



In Touch

May 2013

Branch Summer Social and Striking Competition

St Lawrence, Bradwell Village, MK



Saturday 8th June 2013

All members are invited to the Branch Summer Social - an afternoon of ringing, light refreshments and good company. The second part of the afternoon will include the annual Six Bell Striking Competition.

**5pm General Ringing
6pm Striking Competition**

Entries for the striking competition will be taken on the day. Do come along as a band from your tower and have a go in the competition. Bands can ring call changes, plain hunt or a method. All that is needed is a minimum of 120 rows of ringing, so that each band can be judged over the same length. If you can't get a band from your tower, why not join forces with a neighbouring tower to make up a band? Or come along as an individual and we will try to make up a band for you on the day. We would like to see as many bands as possible and make it a fun evening. Last year was very successful with 90 people taking part. Lets hope this year is just as good.

Jonathan Griggs

One year on: Another day out for the Big Ring Pullers

The morning of Saturday 16th March saw dark clouds and persistent heavy rain. But that didn't dampen the enthusiasm of 16 ringers from the Big Ring Pull, together with help from experienced ringers from the Branch, meeting at St Mary's Church at Woughton on the Green to enjoy a day out ringing at six local churches.



Warmly welcomed with coffee and biscuits by Brian and Norma Baldwin, the band rang at Woughton on the Green, Simpson and Wavendon before breaking for lunch. The afternoon session started at Fenny Stratford, moving on to Loughton and Downs Barn.



The day was nicely rounded off with a fish and chip tea at Downs Barn, with thanks to Alan and Tine Marchbank for making the arrangements for the fish and chips.

Hillary Reading

Who's Who 2013—2014

Chairman	Brian Newman	Great Linford	chairman@northbucks.org.uk
RDL Buckingham	Vacant		
RDL Milton Keynes	Vacant		
RDL Newport Pagnell & Archivist	Doug Hird	Newport Pagnell	rdl_np@northbucks.org.uk
Secretary	Jonathan Griggs	Hanslope	secretary@northbucks.org.uk
Treasurer	Sheila Watts	Emberton	treasurer@northbucks.org.uk
Guild Reps	David Phillipson	Olney	guildrep1@northbucks.org.uk
	Linda Maycroft	Shenley	guildrep2@northbucks.org.uk
	Patricia Rosewell	Wavendon	guildrep3@northbucks.org.uk
In Touch Editor	Nick Read	Newport Pagnell	intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk
Branch Website	www.northbucks.org.uk	Guild Website	www.odg.org.uk

Dates for your Diary

May

18th – Surprise practice – Stony Stratford – 5.30 – 6.30pm
 18th – Guild AGM at Ascott under Wychwood

June

7th – Call changes and plain hunt practice – Shenley – 7.40 – 9.00pm
 8th – Summer social and striking competition – Bradwell – 5pm
 15th – 10 bell branch practice on simulator – Olney – 5pm

July

5th – Call changes and plain hunt practice – Hanslope – 7.40 – 9.00pm
 13th – Interbranch striking competition – Newport Pagnell – 6pm
 20th – Change ringing practice – Calverton – 5.00 – 6.30pm

August

17th – Surprise practice – Turvey – 5.00 – 6.30pm

September

7th – Autumn meeting and 20th Anniversary of Downs Barn – Downs Barn – (TBC)
 13th – Call changes and plain hunt practice – Cosgrove – 7.40 – 9.00pm
 21st – 10 bell branch practice on simulator – Olney – 5.00 – 6.30pm

October

4th – Call changes and plain hunt practice – Loughton – 7.40 – 9.00pm (TBC)
 5th – Guild 6 bell striking competition – Chiltern Branch
 19th – Branch practice – Hillesden – 5.00 – 6.30pm

November

1st – Call changes and plain hunt practice – Stony Stratford – 7.40 – 9.00pm (TBC)
 16th – Joint practice with Towcester branch – Wicken
 23rd – Guild 10 bell competition – Newbury
 23rd – Guild autumn general committee meeting – Newbury

December

6th – Call changes and plain hunt practice – Whaddon – 7.40 – 9.00pm

From the Chairman . . .

Hello All

Welcome to this edition of 'In Touch' and with it I hope the better weather.
 The summer social and 6 bell competition will soon be with us and I hope that we have as many teams as last year taking part.
 We have had some interest in the vacant RDL roles thanks to those who have come forward and hopefully we can have these roles confirmed at the autumn business meeting.

