



In Touch

November 2008

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St. Mary, WHADDON (<http://images.google.com>)

Christmas Celebration

The Christmas Celebration this year will be held at St. Mary, Whaddon on Saturday 13th December.

4.30pm	Ringling
6.00pm	Christmas Service
7.00pm	Fish and Chip Supper and entertainment in Whaddon Jubilee Hall.

Choice of Cod, Chicken, or Sausages and Chips. Price £6.50. Bring your own drinks.

Please email numbers to Helen Stanworth — secretary@northbucks.org.uk by Wednesday 10th December.

Payment will be collected at Whaddon by 5.00 pm. If you will be arriving later than this, please give payment to Helen **in advance**.

Please note: late orders may be accepted but choice of food cannot be guaranteed as the shop may have run out unless the order is placed in advance.

Who's Who 2008—2009

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A welcome note . .

from the new Editor

Welcome to this edition of In Touch, my first as editor. Many thanks to those who have contributed to this November issue. I have kept to the successful format that Sheila Watts developed, but ultimately a newsletter is only as good as its content, therefore I hope you will be inspired to contribute to future editions.

If you have any feedback (positive or negative) then I look forward to receiving it.

Jonathan



The deadline for the next **In Touch** is:

**Tuesday 3rd
February 2009**

Chairman's Jottings

This is the first edition of In Touch under our new editor, Jonathan Griggs. Jonathan is keen that news from all towers in the branch be included in the newsletter as well as any other items of interest to ringers in the branch. I hope you will support him in continuing the high standard set by his predecessors.

We are looking forward to the Christmas Celebration on 13th December at Whaddon and I hope you will join us there. This is a chance to meet and socialise at an event when ringing is not the primary activity. Following the fish and chip supper we hope to have some sort of informal entertainment which may involve some 'audience participation', but only if you wish to.

Attendances at Branch Practices are dwindling – why is this? Does no-one want to get out and practice ringing somewhere other than their home tower? Have we got the format wrong? Please tell us how we should change practices in order to attract you. We would love to see more of you at branch practices.

It is still some way off, but may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and 'Good Striking' in 2009.
With best wishes





Richard Stanworth

What are the Branch Archives ?



Doug explains what the archives are and how they are being developed:

The branch archives contain copied information relating to all aspects of ringing in North Bucks. It is an open ended research project in that it is unlikely that all the historical information will be captured and that we continue to create new information almost every time we ring.

The archives contain:

-  Local ringing related material
-  Information about towers and bells
-  Records of peals and quarters
-  Membership history

The information is held on a database on the branch web site. Pages on the site provide links to the database presenting information in user friendly ways. New information is added to the site on a fairly regular basis, at least monthly, as the Archivist brings in records from each new source. The archives serve several purposes:

-  They provide a display resource that members can use to raise awareness of church bells and ringing.
-  By referring to past activities and situations that have been successful, branch officers and tower captains can make better informed plans for the future.

The deeper understanding of the history of rings of bells is helping ringers and PCCs make decisions regarding the future of their bells.

Doug Hird

800 Cambridge Surprise

Philip Earis, who was Master of the Cambridge University Guild 2002/3, recently circulated an e-mail message about the special ringing which will be taking place on Saturday 17th January 2009, to commemorate the 800th anniversary of that University's foundation. This will take the form of touches of 800 changes of Cambridge Surprise, on any number of bells. Although the activity will naturally be centred on towers in and around Cambridge itself, ringers all over the country are being invited to join in the celebration by arranging their own ringing locally. I should very much like to participate in this myself, and therefore invite any North Bucks ringers who are either CUG members, have some other link with Cambridge, or just want an excuse to ring something different, to contact me, initially by telephone (my number is in the Milton Keynes phone book), to discuss arrangements. Philip has provided some suitable compositions (including solutions to the problem of lead-lengths not exactly divisible into 800) and I shall be happy to pass these on to anyone who would like to try them.

Terry Page (Loughton)

ODG 10 bell Competition News

Unfortunately the branch will not be entering a band in the ODG competition at Wallingford on November 22nd. However, as we become a branch with a 10 bell tower, it is hoped that next year we will be able to have some regular 10 bell practice which will generate renewed interest in entering a band.

Secretarial News



Business Meetings and Election of New Members

Please note that any branch practice may be convened as a business meeting if deemed necessary by the officers present, subject to there being sufficient members present. These will mainly be for the election of new members.

The Secretary will have membership nomination forms at Branch Practices as well as meetings. Under these arrangements, new members may be elected at any branch practice or meeting.

Grants

Applications for grants for assistance from individuals for training or from towers for work or for the provision of things that keep bells ringing shall be submitted to the Secretary. Details of applications received will be sent out to towers as soon as possible after receipt. All applications received and sent out at least one month before a meeting will be considered at the next general meeting of the branch. A meeting for this may be convened at a branch practice or other branch event.

Training Grants

Grants will be given towards training courses as follows: 50% of the cost up to a maximum of £50. Applications for grants should be made in writing to the Secretary. It would help us if you apply before you attend the course if at all possible.

Video / DVD

We have three titles available:

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

Look to and Learn produced by the Kent County Association (video)

Teaching Demonstration recording of Steve Coleman teaching (video)

These videos/DVDs may be borrowed from the secretary free of charge. However a deposit of £5 will be required against safe return of the video/DVD.

