



In Touch

North Bucks Branch - www.northbucksbranch.org.uk

February 2017

Editorial

A warm welcome to the February edition of In Touch.

As the AGM grows near, it is certainly time to ask yourself if there is anything that you can do to support the work of the branch, as there a number of vacancies for officers.

The events and function of the branch do not happen without the efforts of the officers, and those who become an officer will be extended a warm welcome, and will be supported by their fellow officers.

As always, there is much going on in our Branch, so read on and enjoy...

*Phillip Starr
Editor - In Touch*

Dates for your diary...

Date	Time	Event	Location
Mon 27 Feb 2017	19:30 to 21:00	8/10 bell Practice	Olney
Fri 3 Mar 2017	19:40 to 21:00	Doubles, Plain Hunt and Call Changes Practice	Whaddon
Sat 4 Mar 2017	15:30 to 19:15	Branch AGM	Weston Underwood
Mon 27 Mar 2017	19:30 to 21:00	8/10 bell Practice	Olney
Fri 7 Apr 2017	19:40 to 21:00	Doubles, Plain Hunt and Call Changes Practice	Whaddon
Sat 22 Apr 2017	16:00 to 17:30	Branch Practice	TBC
Mon 24 Apr 2017	19:30 to 21:00	8/10 bell Practice	Olney
Fri 5 May 2017	19:40 to 21:00	Doubles, Plain Hunt and Call Changes Practice	Whaddon
Sat 13 May 2017	16:00 to 17:30	Branch Practice	TBC
Mon 22 May 2017	19:30 to 21:00	8/10 bell Practice	Olney

Next edition...

Please ensure that you send all submissions to newslettereditor@northbucksbranch.org.uk no later than **Friday 21st May 2017** to be included in the next edition of In Touch. Don't be afraid to send them in well before this date, as my email account has plenty of space!

Whilst endeavours will be made to send out reminders, your support in keeping to this deadline is appreciated.

Thank You

A huge thank you to Sheila Watts who will be standing down this March as the Branch Treasurer after an amazing 19 years of constant service!

Prior to this amazing service record, Sheila had undertaken numerous stints as Branch Treasurer and other branch officer positions in the previous 20 odd years. We are extremely grateful for the time Sheila has devoted to the branch and very sad to see Sheila step down but as she said herself she's not going far and will still be a member of the branch.

So the hunt is now on to find a new person to take on the role. Could that person be you - if it is then please make yourself known to one of the present officers.

The Branch cannot function without a Treasurer, so it is vital that someone volunteers to take on the role.

Linda Maycroft

Branch Accounts

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS - NORTH BUCKS BRANCH INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - GENERAL FUND 2016

INCOME		£	£	EXPENDITURE		£	£
January	Balance brought forward:						
	Bank Account	1,556.32					
	Cash in hand	21.24					
			1,577.56				
	2016 Guild Subscriptions 192 senior x £8.00	1,536.00					
	2016 Guild Subscriptions 15 junior x £6.00	90.00					
			1,626.00		2016 Guild Subscriptions 208 x £5.00		1,040.00
	Printed copies of In Touch	60.00		Feb/May/Aug/Nov	In Touch - printing expenses	230.86	
	In Touch donations	61.00			In Touch - envelopes & postage	107.73	
			121.00				338.59
March	Donations to Branch Bell Fund		25.00	March	Transfer to Branch Bell Fund		1,290.00
				March	Branch AGM expenses		36.00
April	Ringin Outing to Oxford - fees - 2 April		162.00	April	Ringers' Outing - tower donations etc		162.00
				June/July	Vouchers for Striking Competition judges		40.00
April	St George's Day WAVE - 23 April		965.00	July	WAVE donation to ART		482.50
				July	WAVE donation to Guild Bell Fund		482.50
July	Barbeque fees - 16 July		140.00	July	Barbeque expenses		139.19
	General donations		59.00		Renewal of Branch websites - Fasthosts & LCN		145.08
					Secretary's expenses		58.24
					Ringin World Advertising Account		21.44
					Treasurer's expenses		36.64
	Donations to Guild Bell Fund		36.50		Guild Bell Fund - from donations		36.50
					2016 Data Protection Registration		35.00
					Guild Representatives' expenses		16.52
					Honorarium for Auditor		15.00
					Sundry expenses		11.49
				December	Balances carried forward:		
					Bank Account	243.15	
					Cash in hand	82.22	
							325.37
			4,712.06				4,712.06

I confirm the above account is a true record of the transactions in the year to 31 December 2016 and has been compiled from the books and records, as presented to me.