Brian Newman

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Deadline for next edition . . .

The deadline for contributions for the next edition of In Touch is **Tuesday 6th August 2013.**

Contributions to intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk please.

Nick Read

Tower News

Downs Barn

Some members of the Downs Barn and Great Linford Bands had an enjoyable morning on Saturday 23 March when we visited All Saints Church in Leighton Buzzard to ring on 12 bells. There were experienced ringers with us, as well as Big Ring Pullers. We began with rounds and call changes on 12, and moved on to 10 bell plain hunt. We had previously visited All Saints six months ago, and the obvious progress we have all made since then was really encouraging to see. Thanks to Alan Marchbank for organising the trip, and to Barry Eglesfield, tower captain at All Saints for welcoming us again.

Hilary Reading

The GATE bell ringers (Stoke Goldington and Weston Underwood)

What more could we ask for? A lovely sunny Saturday morning (for once) in April, and it was the day of the GATE ringers annual outing to other towers in the area. This was our second venture out as a band, after starting learning to ring in 2011, and we have all increased in confidence and were well equipped to enjoy some towers in west Milton Keynes and Northants.



We started on the 6 bells at Calverton, and enjoyed the lovely restored church before moving on to the 8 at Stony Stratford. This was our first ring on an 8 as a whole band and we acquitted ourselves well. Then on over the border to Northants where we ended the morning on the 6 at Cosgrove. After a group photo most of us repaired to The White Hart at Stoke for lunch, being joined by family and friends.

Practice nights continue on a Friday at 7.30pm at Stoke Goldington, except the first of the month at Weston Underwood. Anyone is very welcome to come along.

Sheila Ware

Padbury

Following an appeal in the village newsletter we have three new recruits at Padbury who are currently being taught to handle a bell. They are progressing well with teaching on a tied bell and should soon be ringing rounds

Richard Stanworth

Wavendon

St George's Day marked the anniversary of Wavendon's first public 'performance' and was a good opportunity to reflect on how far we've come in the last twelve months. We rang as requested from 6pm on April 23rd, with a band composed solely of Wavendon ringers, whereas last year we'd relied upon our friends at Woughton to supply the backbone of the band. Brian Baldwin and band continue to support us by generously affording time at the start of their weekly practice, and Brian continues to guide us on Fridays. We ring regularly for service and recently did so at a service led by the Bishop of Oxford.

Our latest young recruit, Hannah, has progressed rapidly in only a few weeks, following in the footsteps of parents Keeley and Paul. With three family groups now part of the band, we're close and we have fun but we also work quite hard. Thanks to the stability of our more skilful members, most of the band can now ring Plain Hunt (with varying degrees of assurance) and we're currently tackling Plain Bob Doubles, so a goal of ringing a quarter-peal later in the year begins to look achievable.

It was good to see a crowd back at Wavendon for the Big RIng Pull Day Out in March, and visitors have also used the tower for practice and for peals. If you'd like to visit, please contact me on MK 583652 or via patricia@rosewell.me.uk. Thank you to everyone in the Branch for the excellent support network which I find easy to access thanks to links made through the Big Ring Pull; to Brian for unstinting support in time, skill and attention; and to all the Wavendon Band for their commitment and most entertaining company!

Patricia Rosewell

A sign of the times?

After a quick peal of Superlative Major on the new 8 at St Agatha's in Portsmouth, 6 of the band went into the nearby Weatherspoons for customary refreshment and rehydration. As we sat chatting someone pointed out the drinks in front of us, 2 coffees, 3 teas and a diet coke!

Is it a sign of the times or are we just getting old?

Alan Marchbank

Tower News Contd

Commemorative Quarter Peal at Shenley

In the ringing room at St Mary's there is a photograph of, what looks like to our eyes, a middle-aged man in high collar, waistcoat and jacket.

His name was Hugh Willett and he died on the 6th May 1913, having contracted pneumonia, at the age of 27. He was a well-regarded figure in the church being a server, choir member, bellringer and Sunday school teacher. He was also captain of the local cricket team and sports club. Employed at Wolverton Works, he fell ill just twelve days before he died, showing how quickly someone in the prime of their life could succumb to an illness which is easily treated by antibiotics these days. There is a stained glass window dedicated to his memory in the south aisle.