Membership Information Forms

All members should have received a form at the beginning of the year or when they joined the Guild. About half of these have been returned. If you haven't

already done so, you should complete and return your form to the Secretary. Please remember to let the Secretary know if there have been any changes to your membership information.

As we are aiming to communicate directly with each member, we cannot do this and keep you informed of Branch and Guild activities until we have received a completed form. If you have not received the form, or have mislaid it, please contact the secretary and she will send you a copy. Forms will also be available at Branch Practices and meetings.

Egroup Membership

If you have provided an email address on your membership information form, you will be invited to join the North Bucks egroup forum so that you will automatically receive notices about Branch and Guild events via email. We would like as many branch members as possible to join the egroup so that we can keep in touch with you directly rather than relying on notices on tower notice boards.

A note from the Treasurer



Guild subscriptions and watts happening next year

Thanks to everyone who paid their Guild subscriptions so promptly this past year – it's much appreciated.

As a reminder, part of your subscriptions go to the branch to support local projects and activities, including the production of In Touch. Through the guild, insurance cover is provided for ringing in any tower you might visit. Read more about proposed changes to the payment of subscriptions on page 8, in the **News from the Guild**.

2009 subscriptions will be requested in early January. The Guild sub remains at £5.50, with the North Bucks Branch subsidising junior membership at £4.00.

Sheila Watts



All around the Belfries

All around the Belfries - this is a new section to encourage communication between the towers of the branch. So thank you to the towers who have contributed to this edition. I would like to ask members who represent other towers to contribute next time if possible, so that the widest view of branch ringing activities can be reported.

I am not looking for essays (!) - just a few words about your ringing, attendance, issues with the bells, wedding ringing, not forgetting non-ringing activities as well. If your tower needs help then this is one way of communicating to other branch ringers.

Newport Pagnell

The question I get asked most often is "does the new balcony at Newport make a difference?" My reply is "yes, but you should come and try it for yourself." The balcony has made a difference in that it has given me plenty of work to do to make it habitable, but has also made the ringing easier to run. The band no longer wanders off into the church between touches so I don't spend half the evening rounding them all up. As a result, our learners are now making more rapid progress and new recruits are volunteering on a regular basis.

For members who haven't had the pleasure of ringing at Newport, we have a 1911 Gillett & Johnston ring of eight with a tenor of 21 cwt. A partial re-hang a couple of years ago made the bells easy to ring, now helped by the shorter ropes needed for the new balcony. So they rate amongst the best rings in the area. Ringing on Sunday mornings and for Evensong is well supported and our Wednesday evening practice night is currently focussed on helping the learners to make progress. So the usual extent of our repertoire is Plain Hunt on six or Grandsire Doubles.

Doug Hird

Emberton

We continue to have an interesting practice with the help of our loyal visitors. We're currently trying a new method each month, chosen at random from the website: <http://www.vismeth.co.uk/main.htm>. Last month was Coldstream Surprise Minor, which we felt was tricky and rather tuneless!

We're short of Sunday ringers and recently ran a recruiting 'have a go' session as part of an open day in the Church. There was some interest and phone numbers were exchanged with some potential ringers, but we have yet to get them in the tower!

Sheila Ware

Buckingham

At Buckingham we share our ringers with Maids Moreton and Stowe and ring for Sunday services on a rota. Practice takes place at Buckingham on the last Wednesday of each month and at Maids Moreton on the others. At the Buckingham practice we ring from rounds & called changes through Grandsire and Plain Bob up to simple Surprise Major with the help of a few regular visitors but would always welcome a few extras. At the Maids Moreton practices we ring a variety of plain and surprise methods along with rounds & called changes and plain hunt. During the past year we have stretched our surprise minor ringing beyond Cambridge to include Norwich, Primrose and occasionally London, along the way we rang College or 6th place St Clements. We have also tried a number of more obscure doubles methods and periodically revive Stowe Place Doubles for obvious reasons.

But its not all about ringing, the ringers do other things too; for several years now we have enjoyed a Royal Ascot event including a little gambling, an annual dinner, a ringing outing (this does also include some ringing), a summer walk and any other excuse for a pub lunch. We even have an annual vegetable growing competition including a vegetable themed party, this years carrot competition clearly demonstrated the range of carrot growing skills is just as wide as our bellringing expertise – but the two are not well correlated. We also support many other Church activities, which this year has included quizzes, fetes, barbecues, flower festivals, scarecrows, wine tasting, more horse racing and even the occasional murder mystery.

Andrew Spencer



Bletchley

Thank you all who have helped me during the past few months in my efforts to ensure Bletchley bells have been rung for weddings. This season we have managed to ring for 9 weddings, one of which was on a Friday. We have had a couple of near misses, once when the office forgot to cancel ringing for a wedding and once when they got the time wrong by an hour - thankfully later than I had been told so we still managed to ring! I shall be co-ordinating things next year and I hope you will be able to support me in delivering the goods once again. We already have one booking for April. Anyone free on . . .?