Alison Fowler, Hon Branch Auditor

A. Fowler
21/1/17

**OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS - NORTH BUCKS BRANCH
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FUND 2016**

INCOME		£	£	EXPENDITURE		£
January	Balance brought forward:					
	Bank account		1,058.30			
Jan - May	Donations at Branch practices		29.00	Jan - May	Donations to towers at Branch practices	26.00
				07-May-16	Rope Splicing Workshop expenses	47.00
11-Jun-16	ART Course - lunch fees		65.00	11-Jun-16	ART Course - course fees	230.00
	ART Course - refreshment donations		9.05		ART Course - lunch & refreshments	76.78
					ART Course - Church donation	20.00
15-Oct-16	Branch Course - donations		25.00	15-Oct-15	Branch Course - donation to Church & refreshments	31.30
10-Dec-16	Christmas Social - donations		13.80	10-Dec-16	Christmas Social - Church donation	10.00
				December	Balance carried forward:	
					Bank account	759.07
			1,200.15			1,200.15

I confirm the above account is a true record of the transactions in the year to 31 December 2016 and has been compiled from the books and records, as presented to me.

A. F. Fower
Alison Fower
Hon Branch Auditor 21/1/17

**OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS - NORTH BUCKS BRANCH
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - BELL FUND ACCOUNT 2016**

INCOME		£	£	EXPENDITURE		£
05-Mar-16	Transferred from the General Fund:					
	Grant awarded to Hanslope on 01-Mar-14	750.00				
	Grant awarded to Loughton on 26-Sept-15	450.00				
	Grant awarded to Gt Linford on 05-Mar-16	65.00				
			1,265.00			
05-Mar-16	Donations from towers to Bell Fund		25.00	02-May-16	Payment of grant to Great Linford for ropes	65.00
				December	Balance carried forward:	
					Bank account	1,225.00
			1,290.00			1,290.00

Note: Grants awarded to Hanslope & Loughton totalling £1,200.00 have yet to be paid

I confirm the above account is a true record of the transactions in the year to 31 December 2016 and has been compiled from the books and records, as presented to me.

A. F. Fower
Alison Fower
Hon Branch Auditor 21/1/17

Doubles, Plain Hunt and Call Changes Practice

The 2nd of December saw the last Doubles, Plain Hunt and Call Changes practice of 2016, and so an early Christmas celebration was had. The ringers combined to produce a wonderful selection of food and refreshments, which was enjoyed by all.

The first Friday of every month bring a relaxed yet challenging practice for ringers who are looking to develop.

The next practice is the 3rd of March at St. Mary's, Whaddon.

All will be made welcome.

Phillip Starr



Hanslope

We continue fundraising for our Bell Restoration Project. The most recent event was a concert last November in the church by MK Brass and the children of Hanslope School. We were treated to a varied and enjoyable programme of music and singing, and the sum of £650.00 was raised.

On Saturday 4th February we held an Open Morning at the church with the aim of attracting some more people to start learning bell ringing, in order to strengthen our band in readiness for the installation of our restored bells. Leaflets were delivered to all the houses in the village inviting anyone who was interested to come along for a coffee and a chat, and to watch us ring and find out more about bell ringing at Hanslope. We did not have a massive turn out but we have signed up five people who are interested, so hopefully they will all decide to join us and learn to ring. We would also like to thank all the ringers from other local towers who came to help us and ensure that the event was a success.

Sheila Blenkhorn

Method of the Year

The Guild 10-bell striking competition is to be hosted this year in North Bucks. That rather limits the tower to Olney. As usual, it will be in November which gives us plenty of time to prepare. That is just as well as the method is Stedman Caters.

We don't have a lot of experience in this area. Only three current branch members have rung a quarter of Stedman Caters in North Bucks, ever! That is partly due to the newness of Olney's 10, so perhaps it isn't the best statistic. Looking at Triples, 15 branch members have rung quarters of Stedman Triples in the branch in the last 10 years. That is a good starting point, so to build on this, I propose that we have Stedman as method of the year for 2017.

