



In Touch

North Bucks Branch - www.northbucksbranch.org.uk

June 2019

Editorial

Having been In Touch Editor since 2016, I have been proud to contribute to the branch. In the May 2018 edition, I wrote an article for In Touch asking about engagement with branch, entitled Our Branch. It elicited no response.

That raised a question about the future, and the value of In Touch.

In Touch is produced three or four times a year, with distribution via email, and colour copies being sent to some members for an additional fee. Each tower is sent a copy via the tower correspondent, which is black and white, unless towers have told the editor that they print a copy for their tower themselves. This requires significant time to arrange.

The cost of producing In Touch is around £64 per edition, or around £254 annually. This cost is built up; the majority being split between the cost of printing and the cost of stamps for distribution, with stationery and envelopes the other costs. In Touch requires 200+ sheets of A4 paper per edition, plus 35 x A4 envelopes and a cardboard box. With current trends to reduce environmental impact, this consumption is excessive, especially as the branch has a website, which has access to billions, whereas In Touch is only read by a few hundred.

Due to the quarterly nature of the publication, news is often old, or well in advance, when it reaches the readers. The website, well maintained, would be current.

Our website has been neglected in recent years - however the branch is fortunate to have enlisted Steve Thompson as Webmaster. This has led to a challenging but much needed look at the website, and it is felt that it can be an important source of information. It is already linked to Bell Board, meaning that our website is automatically updated with peals and quarter peals. News and views can be updated as they arrive with the Webmaster or Editor, making them 'live'. The money not being spent on In Touch can be used to facilitate an improved website. Historically, the branch has avoided spending money on the website, while funding In Touch.

In Touch generates very little response or copy from the membership. A few wonderful people contribute regularly; however, they represent a small proportion of the membership.

Going forward, the role of In Touch Editor will be evolved into Communications Officer, working with the Webmaster to keep the branch informed, and members will find the website a valuable tool for news and events, using the news submitted to enliven our website. An up-to-date diary and branch officers contact emails will be available.

On a monthly basis, an email will be circulated to all members with a link the website encouraging them to look at a copy of the branch diary and news. Members and towers who would like a quarterly black and white branch diary sent to them by post can request this at no additional cost. The aim is to have these developments implemented before the Branch AGM in 2020.

This evolution will not only reduce excessive consumption of natural resource, allow re-investment into the website, and wider access to the world with more current information, but make communication easier to manage for the volunteers whose time is given to the branch.

Phillip Starr – In Touch Editor.

*****The deadline for the submission of articles for the next In Touch will be Friday 16th of August 2019 to newslettereditor@northbucksbranch.org.uk*****



OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD of CHURCH BELL RINGERS

North Bucks Branch

Diary of Events 2019/20



Date	Event	Venue	tbc/C	Time	Organiser
Saturday 15 th June	Branch Practice	Whaddon	C	5.00-6.30pm	Barry Eglesfield
Thursday 27 th June	Mid-Week Group	Wicken	C	11am-12.30pm	Nick Read
<i>Saturday 20th July</i>	<i>Interbranch Striking</i>	<i>Wicken</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>?</i>	<i>Barry Eglesfield</i>
Monday 12 th August	Officers Meeting	Woughton	C	7.30-9.00pm	Brian Baldwin
Saturday 17 th August	Branch Practice	MK Village	C	5.00-6.30pm	Barry Eglesfield
Thursday 22 nd August	Mid-Week Group	Olney		11am-12.30pm	Nick Read
Saturday 7 th September	Social/Branch Mtg	?	tbc		Brian Baldwin
Saturday 21 st September	Branch Practice	Lavendon	C	5.00-6.30pm	Barry Eglesfield
Thursday 26 th September	Mid-Week Group	Woughton	C	11am-12.30pm	Nick Read
Saturday 28 th September	Branch Outing	Bedford Area	tbc		Doug Hird
<i>Saturday 5th October</i>	<i>Guild 6 Bell</i>	<i>EBSB Branch</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>tbc</i>	<i>Guild Secretary</i>
Saturday 19 th October	Branch Practice	Newport Pagnell	tbc		Barry Eglesfield
Thursday 24 th October	Mid-week Group	Calverton		11am-12:30pm	Nick Read
<i>Saturday 26th October</i>	<i>Steeple Aston Course</i>	<i>Steeple Aston</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>tbc</i>	<i>Jonathon Creshall</i>
Monday 11th November	Officers Meeting	?	tbc		Brian Baldwin
Saturday 16 th November	Branch Practice	Calverton	C	3.30-5.00pm	Barry Eglesfield
<i>Saturday 23rd November</i>	<i>Guild 10 Bell Contest</i>	<i>Sonning Deanery</i>	<i>tbc</i>		<i>Tony Crabtree</i>
<i>Saturday 23rd November</i>	<i>ODG General Com- mittee Mtg</i>	<i>Sonning Deanery</i>	<i>tbc</i>		<i>Guild Secretary</i>
Thursday 28 th November	Mid-week Group	tbc		11am-12.30pm	Nick Read
Saturday 7 th December	Social/Branch Mtg	Hanslope	tbc		Brian Baldwin
Saturday 21 st December	Branch Practice	Shenley	tbc	3.30-5.00pm	Barry Eglesfield
Monday 10 th Feb. 2020	Officers Meeting	Woughton	C	7.30-9.00pm	Brian Baldwin
Saturday 7 th March 2020	North Bucks AGM	Emberton	C	tbc	Brian Baldwin