Alan Marchbank



Hanslope

As is often the case, ringing in Hanslope has followed the events that happen in our village with both joyful and sad occasions being marked by the ringing of quarter peals. Our practice nights are generally well supported and the methods vary from plain bob minor to four spliced major as we cater for everyone who attends them. We have for some years now had a special monthly method for the more advanced ringers at our practice nights and although all of these methods are eventually conquered some, most recently Primrose, have proved more difficult than others to achieve. We occasionally do not have enough people available to ring all eight bells on a Sunday morning and, like most towers, we are always looking to recruit new ringers to increase our numbers so it is good to report that Roy has just started to teach another young learner.

Sheila Blenkhorn

Olney

Olney Bells Diary Extract

21st August – The bells leave town

Yesterday saw a significant milestone in the life of the Church of St Peter & St Paul in Olney, the town of Olney itself and the Olney Bells Project in particular. The eight bells which had been lowered to the floor of the church during Monday and Tuesday and which had not left the church since 1931, yesterday left the town after been loaded onto a lorry for transportation to the workshops of Whites of Appleton and then onwards for tuning at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. Our thanks go to Duncan Rogers at Projector Lifting and to Colin Jamieson for providing the transport as a donation to the project.

24th August – Welding work required

Some time ago one of the bell founders which quoted for the work suggested that one of the bells may be cracked in the crown which could only be confirmed when the headstock was removed. The headstocks have now been removed and I am pleased to confirm that there are no cracks. In removing the headstocks however Whites of Appleton have discovered that the largest four bells have a large number of bolt holes in their crowns. The tenor is the worst with twelve holes. When they quarter turn the bells and drill a further four holes in each it will considerably weaken the crown. Incidentally it has been confirmed that our tenor bell, at a little under 25 cwt., is the largest bell cast by Henry Bagley still in existence.

The option being recommended is that they should send the bells to Soundweld and have all the holes filled with weld. Unfortunately this will be very expensive to do because of the size of the bells and the time it takes to preheat them to welding temperature. This will result in an increase on the cost line of over £12,000.

12th September – New bells cast

Earlier today a party of people from Olney went down to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in London to witness the casting of the two new bells. At six and a half and six and three quarters hundredweight they will be added to the front end of the existing octave to provide us with our ring of ten bells. These two bells will stay at Whitechapel and be tuned with the rest of the bells once they are delivered back from Whites workshop in Appleton and from SoundWeld in Newmarket.



The 7th being lowered

10th October – Presentation of £20,000

At 6pm on Friday 10th October there was a presentation of a cheque for £20,000 from the Bucks Historic Churches Trust to the Olney Bells Appeal. The presentation was made by Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire, who is President of the BHCT to Rev'd Val Reveley who accepted the cheque on behalf of the appeal and the PCC. The funding for the grant has come from WREN and the landfill tax credits raised at the two Waste Recycling Group Landfill sites at Calvert and Bletchley.

The bells at Whites



10th November – Frame removal

Time has been spent over the last few weeks measuring, drawing and photographing the wooden bell frame before it is removed from the tower and replaced. Back in August, just after the bells had been removed, Dr. Martin Bridge from the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory visited the tower and took core samples of the older timbers. As some of the samples included sap wood he was able to positively date a number of the timbers to have been felled in 1626 and as wood was not seasoned at that time the frame would have been erected in 1626 or within one or two years after that date. It is known that there were bells in the tower prior to that year so the previous frame must have been removed in its entirety. The six bell frame erected in 1626 would have remained largely untouched until there were major changes made in 1903 to accommodate two extra bells and the new clock hammers with the addition of the Westminster chimes.

The frame will be removed during the week commencing 17th November. The western frame side of the old sixth is the only complete unaltered frame side from the 1626 installation and it is planned to preserve it once it is removed. If anyone knows of a museum or alternative venue which could accommodate these fairly substantial timbers then please let us know.

Once the frame, belfry floor and all supporting timbers are removed Graham Clifton will then be able to perform a detailed survey of the tower and establish exact measurements for the frame, the width of the pits and the headstocks. An order can then be placed for the casting of the headstocks which are expected to take between 12 and 14 weeks. So while we will not be ringing for Christmas 2008 we do hope to be ringing again for Easter 2009 and we look forward to welcoming people to ring at Olney once again.

David Phillipson and Charles Knight



Five of the 1903 head bolts removed by Whites



The tenor leaving the churchyard

Bits and Bobs

News from the Guild

Honorary Membership

At the AGM in May there was considerable debate about the continuation of the Honorary class of membership. Concerns were raised for the inconsistent process by which this honour is awarded. There was also speculation about the effects of the "free" status of this class of membership and the negative impact it could have on the financial stability of the Guild. So much was the debate that a motion was passed for the rules to be revised with a view to removing the Honorary status and the entitlement to free membership.

At the Finance and General Purposes meeting the matter was discussed at length and a new class of membership, criteria for award and process for consideration of award was discussed and developed. In short if the rule change is adopted, Branches will propose members for election to a distinguished class of membership against criteria and citation that express the members contribution to Branch or Guild. The Guild will upon recommendation of the F&GP committee agree the award of the new class of membership which will be ratified at the Guild AGM.

Subscriptions

A further anomaly of membership will be resolved by a further change to Guild rules.