There are a few useful targets we can aim for:

- 5 First quarters of Stedman Doubles – the equivalent of a whole band.
- 7 First quarters of Stedman Triples – the equivalent of a whole band.
- To win the Stedman section of the inter-branch competition.
- To achieve an improved performance at the Guild 10-bell competition.
- The first peal of Stedman Triples on the bells at Downs Barn – our only 8 not to have rung Stedman Triples.
- First quarters of Stedman Triples on the bells at Newton Longville and Great Brickhill.

Forthcoming attractions will therefore be

- Stedman at branch practices.
- The quarter peal week being spread over the whole year – also to help with MK50.
- A Stedman training workshop.

Doug Hird

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS
NORTH BUCKS BRANCH
MINUTES OF AUTUMN MEETING
Held at St Mary's, Bletchley on Saturday 17th September 2016

Chairman's Welcome

The chairman, Graham Bartholomew, welcomed 20 members to the meeting.

In Memoriam

Members stood in silence to remember Mike Lowndes from Newport Pagnell, who had passed away on the 26th July.

Apologies for absence

Alex & Tine Marchbank, Hilary & Claire Reading, Lesley Belcher, Doug Hird, Sheila Watts, Sheila Ware, Terry Page.

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the AGM held at Great Brickhill on the 5th March had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Branch website. No amendments were proposed. Adoption of the minutes was proposed by Alan Marchbank and seconded by Ann Birch, and agreed by a show of hands.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Election of new members:

Nominations were received for the following:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Tower</u>	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Seconder</u>
Miss Leisa Frost	Newton Longville	Nigel Titley	Alex Titley
Mrs Linda Windmill	Newton Longville	Nigel Titley	Alex Titley
Mr Andrew Cox	Newton Longville	Nigel Titley	Alex Titley
Mrs Vanessa Cox	Newton Longville	Nigel Titley	Alex Titley
Mr Mark Findley	Shenley	Edward Fawcett	Becky Fawcett
Mrs Angela Northen	Great Brickhill	David Middleton	Rosemary Howell
Mr Mitch Hudson	Great Brickhill	David Middleton	Rosemary Howell

All were approved with a show of hands.

Adoption of the Branch Bell Fund

The rules of the branch bell fund had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Branch website. Martin Petchey proposed the insertion of the words "next Branch" in point 6 of the Management of the Fund to aid greater clarity "*Grant applications will be discussed by the Branch Officers, who will arrive at a recommendation for the next Branch Meeting where the application will be discussed*". The slightly amended wording was proposed by Martin Petchey and seconded by Brian Baldwin, and agreed by a show of hands.

Increase to Adult Membership Fees

Following the suggestions from members at the AGM the officers had discussed ideas for funding the new Branch Bell Fund, the officers' proposal had been circulated prior to the meeting and published on the Branch website and within In Touch.

Linda Maycroft proposed the officers proposal as published and this was seconded by Gary Reading.

Alan Marchbank then addressed the meeting, praising the work of the previous bell ringers who through their efforts in maintaining the bells over the last hundred years have ensured we have so many towers with ringable bells today. As bell ringing is such a cheap hobby Alan proposed that the £2 increase to subs for adult members be increased to £5 making the total membership fee for 2017 £13 rather than the £10 proposed by the officers. Nigel Titley seconded this motion.

Brian Baldwin addressed the meeting supporting Alan's comments and suggested that it might be more beneficial to increase the subscription further to enable the fund to quickly amass vital resources to enable work to be carried out sooner. Simon Head proposed an amendment to Alan's proposal raising the adult membership fee to £15 of which £7 would go to the Branch Bell Fund, £5 to the Guild and £3 to the branch running costs. This revised proposal was seconded by Brain Baldwin.

Martin Petchey asked whether the Guild element was expected to increase in 2017. Linda Maycroft advised the meeting that the Guild decide on any increase in membership fees at their meeting in November. Alan suggested that it was unlikely the Guild would increase the subscription for next year as the accounts are running in surplus due to a number of cost saving initiatives that have been implemented. Linda Maycroft suggested that a cap could be added to Simon's proposal to ensure the annual adult subscription would not rise above £15 for the next 2 years.

John Marchbank asked what would happen to junior fees if the Guild did put up the subscriptions. Alan Marchbank advised that the Guild made no distinction between adult and junior membership fees and that this was a local decision to subsidise junior membership. Simon amended his proposal so that it was a capped increase and this was seconded by Brian. and carried by a show of hands.