Practice Night—St. Mary's Whaddon

While Whaddon no longer is able to hold a band practice due to a lack of numbers, the ringers are fortunate to have the monthly Open Practice at St. Mary's, Whaddon. This continues with ringers from a vast array of abilities, and from across branch borders, on the first Friday of every month. All abilities are welcome, and every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Please join in this friendly practice on a fine set of six (Tenor 14 hundred weight).

Phillip Starr

Inter-Branch Striking Contest

The Inter Branch Striking Contest 2019 will be hosted by the Towcester Branch at Wicken on Saturday July 20th, commencing at 1800

Branch Officers

Role	Name	Email
Chair	Graham Bartholomew	chair@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Secretary	Brian Baldwin	secretary@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Treasurer	Anne Nightingale	treasurer@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Ringing Master	Barry Eglesfield	ringingmaster1@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	Phillip Starr	newslettereditor@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Guild Rep	Alan Marchbank	guildrep1@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Guild Rep	Patricia Rosewell	guildrep2@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Webmaster	Steve Thomason	webmaster@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Database Administrator	Keith Wagstaff	dbadmin@northbucksbranch.org.uk
Archivist	Doug Hird	archivist@northbucksbranch.org.uk

Guild AGM 18th May 2019 – Brief Report

1. Held at Great Missenden – Chiltern Branch
2. About 75 attended – Quorum 50. Guild Membership 2000+
3. All the usual apologies, obituaries, last minutes, matters arising and correspondence – nothing significant
4. Accounts for both General Fund and Restoration Fund approved
5. Motion - Merger of Restoration Fund (1930) and Bell Fund (1970) – Major discussion surrounding this process which will not be rushed. A final change to the motion wording read out by Tim Pett. This was approved with 2 abstentions and 2 against.
6. ODG Committee Structures. Ken Darvill explained the considerations surrounding a restructure of the existing General Committee into a two level Exec Committee and Management Committee. I have not read the papers but it seemed sensible to me to create a situation whereby the Execs concerned themselves with policy and direction whilst the management team did the detailed work. Arising from CC changes.
7. Election of Officers – see list. All renewed unopposed. Alan volunteered to be a general member without portfolio. All agreed
8. Distinguished Membership Awards – none this year
9. Non resident members - all ratified
10. Certificates
11. AOB – Quorum debate – approved for General Council to consider change. Some objections to the way this was being dealt with. Food for thought from several areas

Brian Baldwin

Six Bell Striking Competition—1st June 2019

The results of the competition at Maids Moreton, provided by the Judges, were as follows:-

1. Woughton 86%
2. Bradwell 78%
3. Shenley/Loughton 74%
4. Maids Moreton 69%
5. Bletchley 51%

Brian Baldwin

Midweek Ringing Group

As discussed at the recent Branch AGM the midweek ringing group will move from the second Thursday of the month to the fourth Thursday of the month.

Do come along if you are able, all abilities are welcome. If you need any more information please feel free to email me on read887@btinternet.com

Nick Read

North Bucks bell ringers in the House of Commons

In the House of Commons on 21 February, Alex Burghart - the MP for Brentwood and Ongar - asked Andrea Leadsom MP, who was answering questions on behalf of the Church Commissioners, what the Church of England was doing to encourage bell ringing.

You can read both question and answer if you google "Hansard bell ringing" – what is of interest to us in North Bucks is that John Bercow, the Speaker [and, of course MP for Buckingham], intervened after Andrea Leadsom's answer to say:

"I must say to the House that I have observed bell ringing being undertaken in Winslow and in Lillingstone Lovell in my constituency, and very skilfully undertaken it was too. For my own part, I am bound to say that I think I was very maladroit when trying to bell ring. I found it a most strenuous activity. But there you go—perhaps with practice I might get a little bit better."

Though Winslow is in Central Bucks Branch, Lillingstone Lovell is undoubtedly in North Bucks. Congratulations to the ringers who caught the Speaker's eye (and ear).

John Bercow's answer also implies that he once tried to learn to ring bells. He will soon be retiring from the job of Speaker, and has a house in Buckingham – perhaps the Buckingham ringers could invite him to resume his bell ringing lessons in retirement?

Martin Petchey

Buckingham/Maids Moreton Tower Outing

We had a very enjoyable Tower Outing recently - with the help of a few friends - visiting three towers in Hertfordshire and one in Bedfordshire on the return journey. Nice and relaxed, no rushing around necessary!

First off was Aston, a really lovely 11cwt 6, which everyone enjoyed. We rang from call changes and Plain Hunt through Plain Bob to Cambridge. The bar had been set high early on in the day with this tower.