Currently the rules say membership subscriptions are due on 1st January, but membership does not cease by virtue of non payment until 12 months later. With the incorporation of the Personal Accident Insurance premium in the Subscriptions, this places the Guild at financial (cash flow) risk and introduces an ambiguity as to who is insured.

There is therefore a proposal from the F&GP to amend the rules to say that membership subscriptions are due on 1st January, and membership will cease if they are not received by the Branch Treasurer by the end of March. This is in advance of the payment of the Personal Accident Insurance premium and makes determining who is and is not a member much easier.

So more rule changes are coming. It won't be quick and you will all have a chance to say your piece at the AGM and through the Guild Reps. Please make your feelings are heard.

Alan Marchbank

"You won't have seen much of me over the last couple of years as I've been spending lots of time running and not much time ringing.

I have been lucky enough to get a place in the 2009 London Marathon and will be raising money for The Stroke Association. If you would like to sponsor my efforts please visit my JustGiving page at <http://www.justgiving.com/nicolakingfilm09>, or sign a traditional paper form when you see me or Doug at a Branch meeting or ringing event. I am aiming to raise £750 for The Stroke Association, who support people who have had strokes and their families, and research the treatment and causes of strokes."

Thanks, Nicki King



Stoke Goldington bells sold !

In the August issue of In Touch, you may remember that Owen Warren's model of Stoke bells prior to augmentation was advertised for sale – the highest bidder over £100 would be successful, and the funds would go to the Church.

We decided to keep the offer open for a month after publication, but very early in that month David and Susan Wood from Stoke Goldington village telephoned to say that they'd heard about the sale. They felt strongly that the model should stay in the village, so had clubbed together with two other families and offered £151 for the model. We were told that any other offer we received would probably be topped by the 'consortium'!

We did have one other bite of interest – Bob Winstanley told us that Milton Keynes Museum would possibly be interested.

The month passed, and in the end the model stayed in Stoke Goldington. Owen was very pleased, especially as we understand the model will be securely displayed in the village.

Sheila Ware

P. David Taylor

1942 - 2008

Recollections of 'my mate' David

It was a dull foggy autumn evening in 1955 that David and I stood on the market square in Hanslope when the bells of St James the Great began to ring and, with nothing else to do at the time, we climbed the forty-nine steps to the ringing chamber to see what this bellringing was all about. That was the beginning of fifty-three years of bellringing together.

But that was not the beginning of our friendship as we had started at Hanslope Primary School only one year apart in 1947. In 1952 I moved with my parents and younger sister to a new house which was only a few yards from where David lived and this is when we became good friends and eventually lifelong mates.

At the age of eleven we attended Wolverton School and then at the age of fifteen we moved on to the British Rail (Engineering) Training School, both serving apprenticeships, and then onto the Engineering College at Wolverton.

As we progressed with our ringing, most evenings we spent bellringing around the local area, on cycles of course, with fellow learners George Walker and John (Hoppy) Powell. It was during this period that David acquired a tandem and it was the other three of us that took it in turns to ride pillion. David was the power house of this machine and on many an occasion the person on the back would put his feet up on the rear handle bars, lean back, arms folded (not me of course!) and let David propel us along the country lanes.

One of the towers David and I visited on a regular basis was Wicken, where they had a very good band. However, one particular evening David couldn't make it and I decided to go on my own. On arrival seven ringers had already turned up with me making the eighth so it was decided to ring a quarter peal of Stedman Triples. I had only rung plain courses but, with the help of George Green, we made it. David, right up until quite recently, never let me forget that I got my first quarter of Stedman Triples before him.

Since then we have rung many quarter peals together but our first peal together was at Maidwell, Northamptonshire and also in the peal was another lifelong friend, Tim Wooding of Newport Pagnell.

I have spent quite a number of holidays with David, some of them being camping / ringing holidays, but my very first one with him was in 1968 at a small hotel in Llandudno, Wales where he caused havoc with all the older residents but they all knew that it was in good fun and loved him for it.



Hertfordshire Outing - September 1983

P. DAVID TAYLOR

of Hanslope and Newport Pagnell,
Buckinghamshire
and Ballyfaskin, Co. Limerick
1942 – 2008

A Service of Thanksgiving
for David's life will be held at
St James the Great, Hanslope,
Friday 28th November at 2pm.
Open ringing before and
after the Service.

All are very welcome.

Enquiries to Roy Keeves

David had many friends but there are a small number of them, including myself, that can say that he was an extremely good friend when they needed one. I am sure none of us will ever forget David or his mischievous nature, his pranks or just being able to produce havoc amongst the rest of us.

There are many happy memories and stories that I could tell you about David and hopefully we shall all share these at some later date. His passing is a sad loss to bellringing and to bellringers, but I shall be ever grateful to have had his friendship and comradeship, and to be able to have called David 'my mate'.

Roy Keeves

P. David Taylor
1942 - 2008



A tribute to 'Bomber'

The band at St James the Great, Hanslope were shocked and saddened by the sudden passing of David. In his early days David was a loyal and committed ringer at Hanslope tower before moving to Newport Pagnell where he also had a long bellringing association at SS Peter and Paul. Recently David had moved to Southern Ireland where he died after a short illness. Over the years David had kept in touch with the band at Hanslope usually joining in with Sunday morning service ringing several times a year.