Branch subscription for Adult members will therefore increase to £15 in 2017 and will be capped at this level for 2018 regardless of any increase in subscription to the Guild. Junior membership will remain at its current level of £6. From the £15 adult membership the guild subscription, expected to be £5, would be paid, £3 would be kept in the branch's general fund with the remaining amount, expected to be £7, being paid into the Branch Bell Fund.

Any Other Business

- 1) Alan Marchbank on behalf of the trustees of the ODG Bell Fund noted their grateful thanks to the members of North Bucks for donating a 50% share of the ringing wave fundraising monies. Alan reminded the meeting that the ODG Bell Fund is a capital fund and as such the donation will continue to generate income to spend on the maintenance of church bells within the diocese for years to come. The Bell Fund will donate 20% of the value of any eligible work, which greatly assists in the fundraising efforts of the tower and the PCC.
- 2) Martin Petchey advised the meeting that Milton Keynes will be celebrating its 50th anniversary as a new town in 2017 and asked if there were any plans for the branch to mark this celebration. Gary Reading advised that he had met with MK council who wanted us to mark the end of the celebration with ringing; a day in November is to be put forward being mindful of Armistice Day.
- 3) The meeting offered lots of suggestions for the officers to consider:
 - 50 Quarter Peals or 50 Peals
 - Naming of a new method and ringing a peal of it
- 4) Brain Baldwin expressed his thanks to Richard Booth from Chiltern Branch who quickly came to the rescue and mended a rope to enable a QP to be successfully completed.
- 5) The Chairman informed the meeting that Philip Starr has agreed to become the branch's In Touch editor and has now successfully produced two editions of In Touch for which we are very grateful.

Vote of thanks

Graham proposed a vote of thanks to members of Bletchley for the ringing and the magnificent tea.

A breakout discussion was held where members shared their thoughts and best practice for tower practices. The output of this will be circulated within In Touch and online.

The meeting closed at 7.18pm

Linda Maycroft

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS - NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

Hints and tips for a great tower practice

The following thoughts were collected from members during the 2016 Branch Autumn Meeting and are documented here to provide food for thought and assist new tower captains to run successful practices.

Members were asked to think about what makes a practice great - here are their thoughts:

- Providing a friendly, welcoming and inclusive atmosphere
- The practice should be well organised, enabling everyone present to develop in some way and should ideally enable individuals to work towards achieving their ringing goals.
- The practice should enable the band to reach the next level together e.g. learning a new method or variation, successfully ringing a new touch, completing a QP.
- Good preparation is essential, what should be rung in order to help ringers develop
- Members should aim to observe good time keeping skills so that the great preparations are put to good use during the practice.
- The practice should be run to a good steady pace allowing for some conversation while keeping the prolonged periods of no ringing to a minimum.
- An optimum number of ringers helps - as a general rule 1½ ringers per bell is suggested
- Know the abilities and limitations of the band and ring a variety of methods that enables some great ringing and some development opportunities too but don't push the band too far too fast
- Have a short tea break.
- Place your band - you will need strong ringers around someone learning a method for the first time.
- Acknowledge the achievements of your ringers.

Members considered how they could keep things fresh during a practice:

- Providing development opportunities for all, set goals at the beginning of each year with each band member and look to make progress towards those goals when developing your plan for the practice
- Revisit the goals with individual members to monitor progress and reset as required
- Consider using "learning the ropes" syllabus developed by the Association of Ringing Teachers.
- Keep a steady pace - there should be an even balance between ringing and non-ringing activities.
- Think about fun activities or simple exercises that you could introduce into the practice to help a learner develop a specific skill e.g. dodging practice have a look at Kaleidoscope ringing sheet on the central council website: http://www.ccbbr.org.uk/education/practicetoolkit/pdfs/fs_kaleidoscope.pdf or alternatively the advanced Kaleidoscope ringing page on the ART website: <http://ringingteachers.org/resource-centre/teaching-tips/teaching-kaleidoscope-ringing-advanced>
- Introduce variations to the band which people can learn quickly and widen their repertoire.
- Have an aim for each month/quarter e.g. learning a new method or try the variations named after each month or theme for the season e.g. September, April day, Christmas Eve just google for other ideas
- Ring a touch of a method that doesn't impact the learner but gives a bit more a challenge to the more experienced
- Alternate types of similar methods e.g. St Simons, St Martins, Winchendon Place etc.

