



OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS  
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

# In Touch

February 2007

## Annual General Meeting

**Cross & Stable, Downs Barn  
Saturday 3 March 2007**

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Downs Barn on Saturday 3rd March 2007. The timetable will be as follows:

3.00	Ringling
4.00	Service
4.30	Tea
5.15	Business Meeting

Names for tea to Alan Marchbank on **01908-611434** by Wednesday 28th February at the latest.

Please note the earlier timing than usual. There is an evening booking so we must be finished by 7.00 pm.

## AGM Agenda

- 1 Chairman's welcome
- 2 In Memoriam
- 3 Apologies for absence
- 4 Minutes of previous meeting – as published in *In Touch*
- 5 Matters arising from minutes
- 6 Election of new members
- 7 Officers' reports
- 8 Financing of *In Touch*
- 9 Election of Officers
- 10 Forthcoming events
- 11 Any other business
  - Review of changes during the year
- 12 Vote of thanks



## Who's Who 2007

Branch Website: <http://www.northbucks.org.uk/>

### Chairman

Mr Alan Marchbank  
Email. [chairman@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:chairman@northbucks.org.uk)

### Secretary

Mrs Helen Stanworth  
Email. [secretary@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:secretary@northbucks.org.uk)

### Treasurer / In Touch Editor

Mrs Sheila Watts  
Email. [treasurer@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@northbucks.org.uk) /  
[intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk)

### Ringling Master

Mr Richard Stanworth  
Email. [ringingmaster1@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:ringingmaster1@northbucks.org.uk)

### Assistant Ringing Master

Mr Barry Eglesfield  
Email. [ringingmaster2@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:ringingmaster2@northbucks.org.uk)

### Training Officer

Miss Christine Cable  
Email. [training@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:training@northbucks.org.uk)

### Guild Representatives

Mr Alan Marchbank—see details for Chairman  
Email. [guildrep1@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:guildrep1@northbucks.org.uk)

Brian Newman

Email. [guildrep2@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:guildrep2@northbucks.org.uk)

### Archivist

Mr Doug Hird  
Email. [archivist@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:archivist@northbucks.org.uk)

## Secretarial Snippets

### 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.

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.

### Videos

**Bellhandling—a tutor's companion** (produced by the Central Council)

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

**Teaching Demonstration** (recording of Steve Coleman teaching)

These videos may be borrowed from the Secretary free of charge. However, a deposit of £5 will be required against safe return of the video.

### Email Distribution of Notices etc

If there are any tower correspondents who haven't given their email address to the Secretary and would like to receive electronic notices, then please send an email to the Secretary ([secretary@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:secretary@northbucks.org.uk)). If you are not sure if she has your email address, then send details to her anyway.

### Business Meetings & 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.

## Our Grateful Thanks...

....to all those who contributed towards this issue of *In Touch*.

The deadline for the next *In Touch* is:  
**Tuesday 1 May 2007**

*Sheila Watts & Sheila Ware, Editors*

# Chairman's Jottings

As I indicated at the Branch meeting in September, I do not intend to stand for re-election as Chairman at the March AGM.

There are many reasons for this, some of which I feel I should share with you all.

- § I have been Chairman of the Branch for 2 years on this occasion and have also held the post previously. I think it is time there is some new blood involved in the leadership team, and where better to start than by replacing the Chairman?
- § A start has been made in challenging the norms and a few successes have been scored. More needs to be done to take these things forward but they will take more energy than I have.
- § I hold two posts (Guild Rep and Chairman) and that is one too many.
- § I have not enjoyed the last year in office and I know I don't do my best at things I don't enjoy doing!

I strongly believe in the role that the Branch and Guild have to play in the development of ringers and ringing, as a contribution to the act of Worship and the life and out reach of the Church overall. I believe that it is essential that both organisations continue. But there has to be a greater connection between the membership and the management so that the activities that are organised remain relevant and effective. It is amazingly disheartening for everyone concerned to have events that are poorly supported.

I have worried on a number of occasions that we are obsessed with the management issues and have lost sight of the ringing and social aspects.

To that end can I encourage you all to think carefully about the opportunity that is in front of you at the AGM? You have to determine who does the leadership jobs in the Branch and what they do, so that you get the most out of the exercise. This is a big responsibility that you must take seriously and I urge you to talk about it in your practices and come to the meeting with ideas.