After some years of sporadic ringing at Hanslope, I was invited in late 1955 to teach a new band of young ringers. These included Fae Hollis, Robert Tomkins, George Walker, David Taylor, Edward Boss, Roy Keeves, Joe Geary and John Powell. These young people set the tradition of bellringing at Hanslope which has continued ever since.

David rang his first quarter peal on July 5th 1958 at Courteenhall, Northants, 1260 Doubles (Kennington, Canterbury, Plain Bob), the band being David Taylor 1, Freda Curtis 2, Ian Markham 3, Alan Cozens 4, Kenneth Perkins (C)5. David went on to become a very competent method ringer and I personally rang a number of peals with him ranging from Doubles to Surprise Major. David's first peal was 5040 Seven Doubles methods at Grafton Regis, Northants, on December 13th 1958 the band this time being David Taylor 1, Patricia Neasham 2, Alan Cozens 3, Michael Bennett 4, Robin Baker (C)5.

David was a fun loving person and enjoyed many outings and weekends with his bellringing friends. He was always involved in pranks. On one occasion on a Derbyshire outing, my wife Shirley offered him a glass of "red wine" which in fact was beetroot juice and he said it was very nice. When told what it really was the look on his face was priceless, much to the amusement of everyone. He got his own back on a ringing weekend at Chester when he pinned items of ladies underwear on our bedroom door for all the Hotel guests to see on their way down to breakfast, much to our horror, but with gales of laughter from the rest of the group. (We later returned the items whilst camping in the New Forest by pinning them on the tent he was sharing with Roy Keeves.) We often wondered whose underwear it was!!

St James the Great, Hanslope
Wednesday 10 September 2008
1260 Stedman Triples

- 1 Alan Cozens
- 2 George Green
- 3 Jonathan Griggs
- 4 Roy Keeves
- 5 Ian Thompson
- 6 Doug Hird
- 7 Richard Haseldine (c)
- 8 Tony Gray

Rung to celebrate the life of P. David Taylor whose funeral took place on this day in Co. Limerick, Ireland

David loved football and went to see the Cobblers (Northampton Town) regularly with his friend Tim Wooding and no doubt Tim has good memories of these matches which he attended with "Bomber". David was known in Hanslope as Bomber Taylor: he supposedly got this nickname from his footballing days but he certainly "bombed" everywhere and used to climb the tower steps at Hanslope at 100mph.

A quarter peal of Stedman Triples (one of David's favourite methods) was rung at Hanslope on Wednesday 10th September, the day of his funeral in Ireland. The bells were rung open which we thought David would have wished. David's very good friends Tim Wooding and Audrey Jones came over to listen and remember.

David has gone to join the illustrious band of past ringers in heaven, where no doubt he is still playing pranks, but he will not be forgotten by those of us who knew him and rang with him over the years.

Alan Cozens

Ringling in the Rain

A report on the Ringing Roadshow

Did you go to the Ringing Roadshow at Stoneleigh in early September? If you didn't then you missed a splendid day out (so we thought)!

It was a two day event (Friday and Saturday), and this year we chose the Friday. An exceedingly wet day. But the parking was good, clearly signposted, and everything (except the ten mini-rings) indoors.



There were an enormous range of stands – anything and everything to do with bellringing. But the best bit was meeting up with old friends and ringers who you knew you'd met on 'grabs' many years ago, and who were eyeing you with the same amount of recognition! It was a reminder that one of the very good things about ringing is the fellowship.

Highlights for us included a handbell concert, and also the professional carillonneur Boudewijn Zwart playing the mobile carillon, consisting of 50 bells cast by Petit and Fritsen in 2003.

We even won a prize – a copy of Steve Coleman's *Bob Caller's Companion* – we just have to put it into practice now . . .

Sheila Watts & Sheila Ware

Guild Six Bell Striking Competition

Saturday October 4th at All Saints, Milton Keynes

A good afternoon was spent with 9 bands competing for the ODG Six Bell trophy at All Saints, Milton Keynes Village. The church with its ground floor ringing room afforded excellent facilities for the judges to sit in the north vestry just alongside the tower, which was so much better for them than huddling in a car in failing daylight and deteriorating weather. Richard and Helen Stanworth were the stewards, checking bands in, collecting information and assisting with timings of practices and rounds etc.

During the early part of the competition there was almost a crisis when the Churchwarden (who was unaware of the competition) brought a party of people in for a look around the church! They were somewhat miffed to be asked to keep very quiet and hastily guided away from the chancel and out of the south door!

The bells were certainly enough of a challenge to make this an interesting competition. Alan Shephard from Dunstable, the chief judge said the bells sorted the competitors into two distinct groups, the top three and the following six. Liz Middleton from Radbourne assisted Alan in the task of judging the 9 teams.

Tine Marchbank and her hospitality team comprising ringers, past ringers and non-ringers provided an

abundance of tea which was consumed throughout the afternoon in the warmth and comfort of the Village Hall just opposite the church.

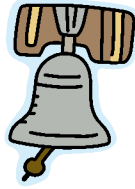
From the results you will see that Reading were victorious and the judges presented Stephen Rossiter with the Trophy.