To mark the centenary of his death, the band at Shenley rang a quarter peal and laid flowers at his grave. (Full details can be found under 'Quarter Peals' on page 6)

Branch News

Forthcoming Anniversaries

Two significant anniversaries are to be celebrated in the branch in the next few months:

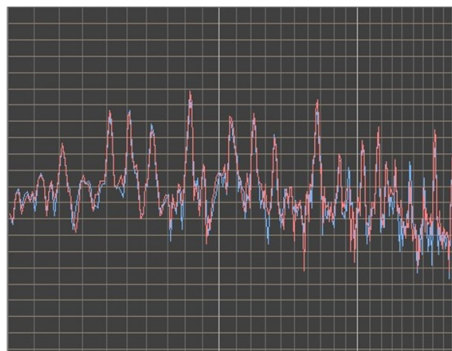
Firstly, 2013 is the 75th anniversary of the first joint meeting between the North Bucks branch and the Towcester branch. This will be celebrated at the Interbranch striking competition which this year is being held at Newport Pagnell on July 13th at 6pm. To mark the occasion a new trophy has been commissioned which is kindly being made by Andrew Spencer of Buckingham. The competition is made up three pieces of ringing: Call changes on 8, Plain bob Minor and Stedman Triples. The trophy will be awarded to the branch that wins the most pieces. This is a friendly competition. If you have not taken part in it previously but would like to participate then please contact one of the officers.

Secondly, September 5th 2013 is the 20th anniversary of the dedication of the bells at Downs Barn. To celebrate this we are holding the Autumn meeting there on Saturday 7th September. We are envisaging doing something a little different from the normal meeting arrangements. Planning is at an early stage so watch out for more details in due course.

Jonathan Griggs

Make a Note of that - A new feature on the web site

When we are ringing we are more or less aware that each bell has its own note. The big ones have low notes, the small ones have high notes. If that was all there was to it we wouldn't need an expert bell tuner to make them sound right. Bells are big things and they are a funny shape. So they actually make a whole load of notes. Which ones will depend on the shape of the bell.

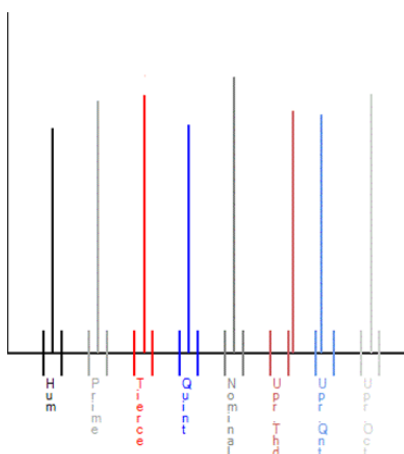


Here is a frequency plot of one of Newport's bells. The low notes are on the left and the high notes on the right. You can clearly see a number of peaks where the

individual harmonics sound. In a modern bell like this we get 5 main notes and then other notes an octave higher than each of these. There is also an extra note that you don't notice unless you know to listen for it.

A frequency plot like this doesn't tell us that much and needs a bit of interpretation. What I have developed for the web site is a way to simplify this for just the 5 main notes. This diagram shows how strong each note is and if it is in tune compared to the Prime. In this bell, the Upper Third is sharp by a semitone but all the other notes are in tune.

The web page also shows what the principal notes, the Prime and the Nominal, are.



practice with the recorder, don't worry, it only takes a couple of minutes to record each bell individually.

Doug Hird

Branch News contd

Secretarial bits and pieces

Branch Membership Nomination forms

In order to improve the process of collecting contact information for new branch members we have changed the format of the nomination form. We now ask for a member's signature, address details and email address / phone numbers at the time of nomination. We also ask that subscriptions are paid at the time of nomination. These changes will make the administration process much easier for both the treasurer and the secretary. A copy of the new style nomination form can be found on the website or can be requested from the secretary.

Branch Practice Tower Donations

Historically £5 of the collection at a branch practice has been given to the hosting tower as a donation and the remainder has been given to the branch's general fund. The officers have reviewed this and felt that the donation of £5 was too little. It is now proposed that £10 be given to the hosting tower and any remainder be donated to the branch training and development fund as opposed to the general fund.