I should like to thank all the other Officers who have put up with me for the last two years, and all of you for your encouragement and support.

*Alan Marchbank*

## *In Touch - the future?*

An item on the Agenda for the AGM is the financing of *In Touch*.

Here are a few facts to aid the discussion:

The cost of *In Touch* for 2006 (4 issues—printing, postage, stationery) was £414.97, or £104.74 per issue.

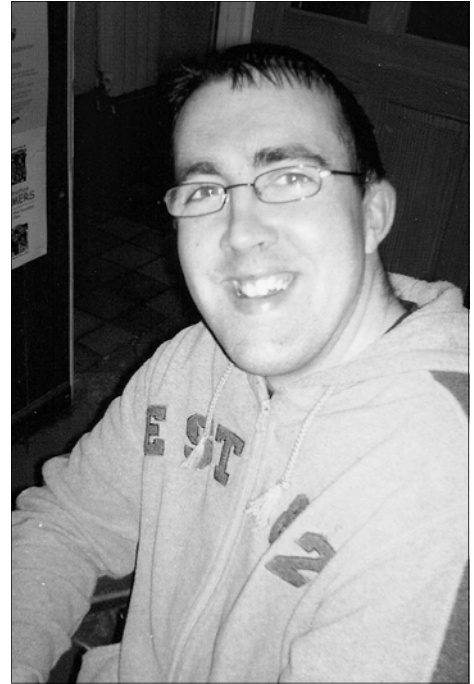
Donations from towers and individuals was £145.00, making a shortfall of £269.97.

In 2006 we had 179 members, and we distributed to towers approximately one copy per two members.

The cost to each member for the year is approximately £2.32, or 58p per issue.

## The PCC Meeting

It is becoming a custom to not only celebrate one's birthday with a quarter and a drink but with a curry as well. We thought that as the next birthday was in February (Edie's) if we waited that long we may have withdrawal symptoms so we decided to have one just before Christmas (the Pre-Christmas Curry [PCC] meeting) as it was to be called in the golden years at Bedford. We decided to set sail at 6 o'clock, but after emergency call-outs and confusion between the H4 and V4 I was picked up at 8 o'clock. After a few drinks in a couple of our favourite locals we enjoyed a superb meal at The Mogul Palace despite one or two finding the chilli a little on the hot side. We thought you may rather see Philip in a photo as you probably see plenty of the rest of us!



*Barry R Eglesfield*

## Calling Stedman Doubles Workshop

**We still have one more place available for this school. To qualify you must be able to ring touches of Stedman Doubles confidently. It has been pushed back to March so if you are interested please let me know.**

## Calling Called Changes Workshop

**To qualify for this you need to be able to ring called changes confidently. This workshop should take place in April, so if you are interested please let me know.**



**To register your interest in either of these workshops, please contact Chrissie Cable, the Training Officer by email or phone.**



## JO NEVILLE

I first met Jo about thirty years ago at Old Wolverton, where I taught her to ring. She achieved a standard which enabled her to be a competent Sunday Service ringer and she rang a few Quarters at Wolverton, Calverton, Beachampton and other local towers.

She was an extremely efficient barmaid, particularly at The Bull at Stony Stratford where coincidentally we drank after the Branch practice at Stony Stratford in January.

In the last twenty or so years her first love and loyalty was to the Church of the Assumption at Beachampton, where she became Sexton and Churchwarden, and I was organist in the eighties.

Her funeral service, which was planned right to the last detail by Jo before her demise, was well attended with good representation from the Branch.

On 5th January her ringing friends rang a peal with the bells open in thanksgiving for her life.

Rest in peace, Jo.