I would like to thank all the ringers who took part in the competition, our judges Alan and Liz, Richard and Helen Stanworth, the Incumbent and ringers at Milton Keynes Village and Tine and her band of helpers. You all contributed to make this my first ODG organisation a success.

The results, in order:

Reading (St Mary with St Lawrence)	14 faults
Vale of WH (Shrivenham)	18.5
EBSB (High Wycombe)	23
Chiltern (Aton Clinton)	69
Sonning Deanery (Sonning)	76
North Bucks (Hanslope)	89
Oxford City (Kidlington)	187
Banbury (Bodicote)	216
Sth Oxfordshire (Chalgrove)	215

Alan Marchbank



Quarter Peals



St James the Great, Hanslope

Saturday 13 September 2008

1280 Lincolnshire Surprise Major

1. Stuart Grout
2. George Green
3. Alan Cozens
4. David Phillipson
5. Nick Gray
6. Tony Gray
7. Alan Marchbank
8. Jonathan Griggs (c)

Rung to open Hanslope Street Fayre

St James the Great, Hanslope

Sunday 12 October 2008

1280 Rutland Surprise Major

1. Stuart Grout
2. Alan Cozens
3. Kevin Haseldine
4. Roy Keeves
5. Ian Thompson
6. Tony Gray
7. Richard Haseldine (c)
8. Jonathan Griggs

Rung as a farewell compliment to Kevin Haseldine as he starts his new career in Lancashire

St Giles, Stony Stratford

Sunday 15 June 2008

1250 Lincolnshire Surprise Major

1. Alan Marchbank
2. Barry Eglesfield (c)
3. Lynn Pughe
4. Bob Winstanley
5. Ruth Stokes
6. Bob Tregillus
7. Chris Stokes
8. Jonathan Griggs

Rung to celebrate 'Folk on the Green'

St James the Great, Hanslope

Thursday 21 August 2008

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1. Jon Skinner
2. Tony Gray
3. Stuart Grout
4. Ian Thompson
5. Roy Keeves
6. Richard Haseldine (c)

First Quarter - 1

St Peter, Stoke Goldington

Sunday 21 September 2008

1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor

1. Roy Keeves
2. Ian Thompson
3. Jonathan Griggs
4. Richard Haseldine
5. Nick Gray
6. Tony Gray (c)

Rung to celebrate the 90th Birthday of Owen Warren, Tower Captain of Stoke Goldington.

First Quarter as Conductor

St Michael, Abergele, Conwy

Sunday, 26 October 2008

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1. Victoria Stanworth
2. Helen Stanworth
3. John Stanworth
4. David Stanworth
5. Richard Stanworth (c)
6. Dennis Monaghan

For confirmation service and the last official visit to St. Michael Abergele by the Rt. Rev. John S Davies, Bishop of St. Asaph, before his retirement.

Also for Sian Stanworth, daughter of ringer of 4, and goddaughter of 5, one of the confirmation candidates.

All Saints, Leighton Buzzard

Sunday 2 November 2008

1311 Stedman Cinques

1. Andrew Haseldine (c)
2. Patricia Newton
3. Julie Haseldine
4. Richard Yates
5. Doug Hird
6. Richard Haseldine
7. Alan Shepherd
8. Richard Horne
9. David Phillipson
10. Chris Stokes
11. Robert Newton
12. Alan Marchbank

Rung for the 60th birthday of Barry Eglesfield

Anne Stainsby

Anne Stainsby, well-known to ringers in Bedfordshire and North Buckinghamshire, had been unable to continue ringing after a severe stroke three years ago but had faced this handicap with the spirit which she brought to everything in which she took part. Her death on 25th September was sudden and unexpected and the regard in which she was held in ringing circles was shown by the number of towers represented at her funeral service on 6th October.

Anne learned to ring in Bedford with the encouragement of her father, George Amor (a leading member of the Police Guild). Her progress was such that she scored her first quarter peal within two months and she rang peals to surprise royal standard before the range of calls on her time caused her to concentrate on the support of local service bands. In 1959 she married Derek, and they lived and rang in Radcliffe on Trent for six years before moving to Loughton, where Derek worked on the development of Milton Keynes. Both of them were recently made Honorary Life Members of the Oxford Diocesan Guild for their many years of service to North Bucks towers.

In one period in Loughton there were regularly four generations of the Amor/Stainsby family at the ringing room at the same time. The two senior generations ringing, the third generation attempting to supervise the fourth, and the fourth enlivening touches by lobbing cuddly toys into the circle. Anne enjoyed quarter peals and ringing holidays, and was to be relied on as the organising force for anything from branch meeting teas to the tower Christmas party. Before and after her funeral service the bells were rung open in thanksgiving for her life; the same evening half-muffled quarter peals were rung by North Bucks Branch members at Loughton and Shenley.