Best practice examples were asked for with an explanation of what was so good about them, the answers varied:

- Linslade practice works well, it's welcoming, lots of enthusiastic ringers, youngsters are as engaged as the adults. It a very popular practice which can mean there are sometimes too many ringers there.
- Woughton practice was also mentioned as being worthy of note - being a ground floor ring it is easily accessible to all, the ready supply of chairs just outside the ringing chamber are often used, the practice is friendly and supportive of learners and the pace is steady: ring, short chat, ring and so on.
- Reward and Recognition – look for opportunities to give some encouragement and compliment a nice bit of ringing - it does wonders for a learner's confidence in those early days.
- Have a list of methods/exercises in your plan for the practice which are collated to ensure everyone achieves something during the practice.
- A structured practice e.g. starting with easier ringing - rounds and call changes and end well with a touch of x from your more advanced ringers
- One group named Ted Fawcett from Shenley as a best practice example of someone who runs a great practice giving the following examples of what he does well, the reasons given were, if it's not working call a halt, discuss what went wrong and start again if it doesn't work then suggest everyone look it up and try again later in the evening. Introduce what you are going to ring next, and what will follow that, enabling those sitting to do some last minute revision if needed. Well done to Ted!

Finally, members thought about the one piece of advice they would give to a new tower captain starting out, each member had something different to give so the advice is quite a bit longer than anticipated:

- Develop a good relationship with the PCC and maintain communication with them.
- Don't feel isolated, there are lots out there that are more than willing to help out - just ask.
- Don't get disheartened and in the words of Winston Churchill never give up, not every practice goes as you've planned and you've got to remain flexible and have fun!
- Always have a spare rope available – just in case.
- Have a plan, write it down, and review it and adapt – it's easy to try to cram too much in to your early days.
- Lead you practice in a positive manner.
- Ensure you know what everyone wants to achieve.
- Congratulate success.
- Delegation is a wonderful tool for example you don't need to be the conductor of a method, there's bound to be someone who already knows how to call it.

Training with the Guild

I'm writing this as one of the Big Ring Pull cohort of 2012 - which means, unbelievably, that we first learned to ring five years ago now. Current reports suggest that around 30% - 40% of Big Ring Pullers are still ringing at least occasionally, and in many cases both regularly and often, so most of us have either reached a plateau through limited opportunities in weekly practice - or we're on a steep learning curve for a particular method.

Many of us are still looking around for extra opportunities to improve, whatever our current standard of ringing. Possibly rather spoilt by the intensive BRP course, we've been quick as a group to take advantage of in-branch courses as stepping-stones. We vary in proficiency: from those yet to master ringing inside to a method, to some leading practices and teaching learners - and everything in between.

So if it's belt *and* braces you need, with an extra boost of practice on top of your regular local practice night to help make that quantum leap in grasping a basic method - or if you have considerable experience and want more of a challenge in your ringing but there aren't enough expert ringers available nearby to help you learn - how about trying what's on offer in the way of additional training from the Oxford Guild? You'll need to pay (for example £25 including dinner for the Radley one-day course), but in my experience the money's well worth it, and there are training grants available from the Branch (up to 50% of course cost).

Courses are run four times a year: two for basic method ringing, one for advanced methods, and one for ten-bell ringing. They cater well for multiple levels of proficiency within the same event - you're grouped according to details provided on your application form - so you get to meet people with a range of experience; and they can be on bells up to twelve in number, but most commonly in six- or eight-bell towers. There should be a course each year that will offer you a chance to develop. Since I was finding it difficult to learn simple methods with just one practice per week in a tower with lots of learners, some intensive work seemed in order; so I bagged a place on the Michaelmas Radley Course, with the aim of brushing up on Plain Hunt and beginning Bob Doubles.

You're given a file including a list of participants and their home towers, from which I was able to identify a fellow North Bucks learner from the other side of the Branch.

Your file also contains details of the tutors, who in our case (for the Plain Hunt and Bob Doubles Course) wrote to us in advance of the Training Day with suggestions for preparatory work, and also to flesh out the details of our ringing experience (which we'd had to summarise on the application form). There were homework exercises to take away which built on the theory session that started the day, and a variety of teaching methods (video, listening exercises and paper-based learning) helped to keep us engaged.

Our group of six was based on three towers, although the 25 participants were spread over six towers altogether, in order to spread around any nuisance arising from clumsy learners grappling with new methods. We were well supplied with refreshments at each tower - and at the end of the day we came 'home' to the Radley centre to inspect a variety of merchandise: clothing, books and models - even a chance to get instructions for building your own mini-ring - as all the participants came together for a hearty supper and a good chinwag.