*Barry R Eglesfield*

Assumption of the BVM, Beachampton  
Friday 5 January 2007  
5040 Doubles 2h35 (8cwt)  
(10 extents Grandsire, 8 extents each, Stedman;  
St Simon's Bob; St Martin's Bob; Plain Bob)  
1 Barry R Eglesfield  
2 Ruth Stokes  
3 Richard Yates  
4 Christopher C Stokes  
5 Alan J Marchbank (C)  
Rung in celebration of the life of Jo Neville

### Tower Information

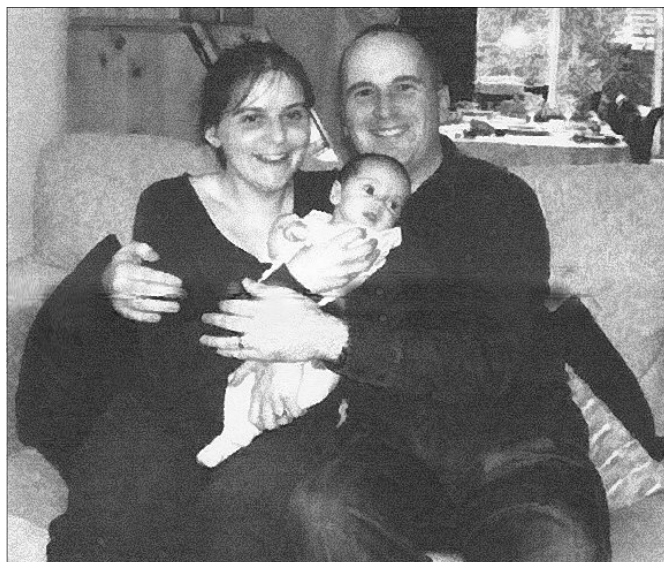
The Secretary sent out a letter to all tower correspondents in December, giving the details that are held about them as tower correspondent, and of the bells and ringing at their tower. They were asked to check these details, amend as necessary and return the letter by the end of the year. So far, less than half of the letters have been returned. If you have not yet done so, please return the letter, even if everything is correct, so that we know that we have the correct details. It will not cost you anything, as there was a stamped addressed envelope included. We try to maintain accurate information. We can only do this with your help.

### IN TOUCH BY EMAIL?

We can now send you *In Touch* by email if you prefer. It would be a fairly large pdf file, but you would have the advantage of receiving your copy before everyone else and maybe saving the Branch some money.

Just send your email address to:

[intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk](mailto:intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk)



Former ringers at Calverton, Clare & Simon Martin, with Bridget who was born 19 July 2006. They now live at Great Horwood, Bucks.

## Stop Press!

Welcome to Lesley Belcher, a ringer who has recently moved into Branch territory at Beachampton!

Congratulations to Barry Eglesfield on his recent election as Deputy Ringing Master/ Tower Captain at Leighton Buzzard.

Barry wishes to extend his own congratulations to Alex Marchbank and James Maltby on all the 'Firsts' in the Peal/Quarter Peal pages.

## CALLING STEDMAN TRIPLES SCHOOL

**Martin Whiteley has kindly agreed to run a Calling Stedman Triples school for us.**

**Unfortunately it is on quite a short time scale. The date that Martin has agreed to do it is on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2:30 - 5:00.**

**If you are confident ringing touches of Stedman Triples; and wish to learn to call it, please let the Training Officer know by email or phone.**

**If you cannot make this date but would still like to attend at another time please also register your interest.**



## Ten-Bell Striking Competition

This was held on Saturday 25th November 2006 at Banbury.



	Branch	Comments	Peal Speed	Faults	Place
1	North Bucks	Slow, faults in the rounds	3h 33m	25 ½ faults	6th
2	VOWH	Settled well and got better	3h 12m	15 ½	3rd
3	EBSB	Good rounds but varied	3h 7m	9 ½	2nd
4	ONB	Changes inconsistent	3h 7m	17 ½	4th
5	Reading	Opening rounds were good, faults in clusters	3h 7m	8	1st
6	Banbury	Rang too fast, faults in rounds	2h 49m	21 ½	5th

# Pearls

St Mary, Bletchley

Monday 18 December 2006

5088 Spliced Surprise Major 2h55 (15cwt)  
(8 methods: Cambridge, Yorkshire Lincolnshire,  
Rutland, Pudsey, Superlative, Bristol, London.  
120 changes of method, all the work)

- 1 Sarah Watts
- 2 Christopher Bulleid
- 3 Richard Yates
- 4 Alan J Marchbank
- 5 Barry R Eglesfield
- 6 Christopher Stokes
- 7 Nigel Williams
- 8 Richard Alton (C)