Next was Datchworth, only 10 minutes away. Another very nice 6, at 8cwt. The bells went well and the church is in a lovely setting too. This time we rang call changes, Little Bob, Grandsire, Kent and Cambridge.

Next was a short drive through narrow lanes to the important "Lunch Destination". If anyone is planning to go over this way we can recommend the Robin Hood & Little John at Rabley Heath. It's a lovely little country pub, with a nice separate dining area just about the right size for the 14 of us. Good pub food and jolly friendly people there!

After a relaxed lunch the next tower was, again, not far away. Codicote, a 10cwt 8, which was chosen for location, reputation and the presence of a toilet. Oh, and a great car park. The bells were very nice to ring, but they were really loud in the ringing chamber and calls were quite difficult to hear! We managed OK though, with call changes and PH as before, plus Grandsire Triples and Stedman Triples to finish with.

A 40 minute drive took us to Tilsworth, a little village in Bedfordshire, just off the A5 and home to an 8cwt 6, which sounded clear and bell-like to me! A fairly long draught, in a ground floor ring and we managed some nice call changes, Grandsire, Plain Bob Minor, Norwich and Cambridge to round off a successful and enjoyable outing. And home to Buckingham in time for tea.

Janet Bond



Getting to know your Branch Officers – a new series Brian Baldwin – Secretary

Having recently celebrated the 59th anniversary of my 21st birthday, I ask myself “why on earth have you volunteered?”. The answer is quite simple, the branch needs a reasonably competent Secretary to run properly and nobody else stepped forward at the March 2019 AGM. It is my way of giving back some of the rich rewards derived from ringing.



Born in Chelmsford, married to Norma in 1962 at St Mary’s Great Baddow, we then spent 12 very happy and productive years in Portishead, which at the time was in Somerset. No ringing in my life at this point. Two children, Rachael who lives in Loughton and Chris, who lives in Surrey and is now a member of the Croydon Minster band. Four grandchildren, 3 in MK and 1 in Melbourne.

In 1974 we moved to Milton Keynes and we joined the church family at St Mary’s Woughton on the Green, which was being refurbished. I was asked to sort out the rubbish in the tower, and discovered a ring of bells and an interesting clock. I am very grateful to Derek Stainsby who taught me to ring and I have been Tower Captain since 1975. It gives me great satisfaction to reflect on the number of people I have been able to help enjoy this unique skill and service.

The 1980s was the most active period of my ringing and service to the Guild. Apart from short periods as Chair and Treasurer of the Branch, I was a member of the Guild Education Committee.

A few ringing highlights:

- Call changes for Service on the 10 at Truro Cathedral
- Quarters of Grandsire Caters on Remembrance Sundays and peals of Bob Royal at St Clement Danes, where I rang regularly for over 20 years
- Sunday Service ringing at York Minster. A few rounds and call changes
- QP of Cambridge Minor for our 25th wedding anniversary in 1987 with Anne and Derek Stainsby at Woughton
- Peal of PB Major at Newton Longville to mark the 75th anniversary of the Guild, conducted by Bill Butler.
- After a QP at the RC Cathedral in Vancouver in 2012, waiting to start the normal practice when who should walk in – David Middleton from Gt Brickhill. He has family in Vancouver
- Spending two years trying to get a band going at Wavendon and failed.
- Elected to Distinguished Membership by the Guild in 2016
- A highlight planned for later this year: my last peal, I think number 11, with my Woughton friends, which will be Paul C’s first, conducted by Simon. Good luck to us all.

My idea of heaven. Plain, Little and St Clements Minor, struck well, on a Sunday morning for Service.

Actually, having held some senior posts in my career, this Branch Secretary’s job is quite challenging and is no sinecure.

ART Module 2F—From Rounds to Call Changes

Saturday 31st August 2019

SMV, Longcot, SN7 7TL

For more information, please visit www.smartringer.org/public/daycourses or email lesleybelcher@ringingteachers.org

Quarter Peals

Oxford Diocesan Guild

Hanslope, Buckinghamshire

St James the Great

Sunday, 10 March 2019 in 48m (19–2–14 in E)

1260 Plain Bob Triples

1. Tracy Field
2. Wendy Haslam
3. Brian Berry
4. Martin Petchey
5. Michael Nimmo
6. Philip Haslam
7. Anthony Gray (C)
8. Roy Keeves



For morning service and rung by the Mayor of Milton Keynes, Martin Petchey (4), as part of his challenge to ring a quarter peal in aid of charity at all of the churches within the borough boundary

Shelia Blenkorn

Oxford Diocesan Guild

Emberton, Buckinghamshire

All Saints

Monday, 25 March 2019 in 47m (9–0–18 in G)

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1. Maureen White
2. Roy Keeves
3. Martin Petchey, Mayor of Milton Keynes
4. Wendy A Haslam
5. Phil M Haslam
6. Tony Gray (C)



Dedicated to the 800th anniversary of All Saints' Church. Also rung for the Milton Keynes Mayor's Challenge, supporting 'The Bus Shelter MK', a charity for the homeless in Milton Keynes.

Sheila Watts