Bob Winstanley

St Andrew, Great Linford

Sunday 28 September 2008

1260 Doubles (60 Plain Bob, 240 each St Osmunds, St Simons, St Martins, Eynesbury, Grandsire)

1. John B Marchbank
2. Alex J Marchbank
3. Barry R Eglesfield
4. B Douglas Hird
5. Alan J Marchbank (c)
6. Ros Tyrrell

Rung in celebration of the life of Anne Stainsby

All Saints, Loughton

Monday 6th October 2008

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1. Gary Reading
2. Becky Fawcett
3. Bob Winstanley
4. Brian Baldwin
5. Ted Fawcett
6. Terry Page (c)

St Mary , Shenley

Monday 6th October 2008

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1. Anne McIntyre
2. Ann Birch
3. John Brookman
4. Malcolm Hooton
5. Simon Head (c)
6. Robin Starr (1st QP)

Both quarters rung half muffled, in memory of Anne Stainsby, ringer at Bedford, Radcliffe on Trent, Loughton and Shenley

A letter from Derek Stainsby :

I, and my family, would like to thank most warmly, those of you who came to Anne's funeral. It was good to see you all and hear the bells rung open.

Two half muffled quarter peals run simultaneously in the evening of the day of the funeral, at Loughton and Shenley, were successfully brought round. Whilst listening to the ringing I tried to position myself between the two churches so that I could compare the properties of the two rings, but the wind was in rather a gusty mood and I can't say I was very successful!



OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

Minutes of Autumn Meeting

Held at Shenley on 13th September 2008

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to Shenley, commenting that it was some years since we had held a meeting at Shenley, and that had also been an autumn meeting.

In Memoriam

The Chairman reported that David Taylor of Newport Pagnell had died on 6th September. David was elected a member under Hanslope in June 1958, coincidentally at a meeting held here at Shenley. He remained a member at Hanslope until about 1970. He then appears under Newport Pagnell from 1974 onwards, where he was tower captain for a time. Barry Eglesfield added a few more details about his ringing career. He was elected to the College Youths in 1964 and was also a regular ringer at Wicken. He supported a number of practices in the area, giving lifts to young ringers such as Barry before they could drive. When working away he would often visit practices in the area where he was based at the time. The chairman then asked the meeting to stand and remember David.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Robert Newton (Guild Master), Hilarie Rogers (Guild Secretary), Rachel Moss (Guild Steward), Brian Newman, John Stanworth, Vicky Stanworth, Roy Keeves, Sheila Blenkhorn, Charles Knight, David Joyce, Chrissie Cable, Alex Marchbank, John Marchbank, Ros Tyrell.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held at Olney in March, and Business Meetings held at Lavendon in April, Maids Moreton in June, and at Newport Pagnell July, had been published in In Touch. It was proposed by Alan Marchbank and seconded by Sheila Watts that the Chairman sign these minutes as true records of the meetings. This was agreed on a show of hands.

Election of New Members

Nominations had been received proposing two new members
Loughton: Claire Reading (Junior) proposed by Derek Stainsby, seconded by Garry Reading
Woughton: Adam Gledhill, proposed by Brian Baldwin, seconded by Simon Head
Both were elected without dissent.

Officers Reports

Chairman - With Sheila Watts and Sheila Ware retiring as newsletter editors, the Chairman thanked them again for all the work that they had done for the branch and to say that the high standard of the publication had been well received throughout the Guild. He asked the members present to join him in showing their appreciation in the usual way.

Treasurer - The Branch Account balance at the Building Society stands at £814.43, which is quite healthy compared with last year, mostly due to the savings we have made on In Touch. Thank you to those towers who have paid their 2008 Guild Subscriptions. There are still five towers outstanding and it is time to name them – Beachampton, Great Linford, Maids Moreton, Stowe, and Tingewick. Thank you for your

contributions to the Guild Bell Fund, £27 has been raised today.

Ringing Master – Unfortunately we failed to raise a band to enter the Guild 8 bell competition this year. Barry appealed for more enthusiasm in attending branch practices. He is willing to help people but can't do anything if they don't attend the practices.

Guild Reps – Alan drew attention to an item of business at the forthcoming Autumn Committee meeting in November. This relates to a proposed change to the rule for electing Honorary members as the current rule could leave the Guild financially disadvantaged in the next 10 years or so.

Election of Officers

Nominations were received for two of the posts which have become vacant in the last few months. Jonathan Griggs had volunteered to take over as Newsletter editor and he had been co-opted onto the committee but the meeting needed to formally elect him: proposed by Richard Stanworth and seconded by Sheila Watts and Sheila Ware. David Phillipson was elected to fill the post of Guild Representative vacated by Alan Marchbank (proposed by Alan and seconded by Simon Head) so that we could have full representation on the Guild General Committee

Newsletter

This item had been included at the request of Jonathan Griggs, our new newsletter editor. He felt that the change of editor might be a time to review whether the format and content of In Touch met the needs of the members. Some questions had been circulated prior to the meeting to stimulate discussion and get feedback from members. The questions asked were: Are we happy with the content? We generally have forthcoming meeting details / news / quarters / meeting minutes / diary and occasional articles. Do we want to change this mix? What else do we want to see?

Does the newsletter content equally represent all the towers in the branch? Would the branch be interested in a change of style, possibly to an A5 booklet?

During the discussion that followed the following points were made: the newsletter can only be what people put into it; we need to talk to towers in order to get participation; ask for snippets or short articles of 'News from your tower'; unusual special methods should be published in In Touch; need to keep the quality up to the standard set by your predecessors; concerns were raised about the size of the font if the style were changed to A5.

Jonathan undertook to consider all comments as In Touch evolves over the next few issues.