I can thoroughly recommend the experience. The Guild-wide grouping meant the chance to compare notes with people I'd never met before, all with their own stories of ringing. There was, as ever, the chance to travel through the countryside of Oxon, Berks and Bucks, discovering new towns and villages, exploring churches of many shapes and sizes, and comparing the bells and ringing chambers (favourably or otherwise) with those of more familiar towers. Helpers and tutors were plentiful and very helpful; materials were well thought out and meticulously prepared; and the camaraderie of our group of learners was a real joy: it'll be a long time before I forget the element of treasure hunting we enjoyed while driving around Oxfordshire in pursuit of a mystery tower. Satnav and mobile phones will spoil all my fun . . .

Patricia Rosewell (Guild Representative)

*If you're interested in training with the Oxford Guild, take a look at their website for latest dates:
<http://odg.org.uk/education/courses.php> North Bucks Branch website has links to information about ODG courses; and you'll be notified by our Secretary when Applications are invited.*

The Eyes, Ears and Mouth of the Learner

Practice Night

Band to raise in peal please - Learner "that leaves me out".

Let's start with Kent minor - Learner "one day I would like to have a go at method ringing".

Rounds for the beginners – Learner "now I can fit in between the new learners".

Plain Bob Doubles – Learner "I can take the treble, although I did not like the comment made by one of the visitor saying - I do not go much on wasting time on this, I only turn up here to ring surprise methods".

The person in charge tries to go through different methods that will improve his band. If we have enough ringers he will ring a surprise method, but will give everybody at least three rings in a night.

Sunday

Band to raise – Learner "funny, now there are only just enough of us I am good enough to raise the bell even if I go wrong. If I was able to raise the bells on the practice night it would sound so much better on a Sunday. The ringing on Sunday is only rounds and call changes and if we are lucky plain bob. I am important on a Sunday, so why can't I be given more of a chance on a practice night. This would then make me feel part of the band and not just someone needed on a Sunday".

I believe that ringing is all about calling to people to Church on a Sunday morning and we have the biggest audience that day so should we not give learners a chance to join in more on a practice night? Without the learners the bells might fall silent.

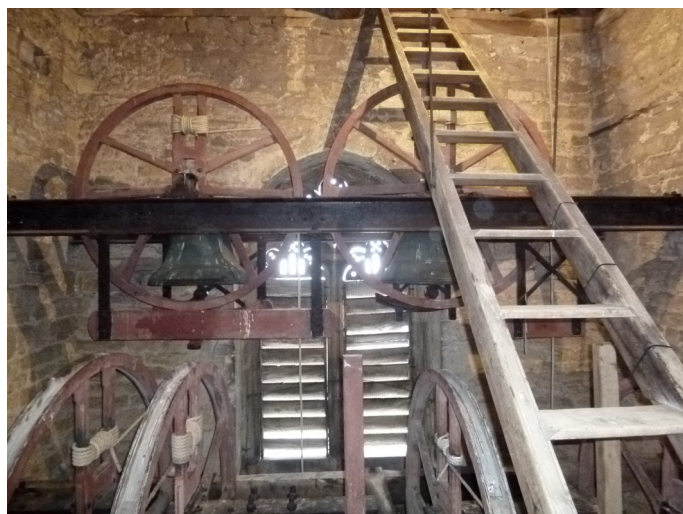
This article does not relate to any person/tower. It is made up of comments, by the learners at three guilds I ring with.
Mick Nimmo

All Saints' Loughton Bell Tower Project

All Saints' Church in Loughton has a ring of six bells, the oldest two of which date from around 1450. They are rung from a ground-floor ringing room behind a wooden screen in the west end of the church.

However, the last time any major work was carried out on the bells was in 1935. In 2014, following various inspections of bells, it became clear that significant restoration work was required, and also that there was an opportunity to improve the ring with a new frame, a new tenor and a recast treble. It was estimated that this work would cost around £85,000.

Since then, as a result of fundraising, grants, donations, and a generous bequest, the initial target of £85,000 has been reached. This means that the project to restore the bells and install a new frame can now proceed. The new frame will be designed so that two additional treble bells can easily be added in the future, to complete the full octave, subject to approval and the availability of additional funding. It is also planned to install a simulator and CCTV.



