanwhile, practice call changes. There is no time lost during practice nights and it can clearly be seen why we need the assistance of the more experienced visitors. So thanks again to them and congratulations to all on their achievements – and to Charles and Alan for their skill, patience and forbearance.

On 14th November, which is Remembrance Sunday, we will be ringing the bells, half muffled, before the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in the Market Place in Olney. Ringing will be for about 30 minutes and will finish so that the Church Clock will chime 11 to announce the start of the silent memorial to the fallen. To find out more, come and join in practice on Monday evenings from 7.30 – 9 pm or please take a look at our website www.olneybells.com where you can find out all about the bells and our latest news, plans and contact details.



Helen Dilley

New Year's Eve in the Neighbourhood of Wolverton

From the Bucks Standard, 3rd January 1891

The many village churches in the district had their bells busily engaged in ringing out the old year and ushering in the new. Early in the evening Great Linford bells were pealing forth a merry tune, and on the opposite side of the river could be heard the bells of Haversham. In the south, first the ear caught the tones from the Old Bradwell ringers, and still further to the westward the listener could plainly distinguish the bells of Loughton, pleasantly borne by the breeze. Holy Trinity bells at Old Wolverton were also being rung, and the stillness of the wind helping the sound

westward, their capital ringers could be included in the range of sounds within the ear of the listener at Wolverton. With the arrival of the new year, the ringers at Holy Trinity renewed their efforts, and a glorious peal lasting over half an hour was rung down. The wind having somewhat moderated, the bells of Stony Stratford could be heard, as well as those of Cosgrove, and if happiness be indicated by the intentions of the bells and their ringers, 1891 should be a very joyous year. - "A LOVER OF CAMPANOLOGY."

Ringers as musicians - whatever next !

Newport Pagnell has been enjoying the 200th birthday of the Iron Bridge this year. For those that have missed this, it is the oldest cast iron bridge still carrying regular road traffic. It was made in 1810 by Walkers of Rotherham, who also cast the cannons that won the battle of Trafalgar.

To celebrate this anniversary a concert was held and included a new piece of music composed especially for the occasion by John Byron which required the ringing of the church bells.

The new piece was played just before the interval by Sinfonia Ariella. Rachel, with her musical knowledge, was in charge of the ringing and ensured that we pulled off at the right moment. The bells rang out well while the audience joined in singing "Happy Birthday" to the bridge.

A few weeks later, a few days after the 200th anniversary of the first traffic over the bridge, the following peal was rung:

SS Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell

Saturday, 2nd October 2010 3h11m (21½)

5088 Ironbridge Delight Major

Gen. byroc

- 1 Scott Ayers
- 2 B Douglas Hird
- 3 Julie Haseldine
- 4 Ruth Stokes
- 5 Simon Read (1st inside)
- 6 James A Haseldine
- 7 Christopher C Stokes
- 8 Andrew Haseldine (C)

Doug Hird

Ringling for biodiversity

On the 22nd September the United Nations General Assembly discussed for the first time ever the crisis affecting the world's biodiversity, underlining the importance of how plants, animals and life as we know it are all linked and the loss of one species through human actions can affect many others.

The Church of England, with its national nature reserve of 11,000 churchyards, has been supporting the UK programme of this year's United Nations International Year of Biodiversity. With a Christian presence in every community, churches were encouraged to ring their bells from 12-2pm to mark the start of the talks.

Olney and Emberton towers were keen to participate and, with the help of ringers from other towers, rang all ten bells at Olney and Emberton's six. The ringers were Charles Knight, Ruth Plackett, Liz and Matt Sheaf, Phil Haslam, Sheila Ware, Brian Baldwin, Derek Stainsby, Terry Page and Bob Winstanley. Many thanks to everyone who joined us.

Sheila Watts



Ringling keeps pace with the 21st century!



Apple, who make and supply computers and mobile phones etc. sell 'apps' or applications for their iphones, ipods and ipads.

It is now possible to purchase from their itunes website two bellringing related 'apps' for the iphone.

One is called 'Tin Tin' which is a method database available to download to your iphone, and is essentially an electronic version of the red Diagrams (Jasper Snowden Series) book familiar to most ringers, but with a database of 17,000 methods. (There is also a beginner's version called 'Tin Tin beginner methods' which is free).

The second app is called 'Mobel' and is a condensed version of the PC software programme Abel - a bellringing simulator. Mobel allows you ring a whole range of methods from minimus to maximus on tower or hand bells on your iphone. It also shows the blue line diagram for any method, including bobs and singles.



The programmes are relatively cheap to buy from the itunes website, Tin Tin is £1.19 and Mobel is £5.99.