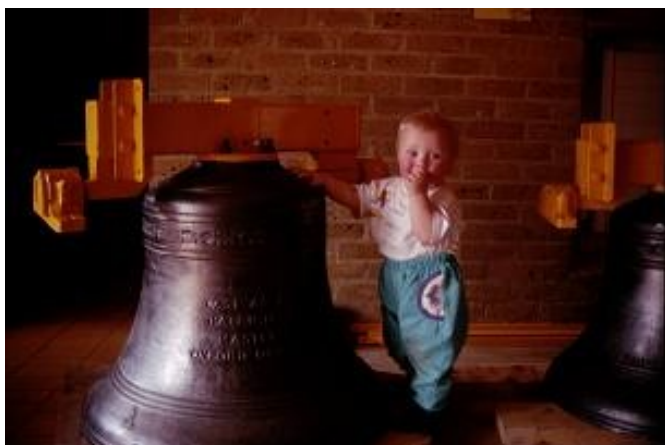
New members

The following new members have recently been elected to the Guild in addition to those elected at the AGM: Martin Hornsey of Tingewick and Brian Berry of Hanslope. We extend a warm welcome to you both.

Jonathan Griggs

Younger Ringers

Alex Marchbank was just one year old when the bells were installed in Downs Barn. Here she is in her first encounter with the Tenor!



Congratulations to Alex who celebrated her 21st birthday on 5th May.

Younger Ringers contd

Quarter Peal

One of the youngest recruits from the Big Ring Pull, Sophie Reading, completed her first quarter peal at Downs Barn on Saturday 23 March. Sophie, now age 10, rang the treble to a quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles. Thanks to Alan Marchbank for organising and conducting.



Conductors comments....

A very good piece of ringing. A nice pace which was maintained throughout made it easy on the hands and ears. only 3 little trips each affecting only 1 row and none due to or involving the treble! Well done a good way to start your quarter peal account. (*Full details can be found under 'Quarter Peals' on page 6*)

Ringing World National Youth Contest 2013

The third Ringing World National Youth Contest will take place on **Saturday, 6th July 2013** at St Lawrence's Church, York. The eight bell competition is open to bands comprised of ringers aged under 19 (on 6th July) who may choose to ring Major, Triples or Call Changes.

As well as the contest there promises to be lots going on during the day. There will be open ringing at some of the other York towers and a peal at the Minster (in which Simon Read has been invited to ring) that people will be able to listen to. As well as this there are other activities The Ringing World are planning to organise both ringing and non-ringing related to add to the day.

The results will be delivered at the end of the afternoon. There will be prizes for both the best Call Change band and Method band with the overall best performance being awarded the Whitechapel Trophy. The current holders of the trophy are The G. & B. who won the 2012 contest held in Birmingham. John Marchbank from Gt. Linford and Claire & Alice Reading from Shenley have been selected to ring in the Oxford Diocesan Guild team.

Quarter Peals

Maids Moreton, Bucks

St. Edmund

Sunday, 10 March 2013 in 45 mins (10-3-20)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Hannah Smart
- 2 Amy Wilson
- 3 Margaret Vince
- 4 Ray Vickers
- 5 Andrew Spencer (C)
- 6 Ann Fletcher

For Mothering Sunday.

First Quarter Peal: 1 & 2.

Downs Barn, Milton Keynes, Bucks

Cross and Stable

Saturday 23 March 2013 in 39 mins (6-0-10)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Sophie Reading
- 2 Alexandra J Marchbank
- 3 Gary Reading
- 4 Graham Bartholomew
- 5 Alan J Marchbank (c)
- 6 Alice Reading

First Quarter Peal: 1.

Loughton, Bucks

All Saints

Saturday 6th April 2013 in 42 mins (11-0-8)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Becky Fawcett
- 2 Ann Birch
- 3 Emily Banks
- 4 Graham Bartholomew
- 5 Ted Fawcett (C)
- 6 Robin Starr

1st Quarter Peal to a method inside: 3.

Rung to celebrate Loughton's long serving band members Derek Stainsby (tower captain) and Frank Daniels receiving Maundy money from the Queen at Oxford Cathedral on 28th March 2013. Elizabeth Clarke and Peggy Bodiley from the Loughton congregation were likewise honoured.

Padbury, Bucks

St. Mary

Tuesday, 23 April 2013 (10cwt)

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Helen Stanworth
- 2 Michael Tinsley
- 3 Catherine Stanworth
- 4 Brian Plummer
- 5 John Stanworth
- 6 Richard Stanworth (C)

For St George's Day and as a thanksgiving for the life of Charlie Macdonald 1935-2013.