First peal—1

50th birthday compliment to Richard Yates

Assumption of the BVM, Beachampton

Friday 5 January 2007

5040 Doubles 2h35 (8cwt)

(10 extents Grandsire, 8 extents each, Stedman;  
St Simon's Bob; St Martin's Bob; Plain Bob)

- 1 Barry R Eglesfield
- 2 Ruth Stokes
- 3 Richard Yates
- 4 Christopher C Stokes
- 5 Alan J Marchbank (C)

Rung in celebration of the life of Jo Neville

# Quarters

St Lawrence, Bradwell

Sunday 17 September 2006

1260 Doubles (Grandsire, Plain Bob, St Simons)

- 1 Susan Hubbard
- 2 Jenny Brookman
- 3 Matthew Hubbard
- 4 Christine Cable
- 5 David Joyce (C)
- 6 Gordon Abbott

Rung to celebrate Jenny's 50th birthday

All Saints, Soulbury

Wednesday 1 November 2006

1440 Surprise Minor

(720 each Belfast and Carlisle)

- 1 Alex Marchbank
- 2 Edie Robinson
- 3 James Maltby
- 4 B Douglas Hird
- 5 Alan J Marchbank
- 6 Barry R Eglesfield (C)

For Patronal Festival

St Mary, Bletchley

Saturday 25th November 2006

1280 Bristol Surprise Major

- 1 Alex Marchbank
- 2 Edie Robinson
- 3 Jonathan Pawley
- 4 Doug Hird
- 5 Phillip Bailey
- 6 James Maltby
- 7 Alan J Marchbank
- 8 Barry R Eglesfield (C)

A 17th birthday compliment to James Maltby

First Bristol at first attempt 5 & 6

This was a bit of a last minute organisation and a number of rings of bells were considered. Thankfully Bletchley were very accommodating and it did mean we did not have the bells and tower to contend with—just the method!!

This nearly completes the Standard 8 for James—just London to go and that will be a further test of skill—all that backward hunting. Then we start the spliced exercise!!

The “youngsters” and Barry joined the Luton District meeting at Leighton Buzzard for some 10 and 12 bell practice. A curry and copious quantity of beer followed to celebrate James's birthday.

Ringling on the Sunday morning at Great Linford was followed by an impromptu quarter at Downs Barn—a very good effort indeed with a strong rhythm and good striking throughout.

Cross & Stable, Downs Barn

Sunday 26 November 2006

1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 Phillip Bailey
- 2 Edie Robinson
- 3 Simon Head
- 4 James Maltby
- 5 Alex Marchbank
- 6 Alan J Marchbank (C)

For Sunday Service

Birthday compliment to James Maltby



St James, Husborne Crawley  
Friday 3 November 2006  
1280 Rutland Surprise Major  
1 B Douglas Hird  
2 Edie Robinson  
3 Jonathan Pawley  
4 Peter Tribble  
5 James Maltby  
6 Alan J Marchbank  
7 Alan Shephard  
8 Barry R Eglesfield (C)  
First in method 4 & 5

St James the Great, Hanslope  
Sunday 3 December 2006  
1344 Double Oxford Major 47mins  
1 Stuart Grout  
2 Alan Cozens  
3 Tony Gray  
4 Ian Thompson  
5 Jonathan Griggs  
6 Nicholas Gray  
7 Richard Haseldine (C)  
8 Roy Keeves  
First (and last) in the method by all the band  
Rung for Sunday Service  
Also as a 60th birthday compliment to no. 3 and a  
birthday compliment to no. 5

St Andrew, Great Linford  
Friday 8 December 2006  
1320 Netherseale Surprise Minor  
1 Alex Marchbank  
2 Edie Robinson  
3 James Maltby  
4 B Douglas Hird  
5 Simon Head  
6 Alan J Marchbank (C)  
First blows in the method—3  
In celebration of the life of Jo Nevill, ringer and  
Church Officer at Beachampton, who died on 22nd  
November 2006

Cross & Stable, Downs Barn  
Wednesday 13 December 2006  
1280 London Surprise Major  
1 Alex Marchbank  
2 Edie Robinson  
3 Richard Yates  
4 Jonathan Griggs  
5 James Maltby  
6 Chris Bulleid  
7 Alan J Marchbank  
8 Barry R Eglesfield (C)  
First of London Major—5