Nick Read

Outing news: Emberton . . .

Following the success of last year's outing, we thought we'd have another day out and Saturday 23rd October was earmarked. Last year's formula of five towers and "the Emberton coffee stop" seemed to work well, so we arranged a leisurely route south of Milton Keynes. Our ringers, plus many friends, met up at Woburn where we enjoyed this stately 8; then it was on to Dobbies Garden World at Fenny Stratford for the coffee stop, a 'grab' for some. Suitably refreshed, we made our way to Great Brickhill and enjoyed a ring on this lovely new 8. We were privileged to be the first visiting band to ring since the Dedication Service the previous Sunday, and were grateful for the opportunity to go up and see the new installation after ringing. By now we had heard that Roger's new grandchild was on his/her way in Nottingham, and plans were afoot to hopefully ring a welcoming touch before the end of the day. We were disappointed to learn later on that it was a false alarm and Roger's daughter had been sent home from hospital!

Lunch was 'own arrangements', but a sizeable contingent frequented The Three Locks at Stoke Hammond, with very slow service! Would they be finished in time to get a ring at the next tower, Stewkley (8)? But all was well and we enjoyed these bells, whilst making time to look at the interesting Norman architecture.

Our next tower was Drayton Parslow (6). The previous evening we been told that there was a broken stay, so an advance party (well, Jonathan...) left Stewkley early and saved the day by climbing up to the bells, aided by the Churchwarden, and re-threading the rope for us to ring. We rang Drayton Bob Doubles amongst the

usual repertoire.

Then it was on to the last tower – Mursley (8). Some of us did not enjoy the springy ropes and long pull and we won't name the person who tried to hang herself and several others (will we, Carrie?).

Our thanks to everyone who made the day such a success, and especial thanks to our supporting ringers from other towers.



Norman Arches at Stewkley

P.S.

Roger's new grandson did indeed arrive on our outing day, but not until 7.02pm. Jacob weighed in at 8lbs 4oz and to celebrate the event Roger provided a method for our entertainment – Jacobs Ladder Bob Minor, which we rang successfully at Tuesday practice.

Sheila Watts

. . . and the Young Bellringers Cycling Tour 2010

For the past 37 years the Revd. Geoff Stickland of Quedgeley in Gloucestershire, has organised an annual cycling tour for young bellringers. This year's tour was held from Sunday 25 - Saturday 31 July in Humberside. Three young ringers of the branch attended, Alex Marchbank, John Marchbank and Simon Read, together with parents Tine Marchbank and Nick Read. Accommodation was provided at The Endsleigh Centre, Kingston Upon Hull, an elegant former convent of the R.C. Sisters of Mercy which is now run by them as a Retreat and Conference Centre.

Each day the group of thirty or so ringers completed a circular route that was skilfully arranged by the Revd. Geoff so that just about every ringing tower within a fifteen mile radius of Hull was grabbed over the week. A total of 28 towers over the week were grabbed ranging from the majestic 10 (34cwt) at Beverley

Minster to light rings of six. Other notable towers grabbed were Selby Abbey (13, 25cwt) and Holy Trinity, Hull (also 13, 25 cwt).

An essential part of the evening recuperation is provided every year by the tour's resident 'Phil the Pint' who sources barrels of local ales and ciders selling at an affordable £1.20 a pint, (not that any of our young ringers sampled these, of course!). Each person who attends the tour is required to 'run' one of the towers and arrange the ringing (and pay the tower fee). Coffee breaks and pub-lunches are also an essential part of the tour. Simon and his dad, Nick, probably set a tour record this year by getting 16 punctures between them earning Nick the nickname of Colin (colander) for having the most punctures!

Nick Read

... and finally on to Leicestershire

I enjoyed a recent ringing day trip and thought you might be interested to read about it. The best bit was to ring on 12 bells. We also went round Taylor's Bell Foundry at Loughborough and that probably gives you a clue as to where the 12 bells are.

But it wasn't a group of ringers from around here! I married a Yorkshire lass and we go up to see her Mum in Masham, home of Theakstons and Black Sheep breweries. I get to ring on their 10 when we visit and they invited me to join in their tour. Over thirty ringers came from around the Masham area so they hired a coach to leave Ripon at 8am and our first stop was Kegworth near Leicester. We made a good choice of a Saturday for it was the Ride and Stride day and every church had delicious refreshments for sale and a cheery welcome. At St Andrew, Kegworth they have 8 bells and we packed into the chamber and everyone got several pulls. Also a chance to sample their refreshments and have a quick look around the church. Then we went to St Botolph, Shepshed - a magnificent church also with 8 bells and again many chances to ring.