Forthcoming Events

A Calendar of events had been circulated to all present. The Chairman announced a couple of additions to the calendar. The special method for the Branch Practice at Old Wolverton was to be Hull S Minor. The Joint Practice with the Towcester Branch in November would also include a shortened form of the Inter-branch competition which was postponed from June. It was also hoped that some light refreshments would also be available in order to make this more of a social event.

The Christmas Celebration is all confirmed and preparations are in hand for the fish and chip supper in the Jubilee hall at Whaddon. We are hosting the Guild six Bell competition with the final at Milton Keynes Village. Alan is organising this as Guild Deputy Master as well as a branch officer. The February Branch Practice will be at Emberton as Olney are unlikely to be back in action by then.

Jill Joyce reminded members about the Steeple Aston course at the beginning of November. Places can still be booked during the next week or so. Helpers will also be required for the practical sessions during the day. All enquires and offers of help should be directed to Chrissy Cable.

Any Other Business

Olney – David Phillipson reported that the branch now has a ten bell tower as the two new trebles have now been cast. They are however in three different locations, two at Whitechapel, two at Soundweld, and six at Whites. There are two at Soundweld because when the headstocks were removed the back four bells were found to have 12 holes drilled in them already, and another five were going to make them look like sieves. The existing holes will be welded before they are re-drilled. It had been hoped to have the bells back

by Christmas but it is now looking like February-ish, which is why the practice can't be at Olney. The main issue is the time to order the new headstocks which can't be ordered until there are detailed drawings of the frame, and these can't be done until the frame is taken out. The frame is still in place because we need to record it before it is taken out. Tests have shown that the oldest part of the frame dates from 1626. This is a bit of a puzzle as we know that there were at least 4 bells there in 1611 and we still have one, dated 1599 so there must have been a frame before the current one. Hopefully at some point in the spring of next year we hope to have a very pleasant ring of ten and look forward to welcoming the branch to ring them.

Vote of Thanks

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of all present to Geoff Ewell for taking our service, to Veronica for playing the organ, and to John Brookman and the Shenley ringers for a wonderful tea, of which there was still some left for those still hungry. Members showed their appreciation in the usual way

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed. Further ringing then followed.

Celebrations at Loughton

After we realised that 2008 was the centenary year for the augmentation, we tried without success to find the exact date of the dedication. Then the penny dropped, and we emailed Chris Pickford; to our surprise, the answer came the next morning:

"The bells were apparently dedicated towards the end of August 1908. I am currently in Australia, and the necessary reference book isn't readily to hand so I can't check the exact date . . . but it was the Sunday before 1st September 1908. This is clear from the following published testimonial:"

LOUGHTON, Buckinghamshire.

Loughton Rectory, September 1st, 1908.

Dear Sir, I will send you a paper at the end of the week giving you an account of our dedication of bells last Sunday. All has passed well. Several changes were rung and all seemed highly gratified with the "go" of the bells all through. Yours very truly, J. T. ATHAWES.

The letter from the then Rector to Alfred Bowell of Ipswich provided all the information we needed; a quarter peal was rung on the exact anniversary (30th August, a Saturday in 2008) and a special service of Praise and Worship was held on Sunday 31st, featuring the Belmont Handbell Ringers, a tune-ringing band based at Loughton Baptist Church.

Bob Winstanley

All Saints, Loughton Saturday 30 August 2008 **1272 Plain Bob Minor**

1. Gary Reading
2. Becky Fawcett
3. Ann Birch
4. Anne McIntrye
5. Bob Winstanley
6. Terry Page (c)

Rung to celebrate the centenary of the augmentation of the ring to six, the dedication service having been held on 30th August 1908



What's on and where



NOVEMBER

22nd	<i>Ten Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Wallingford Old North Berks Branch</i>
22nd	<i>Autumn General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Brightwell Old North Berks Branch</i>
29th	<i>Cambridge Surprise Royal Training Day</i>	<i>Aston Clinton</i>

DECEMBER

13th 4.30	Christmas Celebration with Fish & Chip Supper	Whaddon
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2009

JANUARY

16th *7.30	Branch Practice	Bletchley
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FEBRUARY

13th 7.30	Branch Practice (NB 2nd Friday as 3rd Friday not available)	Emberton
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MARCH

7th 3.30	AGM	Hanslope
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14th	<i>Spring General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Sonning Deanery Branch</i>
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APRIL

4th	<i>Radley Course</i>	<i>Radley</i>
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11th	<i>Guild Handbell Day</i>	
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17th *7.30	Branch Practice	Loughton
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MAY

4th	<i>Eight Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Banbury Branch</i>
4th	<i>Annual Ringing Day</i>	<i>Banbury Branch</i>

15th *7.30	Branch Practice	Thornborough
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16th	<i>Annual General Meeting</i>	<i>Central Bucks Branch</i>
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JUNE

6th *4.30	Summer Social	Clifton Reynes
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19th *7.30	Branch 6-Bell Striking Competition	Weston Underwood
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AUGUST

21st *7.30	Branch Practice	Calverton
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SEPTEMBER

12th *3.30	Autumn Meeting	Woughton
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Items marked * were unconfirmed as at 10 November 2008

Italicised events are Guild events