All Saints, Leighton Buzzard  
Sunday 17 December 2006  
1280 Bristol Surprise Major 55mins  
1 Alex Marchbank  
2 Jonathan Pawley  
3 B Douglas Hird  
4 Peter Tribble  
5 Richard A Horne  
6 Alan J Marchbank  
7 Alan Shephard  
8 Barry R Eglesfield (C)  
For the Christingle Service  
First Bristol—4

St James the Great, Hanslope  
Sunday 24th December 2006  
1280 Xmas Surprise Major  
1 Peter Tribble  
2 Alan Cozens  
3 Ian Thompson  
4 Tony Gray  
5 Nick Gray  
6 Kevin Haseldine  
7 Richard Haseldine (C)  
8 Jonathan Griggs  
Rung for the Crib Service  
First in method for all

St Andrew, Great Linford  
Tuesday 26 December 2006  
1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor 42 mins  
1 Carol Marchbank  
2 Alex Marchbank  
3 Robert Marchbank  
4 Edward Marchbank  
5 James Marchbank  
6 Alan J Marchbank (C)  
On Grandma's Birthday

St Giles, Stony Stratford  
Tuesday 2 January 2007  
1280 Cambridge Surprise Major 42 mins  
1 Barry R Eglesfield  
2 Alex Marchbank  
3 Terry Page  
4 Robert Winstanley  
5 Edie Robinson  
6 James Maltby  
7 B Douglas Hird  
8 Alan J Marchbank (C)  
First touch—2  
To welcome 2007

*More Quarters*



# More Quarters

St Mary, Long Crendon  
 Sunday 14 January 2007  
 1287 Stedman Caters 50mins  
 1 Richard Haseldine (C)  
 2 Alan Cozens  
 3 Stuart Grout  
 4 Jonathan Griggs  
 5 Tony Gray  
 6 Ian Thompson  
 7 Nick Gray  
 8 Andrew Haseldine  
 9 George Green  
 10 Roy Keeves  
 First Stedman Caters—3, 5 and 6

All Saints, Leighton Buzzard  
 Sunday 14 January 2007  
 1282 Yorkshire Surprise Royal  
 1 Alexandra Marchbank  
 2 Richard W Yates  
 3 Edgar Skipsey  
 4 James Maltby  
 5 Roger Powell  
 6 Simon Lockwood  
 7 Alan J Marchbank  
 8 Philip Dunn  
 9 Jonathan Pawley  
 10 Barry R Eglesfield (C)  
 First Yorkshire Royal—4  
 First Royal—1

St Lawrence, Bradwell  
 Tuesday 23 January 2007  
 1260 mixed Doubles (Grandsire, St Simons,  
 St Martins, Plain Bob) 46mins  
 1 Chris Abbott  
 2 Jenny Brookman  
 3 Simon Head  
 4 Christine Cable  
 5 David Joyce (C)  
 6 Gordon Abbott  
 Rung on the exact day, to celebrate the 40th birthday  
 of Milton Keynes

St Peter, Dunstable Priory  
 Sunday 28 January 2007  
 1280 Lincolnshire Surprise Major  
 1 Alan J Marchbank  
 2 Alexandra Marchbank  
 3 Peter Tribble  
 4 Jonathan Pawley  
 5 James Maltby  
 6 Edith M Robinson  
 7 Alan Shephard  
 8 Barry R Eglesfield (C)  
 First Lincolnshire—2 and 3

All Saints, Wing  
 Sunday 28 January 2007  
 1272 London Surprise Minor  
 1 Edith M Robinson  
 2 Alexandra Marchbank  
 3 Alan J Marchbank  
 4 James Maltby  
 5 Ed Houghton  
 6 Barry R Eglesfield  
 For the 50th wedding anniversary of  
 Mr & Mrs Haywood.  
 First London—2

St James the Great, Hanslope  
 Thursday 1 February 2007  
 1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major  
 1 Tony Gray  
 2 Jonathan Griggs  
 3 Alan Cozens  
 4 Stuart Grout  
 5 Ian Thompson  
 6 Nick Gray  
 7 Richard Haseldine (C)  
 8 Roy Keeves  
 Rung for Candlemass Service, and as a  
 celebration of the life of James Thompson, father of  
 Ian Thompson

## GUILD STRIKING COMPETITIONS



Methods proposed by the Deputy  
 Master for 2007:

Eight-Bell Competition on 7th May in  
 the Oxford City Branch  
 —Plain Bob Triples.