Shenley, Bucks

St. Mary

Sunday, 5 May 2013 in 46 mins (17-1-11)

1260 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 Becky Fawcett
- 2 Ann Birch
- 3 Gary Reading
- 4 John Brookman
- 5 Ted Fawcett (C)
- 6 Robin Starr

Stony Stratford, Bucks

St. Mary & St. Giles

Monday, 6 May 2013 in 45 mins (12-1-16)

1260 Grandsire & Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Kieran Salter
- 2 Wendy Price
- 3 Michael Nimmo (C)
- 4 David Moore (C)
- 5 Malcolm Hooton (C)
- 6 Christopher Crompton

First Quarter Peal: 1 & 6.

stay crisis?

Ash Dieback disease has prompted a number of concerns about the future availability of wood for stays. Having bought a number of stay blanks in preparation for the BigRingPull I thought I would investigate a bit deeper.

A stay is expected to be strong enough to lean the bell on when it is rung up. It has to withstand a static bending force but isn't expected to survive larger shocks. If it did, something more expensive would break instead. Also, it isn't a bump stop for when the bell keeps going over the balance. We use ash for stays because we know it is strong and we have always used it. We don't usually think much further than that. Given the current concerns about supply, should we worry about not being able to get replacement stays. Let's look at a few alternatives.

- * European Ash – This is what we have always used
 - * American Ash – This is our stock of replacements at New port
 - * Sycamore – Currently in use on the 3rd at Olney
- And a few others.

The web site <http://www.wood-database.com/> is a great resource for this kind of research. The measure we are interested in is the modulus of rupture – that is the amount of bending force it will take before breaking. It tells us that American Ash is as strong as European Ash and that Sycamore and Oak would do the job also. According to Sykes in Atherstone, though, American Ash is priced as "Low" while the others are priced at "Medium" so it looks like some savings can be had there.

However, even greater savings can be achieved by not breaking them in the first place.

Doug Hird

**OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS
NORTH BUCKS BRANCH**

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on
2nd March 2013 at Buckingham**



Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman, Brian Newman, welcomed everyone to Buckingham for the Annual General Meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Robert Newton (Guild Master), Jean Mattinsley, Roy Keeves, Sheila Blenkhorn, Helen and Dan Richardson, The Reading Family, Hazel Dallen, Bernard Phillips, Ruth Groves (Guild Steward), David Phillipson, Terry Page, Derek Stainsby, Tine Marchbank and John Marchbank.

Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes of the Autumn Meeting held at Wavendon in September were published in the November edition of In Touch and distributed at the meeting. No comments were made regarding the minutes so the Chairman deemed this as acceptance of the minutes as a true record.

Matters Arising from Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

Election of New Members

Nominations were received proposing 21 new members:

Hanslope

Lesley Belcher (*), proposed by Roy Keeves, seconded by Jonathan Griggs

Whaddon

Lee Mellers, proposed by Derek White, seconded by Hugh Butler

Maids Moreton

Richard Wharton, proposed by Robert Christopher, seconded by Andrew Spencer

Buckingham

Laura Primiceri (junior), Sebastian Lucas, Susan Lucas, proposed by Andrew Spencer, seconded by Ann Fletcher

Downs Barn

Steve Thomason, Carole Thomason, proposed by Brian Newman, seconded by Nick Read

Shenley

Annette Reed (*), Graham Bartholomew, proposed by Ted Fawcett, Seconded by Becky Fawcett

Newport Pagnell

Gemma Denman, Leigh Inness (Junior), Alicia Briedis (Junior), proposed by Doug Hird, seconded by Nicki King

Old Wolverton

Christine Crook, Elaine Holes, proposed by Mick Nimmo, seconded by John Mercer

Olney

Roger Gay, Judy Gay, Bethany Heron (Junior), proposed by Charles Knight, seconded by Sheila Ware

Wavendon

Cerys Dallen (Junior), Paul Crombleholme (*), Anthony Tull, proposed by Patricia Rosewell, seconded by Brian Baldwin

* denotes Re-election

All nominations were approved.

Officers Reports

Officer's Reports were published as part of the AGM pack issued prior to the meeting and included with these minutes.

The Treasurer thanked all those towers that paid their 2013 subscriptions but noted that 16 towers were still outstanding and need to pay before the end of March to ensure continuity and avoid re-elections.

Adoption of the reports and accounts was proposed by Brian Newman and seconded by Doug Hird. This was agreed on a show of hands.