Next stop was lunch followed by a trip around the foundry. I'd been round before but still couldn't follow the description of how they cast bells! Maybe my difficulty was because the trip was right after lunch! I think they could do with a model to show how a bell is made - I will send them my suggestion.

Then we went to SS Mary & Hardulph, Breedon on the

Hill. You must go to see the church even if you don't get to ring: beautiful surrounding countryside, only a few miles from M1 junction 23, church perched on the edge of a quarry, narrow approach road that the coach had great difficulty manoeuvring up the narrow lane (six of us ran on ahead and got the bells up ready for the others). I would say they were perhaps the most delightful bells I have ever had the pleasure to ring. The pros amongst the group got to ring Cambridge here. Sadly we were running a bit behind schedule and so I didn't get a chance to look around the church.

The last tower was the 12 bells at S Michael, Melbourne. They are rung in the chancel at ground floor level and it was amazing for me as a beginner to ring them. After the first few rounds one realises that you have to be much closer to the previous bell than when ringing 8 and you have to hold your bell at hand-stroke for probably more than a second before the next round follows! I concentrated so much on controlling my bell that I didn't hear a first call for me to move!

Advice to those going on a trip: have a look first at Simon Jenkins' excellent book *England's 1000 Best Churches* because Melbourne has 4 stars and Breedon on the Hill has 3 but because you are itching to ring you miss the chance of seeing all the worthy features of the church that make it 4 or 3 stars. Consequently I missed many features at both so I must go back, perhaps for a Sunday service!

David Scrutton

Free to a good home ...

I've been having a tidy out of the loft space and need to get rid of my archive of Ringing Worlds and newsletters. The Ringing Worlds date back to the early 1970's and most of the ODG / Branch newsletters are from the early 1990's. Whilst most years are complete, I'm sure there will be the odd edition missing! As the saying goes "free to a good home", but if there are

numerous folk desperate to fill their own lofts, I'll favour whoever wanted to make a donation to the ODG bell fund (hopefully covenanted of course!) . . .

Anybody interested can contact me on David.Jill@btinternet.com

David Joyce

From the Secretary

Grants

Applications for grants (for training assistance, work in towers, ropes, pulleys etc.) may be submitted to the Secretary. Details of applications received will be distributed to towers as soon as possible and will then be considered at the next branch meeting. A meeting for this may be convened at any branch practice or event.



Training Grants

Grants are available to assist with the cost of training courses as follows: 50% of the cost of the course up to a maximum of £50. Applications for grants should be made in writing to the Secretary. Please apply before you attend the course.

Visual Teaching Aids available to borrow:

Bellhandling - a tutor's companion by the Central Council (video or DVD)

Look to and Learn by the Kent County Assoc. (video)

Teaching Demonstration recording of Steve Coleman

North Bucks Ringers and the First World War

I suppose the first time I thought about what our ringers did at times of war was on finding a peal rung by the Bletchley band. Rung in 1917, it stood out as unusual in itself as there were very few peals rung at all then. The dedication said it all though.

"Rung with the bells half muffled as a last token of respect to Sapper L Meager R E who died of wounds in France on Sept 28th 1917."

Laurence Meager was a Guild member from 1903 to 1917. He rang in a number of recorded touches at Bletchley and Newton Longville and also in three peals.

Then, in *The Ringing World*, in 1916, we read that

"Pte F E Garner RAMC a promising and much respected ringer of Stony Stratford has died from disease in St Omar Hospital. "

He doesn't seem to have been a Guild member and didn't leave so much of a record as Laurence Meager. That was the case for quite a few ringers. *The Ringing World* could only print what it had room for and not all ringers were Guild members or were active peal ringers. Local papers, however, made a point of providing much more information about the fallen.

The *Bucks Standard* of 24th April 1915 has:

"Private 1439 T. C. Andrews, Army Cycle Corps, whose home is at Newton Blossomville, is officially reported to have died on March 14 of wounds received in action the previous day." "Before joining the army he was a member of the Clifton Reynes Parish Church Choir, and associated also with the bellringers band. When the sad news of his death was received the ringers rang a muffled peal and a memorial service was held in the church."

There is no other record than this of him ever being a ringer. And on 22nd May:

"Private ARTHUR Wm. WRIGHT, 2nd. East Surrey Regt., son of Mr. And Mrs. Leonard Wright, of Chicheley, was killed in action on April 28." "His bellringing comrades expressed a desire to ring a muffled peal on Saturday but by special request of the bereaved parents this was not done."

He was a branch member at Chicheley between 1907 and 1915. He rang no peals or quarters but the Chicheley band were active at that time ringing for village and church events.