Ten-Bell Competition on  
 24th November in the Chiltern  
 Branch  
 —Stedman Caters.

# Implementation of Guild Communications Enhancements—a Summary



The Guild General Committee accepted the paper from the Communications working group. By doing so, it accepted a broad strategy and approach to communications. The paper looks at what is needed to implement the strategy in a workable way.

The policy adopted was:

- To set up a direct line of communication with each individual member
- To facilitate communication between members, officers, committees and branches
- To exploit electronic communication where practical
- Not to disadvantage those without Internet access
- To encourage a culture of information and knowledge sharing between members, officers and committees
- 

Achieving this will require co-ordinated action by many people, both at Guild level and in the Branches. One key task therefore is to communicate

with appropriate people in all Branches. Some of them will be easy to identify, notably the senior officers and those already involved in communication, but others might be less obvious.

The Master suggested grouping the work into three broad areas. These are interdependent (in that any one won't work without some of the others) but they represent a sensible way to parcel up some of the detailed implementation. They are:

- Management of membership data
- Web sites
- Information distribution

The working group paper outlined a broad picture of the type of features considered appropriate. These need refining in discussion with Branches.

## *Has anyone noticed that it's been different?*

Last year at the AGM we voted to make some changes to the calendar, mainly connected with Saturday Meetings. We agreed to hold two Saturday business meetings per year, the AGM in March and a half-year meeting in September. We would continue with ringing and social gatherings in June and December. We agreed that short business meetings could be held at any other Branch event if deemed necessary to conduct urgent business and to elect new members. Saturday events, apart from the AGM may move from the first Saturday of the month to try and improve attendance. The officers also cut down on events so that in general there is only one Branch event per month.

Has this made any difference? Looking at the statistics then more of you came to Branch events in 2006 than in the either 2004 or 2005

### **Average Attendance**

Did you come to a Branch practice, meeting or social gathering? Are we catering for your needs?

Year	Quarterly Events	Practices
2004	23	16.2
2005	18	15.2
2006	25	17.6

Are there other changes to be made or other events we should hold?

There is an agenda item under Any Other Business at the AGM when we can review the changes over the last year and consider what, if any, other changes should be made. Please give this some thought and bring your comments and ideas to the AGM so that we can discuss them.

*Richard Stanworth*

## Belfry work at Maids Moreton

*Reg Doble*

The work to refurbish the clappers and renew the pulleys at St Edmund's has now been completed and the new units are now installed and ringing true. The photo shows the components upon delivery to the Church prior to installation the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2006.



Photo by Robert George

We are grateful to the North Bucks Branch for assistance in the form of a grant. Similarly, we thank the Bell Preservation Fund of the ODG and the Maids Moreton Parish Council for their generosity in this field. Also to be acknowledged are the major contributions from the Church Fete committee and the St. Edmund's Tower Fund. This latter arises from the voluntary contributions of the ringers on practice nights over the years. I must also mention a thank you to the gentleman who thrust a £20 note into my hands during the business meeting at Calverton last June with the words "here you are, this will start you off".

Finally, thanks are due to Alan Marchbank for advice given during the course of the application and for his help in inspecting the completed work.

## 120 years ago - A Golden Jubilee Year

*Doug Hird, Archivist*

In the small market town of Newport Pagnell the preparations for the celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee were set in motion towards the end of 1886. A sequence of town meetings had difficulty deciding between two major schemes and a number of minor ones. The schemes were:

- To restore or replace the chimes, the tune machine installed by Joseph Ayre in 1762 no longer worked and was the subject of comment for some years
- To set up a Cottage Hospital along similar lines to those already in place in nearby towns
- To open up the entrance to the church by demolishing a building that occupied the space now occupied by the war memorial
- The construction of a new engine house for the fire engine
- To provide improved facilities for the cricket team
- The construction of a swimming pool
- To set up a bathing place on one of the rivers