A further £15,000 has also been raised to carry out other much needed work in the bell tower, including repairs to the roof, improvements to the lighting, restoration of the royal coat of arms in the ringing room, and repairs to the stone staircase leading up to the bells. It is also planned to replace the wooden screen with a glass screen - this will allow more light into the church, and will be positioned so as to provide more space for the ringers.

The DAC of Oxford Diocese have just approved (subject to conditions) the application for a Petition for a Faculty, and it is hoped that the work will all be completed by the end of 2017, prior to the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the institution of the first rector of All Saints'.

When the project is complete All Saints' will, for the first time ever, have a fine musical ring of bells, and will have the capability of being a recognised ringing centre.

For more details of the project please visit the Loughton Bell Tower Project website at www.loughtonbells.org.uk or have a look at the display board at the back of the church.

Gary Reading

Ringling for MK50

Milton Keynes was 50 years old on 23 January 2017, and there are various celebrations happening throughout 2017, including ringing.

To kick off the celebrations the bells at St Mary's, Bletchley were rung on the 23 January from 16:45 to 17:30 by the local band (assisted by other members of the branch) immediately prior to the official launch of the MK50 celebrations at Bletchley Park (and hopefully within earshot).



Ringers at St Mary's Bletchley

During 2017 a Quarter Peal is being rung in every tower that was included in the boundaries of the New Town of Milton Keynes in 1967.

In June it is hoped to ring a peal of an unnamed Alliance Major method at Downs Barn and, when rung, it will be named 'City of Milton Keynes Alliance Major'.

On 4 November, as part of the celebrations, we have been asked to ring the bells across all of Milton Keynes. Whether your tower is within the 'city' of Milton Keynes, the Borough of Milton Keynes, or anywhere within the North Bucks Branch, then it would be good to ring something in celebration, whether it is rounds and call changes or something more complicated. At the moment we are just asking towers to ring on the day if and when they can, but if anyone would like to try and organise the ringing across the branch then please let me or any officer know.

Gary Reading

Where is this ringing room in a North Bucks tower?

Many of us will have seen this church hundreds of times. The nearest this tower got to our attention was in 1893 when the possibility of installing a ring of bells was discussed at the Easter Vestry Meeting. Sadly, the 1844 bell by C & G Mears was never added to.

Doug Hird



Quarter Peals

St John the Evangelist, Wicken, Northamptonshire

Tuesday 29th November 2016 in 47 mins
(15-1-20 in F)

1280 Superlative Surprise Major

1. Ruth Stokes
2. Andrew Spencer
3. Lesley Belcher
4. Nick Gray
5. Tony Gray (C)
6. Sebastian Lucas
7. Stephen H Stanford
8. Christopher C Stokes

*Rung to celebrate the 70th birthday of the conductor
Tony Gray*

Anthony Gray

St Lawrence, Bradwell

Sunday 4th December 2016

480 Grandsire Doubles
780 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Christine Abbott
2. Jenny Brookman
3. Becky Fawcett
4. Martin Petchey
5. Edward Fawcett (C)
6. Gordon Abbott

*To celebrate the 60th birthday of the Rev. Andy Jowitt,
and the 70th birthday of Christine Abbott, and also her
35 years as a bellringer, taught by Martin Petchey*

Christine Abbott

All Saints, Calverton

Friday 18th November in 47mins

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Phillip Starr
2. Wendy Price
3. James Woodcock
4. Christopher Crompton
5. Mick Nimmo (C)
6. Kieran Salter

*Rung in the memory of Mrs. Margaret Hooton, wife of
Malcom Hooton, tower captain at Calverton.*

Wendy Price

All Saints, Loughton

Sunday, 22 January 2017 in 47 m (11-0-8 in G)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Hilary Reading
2. John Brookman
3. Ann Birch
4. Anne McIntyre
5. Gary Reading (C)
6. Graham Bartholomew

First as C in method - 5

*Rung to celebrate the 87th birthday of Derek Stainsby
that day*

Anne McIntyre

All Saints, Loughton,

Sunday, 15 January 2017 (11-0-8 in G)

1260 Julie McDonnell Doubles

1. Graham Bartholomew
2. Terry Page
3. Anne McIntyre
4. Gary W Reading
5. Simon J O Head (C)
6. John Brookman

First in method: 2, 3 and 4.

Anne McIntyre and Gary Reading



These are a selection of the successes that have taken place in our branch, as submitted to the editor. All of the peals and quarter peals can be found on the branch website.

Who's Who in the North Bucks Branch...

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