Some had lucky escapes. According to the issue of 29th Jan 1916, E. S. Mynard lost part of an ear at *"Hill 62"*. Edwin S. Mynard rang in 30 peals between 1903 and 1923, mostly at Emberton, Weston Underwood and Clifton Reynes. Hill 62 is East of Ypres and is now marked by a Canadian memorial.

In July 1916,

"Private REGINALD BROWN, Beds. Regiment, fourth son of the late Mr. Charles W. Brown, and Mrs. Brown of Chicheley, was, we much regret to learn, killed in action in France on July 31, during the big advance." "He was formerly a member of the church choir and also a bellringer."

This is another ringer that we didn't know about. The big advance was to take control of the village of Passchendaele, now known as Passendale, a village not much bigger than Chicheley.

In August 1916,

"Private FREDERICK THOMAS WILLIS, Bucks Battalion, Oxford & Bucks L. I. The only son of Mrs. Cook of Hanslope, was we much regret to learn killed in action in France on the night of the 19th inst." "He was also a member of the band of church bellringers."

Again, ringing records do not show anything about him. Private Albert Miller died in the General Hospital at Boulogne on April 28th 1917. It needed a bit more attention to detail to spot him as his obituary on 5th May 1917 didn't mention that he was a ringer at Tyringham. The account of the memorial service on the following day, however filled in some more detail.

"not only was he a chorister but a ringer" and "A muffled peal was rung by the ringers before and after the service."

Had it not been for this one line, we may have never noticed him.

I conclude this small role of honour on 5th Oct. 1918.

"We regret to learn that Private Ernest Thomas Needle, Royal Marine Light Infantry, eldest son of Mr. And Mrs. J. W. Needle, of Chicheley, has been officially reported killed in action in France on Sept. 2." "He was also a keen bellringer and was a member of the Chicheley Belfry and of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers."

T. Needle was indeed a Guild member at Chicheley between 1913 and 1915.

The *Bucks Standard* was centred on Newport Pagnell and no doubt the Bletchley, Fenny Stratford and Buckingham papers will yield similar insights into some of the ringers that were lost in that conflict. These obituaries describe the lives of these young men. Not just that they were ringers, but who they really were. The full versions of these are now on the branch web site. Take a moment to think about some of our predecessors that we really should not forget.

Doug Hird

News from down under

Many of you will be thinking that I am 'down under' in Sydney with wall to wall sunshine, walking to work everyday in my shorts and short sleeve shirts, ringing in air conditioned towers and generally having a damned good time. In fairness the last item is certainly correct; I am having a damned good time in Sydney.

I know us 'Brits' like talking about the weather but now it is the Australians who are talking about it as well. When I left the UK in May the news was talking about the worst winter in 10 years and my view was that the ice and snow did go on for far longer than normal. I remember one morning driving down to where I worked in Rickmansworth in February and at one point on one of the country roads at the back of Chesham my car thermometer was showing -12 degrees C; the 'Sydneyiders' think +12 degrees C is cold !

The whole of Australia with the possible exception of Western Australia is going through or has now gone through the worst (the Australians actually regard it as the best) winter in between 15 and 38 years depending on which area you are talking about. The dam levels in virtually all areas of the continent are at, or close to, 100%, full to the brim, and some of the flash flooding we are experiencing at the moment on the East Coast, i.e. all the way from Queensland in the far North (state capital Brisbane) to Victoria in the South (state capital Melbourne) is unknown in living memory. Sorry for the geography lesson but Sydney (state capital of New South Wales) lies between both of the above so we are currently getting the tropical storms from the north and the Antarctic storms from the south.

There have been flood warnings issued for Alice Springs, the whole area around Uluru (Ayres Rock) is green and not the normal desert brown, Lake Eyre is full of water for the first time since 1990, Tasmania has had snow down to beach level, and speaking personally I have had enough, bring on the sun !!

In my last update I told you that I had been invited to Brisbane to ring in the first peal on the new twelve. We achieved the main objective at the first attempt with a peal of Grandsire Cinques, rung for ANZAB on Saturday 25th September in 3hrs 22mins. It was a fine peal of a very good standard composed and conducted by Ian Harris. Ian and Roger Lubbock had travelled from Perth, 2245 miles by air, to take part in the weekend ringing. I am pleased to announce that in Brisbane at least the ringers do retire to the pub afterwards and do not drink coffee after peals; sighs of relief from me.

On the Sunday morning we all attended Sunday service ringing After the service the peal band from the

previous day gathered again for another peal attempt. Having achieved the primary objective the collective spirit was not exactly willing and an attempt for Yorkshire S Max failed after two courses. We then rang a quarter peal of Stedman Cinques which came round with the exception of 2 and 4 who were swapped over so that did not count either. Despite the best efforts of the organiser to get us to stay and ring yet another attempt the other 11 decided to go back down to the pub.

On the Monday a number of the band had flown out of Brisbane so we were left with 8 of the original 12 bell band from Saturday plus two local ringers who had not rung a peal on 10 before. We rang a peal of Grandsire Caters in 3hrs 19 mins. Again the standard was very good and the locals gave a very good showing.

I cannot finish without saying something about the Cathedral itself. It is probably the newest Cathedral to



be finished in the world in the English Victorian Gothic Revival style. It has been built in three stages with the first starting in 1906 and the third finishing in 2009. It was designed by John Loughborough Pearson (1817 – 1897) who also designed Truro Cathedral in Cornwall, hence the squat four sided spires on the western towers. It is a remarkable building and well worth a visit to anyone who comes out to Australia. It has a nave with a stone vaulted ceiling which is the only one of its kind in Australia, there is stained glass in the Victorian gothic style from the early years of the 20th century and some spectacular very modern stained glass windows from the early years of this century.

If you are still awake you will recall that I mentioned 'air conditioned' ringing chambers in the opening paragraph. So far in Sydney I have not come across a single tower with air conditioning. In Brisbane however there is. The ring of 12 bells at St John's Cathedral is housed in the central tower and the entrance to the ringing chamber is via a staircase in the south western tower to an elevated walkway above the vaulted nave roof. In the ringing chamber there is the largest internal air conditioning unit that I have ever seen anywhere. It is at least 12 foot long and keeps the ringing chamber nice and cool with a thermostat controlled environment. There is even a bathroom and WC just out of the ringing chamber in the north transept roof space; are you jealous now?

Best wishes to all my ringing friends in Olney and North Bucks.

David Phillipson

In Touch Quiz

In the last edition of In Touch, there was a picture of Alan Marchbank on the balcony at Bradwell and readers were invited to contribute an appropriate caption. A very small number of people, and I mean very very small, sent anything in!

Maybe this will capture more interest: here is a 'Name that Tower' competition. No prizes - just something to think about while you digest that extra helping of Christmas pudding. Answers will be posted in the next edition. Just one clue - all the towers are in the branch.



1



2

3



4



5



6



6-Bell Striking Competition - results

The 2010 Guild 6-bell striking competition was well supported this year with 10 of the 15 Branches being represented.

The City Branch hosted the event with Cowley bells being chosen for the final. These are a delightful 5 cwt ring of 6 cast by Mears in the 1940's with the front 3 ropes dropping very close together.

Congratulations to Drayton St Leonard who won the competition. It is thought this is a "first" for around 45 years in South Oxon. Great Linford represented the North Bucks Branch and were placed 8th. The results were as follows :

- 1 Drayton St Leonard - South Oxon
- 2 Shrivenham - Vale of the white horse
- 3 St Aldates - Oxford City
- 4 High Wycombe - EPSB
- 5 Reading St Mary - Reading
- 6 Wokingham - Sonning
- 7 Blewbury - Old North Berks
- 8 Great Linford - North Bucks
- 9 Wing - Central Bucks DNF
- 9 Wootton - Witney and Woodstock DNF

10-Bell Striking Competition

The 2010 Guild 10-bell striking competition will be held at Amersham on Saturday 27th November.

The touch this year is 288 Little Bob Royal and a branch band have already had a practice at Olney in preparation for the competition.

The judge this year is Ian Willgress, the current master of the Peterborough Guild. Looking at the results of the 6-bell competition, it looks like High Wycombe and Reading are not infallible - so we could be in with a chance !

Branch Notice Board

Branch Practices :

Saturday 20th November 7.30pm Great Brickhill
(Joint practice with Towcester Branch - Note time)

Saturday 15th January 4pm Whaddon

Saturday 19th February 4pm Olney

Handbell ringing at Middleton Hall

Saturday 12th December 3pm

Saturday 19th December 2pm

Christmas Celebration

Saturday 11th December
at Shenley 5pm

See front page for details

THE BIG RING-PULL

The Branch Recruitment Project

Please step forward to register
your help with the project by:

11th December 2010

Guild and other stuff :

Saturday 27th November Guild 10 bell striking competition at Amersham

Tuesday 1st February 2011 Deadline for contributions to next In Touch

Saturday 5th February ODG Training meeting at Thame

Saturday 5th March Branch AGM at Newport Pagnell 3.30

Saturday 12th March Guild Spring Committee Meeting in North Bucks Branch