In the end, the matter was decided by the cost. The cost to set up a cottage hospital was somewhat confused by the range of options available and the complete lack of a financial benefits case. As occupants were expected to pay, most cottage hospitals turned in a steady profit but this was only briefly mentioned. In contrast, the towns people had a good understanding of the chimes and the project was probably favoured because Gillett's representative was able to play the National Anthem and Rule Britannia on handbells. In addition, and pushed into the arena at the last minute, was the proposal to set up a bathing place on the river Lovat. Seen as a low cost, but popular scheme. To play the National Anthem, an extra bell was needed and that wasn't included in the original estimate. A flat 2nd bell was paid for by Mr. F. J. Taylor, the principal supporter of the project, at a cost of £50, and was delivered to Newport Station on Friday 1st April 1887. At the same time, the churchwardens were arranging all the alterations and improvements that were needed in the tower. The wood panelling in the clock room dates from this time being constructed by Mr. E. D. Mitchell. The age of the clock, now out of use, is given then as 126 years, according to an inscription on the mechanism. That inscription is now lost but this would put the date of construction as 1761.

On the day of the Jubilee, festivities started with the opening of the new bathing place followed by a procession through the town to the Church. The vicar had set aside the end of a mid-day service to dedicate the new bell and chimes. "Just at five minutes to one o'clock, as soon as the dedication service was ended, Master Leonard Whitworth Taylor, pulled the string in the bell tower, and which had been connected with the chimes in the clock tower, when the National Anthem sounded from the belfry, indicating to the outside public that the new chimes, subscribed for by the parishioners had been set in motion." Following that, a considerable feast and festivities were arranged.

Elsewhere in the Branch, the ringers were very much in evidence: At Woughton, the ringers started ringing at 3.00am; at Sherington and Chicheley, the ringers started at 4.00am; the bells were rung during the day at Ravenstone and Little Woolstone, both now unringable. At Milton Keynes, Bletchley, Woughton and Great Linford, the bells were re-hung, all by Gillett's. At Fenny Stratford, five new bells were added to the existing bell to make a ring of six in a new oak frame. The ringers at Hanslope seem to have been the last to stop ringing. Having started at 5.00am they finally finished after midnight.

All this, and more is from the pages of Croydon's Weekly Standard, Newport's weekly newspaper. The proprietors took the opportunity of the Jubilee year to re-name the paper to The Bucks Standard in this year.

## North Bucks Branch—Calendar 2007

<b>MARCH</b>	3	3.00	Annual General Meeting	Downs Barn
	10		<i>Spring General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Newbury Branch</i>
<b>APRIL</b>	7		<i>Guild Handbell Day</i>	
	14		<i>Radley Course</i>	<i>Radley</i>
	20	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Double Court Bob Minor	Stowe
<b>MAY</b>	7		<i>Eight Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Oxford City Branch</i>
	7		<i>Annual Ringing Day</i>	<i>Oxford City Branch</i>
	18	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Norfolk Surprise Minor	North Crawley
	19		<i>Annual General Meeting</i>	<i>EBSB</i>
<b>JUNE</b>	2		Summer Ringing and Social (Skittles)	Clifton Reynes
	15	7.30	Six Bell Striking Competition	Emberton
<b>OCTOBER</b>	6		<i>Six Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Chipping Norton Branch</i>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	24		<i>Ten Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Chiltern Branch</i>
	24		<i>Autumn General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Chiltern Branch</i>

Items marked \* were unconfirmed as at 29 January 2007  
Events in *italics* are Guild events, etc.

### News from Newport!

After years of discussion and false alarm it now looks likely that a ringing platform will be constructed at Newport Pagnell. This is just part of a much needed re-ordering of the west end of the Church. The proposals are:

- ⇒ Alterations to the North Porch to provide disabled access, improved lighting and a new interior door.
- ⇒ Improvements to the tower to provide disabled toilet facilities and a kitchen area.
- ⇒ Installation of an oak screen and ringing platform to blend in with the existing character of the interior.

The benefits to the ringers include shorter ropes and a better ringing environment. Both of these will already be apparent at Newton Longville where the new balcony there has transformed the ring.

The cost has been estimated at £100,000 of which £50,000 has already been generously donated. If you wish to make a donation, feel free to get in touch with Doug Hird who can supply donation forms, containing the relevant Gift Aid Declaration.