Election of Officers

Nominations:

Chairman

Brian Newman, Proposed by Doug Hird, seconded by Becky Fawcett

Secretary

Jonathan Griggs, proposed by Doug Hird, seconded by Sheila Ware

Treasurer

Sheila Watts, proposed by Alan Marchbank, seconded by John Stanworth

RDL Newport

Doug Hird, proposed by Brian Newman, seconded by Charles Knight

RDL Milton Keynes & RDL Buckingham

No nominations

Guild Representatives

David Phillipson, proposed by Brian Newman, seconded by Doug Hird

Linda Maycroft, proposed by Brian Newman, seconded by Nick Read

Patricia Rosewell, proposed by Jonathan Griggs, seconded by Brian Baldwin

Joanna Taylor, proposed by Brian Newman, seconded by Sheila Watts

Newsletter Editor

Nick Read, proposed by Mark Vale, seconded by John Stanworth

Branch Archivist

Doug Hird, proposed by Sheila Ware, seconded by Nick Read

Independent Examiner

Alison Fowler, proposed by Sheila Watts, seconded by Jonathan Griggs

Following a ballot David Phillipson, Linda Maycroft and Patricia Rosewell were elected as Guild Representatives. All other officers were elected unopposed. There was a discussion on the unfilled posts and a proposal to split the RDL role into a ringing leader role and a church liaison role. It was pointed out that this may be difficult in the Milton Keynes deanery where there were a number of different ecumenical parishes. However in some respects the local teams of ringers may already have this liaison covered but in a different format. It was proposed by Nick Read to consider having a meeting of Tower Captains to establish how this could be taken forward within the MK Deanery and subsequently the Buckingham deanery.

2013 Training course

A discussion took place to ascertain the desire for a branch training course. There was overwhelming support for another course. The level of the course to be determined at a later date. It was proposed that a questionnaire concerning competence be issued prior to attendance to ensure the capability of those attending. It was also felt that discussions with tower captains prior to acceptance would also be beneficial.

Big Ring Pull 2

The original plan to undertake another Big Ring Pull recruitment project within a couple of years of the first was considered to be too early. It was proposed that a more realistic timescale might be 4 or 5 years when those who had attended the first one would be able to actively participate in the second one. It was also proposed that other aspects of training need to be provided to ensure that all the skills are in place to ensure its success. These might include Bell maintenance and tower leadership. It was noted that the Guild could provide resources where appropriate to support this. It was proposed that a cycle of training of which the Big Ring Pull is part should be put together and this would drive the timescales for repeating the project.

Branch Subscriptions

It was confirmed that if a member is elected to the branch part of the way through a year, the guild would require payment of their subs at that time. It was proposed by Brian Newman and seconded by Sheila Watts that the branch policy would be that a full year's subs should be paid upon election except in December when branch subs would not be payable until January in the following year. This proposal was carried by a show of hands.

New Branch Website

A demonstration of the functionality and capability of the new branch website was provided by Doug Hird. Doug was thanked for his considerable effort in collecting and presenting the records and information on the towers, bells, members and activities of the branch. A discussion took place where it was suggested that functionality be introduced to allow email contact with individual towers via alias email addresses. The website is due to go live in March.

2013 Christmas Celebration

Following the success of the Christmas Celebration at Emberton the chairman asked if towers would like to consider hosting next Christmas's event.

Forthcoming Events

An up to date calendar of events has been distributed as part of the pack. Attention was drawn to the second Big Ring Pull outing on 16th March. Any support would be appreciated.

Any Other Business

Sheila Watts noted that the branch had received a donation of £50 from a musician at Simpson who had included the Simpson Bells in a composition. John Stanworth noted that the National 12 bell striking competition eliminator is due to take place at Towcester on 23rd March from 11.30. All were welcome to attend to hear some high standard 12 bell ringing. James Champion (ODG secretary) noted the request to ring as many church bells as possible for St George's day on April 24 ideally at 6pm. On a separate matter there will be vote at the Guild AGM in May to offer £1000 to ITTS to help with administration support. If members have a view they should attend the AGM in May. Additionally, James mentioned that there is a long standing vacancy in the Guild for a PR person. James would be very happy to hear from anyone who would be able to contribute to this role.

Vote of Thanks

On behalf of everyone present The Chairman thanked the Buckingham ringers for hosting the meeting and providing the tea, Vicky Southby for taking the service, and Ray Mitchell for playing the organ. The Chairman announced that there would be further ringing after the meeting for anyone who wished to stay.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm